



The logo for AGTs features the letters 'a', 'G', and 't' in a stylized, overlapping font. The 'a' is blue, the 'G' is green, and the 't' is blue. Below the logo, the words 'Prez Release' are written in a large, bold, yellow serif font.

Prez Release

You're Old Enough to Know Better, Pat! August 2005

Pundits far and wide are waxing eloquent on Pat Robertson's recent statements about Hugo Chavez, the president of Venezuela. To spin this event kindly one might say this is a poor example of using the influence of mass media.

When sound-bites are the sum total of people's understanding of Christian, Evangelical, Pentecostal and Charismatic, the paint brush of guilt by association gets wide usage. When comedians, who don't know the Bible from the Vedas, ask the question "*what part of thou shalt not kill don't you understand*", no amount of explanation will suffice for the likes of Bill Maher, Jimmy Kimmel and Carson Daly. This episode has just provided the fodder for a new barrage of Christianity bashing. Now the words *Christianity and assassinate* can be glibly used in the same sentence. Imagine what will now get taught in the *hate curriculums* of those opposing the Judeo-Christian worldview. This is not just a slip of the tongue that will fall off the media radar in short order.

I can't imagine the ramifications for followers of Jesus in Venezuela. I have been to Chavez's nation where the dream of Castro's revolution burns brightly. Chavez, when interviewed about this incident while visiting in Cuba, wondered out loud who Robertson was. Venezuela's vice president sarcastically responded to Robertson's comments by reportedly saying, "Sounds like something a Christian would say!" I know scores of faithful Venezuelans pastors living out their faith in the middle of poverty and misery in cities and jungles. Reports are already emerging of Venezuelan pastors being harassed by government leaders.

Parenthetically, we can observe the predictable media and political response to Robertson. Even Don Rumsfeld wanted to disassociate Robertson's statement from American foreign and military policy. "Private Citizen" Robertson supposedly spoke for himself. Duplicitous is a word that comes to mind when we describe the hammering of Robertson for his statement condoning "violence" when "holy leaders" of other major religions regularly call for the death of Christians, Jews and Hindus and it barely makes the media radar. In reality, Robertson's personal opinion got in the way of common sense and he will certainly be made to pay a big price.

This recent episode has certainly verified what St. James wrote in his epistle about the power of the tongue and its potential for doing good and evil, even by the same person. (See James 1:26 and 3:5-10.) It is difficult to watch leaders with the breadth of influence that Robertson has, misuse the potential for influence that they possess. I've thought long and hard about my attitude toward Pat Robertson. We are brothers in the Lord, but no amount of common affirmation of the miraculous or even hastily delivered disclaimers can nullify this kind of damage.

All leaders make mistakes, but not all leaders have the global platform Robertson has. It is reasonable to expect Robertson to act with maturity and in accordance with his sphere of influence. However, when national figures like Jesse Jackson and Ted Haggard (President of the National Association of Evangelicals) get involved in an attempt to ameliorate this situation, we have a very broad representative group of folks who feel Robertson's apology was woefully lacking. The mantle of leadership can be difficult and Robertson knows that as well as anyone. The measure of any leader includes whether or not they are worth being followed: hopefully emerging church leaders will survive this episode, because the rest of the world is making its opinion abundantly clear.

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AGTS Day of Renewal

Friday, September 23

**Services will be held in the AGTS Chapel at
9:30 a.m. 1:45 p.m. and 6:30 p.m. (CDT).**

**Please join us for this time of spiritual renewal—either in person or through the
live audio streaming which will be available at www.agts.edu.**

**Dr. Bob Cook, District Superintendent of the Rocky Mountain District of the
Assemblies of God, will be the special speaker.**