

Franklin Graham 'Shocked' BGEA Site Called Mormonism a Cult

Last month, after Billy Graham met with Republican presidential candidate Mitt Romney, the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association removed an article describing Mormonism as a "cult." Franklin Graham, BGEA president, told CNN this week he didn't know the article existed.

The son of **Billy Graham** told CNN he did not write the article and he was "shocked" to find it on BGEA's website.

"I don't want to be involved in calling people names," **Franklin Graham** said. "I want to reach people for Christ, and how can I do that if I'm calling them a name? I don't even like the word *cult*; it sounds like dungeons and dragons or something."

Graham acknowledged "huge differences between Protestants and **Mormons**, but said his priority is winning people to Christ.

"I believe that the only way that I can get to heaven is through faith in God's son, Jesus Christ, who took my sins, who died on the cross and who God raised to life," Graham explained, "and if we're willing to confess our sins and repent and believe on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, God will forgive us and He'll heal our hearts. This is my message. I'm an evangelist and I want to reach as many people as I can."

In a section of the website called "Billy Graham's *My Answer*," there was a question, "What is a cult?"

The answer read: "A cult is any group which teaches doctrines or beliefs that deviate from the biblical message of the

Christian faith.”

It continued: “Some of these groups are Jehovah’s Witnessess, Mormons, the Unification Church, Unitarians, Spritualists, Scientologists, and others.”

The BGEA confirmed the page was removed last month, and Graham said it would not be returning to the site.

“Our primary focus at the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association has always been promoting the gospel of Jesus Christ,” Ken Barun, chief of staff for the association, told CNN in a statement. “We removed the information from the website because we do not wish to participate in a theological debate about something that has become politicized during this campaign.”

This subtraction from the website was made shortly after Billy Graham met with Romney, a lifelong member of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. In the meeting, Romney reportedly asked for prayer, and Graham told him, “I’ll do all I can to help you.”

The **BGEA** also ran a “vote biblical values” ad campaign leading up to the presidential election, and Graham supported the North Carolina amendment, which protected marriage between a man and a woman.

The 94-year-old **evangelist** has drawn criticism this year for being seemingly more involved in politics than usual. But the younger Graham told CNN his father has always been involved in politics, and has known every president since Harry Truman.

In defense of Billy Graham’s support of the marriage amendment, Franklin Graham said his father “never dreamed that in his 94 years of life that we would be discussing the definition of marriage.

“He just never dreamed that,” he said. “So there was an

amendment to give clear, biblical definition to the word 'marriage' and my father supported that."