

Romney explains role of religion

by UPI

COLLEGE STATION, Texas -- Republican U.S. presidential hopeful Mitt Romney offered his views on religion and faith in the United States Thursday, but not an explanation of his faith. "If I am fortunate to become your president, I will serve no one religion," Romney, a Mormon, said in remarks prepared for delivery in College Station, Texas. "A president must serve only the common cause of the people of the United States." As President John Kennedy did in the 1960s, Romney used his speech to assuage concerns about whether his faith would influence his presidency. Requiring a presidential candidate to explain church doctrines would "enable the very religious test the founders prohibited in the constitution." While faiths have theological differences, "we share a common creed of moral conviction," Romney said. The United States separates church and state because "(no) religion should dictate to the state nor should the state interfere with the free practice of religion," he said, cautioning against efforts to "remove from the public domain any acknowledgment of God." Cultural diversity and the "vibrancy of our religious dialogue" has maintained the United States' leading role internationally, he said, "even as others regard religious freedom as something to be destroyed."

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