

Ray Lewis: 'I Dropped on Both Knees So I Can Simply Honor God'

The controversy swirling around the NFL protests against the criticism and actions of President Donald Trump this past week won't simply go away. Now it has moved into Christian circles, and people are asking that a statue be removed.

Former Baltimore Ravens' standout linebacker Ray Lewis, now an evangelist, joined other Ravens' players last Sunday in London before their game with Jacksonville by kneeling during the National Anthem. The players were protesting President Trump's speech last week in which he suggested the players "should be fired" for disrespecting their country.

Only Lewis says he wasn't kneeling in protest. He says he was kneeling to praise God. And now, because of Lewis' actions, more than 50,000 people have signed a petition started by fan Eric Moniodis to remove the statue of Lewis, considered by many as the greatest Raven of all-time, in front of M&T Bank Stadium.

"I went dropped on both knees so I can simply honor God in the midst of chaos," Lewis said on Showtime's "Inside the NFL."

The *Baltimore Sun* reported Thursday morning that extra security had been placed around the statue by the Maryland Stadium Authority, not waiting until this Sunday's game against Pittsburgh to take precautions.

CBS Baltimore reported that Lewis said on a local radio show that he would pay no heed to the petition.

"You can protest; I'm gonna pray," Lewis told Scott Garceau. "I'm not in the protesting business. I'm not into this,

whatever Trump wanna say. I'm not into that mess. ... It only bothers me if I blatantly did something to gain awareness for myself. What I did—is for our country. That's why I challenge people.”

CBS Baltimore reported that Lewis and other black celebrities met with then President-elect Trump in December to discuss race relations in America.

It's interesting to note that when former NFL player Tim Tebow knelt during the national anthem prior to games a few years ago, the media, which now lauds players for doing saw, bashed Tebow who did in reverence to God.

Lewis said he would not disrespect his country in any way.

“I would never protest against my flag,” he said. “It's just me. I do too much for my country, I do too much for my city, I've invested my life into making people around me better, and the people less fortunate than me. If we do not get back to just respecting humanity again and what the laws are, just respecting each other.” {eo}