



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on April 11, 2024

New York Times Hit Piece on Trump Misses the Mark

An article trashing Trump and his followers, ironically, was published by *The New York Times* on April Fools' Day. Only fools reading Michael Bender's oblique attempt at character assassination would take his rant seriously.

He called it "[The Church of Trump: How He's Infusing Christianity Into His Movement](#)," and promoted the meme that Trump is a fake, fraudulent televangelistic hustler who is succeeding at fooling the rubes, and he's just in it to win the White House for a second go. The fact that his followers are not rubes but patriots gravely concerned about the secularization of the country and sincerely seeking someone to help restore it has escaped Bender entirely.



AP Images

Bender writes about himself extensively in his bio, promoting his neutrality when it comes to matters political. He claims that he follows the *Times*' "Ethical Journalism Handbook," and accordingly doesn't belong to or contribute to any political party, Democratic or Republican.

But Bender's left-wing credentials are borne out with his admissions that, prior to joining the *Times* in 2022, he wrote for Bloomberg and CNN. Further, in his *New York Times* "bestseller," "*Frankly, We Did Win This Election: The Inside Story of How Trump Lost*," he is talking about himself.

A [disappointed reader](#) of that "bestseller," Heather Hall, exposed Bender's left-wing proclivities:

This book defended the point of view that there was no fraud [in the 2020 election], but failed to address any of the evidence put forth by the other side.... It sought to assassinate [Trump's] character.

Bender sought to use the same approach in his April Fools' Day article: declaring that Trump was deceiving the faithful into believing that he is the Messiah, seeking to lead them into the promised land. The faithful, he writes, "raise open palms in the air or murmur as if in prayer" during his rallies.

Trump panders to their alleged need for a savior, writes Bender, often ending a rally with a "15-minute finale that evokes an evangelical altar call."

To prove his point, Bender quotes Trump from a recent rally:

The great silent majority is rising like never before and under our leadership. We will pray to God for our strength and for our liberty. We will pray for God and we will pray with God. We are one movement, one people, one family, and one glorious nation under God.

Bender provides no source for this quote, but offers it as accurate and accusatory. It underlines



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Bender's point: Trump is an authoritarian, like Hitler, using the ignorant and trusting evangelical community as a springboard into the White House in November.

Bender did get one point right: "His success at portraying [his] prosecutions as persecutions ... has placed him, once again, in a position to capture the White House."

Bender accuses Trump indirectly of being a money-grubbing charlatan by "hawking a \$60 Bible" — without noting that that's what Bibles containing, as this one does, copies of many of the country's founding documents, actually cost.

It isn't clear what Bender's purpose really is here. Perhaps it's to affirm what the paper's left-leaning Democratic readers think they already know about Trump. Perhaps it's to offer a glimmer of hope to Biden campaign strategists planning, through articles like his, "to spook moderate swing voters into supporting Mr. Biden by casting Mr. Trump's movement as a cultlike creation bent on restricting abortion rights and undermining Democracy."

He assures his readers that, by asking local preachers and pastors to offer prayers before and after his rallies, Trump really wants those attending to see him as their savior. He quotes Pastor Greg Rodermond of Crossroads Community Church in Conway, South Carolina, who prayed:

Father, we have gathered here today in unity for our nation to see it restored back to its greatness, and, God, we believe that you have chosen Donald Trump as an instrument in Your hands for this purpose.

Bender naturally leaves out any mention of Trump's accomplishments during his first term. Wrote David Keltz at *American Greatness*:

According to Bender, Trump's appeal to evangelicals has nothing to do with the policies he enacted during his first term, which saw a roaring economy, a booming stock market, tax cuts for the middle class, a reduction in anti-business regulations, a secure border, a rebuilt military, no new wars, increased national defense spending, an aggressive posture towards China, Iran, and North Korea, the destruction of the ISIS caliphate, new trade agreements, and a strong pro-Israel stance.

Yes, unlike Bernie Sanders, AOC, Rashida Tlaib, Ilhan Omar, and the radical left, evangelicals not only vehemently support Israel, but they actually believe in the Jewish state's right to defend itself.

If Bender's target market is the "undecideds," his audience is exceedingly small. According to political analyst Mark Halperin, "Around 150 million people across American will vote in 2024, but the story of the election will be told by less than 4%, about 6 million voters in seven battleground states." And precious few of them are likely to read Bender's failed attempt to assassinate Donald Trump's character.



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