

## **President Falwell Donald Trump Introduction 01/18/2016**

It is my distinct honor and privilege to welcome back to Liberty University a man who I introduced in 2012 as "one of the greatest visionaries of our time".

Over the last few years, my wife and I have remained in close contact with Donald Trump and his special counsel who accompanied him here in 2012. As our friendship has grown, so has my admiration for Mr. Trump. Whenever we were in New York, we were asked to drop by and say hello at Trump Tower on 5th Avenue. Mr. Trump is loyal to his friends, even new friends like us.

As you know, Liberty University does not support or oppose candidates for public office, and Mr. Trump's appearance here should not be interpreted by any as an endorsement by Liberty. We have invited the other candidates for president from both the Republican and Democratic parties.

But, I do want to share with you some things that I have recently learned about Mr. Trump that most people don't know — things he never would have told me and things you won't read about in the liberal media.

Soon after his last visit, a friend who leads another well-known Christian ministry in another state was seeking support for an important project. I called Mr. Trump, told him about the need, and later learned he had donated \$100,000 of his own money to assist. On another occasion, Mr. Trump learned about Clyde Frazier Jr., a young African-American man in New York who ran the Harlem Hoops Basketball tournament in the inner city. Clyde died in the 9/11 attacks on New York, and the tournament had to be shut down. Mr. Trump told his aides to find Clyde's father and when they did, Trump donated the money to keep the tournament operating.

Once, Mr. Trump's limousine broke down on a deserted highway. A couple stopped and helped him. Soon thereafter, Mr. Trump paid off the mortgage on that couple's house.

Watching "60 Minutes" one night, Mr. Trump saw a report on the negative impact a Maytag plant moving to Mexico had on the community of Newton, Iowa. He contacted all three of the businesses covered in the report and found ways to help them financially, actually preventing the closure of the businesses.

Liberty student Erin Kelly told us this week about how generous Mr. Trump was to her family when her father, Jim Kelly, was receiving cancer treatments in New York, giving them a place to stay close to the hospital and calling every week to check on Jim.

I attended the debate in Charleston the other night and noticed how friendly and personable Trump is to strangers. He was the only candidate who walked down off the stage after the grueling two-and-a-half hour debate to greet the crowd, shake hands, and pose for pictures.

Matthew 7:16 tells us, "By their fruits ye shall know them." Donald Trump's life has borne fruit, fruit that has provided jobs to multitudes of people in addition to the

many he has helped with his generosity. I have met three of his children in the last week and I can tell you they are personable, kind, and humble — successful in their family lives and in their vocations — a real credit to their father and to the Trump family. I have seen first-hand that his staff loves him and is loyal to him because of his servant leadership. In my opinion, Donald Trump lives a life of loving and helping others as Jesus taught in the Great Commandment.

My father was criticized in the early 1980s for supporting Ronald Reagan over Jimmy Carter for president because Ronald Reagan was a Hollywood actor who had been divorced and remarried, and Jimmy Carter was a Southern Baptist Sunday School teacher. My father proudly replied that Jesus pointed out we are all sinners, every one of us, and when Jesus said render unto to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, that meant we are to be good citizens — voting, active in the political process, serving in the armed forces if necessary, and, while Jesus never told us who to vote for, He gave us all common sense and the ability to choose the best leaders.

Dad explained that when he walked in the voting booth, he was not electing a Sunday School teacher or a pastor or even a president who shared his theological beliefs. He was electing the president of the United States and the talents, abilities, and experience required to lead a nation might not line up with those needed to run a church or lead a congregation. After all, Jimmy Carter was a great Sunday School teacher but just look what happened to our nation with him in the presidency.

I said on Sean Hannity's show in December that I see a lot of parallels between my father and Donald Trump. Like Mr. Trump, Dad would speak his mind, and would make statements that were politically incorrect. He even had a billboard at the entrance to this campus for years that read "Liberty University — Politically Incorrect Since 1971."

His polarizing statements made people who didn't know him think he was tough and mean but he was anything but. People who knew him personally attested to the fact that he loved people. He never could keep any money in his pocket because he gave it all away to those in need, and he gave away so many scholarships, he nearly bankrupted this school. He regularly gave students and staff members who got in trouble the second, third, and fourth chances, even when they didn't deserve it. And he loved his enemies.

When he had heart problems in 2005, two years before he died, he received letters wishing him well from only three prominent national figures: Sen. Ted Kennedy, Rev. Jesse Jackson, and porn king and Hustler magazine publisher Larry Flynt. They were his political enemies but he had shown them love over the years, and they had become warm personal friends.

I have come to see many of those same qualities in Donald Trump. He honors his fiduciary responsibilities to his corporations and makes tough decisions to ensure his business's success. He speaks the truth publicly, even if it is uncomfortable for people to hear yet he treats his friends, his employees and those in need with the greatest respect, loyalty, and generosity.

Dr. Bernice King, the daughter of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. spoke in this

Convocation a few years ago. She told me of how her father was loving and generous in his personal relationships with others, but he spoke the truth no matter how unpopular it was. That boldness cost him life. Dr. King was in good company.

Jesus Himself also healed the sick, cared for the poor, the widows, and the orphans, was accused of being a friend of publicans and sinners because He often hung out with those who were down and out — the wrong crowd so to speak — and He also made public statements that were so radical and unpopular that the religious and political establishment of His day crucified Him.

Becki has often commented that it is inconceivable to her how or why anyone would run for national office in the current political climate. The loss of privacy, the security risks, the scrutiny, lies, and vicious criticism that candidates and their families face in a national campaign is brutal and requires enormous sacrifice. In Donald Trump's case, he has even more to lose. He could have opted to sit back and enjoy his unparalleled business successes. Instead, he sacrificed not only his privacy and popularity as a TV personality, but he chose to risk his business enterprises as well — all because he loves this country and because he desires more than anything to make America great again.

Donald Trump has stunned the political world by building an unlikely coalition that crosses all demographic boundaries of age, sex, race, religion, and social classes — and all party lines.

Donald Trump is a breath of fresh air in a nation where the political Establishment from both parties has betrayed their constituencies time and time again with broken promises and a continuation of the status quo, sometimes in the name of bipartisanship and sometimes in the games of gridlock — both of which are really code words for cowardice and lack of leadership.

Donald Trump shuns the censorship that is rooted in political correctness and speaks the plain common sense truth that so many have been longing to hear. The mainstream press expected this to end his candidacy early on but it did just the opposite — he has soared in the polls and for many months has been the frontrunner in the GOP field.

Liberty is unique as an institution because, unlike most nonprofit universities, we try to operate like a business, emphasizing efficiency, and treating students like customers. As general counsel here in my younger years, I spent many days negotiating with creditors and spent many weekends begging and borrowing from donors and lenders to cover the paychecks that had already been issued on the Friday before. But, applying common sense business principles with an entrepreneurial spirit finally brought success.

In just the last five years, Liberty has gained the respect of Wall Street, exceeding \$2 billion in assets and became one of only about 70 universities nationally rated AA or AAA by both Standard & Poor's and Moody's. The Chronicle of Higher Education in February of last year said that Liberty's business model just might be the future of higher education in this country.

Many universities in this country compromised their missions and abandoned their original purposes just to get the money they needed or wanted from donors — money that came with strings attached. I am proud that Liberty is now strong enough financially to refuse gifts if they come with objectionable conditions. And it is clear to me that Donald Trump is the only candidate in this national election that can make that same claim. He cannot be bought. He is not a puppet on a string like many other candidates who have wealthy donors as their puppet-masters and that is a key reason why so many new voters are attracted to him. Imagine how wonderful it would be, for once, that the United States of America had as its president a man who not only refused campaign contributions but who has built companies from scratch, who knows what it feels like to be solely responsible for finding the money each week to cover payroll, who runs the nation with the same entrepreneurial business principles that have brought success to his own companies.

For decades, conservatives and evangelicals have chosen the political candidates who have told us what we wanted to hear on social, religious, and political issues only to be betrayed by those same candidates after they were elected.

Our local congressman, Robert Hurt, is here today with his two sons. Congressman Hurt, would you please stand. Robert Hurt recently made the shocking announcement that he would not run for re-election representing Virginia's 5th District in the U.S. House of Representatives despite his popularity with constituents. He told the Washington Post, "When I think back on my first run for public office, I never envisioned making this a career... I ran because I believed then as I do now that every citizen should contribute in his or her own way to ensure a vibrant representative democracy. But I also believed then as I do now that it is not our elected leaders who make our country great, but it is, rather, the private citizen and the private economy that make this country great."

Our founding fathers envisioned a nation governed by citizen legislators. The polls are saying Americans think it is time we take some advice from our founding fathers and from Congressman Hurt, and instead of electing career politicians, we elect citizen legislators who have succeeded in real life.

Please welcome back to Liberty University, Mr. Donald Trump.