

Romney Calls on Perry to Repudiate Mormon Cult Comments

The presidential nominee race is once again becoming, at least in part, about religion.

Mormon presidential racer Mitt Romney on Tuesday called on his Christian campaign rival Rick Perry to repudiate Baptist Pastor Robert Jeffress' remarks that Mormonism is a "cult."

"I would call upon Governor Perry to repudiate the sentiment and the remarks," Romney said at a news conference in Lebanon, N.H. "I just don't believe that that kind of divisiveness based on religion has a place in this country."

Jeffress, senior pastor at Dallas' First Baptist Church and a Perry backer, said Romney is a good, moral person, but he's not a Christian.

"Mormonism is not Christianity," he continued. "It has always been considered a cult by the mainstream of Christianity."

The remarks caused Perry to distance himself from Jeffress. Perry has said he doesn't believe Mormonism is a cult. But that's not good enough for Romney. He wants Perry to take it a step further and repudiate the remarks.

"Governor Perry is going to focus his campaign on improving the economy and creating jobs," the Perry campaign said in a statement. "Mitt Romney's comments are a distraction from the fact that Romneycare served as a blueprint for Obamacare."

But Romney and his supporters, including New Jersey Gov. Chris Christie, isn't letting the issue die. With the fervor around Romney's religion rising, Christie is forcing the ball back in Perry's court.□

“These types of religious matters have nothing to do with the quality of somebody’s ability to lead,” Christie said at the news conference with Romney. “Any campaign that associates itself with that type of conduct is beneath the office of president.”

Should Perry repudiate Jeffress for his “cult” comments? Would you be disappointed if Perry accepted Mormons as Christians? Is all of this a distraction from the larger issues? What say you?