

Aloha from Hawaii. The first Christian missionaries came to Hawaii from New England two hundred years ago. It is with pleasure to reciprocate. The word "Hawaii" itself is restorative. Ha means the breath of life. Wai means living water. 'I means created by God.

A young boy told me recently that all life is equally precious and we should protect all animals. I responded that a human's life is more precious than an animal's life. He argued that it was all equal. I asked him: "If ISIS has your favorite dog and best friend at gun point and you have to decide which one to kill what would you choose?" He had to think it over. He finally chose the dog. I congratulated him on making the right choice.

The next week a man in his thirties commented on the ivory I sell at Whaler's Locker in Lahaina. I explained to him it was fossilized or old legal ivory and that the illegal trafficking was taking place in Africa where they have much greater problems including atrocities committed to human beings. He responded "humans are not endangered." I asked if it was a choice between a human or an elephant to be shot which one would you save. He responded "humans are not endangered." I couldn't believe what I heard so confirmed that he thought killing the human was more acceptable. He affirmed again that humans are not endangered. I asked him if he was driving his car and lost control in an intersection and had to hit a man or a dog in the cross walk, which he would choose. He responded "the dog." I commented that he believed in that circumstance human life is more precious than an animal's life. I then asked him if it was a choice to kill his mother or an elephant what would he choose. What about his own life? He did not have a response to that.

One day a woman came into the store looking for a "human bone" fish hook. I tried not to act shocked and showed her fish hook necklaces made from mammoth ivory, fossil walrus tusk, sperm whale tooth, narwhal and elephant ivory. She was outraged when I mentioned "elephant ivory". I explained that it was old legal ivory in the United States prior to 1989 and about the international laws protecting elephants. She was not to be appeased. I then responded in a voice like you would use with a four year old. "You know you came in here looking for human bone fish hooks? You do know where human bone comes from right?"

Webster defines religion as "a cause, principle, or belief held to with faith and ardor" and religious means "devoted to that which is held to be of ultimate importance". Animal advocacy is one of the most prevalent and acceptable religions in our culture. It is one of the oldest religious practices. Our society is greatly influenced by animal advocacy propaganda and evident in our culture. Human life is no longer considered sacred.

"Once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide, in the strife of truth with falsehood for the good or evil side." (James Russell Lowell) For legislators, I pray to God: "Give your servants a discerning heart to govern your people and distinguish between right and wrong." (1 Kings 3:9)

Animals have been used to deceive mankind from the very beginning by taking some truth and manipulate it. Lying is the oldest trick in "The Book". It started when Satan used the snake to deceive Eve. The same practices are exercised today by some advocacy groups and promoted in the media. This legislation is based on lies and deceit.

My reason for speaking out is because of the dishonesty associated with the issue. I care about truth, integrity, and most of all love. Love is powerful and can change the world.

Recognizing that much of the ivory propaganda is misleading and twisted truths it made me consider what the crux of the matter is. Finding myself in opposition to organizations that have a

reputation for bribery and are some of the most corrupt charitable organizations in the country it makes me wonder how to respond in a way that would bring glory to God. My reason for existence is to give God glory. He created us because He delights in us.

I know things about the ivory issue that makes me realize how deceitful the information is and who is behind it all. Scripture is very clear that Satan is a thief and comes to “steal, kill, and destroy” The “devil is the father of lies.” Upon reflection I find the real issue is not about illegal wildlife trafficking but about TRUTH. *Jesus said “I am the Way, the Truth and the Life”*. If you want to stop the illegal trafficking of wildlife products—“Jesus” is the answer.

Africa has issues that extend way past wildlife issues. Corruption and evil are commonplace. In those same countries are atrocities committed to human life. We cannot begin to even imagine the horrors that people endure.

We focus on sensationalized news about Cecil the lion, which takes our focus off the lion we should be exposing. *“Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour. Resist him, standing firm in the faith, because you know that your brothers throughout the world are undergoing the same kind of suffering.” (1 Peter 5:8-9)*

The problem is demonic. *“The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil.” (1 Timothy 6:10a)* Corruption in Africa and Asia’s government officials and various agencies, along with regular criminal organizations, contribute to illegal trafficking. Much of our wildlife propaganda is funded by environmental groups with the overall agenda to raise money. Some of these animal advocacy groups are the most corrupt and wealthy charitable organizations in the world. In many cases they exploit animals for the same reason poachers do—MONEY.

In some respects unscrupulous animal advocacy groups are more insidious as they are deceitful and manipulative. In some ways they are more effective than the extremist groups because they criminalize law abiding Americans and devaluing our commodities, which is one of the objectives of militants.

Proposed legislation is not reasonable. Facts are disregarded. Lies and unrealistic sentiment are presented as truth then formulated into legislation intended to impress a “politically correct” society. It is hard to know how to respond when faced with multi-million dollar funded lobbyist groups and celebrity endorsements. Honesty and integrity are what is missing in our “fear” driven world. Righteousness matters!

“Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established.” (Romans 13) Though I may not respect the decisions of our law makers; I will be respectful of the laws and obey them as long as they are not in conflict with God’s commands. This legislation will cause hardship for many law abiding tax paying citizens. Then consider the fact that black market trade in endangered species is committed by people that are not law abiding. Who really benefits here? Who does it hurt?

Know this as Truth: God is Sovereign and in control. Whatever the outcome of this erroneous legislation He will work for good because He is God and that’s what He does. God will judge righteously. He looks at a man’s heart and motives. Mankind is easily deceived but God will deal with unrighteousness.

You may think lying is “no big deal” but Revelation spells it out clearly: *“...all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone...” “Outside are the dogs, those who practice magic arts, the sexually immoral, the murderers, the idolaters, and everyone who loves and practices falsehood.”* God really *“detests lying lips.”* There are consequences.

God's Word is true. Revelation warns about judgement *"and the merchants of the earth will weep and mourn over her, for no one buys their merchandise anymore:...every kind of object of ivory..."* It's not a matter of if all ivory cannot be sold it's just a matter of when. It will happen before the battle of Armageddon. *"Behold, I (Jesus) am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done."*

"When all the workers of iniquity flourish, it is that they may be destroyed forever." (Psalm 92)
I love how God allows even liars and deceivers to accomplish His will. It makes it so much easier to *"love your enemies"* when *"We know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose"*. (Romans 8:28)

For effectual preservation of wildlife consider sending Christian missionaries around the world. The illegal market is fueled by greed. Wildlife is exploited with organizations parading as light. *"For Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light. It is not surprising, then, if his servants masquerade as servants of righteousness"* (2 Corinthians 11: 14-15)

The greatest battles are fought in our minds. Since illegal wildlife trafficking is due to the love of Money it can only be truly defeated by changing people's hearts and minds toward the love of God. *"No one can serve two masters. Either he will hate the one and love the other, or he will be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve both God and Money."* (Matt. 6:24 or Luke 16:13)

The United States could be the greatest influence in wildlife preservation by sharing the Good News of Salvation through Jesus Christ. Hawaii's state motto was first spoken by Queen Keopuolani and would be the perfect mantra: *"The Life of the Land is perpetuated in Righteousness of Jesus Christ."*

Aloha means *"to receive the breath of God"*. Like in Genesis: *"So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them... The Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became of living being."*

"God is love." (1 John 4) Jesus is the personification of love. The most effectual way that we can send a message around the world to protect the sacredness of human life and Godly stewardship of all wildlife is to share the true meaning of aloha, which is LOVE—JESUS.

"For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son (Jesus), that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved" (John 3:16-17)

Michele Lincoln

wife, mother, taxpayer, voter, citizen of the US, saved by the grace of GOD