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Paul Values Voter Summit Transcript



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Remarks by U.S. Representative Ron Paul

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE RON PAUL (R-TX): Thank you. Thank you. So early in the morning, too. I appreciate that. Thank you very much for coming.

And I appreciate very much this opportunity to visit with you to talk about families. Obviously family values are very, very important. And, as was mentioned in the introduction, I have delivered a few babies. And that does contribute to family, let me tell you. (Laughs.)

But also I'm from a rather large family. I have four brothers. But we have five children and 18 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren as well. (Cheers, applause.)

But, you know, the one thing that is fascinating to me when we bring new life into the world or a new baby comes into the family has always been the reaction of the siblings – maybe one, two, or three, four years old. I'm always fascinated with the intrigue of the siblings looking at a small baby. And I thought, well, that was natural and good and really symbolizes what the family is all about.

Unfortunately, our families have been under attack. And I have a few ideas about why that has occurred and what we might do about it. But the value of the family was something that was early described in the Bible. And there's one reference to the family that I thought was very important. That was in Samuel, 1 Samuel, chapter eight. And this is when the people, not the elders, came to Samuel when he was very old and they knew he would be passing on, so the people came and said to Samuel, what we need is a king. We need a king to take care of us. We want to be safe and secure.

And Samuel, although he knew he wasn't going to be around long, he advised the

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people of Israel not to accept the king, because the king, he warned, would not be generous. He would undermine their liberties. There would be more wars. There would be more taxes. And besides, accepting the notion of a king would reject the notion that, up until that time, since they had left Egypt, their true king was their God and the guidance from their God.

But the governing body was the family. And they did not have kings, but they had judges. And that's what Samuel was. But this was the time there was a shift away from the judges and the family into a king. And I think a lot of that has happened to us in this country. We have too often relied on our king in Washington, and we have to change that. (Cheers, applause.)

Samuel warned that the king would want to make servants of the people. And he even talked about taxes going up and he talked about the use of young men being drafted and he talked about the women and young women being used by the king. And the warning was not heeded, as Samuel didn't expect it to be heeded. But he also said that if you depend on the king, the morality of the people will be rejected, the emphasis on the people themselves; the morality should come from the people and not from the king. And generally it doesn't work that way.

You know, morality of the people or the lack of morality of the people can be reflected in the law. But the law never can change the morality of the people. And that is very important. (Cheers, applause.)

In the 1960s and the 1970s, there were dramatic changes in our country. During the Vietnam War there was a lot of antiwar sentiment. There were a lot of drugs. This was the decade that abortion was done flagrantly against the law. And, lo and behold, the laws got changed after the morality changed.

But it was also - about the time we had Roe versus Wade, we also had the breakdown of our monetary system, the rejection of the biblical admonition that we have honest weights and measures and honest money. And not to have honest weights and measures meant we were counterfeiting the money and destroying the value of the money, which implies, even in biblical times, they weren't looking for a central bank that was going to counterfeit our currency. (Cheers, applause.)

But the culture certainly changed. The work ethics changed. The welfare state grew. And it wasn't only for the poor who were looking to be taken care of, but we finally ended up with a system where the lobbyists were from the rich corporations and the banks that would come to Washington and expect to get their benefits. And the whole idea of a moral society changed.

But, you know, biblically there's a lot of admonitions about what the family should be in charge of. Certainly the 10th commandment tells us something about honoring our parents and caring for them. It didn't say work out a system where the government will take care of us from cradle to grave. No, it was an admonition for us to honor our parents and be responsible for them, not put them into a nursing home and say the federal government can take care of them. Besides, sometimes that leads to bankruptcies and the government can't do it anyway. So that responsibility really falls on us.

In the Bible, in the Old Testament as well as the New Testament, Christ was recognized to be the prince of peace. He was never to be recognized as the promoter of war. And he even said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be the children of God." He never said blessed are the war makers. It was the peacemakers that we must honor and protect. (Cheers, applause.)

Christ was very, very clear on how we should treat our enemies. And some days I think we quite frequently forget about that. Early in the history of Christianity, they struggled with the issue of war and peace, because Christ taught about peace. Did that mean Christ was advocating pacifism? The early church struggled with this and came to the conclusion, at least in those early years, that Christ was not a pacifist, but he was not a war promoter.

And this is when they came up with the just-war principles, saying, yes, war could be necessary, but only under dire circumstances, and it should be done with great caution. All other efforts should be exhausted before we go to war, and always under the proper authority. And today I think the proper authority is not the U.N. or the NATO forces to take us to war. (Cheers, applause.)

We are taught in the New Testament about caring for the poor and caring for our families and our neighbors and friends. But never did Christ say, you know, let's go and lobby Rome to make sure we're taken care of. It was a personal responsibility for us. Christ was confronted at one time by a prostitute, but he didn't call for the

centurions. He didn't call for more laws. But he was very direct and thought that stoning was not the solution to the problem of prostitution.

So do laws take care of these things, or do we need a better understanding of our Christian values and our moral principles?

Life is most precious. I talk about life and liberty. I defend liberty to the nth degree, as long as people aren't hurting and killing each other and stealing and robbing. But you cannot defend liberty unless you have a clear understanding of life. And believe me, as an experienced physician and knowing the responsibility of taking care of life, from the earliest sign of life – I know, legally and morally, I have a responsibility to take care of two lives. And therefore you cannot be a great defender of liberty if you do not defend and understand what life is all about and where it comes from. (Cheers, applause.)

You know, many great religions, and especially both the Old and New Testament, talk about a golden rule. And I think it's an important rule. We want to treat – we should treat other people the way we want to be treated. And I would like to suggest that possibly we should be thinking about having a foreign policy of the golden rule and not treat other countries any way other than the way we want to be treated. (Cheers, applause.)

There were great dreams by Isaiah in the Old Testament about the time that would come when the swords would be bent into plowshares and spears into pruning forks, the dream of ending the wars and to the point where peace is prosperous. And I have come to a strong conviction that one of the most greatest threats to the family is war. It undermines the family. (Cheers, applause.)

Just in our last decade, an undeclared war that we're dealing with, we've lost over 80,000 – 8,500 men and women in our armed services. We have 40,000 who have returned, many of them with severe amputations. And it's, in essence, forgotten by the general population of this country. We have literally hundreds of thousands begging and pleading for help.

I talked to a young man the other day and he was telling me about losing all his buddies and his frustration with the war and not having a goal of winning the war and not knowing when it would end. And yet his conclusion was – almost in tears he said to me, he says, I lost my buddies over there, but now I'm losing many of them to suicide.

And when you think of this, of what the consequences of war, the death and destruction, what does it do to the families? What does it do to the husbands and the wives and the mothers and the daughters who have to deal with these problems? So, yes, it is very, very damaging. War costs a lot of money. It causes a lot of poverty. Poverty and the economic crisis in this country is undermining the family. But \$4 trillion of debt has been added in the last 10 years to fight a war that seems to have no end.

Wars generally lead to inflation, the destruction of money. We don't honor the biblical principles of honest money. We invite this idea that we can spend endlessly and we can print the money, and literally it undermines the family and undermines the economic system. When you lose a job, it's harder to keep the family together.

Divorce rates are very, very high among the military, because these young men are being sent back two and three and four times. And there was one story told me about a little boy, a little boy who was 10 years old, and his dad was getting ready to go back again. He was screaming, I hate you, daddy, I hate you, daddy, because he was leaving him.

So this is why, in the early church, they talk about being very careful about going into war, and also to be thinking about the admonition that peace is far superior to war. That should be our goal. (Cheers, applause.)

The goal of a free society, from my viewpoint, is to seek virtue and excellence. And only we as individuals can do that. When we turn this over to the government, when we seek our king and depend on our king, it can only be done at the sacrifice of liberty. And that means eventually all liberties – our personal liberties, our civil liberties, our religious liberties, our right to teach our children and our responsibility to teach our children, whether it's home schooling or religious school - it's always under attack.

The more we turn it over to the government – it was a sad day in this country when we went this full measure about acknowledging the authority of the federal

government to educate our children. There was a time when the Republican Party said that we shouldn't even have a Department of Education. And I believe it should go back to the family, not the federal government. (Cheers, applause.)

If we – if we do not get our moral values from our government, which I think it's impossible to get it from them, where does it come from? First, it comes from us as individuals. We have the responsibility for dealing with our eternity and salvation. But we have our responsibility to ourselves to do the best we can with our own lives.

But then our next step is our families; you know, our children and our parents, and then our neighbors and our churches. That's where the moral values should come from. And, quite frankly, that is where I think we have slipped. So you can pass all the laws that you want. You can fight more wars than ever that's going to bring us peace and prosperity. But if the basic morality of the people does not change, it will not matter. We must change our hearts if we expect to change our family and treat our family values as they should be. (Applause.)

We have been blessed in this country by having the freest and the most prosperous. We've had a good Constitution, far from perfect. But today we are living way beyond our means. We are living in debt. And debt is not a biblical principle, whether it's personal debt or whether it's a national debt. We owe \$3 trillion to people overseas. We are suffering from a mountain of debt because we have accepted this idea that we have this responsibility to mold the world, mold the people and mold the economy.

Government is incapable of doing that. The responsibility of the government is to provide the environment which is proper to allow us to thrive, for us to work hard and have the incentive. If we have our right to – (applause) – if we have a right to our life and liberty, why is it that we don't fight for the right to keep the fruits of our labor? (Cheers, applause.)

If we accepted that, there would be no demands for the king. The people – the early Israelites demanded the king to be taken care of. But we have too, and we have accepted this notion as a country and as a whole that the king will take care of us.

But I prefer the different king, the original king, the instruction that comes from our creator, not from our government. Our government should be strictly limited to the protection of the liberties that allow us to thrive. (Cheers, applause.) And our liberties and our economy, they are under attack today. There is no doubt about it.

So we will have to meet up and make these decisions. To me, the most important decision that we have to ask, just as they asked, you know, in biblical times, as well as at the time of our founding of this country, what should be government like? What should the role of government be? It isn't, you know, where do you cut this penny or this penny, and what do we do here and there, and tinker around the edges. It should be what should the role of government be? The founders said the role of government ought to be the protection of liberty. That is what the role of government ought to be. (Cheers, applause.)

But the experiment is about to end unless we reverse this trend. I would say that we have gone downhill nearly for 100 years, especially for the last 10, and especially for the last four, when we think of our economy. But the real challenge is, are we going to transition from the republic to the empire and to dictatorship? And there are so many signs that we are, you know, transforming into empire and dictatorship. And just think of the bearing down on our personal liberties today. Think about what happens when we go to the airports. Think about now you have no privacy whatsoever. Now the government can look into every single thing.

So we are living in an age when government is way too big. And it's time this government act properly, and that is to protect our freedoms. (Cheers, applause.) The – if you read the Constitution carefully, you will find out that the Constitution is directed at the government. There aren't restraints placed in the Constitution on you. The restraints are that you don't hurt and kill people, that you fulfill your promise that you're honest and you fulfill your moral obligation. The restraints are placed on the federal government.

So as long as we allow the federal government to grow and we don't obey those restraints, things will get worse. But the good news is there's a whole generation of Americans right now rising up and saying we were on the right track at the right time. Let's get back on that track. Let's restore liberty to this country and prosperity and peace. (Cheers, applause.)

Thank you.

(Music.)

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