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### Making a Difference

Charlie Kirk once stated, “God. Family. Country. In that order.” This simple phrase is the basis of what made Charlie Kirk such an American icon and hero to millions of people around the world who aspired to emulate him and find fulfillment in life. Charlie Kirk was one of a kind and a great role model of a Christian husband, father, leader, and patriot.

Charlie Kirk was born in 1993 and lived in Illinois during his childhood. He originally desired to enroll in West Point Military Academy, however he was not accepted. Undaunted, Charlie enrolled into a community college in Illinois. At the end of the first semester he decided to fully commit himself to the company he created, Turning Point USA. So, he dropped out of college and began to visit college campuses to share his message with students across the country. He believed that God, family, and country were the foundations of a Christian patriot. These ideas and many other have impacted my own life through Charlie’s example: how to become a better debater, how to fulfill my purpose as a woman, how to work hard, and how to become a steadfast Christian.

Charlie was an incredible debater and was allowed to visit hundreds of college campuses to let students attempt to prove him wrong. During these debates he asked students thoughtful questions and was even able to change people’s minds about different issues and beliefs. These conversations between Charlie and the students proved to be an immense influence on the younger generation. As he once stated, “Young people are the future of America, and we must equip them with the tools to think critically and defend the liberty.” By using well thought out arguments and syllogisms, Charlie shared the importance of the freedom of speech. More people

were curious about this young man who never graduated college and yet was outsmarting graduate students in arguments and his audience grew. These same skills have personally impacted my own education. Through Charlie, I learned how to ask thoughtful questions that went step-by-step through an argument. At the end, I have poised a compelling question that would prove my point - just like Charlie did. I have used this technique several times in my team policy debates that I participate in.

While he advocated for political issues, Charlie also shared his opinion of the values that are most important in life. As stated earlier, his message for everyone was that faith, family, and freedom make up the fabric of a good society. Faith is most important, then family, and then freedom; the order is critical. His family was vital to him, and he exemplified that family should be prioritized over any career. As he once promoted in a speech, "Having children is more important than having a good career." He believed that the younger generation is the future of America, and therefore by having children and teaching them Christian conservative values, the country will be more grounded and successful.

Charlie was also committed to fostering integrity in young men and women. He has personally inspired me to fulfill my purpose as a woman. When I saw him in person in June of this year, he passionately advised all young women to stay rooted in the Word, find a husband who will love and support them, and raise a family with the basic core American values that shape this country. He and his wife, Erika, also encouraged everyone to get married and become a devout wife or husband. On another occasion, Charlie encouraged to women, "Most importantly please become a wife and start a family. That is the most important thing if you feel called to do so and want to be happy, I really encourage you to do that." This advice is counter-

cultural and has opened my eyes to recognize what is truly important when deciding the plans for my life. Again, I am grateful to Charlie and his example.

Additionally, Charlie Kirk advocated for people to engage in civil debate regardless if you agree with your opponents or not. He demonstrated this during his “Prove Me Wrong” debates with college students from liberal universities. He explained that by listening and respecting other’s opinions there can still be civil conversations between opposing sides. As he once declared, “What we have to get back to is being able to have a reasonable disagreement where violence is not an option.” This is what he encouraged all over the country during his debates. He was successful at these conversations with collage students partly due to his immense amount of knowledge that he acquired through questioning. He repeatedly expressed that he was a lifetime learner and worked incredibly hard to understand a variety of issues currently impacting the country. By obtaining this vast amount of knowledge, Charlie could not only carefully listen and understand his opponent’s argument and its flaws, but he could also explain and refute the error in the argument. Hard work allowed him to become a better debater and even build his own company from the ground up. As he explained in a speech, “Hard work, discipline, and faith are the building blocks of a meaningful life.” Charlie’s hard work and passion for knowledge were the cornerstone of his success.

Lastly, Charlie was a great model for Christians and especially for Christian parents. He exhorted parents to have kids and teach them Christian conservative values. He also encouraged parents to bring their children to church and instill in their young minds a hunger for Christ and His Word. As a teenager, Charlie’s faithful example encourages me in my walk with God.

In conclusion, Charlie Kirk made an incredible impact on millions of people around the world. He traveled all across the country to dozens of college campuses to share his message of faith, family, and freedom. These ideas that Charlie has advocated for has also made an impact on my life; namely how to become a better debater, how to fulfill my purpose as a woman, how to work hard, and become a steadfast Christian. As Charlie Kirk once stated, “American exceptionalism is not arrogance; it’s gratitude for the unique blessings of liberty.” I want to live out that motto, too, in my own life. God has blessed me with incredible role models, and I desire to follow in their footsteps and make a difference in my school, my community, my state, and my country.