

FAMILY RESEARCH COUNCIL

VOTER VALUES SUMMIT

**REMARKS BY
SENATOR SAM BROWNBACK (R-KS),
PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE**

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 19, 2007
9:43 A.M.**

**WASHINGTON HILTON AND TOWERS
WASHINGTON, D.C.**

*Transcript by:
Federal News Service
Washington, D.C.*

(Cheers, applause.)

SEN. BROWNBACK: Hi. Great to be here.

What a great crowd, and what a great day. Tony Perkins, doing a great job; Gary Bauer, the other groups that are involved in this, thank you very much for all you're doing.

And we've got a big election up in 2008, and it's an important one. It's an important one for the courts. It's an important one for the country. It's an important one for where and how America leads. And it's -- important one for how you look at things, the values voters and what you're going to do and how you're going to move forward and how you're going to carry this country forward. And if, before I really get started, I could take just a moment and pause and think -- and thank the great leaders have gone before us that are no longer here. We've lost some real giants lately: several years ago, Bill Bright, good friend of mine, who's head of Campus Crusade for Christ; D. James Kennedy; more recently, Jerry Falwell, Ruth Graham. These are giants. They say you can't really measure the height of a tree until it's down, and we can see now the void that they have each left, and we really miss some giants.

But you know, the cause doesn't die with the individual. The cause goes on, and people live on. And as they may drop the flag, it's up for us to pick it back up and to go forward and to carry the cause on forward. So it is for us to reflect, but it is also for us to move forward and to charge forward.

One of my great political lodestars, guides, was an English parliamentarian round the late 1700s, early 1800s, by the name of William Wilberforce. And he had said -- (applause) -- great movie about William Wilberforce. He had said in his life that he had two great causes. One was the end of the slave trade, and the second was the reformation of manners in Great Britain. And around those two things he had fixed his life, he had moved forward, and this is what he was going to get done.

And may I suggest to you that God has laid on our hearts two great things: the end of abortion -- (cheers, applause) -- and the renewing of the American culture, that these are great things -- (cheers and applause continue) -- and we must do them. And we must not stop until we win, and we will win if we if we do not stop. (Applause.) We've got to keep moving forward on these, and we can. It's going to be difficult. It will be difficult, and it may feel like at days that just people are really not into what your message is.

I remember them telling the story years ago about Mother Teresa going door to door in Calcutta -- this was before she was "Mother Teresa" -- going door to door, asking for contributions for her orphans. And she went up, knocked on one door. The guy opened up the door, looked at her, saw who she was and spit in her face. And she took her habit, wiped her face clean and said, "Well, that's for me. That's for my humility. Now how about something for the children?"

And he gave her some money.

I tell that story because at times we can feel like, you know, that people are just spitting in your face, that they don't want to hear about life, that they don't want to hear about marriage, they don't want to hear about the family. But you know what? Maybe that's just for our humility training. It's about the kids. It's about the next generation. It's about them, not about us, and we need to move this car forward. (Applause.)

I believe that we need to be pro-life and whole-life, that we need to stand for each and every life as being beautiful, unique, sacred, a child of a loving God, period. And it is sacred because it IS; no more, no less. It is. It is human, and that's why it's sacred, made in the image of God. And that applies to the child in the womb; that applies to somebody at the very end of life. That applies to the child in Darfur, the man in prison, the person in poverty, and, yes, even the immigrants to our land. Each has dignity, each is human, each is beautiful and each we will fight for. And they're beautiful.

And I think -- (applause) -- you can look at the numbers and just be overwhelmed by them. Over a million abortions a year in the United States, 4,000 today -- roughly 4,000 a working day that are killed. But those are numbers. Think about the people.

There's an elevator operator on Capitol Hill by the name of Jimmy. He's an adult with Down's syndrome. He is the favorite employee of the Capitol Hill. He's a wonderful young man. I hope you get to meet him sometime. He wears really ugly ties often; Orrin Hatch gives them to him. (Laughter.) I've gotten on to Orrin about that, but Jimmy likes the ties and he wears them. He's a beautiful young man. He was saying to me the other day -- he'll give me a high-five, he'll give me a hug, and then he -- he did that the other day, and he said, "Shh, don't tell anybody. My supervisor says I'm hugging too many people."

AUDIENCE MEMBERS: Aw.

SEN. BROWNBACK: And (I'm ?) going, "That's all right, Jimmy."

And yet, if you see a Down's syndrome child or person in this country today, I hope you give them a hug, because 90 percent are killed in the womb -- 90 percent. Four thousand a day is a number; Jimmy's a person. And so are those others that are being killed. And I'm saying, if it's too much of a struggle for an individual -- and I can understand; my wife and I have five children. Raising children's tough. And by the way, I think it takes a family, clearly, but also it takes every responsible adult we can get around children. So any of you who want to move to Kansas and help us out, we accept. (Laughter.)

But my point here is is that this is a person. And I haven't met a Down's syndrome person, child or otherwise, that isn't the centerpiece of their family, and we're killing them before they get here. And if it's too tough for the family, don't kill them; we'll put them up and we'll get them adopted. We can get children adopted, and we'll do these sort of things. And that's what we need to do. (Cheers, applause.)

And I even have a bill, working with Ted Kennedy on this, to adopt -- establish a national registry of people willing to adopt Down's syndrome children. And that's what we ought to be doing, and that's what we can do, not kill them. (Applause.)

Or there's another face I want to introduce you to. It's a little child by the name of Chenyi Dan, a little girl I met in China at 18 months of age.

She'd been dropped off at an orphanage by a mother who had fought through a system in China to have this child -- a mother that had to go through -- and rather than getting an abortion that was paid for by the state and forced by the state, somehow she fought through this system and had this child, and then dropped her off at the orphanage.

And with any good luck tonight, I'll be able to give that little girl a kiss goodnight. Her name is now Jennifer Joy Brownback. She's 9 years old and she's in a play today in Topeka, Kansas. (Cheers, applause.)

When we overturn Roe v. Wade -- (cheers, applause) -- when we overturn Roe v. Wade and can stand with moral authority around the world that abortion is a procedure -- in the procedure, what we are doing is killing an innocent child -- we will be able to stand in places like China and India and other places and say, killing children is wrong. It is wrong and it shouldn't be done. Roe v. Wade is a legal fiction built on a lie. That's what it is.

We've got a gentleman here in the audience that's representing Norma McCorvey, the Roe of Roe v. Wade, who wants that case overturned. He also represents Doe of Doe v. Bolton -- Sandra Cano -- and she wants the case overturned. Both those ladies have testified in front of my committee, when I was chairing the Constitution Subcommittee, and both of them said they -- their cases are built on lies, that Sandra Cano didn't even want an abortion and that Norma McCorvey said she was raped, when she wasn't, in the affidavit. So on these two pillar cases, that over 40 million Americans aren't here because of these pillar cases, that we have a legal fiction built on lies.

It's time to end this night of wrong. It's time to overturn it. And in every abortion, there are two victims. One's wounded; one's dead. We need to reach out to women in this situation and we need to end this. This is a great cause that's before us, and we can win this great cause. (Cheers, applause.)

We must rebuild the family here in Washington, D.C. In Washington, D.C., on an annual basis, 56 percent of the children are born out of wedlock. Across our nation, the number's 35 percent. We -- you can raise a good child in a single-parent family. There's no question about it, and we should celebrate it whenever it happens. But we know from all the statistics and we know in our heart -- the best place to raise a child is between a mom and a dad bonded together for life. That's the best place to raise a child, and we should pull for it. (Applause.) And we should say that that's what we want.

And marriage: Marriage is the union of a man and a woman. That's what it is. That's what it has been for thousands of years. This vast social experiment that's going on right now to redefine

marriage is one that the early results of this are catastrophic. These are not done in a cultural vacuum. When you redefine marriage -- and some people say, well, it doesn't hurt my marriage -- it hurts the overall system.

And look at countries that have redefined marriage. They have seen their marriage rates plummet over a period of time. You've got now countries in Northern Europe where in counties, 80 percent of the firstborn children are born out of wedlock -- 80 percent.

You take that sacredness of it out, you drive the marriage rates down. And then you have fewer children born into that best of settings, rather than more. Is that the direction we want to go? It is not the direction we want to go. And yet it's a tough fight, and none of us want to come across as mean-spirited or against anybody else, but this is for the future. This is for the culture; this is for the country.

And we need to stand for marriage. We need to change the welfare system. (Cheers, applause.)

We need to change the welfare system. Right now if you're on public assistance and you get married, you can lose up to 88 percent of your benefits. That's crazy. We should give people a bonus for getting married, not take away their benefits. (Cheers, applause.) That's how to grow it. We've got to rebuild the family. One of the key things for us in the future, we must have a strong family structure in this country. I mean it's like having a line in football. If you don't have a line, I don't care how good the backfield is, you can't do much. I mean this is the line; this is where we form people in this country, primarily in families. And we need a strong family structure, and you guys stand for it and fight for it and keep fighting for it. It is important that we do that.

And finally, and I want to say this, that we've got to stand for faith in the United States and for faith in America. Faith is a good thing; it's not a bad thing to be driven out of the public square. Faith is a good thing. (Applause.) I don't know how you understand America without understanding faith, how you understand the founding generation without understanding faith, how you understand Abraham Lincoln and read his words, where he says a house divided cannot long stand. I wonder where he got that idea. (Laughter.) Beautiful phraseology, isn't it?

Faith. How do you understand Martin Luther King and the civil rights movement, and what was his profession? He was a preacher. How do you understand this country and the great movements that have taken place without understanding faith? The separation of church and state does not mean the removal of faith from the public square. It is not that. (Cheers, applause.)

Now, some would say there's no role for faith in the public square or in government, there's no role for it whatsoever and should be no role for it, and in a pluralistic society, we can't involve any a faith. And I want to submit to you that that view of government and governance has been tried, and it's failed. The biggest threat of the last half of the 20th century was atheistic communism. This was government built just on reason of man and that somehow man was going to move himself into a perfected state in his governance, but no faith, no God involved in this.

That system utterly failed. It's man focused in on himself and not looking at the transcendent and not being pulled outward in love. It did not work then; it will not work now. Search the record of history. Any country that's walked away from God has walked away from its own future. That's not the way we want to go in this country. (Applause.) It's not the way we should go in this country.

And by the way, if anybody's questioning or asking about this, I am not for a theocracy. That's been tried in Western civilization a few centuries ago. It's bad for the church, it's bad for the faith, it's bad for government. That doesn't work. But what I'm talking about is a responsible role and being able to allow faith to flourish in the public square.

Let me give you a quick example of this. I've spent a couple nights in prison -- of my own volition -- I have not been convicted of anything -- (laughter) -- but to look at programs of faith-based prison programs. Right now the recidivism rate in prisons in the United States or people that have been incarcerated is two-thirds. Once you go to prison, two-thirds of the time you're going back. And yet some of these faith-based programs have been able to get that recidivism rate down to below 10 percent. (Applause.) Working and engaging the heart and the soul of the individual. (Applause.)

And matter of fact, I just read a poem before coming out here of a man I met on death row in Louisiana, in a state prison in Louisiana, and the poem was about how God had blessed him. And here was a guy that obviously had a lot of demons in his life and difficulty.

Faith is a good thing. It helps change us. It makes us better. It can be abused and misused, and it has been at times throughout history, but that doesn't mean you throw it out, that means you engage it in its authentic way and in its authentic fashion, not in a poor fashion. It means that you really, truly live the faith, the faith of love and joy and peace.

One that I got to see in a person that's been a lodestar for my life, I mentioned her at the outset, was Mother Teresa -- an amazing lady. I met her towards the end of her life. She received the Congressional Gold Medal here and died within a year later -- not because she got that, I might want to add. (Laughter.) It was very interesting. When she received it, her order, they called and said, "You know, can we melt this gold down and give it to the poor, because we'd like to be able to help the poor with the gold medal itself." We said, "Yeah, sure, you can do whatever you want, but I'd suggest you auction it off instead of melt it down. It will be worth more as an auctioned-off item." But they didn't care about the medal, they cared about the poor. And it was an authentic faith.

And I remember meeting her and seeing her, and a frail lady, and wondering, what's the power that's here? This lady wasn't five foot tall, and she cared for millions around the world. I went to put her in her car as she was leaving, and just, you know, was amazed at who she was. She grabbed my hand and she said three words four times. She said, "All for Jesus. All for Jesus. All for Jesus. All for Jesus." (Applause.)

It was a beautiful, authentic faith, a faith radically lived, pouring through her, that cared for millions of people. I mean, that's what we should do. People should see love and joy and peace

and truth in our lives. That's what we need to do. That's what we need to do more of, and live that in the public square and be the salt and the light and carrying that around.

And we need to do that, and that's our calling for us to do -- an authentic faith. (Applause.)

This -- let me just say, in conclusion, this is a great nation, and I believe in American exceptionalism, that this is a special place. Tony Blair made that speech on the Senate floor, on the House floor, at a joint session of Congress not long after 9/11. He came here, and in one of the sidebars to his speech, he said: You know, I know right now somebody in New Mexico (sic; Nevada) or Idaho is saying, "Why is so much required of America, and why now?" To which he responded, as I think only a Brit probably could, because it's your time, and it's your destiny.

And I think this is our time, and I think this is our destiny; and that to whom much is given much is required; and that that is the nature of where we are; and that we are great because we are good, and if we ever lose our fundamental goodness, we will surely lose our greatness; and so that the core is the core. (Applause.) It's the heart. And it's living that authentically.

Each of us are placed on this Earth for a reason and a short season. No matter how long life is, it's short. Ours is to present the truth in love, to live it, and to fight for the good, carry the fight on.

God bless you all. Thank you for what you do. Bless America. (Applause.)

(END)