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FOR
U.S. Senate

Freedoms, Families and Faith

“What is more important?”

One of the greatest ideas in Western Civilization surfaced with the writing of the Declaration of Independence. One statement in particular was as bold in the day it was written as it is today. It was proclaimed as something that seemed obvious to all those who signed their name to the document and yet it is something that we as a country and as a people struggle to define and live up to today.

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal” is the line. Competing ideas of what that all meant took 13 colonies into a Revolutionary War with a Revolutionary idea. These people said that everyone is of equal importance. It would take nearly another century and another war for that line to be realized for people of all color to be treated as equal under the law because there were competing ideas as to what made someone a man. Finally, it would be nearly another century before women were treated as equal in their opportunity to vote and fully participate as citizens. These advances in our ability to see ourselves as equal to one another is a triumph of that Revolutionary spirit to include and not exclude others from opportunity.

Although we are created equal we live in a world of competing ideas. It has always been that way and it will continue to be. The questions of our age are no different than those in earlier eras. It is a series of questions that need answers. The start of these questions are the same as the questions that people faced during the Revolution, during the Civil War, and during the 20th century. “What is more important?” After that initial question come the search for alternatives to define ourselves by, but the decision to choose an option should not define us. Because someone leans one way on one issue should not mean that they are type casted or stereotyped as being of one political party. The only party we should align ourselves with is that Revolutionary one, the one that gave us that Revolutionary idea that we are a people that include one another and don't exclude one another.

A more definite way of defining the issue in our day of competing ideas, policies, and ideals should be phrased as follows “What is more important, to be right or to do what is right?”

One concrete example of this is with gun control. What is more important, to be right in your stance on this issue or to do what is right when confronted with the implications of everyone having the right to bear arms? If the goal is to treat everyone as equal and to include gun owners and non-gun owners, then whatever the consensus is it should be aimed at keeping people safe. The greatest care should be taken towards how we treat people. The atrocities that come from violence stem from an inability of people to feel included and to be seen as equal. Putting people on the fringes and excluding their ideas, thoughts, and feelings as being equally important to your own is a way of guaranteeing future atrocities and loss of life.

In a world of competing ideas aimed at defining what makes us equal under the law, we ought to ask more important questions. Is it more important to speak than to listen in our current political climate? In the nearly three centuries since the signing of the Declaration of Independence there have been politicians aplenty who prefer to speak and surround themselves with a band of similar voices acting as a chorus of their idea. Maybe what is more important is our ability to question clearly and listen longer before speaking and stating our stance. Maybe what is more important is our ability to remember that we are all created equal and should be treated as such in word and deed. Maybe what is more important is our ability to sustain freedom for our families and the faith in our country's future.



*Let us believe that **the “best is yet to be”.***

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