

# I Am a Real American

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I am a real American. I believe in our Constitution and its balancing assignment of power to three branches of government. I will defend following this grand document to the end — even with my life, if necessary.

I am a real American. I believe, without reservation, in freedom of religion — true freedom, not some mockery where “freedom” means my way or else. I believe every person has the right to prove the value of their beliefs, whether religious or not, in how they treat their family and everyone they meet. I never force my beliefs on others by passing laws or by physical intimidation. I take genuine joy, not fear, from talking and befriending those who believe differently from me. As an American, my strength comes from knowing that when my life is over, I can say I have fought the good fight and proved the value of what I believe through every life I touched. I will often fail, but I will never stop trying to do better.

I am a real American. I do not betray friends and allies, either personally or internationally, and I never break promises I made, especially to those in need. I do not preach hatred or disdain for any human being, and I never forget that no matter how awful this or that world leader may be, it is only by the grace of God that I was not born in that country and suffering under them myself. No matter how bad some international situation becomes, I remember that the everyday people living in every country count, and always first seek the path that helps rather than hurts them. I never justify hurting others by coming up with some reason why I should disregard their value and humanity.

I am a real American. I believe in a government that does everything it can to support free markets where everyone, regardless of their background or beliefs, has as much of a chance to do well as anyone else. I do not cower in fear that someone might make a better product than me but instead work to make my product better. I do not attempt to grab the reins of power to force others to use my product when I cannot improve it.

I am a real American. I do not mock anyone, anywhere, at any time, for any reason, for I know that doing so reveals nothing of the emptiness and utter lack of self-confidence in my soul. I try my best to respect every person I meet, and seek as if they were my closest friend to understand why God placed them on this earth. As the American leader Billy Graham — a man as much the opposite of his son as imaginable — said to everyone he met: Look first into your fixing own soul before you criticize the souls of others.

I am a real American. If one branch of my government sends data raiders into Departments created by a co-equal branch of our government, and those raiders commit more extremely serious felonies against fellow Americans in five minutes than most hardened criminals commit in a lifetime, I will join in peaceful protest in front of the building under attack to help prevent the raiders from committing more felonies, and I will call for their immediate arrest for the crimes they have already committed against the people of America.

I am a real American. If I am a news person, I follow the unwaveringly courageous path of the American hero Jim Acosta and resign before repeating some falsehood out of fear of losing my job. As this real American said in his resignation, "Do not give into the lies. Do not give into the fear." As an American news person, I never bend the knee before power. Without truth, courage, and a free press, America is nothing. When my leaders do wrong, I never stop shouting it because free speech is what real Americans do.

I am a real American. I view the concept of unifying political power by arbitrarily labeling some group of people "the enemy" as the exact opposite of everything for which America stands.

I am a real American. If I am a military leader or soldier told to do something that every inch of my soul and beliefs tells me is wrong, I follow the training by the American military and refuse to do that terrible deed, no matter what the personal cost. I do not attack my friends, I do not hurt the helpless, and I exercise my explicit right as part of the American military to refuse an illegal or immoral order.

I am a real American. I do not pretend my country has never done wrong to its natives or other sovereign countries. Instead, in Billy Graham style, I learn from the past and vow to do better in the future. I refuse to go backward and use the past as an excuse to perpetrate the same horrors again in the future.

I am a real American. I know what fear is, but I refuse to let it make me afraid. If you are a real American, please join me and others in protecting our Constitution, our laws, our true faiths, and — most importantly — our people.

We are the real America.