

Atheists Cop an Attitude with this Sheriff

If the Freedom from Religion Foundation thought they could bully Grady Judd, they picked on the wrong man. The Polk County Sheriff isn't the slightest bit intimidated by the group's bullying machine. Apparently, the atheists at FFRF had nothing better to do than criticize Grady's outfit at an April church meeting. Like he has for countless events, the Florida sheriff wore his uniform to deliver a speech – which the radicals at FFRF insisted was an official county endorsement of religion. In a letter the group fired off this week, they accuse him of violating the Establishment Clause and abusing his elected position – a charge Grady fines “humorous.” “I actually find it entertaining that they even made those allegations,” he told reporters. “I am the sheriff of the county 24 hours a day seven days a week.” If they think they know the law better than the sheriff, they're in for a surprise. “They have a choice,” Grady told me on “Washington Watch” last week. “If they want to file a lawsuit and try to stop me, they're certainly free to do that. But at the end of the day, we will prevail, because what I'm doing is perfectly legal, and they can pay for my legal fees.” As someone who spent a decade in law enforcement, I understand that Grady goes where he's asked to speak – whether it's a secular or religious institution. As for wearing the uniform, Grady told listeners, “They didn't invite me because I'm Mr. Judd. They invited me because I'm Sheriff Judd.” Whether he's at First Baptist Church at the Mall in Lakeland or elsewhere, “I'm the sheriff of the whole county,” he said. Interestingly enough, Grady was speaking at his home church, which happens to be led by one of FRC's Watchmen pastors, Jay Dennis. It's no coincidence that Grady is standing his ground on the issue. Like so many men and women across the country, he is the product of pastors unapologetically preaching the word of God

and living it out. "I would think," Grady explained, "that people would be proud to have a sheriff whose life and message, speech and conduct, is consistent with everything the uniform stands for." His pastor certainly is. In a statement, Pastor Dennis makes it clear, "The people of Polk County who have overwhelmingly elected him twice as sheriff, elected him knowing of his strong, Christian faith and commitment to the Bible. One example of that is there are no adult entertainment businesses in Polk County, because of Grady Judd. In a day when political correctness has run amuck, it is refreshing to hear a man speak with truth and conviction on the things that matter most." It's time for the Freedom From Religion Foundation to back off and leave the policing to Sheriff Grady. *Reprinted with permission from the **Family Research Center**.*