

Fox Sports Sacks Outspoken Christian

As a former NFL running back, Craig James isn't used to being on the defensive. Unfortunately, that's exactly where Fox Sports is putting him in a story that should rock the football world.

The retired Pro-Bowler became the latest face of the war on religious liberty when—after one day on the job—Fox gave James the boot for his conservative views on marriage. And here's the kicker: He made the comments not at the sports desk but during last year's Senate campaign!

Apart from being a popular analyst, James also had political aspirations—aspirations he followed to Texas in an unsuccessful bid against Ted Cruz during the primary. In the course of the campaign, James was asked—as all candidates are—about his views on marriage and sexuality. James' opinion happens to coincide with the research, which is that no one is born gay. And as an orthodox Christian, he didn't shy away from the eternal consequences of this sin or any other.

"They are going to have to answer to the Lord for their actions," he said before pledging not to support same-sex unions.

According to *Sports Illustrated*, the regional affiliate of Fox hired James without involving upper management.

"Fox Sports executives were not happy with the hire by the regional network," sources explain.

High-level executives felt he hadn't been properly vetted (or properly excluded, depending on how you look at it). When the news broke, a Fox Sports spokesman tried to explain away the network's religious profiling.

"We just asked ourselves how Craig's statements would play in our human resources department. He couldn't say those things here," the spokesman said.

First, James *didn't* say them there—or anywhere in his commentating capacity. He stated his position as a candidate for public office in response to legitimate constituent questions. To suggest that having an opinion on cultural issues disqualifies you from breaking down football plays is outrageous—especially when that opinion is shared by the majority of Americans! Is the grip of religious hostility so tight that Americans can't even have an open debate for fear it'll cost them their jobs?

Dr. Angela McCaskill, Jerry Buell, Julea Ward, Damian Goddard, Senior Master Sgt. Phillip Monk, Crystal Dixon and Air National Guardsman Layne Wilson certainly think so. To a person, they were all suspended, fired or sued by their employers for their views on marriage—whether or not they expressed them at work. Like them, James' ousting had nothing to do with his job performance and everything to do with this new climate of Christian persecution.

The Washington Times reports that at the time of James' hiring, Fox Sports Southwest Executive Producer Mike Anastassiou called him a "talented broadcaster who I've admired throughout his career. His knowledge of college football and the experience he brings as an analyst will be a tremendous asset to our coverage."

From the military to Fox Sports to city halls like San Antonio's, the overwhelming message seems to be that when it comes to the public arena, conservative Christians need not apply. Let the network know what a disappointment their political correctness is by contacting Fox Sports and protesting Craig James' dismissal.

Unfortunately, college football isn't the only one sidelining

people of faith. Congressman Randy Forbes, R-Va., made that quite clear at last night's special order on religious liberty. Joined by Reps. Walberg, Lamborn, Wittman, Lankford, Gohmert, Fleming, Griffith, Franks and Pearce, Forbes stood on the floor and called for a return to the freedoms our Founding Fathers gave their lives to secure. [Click here to watch the video.](#)

Tony Perkins is president of the Washington, Family Research Council. He is a former member of the Louisiana legislature, where he served for eight years, and he is recognized as a legislative pioneer for authoring measures like the nation's first Covenant Marriage law.