

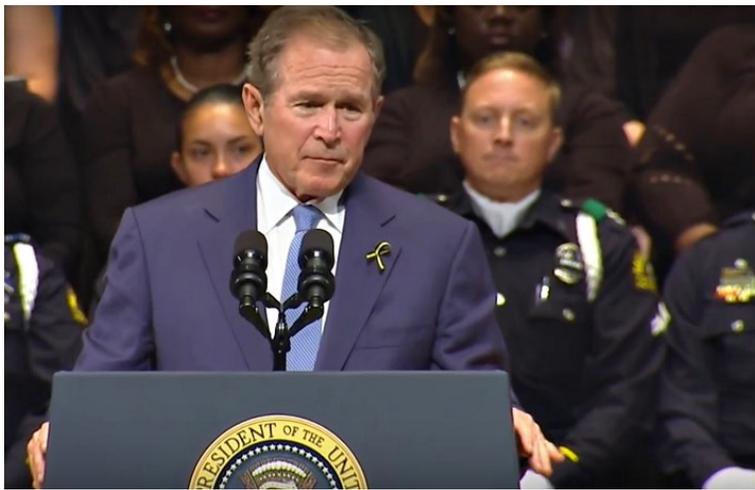


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**George W. Bush**

*Dallas Police Memorial Address*

delivered 12 July 2016, Dallas, Texas



**AUTHENTICITY CERTIFIED:** Text version below transcribed directly from audio

Thank you, Senator. I, too, am really pleased that President Obama and Mrs. Obama have come down to Dallas. I also want to welcome [the] vice president and Mrs. Biden; Mr. Mayor; Chief Brown; elected officials; members of the law enforcement community.

Today the nation grieves, but those of us who love Dallas and call it home have had five deaths in the family. Laura and I see members of law enforcement every day. We count -- We count them as our friends. And we know, like for every other American, that their courage is our protection and shield.

We're proud of the men we mourn and the community that has rallied to honor them and support the wounded. Our mayor and police chief and our police department have been mighty inspirations for the rest of the nation.



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These slain officers were the best among us:

- **Lorne Ahrens**, beloved husband to detective Katrina Ahrens and father of two;
- **Michael Krol**, caring son, brother, uncle, nephew, and friend;
- **Michael Smith**, U.S. Army veteran, devoted husband, and father of two;
- **Brent Thompson**, Marine Corps vet, recently married;
- **Patrick Zamarippa**, U.S. Navy Reserve combat veteran, proud father, and loyal Texas Rangers fan.

With their deaths, we have lost so much. We are grief stricken, heartbroken, and forever grateful.

Every officer has accepted a calling that sets them apart. Most of us imagine if the moment called for, that we would risk our lives to protect a spouse or a child. Those wearing the uniform assume that risk for the safety of strangers. They and their families share the unspoken knowledge that each new day can bring new dangers.

But none of us were prepared, or could be prepared, for an ambush by hatred and malice. The shock of this evil still has not faded.

At times it seems like the forces pulling us apart are stronger than the forces binding us together. Argument turns too easily into animosity. Disagreement escalates too quickly into de-humanization.

Too often we judge other groups by their worst examples, while judging ourselves by our best intentions. And this has -- And this has strained our bonds of understanding and common purpose.



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But Americans, I think, have a great advantage. To renew our unity, we only need to remember our values. We have never been held together by blood or background. We are bound by things of the spirit, by shared commitments to common ideals.

At our best, we practice empathy, imagining ourselves in the lives and circumstances of others. This is the bridge across our nation's deepest divisions.

And it's not merely a matter of tolerance, but of learning from the struggles and stories of our fellow citizens and finding our better selves in the process.

At our best, we honor the image of God we see in one another. We recognize that we are brothers and sisters, sharing the same brief moment on Earth and owing each other the loyalty of our shared humanity.

At our best, we know we have one country, one future, one destiny. We do not want the unity of grief, nor do we want the unity of fear. We want the unity of hope, affection, and high purpose.

We know that the kind of just, humane country we -- we want to build, that we have seen in our best dreams, is made possible when men and women in uniform stand guard. At their best, when they're trained and trusted and accountable, they free us from fear.

The Apostle Paul said, "For God gave us a spirit not of fear, but of strength and love and self-control."<sup>1</sup> Those are the best responses to fear in the life of our country; and they're the code of the peace officer.

Today, all of us feel a sense of loss -- but not equally. I'd like to conclude with the word of the families, the spouses, and especially the children of the fallen: Your loved one[s] time with you was too short. They did not get a chance to properly say goodbye. But they went where duty called. They defended us, even to the end. They finished well. We will not forget what they did for us.



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Your loss is unfair. We cannot explain it. We can stand beside you and share your grief. And we can pray that God will comfort you with a hope deeper than sorrow and stronger than death.

May God bless you.

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<sup>1</sup> 2 Timothy 1: 7