

Bush shares views from politics to religion in a Q&A session

Elizabeth Sudduth
News Editor

Former U.S. President George Bush addressed students, faculty and staff in a question and answer session. An intimate group of about 500 gathered in Elon College's Whitley Auditorium at 2 p.m.

Bush was asked questions about foreign policy issues faced during his administration, his fears during the Gulf War Crisis and even more personal questions based on his own personal faith.

Bush served as the nation's 41st president from 1989 to 1993. During his term in the Oval Office, Bush witnessed the fall of the Berlin Wall and reunification of Germany, the Gulf War, the collapse of the Soviet Union and negotiation of the North American Free Trade Agreement, (NAFTA).

Sophomore Jordan Olsheski asked the President if he shared a similar experience of faith as his son, the current President George W. Bush.

Bush said he did have a strong faith, but kept it more private. "I of thought myself as Abraham Lincoln, not that I could compare myself to that great predecessor, but you couldn't be president without spending some time on your knees in prayer," Bush said. He sees faith as something personal but did remark that his son had a better sense of articulating his faith so not to mix church and state.

"When you're president, you know everyone thinks of you as some big shot, a big deal. You have got to believe there is some force bigger than yourself."

Junior Kim Rogers asked Bush what he would have done different in his presidency had he to do it all again. Bush said that he would have expressed differently and more convincingly to the American people that the economy was

not in a recession in the fall of 1992.

"I wasn't a good enough communicator like my predecessor, Ronald Regan, in convincing the American people not to think things were better than they actually are, but that they were as good as they were," Bush said.

He said the recession had ended the spring of 1991, prior to the 1992 election and maybe by explaining this he would have had a job for four more years. "I think communication was my biggest short coming; there were others."

Martin Baker, an athletic trainer, asked the former president what were some of the personal traits that drove policy successes.

"I think what drove me more was getting people around me that know more about it than I did," he said. "Getting good, smart people in the arms services, some my cabinet secretaries, but through them and my experiences of eight years as vice president, with the UN, the CIA and living in China, I had a concept."

Bush also added that you cannot do everything by yourself; you have to have help. "I have learned you can't take credit for everything," he said. "You have to learn to care about other people, you have to go the extra mile and care about the little guy along the way."

One of the final questions of the session was with all the accomplishments Bush has achieved, what was the most important thing he had learned.

Bush looked at the audience and said subtly, "my kids still come home."

"Some people might think that is a little weird," Bush said. "But we have a strong family and it means everything to us."

To former President Bush, his family has been his greatest impact. He credits his mother, who taught him to be a team



Adam Waterson / Photography Editor

Former President George Bush addresses students, faculty and a staff in a Q&A held in Whitley.

player when her son called home to brag about scoring three goals in a soccer game, 'George, how did the team do?'"



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EYE IN ELON



History in the making
High atop the
future bell tower, a
construction worker
hurries to finish the structure by opening season. The 57 foot bell tower will have four bells tuned to the sound of the classic Westminster Chimes.

Photo by: Adam Waterson / Photography Editor