

# Whose side is God on?

This article is from the "Edifying the Body" section of the Church of God Big Sandy's Web site, [churchofgodbigandy.com](http://churchofgodbigandy.com). It was posted for the weekend of Nov. 13–14, 2010.

**By Lenny Cacchio**

LEE'S SUMMIT, Mo.—During the Civil War someone asked Abraham Lincoln if he thought God was on the Union's side. Lincoln is said to have answered, "Sir, my concern is not whether God is on our side; my greatest concern is to be on God's side."

As in times of warfare, the temptation during a political campaign is to claim the mantle of God's endorsement. "God is on our side." "How would Jesus vote?" "We're doing the Lord's work."

We would do well to remember what happened when the Angel of the Lord stepped into the time and space around Joshua. Israel was about to conquer Jericho, and, as Joshua was apparently reconnoitering the vicinity, he came across a mighty being standing before him, sword drawn as if ready for battle.

"Are you for us or our adversaries?" Joshua queried (Joshua 5:13).

The answer? "Neither!"

Face it. It was a great answer. To claim the imprimatur of the Almighty on our endeavors smacks of presumption. It may be so that one candidate is superior to another, and it may be true that living godly values places us on God's side, but, rather than claiming the mantle of providential favor, it would be better to submit our endeavors to God's service and will.

In Lincoln's Second Inaugural Address, sometimes called the greatest sermon ever delivered on American soil, the theme surfaces again, this time as a reminder that God's purposes are sometimes beyond our understanding and that victory after such an awful conflict should be viewed with humility, not the arrogance of the conquering self-righteous.

"Neither party expected for the war, the magnitude, or the duration, which it has already attained . . . Both read the same Bible, and pray to the same God; and each invokes His aid against the other . . . The prayers of both could not be answered; that of neither has been answered fully. The Almighty has His own purposes . . . With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right, let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds; . . . to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and a lasting peace, among ourselves, and with all nations."