

NASCAR Driver Loses Sponsor Over Christian Faith

Although many applaud the prayer meetings in NASCAR circles, not everyone is willing to tolerate Christian values on the race track.

Indeed, NASCAR driver **Blake Koch** is being persecuted for his faith.

Following California's Royal Purple 300, Koch sat just 28 points out of the top 10 driver standings—but he was forced to race with a blank car after losing his primary sponsor because of a controversy over his Christianity.

Koch had partnered with The Rise Up and Register Campaign, which works to educate people on the importance of voting in the 2012 elections. But ESPN would not allow the ad to air because of its so-called political and religious overtones.

"I didn't think that my faith in Christ would have an impact on whether or not a sponsor could air a commercial or not," Koch told *Fox & Friends* on March 29. "The one thing I will not do is deny my faith just because a particular sponsor might not like the way I express my faith, which I do on my own time."

Going into the race last weekend in Dallas, Koch would have been forced to park his car without a primary sponsor. As soon as heard about Koch's dilemma, the company stepped up to sponsor him. Koch was then able to race at the O'Reilly Auto Parts 300 at the Texas Motor Speedway last week.

"It shows me how much God has His hand on the situation that He would bring along at just the right time," says Koch. "I'm excited about how they encourage families in their faith, which is extremely important to me. God is always faithful!"

But the battle is not over. Koch still needs a primary sponsor for the remainder of the season and has started the #KeepBlakeRacing campaign to bring awareness.

“We’re excited to support Blake and his stand for his faith,” says Bobby Downes, CEO of . “This is a great opportunity to keep him racing and at the same time bring awareness about Christian movies that reflect family values.”

ESPN could not immediately be reached for comment.