

Mike Pence: Donald Trump Will Turn Back Obama Administration Attacks on Religious Liberty

During Wednesday's episode of *Dr. James Dobson's Family Talk*, Republican vice presidential nominee Indiana Gov. Mike Pence was asked a series of questions relating to religious liberty and the Obama Administration's attacks on those fundamental freedoms.

"A Trump-Pence Administration will be dedicated to preserving the liberties of our people, including the freedom of religion that's enshrined in our Bill of Rights," he said. "We have a long history in this nation of accommodating religious belief, but under this administration, you've seen the heavy hand of government—whether it be in the Hobby Lobby case or the Little Sisters of the Poor—or where there is an unwillingness in the administration to accommodate the religious sensibilities and convictions of ministries or private organizations."

Pence said he and his running mate, Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump, would "err on the side of freedom" in such cases. He added the issues brought up underscore the importance of the 2016 presidential election—particularly as it relates to the Supreme Court.

"With the passing of Antonin Scalia, literally the balance of the court on many of these very closely decided questions is on the ballot this year," he said. "What I can tell you is that Donald Trump is absolutely committed to appointing justices to the Supreme Court—and ultimately all of our courts—in the tradition of the late and great Justice Antonin Scalia. People that will strictly construe the Constitution of

the United States and I couldn't be more proud to stand with him on that."

Pence said that on issues such as the "transgender mandate" and the declaration that schools must allow students to use opposite-sex restroom and locker facilities based on gender identity, it is further proof there is no area of our lives "too small" to regulate, and not aspect of the Constitution "too big" for them to be willing to ignore. He added the federal government has no business injecting itself into local education issues, which are much better solved at the state or local levels.

"Donald Trump and I will stand by that commonsense principle that government that governs least governs best," he said. "When it comes to our kids and the operation of our schools. those decisions can be made and should be made at the local level.

"Find ways to accommodate all of our kids. Free public education—universal public education—is a principle enshrined in the Indiana Constitution, and it's a principle we cherish all across this country."

Dobson also asked about a recent report issued by the U.S. Civil Rights Commission that suggested the Religious Freedom Restoration Act be curtailed. Chairman Martin Castro also suggested religious freedom provided "code words" to facilitate discrimination, intolerance, racism, sexism, homophobia, Islamophobia and "Christian supremacy."

Noting he couldn't find any reference to religious freedom on the Trump-Pence campaign website, he said he wanted to know where they stood on that issue. Pence replied that both Republicans were going to uphold the Constitution.

"The First Amendment is very clear: 'Congress shall make no law respecting the establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof,'" he said. "We live in a diverse

country with people with different viewpoints and different lifestyles. I don't believe in discrimination or mistreatment of anyone, but I do believe we should love our neighbors as ourselves.

"But neither do I think anyone should ever fear persecution because of their deeply held religious beliefs. When those two things come into conflict, that's what we have the courts for. The courts sort out these issues, and have done so throughout the history of this nation. Donald Trump and I truly believe that ensuring we have people appointed to the courts who will respect our Constitution and respect the God-given liberties that are enshrined there is very much on the ballot."

Much of the 25-minute interview focused on Pence's family life and how it has been affected by his time spent on the campaign trail. Dobson noted it seemed as though Pence and Trump were "going 100 miles per hour," and said he was told by his longtime friend Gary Bauer—himself a former presidential candidate—that life on the campaign trail can be grueling.

Pence, on the other hand, said it's been a very rewarding and encouraging experience.

"When the call came at 11 o'clock at night at the Governor's Residence, I heard that familiar voice over the phone—we knew the call might be coming, and so we prayed through it as a family and talked to our children about it—I said 'Yes' in a heartbeat," he said. "I truly do believe that this man has given voice to the frustrations and aspirations of the American people like no one since Ronald Reagan. I'm honored to be with him, but what really keeps us going is the people we meet every single day all across this country.

"Number one, people are unfailingly gracious. We were stopping and shaking hands at a local diner when we were outside Williamsburg, Va., the other day ... it was just wonderful and frankly, we met an awful lot of supporters there.

"But, even when you meet people who aren't supporting your team or your team's ticket ... we just continue to be inspired by the optimism and determination that I see on the faces of thousands of Americans who are coming out to these rallies who know we can be better and know we can be strong, who know that our best days are ahead. It's just very humbling for us to be some small part of that ...

"One of the things Donald Trump says more often than anything else is this isn't about him, this isn't about our team, or our party. This is a movement. It's a movement of people across this country who know we can make America great again. That really came in high relief in the last couple of days."

Dobson had Pence share the story of his recent speech made during a rainstorm while visiting Colonial Williamsburg, a historical site in Virginia. About 650 people were there, unable to use umbrellas because of Secret Service security protocols, but he decided to continue on with the speech.

"I thought the few hundred who would stick around in the rain, I would give them the 'whole story' and tell them about this great man and about this great cause," he said. "But the remarkable thing to me was that while the rain continued to pour, nobody left.

"Six hundred fifty people stood for the better part of an hour—and the rain kept coming down ... it showed the determination that I see each and every day at rallies and on campaign stops. There are literally millions and millions of people across this country who know we can make this country great again. It was an incredibly inspiring sight."

Pence's wife Karen said that rather than drenching their spirits, the rain—and, more importantly, the spectators' response—"invigorated" them. She said it was a lot of fun, and inspired both of them greatly.

Pence, who worked in radio before his foray into politics,

said one of his most famous quotes—that he’s “a Christian, a conservative, and a Republican, in that order”—was the byproduct of one caller’s question, asking him where he came from. The governor said the phrase stuck because it sums up both who he is and what his core convictions are.

Dobson turned the conversation to the Pence children, who are all adults now. Karen admitted to using many of his instructional materials with them when they were younger, and Pence talked about how bringing his whole family with him to Washington, D.C., when he was first elected to Congress helped keep him grounded.

“I’m running for vice president and I’m governor of the state that I love, but the highest office I’ll ever hold—the highest position I’ll ever have—is ‘Dad,’” he said. “Whatever I’ve been able to accomplish is mostly due to this woman. She has been the architect of family life for our kids that even though we served on Capitol Hill, and even though we served under two different administrations, Karen has always created that zone for our family of real normalcy ...

“I always told people you can have some pretty heady days in Washington, D.C.—maybe a meeting at the White House, or you know, a hearing on Capitol Hill, or maybe a national television interview—but then I could walk in that little house that we had just outside of Washington, D.C., and I knew there were four people who were absolutely unimpressed with me.”

Dobson opened the interview by reminding his listeners that as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, his organization was required to abide by the Johnson Amendment. He also noted that he had also extended an invitation to Democratic vice presidential nominee U.S. Sen. Tim Kaine (D-Va.), who had politely declined due to scheduling conflicts.