

‘Convert Them or Kill Them’: Is Phil Robertson Like ISIS?

The moment *Duck Dynasty*’s Phil Robertson said to Sean Hannity, that, with regard to ISIS, you have to “either convert them or kill them,” it was obvious that others would pounce on those words and claim that he was no better than ISIS.

After all, haven’t these murderous terrorists done this very thing to the Christians and Yazidis, offering them conversion or death? How is Robertson any better?

A headline in the U.K.’s *Daily Mail* asked, “Isn’t it ironic, Phil Robertson? *Duck Dynasty* star’s stance on ISIS is ‘convert them or kill them’ as terror group wages bloody religious war across Middle East.”

A caption under the video of his conversation with Hannity was even more direct: “‘Convert them or kill them’: Phil Robertson takes radical stance on radical Islam but fails to acknowledge his solution sounds like the religious war being waged by ISIS.”

Hannity himself recognized that Robertson’s words could be controversial, beginning to inject the words, “That’s going—” before the *Duck Dynasty* patriarch continued. Later, Hannity said, “I know there are going to be people that are always looking to jump on you and say, ‘Convert them or kill them.’ And they’re going to say, ‘There goes Phil Robertson again.’ I know the media. I know how they act.”

But was Robertson’s stance really comparable to that of the radical Islamic terrorists? Absolutely not; although he could have found a better way to express himself (in which case, though, he would hardly have been speaking and acting like Phil Robertson!).

To put his remarks in proper context, Robertson began by quoting a number of Scriptures, including the highly appropriate verse from Proverbs 8: "All who hate me [speaking of divine wisdom personified] love death," his point being that these are evil people bent on destruction and murder.

Hannity then stated, "I think they are at war with us," and that's what Robertson was responding to. How do you deal with people like this?

Robertson described the terrorists as "street thugs on steroids," calling the conflict, "worldwide gang warfare, but this gang is well-armed and well-organized," suggesting that "we're going to have to deal with this group way more harshly than we have up to this point," which is actually the sentiment of many respected leaders, not to mention much of the American populace.

Who among us doesn't want to see these murderers stopped? Who among us doesn't want to see an end to their atrocities?

Dr. Ben Carson remarked that, "I normally encourage conversation and compromise where possible, but how does one negotiate or compromise with someone who desires your elimination? Maybe if you meet some of their demands, they will only dismember you or kill you more slowly." In short, "You don't negotiate with people whose goal is to eliminate you."

Similar sentiments were expressed in a petition launched by Princeton professor Robert P. George, which stated, **"It is imperative that the United States and the international community act immediately and decisively to stop the ISIS/ISIL genocide and prevent the further victimization of religious minorities.** This goal cannot be achieved apart from the use of military force to degrade and disable ISIS/ISIL forces" (emphasis in the original).

Signers of this petition not only included conservative

Christian leaders like Jim Daly of Focus on the Family and Russell Moore of the Southern Baptists, but Cornel West, “a former Princeton professor, a radical left-winger, a member of the Democratic Socialists of America, and a frequent guest on MSNBC.”

This led to a *Daily Caller* headline, “The One Thing Cornel West and Ben Carson Agree On.”

Even Vice President Joe Biden, perhaps reacting to President Obama’s much-maligned public indecisiveness, stated, “They should know we will follow them to the gates of hell until they are brought to justice. Because hell is where they will reside. Hell is where they will reside.”

It turns out that Phil Robertson actually responded with more grace than any of these leaders, actually suggesting the possibility of reaching out to the terrorists with the gospel:

“I’d much rather have a Bible study with all of them and show them the error of their ways and point them to Jesus Christ, the author and perfecter of having your sins removed and being raised from the dead. I would rather preach the gospel of Jesus to them. However, if it’s a gun fight and a gun fight alone, if that is what they’re looking for, me, personally I am prepared for either one.”

Perhaps if he had simply said, “The best thing of all would be to lead them to Jesus, but I have little hope that could happen. So, since it’s a war they want, we will bring the war to them.”

But that wouldn’t be Phil Robertson, nor is it as catchy as “convert them or kill them.”

Still, the massive night-and-day differences between Robertson and ISIS are clear: They offer conversion at the point of the sword; he would offer it freely with a Bible in hand. They slaughter innocent, unarmed men, women, and children; he is

talking about killing the killers.

I agree with you, Phil.

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