

SECULARISTS PUZZLED BY TRUMP SUPPORT

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Every survey shows that most Americans do not consider Donald Trump to be a particularly devout Christian. Indeed, only 14 percent of U.S. adults say the word “Christian” describes the former president. Even among evangelical Protestants who think favorably of Trump, only one in five strongly associates the term “Christian” with him.

This obviously does not bother his supporters, but it sure bothers others. The others are those who are unhappy with the faithful for standing by Trump, a man they say is characterologically flawed. They are basically saying that religious Americans who are in Trump’s corner are hypocrites.

R. Marie Griffith is a religion and politics professor at Washington University in St. Louis. Speaking of the faithful who support Trump, she says, “They really don’t care about, is he religious or not.” According to Newsweek, this signifies a “disconnect” between personal faith and political support, one that “prioritizes political goals over traditional religious values.”

Not really. What it suggests is that Christians who like Trump are mature voters: They are not choosing the most pious candidate—they are choosing the person who is the most likely to promote their values. Whether the candidate is religion-friendly matters gravely, not his personal relationship with God.

In June, we published a report, “Biden and Trump on Religious

Liberty,” that compared the Trump-Pence administration’s record on this subject to that of Biden-Harris (we recently updated it). In his four years as president, Trump addressed religious liberty issues 117 times. From the beginning of his presidency in January 2021 to October 1, 2024, Biden-Harris addressed these matters 33 times.

While quantitative data are important, qualitative analysis are also critical. On this score, Trump wins easily: he expanded religious liberty while Biden-Harris often contracted it.

Our report looked at the following issues: Faith-based initiatives; Conscience rights; Abortion; HHS Mandate; Foster Care; Gays; Transgenderism; and International Issues.

“No one seriously believes that Trump is a man of deep faith,” Bill Donohue said. “But his policies on religious liberty are a model of excellence. Biden, on the other hand, tries hard to convince the public that he is a ‘devout Catholic’ yet his religious-liberty rulings are unimpressive, and in some cases are subversive of this First Amendment right.”

Harris’ views on religious liberty are inextricably linked to the administration she serves. This explains why Sen. Mike Lee recently said that “Kamala Harris doesn’t believe that religious institutions should be able to live according to their faith. Rather, they must bend the knee to the popular social justice movement of the day.”

Lee does not exaggerate. Harris is a co-sponsor of the Equality Act and she introduced the Do No Harm Act. Both would gut religious liberty protections by sidelining the 1993 Religious Freedom Restoration Act. And unlike Trump, who gave us Supreme Court Justices who respect the First Amendment guarantee of religious liberty, Harris would go the other way.

There is no disconnect between people of faith who are unimpressed with Trump’s personal Christian credentials and

his phenomenal record of promoting religious liberty for all Americans. After all, they know what the choices are.

Harris, who is a religious hybrid (she was raised Baptist and Hindu), is not exactly known as Ms. Devout. But she is known as someone who entertains a militant secularist mindset. It is the latter that counts. Persona matters but policies matter more. That's the mature way of sizing up candidates for public office.