

An Appeal To My Fellow Pastors *By Chuck Baldwin*

November 6, 2007

This column is archived at
http://www.chuckbaldwinlive.com/c2007/cbarchive_20071106.html

Recently, Iowa pastors gathered to hear my presentation in Des Moines on behalf of Republican Presidential candidate Ron Paul. After listening to me, they then heard ten-term Republican Texas Congressman Ron Paul himself.

Consider how Congressman Paul's message impacted Pastor Jim Hartman of the Assembly of God church in Conrad, Iowa. "I've been supporting Mike Huckabee, but I would say I'm leaning real strong toward Ron Paul." Hartman supported President Bush four years ago and explained, "Up until the last six months I had not allowed myself to imagine that we'd been let down by Bush." As for Iraq, he said, "I don't think we were prepared to understand that culture and to work with that culture." He said he now feels "humble and I feel kind of bad that I haven't done a better job of being faithful to Ron Paul's kind of integrity." [Source: MSNBC, Oct. 30, 2007]

Integrity: that is the issue drawing millions to Ron Paul, including young people. The night before I spoke, nearly 700 students gathered at Iowa State University in Ames to hear Dr. Paul. One of those students wrote me recently. His name is Nathan Rockman. He wrote, "As a columnist for the Iowa State Daily here on campus, I have seen first hand what can be described as Ron Paul fever. Since Dr. Paul visited this past Friday, his message of freedom and liberty has been spreading through campus like wildfire . . ."

Ron Paul doesn't recruit artisan spin writers and bloggers to wear down those who might question his past dealings. He doesn't need to. There are no missing hard-drives, ethics violations, and taxpayer funds used for personal use that need to be spun away. He still refuses to participate in the lucrative Congressional pension fund and returns a portion of his Congressional office budget back to the U.S. Treasury each year.

This kind of integrity moved Pastor Hartman, the students at Iowa State University, and many more like them.

Ron Paul has been fighting for the right to life from the beginning of his public career. Dr. Paul is rock-solid on pro-life. After all, he has helped over 4,000 women deliver their babies into the world in his obstetrics practice in Lake Jackson, Texas. He proposed the "Sanctity of Life Act of 2005" (and 2007), which would require that "human life shall be deemed to exist from conception, without regard to race, sex, age, health, defect, or condition of dependency." Has he recently discovered these pro-life convictions? Not at all. Congressman Paul introduced the Human Life Amendment in Congress in his very first term of Congress, a couple of years after *Roe v. Wade* was first handed down.

Is Ron Paul a libertarian, as some use in a throw-away line, often intended to move the listener to discard him without thought? Yes, on areas of fiscal, economic and judicial liberty, he is. But, he is also a social conservative and a Constitutionalist.

Ron Paul's priorities are right with marriage. He and his wife, Carol, have been married for more than fifty years. He believes marriage should be between a man and a woman and defends that principle with his vote, where and when he has the Constitutional authority to do so. For example, Dr. Paul strongly supports the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). Candidly, though, Ron Paul does not believe (and neither do I) that the U.S. Government needs to be defining that which God has already defined in His Word.

Where pastors often become confused about Ron Paul is that when he is resisting the unconstitutional centralization of our federal government, he is often perceived as being anti-family. Many in these pro-family movements themselves have been co-opted into believing that the solutions to our family problems come in the form of more unconstitutional federal legislation and programs. And when one does not agree with these unconstitutional remedies, they conclude that he or she is "anti-family." Such people mean well but are confused.

America would be much better off if we Christian pastors taught the need for Christ-honoring resistance--at the local level--to anti-family federal intrusions. We should call on our congregations to vote out of office any judge who passes rulings designed to pervert the Biblical family. That doesn't take a Constitutional amendment. It just takes courageous pastors and people who understand that judges, too, must respect the Constitution and our Christian heritage.

In fact, adherence to the Constitution protects our freedom of speech and assembly; our freedom of worship; our right to keep and bear arms; our right to a trial by jury; the right to be secure in our own homes against police overreach; our right to witness for Christ in public, as a Christian; the right to own property; the right to not be deprived of life or property without due process of law; the right to face our accusers, and the right to keep government local and limited.

Keeping government local and limited is the cornerstone doctrine of American government. Ron Paul understands this more than any other candidate running today.

Most of the problems that we are now dealing with socially, culturally, financially, etc., stem from America abandoning the basic founding principle that "the government that governs least governs best."

Accordingly, America's commitment to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness has been (and is being) systematically stripped from us--not by State legislatures, but mostly by agencies of the federal government.

Consider how it has been federal courts that have banned prayer in school, and legalized abortion and homosexual marriage. Even in the liberal State of Massachusetts it was the courts (along with a compliant liberal governor, Mitt Romney), that forced acceptance of homosexual marriage upon the people.

The solutions to these problems do not reside in more federal legislation. All that does is strengthen the scope and power of the federal judiciary.

The only ones who have anything to fear from Ron Paul are those who believe in Big Government.

You see, Ron Paul is actually calling on us pastors and Christians to stop seeing the federal government as one "in whom we live and move and have our being." Jesus Christ is our Savior and Lord, not the federal government. Have we not, in a material way, set up the federal government as our functional Lord and Savior? When we look to the federal government to solve our moral and spiritual problems, that is exactly what we are doing.

When it comes to the war in Iraq, I firmly believe that Christian conservatives have been duped by the neocons. Dr. Paul--an Air Force veteran and proponent of a strong national defense--opposed the unprovoked and pre-emptive invasion of Iraq, and rightly so. Time has certainly vindicated Dr. Paul's principled position. There was a much better way to deal with al-Qaeda.

Soon after 9/11, Congressman Paul introduced H.R. 3076, the September 11 Marque and Reprisal Act of 2001. According to Paul, "A letter of marque and reprisal is a constitutional tool specifically designed to give the president the authority to respond with appropriate force to those non-state actors who wage war against the United States while limiting his authority to only those responsible for the atrocities of that day. Such a limited authorization is consistent with the doctrine of just war and the practical aim of keeping Americans safe while minimizing the costs in blood and treasure of waging such an operation."

This is precisely what President Thomas Jefferson did when America's ships were confronted with Barbary pirates on the high seas.

If the United States government had listened to Ron Paul, we would not have lost nearly 4,000 American soldiers and Marines, spent over \$1 trillion, and gotten bogged down in an endless civil war from which there is no equitable extraction. Furthermore, had we listened to Dr. Paul, Osama bin Laden would no doubt be dead, as would most of his al-Qaeda operatives, and we would be less vulnerable to future terrorist attacks, instead of being more vulnerable, which is the case today.

One thing that Pastor Hartman brought up in our meeting in Iowa was the sentiment of many Christians and pastors to defend Israel. Dr. Paul stated that he did not believe that we do Israel any favors and we actually weaken Israel by our constant meddling and intervention. I agree.

Ron Paul is not Israel's enemy. And neither is he the enemy to Christian liberty and constitutional government.

Ron Paul's non-interventionist and constitutional foreign policy approach would help, not hurt, Israel to resolve tensions with their neighbors. Remember, Israel has more nuclear missiles to defend themselves than all of the Middle East nations combined. Believe me, Israel knows how to defend itself. And know this: America's constant meddling curses Israel more than it blesses.

Also consider this: according to published reports such as this one in the Houston Chronicle <http://www.chron.com/disp/story.mpl/politics/5223477.html>, Ron Paul is receiving more donations from military personnel than any other Presidential candidate in either party. Think seriously about this. Our active duty and retired military personnel clearly endorse with their own contributions Ron Paul's non-interventionist position above all others.

In the end, if the candidate is a sincere Christian, he will all the more readily obey his or her oath to preserve, protect, and defend the Constitution of the United States. After all, does not our Lord tell us that our yea is to be yea and our nay is to be nay? In other words, genuine believers are to be true to their word. How, then, could a true Christian make a promise before God and the American people to preserve, protect, and defend the U.S. Constitution and then turn around and ignore that promise?

Ron Paul lives his Christian faith and takes his oath to the Constitution seriously. What more could we ask for in a Presidential candidate?

Every Christian pastor should seriously consider Congressman Ron Paul. Here is his website: <http://ronpaul2008.com>

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