

God is One of Us

by

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There are only two stations I listen to on the radio. They call themselves "The Force" and "The Revolution". They both play earsplitting, mind-numbing music. I listen loudly and frequently in the car. Sometimes the words are crummy and I interject my own words so I can justify listening. Most times the words rarely make sense and the resulting cacophony makes up the obstreperous environment where I usually manage bills, responsibilities, bright ideas, love life and Steelermania.

While being caught in a trance of watching myself spike the ball over the goal post after scoring the winning touchdown in Super Bowl XXX (on my way to Giant Eagle), I almost slammed on the brakes when words from a song crashed through my head and actually caused me to pause and reflect.

Rock singer Joan Osborne has received a grammy nomination for a song called "One of Us" on her latest album. Her video for this song has been on the MTV top twenty countdown for the last few weeks. While that may not impress you, the song might make you think a bit. For those not familiar, the song repeatedly asks the question "what if God was one of us." This is followed by a series of questions such as "what would we ask God if God stood in front of us right now". Hmm.....

It isn't clear whether Joan is asking this question after intensive theological introspection or after extensive exposure in the sun. The song has a few theological gaffes that make it a little humorous. However, the song and the video has a strikingly profound message for anyone who cares, let alone anyone who cares to think. While the concept of the song is nothing new to Christians, the reality of her video where people of different colors, shapes and sizes are shown as God possibilities is something that perhaps captures the unseen, spiritual reality we often ignore. The first time I saw the video, I have to admit it made me uncomfortable. Imagining God with a nose ring was more than I could handle.

I'll be the first to tell you that I cannot buy into the so-called Christian radio or TV stations for reasons I can't even explain. I just don't care for them. The cool thing about this song and video is that a faith-provoking message hits the listeners and viewers respectively who are too often anesthetized in the desert wasteland of today's rock lyrics. It leaves many pondering for the moment, the question of our mortality, our concept of God, our view of people of all colors.

Today many people don't see the need for God because they don't know themselves. They in effect become their own God. Evil or sin becomes an impossibility. In the early 1980's Ronald Reagan probably sounded a little theatrical when he talked about how quickly Americans and Russians from the evil empire would come together if they had to

fight a common enemy from outer space. This song causes one to pause and consider that the unseen reality might be that people of all nations, creeds and colors are fighting a common evil from another world and that God is right there with us to do battle.

What if God really was one of us? What would I ask God? Would God be the way I thought? What a troubling song in some ways.

Imagine the implications if we began to see strangers as having the possibility of being God. Would that possibility give someone holding a gun cause to reflect before pulling that trigger in a senseless holdup? Would that possibility give a pregnant woman cause to reflect before aborting her child? Would that possibility give a white cause to reflect before ridiculing a black and vice versa?

I think this song is a small glimmer of the answer our nation needs to come together. We can argue values until the cows come home. This song is a home run. Imagine if we treated everyone with the dignity and respect that might consider that God was one us.



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