

Atheist Fails Miserably With Gotcha Question Directed at Marco Rubio

Getting a “gotcha” question from an activist for another candidate, or for those pushing a specific issue, is not uncommon in any election campaign.

But, in presidential election politics, they can sometimes be devastating to a candidate who swings and misses. During a recent campaign stop in Iowa, Marco Rubio swung and didn’t miss.

In fact, his answer, keeping up with the baseball euphemisms, was a “moon shot.”

After opening up to questions from the audience, Justin Scott, a self-described atheist who has been following the candidates on the campaign trail and asking them about religious liberty and “separation of Church and State,” asked his gotcha question:

“I just noticed your recent ad, it mentioned nothing about policy, it mentioned nothing about ideas, and it simply talked about us wanting to follow faith, and find God, and go to Heaven, and things like that, which is fine for those people who align with you,” he said after identifying himself as an atheist. “My question is how do you plan on upholding our rights and focusing on non-theist ... because there’s talk in our community about running as pastor-in-chief instead of commander-in-chief, and so I’m curious as to your thoughts.”

In response, Rubio gave a heartfelt answer about his personal faith and the distinction between Christians and those who attempt to impose their faith—or lack of it—on the rest of the country. His answer drew rounds of applause from the audience:

"Well, first off, as I said in my speech, you have a right to believe whatever you want. In fact, you have a right not to believe in nothing at all. You certainly have that right. But I'm a Christian, I can't force you to be a Christian."

Rubio continued to discuss the "free gift" of Christianity and of salvation, which he said must be "willfully accepted." He said those cannot be forced on anyone, and no Christian would attempt to do so.

"So, you have a right to believe whatever you want, and I'm going to share my faith, especially when I'm asked, because my faith influences who I am in every aspect of my life," he added. "If you don't believe Judeo-Christian values influenced America, you don't know history. I'm not saying you, but I'm just saying in general. This nation was founded on the principle that our rights come from our Creator. If there's no Creator, then where did your rights come from?"

Rubio then said that if he becomes president, the U.S. will protect the rights of Americans who continue to believe in the nation's founding principles. He said the country would also protect the rights of those who disagree:

"We're also going to have a country where no one is forced to violate their conscience, which means no one is going to force you to believe in God, but no one is going to force me to stop talking about God."