

In 2020, Republicans must pair words with actions

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I've been a Republican my entire life. I've worked in GOP politics for over a decade – I've managed races, consulted for candidates, and fought in the trenches for the conservative cause. In 2016, I could not bring myself to vote for Donald Trump – or for Hillary Clinton.

Instead, in 2016, I wrote-in Mitt Romney – the now-senator from Utah. But my protest vote was a throw-away ballot. This year, there is too much at stake to write in a candidate – or abstain from voting altogether.

On Nov. 3, I'll vote for Joe Biden. Some may be shocked– unwilling to believe I could dare commit to supporting a candidate I disagree with on a multitude of policy issues. Readers here are the crowd who may attempt to dissuade me by using arguments like “But Joe is pro-choice!” and “How can you abandon the party?”

This election is unique. In 2020, a growing multitude of registered Republicans will vote for Biden. For me – the choice is simple. I may disagree with Biden on some issues – this is a given in politics. But this disagreement doesn't outweigh my desire to be on the right side of history and do the right thing for our country. I believe that not only casting a ballot for Donald Trump is wrong, but doing the same for Biden is the right thing to do.

Character matters. Words have weight. Actions speak louder than words – and, ultimately, “what is down in your well will come up in your bucket.” This is something built into me from a very young age, and something I will never abandon. On this note, I believe Joe Biden is a man of great character and integrity. Wrong on some issues? Absolutely. But genuine and sincere – with a heart and passion for these amazing United States? Most definitely. We can see this through his regular, daily dealings with people.

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Biden displays kindness, empathy, genuine care, and respect. He advocates for the things he believes in fiercely – and is willing to throw hard punches when necessary. He joins these battles with the ability to walk away from a fight as friends. He spends personal time working with young people who have struggled with the same speech impediment, a stutter, that he once dealt with– purely out of the goodness of his heart. When he speaks, he uses hopeful language that focuses on our better angels– inspiring people to work hard, stand strong, and never give up. Biden displays respect for the authority of the Office of the President– he knows the weight that it carries, the power it wields, and the importance of the decorum attached to it– but he also remains humble and genuine despite the time he spent inside the Oval Office. Biden loves our military and makes it known constantly – as the father of a soldier, he supports our men and women in uniform. Biden is a sincere, dedicated, genuine, kind, strong, determined man who would make a strong president to bring us back from the edge of destruction in what has been Donald Trump's America.

I cannot stand idly by and watch as our nation is pulled further into an autocratic abyss – as Republicans turn apologist and continually excuse his abhorrent, vile, disgraceful behavior. I cannot remain silent as I watch fellow Republicans lied to and used for both personal and political gain. I cannot support a candidate who makes a mockery of people of faith and of evangelical Christianity. I cannot stop short of doing everything in my power to stop this from continuing. If I stand for the things I say I stand for, I cannot remain silent. But speaking up isn't enough – we must pair words with actions. That's why I openly support Operation Grant, an Ohio grassroots nonprofit affiliated with The Lincoln Project and Republican Voters Against Trump that tells the stories of conservative Republicans who have changed their minds about Donald Trump and are now voting for Joe Biden.

In these times of uncertainty and chaos – when our current president is devoid of character and displays astonishing moral turpitude – we must put aside loyalty to parties, platforms, and the political tribalism we are constantly begged to engage in. We must put country first.

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