

Understanding Donald Trump: The Man and His Faith

Christians understandably have a desire to know about the president's personal religious faith. Along with other faith leaders, I have been with the president six or seven times. Here is what I have observed:

Faith in Christ

Pastor Paula White-Cain led Donald Trump to faith in Christ before he became a candidate for the presidency. At the time, White-Cain wisely never openly spoke of it. However, at a White House dinner in May of 2017, Vice President Mike Pence stated, "Donald Trump has prayed to receive Christ as his Lord and Savior," with the president sitting only about 10 feet away.

Still Growing

Some "Never Trumpers" are consumed with every flaw in the president, providing them a basis for their intense disdain of him. They are particularly quick to point out his tone or his tweets. I don't defend every one of his social posts any more than I can defend every one of mine. Or yours. Even he acknowledged on July 24, 2020 that there have been some tweets he regretted posting.

However, those of us who served as his faith leaders have observed him grow spiritually. We all recognize the president has more growth to experience. But so do I. And so do you.

On one occasion, the president openly acknowledged the challenges of living out the Christian life. Let me set the stage. It was the morning after the vote by the Senate to acquit him of the viscous and unfounded impeachment charges. Washington D.C., always rancorous, was particularly so during

the impeachment hearings.

In February, unknown to him, until he was in the car on the way to the national prayer breakfast, Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi was seated at the head table near where the president would soon sit. The president was brought in while a guest presenter was halfway through his talk on “forgiving our enemies” and, in fact, “loving them.” The president was brought in, while the person was speaking—with Pelosi only a few feet away—again, on the morning after the Senate vote to acquit.

Frankly, it was tense. Several thousand people were looking at the newly arriving president and, a few feet away, speaker Pelosi. The gentleman finished his talk on forgiveness. Now it was president’s turn to stand and speak. There was air of uncertainty about what might happen next.

In typical unpredictable Trump style, he simply stood up, and held that morning’s *Washington Post* high above his head so all could see the word, “Acquitted.” The audience—knowing the prayer breakfast was to be non-partisan—nervously laughed, while some applauded. Pelosi sat stone-faced.

Then the president, again in typical Trump candor, commented that he wasn’t quite so sure about what the presenter had just said. That was followed later by a tender moment that gave all discerning people a deep and moving insight into the heart of the president. He said, in effect, “I’m trying, but, you know, it’s hard to forgive” with great pathos. He is exactly right. It is hard! Frankly, if we were all transparent, we too would admit how hard this can be. The president, less “filtered” than we try to be, was merely admitting that with which we all struggle.

Prayer

The first time that pastors “placed hands” on him to pray for him, Trump appeared to be shocked, looking over his shoulders

at the hands on him, wondering what was going on. Months later, he would say to us, “lay hands on me and pray for me.” He genuinely honors the role of prayer and has asked for it with increasing frequency.

Character

He is frequently attacked for “character.” I have observed politics and government closely since age nine when Dwight Eisenhower was running against Adlai Stevenson. (I know that is strange, but from August 13 of my ninth year, a “government anointing”—that’s what I call it—came upon me, I have followed politics virtually every day since). I have never seen a nationally elected official so honor his campaign promises like Donald Trump. His critics cannot seem to understand that honoring one’s campaign commitments is a demonstration of character.

His Past

How often have you heard someone bring up something about Donald Trump’s past? The “Never Trumpers” obsess with this. Let me cut to the chase. Every person reading this has things from their past they wish they could change. Just because one has a “Saul” past, does not mean one cannot have a “Paul” present. The nature of the gospel is one of redemption.

Understanding the Man

At the 2016 Republican National Convention in Cleveland, Ohio, Donald Trump Jr. stated that his father is a “blue-collar billionaire.” If you will remember that, you can not only understand Donald Trump, but you will understand why “common people,” the “deplorables,” flock to him. Many “common people” feel—quite correctly—that the “elites” mock them. And they do. The president understands this more than anyone, because the “elites” look down not only on the “common person,” but on Trump as well. There is a connection between Trump and his audience regarding this issue. They have grown weary of the

cynical, mocking, controlling elites of society.

As an example, on one occasion, I was driving through Central Missouri and met a man who sells used trucks and heavy equipment. We began talking about the president. This blue collar man suddenly stopped, looked into the distance and said longingly (referring to Trump), "I would give anything to meet that man." That story could be repeated tens of millions of times all over America. Both the president and the "commoners" are tired of the condescending ways of the elites.

Secondly, if you want to understand the man, you need to know this axiom: "The president will not start a fight, but he will finish it." That was told to me by a person who has known him extremely well for a long time. Next time you see him in a "fight," remember who started it.

Thirdly—and this comes again from someone who knows him really well—and I quote, "he really wants to do what is right." I have observed this quality about him. This is one of the characteristics I most appreciate about our president.

Fourth, he is a superb listener. Everyone who meets with him observes that he is a quick study and listens intently. I do not think I have ever observed one who so intuitively grasps an issue.

Fifth, he looks at you when you talk to him. He is focused on what is being said. The rare times I have been "eye to eye" with him (well, actually, he is taller), he looks directly into my eyes with intensity, and listens.

Sixth, he really loves his family, and they love him.

Seventh, he really loves America. Nothing more need be said.

Eighth, he is a New York City street fighter—not with fists, but with words. It is at this point that "Never Trumpers" become apoplectic. What they do not understand is the depth of

vile, vengeful and deceitful disdain that the Democratic/media/academic/Hollywood cabal (with some business and sports figures piling on as well) have for Trump. It is wicked. I am stunned he survives it every single day. Let's be honest, you and I do not face what he does daily.

We need a fighter. We have one. We need a disrupter. We have one. We need a wrecking ball. We have one. Mother Teresa is wonderful, but we do not need someone like her for our president right now. We desperately need a Churchill. We have one.

Globalism

Add to that the really big deal, and it has spiritual connotations: he is not a globalist. I stated in an August 2016 article, published by *Charisma* that garnered 4.1 million shares, stating that "Trump opposes globalism. ... Globalism is far more than 'geographical' or 'eliminating national borders and boundaries.' It is spiritual and demonic at its core. Few—very few—understand this. This is quite likely one of the main reasons why Trump is hated. Do your homework on this one. Think 'principalities and powers.' Serious. Extremely serious."

I had no idea how accurate my words were. Trump, along with presidents or prime ministers in Israel, Brazil, Hungary, Poland, Guatemala and other countries, know their task is to stand against the evil and hostile forces of globalism. There is a reason that these leaders, along with those in Egypt, Jordan and Kurdistan—I have been privileged to be with small delegations who have met with all eight of these heads of state—so respect Donald Trump. Contrary to what the media wants you to believe, the world respects Donald Trump.

We have seen the manifestation of anti-American globalism in the streets of U.S. cities since May 25 of this year. It is a hatred of our nation. It is antinomian, a fancy way of saying lawlessness. Trump gets that. Few do. When I penned the words

above in August 2016, I had no idea what our president was going to face.

Injustice

Having followed the rough-and-tumble nature of politics for over six decades, I have never seen an American political leader subjected to the treatment the president has had to endure. It is quite possible that many Americans, who have an inbuilt sense of justice, will be driven to vote for Trump, in part, because of the unjust way in which he has been treated.

Back to the tweets. Want to know why he pushes back hard with tweets? Because his attackers knowingly, maliciously lie about him every moment of every day in every way they can. He is coming against not merely “fake” news. He is coming against evil itself.

God

But God has put him in this position at this time. We need to keep him there. {eoa}

Dr. Jim Garlow *lives in San Diego, California with his wife, Rosemary, who together co-founded Well Versed, a ministry to those in the U.S. Congress, those at the United Nations in New York City and global political leaders, by bringing biblical principles of governance to government leaders—and the people who elect them.*