

Liberty U President Jerry Falwell Responds to Student Backlash Over His Trump Support

Liberty University President Jerry Falwell Jr. says his personal endorsement of Donald Trump represents Christ's directive in Mark 12 and that many of his students agree.

Falwell's comments come after a group called Liberty United Against Trump made national headlines for dissenting with their university president.

The group says:

"A majority of Liberty students, faculty and staff feel as we do. Donald Trump received a pitiful 90 votes from Liberty students in Virginia's primary election, a colossal rejection of his campaign. Nevertheless, President Falwell eagerly uses his national platform to advocate for Donald Trump. While he occasionally clarifies that supporting Trump is not the official position of Liberty University, he knows it is his title of president of the largest Christian university in the world that gives him political credentials.

"Associating any politician with Christianity is damaging to the gospel of Jesus Christ. But Donald Trump is not just any politician. He has made his name by maligning others and bragging about his sins. Not only is Donald Trump a bad candidate for president, he is actively promoting the very things that we as Christians ought to oppose."

While Falwell praised the group for speaking their minds, he says their statements are exaggerated.

The president says:

I am proud of these few students for speaking their minds. It is a testament to the fact that Liberty University promotes the free expression of ideas unlike many major universities where political correctness prevents conservative students from speaking out. However, I am afraid the statement is false in several respects. First, the statement claims that a "majority" of Liberty faculty, staff and students are not supporting Donald Trump. It is true that Donald Trump lost in the Virginia primary at Liberty's precinct when there were many Republican candidates still in the race but, when Mike Pence spoke to many thousands of students at Liberty yesterday, he was applauded when he spoke of the importance of supporting Donald Trump for president. In fact, he received five standing ovations during his speech. The group of students now speaking out against Trump represents a very small percentage of the Liberty student body of 15,000 resident students and 90,000 online students. The group (led by a never Trump activist, I am told) claims to have between 200 and 1,200 signatures on a petition but admits that many of these signatories are not Liberty students. The student statement also falsely claims that I am "touring the country" and associating Liberty University with Trump. The fact is, I traveled with the Trump campaign only one weekend in January, and I always make it clear to the media that my endorsement of Trump is my personal endorsement only and that I am not speaking for Liberty University, its students, faculty or staff. I am only fulfilling my obligation as a citizen to "render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's" by expressing my personal opinion about who I believe is best suited to lead our nation in a time of crisis.