

Did Mike Huckabee Just Cross the Line?

During the 2016 presidential election cycle, it's been clear that the army of evangelical Christians who had supported former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee is backing someone else.

And, in an interview with FOX News Radio's Todd Starnes on Wednesday, the 2008 GOP runner-up didn't hold back with his assessment of why. Afterward, however, some Christians suggested he had crossed a line.

Was it hubris, or just plain honesty?

A large number of evangelical leaders, led by Tony Perkins of the Family Research Council, have thrown their support behind U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) this cycle, arguing he's been the best Christian candidate with the best chance to win in many years. Starnes noted others, particularly in the Southern Baptist Convention, are rallying behind U.S. Sen. Marco Rubio (R-Fla.).

Starnes also noted Huckabee had "been there ... supporting their causes," in the past. So, he asked if Huckabee felt betrayed by those evangelical leaders, to which Huckabee said:

"Well, certainly a sense of disappointment, and yet I do understand because, as I've often said, 'I don't go to them, I come from them,' but because of that I do understand them.

"A lot of them, quite frankly, I think they're scared to death that if a guy like me got elected, I would actually do what I said I would do, and that is, I would focus on the personhood of every individual. We would abolish abortion based on the Fifth and 14th Amendment. We would ignore the Supreme Court's same-sex marriage decision."

Then he went right past the ragged edge and explained why his positions on social issues might not be popular with some evangelical leaders. He said during his presidency, those leaders and their organizations might have a more difficult time rallying their followers and raising money:

“A lot of these organizations wouldn’t have the ability to do urgent fundraising because if we slay the dragon, what dragon do they continue to fight? And so, for many of them, it could be a real detriment to their organization’s abilities to gin up their supporters and raise the contributions, and I know that sounds very cynical but, Todd, it’s just, it is what it is.”

Then he kept digging:

“I think sometimes, while people say, ‘we’re praying about this, we’re asking God,’ that’s fine, but it seems like the criteria that I’ve been told for selecting candidates seems very secular.

“It’s about well, this person is polling well, this person has the cash. And I’m thinking, you know if these guys were going up against Goliath they would’ve insisted that it was the big guy, with the king’s armor—they never would’ve allowed that shepherd boy with the five smooth stones—and with Gideon’s army, they would’ve run for cover when God got Gideon’s army down to 300.

“Either we believe in a great God who overcomes the obstacles or we don’t. And if we’re going to live by secular standards, and if we’re going to fight our battles solely on the basis of human and traditional political standards, and not by moral standards, then I want these organizations to be a little more honest and tell their donors that, ‘Look, we’re just a club, we’re just an organization. We’ll talk about prayer, but we don’t necessarily believe that it will change things. We’ll still look at very secular, uh, pieces to the pie to determine

what we do and how we do it.'

"I just feel that there comes a point in our lives, where we either believe in a great God who does great things and uses sometimes the weak to get it done, or else we don't believe in that and we just believe we get human might and we gather all the human resources and we live or die by the human sword."

Earlier in the interview, Starnes invited Huckabee to discuss his frustrations with Cruz. Huckabee criticized the Iowa front-runner for having "regional messages" that changed depending on the audience.

In his final assessment of Huckabee's statement, Starnes suggested the 2008 Iowa Republican Caucus winner still had a "lot of fight left in him" and wasn't necessarily "down and out" just yet. His polling numbers are headed in the right direction, but he's still languishing in the low single digits.

The question he likely needs to ask now, however, is if he can continue to move upward after burning some key bridges with those he'll need to win, place, or show in Iowa in just 24 days.