

Huckabee: Critics dwell on his pastor past: "A small, arcane part of my biography"

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Republican presidential candidate Mike Huckabee says that critics have unfairly focused on his former career as a Southern Baptist pastor rather than his role as Arkansas governor.

"It's been fascinating to me that people have tried to marginalize me as a candidate of the fringe," said Huckabee at a February 12 breakfast meeting with reporters sponsored by the *Christian Science Monitor*.

"How many other candidates are most depicted by what they were 20 years ago? Last time I was a Baptist minister was 1991. . . . The attempt to ghettoize me into a small, arcane part of my biography has been remarkable." Huckabee said he has served in "an executive capacity" longer than others in the presidential race.

After another former governor, Mitt Romney, bowed out of the Republican race following Super Tuesday, Huckabee received a personal endorsement from Focus on the Family founder James Dobson, who declared again that he would never vote for Senator John McCain, the GOP front-runner, because of the Arizona senator's deviation from some conservative stances.

Huckabee reiterated February 12 that he is resisting any talk about getting out of the race despite McCain's big lead among pledged delegates.

A bit earlier, Huckabee called attention to his pastoral calling when he told the Conservative Political Action Conference in Washington, D.C., in a widely circulated quote, "I didn't major in math. I majored in miracles, and I still believe in those." - *Religion News Service*