A HOUSE DIVIDED AGAINST ITSELF CANNOT STAND

SPEECH FOR

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“A house divided against itself cannot stand.” (**Say this very excitedly**) Of course it can’t!!! Where would the walls go? What would hold up the roof? And let’s not even think of where the plumbing would go!!! (**Wait for the laugh**). But in all seriousness, ladies and gentlemen, this quote has been used in very famous orations and was originally found in the Bible. This was the message in one of President Lincoln’s most famous speeches, and like I said, he borrowed the quote from what many people believe is a “very reliable source.” It’s been used throughout history to illustrate battles and differences of opinion. Let’s explore what this means to us in this day and age and with what we all go through.

When Lincoln used this Bible quote, he was referring to the strife the country was experiencing because of slavery and the damage it was causing to the unity of the country. After all, this was and is the **UNITED** States of America. President Lincoln “believed that this government cannot endure, permanently, half slave and half free.” He knew the country was dangerously divided. Having the Confederate States as one separate country and the Union as the other country was not an option for President Lincoln.

There are valuable lessons to be learned by really trying to understand the meaning behind this very powerful sentence and how it relates to our own lives. Think of your own lives. Think of what destroys unity. Think of what pits friend against friend. Think of what tears a family apart. A house divided against itself cannot stand. As high school students, most of us have our set of friends, also known as a “clique.” Can you think of an incident where two of your friends in your group had a really bad misunderstanding? Now honestly-whose side were **YOU** on? Sometimes after a big argument or disagreement, nothing is ever the same again, people take sides, new “houses” are formed, but remember about that house divided.

Of course, the house is a symbol of any kind of relationship. It can refer to the government and population of the country as Lincoln had intended it. It can be a symbol for your circle of friends. The house can represent the family. Another thing we can think of in the same spirit of this quote is, “United we stand, divided we fall.” That has also inspired people who need encouragement to get along.

The very famous German philosopher, Johan von Goethe, once said, “Divide and rule, the politician cries; unite and lead, is the watchword of the wise.” I think that in today’s world, we can all see examples of politicians actively wanting to divide and rule while pretending to want to unite their constituents. We live in an age where it is easy to attempt to divide a united group. We all have some much access to information, rumors, and lies. How do we ever know what is the truth and what isn’t? Just because we read something on the Internet does not mean it is true, yet we all get sucked into the “hype” of a story, an incident, or a point of view. And every bit of information can act to divide the many “houses” we are a part of. Another point to consider regarding “a house divided,” is that we have to think that our enemies may **LIKE** for us to fight and split into smaller and weaker groups. We’ve heard, “Divide and conquer,” and we’ve heard “Strength in Numbers,” but the lesson to learn is to respect your group, your class, your family, your community, your country, your planet. Find the common ground that unites all of us. If you look hard enough, each one of us has something in common-something we can relate to, some reason to forge unity.

Think of the house as a whole pie. Now take a slice. It is no longer whole. It needs every part of it to retain its full status as a complete pie. Now think of a pizza pie and think of **THAT** divided, especially with different toppings. “A pizza pie divided against itself cannot stand.” You bet it can’t!! Especially with something for everyone!! Maybe that isn’t such a good example of this lesson, but there are usually six slices-who wants to join me?!?! Thank you all!