



## SPEECH

# Grace Baptist Church in Decatur, Illinois

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Someone was mentioning to me that there is a school district now in America where they will no longer teach the Declaration of Independence to the students. Why? Because it mentions God.

This notion that there must be separation of church and state--you can't pray, you can't mention God, you can't do this, you can't do that--that means you cannot teach the Declaration anymore, because the Declaration is a document of our history, the founding document, a statement of our principles as a people, and embarrassing, by the way, to a great many people in the country who would just as soon that we forgot this and succumbed instead to their lies.

It states the first principle of American life, the principle on the basis of which everything that we know as liberty, our elections, our court system, our due process, everything is based. And that principle is stated clearly, directly, simply, "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."

That is a statement of American principle that at one time, indeed at most times, in the history of our country would have been entirely *uncontroversial*, and we would simply have taken it [with a] "Oh yes!" and our hearts would have beat a little higher as we heard the words that ring down through history, stating the wonderful principle of justice which extends to all our humanity the dignity that God intended for each and every human being.

But now we're being told that on account of some doctrine that has been promulgated by the courts, it is now unconstitutional to teach our children about the Declaration.

Years ago, when I was talking about this, I predicted to folks that we would reach this day; that a time would come when we would no longer be able to teach our children in the public schools about the Declaration of Independence because it mentions God. And people probably thought I was exaggerating or something, but it has happened, rather faster than I thought, and it is inevitable.



Now, what does it mean when we can no longer teach the Declaration to American children? It means that they will no longer understand the basis of their rights and liberties. It will mean that we can no longer fix into their minds and hearts the reasoned conviction which they can then act from and defend in the course of preserving our institutions of self-government. It means that they will end, and that we have already entered upon the preparation of the generation that will accept their demise without a struggle.

Doesn't that bother anybody? It bothers me greatly, I've gotta tell you.

And it bothers me even more when I realize the implications of a lot of the issues that we are now dealing with, and particularly some of the key ones--implications that people don't want to look at. We want to pretend that we're just talking about one issue among many when we talk about something like abortion; it's just "another issue" like healthcare or how we're going to fix O'Hare [International Airport], and all this nonsense.

But it's not. Not at all. It's fundamental.

We began claiming our rights on the basis of the principle that they come from God. We now have promulgated from our courts in *Roe vs. Wade* the notion that that babe in the womb--and remember, we were all babes in the womb, weren't we? I mean, I don't know if we *remember* it, but we ought to recognize that we all started there. And if we're going to deny to the babe in the womb a fundamental principle of right, then it is denied all of us.

And that fundamental principle is simple. It is stated right there in the Declaration, rights come from God, beginning with the right to life.

But the court restated it and said, "No. You have no right to life until your mother chooses." And that means that the right to life is not God's choice, it is the mother's choice; the right to life is not God's choice, it is human choice.

That means that the implication of the abortion issue, if we embrace the position that the court has imposed upon us, is that our rights do not come from God, they come from human choice. And then you have to ask yourself, "What if the choice goes against me? And what if that choice is made in such a way that I or people like me are no longer to be accorded respect for our rights?"

There would have been a time when the champions of human dignity could stand up and say, "No! That's an unjust law, that's an unjust decision, that's an unjust determination!" because our rights do not come from human choice, they come from the will of God. And if [laws] are not consistent with what God has done, then we have the right to challenge that injustice.

But once we have decided that it is not God's choice, but human choice that determines that justice, well, if the choice goes against us, we are stuck; we have deprived ourselves of the higher law, of the higher tribunal, which could be used to rally heart and conscience in defense of true liberty.

As a result, we have demoralized and undermined that spirit of courage which is needed in order to defend liberty--and without that spirit, it must perish.

This is not something that is *going to happen*, it is something that has already happened.

As if, I believe, to tell us of the true implications of what we're doing, God has put us in a situation now where, if we only understood what it is about, we would realize that He has put us on notice that we confront the consequences of our sin. I think that that has been true, in terms of being put on notice, since September 11th and since we began to be engaged in this War on Terror, which has had some pretty grave implications--though we don't, all of us, understand them--for our liberty, for our understanding of our basic rights, for the structure of our government in addition to its implications for our physical safety and security.

So what is it that happened on September 11th? On September 11th, we were struck by terrorists. Well, what is a terrorist?

A terrorist isn't just somebody who is making war on us. No, because there was a difference, for instance, between September 11th and December 7th, 1941. The Japanese attacked us and by surprise came against us. It was aggression, it was obviously a breach of the peace and a violation of this and that. But they did us the courtesy of attacking our military. They attacked our armed forces in an act of war. What did the terrorists do on September 11th? They attacked the World Trade Center. They attacked unarmed civilians going about their

daily lives. They violated a principle that we have even learned to apply to war, that even when you make war, it violates the most fundamental tenets of decent conscience to make war upon the innocent, to use violence against innocent life--those who are not armed to do you any harm.

That is what distinguishes the terrorist from even the ordinary warrior in any kind of war. The terrorist is someone who is willing to bring violence to bear against innocent life.

And there we confront the moral cause, as it were, of the War on Terror. For, the moral cause of the war is the violation of this fundamental principle of decent human conscience.

And that violation is the reason the President could stand before the world and make it clear that this was not just an attack upon America, that it was an attack upon decent humanity, all decent conscience, and that people everywhere in the world, whatever might be their place and race and background, and so forth, they all should rally 'round us and join with us in an effort to defeat this scourge of terror.

The problem is this, though, that when we reflect on it, it's quite clear that our experience with the assault on innocent life did not begin on September 11th. We didn't have to wait until the World Trade Center collapsed into the dust before our eyes in order to witness the consequences of the assault on innocent life. In most places in America, all we had to do is go down the street to our local abortion clinic, and we would see within its walls an assault on innocent life.

If we think about it and weigh it up on the scales of evil, it's always a difficult thing to do, but when you weigh it up on the scales of relative evil, you decide which you think is more repugnant to human conscience:

Osama Bin Laden's assault on the lives of people he never knew--because he believed somehow, in his fanatical wickedness, that they represented evil and oppression in the world that had to be wiped out--that's bad, because it violates our obligation to common humanity.

But what about a father or mother's assault on the innocent life of their very own child? Isn't there something in our hearts that is even more repulsed by the spectacle of that violation, not only of humanity, but of all the bonds of trust and love that ought to be the basis for family life?

There is something in that assault that is more than an assault on individual, physical life. It is an assault on the very heart of love that must be at the heart of family life. It is an assault on the very possibility of decent family life.

And yet, that is the assault that is involved in the violation of innocent life by abortion. It is a violation of our double trust--not only the trust we have to respect the innocent life of all human beings, but the trust we have from God to cherish the gift of life in the form of our own offspring.

When we think it through that way, it turns out that in the War on Terror, the evil that we fight is but the shadow of the evil that we do.

And when you find yourself shadowboxing with evils that are the consequences of sins you, yourself, are committing, don't you have to ask yourself, "Well, maybe there's a little more something in this than I think"? Because, I think that when you find yourself shadowboxing with the consequences of your own sin, you ought to look upon it as one of those moments God intends to instruct you with.

But as a people, I am not sure we have received the message yet. Matter of fact, I'm pretty sure some of us have not.

I wish I could tell you that this heinous business of abortion is the only way in which we are tossing aside the fundamental doctrines of right and wrong on which our country was based. And the fundamental doctrine is clear, the most important principle we violate is clear. We

started off with the truth that our rights come from God, and by the perversion of our court's decision, we have ended up in a position where we have no rights until our mothers choose, until a human choice is made--substituting for the will of God our own human will as the foundation and prerequisite for justice and right.

So, what we are dealing with here is not just an assault on innocents, it is the abandonment of this fundamental truth: that it is God's will and authority that are the basis for human justice, not human whim and arbitrary choice.



Alan Keyes at the Grace Baptist Church

The business of turning our backs on God, we have several issues that involve that now, including one that goes beyond the assault that abortion represents on the very fundamental principle of our political life and political liberty. For, in this issue of marriage and what it is going to be understood to be, we are confronting another effort to turn our back on a God-given reality-- only in this case, we are turning our back on a disposition by God that is at the basis of the fundamental unit, the building block, of our entire society and civilization.

That means that these are issues that represent: the one, abortion, the crisis of our political liberty and institutions; the other, marriage, the crisis of our society and our civilization. And as we decide them wrongly, we destroy the foundation for our freedom and our civilized life. Isn't that fascinating?

I think that is a pretty grave crisis, don't you? I think, I believe, and I will tell you straight and upfront right now, I think it's rather more important than "O'Hare expansion," I think it's rather more important than Social Security, I think it's rather more important than any of the materialist issues that are forced down our throats as supposedly the most important issues of our time. We have become in this society like slaves.

And they tell us that we should argue over how much we get to eat and whether they turn the heat on where we live, and not think about whether we are slaves or free, and whether we are a people who have been accorded the most fundamental right of all, which is the right to honor in our lives the will of Almighty God.

But we're not accorded that right. It's fascinating to me that we now live in an era where, in the name of our Constitution and Bill of Rights, we are being deprived of the most fundamental and first right that was to be guaranteed by our Constitution and Bill of Rights, which is the right to honor God. That's what the First Amendment was all about. You do know that, right? And it was put there in order to make provision against the possibility that the national government would somehow dictate *to the people* what would be their way of honoring God as *a people*.

And this is where we've been fooled, I think, because we now live in an era where, if you talk to people about religious freedoms, they actually think it's an individual right that we're talking about. And that's not true.

Religious liberty isn't only an individual right. It is an individual right, but it's not *only* an individual right. And indeed the First Amendment was not in its first part addressing the individual right at all: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion." You say those words and you realize the moment you say them that they have nothing whatsoever to do with the prohibition on religious establishment. That's not what's prohibited by those words. What's prohibited by those words is any congressional action on the issue of religious establishment, one way or the other. It simply says that the national government shall have no lawful authority under our Constitution to address the issue of religious establishment.

So the question of how church and state shall be related--the question of what shall be done to honor God, and to what extent and in what way His existence and authority will be reflected in law--that shall not be the business of the national government. That's all that

says.

It should [be obvious] when I say that. And it's pretty clear from the words that that's what it says. In fact it is so clear that when I say them, you and I both know there can be no other interpretation put on them.

"Congress shall make no law respecting"--that is, concerning the subject of--"an establishment of religion." It is very clear. Congress shall make no law on the subject of religion. This means establishment is out; can't be legislated on by Congress.

Well, then, who has the power to deal with it? The Tenth Amendment tells us that any power not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, "nor prohibited by it to the states," *any powers*, "are reserved to the states respectively, and the people." So, it's the business of the states and the people of the states to decide in what way, to what extent, in what degree the people shall honor God in their laws and practices.

But what's clear in the whole business is that we're not talking about an individual right. We're talking about a law-making power. Do individuals in this country have the right to make laws? No, the law-making power is given to the legislature, the legislature consists of representatives--chosen by who? The people! Not by any individual, but by the people as a whole. And that means that the first element of religious freedom that is protected in our Constitution is the right of *the people* to make decisions with respect to their relationship with God Almighty.

And in order to understand this, I think it's pretty clear if we just look at elections themselves. The right to vote is an individual right, but who elects? The people elect. The right of election is not an individual right. The right of election is a right of *the people*. And if we don't protect the rights of the people, what happens to self-government? It will be destroyed.

This is a distinction we've completely lost sight of, because the lawyers and judges, for their own purposes, have talked to us as if rights are always individual. Rights are not always individual. Some rights belong to the people as a whole, and if they are not respected, self-government cannot be sustained.

In our Constitution, a fundamental right of the people at the state and local level is protected from infringement by the national government: the right of the people to honor God according to their choice.

That right has now been taken away from us by federal courts, and the taking away of that right is now enforced by a complex skein of controls through the income tax system that has utterly undermined and destroyed the religious freedom of our people. It has reached right into the very heart of the church to tell us that we can no longer act, as a people, when it comes to the business of respecting God, and invoking His authority, and applying our understanding of that authority in the education of our young and in the maintenance of decent order in our society.

This has gone on now for several decades. I think most of us don't even realize what's happened, that we now live in a society where we do not have the right as a people to honor God. We don't have it.

And I cannot for the life of me understand, especially, why Christian folks in America are so complacent about this. It's as if we don't have the vocation to deal with "the people"; as if, somehow or another, our Christian call and the injunction that was laid upon us by Christ is an injunction that says convert *individuals*, deal with *individuals*. Is that what Christ said? Not exactly. As I recall, His words to us were, "Go and teach all nations." Isn't that fascinating?

He tells us to go and teach all nations, and doesn't expect that we'll begin with our own? I don't think so. I think, like charity, this begins at home, and that means we are supposed to go and teach all nations, starting with your own; and that you must therefore be able not only

to affect and address the heart of the people, but then to put into place those laws and practices that reflect the submission of the people to the heart of God.

If we recall our Christian history, we'll also know that Christianity reached out and actually did spread through nations by access through the heart of the sovereign. We do remember that, right? In many cases that's how conversions occurred, in Europe and elsewhere. Yes, people were converted at an individual level, and people of great courage who were willing to bear witness to the Truth and preach the Gospel went in, and by word and deed and example, and so forth, started to touch the heart of the people. But even in the days of the old Roman Empire, those hearts often included masters and aristocrats and others whose hearts were moved by the changed lives and example of love in their slaves and their servants. And as they became converts to Christianity, that influence then spread through their households, or through their prefects, or eventually through their kingdoms and their empires. And so it was by changing the heart of the sovereign that we affected the heart of the nation.

Well who's the sovereign in America? Who? The people. "We the people," we're the ones who choose the ministers, we choose the representatives, we choose those who make and adjudicate the laws, we choose those who carry them out. They are our ministers, and that being the case we are in this case like David, like Solomon, like Saul, we are the anointed sovereign of America. Each and every one of us, we participate in the sovereign body of the people, and part of our vocation as citizens reflects that kingly responsibility.

But when we look in the Bible, were the kings just set in place and then they were left to do whatever they pleased? No. They were held accountable. There were people who would come to them, like a Nathan, and they would talk to some of them and say, "You know, you're responsible to God." And when they failed in that responsibility, God would smack them up. He would visit consequences on them, He would visit consequences on their families. There would be times when the hand of their children would be turned against one another or against them in consequence of their sin--as happened, sadly, to David.

Now here we are part of the sovereign body of people, do we think that we are going to be exempt from our responsibility to God's authority? Not according to our biblical understanding. If we are part of the sovereign body of the people, then like David, and Solomon, and Saul, that sovereign body will be held accountable to God for the use and abuse of that authority which He has placed within our hands.

And that means that if we are going to teach our nation, we have to address the heart of the people.

How is the heart of the people addressed in America? How is the heart of the people affected? How is it changed? How is its repentance signified to our political life? Through the actions that we take collectively, through our legislatures and in our laws, and in our choice of representatives and executives, we exemplify the heart of the people.

How can we, then, as Christians, believe that by the power of God we are placed in this vocation as citizens of the United States, and yet we can just sit on our hands and act like we don't have this responsibility?

I find it, by the way, very interesting and even a little bit ironic that there are people in our Christian community--and you and I know, because we have heard I'm sure many times the sermons, in which they will work with the Apostle Paul and others who tell us quite clearly that being a Christian isn't just a matter of praying once you're in church, that it doesn't matter where you're standing or what work you're doing, you can do that work in such a way as to reflect the presence of Christ in your life. Have you heard this sermon? I've heard it many times. It doesn't matter whether you're a parent, or whether you're a teacher, or whether you're a manager in business. It doesn't matter if you're a lawyer or a doctor--there is a Christian way, even, of being a slave, remember that? Because you can serve that master as if you were serving Jesus Christ, and therefore exemplify in that service the presence of Christ in your life.

Now having heard that sermon, and being encouraged and enjoined to live by it in all these

different ways, will somebody explain to me how it is that when it comes to our vocation as citizens, there are people who profess to be Christian who usually will tell us, "Well, no, except for *that* vocation. Can't live *that* as a Christian; *that's* a distraction from Christianity; shouldn't get involved in *that*." What sense does this make? Don't you think the providence of God put you here?

And if one of the elements of being here is that you're not like the people in China right now--people in China right now are not part of the sovereign decision-making process in their country. They are held down, they are subject to a regime that dominates and oppresses them and excludes them from the making of laws, and from the adjudication of law. They have no role. Like most of the people throughout human history, they are left on the outside of the process which governs their society. But we have been born Americans, privileged to be part of a society in which we participate in all those decisions, in which it is part of our life and our vocation to be citizens who can participate in influencing and determining, indeed, what will be the content of the laws and who shall be those who carry them out.

Now, if that is our God-ordained vocation--meaning to say that it hasn't happened by accident, but in accordance with His plan and will for our lives--how can it be that we're supposed, in this one instance, to treat that vocation as if we are not Christian people? And not only to do so as a result of choice, but even to accept that we shall do so under coercion from our courts, or our media, or other influences that shall compel us to leave God out when we act as citizens?

And don't tell me it's not compulsion, because I just went through the process where I felt it, where people were ridiculing and trying to say, "Oh how dare you! You don't have the right to raise" this and that and the other. "You can't talk about God in here! This is politics!" It's fascinating that we have accepted this absurdity, when our whole way of life, politically, is based on the premise that our rights come from God.

We're operating in a system where the fundamental premise is that our rights come from God, but we can't talk about God while the system operates, because then we might remember its real foundation and preserve it from its destruction. That's what they're telling us.

And our courts are telling us we can't pray in the schools, we can't invoke God in the public places and on the public platforms, it's got to be left out. And even now people are trying to argue that it's somehow illegitimate to bring faith into the process when we vote and when we decide on who shall be our representatives. How can this be?

We are told by our Lord that we shall love the Lord our God with whole heart, soul, mind, and strength, right? What's left?

If somebody tells me that when I go into the voting booth or go into the legislature or go to take up my seat on the bench as a judge I have to leave religion out of it, leave faith out of it, leave God out of it, leave Christ out of it, what's left? What's left of my heart? What's left of my conscience? What's left of my mind and my soul and my strength, which have been wholly given to God--and if I leave Him out I have left them out with it?

And yet, we've accepted this notion that you can leave God out of it. "Leave God out of it when you're making these public decisions, when you're acting as a citizen," and so forth. Well, if Christ has had His right effect upon us, then when we've invited Him into our house, He swept it clean of all the sin and guilt and evil--even as the house in the parable is swept clean when we boot out the demons that have been in possession of it, right? But if we leave it empty, what does Christ say will happen? They will come back sevenfold. So you tell me: you've invited Christ into your life, you've swept it clean, but then when you act as citizens you enter into that vocation with the room empty. What do you think is going to fill it up?

And then we're surprised to see legislation from hell beginning to dominate our lives.

Why not? We have left the door open, we have left the place empty, because we have given in to the lie that we can act as citizens without reference to God and faith and truth. It's not

possible, and we cannot survive this way.

At least in part, we've accepted two lies to get here. The first lie, as I have said, is a lie about our Constitution: the notion that there's some Constitutional requirement for the separation of church and state. I will say it unequivocally, because I can quote it chapter and verse, that is simply a lie. There is no such requirement in the Constitution in any way whatsoever. It isn't there. It is not there in the words, it is not there in the history, it is not there at all. They made it up, they fabricated it. And every time a court asserts it, they lie. It's as simple as that.

As I was telling an audience earlier, I have been to law schools and Harvard and other places; I have said this in front of all these sage leftist lawyers. They never stand up to challenge it. You know why? Because they'll lose. Because when we get into the tit for tat, I will crush them and they know it, because there's no truth on their side in this one.

The First Amendment was *never* intended to prohibit religious establishment, and the historic truth is that at the time it was passed, there were religious establishments in most of the churches, strict ones, where you had to have a religious test to run for office and so forth, where there were established schools where religion and faith were taught with government funding, and so forth and so on. It was there. And the First Amendment passage had no effect on them whatsoever, because it was not intended to.

And yes, a lot of those things changed in the course of the 19th century, but the decisions that changed them were not made by the federal courts, they were made by the state governments--which is what the Constitution provides, that it is for the states and the people of the states to decide on the nature, extent, of the relationship between the faith and the positive law. It is for us to do, through our representatives and our state legislatures, not through the federal courts.

So I say "lie number one" that has put us in this position is this lie about the Constitution.

But there's another lie, or misunderstanding, that comes from the side of our very own faith. There are those people who will tell us that, somehow or another, not only is the vocation of politics a distraction, but that Christ Himself established separation. And there's a plausible case to be made for this, I guess, because when He was asked whether it was lawful to pay taxes to Caesar or not, what did He say? He said, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God." That seems like separation, doesn't it? There are things that belong to Caesar, give those to him, and there are things that belong to God, give those to Him. We've got the Master number one over there, that's God; Master number two over here, that's Caesar, serve him.

I put it that way because that raises a problem. Even though there you are in Matthew 22, and He's saying, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's," then you go back to Matthew 6, and we have Him saying, "You can't serve God and mammon." Can't serve two masters. You'll love the one, and hate the other; have contempt for one, and serve the other. Remember that?

Does Christ contradict Himself? I don't think so. I think that He can appear to us in many ways, but not with two faces, pointing in both directions. A modern politician He's not.

Therefore, the notion that He's contradicting Himself we shouldn't accept. We have to go back and rethink things. He says we can't serve two masters, so let's look at this passage again. "*Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's. . . .*" Years ago, I was led to think about this and meditate upon it, and one of the things that I've realized over time of reading the Scriptures is that when you are thinking about what Christ says you'd better look at what He does. Keep your eyes on Christ when you are trying to understand what He tells you.

And so, in this particular passage, if you keep your eyes on Christ and look at what He's doing, what does He do? He pulls a Jerry McGuire--remember the movie where Jerry McGuire is always saying, "Show me the money?" "Show me the money!" That's what Christ says at this point. He says, "Show me the money!" He says, "Give me a coin," and then He says, "Whose inscription and image is on this coin?" And they say, "Caesar's," and at that point

He says, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's."

That's fascinating, isn't it, because He has given us the key to the passage.

He says, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's." How do you know what belongs to Caesar? It has Caesar's image stamped upon it. "Render to God the things that are God's." How do you know what belongs to God? It has God's image stamped upon it.

Who has God's image stamped upon it? "Male and female He created them; in the image and likeness of God, created He them." We are, all of us, made in the image and likeness of God --including Caesar--and therefore we belong to God. Isn't that fascinating? So He's not saying give to Caesar what belongs to him, and give God what belongs to Him. He's saying it all belongs to God! That's what you'd expect Him to say. And that's what He says.

And since it all belongs to God, He is not giving us some phony doctrine of separation. He is reaffirming the truth that God is Sovereign over all, that every element of our life, including that element that reflects the supposed sovereignty inherent in human government, must answer to God's Will, to God's authority, to God's ownership, to God's dominion. That is the truth of our faith.

And if that's the truth, how can we forget that truth when we ourselves, as part of the sovereign body of the people, act in our citizen vocation? We can't.

So at the end of the day, no matter how you look at it, those who are trying to tell us that as citizens we can forget to be Christians--whether they do it from a Constitution point of view, or from the point of view of the Scriptures and the faith--they mislead us, they take us down a road which turns its back on our true vocation as Christian citizens.

And I've got to tell you that in our world right now, this vocation as Christian citizens is far more important than it used to be, because in our country, as I have said, it's all coming to a head right now, and I don't mean coming to a head in five or ten years to twenty years. No, within the next three to five years, we shall make the critical decision that will determine the fate of our liberty and our civilization. We shall confront and decide whether to embrace and go further the heinous road of abortion--which shall have its permutations now. It shan't just be abortion; it will be abortion and stem cell research and cloning, and all these other heinous scientific possibilities that involve the assault upon and manipulation of human nature and dignity--raising issues that our children and their children will soon have to deal with that are no longer the realm of science fiction.

If I produce a human being, does that human being belong to me? If I have done all the research that is necessary to manipulate the DNA to come up with this specific kind of human being, with these particular qualities and attributes so that they are very specially suited for the particular work that I want done, do those genetically-enhanced individuals belong to me?

You see, by means of this kind of thing, we will reintroduce slavery and every other evil into the world--and in doing so, we will take back the dignity accorded by God in His reverence for all our lives, and we will instead reinstitute the utter disregard for human dignity that has been characteristic of human societies when man was left to his own devices.

And all of this because, in our time, we were willing to surrender the great principle of truth with which our nation began.

See, that's where we started. We started with this great principle of truth, like a great treasure in the possession of our country and our people, a great challenge, too, but in each generation we lived up to that challenge. In each generation--whether it was the founding generation, the Civil War, the issue of slavery--we have, as Americans, time and time again met the challenge of conscience.

And that challenge of conscience was met by our nation, why? Well, I'll tell you. If you look at

our history, it was met because, at each critical juncture, people of faith took the lead. A nation founded on the existence and authority of God can hope to survive only if the people of God who are called by His Name and moved by their faith in His existence, and will, and love, and mercy, and salvation--only if they are willing to step forward and take the lead will the nation survive.

And if we don't? Just as America would never have been founded without Christian leadership, so it will perish when Christians persist in their default of leadership. And that's where we have been--in default of leadership. We have been gone by on the high road, thinking, "Well, it's all about my individual salvation." Is that what we were told, that salvation is a gift that is not to be shared, be hoarded, we just stay on our high horse and continue on the road to heaven, and when we hear the cry from the ditch of our despoiled nation crying out for truth, crying out in misery, for a reintroduction to God and His mercies, we just go on our way? Is that what our Lord suggested? Or did He suggest that we get down off our high horse and go down into the ditch, in order to be the neighbor who signifies in his action real love, real mercy, real compassion.

We sing the songs that signify our love of our country, but as we do not grieve as those who have no hope, so we cannot love as those who have no Savior. If our love for our country means anything, as Christians, then it must mean that we will, with courage and consistency, share the truth with our nation--and we can only share the truth with our nation in our vocation as Christian citizens. If we are unwilling to do so, then we are not bearing witness to the nation, whatever we may think we're doing with individuals.

And that's something I keep trying to remind people of. Because, after all is said and done, Christianity, when we look back at our history, one of the prominent features of Christianity--which we still see today, by the way, though some of us don't keep our eye out--is this business of bearing witness no matter what.

What does "bearing witness no matter what" sometimes lead to? Persecution. Martyrdom. That wonderful word, "martyrdom"--*martyros* was the Greek word for witness. That's what a martyr was, a witness. It wasn't a victim of violence and persecution. No, it was just somebody who was witnessing the truth, and who chose, as the Apostle said, to stand--and to stand no matter what. To stand when the sun shone, to stand when the crowd applaud, to stand when the people smiled, but also to stand when they went for the stones, to stand when they went for the lions, to stand when they went for the crosses on which we would fulfill our true Christian vocation and follow all the way in the footsteps of our Lord to Calvary. That's what it meant to be a witness, to be a witness no matter what.

I think this is the challenge we face now as American Christians: will we bear witness no matter what? And yes, at the moment at least it hasn't reached the stage of violent persecution. Other forms of persecution, you may have noticed, are emerging. Faster than anyone would have predicted, we can see in Canada and elsewhere, and we can see starting in America, the persecution against a biblical understanding of things like, for instance, human sexuality, where now, if you stand up and speak truth--I had found this during the campaign. I spoke a couple of words of truth about homosexuality, and boy was I pilloried by all and sundry, right? "How dare you! You called somebody a . . ." I never called anybody any names. I simply, in the course of talking about homosexuality, gave a truthful and accurate description of it: "the engaging in sexual relations for the purposes of pursuing pleasure for oneself; selfish hedonism."

And then the firestorm! "How dare you [unintelligible]." But no, I'm not. I simply spoke the truth. I gave an accurate description of a sin.

And you now what the Bible says, right? "Righteousness exalts a nation." Sin is what? A reproach, "a reproach to any people." That means that if you give an accurate description of sin, it's going to sound like a reproach. I can't help it. That's just the way it is.

If you tell the truth about sin, it's going to sound like a reproach, because sin is a reproach. And so what can you do? Stop telling the truth. But then are you bearing witness? No. So if

you bear witness, you're going to bear the consequences.

Christ told us this. It's not like He didn't warn us. He told us we were going to be reviled and despitely used for His Name's sake. He did not promise us a bed of roses: "I'm the morale officer. Anytime you're down, I'll lift you up. Anytime you're hurting, I'll relieve the pain, and there'll be no suffering." He didn't tell us that at all. He never lied to us like that. He told us straight in the front that if we walked His way we would suffer the same persecution, the same revilement, the same contempt that He suffered. Why is it that we forget this now? We want only those people who will tickle our ears with the notion that Christ is the morale officer. He's here to buck us up and help us along. No difficulties. No problems. Pain and suffering will be relieved.

No! Sometimes if you walk the walk of Christ, pain and suffering will be encountered, they will be intensified!

I have all these folks that I've talked to, and they've been to see *The Passion of Christ* and have been so moved by it. Do you know what we are moved by? A reminder that being Christ hurt, that being Christ hurt a lot. We have sometimes reduced it to some abstraction where it's just words--and then suddenly in this film it was brought home to us once again. "Oh! That hurts! That's torture! That's pain like nothing we've ever known." And He suffered it for us and it's what broke our hearts, because sometimes in the midst of it all we embrace the truth of salvation but we forget the cost of salvation, a cost not borne by us but by our Lord.

But even as He calls us to be like Him in the healing and the mercy, so He calls us to be like Him in being courageous in the face of the cost that might be there for us as we extend the truth of His presence to a world that desperately needs His presence now, and that can find that presence in us but only if we are willing to bear witness, even in the ways that hurt.

And in our public and political life, that means taking a stand that is consistent with truth, and doing it whether we win or lose, doing it whether we are praised or blamed, doing it whether we are accepted and received or reviled and despised, even by those who profess to share our Christian faith.

Because at the end of the day, that's not what matters. We can't look around and worry about who's with you. "Who's with me on this? Nobody with me, I guess I'll back out. Who's with me on this? Nobody with me, I guess I'll stand somewhere else." No. You can't do that. You can't worry about who's with you. You can only worry about whether you're with Jesus. And if you are, then it doesn't matter who's with you because if He's with you, then that's enough--and it will prove to be enough.

Christ doesn't count, the Lord doesn't count the way we do. We see this in the Scriptures. We enter on the scene we'd think this big old army of 30,000 is better than an army of 3,000. We think that an army of 3,000 is better than an army of 300. Is that the way the Lord thought? No. The Lord saw the army of 30,000 and said, "No, that's no good." He saw the army of 3,000 and said, "No, that's no good." Got down to 300 facing the tens of thousands, and He said, "Yes, that's about right."

He doesn't count the way we do.

And yet, if we stand with Him, we will find that many or few--alone if we must--yet we will still prevail along with the truth.

And that, I think, is the spirit in which we must act in our faith, in our lives, in our families, in our work, in our communities, and in our vocation as citizens. We must do it in our private things and we must do it in our public things, for we must do it in all things for the sake of our Lord.

God bless you.

**Q & A**

Q: What do you think about the recent election?

ALAN KEYES: A couple of things. Though it may or may not have been more difficult for me to remember on election night than it might otherwise have been, it was a good day. It was especially a good day for people who have been working, as I have and as others have around the country, to mobilize people of faith and people with moral priorities. Those moral priorities determined the outcome, and the mobilization of those folks determined the outcome.

And what is really promising about it is that we haven't yet reached the stage where a majority of people who profess Christian faith are actually mobilized. We haven't. You know that don't you? We haven't reached that point, but even the increase of the percentage of people who were mobilized was sufficient to turn the tide at the national level. And that, I think, is a wonderfully encouraging result at some level, at least when it is looked upon as an example of what God has on offer to us if we are willing to act in response. We can really change things.

But then you might ask, do I think the election itself changed anything, and I'll have to tell you that I don't. I think it simply *challenges* us to understand that we can make a difference, but we haven't *made* the difference yet. Why? Because the difference is not made just because you elect this one or that one to office.

I will give you an example. It's going to perhaps discourage you a little, I don't know, because a lot of people didn't notice it, but I noticed it and so did others who felt deeply angered by it, in fact, and abused, and I still do every time I think about it. On Thursday, I believe it was, before the election, G. W. Bush goes on ABC and embraces the idea of civil unions--moved from the platform position of the Republican party, which rejects them, to the position that has been taken all along by Vice President Cheney, saying that somehow or another this is something we need to do so that gay people can have rights.

This was a pernicious, potentially fatal blow, in terms of our defense of marriage. And so it means that the election that occurred--I'm sure glad that, myself, personally, that John Kerry is not President of the United States.

But I don't wake up in the morning feeling, "Oh, everything is fine now because G. W. Bush is President of the United States." No I don't, because something's wrong with this picture. We haven't gotten there yet. Just because you get this or that person into office doesn't mean that we have what we need to defend marriage, doesn't mean that we have what we need to put this country back under its principles when it comes to abortion. We haven't won these battles yet. And the outcome of this election is no offer of certainty that we will win them.

And as a matter of fact, something like what I just told you puts us on notice that the outcome of the election may in fact make it certain that if a federal marriage amendment is passed, it will include language that sanctions civil unions and effectively destroys the institution of marriage.

You realize that, don't you, because that's what happened just empirically in the Scandinavian countries, I think it is, where they've embraced this pernicious idea of civil unions. What happens over the course of a very short time--and what's funny is that in the media they'll say, "Look in the Scandinavian countries! The divorce rate has gone down!" You know why the divorce rate has gone down? It's because people aren't getting married anymore. You don't have as many divorces when people don't marry. See, marriage is destroyed. Therefore, you don't get out of marriage, because you never get into it.

And this appears to be the truth about where civil unions will take us--and we shouldn't be surprised. Civil unions will also take us, by the way, to a world--though we're not thinking about this, but we need to--where, if it is in fact legitimate and these relationships are sanctioned by law, how can we deny that, in the interest of truth and quality and mutual respect, we must teach our children to accept the idea that these are legitimate relationships and a basis for family life--and that therefore early on, we must introduce them to *Heather Has Two Mommies* and other things like that. This is where we're going. And sadly, this is the

road down which G. W. Bush appears to be willing to lead us when it comes to the wording of the Federal Marriage Amendment.

Now that doesn't mean that, "Oh, it's terrible. . . ." No. It just means we've got to be on watch, we've got to be vigilant, we've got to mobilize to make sure this isn't the way it turns out.

But we can't just sit back and say, "Well, we've got the President in there now, and everything's going to be all right," because it's not going to be all right if we don't stay awake and stay involved.

So there is what the election is: an encouraging sign and hopeful sign that Christian mobilization can make a difference. But there is also what the election isn't, and that is: any guarantee that the key moral challenges will be met. There is no such guarantee. The only thing that we need to understand is that we need to be engaged in this whole process, not as Republicans, not as Democrats, not to get victory, not to get votes, not to get this, not to get that. We need to do it as Christian people for the sake of God and His truth. That alone must be our vocation.

And in terms of party label, we wear the party label that seems most consistent with our allegiance to God. I believe I can make a cogent argument that that label is Republican right now. There are things the Republicans can do, however, that will change my mind about that in a flash. And so we need to keep our allegiance where it belongs and act in such a way that we will keep at least one of the major parties where it needs to be, so that we can effectively participate in American politics.

Q: Do you think our Founding Fathers intended us to keep the Judeo-Christian heritage?

KEYES: I think that to such a degree that I put it a little bit more strongly: our Founding Fathers *assumed* that we would keep our Judeo-Christian heritage. They assumed it. It was so much a part of their thinking that it never occurred to them that anyone would be so crazy as to think you could sustain this system of self-government without respect for it.

Q: Why didn't they relate that better in the Constitution?

KEYES: Well, actually I think they related it quite well in many ways; there were just things that were so taken for granted by them that I don't think it ever occurred to them that they would have to be explicitly defended.

Remember, you make laws and other provisions against evils that you can imagine occurring. The notion that somehow or another you'd have to deal with a people that had entirely divorced itself from the very idea that God and faith played a role in human life and politics [never occurred to them].

They had encountered many things--and I have been over the ground that they walked because it's part of how I've spent my life. If you go back and you read the great philosophers, ancient and modern, one of the things that seems common to all of them pretty much is the notion that the political life of a people is, in the end, founded upon its religious beliefs. And this is true even of the pagan philosophers. They weren't talking about Christianity, but they knew if you wanted to have a polity it had to be related to who and what you thought the gods were, and how they would behave, and how they would react.

It just never occurred to the Founders that we could get to a point where we'd actually think we could sustain politics without morality, politics without religion, politics without faith, and our particular form of politics without God.

Q: Since the Constitution says that we can't inject anything, would a new amendment be the solution?

KEYES: Well, see, we don't need to. The one thing they did quite brilliantly was they left it in our hands. We have the power to stop the judiciary, for instance. We can do it easily, by the way, if we have the will.

The federal courts, in particular, are subject--in Article III, Section 2--to our discipline through our representatives. You do remember this, right? People will mention the fact that there's impeachment and removal. We will also remember that that's difficult, isn't it? It's especially difficult when one of the major parties that sits in our national legislature is thoroughly committed to evil.

And I know people don't like it when we say this, and I probably have offended somebody here--and I would apologize except that I'm sorry, it's like describing sin, I'm just speaking the truth.

If you can show me a position where the Democrat party does not take the position that's opposed to God's will, then I'll change what I just said, but I don't find one. On all the major issues of moral concern, the Democrat party has aligned itself with evil. I'm sorry. That's where they stand. And that leaves me helpless but to recognize that when we're dealing with our national legislature, they're not going to be the ones who will rise up against judges who are despoiling us of our right to honor God.

As a matter of fact, as I recall, there was a movement on which I was part of inspiring around the country and our state legislatures to pass bills that would have our children read the words of the Declaration of Independence, the key words, at the beginning of each school day, observe a moment of silence and sit down. I thought along with others that would be a wonderful way of kind of reminding people of our godly heritage and yet getting around this notion that they were praying. They're not praying. They're just reading from our public documents, our civic documents, "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, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness."

Just reading it is a little bit like a prayer, because what is a prayer? A prayer is an acknowledgment of God and His authority and of the fact that we are beholden to Him for what we have. That's prayer. Well, the Declaration of Independence is like a little prayer. We acknowledge that God exists, that He's the source of our rights, that we're beholden to Him for our liberty and our free form of government.

Do you realize that there was an organized opposition almost everywhere, spearheaded by the formal Democrat party, in each and every state legislature, to stop that from occurring?

So of course, with Democrats in legislatures, *impeachment* is going to be a problem, because they will stand against the idea that we should limit the ability of the courts to drive God out of everything. They seem to want Him driven out of everything.

But there is, by the way, another way that we can deal with these issues, at least in the short term, because the Congress of the United States is given the power to limit the jurisdiction of the Supreme Court and the federal courts. The Supreme Court is granted original jurisdiction in, as I recall, three specific sets of cases. In all other cases under the Constitution, the Supreme Court has appellate jurisdiction "with such exceptions and under such regulation as the Congress shall make."

And that means that a majority--that is, a simple majority in the Congress--can remove from the purview of the federal courts any issue whatsoever that they deem inappropriate for federal jurisdiction.

Now, understanding that, it is as clear as a majority vote. And by the way, when we run out to the polls, we vote for Republicans, and so forth and so on, and we're all assuming that we're voting for a majority--we've got it now in the Congress of the United States--that is going to stand with us on these moral issues.

So instead of, in the first instance right now, pushing it uphill to get the Federal Marriage Amendment right away, you know the first thing we need to do? Let's push to get the issues that are involved in homosexual marriage and the Federal Marriage Amendment--*let's remove them from the jurisdiction of the federal courts*. That buys us some time, and in that time we

can organize to get the Federal Marriage Amendment through. That's by majority vote.

So I think there are mechanisms available to us--but we're going to have to mobilize. It's like everything else in life in America. You're not going to get the result, if the people don't mobilize to put pressure on for the result; if the people don't mobilize to make sure people are elected to the legislatures and the congressional legislatures that reflect our views. That's what we have to do. This is not a system that works automatically in any way. No, it's a system that only works if we work it. And if we work it, that means we've got to get involved and we've got to be committed. We've got to leave no stone unturned, and no access point and opportunity for influence left unused.

And we leave a lot of them unused. The structure of the parties, for instance. In many states, including this one, the structures of the parties are like a structure filled with rooms where all the chairs are empty except a few. And those chairs are occupied by a handful of people who then decide who the party leaders will be. Why is that? It's because most people don't know, don't inform themselves, and don't participate in the key decision-making that goes on at the grassroots in the parties. There is a level of decision-making in the party where all you have to do is be a Republican and show up, and you can participate. Do most people in the country know that? No they don't, and therefore they don't bother to participate.

All you have to do is organize your friends and neighbors to sign up in support of you, and you can stand for leadership. It's that simple. And you don't have to get this or that special qualification, you just have to be a citizen, identify yourself as a Republican, and get yourself organized. Do we do it? By and large we don't. So I think that as folks who are concerned, particularly to reintroducing to our country a decent respect for its moral foundation, we just need to get busy, because there's a lot we can do.

Q: Would you encourage or discourage parents and families who leave their children in or take them out of the public school system?

ALAN KEYES: Well, I would be a bit of a hypocrite if I simply said I encourage people to take their children out or leave them in. I did both. Why did I do both? Because for a while I left my children in the public schools, and then when it got to a certain point, the results were getting so bad I had to take them out. And that was particularly true . . . we found in our area then that it was safe to leave them in first through sixth grade, about. I'm beginning to think from what I see now that probably--this was some years back--it wouldn't be safe anymore.

The key measure of the lack of safety seems to be the point at which they start talking about sex in school. Wherever that point is, get your children out before that. Either that, or stand over them like a hawk--but I don't think that's good enough.

I also found that overall it seems to be that at some level you can teach basic courtesy and decency to very young children, and that will work in an environment entirely devoid of faith. When they have to start coping with their hormones, you cannot instruct them without reference to God, and therefore the environment that exists in schools that are dealing with children at that age--12, 13, 14, 15, beyond--it becomes almost hopeless. Especially in a world infested with titillation that's going to be assaulting people with lies about their sexuality all the time. How can they spend most of their day in an environment cleansed of the discipline of Christ's presence and of God's influence? It doesn't work.

So I think we all have to make our decisions based on our circumstances and such, but I would think that one really has to look closely at what's happening to the kids when they get to that point--because if you don't, things can happen very quickly that are very bad. And so you have to be careful, because it's a constant, it's an ongoing tribulation, and none of us are immune and neither are any of our children. So I think we all have to be on watch, and we have to make sure that to the best of our ability we are bearing witness, we are sharing the Word, we are living the example as best we can, because even when we do it all, there are still going to be problems, but we just have to pray to the Lord and rely upon His help in dealing with them.

And I would say, finally, I'm one of those people also who keeps reminding people--did so

during the campaign, will do so constantly--the first schooling was home schooling. In order to restore respect for the real American tradition of education, we must restore respect for that truth. Home schoolers ought to be honored and encouraged, especially now that we can begin to see that the results that are coming out of home schooling are putting all of the organized schools to shame. Not just the government schools, but also others. A lot of home schoolers are doing really well.

And they also seem to come out [politically], as I learned in my campaigns--because we get a lot of home school involvement in our efforts. I have learned also that--in terms of personality and balance and stability and discipline and hard work and a real sense of self-assurance that comes from a proper grounding in faith and an understanding of one's relationship with God--homeschoolers also have an ability to relate to people that isn't influenced by this perverse notion that adolescence is *sui generis*. That's one of the things that has hurt us most, this notion that somehow there is this thing called adolescence and it has its own rules and prerogatives and all this. That's a pernicious lie. One aims in life to be an adult person. That is the objective, to be a mature and responsible adult person. And that's a particular objective in a free society, because maturity is a prerequisite of real freedom.

If you create this notion that at each stage of the child's life, it is all about itself and nothing at all about aiming at that final and responsible result, then you have in essence destroyed the continuity of growth in a spiritual and moral sense. And that's what we've done. And as a result, what do we find? We find that people who have not been challenged to grow up never do. And the result is that instead of growing to maturity and becoming adults, we are redefining adulthood in terms of adolescence.

I think this, by the way, every time I see a Viagra commercial. No, really. Because at some point in the back of your mind, you have to ask yourself why it is we live in a world where we cannot accept the natural developments of life. You know, part of our life is spent directed toward procreation--and another part of our life in which the very same sentiments and impulses actually find a different outlet, that outlet which is the result of the fact that we have fulfilled our vocation and can now turn the heart and the desire for connectedness to what? To our children and to our grandchildren and to our preparation for our final peace in the bosom of God.

But we don't want to do this. We want to stay adolescent all our lives. We want to be twenty-something until we die. What a horror! And so--but I think in terms of schooling, we each have to make our own decisions, but I think we have to keep our eyes open and our hearts fixed on the truth that we have a responsibility from God. Parents are the first educators, and one of the most pernicious notions encouraged by our education system is that somehow our children are being educated by the schools and by the teachers and by the system. At the end of the day, our children throughout their growth are being educated by us, and we cannot abrogate that responsibility.

Q: Why did the Republican Party give you so little support in your recent campaign?

KEYES: I always say those are questions one would have to address to others. I simply do what I do, and others have to make their judgments about what others do.

But when I came into the whole business of the last election, one of the things I insisted on with the people I was working with, when we talked about it, was that we had to make sure we would be able to mount a campaign--and that meant raise some money for it, and so forth --without reference to anybody, because I didn't trust anything that I was hearing.

I was reasonably certain that, given the way people categorized, not me, but Illinois, it would be very hard to get any national support for a race in Illinois. I knew that. I was hearing all kinds of promises and stuff from the leadership in Illinois, but I took them with a grain of salt, thank God, because if I hadn't taken them with a grain of salt, I suppose I'd be a bitter guy decrying all these liars (but I never do this).

I took them with a grain of salt, and I said, "If we can raise a certain amount of money from our grassroots around the country, then we will be able to mount a campaign that will

effectively get the word out there, give people an opportunity to do what's right," and that's what happened.

And so I was not surprised. And at the end of the day, the final point which is important--how can I put this? There's a lot that's wrong with politics in Illinois. And I will say that with a sense of some hesitation, but I think that, after all is said and done, I now bear the scars required to earn the right to speak to this.

And I have to tell you, I got the feeling--I have had a lot of experience, not only in different aspects of American politics, different states, and so forth, but also looking at things as they go on internationally, etc.--right now, the political system in Illinois is not American. The promise of American liberty is thwarted here. The people are not governing themselves. They are being manipulated through corrupt political structures that essentially resemble the kind of things that existed in the Soviet Union or some parts of the third world. And that means that the democratic process has become a sham, and it serves not the interests of the people, but the interests of a corrupt few who have hijacked the political system.

*I think the challenge here is to return control to the people of the state.* And that's a challenge that I'll be trying to meet, working with others around the state, not because I have any particular this's or that's, but because I have worked a good part of my life [doing this]. When I was in the State Department and elsewhere, I was one of those people, during the Reagan years, who fought the communists hard; we put a lot of time and effort on the line to make sure that that way of life and that system of government would not triumph over the world, in order that self-government would survive, real liberty would continue to flourish and exist.

The idea that in the Land of Lincoln, in the state that ought to exemplify the very uttermost realization of American principle and self-government, we now have a political system that resembles, more than anything I can think of, the communist party system of the old Soviet Union--I think this is a travesty, and I will dedicate myself to helping the people of Illinois change this travesty.

