

Tony Perkins: Say No to Bernie Sanders' Religious Bigotry

Thursday night, Family Research Council President Tony Perkins issued a call to action for the organization's supporters, urging them to call their senators to demand that they rebuke U.S. Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) for bigoted remarks he made to Deputy OMB Director-designate Russell Vought in a confirmation hearing Wednesday.

In the email, obtained by Charisma Caucus, Perkins wrote:

Last night, U.S. senators witnessed one of the most stunning outbursts of religious bigotry and hostility in recent memory. U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) responded in anger after Russell Vought, President Trump's nominee to be deputy director of the White House Office of Management and Budget, answered a question about his belief that salvation is found alone through Jesus Christ. Sanders declared that Mr. Vought is "really not someone who this country is supposed to be about."

Senator Sanders made this blatantly unconstitutional endorsement of a religious litmus test following this exchange:

Sanders: Let me get to this issue that has bothered me and bothered many other people. And that is in the piece that I referred to that you wrote for the publication called Resurgent. You wrote, "Muslims do not simply have a deficient theology. They do not know God because they have rejected Jesus Christ, His Son, and they stand condemned." Do you believe that that statement is Islamophobic?

Vought: Absolutely not, senator. I'm a Christian, and I believe in a Christian set of principles based on my faith. That post, as I stated in the questionnaire to this committee, was to defend my alma mater, Wheaton College, a Christian school that has a statement of faith that includes the centrality of Jesus Christ for salvation.

This is a core biblical tenet held by Christians—Protestant and Catholic—throughout the world for millennia.

The Bible says in John 3:18 that "Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe stands condemned already because they have not believed in the name of God's one and only Son."

Yet Sen. Sanders is making it clear that he believes the U.S. Senate should disqualify nominees who express this most basic biblical belief. Sen. Sanders is taking the Obama era's religious hostility and putting it on steroids.

Please sign this petition which will be delivered to every U.S. Senator—reminding him or her that our Constitution guarantees there will be no religious litmus test. Americans should never be forced to choose between their faith and public service.

Nor should the U.S. Senate try to impose a stealth litmus test that says "you can be religious as long as you don't actually believe or talk about what the Bible teaches."

By signing this petition, you are asking Sen. Sanders to apologize for his bigotry and asking his Senate colleagues to immediately pledge that they will not oppose nominees on the basis of their religious views.

Demanding a loyalty oath to the government's (or Sen. Sanders') determination of what beliefs are acceptable isn't what this country is about; indeed, it's what we

fought for independence from! We should celebrate that we are a nation that not only allows but encourages every American to hold and express their religious beliefs without fear of retribution by the government. This is the essence of America and the Constitution.

Sanders has not yet apologized for his comments, which were fueled by a letter written by Muslim interest groups and liberal Jewish groups aligned with J Street. Even liberals were taken aback by the vitriolic attack on a person of faith, and several left-wing news outlets called on the senator to walk back his statements.