

Liberty Commentary May 25, 2009

President Barack Obama recently gave the commencement address at Notre Dame University. The president urged the graduates to strive to find common ground with respect to their views on abortion. The president said that the two sides should extend the "presumption of good faith to others." The president went on to say, "When we open up our hearts and our minds to those who may not think precisely like we do or believe precisely what we believe — that's when we discover at least the possibility of common ground."

In 1857 the United States Supreme Court by a 7-2 vote ruled that people of African descent imported into the United States and held as slaves were not legal persons and could never be citizens of the United States. The court also ruled that the Congress had no authority to prohibit slavery. The court ruled slaves could be treated as chattel and private property of the slave owners and could not be taken away without due process.

President Abraham Lincoln signed an executive order in 1862, named the Emancipation Proclamation, that led to the freeing of every slave by 1865 as the Union army conquered all of the confederate territory, preserving the Union and abolishing slavery. In order to overturn the Supreme Court's unjust decision allowing slavery, the 13th amendment to the constitution was ratified in 1865 ending permanently the blight of slavery.

The Supreme Court in 1857 was wrong in their decision when they ruled that a black person had no rights as a citizen and could be traded as a commodity. The Supreme Court was equally wrong when in 1973 the court ruled in the case of Roe v. Wade that a woman has a constitutional right to abort her pregnancy for any reason.

President Obama must realize that there can be no common ground between right and wrong, good and bad, sanctity of life and the destruction of life. Like the nation in 1857 that was divided on the issue of slavery, we today are divided on the issue of abortion.

Abraham Lincoln grew up during a time when owning slaves was an acceptable practice as well as the law of the land, but because of his Christian upbringing he began to change his views as he realized that slavery was dehumanizing and needed to be abolished. Lincoln says of slavery, "I hate it because of the monstrous injustice of slavery itself." President Lincoln was not looking for common ground, but rather he stood on principle that was grounded in his strong faith and he realized that "he who would be no slave must consent to have no slave. Those who deny freedom to others, deserve it not for themselves; and, under a just God, can not long retain it." (Lincoln)

Instead of seeking common ground on an issue that involves the destruction of life, we need men and women with conviction and

respect for all people both born and unborn such as Lincoln, who will be willing to defy political pressure, public opinion, and the Supreme court's decision, and lead us as a nation out of this moral dilemma that has been plaguing our country since 1973. The answer will not be found in finding common ground, but rather in doing what is right. Our nation is faced today with a number of perplexing moral issues that must be addressed from the church house to the White House. Our country has faced moral and ethical dilemmas in the past, such as the issue of slavery and equal rights, but because we are a nation rooted in the Judeo Christian ethic with the Ten Commandments etched in the stone of the Supreme Court building and our nations currency printed with the words "In God We Trust", we have always found our way back to the moral high ground.

President Lincoln was one of the most unpopular presidents of his time because of his moral leadership in preserving the Union and abolishing slavery. However, today he is revered as one of the greatest Presidents the United States has ever had. Why is Lincoln considered a great president? History has judged Lincoln to be great not because he found ways to compromise and find common ground, but because he knew there could be no common ground between right and wrong and he was willing to lead this nation toward the moral high ground that led to the preservation of the Union and abolition of slavery that has resulted in the United States becoming the most influential, most powerful and greatest nation in the history of the world.

"Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people."
Proverbs 14: 34

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