

ERLC's Moore calls for Trump resignation

Editor's Note: This article is based on reporting by Tom Strode in the Washington, D.C., bureau of Baptist Press; Ken Camp, managing editor of The Baptist Standard, news journal of the Baptist General Convention of Texas; and Adelle M. Banks of Religion News Service. Edited for clarity and length.



Moore

NASHVILLE – U.S. President Donald Trump should resign to bring about national healing, says Russell Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission (ERLC) in Nashville.

Moore, a longtime vocal critic of Trump, made the demand in the wake of the violence and chaos created by a mob of Trump supporters who stormed the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C., on Jan. 6 while Congress was meeting to certify the Electoral College victory for Democrat Joe Biden. Some observers contend a Trump speech to the protestors earlier in the day incited the riot.

“Mr. President, people are dead,” Moore said on Twitter on Jan. 8. “The Capitol is ransacked. There are 12 dangerous days for our country left. Could you please step down and let our country heal?”

During an ERLC-hosted webinar on the same day, Moore said his request was an “appeal to the president’s sense of

responsibility in all of this.”

“This is a moment where the entire country is waiting to see what is going to happen next,” he told those participating in the online event.” This is a very, very dangerous time, so what we need is leadership that is going to say, ‘Let’s heal,’ and the way that we heal is by saying violence and attacks on the U.S. government are always wrong. We’re going to prosecute them and then debates about disagreements among Americans can take place.

“There has to be a time of healing and if the president can’t or won’t do that, then there’s 12 more days left. Then I think he should take responsibility one way or the other, but we have to have stable, unifying leadership in this country.

“[O]ne of the things that we’re dependent on in this country is the kind of presidential leadership that in moments of great crisis is speaking not only to one’s own supporters but also to the entire country, and we really, really need that right now.”

During the ERLC webinar, Moore described the assault on the Capitol as an “insurrection and an act of domestic terrorism.”

“This is unjustifiable,” he said. “Doesn’t matter what your politics are, doesn’t matter what your religion is, doesn’t matter what region of the country you’re in. This is an attack on the United States Constitution.”

“It also is a violation of the Romans 13 directive to be subject to the governing authorities who are established by God,” Moore told the audience.

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Russell Moore, president of the Southern Baptist Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission

One of the reasons he was “trembling with rage” as he saw the mayhem at the Capitol was because of the combination of images of a gallows and signs that said, “Jesus Saves,” Moore said.

“Violent insurrection and the Gospel of Jesus Christ cannot coexist,” he stressed, “and there are people who don’t yet know Christ, who all they know about Jesus is seeing ‘Jesus Saves’ signs in the hands of violent insurrectionists who are disobeying the clear commands of Scripture and the explicit words out of the mouth of Jesus himself. That is blasphemy. We have a responsibility to say this is what Christianity is, defined by the Gospel and the kingdom of God, and this is what Christianity is not.”