

So it's pretty obvious, we're getting under his skin. I like that.

And I have a notion you like it too -- and that you'll want to help keep it up by joining Americans United.

As an Americans United member, you can join us in making life more uncomfortable for Pat Robertson and his cronies. You can help us crush their plan for replacing American democracy with a rigid theocracy -- where all laws would be based on Robertson's narrow interpretation of the scriptures.

Please understand one thing: Americans United's quarrel is not with religious Americans. Far from it. I'm a Christian minister myself, and many of AU's members are people of faith.

No, my quarrel is not with religion or Christianity. It's with dangerous zealots who use religion or the Bible as a club to attack others. My quarrel is with self-righteous extremists who use religion to justify their hate and insist that God has ordained them to jam their over-the-cliff political ideas down the throats of the rest of us.

My quarrel is with the self-appointed "family values" brigade who call separation of church and state a lie and yammer about making America a "Christian" nation -- according to their definition of "Christian," of course.

That's one reason why I've dedicated my life to stopping them -- from Pat Robertson, Jerry Falwell, James Dobson and Pat Buchanan -- right on down to their foot soldiers. You know their followers, they're the ones who attack your local public schools, demand censorship at your libraries and think they have the right to judge and harass any woman who visits a clinic that provides reproductive services.

You know the folks I'm talking about. Now I need your help to keep fighting them.

With your help . . . Americans United will step up our efforts to expose the outrages and excesses of the Christian Coalition and other Religious Right groups. We'll fight them in courts of law, courts of public opinion and through the media. We'll take them on anywhere.

With your help . . . Americans United will continue to defend church-state separation from the Religious Right's crude attacks. And stand up for religiously neutral public education that welcomes children from all faiths. And speak out against efforts to funnel the tax dollars you and I have no choice but to pay into religious schools and other institutions we do not want to support.

And with your help . . . Americans United will carry on our proud tradition of defending the right of all Americans to practice the religion of their choice freely without government interference.

We've been at this for a long time -- more than 50 years.

But in all that time, Thomas Jefferson's "wall of separation" has never undergone the relentless and ugly assault that it is facing today from the Religious Right.

As a minister, I know how that wall of separation protects religious liberty. And it disgusts me when I hear Religious Right leaders compare it to the Berlin Wall, or call it "a wall of shame," as I have heard them do.

I'm determined to stand up against this type of ignorance and mean-spiritedness. And I