

# Evans says church has become more partisan than Christian

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ANAHEIM, Calif. (BP)—Noted Dallas pastor and author Tony Evans likened the church of today to referees on a football field who have chosen sides.

“It becomes unfortunate when those who are to be the independent on the field decide to join the jersey of the competing teams, because the moment they do that, they have lost their uniqueness, their distinctiveness,” Evans said. “And what you find out is the competing teams use them rather than follow their lead.”

He preached at the National African American Fellowship of the Southern Baptist Convention during its June 12 worship service at Friendship Baptist Church in Yorba Linda, Calif.

Evans told the group God’s church needs to carry out its created purpose in proclaiming and upholding God’s word, even amid America’s political and racial turmoil.

“The point is today that the church of Jesus Christ has lost its uniqueness. Rather than saving and representing the team in heaven, they have been mimicking the teams of the culture,” said Evans, founding senior pastor of Oak Cliff Bible Fellowship in Dallas. “They have decided to be more Democrat than Christian, or more Republican than Christian.

“We are actually a church that’s participating in cancel culture,” Evans said, “because we lead churches and cancel out the word of God by the doctrine of secularism and deciding only when it’s convenient to be Christian, not taking a stand with Jesus Christ, because we’ve got these legislative bodies.

“That’s why you can have slavery go on and racism go on, and culturalism go on, ... and this and that, and this and that, because it is not the final word. There are two answers to every question: God’s answer and everybody else.”

## **‘God is waiting on us’**

Evans based his sermon on Matthew 16: 13-19, backing it in part with 1 Peter 2:5. He exhorted the church in its calling found in the meaning of the word “Ecclesia,” a church that is a legislative body adjudicating God’s word.

“And [Jesus] said whatever you bind on earth, shall have been bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth, shall have been loosed in heaven,” Evans said. “In other words, if you kick, I’ll back you up.

“A lot of us are waiting on God, and God is waiting on us. He says if you bind, if you loose, if you forbid, if you permit, I will back you up, as long as you do kingdom stuff.”

Evans is the author of more than 100 books, including the CSB Tony Evans Study Bible and Commentary, the first such work by an African American.

SBC President Ed Litton encouraged the National African American Fellowship in doing God’s work.

“This is God’s work, and it’s a good work, and it’s hard work,” Litton said. “But it’s God’s work, and they can’t stop. God bless you, church.”

Greg Perkins, NAAF Western Region director and senior pastor of The View Church in Menifee, Calif., moderated the event. Perkins recognized Franklin Avenue Baptist Church in New Orleans, led by senior pastor and former SBC President Fred Luter, as a “pacesetter” in missions giving among African American churches; and honored Browns Memorial Baptist

Church in Southaven, Miss., led by senior pastor Bartholomew Orr, as a leading Southern Baptist church in baptisms.