

# Liberal vs. Conservative

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I don't consider myself either a liberal or conservative. I am a little bit of both, probably leaning more towards liberal, but who cares? Actually, these days labeling politicians as one or the other is an almost certainty. If you have to label me as one or the other, and I would rather that you didn't, then count me on the side of liberals. Many people use the term as if it were a bad thing. Look up the definition in the dictionary some time. You would be surprised to find out it is a good thing to be a liberal.

From Merriam-Webster's online dictionary found at <http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/liberal> you see that it has multiple definitions.

The first definition doesn't apply to describing a person, so we will move on to the second definition. That one sounds good. "marked by generosity: OPENHANDED. How about the third definition? Oh, that one is obsolete, but seems to be the one those opposed to being liberal are probably using. I do not believe I am lacking moral restraint, but I do believe those using this definition are obsolete. The fourth definition of "not literal or strict: LOOSE" does not sound like it applies to a person either, so we will move on to the fifth definition. BROAD-MINDED; especially: not bound by authoritarianism, orthodoxy, or traditional forms. That does not sound bad. The last definition has more to do with describing the political party in the United Kingdom, but I like the words "associated with the ideals of individual especially economic freedom, greater individual

participation in government, and constitutional, political, and administrative reforms designed to secure these objectives.” Isn’t that what our nation was founded on?

What about the synonyms to liberal?

“Generous, Bountiful, Munificent meaning giving or given freely and unstintingly. Liberal suggests openhandedness in the giver and largeness in the thing or amount given. Generous stresses warmhearted readiness to give...”

None of that sounds bad. In fact, most of it sounds rather good. Being broad-minded; not bound by authoritarianism, orthodoxy, or traditional forms; openhanded, generous, warmhearted, and associated with economic freedom; who would want to be anything but liberal?

I could go through the same exercise with the word “conservative” but I will not waste your time. Suffice it to say they are just labels used to categorize us into opposite camps. I would rather not play that game.

If I had to label myself, I would say that when it comes to politics, I am fiscally and socially responsible. By that, I mean that I am for making the government work efficiently and effectively, but at the same time want to make sure we do the right thing by helping those among us who are in a time of need.

The more I think about it, Jesus must have been a liberal. He was generous in giving and openhanded, and definitely open-minded. He accepted everyone and strove to help him or her. While he was Jewish, he preached unorthodox lessons and fought against the authoritarianism of the church leaders and the Roman Empire. When I think

of being labeled a liberal now, I guess I would say that I am proud to wear that badge of honor. In other words, if someone were against liberals, wouldn't that mean they would be against Jesus as well?