

Congressman Jim Jordan

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 27 August 2017

Preacher: Jim Jordan

[0 : 00] Appreciate Jim and Polly Jordan worshiping here with us at Grace for many years. And every now and then we prevail upon him to give us a kind of an update and let us know what's happening to keep you informed.

Because only by understanding and knowing what's taking place can you take an intelligent position about anything. So without any further ado, I'm just going to ask Jim if he will come forward.

And if you want a Q&A, I think they'll be prepared to handle that if you want to do that at the time. So thank you so much. We appreciate you being here. We started coming to Grace Bible Church when I was, I think, seven years old.

And when you sit where you sit and you're part of this church, there are certain principles, certain concepts that you just can't help but learn. You learn about God's sovereignty and the certain attributes that God has.

You learn that grace is God's unmerited favor. And that while we were yet sinners, he sent his son who came, bled, died, and rose again for us. And it's not earned.

[1 : 11] It's not deserved. It's for sinners like me. And that's what makes it amazing. You learn, I think we learn this more from Mrs. Wiseman, probably in junior church. You learn that there's this, when you become a believer, there's this struggle between the old nature and the new nature.

And the older I get, the more I learn that that is a daily, minute-by-minute, moment-by-moment struggle. But probably the one thing, the one principle you learn most when you attend this church is that when you're looking at Scripture and you're trying to figure out what's going on, there's one thing that is most important.

What is that one thing that Pastor always talks about that's most important when you're trying to figure out what's being said in Scripture? That's what someone said, right? It's context, right?

Context is always important. And I get the privilege in my work in Congress, I get to sit on certain committees where context is critical because we're always looking at the latest scandal, the latest what we think is wrongdoing done by someone in government.

I'm on the Judiciary Committee. I'm on the Government Oversight and Reform Committee. I served when it was in existence on the Benghazi Committee. So context is important.

[2 : 25] You know, who's, in Scripture, it's who's the author, who they write into, what are the facts surrounding that, where are they from, where the person is receiving the message. Same thing applies when you're trying to get to the bottom of certain things you're looking into, certain potential crimes, potential wrongdoing you're looking into.

And, in fact, I think many times it's all those questions that journalists are trained to ask. You know, what's happening, where is it going on, when did it occur, who's involved.

But I think many times the most important question is why. Why did those, when we're looking at things in some of these committees, we put together a timeline. And we look at, well, this is a critical thing that took place, a critical fact.

And we ask, you know, what happened before, what happened after, and why did those things occur in the order, in the sequence they did. In fact, we had, just four weeks ago when we left Congress, before the August, traditional August recess, on the Judiciary Committee, we passed a resolution asking for certain documents relative to Clinton, former Secretary Clinton last year, Mr. Comey, Ms. Lynch, who was former Attorney General, some of the things dealing with Clinton Foundation.

We passed this resolution out of the committee, a big fight in the committee between us and the Democrats. And I gave a little speech in committee, and I started off with that fundamental question. Why, in the summer of 2016, why would the Attorney General of the United States tell the FBI Director of the United States to go call the Clinton investigation a matter, not an investigation?

[4 : 00] Why would she do that? What could be the reason? I mean, last time I checked, James Comey wasn't Director of the Federal Bureau of Matters, right? Why would they do it?

The summer of 2016, why would the Justice Department think it was appropriate to mislead the American people and tell them something that, in fact, was not true? It was clearly an investigation.

Why, last summer, why would the Attorney General of the United States, one day before the Benghazi report is going to come out, three days before Secretary Clinton is going to be interviewed by the FBI, why would the Attorney General meet with the former President, Bill Clinton, on the tarmac in Phoenix?

Why would that happen? I mean, what could be the reason? Why, if you saw this story two and a half weeks ago, why, this is in the Daily Caller, why, in the aftermath of that meeting, in the days that followed, when Attorney General Lynch was communicating with the public relations people at the Justice Department, why would she not use her real name, Loretta Lynch, why would she use an alias, Elizabeth Carlisle?

Why would she do that, right? I mean, if you're just talking about grandkids in golf, why the need to use a fake name? So the why question is important. It seems to be pretty clear what was going on.

[5 : 16] What was going on in the summer of 2016 that was kind of important in this country? Anyone know what was going on in the summer of 2016, right? Pretty big election, right? I mean, I said in committee, you know, we got all this focus on potential Russian influence on the American electoral process.

How about the fact that the Obama administration's Justice Department definitely tried to influence the election? And so this why question is important. I want to explore that some this morning as we set a context.

And the context is, frankly, what Pastor just read. What's really happening in this country and the attack on those fundamental principles that I think make us a great nation in the first place. I mean, we didn't coordinate, but what he read is exactly the broader context and framework I want to get into.

And then we'll talk about some of the issues we're going to deal with when we get back in session in a week and a half. And then, as Pastor said, I'll be happy to have leave time for you to ask any questions.

You all know how this works. Some of you are stuck with me as your congressman. Most of you get the privilege of having Warren Davidson as your congressman, who is a good man. And Pastor's willing, sometime we'll get Warren to come here.

[6 : 27] His testimony is powerful. But we'll save plenty of time for questions because even if you're not stuck with me, you still pay my salary. So we always will save time for that.

But that why question, you know why it's so important? Because it goes to that when people in police work and prosecutors, the why question is really gets to what?

What's the key word we always talk about? We always, you know, you see gets to motive, right? What's the motive for these actions and activities that we see happening? I heard this guy speak the other day and it reminded me again when I was a kid.

Some of the folks my age or older here will remember the, remember Columbo, the detective stuff? Yeah, remember this? And he always had that, he's sort of this quirky kind of guy, at least the way I remember.

And he'd be talking to someone who you knew was probably a bad guy and had a little question and answer period. And he'd always start to walk away and have one more question. It was typically a why question, like why if this happened, you know.

[7 : 27] So that why is, I think, is critical to understand. So it seems to me the fundamental question about, when we think about this broader context, again, gets to what Pastor read about.

But the fundamental question hasn't changed. The fundamental question is, are we free or not? It has been the question since 1776 and I think remains the question today. Will we be that country that continues to recognize what the Declaration actually said?

I know I've read this, we've talked about this many times. You know, we hold these truths to be self-evident, all are created equal, endowed by our Creator with certain inalienable rights and among these life, liberty, pursuit of happiness. Will we continue to be a nation that says you can chase down your goals and dreams, you as an individual?

We've got right now this whole focus on group politics and group identity. You as an individual, will you have the liberty and the freedom to pursue happiness, to pursue those objectives, those things that have meaning and significance to you and your family?

Will you continue to have that ability? And as Pastor said in his, I think, the second statement he just read, he talked about this equal versus free, right? The truth is, we're not all equal.

[8 : 42] And, you know, I'm short, we've got a son-in-law who's 6'9". We are not equal in any way. You know, some people have certain jobs and make more money.

It's just, we're not equal in lots of things, but we're equal in the fundamentals. The idea that we're all created in God's image and we all have these inalienable rights to pursue happiness, to chase down goals and dreams, the right to live.

Those are the, when the founders wrote this, that's what they were getting at, those fundamental concepts, fundamental freedoms that we have.

And if you think about just what we've seen in the last two weeks, it seems to me that basic concept is now under attack. You know, you look at what happened in Charlottesville, and that was, I mean, look, everyone understands, these folks who started this rally, there is no place for that evil mindset and racist, anti-Semitic focus that they have.

That is wrong. But some of the things we've seen in the aftermath of all that are scary. I saw this, I forget what show we were watching, but Paul and I were watching, and the days are, you know, two or three days afterwards, there was a gentleman from the Federalist Society who was on one of the, one of those shows, I think it was, I think it was Fox, but one of the shows on Fox, again, I don't know which one, but he made an interesting point.

[10 : 06] He said, first they tear down the monuments and burn the books, then they come for the people. Think about that. That's historically how it's been.

And you stop and think about it, the people they typically and oftentimes come for first are Jewish people and Christian people, right? It's scary when you see these, some of the monuments that were destroyed, Heritage had a piece I read the other day where you look at some of the monuments that were destroyed, some of them had nothing to do with the Civil War and with people who were, individuals who were part of the Confederacy.

Like Lincoln, you know, I mean, I guess he had something to do with the Civil War, but he wasn't part of the Confederacy. The Columbus statue was defaced. And this is a scary, earlier this summer, I thought about this too, when I was making some notes for this morning.

Earlier this summer, I had to fly to Denver. I think, cooked out one day, back the next, but was out for the Heritage Foundation. And finished the book on the way out, so I'm coming back home, and I got like a, I don't know, two and a half, three hour flight, wherever that flight is, and I'm like, I can't sit on the plane without having something to read.

It was, you know, it would drive me crazy. So I went to the bookstore there, and I was looking around, trying to figure some, you know, some book I wanted to read, and I saw 1984, Orwell's book. I don't know if any of you ever read the book.

[11 : 34] I had not. And you hear all these things about, you know, the reference in 1984 and Orwell's writing. We had read Animal Farm in high school, but I'd never read this, so I grabbed the book.

It's scary when you read that. It is not, frankly, not a fun read. Kind of a dark feel to it. But the attack on language that Orwell writes about, you can see it today.

And they, it's, to kind of neutralize and restrict the language so much, things that just weren't, you weren't permitted to say.

And, of course, the whole kind of facade of government, they call them the ministry of truth, was really all about lies and revising history.

The ministry of love was really the ministry about torture and what it did to people. Again, this broader context, I think, we find ourselves in.

[12 : 35] I think that's how we have to, as we're looking at these issues, understand the bigger picture. You think about, you think about the left right now, they, they control so much of, so much of our culture.

Obviously, they control Hollywood, right? They control, they control the mainstream press. They've got that. Academia, certainly. I think many of our, many of our mainline Protestant churches as well.

And, of course, Hollywood. And I think even something that's starting to emerge, in fact, there was some news about this this past week. You're seeing Silicon Valley, Google, Facebook, some of these, which are key parts of our culture today.

Again, largely controlled, largely controlled by the, by the left. And you see the, the left, I think, want to begin to control, even, even, even the military.

We had this, this is probably six, eight weeks ago now. We had a vote. A vote on the House floor. Vicki Hartzler, a member, a Christian lady from, a member from Missouri.

[13 : 55] Currently in the military, it's, there's this whole transgender issue. And, and currently in our military, taxpayers can actually have to finance surgery.

Changes, someone wants to change sex. Taxpayers have to finance. Vicki offered an amendment which said, look, we don't think taxpayers should have to, should have to pay for that kind of surgery.

And you would, I mean, you, you think that's pretty fundamental, pretty basic. The amendment lost, lost by seven votes. Every single, and I don't mean all this to sound party, or partisan, I'm just, this is what happened.

Every single Democrat voted against her amendment, and 23 Republicans voted against her amendment, and it did not pass. And you're thinking, wow, this is, again, I think sometimes the reason the left wants to get at the military as well and turn our military into some kind of big social experiment is because it undermines those fundamental things that the pastor talked about in that statement.

And I said to some of my buddies, I said, I said, I said, you think, I think the Russians and the Chinese and the North Koreans are worried about paying for surgery, this kind of surgery in their militaries?

[15 : 10] Or do you think maybe they're more focused on just making sure their military is equipped to do the job that militaries are supposed to do? So, in this, I think it's always important to understand where we're at.

And that why question of why does the left do these things and want this focus and this control on our culture, I think deep down it's because they fundamentally disagree with the key principles that made our country special.

We're at an event Thursday night in Nashville with four of my colleagues in the Freedom Caucus, four conservative buddies. Dave Bratt from Virginia made a great point. We talked about what makes America great.

There's lots of things we can talk about. I mean, there's all kinds of things that make us special. But the three big principles, the Judeo-Christian tradition, focus on the rule of law and free markets.

And what does the left try to attack? The Judeo-Christian tradition, the rule of law. I mean, think about it, right? There's lots of things that make voters, tick voters off.

[16 : 12] I mean, and they're frankly mad right now because I've been all over the fourth district the last four weeks talking to them. They're mad. Appropriately so. I knew they would be based on what we're not getting done in Washington. But a couple of things make them mad.

One is when politicians say one thing at election time, get in office and don't do it or do something else. And the other thing that makes them mad is it's double standard. The idea that there's one set of rules for us regular folk, but a different set of rules.

If your name is Clinton, call me Lynch or whoever, whoever's getting a better deal. That, that is not supposed to be, be how it works in this great country. It's supposed to be equal treatment under the law.

So when you have this attack on the rule of law, again, it goes to the foundation of what America is about. And then of course, this attack on, on, on free markets and on free enterprise and on fundamental economic liberty.

So I want to just, well, I'm going to, and I took too much time laying all that, I guess, but that's the context. I think we need to think about the issues that are going to confront us when we get back.

[17 : 11] And we got several. So once again, spend a little time talking about them. And then, like I said, we'll save plenty of time for you to ask questions. Of course, the biggest issue right now is, and it's been for seven and a half months is the healthcare issue.

You know, I think again, you see folks, want to, want to have more control over healthcare because it's one sixth of the American economy. Talk about free enterprise and, and free economies.

But the part that I think frustrates Americans the most is that, that, that idea that we told the American people we were going to repeal Obamacare and replace it with a more market centered approach.

And we have not got that done. You know, you think about four weeks ago, six Republican senators, six Republican senators voted against the very same bill, the exact same language they voted for 18 months ago.

Same sentences, same paragraphs, same comments, same everything. It was exactly the same, except the bill number at the top was different because it's a new Congress and you got to have a different bill number. I don't know how they can do that.

[18 : 17] I mean, and again, this is, this is the party I belong to. Doing, you know, I tell folks, I say this all the time whenever, whenever I'm interviewed, because I say, because I believe it, we make the job way too complicated.

The job, you remember Congress, what's your responsibility? Do what you said you would do. What's the contract and promise you made with the voters when they gave you the privilege to serve? Just go do that. But how, how six, Dick Army has a, Dick Army, former Republican majority leader, has a, has a good line.

He has lots of good lines, but one that I remember is he says, when we act like us, we win. When we act like them, we lose. And the idea is, act like you said you were going to when you, when you ran for the job.

Unfortunately, that did not take place. I think fundamentally from the get go, the strategy was flawed. The, the sort of the strategic and tactical decisions that were made. Seemed to me, and this is what, some of you know I belong to this group called the Freedom Caucus.

We actually, at the start of this Congress, introduced two bills. One was clean repeal. The same bill we voted on 18 months ago. Same bill we put on then President Obama's desk. I actually introduced that bill.

[19 : 31] Our colleague, Mark Sanford from South Carolina, introduced the replacement. And our idea was to do them at the same time, but do them in two pieces of legislation. Instead, what our leadership did is, they said, no, we're going to combine elements of repeal with elements of replace, and put that into one big ugly package.

And when you do that, by definition, you're, you've, you've ruined any chance of, of a bipartisan approach to, to fixing health care, because Democrats just fundamentally are not going to vote to repeal Obama.

This is, to them, it's, take, I mean, good or bad, to them it is just the most important thing in the world, this, this piece of legislation. So when we embarked on that strategy, we had to get it done with Republicans, and obviously we saw what happened.

It was a tough fight in the House. Many of us in the Freedom Caucus initially opposed the bill, because we didn't think it, again, was consistent with what we said we were going to do. through six, eight weeks of debate that were intense.

We believe we made the bill much better, and then we ultimately supported it. Voted for it on, I think it was May 4th, when, May 4th or 5th, when, when, when the bill passed. We thought the same process would, and it was ugly.

[20 : 42] We passed by one, passed by one vote. Then, that last vote was our colleague, Justin Amash from Michigan. I can remember Mark Meadows and I were standing by Justin. When, when the vote is tied, we're like, Justin, we kind of need you to vote yes on it.

And he did. And we thought maybe the same thing would, would play out in the Senate. And obviously we saw that, that it didn't. In hindsight, or frankly, it wasn't hindsight for us. We thought we should have, we thought we should have approached it this way to begin with.

I wish we'd have just done clean repeal. Remember when we were talking before inauguration day, there was all this talk about on January 20th, putting on President Trump's desk, the repeal bill. Remember that? Yeah, because we all thought that's what we're going to do.

We thought it was going to be the same thing we, we passed before. I wish we'd have done it that way. Then once you repeal it, now, now Democrats might work with us. And we could, we could focus on the things we think make sense in healthcare, like allowing interstate shopping for insurance, greater ability to use your health savings accounts, use your health savings accounts for premiums, and easier formation of association plans to give more purchasing power for groups so that they don't have to pay these, these higher premiums that we've been witnessing the last several years.

But unfortunately, that was not carried out. So I don't know what, I don't know where we head. The one thing I do know is what we currently have is just, it is not working at all. And it's for people who don't have a group or employer sponsored plan, large group or employer sponsored plan.

[22 : 11] If they're an individual buying an individual market, it is tough right now. I mean, think about the, I'd say the small business owner, Fred, the plumber, Tim and his wife are in their business and they got three kids.

Right now, that, to go just out on the open market in the individual market and buy a plan, it's about \$1,300 a month for a 10, \$12,000 deductible.

So something bad happens to your family. I mean, think if you're out 20, 25, \$26,000 before you get the first, first bit of benefit that, that has, we want to bring back affordable insurance and there's some things we may move in the question and answer period.

We can get to that. The other thing we'll be dealing with when we get back, of course, is the tax reform. Again, I think sometimes, um, the, the left, uh, why they're typically opposed to letting people keep more of their money is because it, again, letting people keep more of their money is freedom.

Letting you spend your, your resources on the, on the things you care about and your goals and dreams is, that's where we, I think should be focused. So we'll, we'll, this will be a big fight as well.

[23 : 15] I think we get it done. Um, that's, that's the goal is, is to get this legislation done by, into the calendar year. The big debate we're going to have is, is, is, it's Washington speak, but it's called revenue neutral to do tax reform in a revenue neutral way.

And I always tell folks, revenue neutral is a fancy way of saying, the tax burden stays the same. We just shift around who pays what. And my experience under that approach is, the big corporations with the high paid lobbyists get a pretty good deal.

And middle class families get a pretty bad deal. The other thing with revenue neutrals, it, it sort of goes, I just don't buy the premise. This idea that somehow letting you keep more of your money is a cost to government.

I just don't accept that. It seems to me letting you keep more of your money is just that letting you keep your money. It's not the government's money to begin with. So that'll be a, a pretty intense fight.

The other thing that scares me about revenue neutral, revenue neutral is a zero sum game, uh, by definition. And again, in those zero sum games, the people in Washington who become the most powerful are the lobbyists.

[24 : 24] Because they, they have to be one of the winners for their respective, uh, clients. And I think that is, um, not healthy in the long run. I've seen how it plays out.

Certain committee chairmen and, and leadership folks seem to get a lot of money in their campaign accounts in the course of that debate. I don't know that it's always, always healthy. Um, finally, the last issue I'll mention, then we'll, like I said, get to your questions is, uh, and I may have talked about this early in the summer when, when I had a chance to, to visit with you.

The, um, I do think it's critical we do welfare reform. Um, and I'll try not to bore you with all the, the, the, the numbers here, but, and, and why, but we got a \$20 trillion debt.

It's as serious as it can. This \$20 trillion is even by, as I say, even by Washington standards is a lot of money. And, um, in order to deal with that debt, we do have to, in my judgment, reform, um, the tax code.

We do have to deal with the regulatory burden we put on entrepreneurs and job creators. And we certainly have to deal with health care. Uh, but even if we do all that, I don't know that we can get the growth rate we need to deal with the \$20 trillion.

[25 : 38] We got to, we got to, during the Obama years, we, we averaged about a percent, percent and a half, uh, annual GDP, uh, annual growth rate. By comparison, if, if you think back, and we conservatives always talk about the Reagan years, we're talking about them because we like them, and good things happening.

1985, first year of Ronald Reagan's second term. Um, anyone want to hazard a guess at what the annual growth rate was that year? Anyone have an idea? Seven and a half percent.

I mean, seven, I mean, gee, it becomes a lot easier for politicians to solve debt and deficit problems when you're growing at seven and a half percent. I would just love to get the three, three and a half percent, but I'm not convinced.

And there are lots of sharp, you know, smarter people than I who aren't convinced either that you can get to three, three and a half percent annual growth rate just with tax reform, um, regulatory reform and healthcare reform, because you also need, in my judgment, you need a labor supply.

And right now we have, I hear this every single day as I'm traveling across our district from employers. They can't find enough people to work. And it's, it's largely a cultural thing and it's largely the wrong incentives sent from the federal government to folks in our social welfare programs.

[26 : 55] Um, we have today in America people between 18 and 64, the working age population. We have the lowest labor participation rate we've had since World War II. Only 61% of the people in the working age category are actually working.

And a lot of that is driven by the huge growth we've seen in our social welfare programs from 20 some million in food stamps eight years ago to 49 million in food stamps today.

Those are the things that have to change. So we, in fact, we've met with the president on, Mark Meadows and I met with the president about how critical we think this is. Well, for reforming, again, it's a, it's a, it's a cultural thing.

Um, just, I read something not too long ago where the author said, too many kids today go to bed at night and never with their body tired because they did a hard day's work.

Just, I mean, you think about when we all grew up and my dad made us mow 25 country lawns. I think I've, I think I've, I think I've told you before someone will call the house and we try to get to the phone first because if dad answered it and they were asking for, you know, Hey, we hear your boys mow lawn.

[28 : 00] Will they mow? He, he never turned down any of them. Right. We were like, no, we don't want any more. We had to bail hay for, I bailed hay for Polly's daddy. He was a, you do, you bail hay all day long. You go to bed and you, when you close your eyes, you see hay bales, right?

You're like, but unfortunately we don't, too many kids. Like I, I walked, this is how old I'm getting now. Polly laughs at me, but I walked into the, just a couple of Saturdays ago and we, we were running to town just do some errands and we stopped at the bank.

We had to cash a check. She just sat in the car and I ran in and this is a bank we've been at for, I don't know, since we've been married, a little bank in Urbana. And, uh, we go in there and there were two kids, uh, behind the counter, uh, and no one else in the bank.

And I walked in, the first thing I said, hello. And they didn't even say hi to me, uh, which is, you know, fine, maybe whatever. They were kind of talking and, and, and there were two, again, two guys there, no one else in the bank.

And yet one of them had the, you know, next window please sign in front of his. I'm like, well, why, what are you doing? You know, like, and then this, this definitely shows how old I'm getting because the, the young man who waited on me, um, he had like the long hair with the ponytail and like five earrings and, and wasn't shaved and, and, and, and had like, didn't even have like on a collar shirt.

[29 : 22] I'm like, I walked out and probably just started laughing. I said, you know, I said, I'm getting old. I just, but there's this, there's a cultural thing in a, in a, in a, in a work ethic that, um, again, I said this earlier, lots of things make our country special.

Um, those, those big principles and concepts, but, one of the other things that makes us a great country is this idea that there's an American work ethic. Americans work. And so we, we've got to design policies and this will be a big focus when we get back.

And this is a bill that I've introduced on the house side, Senator Lee on the Senate side, which says if you're going to get a benefit, you have to do something to get it. If you're able bodied, we look, everyone wants to help the single mom with kids, but think about our welfare system right now, particularly the message it sends to the single mom out there.

Don't get married. Don't get a job. Have more kids. You get more money. Completely backwards. Completely backwards. And today, frankly, you can get, you can get free phone, free housing, food stamps, uh, free medical care, daycare for your child.

And, and again, Americans are the most generous people on the planet. We want to help people who truly need it. But at some point, there has to be this idea that you have to do something if you're able bodied to receive that benefit.

[30 : 41] Two states have done this. And again, that is straight from, you guys, that's straight from, that's a biblical and scriptural principle. Um, two states have required work for their food stamp recipients. Alabama and Maine.

Maine saw an 80% reduction and Alabama saw an 85% reduction. So, simply, because simply what happens is they say, well, if I have to do this, some job training, some volunteer work at the non-for-profit, if I have to do that, I'll just forego the benefit and I'll go get a job.

Imagine that. Right? So, we think this is, this is critical for the country as, uh, as we move forward. There'll, there'll be one other big debate. I know I said I'd stop at that, but the, the, the border security wall will be a big debate.

We need to do this again. This is something we promised the American people. It was a central element, um, a central element in the campaign, um, or issue in the campaign, I should say.

And, it, it needs to happen. When that happens, it may, it may be the fight in September. It may be, we may do a short term spend, and so it may be a fight at the, at the, uh, later in the year or early in January.

[31 : 44] But I do think that debate's going to happen. And it'll be in the context of this whole shutdown issue. And as I said to several reporters this week, if, if Chuck Schumer thinks it's more important not to fund our troops and, and to stop a Republican House, Republican Senate, and Republican president from doing what the American people elect them to do, then let's have that debate.

And I'll, I'll, I'll debate Chuck Schumer anywhere he wants to meet on, on that, on that issue. Um, all right. I see it's already 10 after. This always goes fast up here, Pastor.

So I, I wanted to say plenty of time. So you got 20 minutes, uh, to ask questions. And, and, and I'll, I'll attempt to respond. This is like, oh, we got the powerhouse boys here.

Getting the mice. Good for that. These guys are best. Oh, okay. You got them. Okay, great. All right. We got one in the back there too.

Okay. Okay. Mr. Neff is going to be the first, first question. I have got a couple, uh, letters from the conventions of state committee proposing amendments.

[32 : 53] Yeah. Would you explain to the congregation what that's all about? Whether you're in favor of it, where it will work or whatever, because it sounded good. Yeah. There's always a risk when you, when you come together to attempt to change the constitution.

And there are good conservatives who are nervous about that, but the founders in their wisdom wanted to give the people, we, the people an avenue to make changes when they thought it was necessary.

I would argue that a \$20 trillion debt is the circumstance that warrants doing this. So I'm in favor of it. If the focus is solely on dealing with that debt burden and moving in a direction that would require a balanced budget amendment to be added to the United States constitution.

Again, \$20 trillion is, we're too much economics here, but when your debt to GDP is one to one, that's when it gets dangerous. And that's where we're at. You don't have to take spending in a negative direction.

Like if spending continues to go up, you just got to, you just got to bend the curve down and grow at a better rate. That's the form of, because, in fact, one of the things I think I didn't mention this issue, because there's so many we could get into, but the debt ceiling issue is coming up when we get back in September.

[34 : 05] We want the first things we deal with. If we're going to increase the limit on the credit card, it seems to me we should deal with the underlying problem, the \$20 trillion debt, some kind of structural, some kind of real, real way to address that.

What I would advocate is capping spending going forward as a percentage of GDP so that government doesn't ever continue to get, become a bigger portion of our overall economy. So if you cap it at its historic level, it's typically around 20% government spending of annual gross domestic product.

Let's put that in law so it doesn't keep growing. Big time under Obama. It's starting to come back a little bit now, but I would argue \$20 trillion debt warrants taking some pretty drastic action.

Gary. Is there any chance at all of this repeal and then replace and repeal first? We'll see. I certainly hope so.

You know, we all know this. This was a huge issue in the 10 election, 12 election, and, excuse me, 10 election, 14 election, and 16 election. So, I certainly hope so, but one of my colleagues said, he's not sure if the United States Senate could pass a Mother's Day resolution right now.

[35 : 30] You know, it's tough. So, we'll just have to wait and see. What we did as a Freedom Caucus, we introduced this three weeks ago. I had to go back for what they call a pro forma session.

So, Congressman Perry, Congressman Garrett, and I introduced what's called a discharge petition. Again, it's a simple way to go around your leadership and try to bring to the floor that very thing I talked about.

The bill I introduced back at the start of this Congress, the clean repeal, and if your leadership won't put it on the floor, what you can do is you can gather signatures, and if you can get a majority of the House to sign this petition, then the bill automatically comes to the floor, and you have a vote on it.

So, we started that process. You're not supposed to do that, frankly, when you're in the majority party, because it's sort of a way to go around your leadership, but we felt the circumstances warranted that in light of the seventh month debate we've been through and what we had told the American people we were going to do.

So, we'll keep pushing that, but you won't get the signatures unless the American people tell their member to sign that petition. I think when we get back in a week and a half, you're going to see a lot of people sign it, because my guess is my colleagues all across the country have been hearing the same thing from their constituents that I've heard from the good folks in the 4th District of Ohio, and that is like, get this done.

[36 : 54] So, we'll begin building, and if we get close, that's when the conservative press begins to kick in and talk radio begins to kick in, and that's how you can build the momentum to get the signatures to bring it up for a vote, and if we could pass it in the House, then suddenly those six senators in the Senate, six Republican senators who voted one way 18 months ago and voted different four weeks ago, can say, wow, now it is just six people stopping what the American people elected us to do.

So, we will push that process, but we'll have to see. We got two here. That's working hard back and forth.

All right. About the wall. Yeah. All right. So, democracy wanted to destroy the Berlin Wall, right?

But now we want to build one here. Do you think our immigration laws are good enough? I mean, they always worked, and years ago, David Duke ran, remember him?

And he wanted to isolate us from Mexico, too. It's like, what kind of message is that showing the world? Yeah. No, it's certainly not about isolation.

[38 : 20] It's not about any type of racism or anything like that. It's about a sovereign, a sovereign nation should have the right and the ability to know who's coming and who's leaving their country.

By definition, that's where the country is. If we want, if you remember during the campaign, this was in one of the WikiLeaks emails, the Podesta emails that came forward, Secretary Clinton had given a talk behind closed doors, somehow got public, tape was leaked, or email was leaked about it, where she said she wanted a borderless hemisphere.

Well, that's not what the American people want. That's not what a sovereign nation state's about. So it's simply about controlling, understanding as a country, you have the right to know who's coming and who's leaving.

We want to welcome people. We are the most welcoming nation on the planet. And people want to come here because of that fact, because you can set goals, you can work hard, and you can accomplish things.

So we want to maintain all that. But I do think it's important to understand who's coming in your country. And now, particularly in light of, you know, again, the context we find ourselves with the terrorists, you know, terrorism the way it is, and with this gang activity, this MS-13, which is very serious, I think all the more reason to, to build that border security wall, and understand what's happening on your border.

[39 : 49] As you probably have heard, there's been a marked reduction in illegal crossings in this new administration. And I think that's a testimony to the fact that we're going to enforce the law, and we're going to treat people the way you're supposed to be treated under the law.

So, in effect, working, right? Why don't we enforce the law instead of having the American officials pay for a law?

Yeah. Well, I think part of it is because that was a huge issue in the campaign. And the American people elected two individuals running for president. One says border security wall.

One says not. The one who said border security wall gets elected. That's sort of how it works. You're supposed to do that. Yeah, and you want to do it in a smart, intelligent, proper way. We passed legislation that's waiting in the Senate, part of the appropriations process, which starts some funding for the wall, small amount.

And I think Chuck Schumer is going to have a big fight over that and not going to support it. So, we're going to have, we are going to have this debate. And it will revolve around the appropriation process and a, and a shutdown, showdown type of scenario at some point.

[41 : 04] But the American people were very clear that they wanted this done. as evidenced by who they elected in the House, the Senate, and most obviously the White House. Hi, Congressman.

My question has to do with the fight against abortion violence in this country. And I kind of prefaced it. A few years ago, I read the book, 12 Years a Slave.

And one of the, one of the things that really impacted me in that book was, I forget the guy's name, but during his time in slavery, he made the observation on how slavery affected the slave owners, the slave holders.

And that act of barbarism made them barbaric. It, it really had an impact on their character of those people. I see the same thing in our country today when it comes to abortion violence.

You know, we see such a violent culture surrounding us. And I think it has a direct relation to the, the act of abortion, the abortion violence that is so prevalent in our culture.

[42 : 09] I see a little bit of the battle at the state level. But at the federal level, what's, what's going on? I mean, Trump has made some promises.

I'm not sure how much, you know, I, I believed him, but at, at this point, I, I believe we're still continuing to fund Planned Parenthood at the same levels that Obama did. What kinds of things are going on in that arena?

No, great question. And, and we, in the healthcare bill that passed the house that, that died in the Senate four weeks ago, the, we did have a restriction on dollars, your tax dollars going to Planned Parenthood for the next fiscal year.

So that was a step in the right direction. I think some of the things you talked about culturally, you're right. I mean, I've had the opportunity to, to question Cecile Richards, who's head of Planned Parenthood Foundation.

And the, the, they just don't, they just don't see it. The way, the way we do. And it's, and it's sad. And I do think that is having an impact in the broader, broader culture.

[43 : 12] But we did have that prohibition on dollars, your tax dollars going to Planned Parenthood for the next fiscal year in the healthcare bill. But right now they continue to receive your money, which is in light of the videos.

This is, this is something that always bothers me because I feel like our leadership is not, many times they don't want to be as aggressive as I think we need to be. We had a hearing a few, I don't know, it was a couple of years ago, when the, when the first videotapes came out and, and showed what Planned Parenthood was up to.

They were repulsive, which is this, the attitude you talked about in your question is this cavalier attitude towards human life and actually selling fetal tissue and stuff we don't like to talk about.

We were, we had a hearing where we had Cecile Richards come in and what, in my mind, what's the best evidence we had to use in, in, in, in that hearing?

Seemed to me the best evidence were the videos themselves. You know, the old, the old idea that a picture is worth a thousand words. We had, we had the doctors at Planned Parenthood with their cavalier attitude, sipping wine, talking in, in the repulsive way they were.

[44 : 26] We had that evidence. Our leadership wouldn't allow us to use the videos. I had this long exchange with Cecile Richards where I asked her, I think I talked about, I asked her the why question.

I said, if you have done nothing wrong, why did the day after the first video come out, why did you issue an apology? If you now say these videos were heavily edited, they weren't, they weren't true, that, that, that, that, that, that, that, that, that, why did you issue an apology?

What were you apologizing for? Because last time I checked, you only apologize when you've done something wrong. If you've done nothing wrong, why did you issue an apology? And it would have been great because she, she, she wouldn't, she wouldn't answer the question.

It would have been great if I could have had the video up there and said, were you apologizing for this statement? And play back some of the statements made by those doctors that we all knew were just, that were ugly statements.

But unfortunately, leadership, it just, it drives me crazy because, I don't know, it's, my, my, you all know my background is in wrestling. And in wrestling, if you, if you stand around scratching your nose, you are not going to win.

[45 : 29] It just is not going to happen. You have to go on the offense. Like, defense does not win. And it's like, we, we have to go on the offense.

We, we seem like we always want to have these debates on, on their terms. Like, why? Just, let's go on the offense. Like, some, I've had colleagues tell me before, they'll say, well, if we do this, there's going to be a 30 second ad run against me.

And it's going to be, that's going to be a, you know, devastating ad in the campaign. I'm like, well, you get to run ads too, right? That's what a campaign is. They, they, they're going to say one thing. You get to, you get to make your argument.

That's how courtrooms work. That's how campaigns work. That's how debate works. So, but too often we're, we're afraid to go on the offense and make the argument. We think, well, we'll just, if we just keep our head down.

Look, one of the reasons I talked about where I think we're at is because we're at a moment in history where we cannot keep our head down. We have to do what these four wonderful young ladies sang about.

[46 : 29] We have to be a bright light fighting the good fight. I mean, we really do. It is, and it is not just, you know, the guys who are in elective, it is, it's we the people.

And I, I think we're at one of those moments. We, we're doing a series of hearings on the First Amendment. So, when I talk about freedom under attack, it's largely your right to speak, which is under attack.

And it's, it's, it's been happening, but it's been happening at a greater rate and the attacks are more frequent. We did a, we did a hearing. You got nothing better to do. Watch, watch the YouTube clips of these because they were funny.

We had Ben Shapiro, who is a brilliant young man, who goes on these college campuses and will take whatever the left throws at him. Jewish guy who is the smartest, I mean, just, he's amazing.

He came and testified. It's a little subcommittee that I get the privilege to share in. We're doing a series of hearings. The first one on, first hearing was on the Johnson Amendment, which is that amendment which says, pastors can't got to be careful what they say.

[47 : 27] Cause if it gets too political, they can lose their, the church can lose their taxes and status. We think that's an attack on the first amendment. We really do. Pastors should be able to preach whatever he darn well thinks is in the best interest, what the Lord's telling him to preach, what's in the best interest of his congregation.

And he shouldn't jeopardize his taxes and status or the grace Bible, the church's tax. So we had a hearing on that. That was our first. And the second one was four weeks ago where we had Ben Shapiro. And the funny guy was Adam Carolla, who's a libertarian guy.

He was hilarious. Talking about the attacks on free speech. You got these safe spaces on college campuses. If you're, if you're a conservative speaker invited to come speak, you get shouted down.

It's almost always conservative and libertarians who take the brunt of it. Every once in a while, a liberal will, but hardly ever, almost always conservatives and libertarians. And it's sad. Some of these things turn, Berkeley turned violent when, when Shapiro and Ann Coulter, have spoke at some of these places.

So this is important that we recognize. Again, first it's attack on speech. And then it's oftentimes, then it, then it's coming for the people.

[48 : 31] I'm sorry. I don't know. I got on my soapbox here. Back on the abortion issue. Any efforts as far as legal personhood? Yeah, there's a, there, I don't know the building, but the Trent Franks, a friend of ours, she's a member of the, a member of the Freedom Caucus too, from Arizona.

Trent is kind of our point guy on, on pro-life legislation. He has that bill. I believe there's, there's legislation by Steve King as well from Iowa.

So yeah, there are some, some bills. We are obviously going to get you the bill number. I believe it's Trent though. He's, he's a sponsor. God bless you. Thank you.

Thank you. Okay. They're back. Yeah. Also, our, our thoughts and prayers are with you because we realize you have a tough, tough job dealing with folks in Washington.

I would be very interested in the Republican party, the conservatives being far more aggressive. Yeah. In providing factual information for all of the liberal misleading statements, the news media's misleading statements.

[49 : 41] I think we need to be much more aggressive in providing that factual information to counter that. And when the folks at Berkeley go out in their masks and damage, riot, injure people, we have to come out against that.

We have to be very clear about the positions. Yeah. You know, the, the, one of the things I said, I think at the start here was when, when the founders put together this, those documents that started what I call this experiment in freedom that we, we enjoy the greatest country ever longest, most stable democracy, longest running Republic in history.

When they put it together, it was not about group politics. It was not about groups. It was about the individual. You as an individual have these unalienable rights that God gave us.

No other country. And so we have to, again, focus on that premise when we're making our argument, and that maybe not always go back to that, but we have to have that, I think, understanding.

Maybe I showed this before, but Gingrich made this point several years ago. When I was first in 20 some years ago, listen to Gingrich tapes when I was first running for office. And he talked about no country ever started from that premise.

[50 : 56] All the other countries, the closest country that to us is great Britain, but great Britain wasn't a bottom up model. It was a top down model. God gave power to the king, right? And the king over time gave it to the, to the knights and, you know, all these things in history, the round table.

And then, then it was the landholders. And then it was the merchants and the shopkeepers. And finally, it got down to the regular folk, the people. But in America, we said, no, no, that's, while we appreciate Magna Carta and the rule of law and everything we learned from Great Britain, America adopted a completely different model.

And we're the only country who's done so. First one to do it. Where we said, no, we, the people, loan power to government for what purpose?

To protect your fundamental liberties, your right to life, liberty, and to pursue your goals. And own property. And your right to speak freely and not be criticized for doing it. So, we always have to remember that, that fact when we're, and that to me, when you remember that, that's what should persuade us to be more offensive and go on the, go on the offense and defending, you know, Pence has a, Pence has a great line.

He says, I'm a conservative and I'm not mad about it. Right? We shouldn't be mad, but we got the truth on our side. Let's go make the case. Let's, and let's do it with a smile on our face because it's the truth, but let's do it in an aggressive and persuasive manner.

[52 : 21] And that's, that's what we try to do. And I think included in that, and that's why maybe I focus on this, this, this idea that I think we still need to investigate what took place last, last summer relative to the Clinton Foundation and Secretary Clinton and the Justice Department.

I think the American people deserve all the truth. If we're going to figure out what may or may not have happened with this Russian involvement in the election, let's, let's get, let's get it all out there. Let's give all the truth to the American people. You know, think, think about this fact.

I'm, I'm, I'm amazed by this. And again, it's the mainstream press doesn't want to cover some of these things, but James Comey, when he got fired, think about this. When he got fired, what's he do?

He leaks a government memo through a friend to the New York Times. And what was his goal? What was his objective? To create momentum for a special counsel, right?

He told us that. He's crazy enough to tell us that under oath. Right. And it worked. And of course, it's not just any special counsel. It's Bob Mueller, Jim Comey's best friend, his predecessor, his mentor.

[53 : 26] I mean, think about James Comey, the FBI director, was told by the attorney general of the United States, go call an investigation, a matter. he did it willfully, knowingly, intentionally, and he knew it was wrong when he did it.

And we're not going to investigate that. That drives me crazy. So, yeah, well, yeah, and I'm sorry. Now, I'll go a couple more. Now, I do want to read one thing that I think is.

I just wanted to ask you, in November, we're all going to be asked to vote on issue two. Yeah. Can you explain that a little bit? I haven't looked at that closely, but my just cursory look at it is, we should vote no.

It's basically price fixing. It says that, well, we all want prescription drug prices to come down. When the government says we're going to, we're going to set prices as economics 101, I always tell folks, I majored in wrestling in college, but you're supposed to get a degree.

So, I got one in economics. And the, the, one of the first principles you learn is whenever you fix the price, and it leads to scarcity.

[54 : 31] Just, just way, way economics works. So, I'm nervous about that. And you're seeing all kinds of groups that actually have a lot of respect for, who are coming out opposed to it here in Ohio.

And the other question is, you know, why is there this, who's pushing this and why are they doing it? I'm going to, I want to research that a little bit too, because again, it gets sort of some of the things Pastor read about in his statement, the financing behind some of the movement on the left.

I think that's important as well, but my, my gut says vote, vote against it. I'll try to get some more information. A few of you have asked me about that and I haven't, I just haven't looked at it closely because it's here at the state, but yeah, but, but, but I'll do that.

Okay. I got, we got time for a couple more and then I'll quit. Gary, you're doing too. We call that a filibuster in Congress, Gary. Sam, I am.

Yeah. Not quite. I just, maybe a comment from you, if you don't mind, I guess, relationship between the speaker and the freedom caucus. Yeah. But further, I get the feeling that the, all this argument back against Trump is more a protection of the swamp.

[55 : 40] than it is anything. Yeah. I think that there's a lot of swamp dwellers out there and people are protecting them and they're trying to do whatever they can to maintain that, what those advantages they have as part of the swamp.

Yeah. I think that, I think that, that is a real concern. I'll just say this. I've had the, the privilege of spending some time with the president.

Maybe I should have this with you earlier this summer, but my best friend in Congress is Mark Meadows. And Mark is very close with, with President Trump. But Mark and I had a chance, I guess six, seven weeks ago, we had lunch with him and it, it was, it was Mark, the president, Mr. Bannon, Mr.

Priebus, and myself. Kind of interesting that Mr. Bannon and Mr. Priebus are no longer there. I don't know what that means for Mark and I. But the, but it was, when you're around the president, we got to, I was shocked.

We got to spend an hour and 15 minutes with the president talking about everything. We went there to talk about welfare reform, which I spent a lot of time on here a few minutes ago. Um, and why we thought it was so important and why we thought it should be attached to the tax reform legislation.

[56 : 52] We're going to have one big piece of legislation I think is critical that we get done. And we talked to him about that. But when you're around the president, you, you, you cannot help but like the guy. You, you genuinely, you know, I don't know that this, he just genuinely cares about the country.

And look, there's some things we, I'm sure we all disagree with the president on certain issues, but, but he has a love for the country and you can feel it. You can sense it. And he's got an energy level that is amazing.

It really is. and it, and it comes through when you're around him. So I, I, I appreciate him. And frankly, one of the reasons I'll, I go out and, and, and defend him and fight for this, this, these issues on, on with the, with Mueller and with Clinton and Comey and Liz is because I think he's getting a, I do think he's getting a bad deal on, on some of this.

Um, but he, he's, he's a fighter. And, uh, we'll see that, as, as pastor said, the swamp's not easy to, not easy to navigate through, but I think he's, he's fighting as hard as he can.

All right. Last one. I thought there was one other hand and I'll stop. I don't want to read one thing to you. The young man, Josh, right? So in regards to the economy, um, during the Reagan administration with a GDP of about seven to seven and a half percent, why did the deficit triple from one to three trillion at that time making the highest deficit?

[58 : 20] Yeah, because, because he's ever seen. Yeah. Um, because he spent too much is a simple answer, right? Congress has a habit of, uh, you know, nothing more fun than spending other people's money. And that's, that's what Congress does. And they do it unfortunately very well.

And I always, I always joke the most bipartisan thing in Washington is government spending, right? You can get Republicans and Democrats agree to spend more money. It's the one thing you seem to be able to get them to agree on more than anything else.

Um, part of it, look, they spent too much, but part of it was for national defense. Historically, if you remember in the Carter years, defense had been reduced.

Uh, we had this, this kind of the first big terrorist thing. I remember my lifetime, um, was, I was in high school. And when it happened was a high school and starting college was the, um, the Iranian hostage crisis.

So president Reagan was determined to cut taxes and form the tax code and build up national defense. That's what he ran on and making America the great nation that I think we, we should be in have been.

[59 : 22] Um, so a lot of it was due to a huge buildup in national defense, which I would argue paid off in a big way in, in, in the cold war really did. Um, so that was, that was the reason.

Now they spent more money on other things that they probably shouldn't have, but most of it was on national defense. I just want to close with this and I apologize. We're a little over, but I'll be real quick. I want to read this. Our oldest boy, Ben sent this to me the other day.

If you get a chance, it goes along with what these, these amazing young ladies saying about being a bright light and, and, and getting in the game. I always, I always tell folks, Teddy Roosevelt talked about, you know, not hanging out in the twilight, uh, where, where victory or defeat never happened, but getting in the arena, getting in, in, in, in the game.

Um, Garth Brooks, I never thought I'd quote Garth Brooks, but I love the Garth Brooks song. Garth Brooks says, life's not tried. It's merely survived. If you're standing outside the fire, you got to get in the fire.

You got, you got to get in the game. And Reagan talked about this, if I can find it using technology, which is always dangerous here, folks. Um, if you get a chance, watch Reagan, uh, well, his speech, the speech that sort of really launched Ronald Reagan in a national way was when he was campaigning for Goldwater in 64.

[60 : 37] And he speaks a time to choose. And it's powerful. And I'm just going to read a little bit of it. Better to watch the YouTube video, but I should have, we should have equipped, we should have hooked that up.

That's what Ben sent me. I just want to read, um, Reagan's words. And then, and we'll turn it back over to pastor. Um, let's set the record straight. There is no argument over the, remember the context here is the Cold War.

Well, Joshua's question, I didn't realize it was. Let's set the record straight. There is no argument over the choice between peace and war, but there is only one guaranteed way you can have peace and you can have it in the next second.

Surrender. Admittedly, there is a risk in any course we follow other than this. But every lesson in history tells us that the greater risk lies in appeasement. And this is the specter our well-meaning liberal friends refuse to face, that their policy of accommodation is appeasement.

And it gives no choice between peace and war, only between fight or surrender. If we continue to accommodate, continue to back and retreat, then eventually we will have to face the final demand, the ultimatum.

[61 : 44] And what then? When Nikita Khrushchev has told his people, he knows what our answer will be. He has told them that we are retreating under the pressure of the Cold War. And someday, when the time comes to deliver the final ultimatum, our surrender will be voluntary, because by that time, we will have weakened from within spiritually, morally, and economically.

He believes this because from our side, he has heard voices pleading for peace at any price, or better red than dead, as one commentator put it. He would rather live on his knees than die on his feet.

And therein lies the road to war, because those voices don't speak for the rest of us. You and I know, and do not believe, that life is so dear, and peace is so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery.

If nothing in life is worth dying for, when did this begin? Just in the face of the enemy? Or should Moses have told the children of Israel to live in slavery under the pharaohs?

Should Christ have refused the cross? Should the patriots at Concord Bridge have thrown down their guns and refused to fire that shot heard round the world? The martyrs of history were not fools, and our honored dead, who gave their lives to stop the advance of the Nazis, didn't die in vain.

[62 : 59] Where, then, is the road to peace? Well, it's simple. The answer, after all, you and I have the courage to say to our enemies, there is a price we will not pay. There is a point beyond which they must not advance.

Winston Churchill said that the destiny of man is not measured by material computation. When great forces are on the move in the world, we learn we are spirits, not animals. And he said, there is something going on in time and space, and beyond time and space, which, whether we like it or not, spells duty.

You and I have a rendezvous with destiny. We will preserve for our children this, the last best hope of man on earth, or we will sentence them to take the last step into a thousand years of darkness.

Pretty good guy. Pretty darn good president who said those words. Thank you all very much. Thank you. Very fitting conclusion, and we surely appreciate you being here.

Thank you so much, Jim. Would you stand, please? Father, with information received, there is always a response that needs to be given to it, and we trust that each of us as patriotic Americans will take to heart the things that Jim has shared, and that we will offer ourselves as a congregation and as individuals to be employed by you in any way that you see fit, in any kind of an effort to further the peace, the strength, the freedom, the security of this great nation.

[64 : 38] Thank you so much for the gathering this morning, for those who were here, and for the information that we will take with us. Thank you in Christ's name. Amen.