

Pentagon Unblocks Baptist Website to Military Personnel

Within hours of an American Family Association (AFA) Action Alert, the Pentagon said it had resolved the reasons it blocked the Southern Baptist Convention website, , from military computers.

The block came just a few weeks after reports that an Army briefing labeled evangelical Christians and Catholics as examples of religious extremist groups, and a separate email identified two prominent Christian ministries as “domestic hate groups.”

The Pentagon says the website block was a matter of website security and not an infringement on religious liberty.

“In this case, security systems performed as expected in detecting a threat to DoD [Department of Defense] networks,” Lt. Col. Damien Pickart said in a prepared statement.

“We determined that our web filters recently detected malware at the SBC website, which resulted in the block for some service members,” Pickart said. “The department has verified that the Southern Baptist Convention website no longer contains malware that may pose a threat to our networks and will be unblocked today.”

Pickart added that the block did not have anything to do with “hostile” or religious content. “The department of defense strongly supports the religious rights of service members, to include their ability to access religious websites like that of the SBC,” he said.

Immediately after releasing the AFA Action Alert, AFA reports that dozens of military personnel and chaplains said they could not access the Baptist website on base computers, while

a few said their military computer allowed the site.

Had this issue not gained national attention, the website would still be blocked today. Because hundreds of Baptist military personnel and chaplains depend on their denomination's website, it was critical that the site be unblocked quickly.

However, Congressman Randy Forbes, R-Va., recently noted during a congressional committee meeting that there is still a level of anti-Christian sentiment within the military, and he cited several examples.

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