



SPEECH

Son Life Church

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Good evening.

Now, I had to do something a little bit odd this evening, though I hope you all will forgive me. I'm going to give a talk tonight that is as much for folks who aren't here as for people who are here. You don't mind, do you? Because I have the sense that you and I probably agree about a great many things. We would most importantly agree, I think, on the understanding that there are key issues facing our country today on which its survival depends. Those issues surely include things like the War on Terror, and what is happening to the economy and jobs in our state of Illinois, and what the prospects will be for opportunities for our young people. All of that will be deeply on our minds, but we would also know, for truth, that all of the things on which our material life and physical security and economic prospects depend, all of them depend, in turn, on whether or not we address the great issues of conscience that face this country, and on which its relationship with the God Who we declared to be the source of our rights depends.

Those words that came up on the screen at the beginning of that wonderful and moving vignette were words that we hear a lot, but on which I think people fail to reflect sufficiently. They were the words, of course, with which our nation literally began, with which the Founders of our country declared the separate and independent existence of the United States of America, and with which they justified the act that broke away from Great Britain, even though it portended terrible wars such as we have seen.

And in those days, they didn't assume that you could just go to war on a whim, either. They understood that war was a terrible decision, that it involved not only a price that would be paid in money and physical life, but it involved a requirement, an obligation, to justify what you do before the tribunal of decent opinion and of Almighty God.

And that's what they were doing in the Declaration of Independence, they were declaring the causes that led to the separation with Great Britain, that led them to risk the terrible war--and those causes were, first and foremost, moral causes; causes that derived from the great moral principles that they stated at the beginning of the Declaration: "We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights."

Now you see, we have in America, many of us, heard those words in the course of our lives, and so in some sense they become commonplace--and that's why I parsed them a little differently tonight, so that we wouldn't just let them go by. We want to rush right to the rights in that thing. You know, ". . . certain unalienable rights." That's it. That's what's important. We want to get to those rights quickly.

But what I like to remind people of is that you can't get to the rights until you have gone through the Creator.

This is one of those things that I find it deeply hard to understand about how some people want us to regard our politics. These are the people, by the way, who have been shocked and chagrined at the thought that, "Alan Keyes, you're supposed to be a politician. How dare you talk about Jesus in political life?" This has been their reaction when I have raised the standard of "what would Jesus do" in the election--they don't want us to think about this. They actually act as if we don't have a right to think about it and I don't have the right to talk about it. I don't understand this.

If I get up in front of a group of people--let's say I go into a neighborhood that's predominantly black--and I talk to those people in terms of what issues are of most concern to black folks, they don't mind that. If I go to a group that is predominantly Philippino, as I did the other day, and talk about what is of concern to Philippine-Americans, they don't mind that. If I go to a group of farmers and talk to them as farmers, if I go to a group of industrialists and talk to them about industry, nobody says a word, nobody minds, nobody says, "You can't do that in politics." Well, someone is going to have to tell me why it is that when I go before Christian people and address them as Christian people, when I raise the standard of Christian conscience, their bigoted reaction is to suggest that I have not the right to speak to those who are fellow members of my faith, fellow members of the Body of Christ. How can this be?

We have been led down a road where we are supposed to believe that the great issues of morality confronting our country--issues in which the whole future of our society depends--when it comes to judging those issues of morality, we do not have the right to apply the conscience shaped by our faith.

And here's what I don't understand. If I don't--I'm a Christian person. If I don't apply the conscience shaped by my faith, by my followership of Jesus Christ, then what conscience am I following? Do I have some other conscience that I can apply?

I think about the scripture, I think about the Great Commandment of love, the first of which is to love the Lord your God with your *whole* heart, your *whole* mind, your *whole* strength. If you're loving God with everything that's in you, if you're focused on Him, what have you got left? I'm not sure. That would mean that if my whole being is following Christ, and they then tell me that when I go into the public arena or when I go on the stage, I can't take Christ with me, well then they're telling me I can't go, I guess. And they're trying to act as if this is somehow consistent with our understanding of rights to suggest that, as such, people of Christian conscience can no longer be citizens in this country, that we have to leave Christ behind before we can go into the political arena--and they dare to suggest that they are respecting our rights? It is our right to apply the conscience shaped by the Lord in every area of our lives, to apply that conscience in the voting booth, and in the legislature, and on the bench and in every other aspect of our lives.

And I know, I know--matter of fact, the pastor was telling me that there are some folks in this very community who have reacted to our coming together tonight for a little talk as if, "Oh, you're doing something terrible; that violates the separation of church and state." Let's take a moment to try to understand what it is they're talking about. In the first instance, I always like to ask people, separation of church and state--that's an interesting phrase. You have people who will try to argue that this is somewhere in the Constitution. The Constitution of the United States, they claim, requires separation of church and state. Now the first question I ask, and you all can raise your hands if you like, but has anyone here ever read the Constitution? I have, too. I have read it backwards and forwards and upside down and sideways and inside and out. Guess what I have never found there? I have never found there any mention whatsoever of separation of church and state. None. And I know that it probably requires lengthy study, it probably requires all the credentials of the lawyers and doctorates. They probably think you have to have a J.D. or Ph.D. before you can say a word about the Constitution, if that was required, I do qualify. I actually don't agree with this, though.

When all is said and done, we do remember, don't we, that the Constitution was written by our forefathers and then ratified by the people, by representatives they chose, by direct vote, in some cases. Now if it was up to the people to ratify the Constitution, I presume the people can understand what's in the Constitution! I presume that if we read it over and under and

inside and outside, and we don't find any mention of separation, we have a perfect right to challenge the lawyers and challenge the judges who dare to tell us what it means.

You know the problem? The problem is that we have a written Constitution. If it weren't written down, and they told us something was in it that only the cognoscenti, the people who know, that only they would know, then perhaps we might believe them. The problem with trying to do that with a written Constitution is that there's a reason why it's written down. Do you know what it's written down? It's written down so you can read it, so that if somebody tells you something's in it, you can go look. And if, when you go look, you don't find it, you begin to be a little suspicious of the possibility that they are lying to you.

And I will state it unequivocally: all the judges in all the decisions taken that have depended on this specious concept have lied to the American people! It is not in the Constitution! And it is not required by the Constitution! The only words in the Constitution bearing on the subject are really clear, short, sweet, and relatively easy to understand.

"Congress ..."

We understand that word, don't we? That is the body I am now seeking to be a part of. Unlike most people who go to Congress, however, when I get there I won't forget where I've come from, in Illinois.

"Congress shall make ..."

That's pretty easy. We get those words, right? Doesn't even require a dictionary for most of us.

"No ..."

All right, pause, wait. Hard, difficult.

I have kids. I can tell you that word can cause difficulties. It really can. As a matter of fact, when they're young it causes difficulties, as they grow it causes difficulties, as they grow into their teens it is difficult. I have a son who's 22 years old, if I might take his age in vain, and I get the feeling sometimes that this word is still hard for him to understand.

But you know what often does it for us, though? First time we get a job and the fellow who signs the paycheck says that word, it's remarkable how our understanding improves. Somewhere along the way we actually get it: no means no.

And so, "Congress shall make no," means no, "law."

Law. Those are the rules we live by, passed by our legislatures, like Congress. Congress is the one that passes the rules for the federal government.

"Congress shall make no law respecting ..."

Now, that might cause a little bit of a problem--except it doesn't. Down through the whole history of this particular phrase, it has been understood to mean exactly what it meant: on the subject of, concerning, regarding, with respect to.

". . . an establishment of religion."

Two things: you might need to know a little history to understand that one. But on the other hand, even if you didn't understand this, you put a little parentheses around it, you would know that whatever it means, Congress can't make any law about it. That's fairly easy to understand. Whatever is inside that phrase, "an establishment of religion," Congress cannot make any law about it! Because that's what that simple phrase means. And since Congress makes the laws for the federal government, one is reasonably assured in concluding that there can be *no lawful basis* at the federal level for dealing with the issue of religious establishment.

Problem. We've had all these court decisions made by federal judges on the issue of religious establishment. And yet, there can be no lawful basis for any action by the federal government on the issue of religious establishment. That doesn't seem to work. It would seem to be the case there is no lawful basis for the decisions made by these federal judges.

Now, wait. Before I get there, they will tell me, "Alan, you're wrong! The Constitution, right there in the First Amendment"--oh, wait a minute, those are the words we just read. The only words in the Constitution about this are the words we just read, saying that they can't have any authority to make these judgments.

So how is it that they are able to tell us that there's something in the Constitution that gives them the authority to do it? The only words in the Constitution take that authority away, but they refer to the Constitution in order to use the authority that the Constitution just took away. I'm tempted at this point, with apologies to the kids, to ask how stupid do they think we are? I think we'd have to be pretty dumb not to see through that strange reasoning: the Constitution just took it away, you are now going to claim that the words that just took away the power are the reason you have power. This doesn't work.

And, of course, they will try to say, "Well, the by Fourteenth Amendment, we get the power to make the states refrain from any legislation over religious establishment." Really? How can that be, when the whole point was to keep the federal government out of it, and when the Tenth Amendment clearly states that any powers not delegated by the Constitution to the United States, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states, respectively, and to the people.

Under the Fourteenth Amendment, they claim that the immunities and privileges that are established by the Bill of Rights are enjoined upon the states. OK, but in this particular case, the immunity involved is the immunity from federal interference when dealing with the subject of religious establishment. So even if the Fourteenth Amendment does enjoin those privileges and immunities upon the states, that would simply mean that there is a federal constitutional responsibility for all state officials to defend the right of the states to decide on issues of religious establishment, without interference from the federal government.

Imagine that. That would mean, by the way, that Judge Roy Moore was in fact obeying the Constitution when he said no and refused the unlawful order of the federal judge.

It all becomes very clear. But y'all, if there's no basis for the separation doctrine in the Constitution, will somebody explain to me why we should be bound by it? It doesn't appear to me that we should. Somebody will say, "Well, if you're not bound by it, they're going to take away your 501(c)(3) status, and that will destroy your church." Well, that ought to warn us, and give us a clear understanding of why it is that when the time comes we should all band together to make sure that this abusive power that has been used to undermine and kill the voice of conscience will be, once and for all, taken out of the hands of those who are abusing it in order to destroy our constitutional rights.

One of the reasons that I have taken strongly the stand I have taken is because of this effect it has on the church, and that stand is very clear. For this reason among others, the federal income tax is a system of taxation entirely hostile to the freedom of the people of the United States, and it should be abolished and replaced with a system that does not require the sacrifice of our economic or our religious liberty. But that's for another day, because what I want to focus on tonight is very clear.

Why have we, as Christian people, people who acknowledge the existence of the authority of God, why do we allow ourselves to be intimidated to such a degree that folks actually accept the notion that, as Christian people, as church people, as churches, as leaders and pastors, people don't have the right to express their understanding of the issues confronting the country politically, to make statements to one another about who's the good candidate and who's not a good candidate? Why have we accepted this?

We have basically been told that when it comes to politics, we must leave our religion at the

door. But here's what I would ask you. Let's say that somebody opened up an entertainment arcade in the neighborhood, and in that arcade there was a choice of entertainment, some of it pornographic, some of it films with violence and suggestiveness, and some of it like our R-rated movies, suggesting everything and showing this and that, and others, like Friends, where they talk about all the worst obscene stuff but don't actually show it, and so on and so forth. And this combination of DVDs and CDs and video games, that is what was there. Now, I would like to ask you, as people of Christian conscience and parents, how many of you would send your children into that arcade? I don't see any hands. How many of you would go into that arcade and play around? I see no hands. Why not? Because obviously it's not the Christian way to go to a place where all you have is wicked choices.

We don't go to places where there's just wicked choices. Wicked choices aren't good enough for us, because we're trying to walk a walk that is in the footsteps of Christ, and He didn't make wicked choices. He suffered death rather than to see wicked choices prevail over our nature, He wanted to save us from the wicked choices and the consequences of the wicked choices.

But here's the great problem. We are confronted in our political lives sometimes with this dilemma: that they present to us, maybe on the Republican side, a pro-abortion candidate who is for lowering taxes and for taking the burden off businesses and for doing other things that will help to make our economic lives better. Or they present a candidate on the Democratic side who's pro-abortion, only he want to give bigger welfare payments and more money for Pell grants and all this other stuff. And then we sit there, as Christian people, and we're supposed to do what, I wonder. What are we supposed to do?

Well, you see, just as with the entertainment arcade, I think there are a lot of good-hearted, conscientious Christian people living fruitful Christian lives in a real walk of faith who will look at that arena and say, "That's just a choice of evils, I can't go there."

There are some who will talk to themselves into saying, "Well, the lesser of evil, that's what we've got to do. It's only a choice of evils. Gotta vote the lesser of evils." Well, no. You have another choice. You can stay out, you can sit at home. And of course I know, as I've often said to folks, one of the main reasons we have all the problems we have right now is because people of Christian conscience are sitting out politics. We want to blame the church, we want to say, "Oh, that's because nobody in the church will do this, that, and the other thing." And that's partially true, but the other thing that is true is that it is not possible, it is not right, for Christian folks to walk into that arena when there's just a bunch of wicked choices.

That means that really in order to make a difference, one thing that's practically needed is that somebody's got to stand forward. Somebody's got to stand forward who is willing to take the risk, have the courage, stand forward, and with absolutely unswerving and uncompromising insistence, raise a godly standards in our politics. Somebody's got to do this.

Then we take away the excuses. Then we take away the rationale, because then we look there and we can walk through that door and we can make a positive difference, we can take a stand that is a stand bearing witness, not betraying our Lord. And that's the only thing I'm going to say tonight about everything I am presently doing in this present senate race-- because if you understand that, you understand everything about what I have and shall do. I intend to raise that standard, without apology, without shame, without compromise, without retreat. I intend to do it precisely so that people of Christian conscience will have a place to rally in the politics of Illinois.

But the hard question is, even with that excuse taken away, do you think Christian would walk through it? If they would, you know a lot of the things we claim to care about would be resolved. Do you know that people who self-identified as evangelical Christians in the year 2000 amounted to something like 60 million folks in the election? And do you know that of those people, only 15 million went to the polls?

Think about it. Think about it, y'all. 15 million people. That's all. And what are we saying here?

And by the way, as I understand what the pollsters do, that doesn't include the whole universe of people who profess to follow Christ. We don't even want to think about how many of those people stayed home, how many people who are Roman Catholics and Episcopalian and other things stayed home--or worse yet, we won't even talk about the other alternative, will we? But we know it's happening. So what would happen, do you think, if even another quarter or third of those folks went to the polls? You know what would happen? Every election in America would get turned around. There wouldn't be a single state, there wouldn't be a single city, there wouldn't be a single county, I am willing to say, that would not be turned around in its political result.

If we care about defending about innocent life--it is not being defended because too many people of faith won't get into the arena to defend it. If we care about the respect for traditional marriage--it is not being defended because too many people of faith will not walk into that voting booth and make the choice to defend it. It is not being defended because too many people are willing to stop up their ears and close their eyes and refuse to see the real nature of the choices that they are making, acting as if "separation of church and state" means separation of God from their conscience when it comes to voting. How can this be?

It's one of those things I simply cannot understand, and yet it is happening, and if we really acknowledge it, it is not just happening, it is hurting, it is damaging, it is killing the moral heart of our country. We profess to love America. We sing the song, and we ask for God to please bless America, "land that I love." Do you really love America? Because, to be frank about it, we are Christian people. And just as we are told we do not grieve as those who have no hope, we don't love, either, as those who have no Lord--understand? Our love is different. Our love isn't like that because our love understands the real expression of love--and that real expression of love is to share the truth of Christ's presence in our life, to share its fruits, to share its reality.

And if that's the case, that the truth of Christ's presence and its fruits in a relationship with God are in fact the heart of love, then how can we love America without sharing that truth? How can we love America without calling it back to that relationship with God?

Well, that means that our Christian faith and our Christian love have implications for our American citizenship, doesn't it?

We sometimes forget, I think, that as American citizens we are in a position different than other people in the history of the world. Other people of the world, like folks who are born in China today, are they born in a position where they're free to decide the destiny of their country, where they're free to participate in the making of the law? No. They don't get that chance. Down through all the ages of human history there have been people--most human people, in fact--who lived under tyranny and despotism, totalitarianism, military rule, aristocratic rule, oligarchic rule, some form of society that kept the mass of the people out and let a handful of people make all the decisions.

But we're different. By the providence of God, we have been put in the position that we are part of the sovereign body of the people, right? And we are the temporal sovereign, just like David, and Solomon, and Saul, anointed kings over Israel. By the providence of God, we are part of that temporal sovereign over America, the one that chooses the president, chooses the senators and the congressmen, chooses the legislature, chooses those who choose the judges, sometimes chooses the judges themselves. Isn't that true? That means that we not only answer to the standard of subjects and slaves and servants--though even by that understanding, even a slave is supposed to do what? Be a slave as if you served Christ.

There's a Christian way to be a slave. You try to tell me that there's not a Christian way to be free? This can't be. And you and I both know it. We are placed here by the providence of God, part of the sovereign body of the people, we have the choice, we can stand forward. Even if there isn't a good choice in an election, guess what we can do? We can stand forward with courage to be the good choice that's required if we wanted to, because we have that freedom, we have that right. We live under a Constitution that gives us the liberty, we live by the providence of God in a land that gives use the opportunity to stand forward and bear witness for the truth, to stand forward and speak the arguments that can lead hearts to the truth, to

stand forward and advocate the policies that will defend innocent life, that will preserve respect for traditional marriage, that will call this country back to a proper reverence in its schools, in its laws, in its precepts, in its practices, for the laws and authority of God.

But we're still, apparently, reluctant to do it. Why?

Well, I know there are some folks who would tell me, "Now wait a minute. You just said that there's no separation of church and state in the Constitution." Yes I did. "But there is separation of church and state in the scripture." Yes, that's what they say. Why? Well, Jesus, Himself, said it. He said it: "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." That's separation. Caesar gets some stuff, God gets some stuff. Well, there's a problem. Know what the problem is? Christ did indeed speak those words in Matthew, Chapter 22, but in Matthew, Chapter 6, He also spoke some other words, saying that you cannot serve two masters. You either love the one and despise the other, serve the one have contempt for the other. Remember that? He said that, too.

We're put in an awkward position. It seems as though our Lord is contradicting himself. You realize this is not possible, don't you? Jesus can't contradict Himself, He's the Son of God! God can do many things, but contradicting Himself is not one of them. What do we do? Well, then, we must be wrong in our understanding of one of these passages. Let's go look at the one about serving Caesar. If we look at the whole thing in context--which is always a good thing to do with scripture--what do we find? These folks come to Christ and they say to Him that He's a great teacher, He knows the ways of God and truth, and that He is no respecter of persons and therefore we know He will give us a straight answer: "Is it lawful to make taxes to Caesar or not?" This question of church and state is right there. Christ is about to address it directly. And what does He say? You see, He doesn't say anything at first, except He looks at them and He says something rather uncharacteristic for Christ, if I must say. It would be more characteristic of Jerry McGuire or someone. He says, "Show me the money! Show me! I want to see it!" And so they hand Him one of the Roman coins and He looks at it and He says, "Whose image is stamped upon this coin?" and they tell Him, "That's Caesar's image and his inscription." And He says, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's." And their jaws dropped and they just went away.

Why does that happen, why is that such a great answer? It's not a great answer, by the way, because, like some of my colleagues in this race, I won't say who, they're talking out of both sides of their mouth. But Christ doesn't do that. No. It might seem like it, like he's just giving a little something to everybody. You know, politicians do that. Promise everybody everything, even if it doesn't add up. Just keep promising it and they'll give you their votes.

He doesn't do that. So what does He do? Well He's actually already given us the key to this passage, because He says, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's." Well according to the key He gave us by the coin, what is it that belongs to Caesar? That which has Caesar's image stamped upon it. That begs the question then, doesn't it? What is it that belongs to God? See, now you know where I'm going with this. What belongs to God is what has God's image stamped upon it! He has taken us all the way back to the very first page where scripture tells us about ourselves, tells us about what we were as God created us, male and female God created them, in the image and likeness of God created He them.

That passage isn't about how you server two masters, and give mammon a little and Caesar a little. Everybody ought to know, that passage is clearly about this truth, that Caesar belongs to God, and you belong to God, and I belong to God, we all belong to God. He is the Sovereign over all. God does not contradict Himself. That's the Master at work.

And as Christian people, that means that wherever we go, we must take that acknowledgement of God's sovereignty with us. And as we have been born into a country founded on a principle that from the very first step of this nation's life acknowledged the sovereignty of God, then we can stand boldly in our citizenship and in every way and every law and every policy we can do the same. We are Christians and we are Americans, and the two things stand upon the same true principle: that God is Sovereign over all. When shall we show boldness and not shame? When shall we take advantage of the truth that our rights as citizens give us the right boldly to appeal to one another in the name of God and Jesus Christ

to stand forward in the public arena, and do that with our vote that we are called upon to do with our lives. That is the call of the Lord.

It is not hard, when you think it through. And that means, as a simple matter of conclusion, that we should register to vote. I'm not even going to ask how many are registered, but if you're not, you can't vote. So if you haven't done it you can do so. It constitutes for this little chap the [unintelligible]. So if you haven't done, you can do it tonight, and then you can find out amongst your friends, amongst the people that you work and pray and play with, find out who is registered, who with a heart that belongs to Christ is registered, who with a mind that is Jesus Christ's is registered? And get them to register if they have not, take them to the polls when it happens that they have not.

And then all these folks who are so afraid of it, they're absolutely right. There was a front page story in the Chicago Defender--which is the premiere paper for the black community in Chicago--after I made the argument as to why I thought Christ would not vote for my opponent. "Oh shocking! You can't say that!" Well, of course you know the media didn't properly report that. You guessed that. They keep saying that I claimed that Christ would vote for me. I claimed no such thing. When they explicitly asked me that at the news conference, I told them, "No, that's not what I'm saying. I'm just saying that given that Barak Obama has voted for things like infanticide and refuses to defend traditional marriage, and has even..."

Oh, I promised I wouldn't do this. No, I didn't...

[congregation laughs]

Every day, it seems I stumble across something new that indicates to me the deep moral difference between Barack Obama and myself. He apparently voted, Senate Bill 99, and he voted in committee, and he voted that we should in Illinois start sex education in kindergarten.

[congregation gasps]

No, no. See, somebody said he didn't do that. No, he did it. Really. I promise you, he voted for this bill. I said the same thing, by the way. I couldn't believe it. "You've got to be kidding!"

His apparent rationale is that, "Oh, it's all right. I voted for 'age-appropriate' sex education in kindergarten."

And you know what I said? That little voice in my head said, "But Senator Obama, what's age-appropriate in kindergarten is no sex education at all." He doesn't get it! And that is a deep blindness that doesn't understand what's wrong with this. And then to turn around and go into the churches and say that he doesn't support the concept of gay marriage, that marriage is a religious institution, it's between a man and woman, then go into the gay community and say he's 100% for the gay rights agenda that has at the top gay marriage.

He thinks we're not watching, but that's okay. Some of us are, and some of us are going to tell others, too. I'm going to tell people. The media keeps saying that I shouldn't tell people. I'm going to tell them. [applause] I plan to tell everybody about this, because I think that this is really unbelievable.

So we look at this and I know there are some who say this is doesn't matter, we shouldn't apply this standard of our Christian conscience to everything. But I believe that we must. I believe that I must apply it to my candidacy, and I believe that Christian people of conscience must apply it to their vote. And I will tell you for sure, I can't say how it will turn out, but I do know that I will move forward toward the day with confidence if I could believe that every person of Christian conscience going into that voting booth would hold up as their standard "how would Jesus vote?" I will stand side-by-side with Barack Obama, and before God I will take my chances.

With that as the criterion, I don't think I'm taking a chance at all. No, let God be the judge between me and thee. And in this particular case, let the Christian hearts and conscience shaped by the presence of the Lord be the judge between me and my opponent. That's all I

would ask. And I think if that happens then we will have laid a groundwork for a new birth of understanding in America, a new birth of character, a new birth of righteousness in this land of the free.

And won't it be wonderful. That new birth of righteousness will begin where the new birth of freedom began in the 19th century. It will begin in this place, in this place that, however betrayed now by a political system of all cynical, ambitious politicians, will yet have once again have rediscovered the greatness of its heart, the greatness of its conscience that shaped once before America's commitment to its moral creed, and that can once again raise up the standard of that creed to shape America's heart again in this new century to put it back on the track that will lead it to that destiny of liberty, that destiny of morality, that destiny of decency and prosperity and greatness that is promised by our strength, and not by our prowess, and not by our knowledge, and not by our money, but rather by our acknowledgement that our rights come from God and must be exercised with respect for the authority of God.

You all can do it. People like you in every church, in every town, in every county in Illinois, together we can do it, rally around in a great community of principle--and then you know what we going to do? We're going to stand before the gates of Chicago prison of conscience, that prison of conscience in which the Democrat machine has walled up so many people of faith, loyally farming their votes while it betrays their conscience on every issue. And we're going to bang down the gates of the prison, and we're going to call out the prisoners of conscience to stand with us on the common ground of our allegiance--not to mammon and not to money, not to our pocketbooks but to God and to Jesus Christ. Join with us in that great community of principle, and we shall stand together to offer to our state a new day of integrity, a new day of hope. And that spirit of hope born in Illinois will light the way to a new destiny of hope, not just for our country and its new generations, but as we are a nation of nations, a people of many peoples, it will hold aloft a beacon of hope that will penetrate the darkness and hopelessness in every corner of the earth. God bless you.

Question and Answer Period

Q: [Paraphrased] How do I get my friends and relatives to vote their conscience instead of simply remaining loyal to their party?

ALAN KEYES: It was a case in the past--and this is something we can talk to our friends and neighbors about--when I was growing up, if you were a Republican, you were listening to people who acknowledged the name and authority of God. They didn't feel any shame about talking about it. And if you were a Democrat, you were listening to people who acknowledged the name and authority of God. They didn't feel any shame about talking about it.

I was talking to people about this the other day. We will move forward, imploring the blessing and favor of Almighty God, "knowing that on this earth, God's work must truly be our own." Who spoke those words? John F. Kennedy, a Democrat. He wrote in a letter to the Brazilian president, they had both just been inaugurated, and they both were from countries where it was acknowledged that the rights of people came from the hand of an Almighty God. That was in a statement that was in a formal, official communication from one president to another.

He had no shame about it. This was the way folks understood life, and they had no qualms about talking about it, Democrats or Republicans.

I don't know exactly when it was that the Democrat leadership decided to abandon the moral traditions of this country, but I think you need to point out to folks, just re-familiarize them with the fact that when their fathers voted for a Democrat, they weren't voting against God, but that the Democrat leaders have now put them in the position where if you vote now for the Democrat leaders and the Democrat platform, their platform supports abortion, their platform supports gay marriage, their platform supports the idea that separation requires that you take the Ten Commandments out of the courthouses and prayer out of the schools

And basically, I just don't understand. I think being loyal to a party is one thing, but when the

loyalty to that party requires that, after they've abandoned God, you must do the same, I think that's going a little far--especially if you are truly a Christian person.

Now, maybe they would tell you not every Democrat is that way, and that may be true. Then look at the ones who aren't. But when you are faced with the ones who are standing loyally, unswervingly on that anti-God platform, I think it's time to ask some questions about what you're doing with your vote. That doesn't mean you have to stop being a Democrat--it might mean you'll have to work pretty hard to get some changes in that platform, though--but it does mean that maybe you have to stop voting with unswerving loyalty for people, just because of their label.

Now I'm not saying what I don't preach. And it has not won me friends--it has, in fact, produced some coldness among quarters, even as I came into the state of Illinois. I have said many times over the years that I will not, ever again, vote for a pro-abortion politician, I don't care what label they have. So, I practice what I preach.

Q: [This was not really a question; it was more of a statement that he and three hundred thousand people are voting against the Republican party because of Iraq.]

KEYES: I really don't understand why one would oppose the President of the United States over the Iraq war, unless of course you think we have some option to fighting the war on terror. I know John Kerry says that. He talks as if the war is optional--as if, if he becomes president, we can choose something other than this war on terror.

But don't we have common sense anymore? Did we choose to start this war? Which American chose to start this war? It was a nasty bunch of ruthless terrorists who started this war. They flew the planes into the World Trade Center, they flew the planes into the Pentagon, killing thousands of innocent people.

Now, it seems to me that as long as we've got these ruthless people--and we know we still, have them because they were just killing kids in Russia. This is a global network. It is not a coincidence that it is Islamic fundamentalist terrorists doing all the dirt all over the place. They are bound together by a common fanaticism, bound together by a skein of infrastructure, bound together by governments like the government of Saddam Hussein, but including some others, willing to work with them, willing to pay them when they have committed their enterprises, or take care of their families, as they have done when suicide bombers go against people, innocent people in Israel. The whole point being that, sadly, we are not going to be able to just "stop fighting," because, you know what happens on a one-sided war? Your enemies kill you and you end up dead.

In wars, there have to be two sides if you want to survive. And that's what I don't understand about Kerry. He acts as if we could stop paying for the war. I know he didn't want to vote for it, once he had voted to support it, but most people would think that kind of irrational--that you tell people, "Well, yes, we should fight the war," but when you send the troops over there, you vote not to pay them. What do you want? Just to get them killed? I don't understand this. See, we can't act this way because we're rational people, and we believe that when a war has been started you must fight it until you have defeated your enemy, eliminated their power to do you harm.

And to eliminate the power of the terrorists, we can't sit on our hands and wait for them to strike. We have to go to their bases, we have to destroy their training camps and their infrastructure as we did in Afghanistan. And if there is a government that has or is threatening to get weapons of mass destruction, and we know has declared its predisposition to hand them off to people who will kill Americans by the thousands or hundreds of thousands, we don't have time to wait for the wisdom of hindsight. John Kerry voted on the information we had. He now criticizes on the wisdom of hindsight. We can't accept wisdom of hindsight. It's not good enough to defend this country. It comes too late to stop our enemies.

So, I think we have no choice but to fight the war, and no sensible choice but to back the president who's willing to fight it.

Q: What is your position on capital punishment, and do you agree with the former governor's position of pardoning the prisoners who are on death row?

KEYES: I can't say that I agree with the wholesale pardon policy. I would have to examine what that was about. It seemed to me to come at a moment that was in some ways Clintonesque. I'm not entirely sure whether he was more concerned about the folks in prison or the folks about to be in prison, and this raises a question about whether there was wisdom in the choice.

It did come at a time when serious questions had been raised, though, about whether or not the system had operated with proper integrity with respect to decisions on the death penalty--and it is imperative that we do our utmost to make sure that all decisions that involve the application of the death penalty rigorously respect the requirements of law and of truth. And so that is something that we do need to make absolutely sure of here in Illinois, since a serious doubt has been raised about it. But before we reject the idea of the death penalty wholesale, we need to remember that one of the reasons we're raising questions is because we now have techniques to be rather more certain than we used to be about the application of the death penalty.

I've always thought it ironic that there are people coming forward to clamor that we should get rid of the death penalty because of the evidence that we can now produce that shows that we have a better ability to apply it with greater care. This doesn't seem to make sense. There are also people who would chide me because they suggest that somehow it's inconsistent for me to defend innocent life in the womb and then support the death penalty. I would say very simply that folks who chide me on that need to think about many things--and I have at great length talked about the death penalty and its moral basis, and Christian basis as well, by the way, in terms of how we can think about it as Christian people. What I would simply say is that I am adamant in defense of innocent life. I think we need to make sure that we maintain the distinction between innocence and guilt. If somebody is guilty of a heinous crime under the law, that puts him in a little bit of a different position. And if we forget the difference between innocence and guilt, especially when it comes to murder, then we're not respecting life.

As Christian people, I would make one observation, too, because some people say that the physical death penalty is the ultimate sanction. As a Christian person, I can't believe this. I can't believe it, you know why? Because with Christ in my heart, I know that that physical death is not real death, and therefore I look at the physical death and I say that there's a worse death. And we need to act in such a way in our society that we have set a standard to help guide people away from that worse death and toward true life--and we won't do it if we give people the idea that they can go about killing people with impunity, particularly when they do it in a ruthless, cold-blooded way that serves some material interest with utter disregard for the worth of human life.

So I think we need to think carefully about this distinction, maintain it, and understand that there is a deep respect for both life and moral truth involved in making sure that we impose and respect the difference between innocence and guilt--because I think we need to have a system that respects that difference.

Q: [Paraphrased] As a Roman Catholic, I've been told I can vote for a candidate who is pro-abortion as long as they stand for other issues I support. How can I do this with good conscience?

KEYES: The Holy See has been very clear on this. They have made very clear that it is a sin --a mortal sin, in fact--consciously to vote for people who are pro-abortion and pro-euthanasia. And Cardinal Ratzinger wrote a long piece in which he distinguished between the pro-abortion and pro-euthanasia issues and every other issue, including welfare, capital punishment, and everything else that don't have the same status. For good reason, by the way, because the same fundamental violation of godly conscience is not involved in those issues as is involved in the issue of abortion--which, when you think it through, involves utter turning you back on the authority of God. When you think it through, you are doing something that denies the

existence of God's authority in the world and denies it in that area where He has already told us that our nature reflects His image, male and female He created them, in the image and likeness of God created He them.

Suppressing the true consequence of the male/female distinction or ignoring it altogether as people want to do in gay marriage, we need to think through as biblical the theological implications of these issues. Nobody wants to look at that anymore. We may think we're just talking about behavior but we're talking about something deeper than behavior and that's why these issues are so fundamental.

