


Life Is Not a 'State' Issue

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Regarding the Atlantic slave trade, from approximately 1526 to 1867, it has been estimated that some 12.5 million captured men, women, and children were put on ships in Africa, and that approximately 10.7 million arrived in the United States of America. At this time, the Atlantic slave trade was easily the most costly, in terms of human life, of all the global migrations businesses.

In 1800s America, slavery was legal and fully and boldly embraced by the southern states. While slavery existed in the North and the South, by 1860, it has been estimated that 95% of Black Americans lived (primarily as slaves) in the southern states.

Clearly, slavery had become a “state” issue.

In the South, slavery put food on the table, built banks, governments, businesses, homes, and cities. Slavery was easily the leading and most financially profitable economic model of its time. And by the time the Civil War started between the North and South in 1860, there was no doubt that slavery was a “state” issue.

I thank God for the Civil War between the northern states and the southern states, because it led to the end of slavery. I am also grateful to God for the Black American

men, women and children who risked their very lives, fighting for the end of slavery in the United States.

As this historically “state” issue crosses my mind, I’m reminded of Frederick Douglass, a Republican, who publicly and boldly expressed his hatred of slavery. Douglass did not make excuses for Abraham Lincoln, the Republican Party’s presidential nominee at the time. In Frederick Douglass’s mind, Abraham Lincoln was not anti-slavery *enough*. However, because it was a choice between Abraham Lincoln and radically pro-slavery candidates, Douglass voted for Abraham Lincoln.

Nevertheless, he maintained his moral convictions and ultimately pushed Abraham Lincoln towards his biblically-based and biblically-clear objections to slavery. Still, in 1864, Frederick Douglass voted for Civil War General John C. Fremont, who was nominated by the Republicans.

While Fremont and many prominent abolitionists were highly and rightfully critical of Abraham Lincoln and his failure to fully embrace the aims of the anti-slavery abolitionists, Fremont eventually had to drop out of the race for the Republican Party’s nomination for president. As such, Douglass threw his support, however reluctantly, behind Abraham Lincoln.

This piece of history is ringing bells in my mind today.

Douglass never stopped publicly speaking, and unapologetically so, about the evils of slavery and the need for the leader of the Republican Party to embrace the preamble to the United States’ Declaration of Independence, which states: “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.”

In 1865, the Civil War was won by the northern states and the 13th Amendment (1865), which ended slavery in the U.S., the 14th Amendment (1868), which says no state shall deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law, and the 15th Amendment (1870), which gives every U.S. citizen the right to vote, are now a part of the Constitution of the United States.

As such, in the United States of America, by way of the Constitution:

- Slavery is no longer a state issue.
- “Life and Liberty” are no longer state issues.
- Voting is no longer a state issue.

The Constitution of the United States makes it absolutely clear that:

- No human being can be a slave.
- No human being can be put to death without due process of law.
- Only citizens of the United States have the right to vote.

The idiom “history repeats itself” is especially applicable here, after the Republican National Committee (RNC) removed the Human Life Amendment from its party platform, claiming that abortion is now a “state” issue.

However, just like slavery is no longer a state issue, neither is the right to life and liberty a state issue.

As such, the RNC’s decision to remove the Human Life Amendment from its 2024 party platform, because they claim abortion is now a state issue, is no different, in my mind, from the efforts of the southern states to keep slavery a state issue.

In my opinion, the Republican Party Platform has taken a giant step in the wrong direction.

As American citizens, we must fully embrace the Constitution and what it stands for. The 14th Amendment of the Constitution is clear. In America, every human being is endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, and at every stage of our humanity — in the womb or out of the womb — every human being has an unalienable right to life and liberty.

Like Frederick Douglass voted for Abraham Lincoln, I too, as an individual American citizen, am voting for the GOP’s candidate for the president, which in my opinion, is beyond any doubt, the very best choice that we have to save our country.

As such, I believe we all must work hard — as hard as we can — wherever God has placed us, to restore this language from the 2016 and 2020 Republican Party Platforms to the current Republican Party platform. It should read: “We support a Human Life Amendment to the Constitution of the United States and endorse legislation to make it clear that the 14th Amendment’s protections apply to all human beings inside or outside the womb of their mothers.”

God bless America.

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