

## The Language of Liberty Series



# John F. Kennedy's Right Answer For Our Future

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“Let us not seek the Republican answer or the Democratic answer, but the right answer. Let us not seek to fix the blame for the past. Let us accept our own responsibility for the future.” -[John F. Kennedy, 1958](#)

This quote is bantered around a lot on the internet by some who, I'm guessing, are middle-of-the-road or don't like all the animosity between the parties. What most of us who yearn for less conflict blissfully overlook is an omitted sentence before the quote and Kennedy's challenge at the end of his speech.

First, his quote in the speech is prefaced by... “Let us not despair, but act”. Immediately following the above quote is another plea for involvement: “In the words of the poet, ‘Now has come the time for action...’”

His emphasis on the words *act*, *action*, *acceptance*, and *responsibility* define the required duty each of us have to protect the future. The future he was referring to back then is here and now. Over the years, lack of action on our part has resulted in the mess we have today in Washington D.C. and the rest of the country.

Many have of us have served our country and taken an oath to defend the Constitution. That oath was binding even after our service ended. For those who did not serve, but stayed at home and supported those who did, their duty was no less admirable. Unfortunately, once that service was over, and due to the prevailing message “you don't talk about politics and religion” that permeated the 50's, 60's and 70's, we sat back in our pews and let someone else get involved in politics. We abdicated our civic responsibility.

JFK's call to action in 1961 still pierces our hearts today and rings truer than ever before: "Ask not what your country can do for you...ask what you can do for your country."

Naturally, I have no problem with fixing the blame for past failures and equally accepting my part in it, but it is past time for our generation to accept the responsibility for our grandchildren's future. So my question is this: What responsible actions did we take over our lifetime to keep our republic other than showing up every two years to vote? As [JFK famously said](#), "Things do not happen. Things are made to happen." and later said, "Change is the law of life. And those who look only to the past or present are certain to miss the future."

Today, a mere 60 years later, we are overwhelmed with bloated government, mindless bureaucracy, biased media, universities bent on indoctrination instead education, and disconnected politicians.

At some point in life, we must confront this reality and own our part in the bigger picture. Can we look around at our blessings and realize that America's "great experiment" has made it all possible? Well, JFK also quoted the Bible in 1963 when he said, "Of those to whom much is given, much is required."

As we focused on making a living and planning for our future "golden years", we allowed others who demonstrated on campuses and in the streets to infiltrate our political process, our universities and the media.

Inattention to the political process has tarnished our generation. On our watch, we have been responsible for the type of society and government our children and grandchildren will inherit and be burdened with for years to come.

Kennedy, the father of two small children of his own, was determined in securing the future of America when [he said](#), "Children are the world's most valuable resource and it's best hope for the future." and "So, I ask, can we deny this reality and challenge...although children may be the victims of fate, they will not be victims of our neglect."

Can we truthfully look in our children and grandchildren's eyes and assure them their future will be better than ours? Kennedy stressed the responsibility of investing in the future of our country when [he said](#), "Our deep spiritual confidence that this nation will survive the perils of today – which may well be with us for decades to come – compels us to invest in our nation's future, to consider and meet our obligations to our children and numberless generations that will follow."

This coming year, awareness and diligence in holding our elected, appointed, and employed representatives accountable will be every bit as important as showing up at the polls. The very fact we are paying attention can, and will, help create the change we envision.

JFK prescribed an educated nation of citizens when he said, "Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other."

Whether you think of yourself as a leader or not, I suggest investigating the [Center for Self-Governance](#) applied civics training. With this training, citizens across the country are learning how to properly govern in partnership with elected officials as the Framers intended. This will require taking classes and actually putting into action the information that is taught in order to complete the assignments. Quite simply, we will have to leave our comfort zone occasionally and do more than in the past.

It's not too late to accept our responsibility and act. Prayer alone is no longer enough. We must add action.

The bottom line is...we have two choices. We can do what we have always done and get the same results, or seek the habit, practice, and training of self-governance to secure the future. Will you take Kennedy's challenge?

*The Language of Liberty series is a collaborative effort of the Center for Self Governance (CSG) Administrative Team. The authors include administrative staff, selected students, and guest columnists. The views expressed by the authors are their own and may not reflect the views of CSG. They may be contacted at [info@tncsg.org](mailto:info@tncsg.org). To learn more, go to [CenterForSelfGovernance.com](http://CenterForSelfGovernance.com).*

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