

Glenn Youngkin and the ‘Uncomfortable’ Gospel Moment at TPUSA Virginia Tech

BLACKSBURG, Va. – It was just after 4 p.m. when I had meandered my way through Virginia Tech’s campus – teeming with the buzz of students leaving classes – and found the growing line for a Turning Point USA event, only the second since its founder, Charlie Kirk, had been assassinated at a similar event in Utah two weeks and one day before.

There are plenty of things from the evening in Blacksburg that will make the news, from the greatly heightened security (including officers on the roof of the venue and police drones overhead) to podcaster Megyn Kelly’s tête-à-tête with a student who blamed President Donald Trump’s “rhetoric” for Kirk’s murder. But there was one moment that likely won’t draw so much attention.

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It was an “uncomfortable” moment – at least, that’s how Virginia Gov. Glenn Youngkin preempted what he asked those gathered in Burress Hall to do at the end of his speech, before Kelly took the stage.

Youngkin, the outgoing governor of Virginia, had been personally invited to speak at the TPUSA event by Kirk and, he said, was busy Sept. 10 rearranging his schedule to accommodate the invitation when he learned the 31-year-old had been fatally struck by an assassin’s bullet.

Seemingly spurred by Kirk's own devotion to his Christian faith, Youngkin offered a bold message that felt less like a political rally and more like a Gospel outreach.

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Admitting he was "not faithful" to God when he was in college, Youngkin encouraged Virginia Tech students that "the most important decision" they will make in their lives is "accepting Christ as your Savior." The next most important choice they'll make in life, he said, is deciding who to marry.

Youngkin then spoke about his relationship with his now-wife Suzanne. It was her faith in Jesus – and her insistence God be at the center of their marriage – that led Youngkin to his own faith in the Lord.

When he asked Suzanne to marry him, Youngkin reflected, she said, "Yes, but," and went on to tell the now-governor, "Jesus is really the center of my life and, therefore, He has to be in the center of our marriage. Promise me you'll do that."

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In the years to come, he recalled attending a class for new Christians at the church he and his wife were attending at the time. It was in that class, Youngkin said, that he "truly accepted Christ," telling the thousands of students gathered in the dimly lit auditorium he felt the "Spirit descending on me and I could do nothing other than weep."

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