

Where Jeb Bush Really Stands on Gay Marriage

Jeb Bush said Americans should be unwavering supporters of traditional marriage. While Bush hasn't officially announced a run for president, he's spending a lot of time getting ready, including in Iowa.

Bush would bring a big name and plenty of money to the presidential horse race, but he's already behind in the state that votes first in the primaries. His famous last name hasn't resonated in the Iowa polls.

While he's not taking part in the traditional straw poll, Bush says Iowa is still important.

"Are you going to be a serious player in Iowa? What's the sense?" CBN's David Brody asked.

"Absolutely," said Bush. "Look, I'm a really competitive guy to begin with. It's hard for me to imagine that I'm going to plan for fifth place. I mean, that's not going to happen. We're going to work hard here."

He'll have work to do for sure. As a GOP establishment figure, he doesn't excite the Tea Party circuit. His support of comprehensive immigration reform and Common Core educational standards hasn't helped either, something on display in Dubuque this weekend.

"I understand that you personally support Common Core," probed one Iowa voter.

"Here's what I'm for," Bush replied. "I'm for higher standards driven by the states. Common Core was established with 45 states voluntarily doing this with no federal government

involvement.”

Bush’s team is quick to point out his socially conservative past. As Florida governor, he championed pro-life causes such as a late-term abortion ban and parental notification. He also stood for school choice and tried to protect prayers at public school events. It’s that Jeb Bush evangelicals want to see emerge in 2016. Yet right now he’s fighting skepticism.

“The world we live in. People can get their own set of facts and make up their own minds without maybe having all the information,” Bush said.

So voters came to Iowa searching for answers.

“I think he did a great job in Florida, and we’re here to learn about him and how he can be an effective national leader,” Iowa voter Dave Richter said.

“I’m kind of curious to see what he has to say about everything. I think everything right now is surrounded around the Iraq war and his brother, but I think that’s taking away from a lot of other important issues,” said Tracy Runde, another Iowa voter.

Indeed, he tripped up last week answering whether he agreed with his brother’s decision to go to war. But in Iowa this weekend, he wasn’t backing away from his family.

“Many of you know me as George and Barbara’s boy, for which I’m proud. Some of you may know ‘W’ is my brother. I’m proud of that too. Whether people like that or not, they’re just going to have to get used to it,” Bush told the Iowa crowd.

Bush also hopes conservatives get used to him defending traditional marriage in a day when doing so has political risks.

"They want a candidate who's going to fight on this issue. Are you their guy? Because they are concerned about the marriage issue," Brody said.

"Well, I'm concerned about it as well," Bush responded. "I think traditional marriage is a sacrament. We need to be stalwart supporters of traditional marriage."

"Do you believe there should be a constitutional right to same-sex marriage because that's the argument in front of the Supreme Court?" Brody pressed.

"I don't, but I'm not a lawyer and clearly this has been accelerated at a warp pace," Bush replied.

The religious liberty issue has also accelerated so we asked where he stands on the rights of Christian business owners refusing to provide services for same-sex weddings?

"Are you okay if they don't provide those types of services? Is that okay?" Brody asked.

"Yes, absolutely, if it's based on a religious belief," he replied. "A big country, a tolerant country ought to be able to figure out the difference between discriminating (against) someone because of their sexual orientation and not forcing someone to participate in a wedding that they find goes against their moral beliefs."

It's one of many issues Bush will have to navigate if he decides to take the presidential plunge.