

Christian Nationalism

Is it a thing?

Winter 2024 Forever Learning Institute

The Good, the Bad, *and* the Ugly

In this **six-week session**, our study will be an overview of **Christian Nationalism**; we will explore the cultural (which includes the religious) and political ideology.

We may think we have encountered the term in the press, on social media platforms, and in casual conversations in our workplace, school, neighborhood, or church. But we might be surprised as to where else we see it creeping into our world.

Christian Nationalism is an ideology that threatens the teaching of Jesus and our pluralistic democracy, and it thus needs to be addressed by the churches in the United States.

The KEY to remember is that Culture (religion) is always in the room

Each week, we will walk through slides that I will compile, and then we can discuss along the way.

I will send out within a day or two of each class what I call “**bedtime reading and viewing.**” These will be PDFs and videos showing the topic of Good, Bad, and Ugly. Some taking different positions.

Some will push extremes on both sides of the issue. But the purpose is for us to think, understand, and comprehend our way through the situation in time.

I advocate for what is called the *Cardijn Method* of **See-Judge-Act.**

I don't expect you to read or view all the material I will send out. Spread it out over the year, and if you have questions, just ask, and we can discuss.

Week One: Introduction, History, the Good, the bad & the ugly

Week Two: What is our collective current understanding of Christian nationalism?

Week Three: What does Christian nationalism look like in the United States?

Week Four: What is working for Christian nationalism in Politics and Religion?

Week Five: How should religions think about nationalism?

Week Six: Why should Christians critically reflect on Christian nationalism?

What have we learned about Christian nationalism?

Who is this Guy?

Hi, I'm Richard

The challenge of society in a world of emerging technology at every age begs the question, "How should we live our journey in life?" The one question that we all must grapple with, no matter our background, is how we observe, discern, judge, and act in a manner that brings about the greater good for the common good of everyone on this planet.

As a Cultural Historian of society and technology,....

I focus on those moments, patterns, and events that changed how civilization evolved and will touch our lives and hopefully present "AHA" moments: Society, Culture, Religions, Theology, Philosophy, Policy/Government, and Emerging Technology have altered how we live and, most importantly, how we behave as human beings. We have experienced two cultural revolutions: The agricultural and industrial revolutions. We are entering the third, the Autonomous Revolution.

Religion is always in the room, even when the room is full of atheists and agnostics.

"On the Day of judgment, Christ's sentence will not bear on your assistance at Mass, reception of Holy Communion, your fasts, and abstinence, nor will good intentions be of any avail; these are a means to an end, but it will call for your concrete acts of love." ~ Lous J Putz CSC

"When I became a Quaker pastor in 1984, I never dreamed I would have to preach against fascism. Nor did I think flag-wavers extolling the Greatest Generation one moment would, in the next moment, tell me to stop preaching politics. It isn't political to condemn fascism. It's the gospel." ~ Phil Gulley — Danville IN

Our bodies, brains, senses, and minds evolved over billions of years to create a species superbly adapted for survival in the physical environment.

But when we venture into the world of ideology, beliefs, and religion we face an alien environment.

לְבַדְּכֶם... אֲמַרְכֶם וְכִי מֵיָדָא הַאֲמַרְכֶם

דרשו ותמצאו, ובקשו את ממלכת ה' תחילה

Ζητεῖτε, καὶ εὕρήσετε... ζητεῖτε πρῶτον τὴν βασιλείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ.

Ψάξτε, και θα βρείτε... Αναζητήστε πρώτα τη Βασιλεία του Θεού.

Quaerite et invenietis ... Quaerite primum regnum Dei—

Suchet und ir werdent finden... Suchet iu êrst daz Rich Got

Suchet, und ihr werdet finden... Suchet zuerst das Reich Gottes

Seek, and ye shall find... Seek ye first the Kingdom of God... (Luke 12:22)

But seek the Empire of God and his righteousness; all these things shall be added unto you (MT 6:33).

Coughlin, a right-wing populist, advocated a form of corporatism influenced by Italian Fascism. In 1934, Coughlin organized the National Union for Social Justice, arguing that neither capitalism nor democracy had a future in America. In 1938 the *National Union* developed into the *Christian Front* and the *America First movement*, which was even more ardent in its support of fascism and became a mouthpiece for *Nazi* propaganda. Subsequently, as war loomed in Europe,

Coughlin supported isolationism, charging that Jewish financiers were secretly behind efforts to involve the United States in the war. *Coughlin received more mail than President Roosevelt at the height of his popularity.* Indeed, a public opinion poll taken in 1938 showed that 25 percent of those polled supported all or most of Coughlin's ideas. Coughlin was thus the most visible of the American right-wing activists during the 1930s, and his *anti-Semitism* deeply troubled American Jewry.



- Develop an understanding of Christian Nationalism
- Explore research-based characteristics of American Christian Nationalism
- Incorporate responses to Christian nationalism
- Learn ways to talk with those who adhere to Christian nationalism
- Consider some Scripture passages that remind us how to interact with others lovingly, even when we do not agree

Questions addressed include:

- Was America founded as a Christian nation?
- What does Christian Nationalism look like in the United States?
- Is there a difference between conservative Christianity and Christian nationalism?
- Is Christian nationalism embraced only by a fringe element in America?
- Does Christian nationalism come in various flavors?
- How should the Christian church think about Christian Nationalism?
- How can I talk with those who embrace Christian nationalism?

Christianity, Nationalism, and the 20th-Century Experience

Christianity *BEFORE AND AFTER* 1933

Christian nationalism is a complex and nuanced concept with a range of interpretations, so it's essential to approach it with an open mind and critical thinking. Here's a breakdown of some key aspects:

Core idea: Christian nationalism blends religious beliefs with nationalist ideology, often advocating for the fusion of national identity with Christianity. This means aligning the nation's laws, policies, and culture with Christian values and principles.

Variations: Within Christian nationalism, there's a spectrum of views. Some advocate for the peaceful integration of Christian values into society, while others hold more assertive or even militant views, seeking to reshape society and government according to their interpretation of Christian tenets.

Criticisms: Critics of Christian nationalism raise concerns about potential violations of religious freedom and pluralism, as well as the potential for discrimination and marginalization of minority groups who don't adhere to the dominant Christian interpretation. Concerns exist about the potential for blurring the lines between church and state, leading to theocratic tendencies.

Understanding complexity: It's crucial to avoid generalizations and recognize that Christian nationalism isn't a monolithic concept. Individuals and groups within this movement hold diverse views and motivations. Some may genuinely believe they're promoting good by upholding Christian values, while others might use religion to achieve political or social goals.

Instead of simply labeling Christian nationalism as “good,” “bad,” or “ugly,” it's more productive to engage in *critical analysis and open dialogue*. This involves examining the specific beliefs and actions of different groups within the movement, considering potential consequences, and promoting respectful discussion about the role of religion in society.

Pinpointing the exact origin of Christian nationalism is challenging, as its influences and expressions have woven through history in various forms. Here's an overview of some key contributors to its development:

Early Roots:

- **Medieval Europe:** The blending of Christian faith and political authority during this period laid some groundwork for the concept of a Christian nation. This included notions of the divine right of kings and the close relationship between church and state.
- **Reformation & Religious Wars:** The 16th and 17th centuries saw conflicts driven by religious divisions. Protestant and Catholic factions vied for control and sought to align national identity with their interpretations of Christianity.

Modern Developments:

- **19th-century Nationalism:** With the rise of modern nationalism in Europe and beyond, some thinkers and movements began advocating for Christian principles as a core element of national identity. This was particularly prominent in countries like Germany and the United States.
- **20th-century Fundamentalism:** The rise of fundamentalist Christian movements in the 20th century, particularly in the U.S., contributed to a renewed emphasis on blending Christian values with social and political life. This included movements like Christian Reconstructionism, seeking to reshape society according to biblical principles.

Contemporary Expressions:

- **Rise of Populism:** In recent years, the rise of populist movements in various countries has sometimes coincided with increased visibility of Christian nationalist ideals. Some populist leaders have appealed to Christian values and identities as part of their political platforms.
- **Cultural Debates:** Contemporary debates on issues like abortion, same-sex marriage, and religious freedom often involve clashes between secular and Christian nationalist perspectives. These debates highlight the ongoing struggle to define the role of religion in public life.

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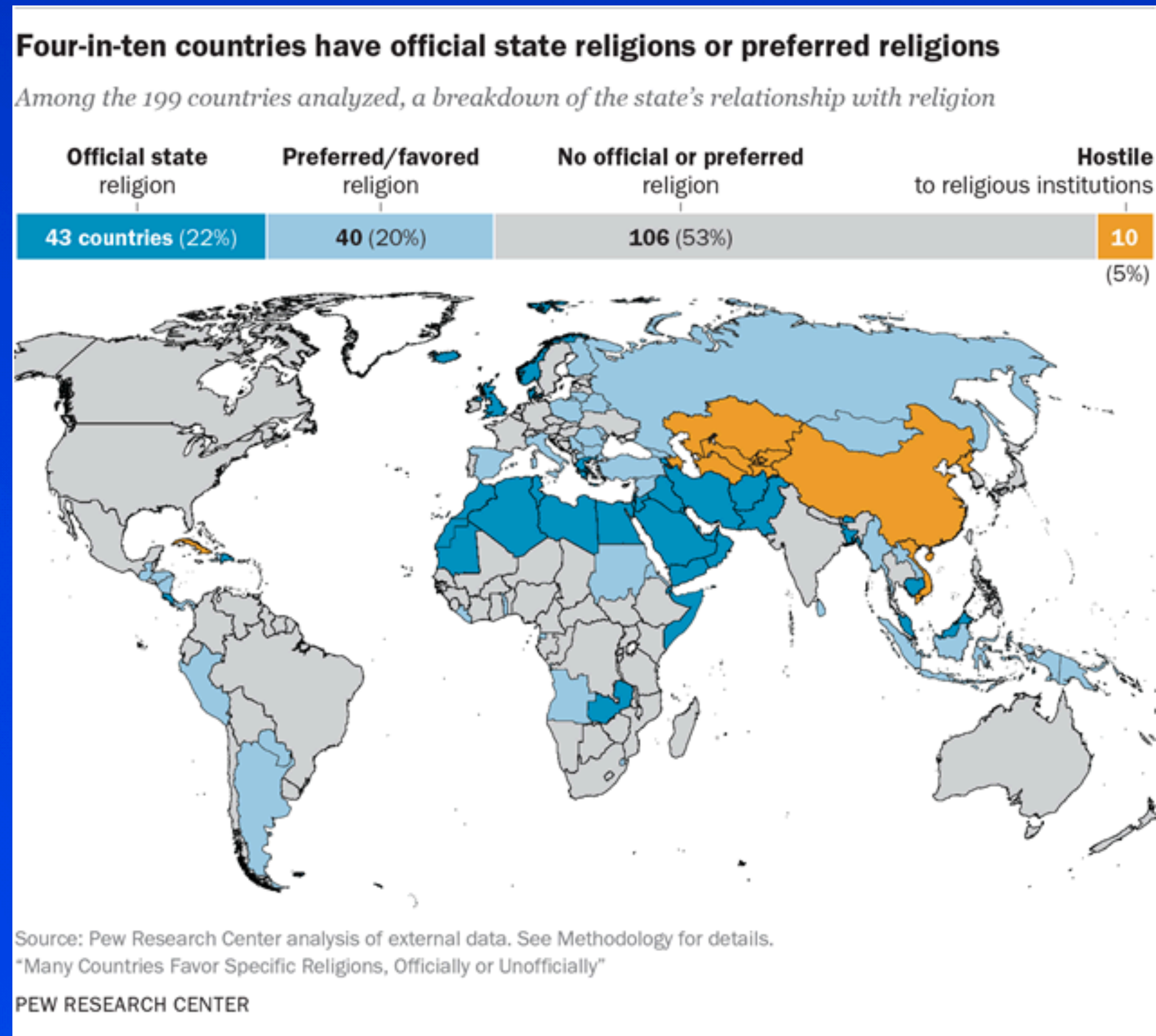
Q. How do we define and understand Christian nationalism in the 21st Century in the United States?

A. Christian nationalists insist that the United States was established as an explicitly Christian nation, and they believe that this close relationship between Christianity and the state needs to be protected—and in many respects restored—in order for the U.S. to fulfill its God-given destiny. Recent scholarship underscores the extent to which these efforts to secure a privileged position for Christianity in the public square often coincide with efforts to preserve the historic status quo on issues of race, gender, and sexuality. And the practical ramifications of such views involve everything from support for laws that codify specific interpretations of Christian morality to the defense of religious displays on public property to nativist reactions to non-white, non-Christian immigrants

It's important to remember that Christian nationalism isn't a monolithic movement with a single origin story. **Its expressions and influences have evolved over centuries**, shaped by diverse historical, political, and religious contexts. Understanding this complexity is crucial when navigating discussions about this topic.

Instead of seeking a definitive starting point, consider exploring the various historical currents and contemporary manifestations of Christian nationalism. This can help you develop a more nuanced understanding of its complex dynamics and potential impacts.

According to Pew Research Center analysis, more than **eighty countries** have a national religion or favor a specific religion. This includes countries that have an official religion or give preferential treatment to one religion over others.



Islam is the official religion in **27 countries**, Christianity is the official religion in 15 countries, Buddhism is the official religion in two countries, and Judaism is the official religion in one country

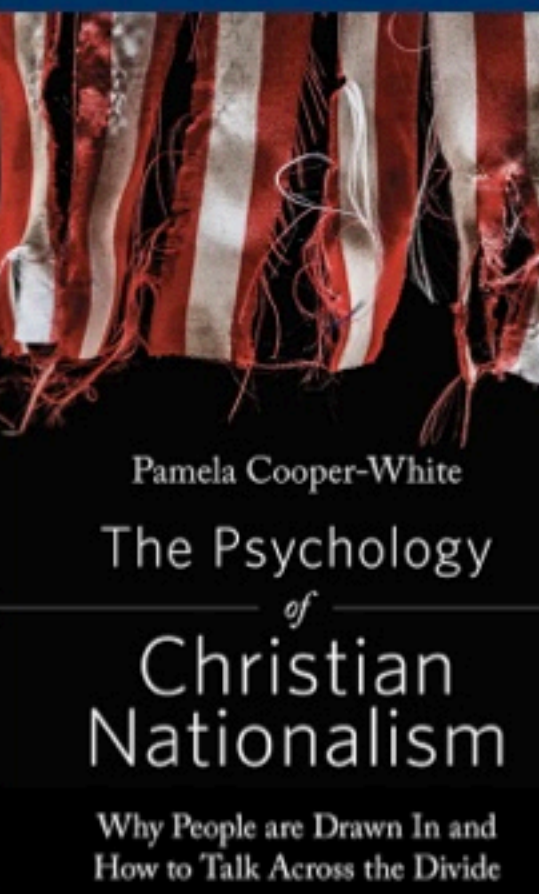
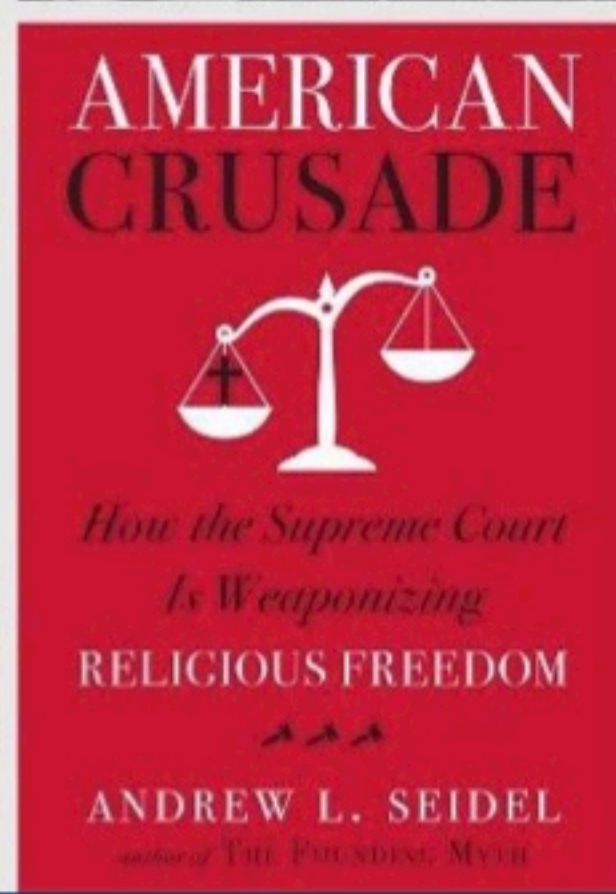
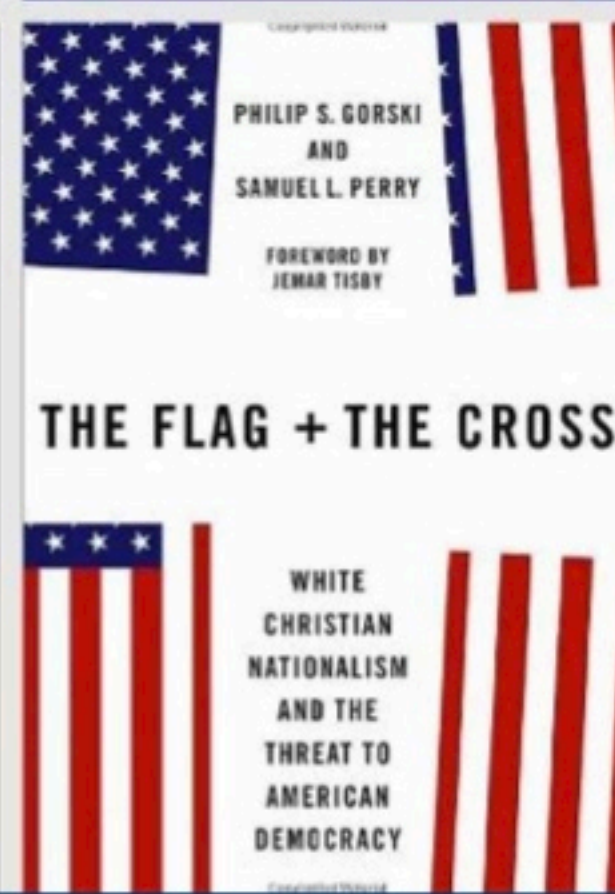
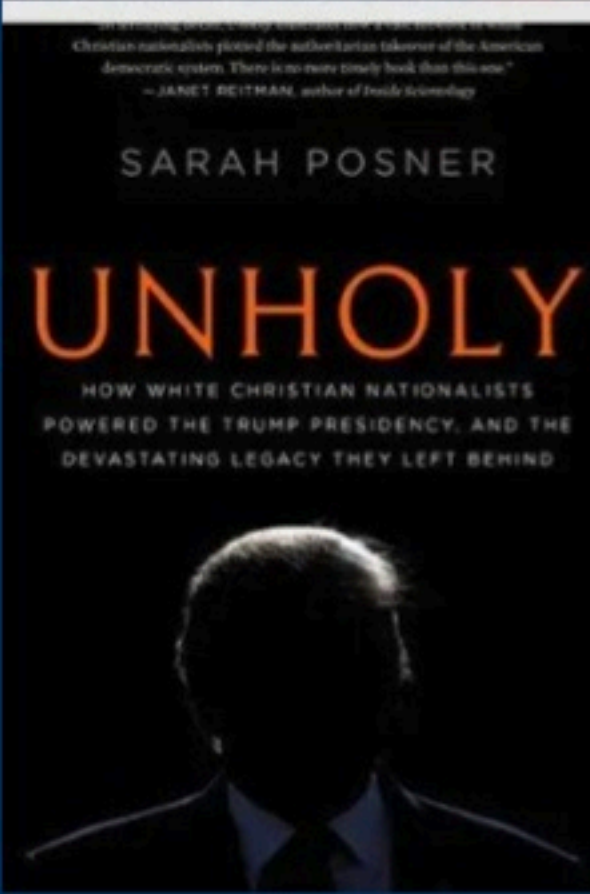
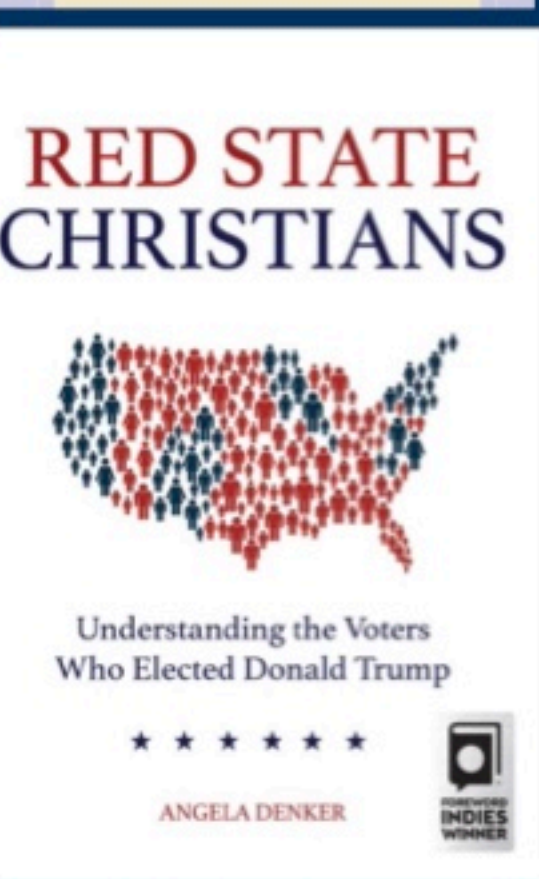
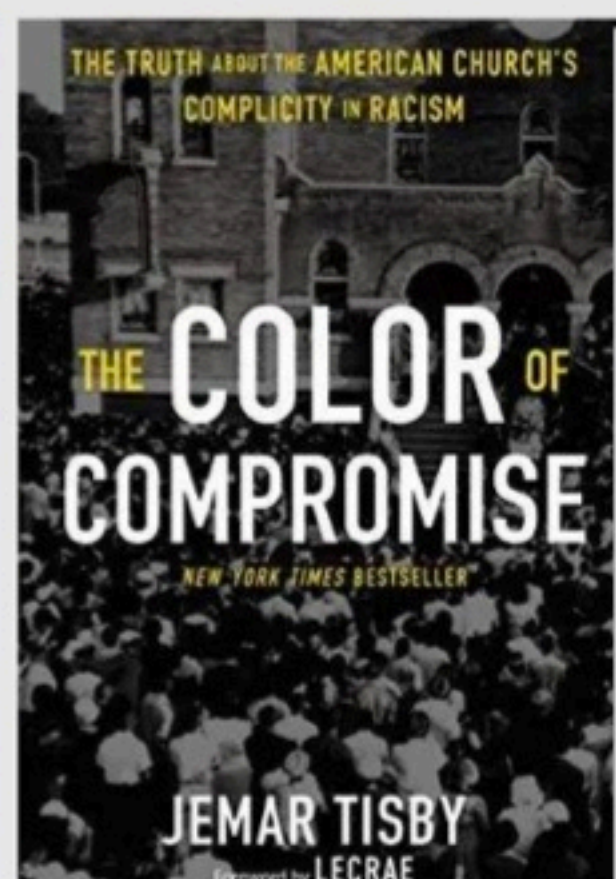
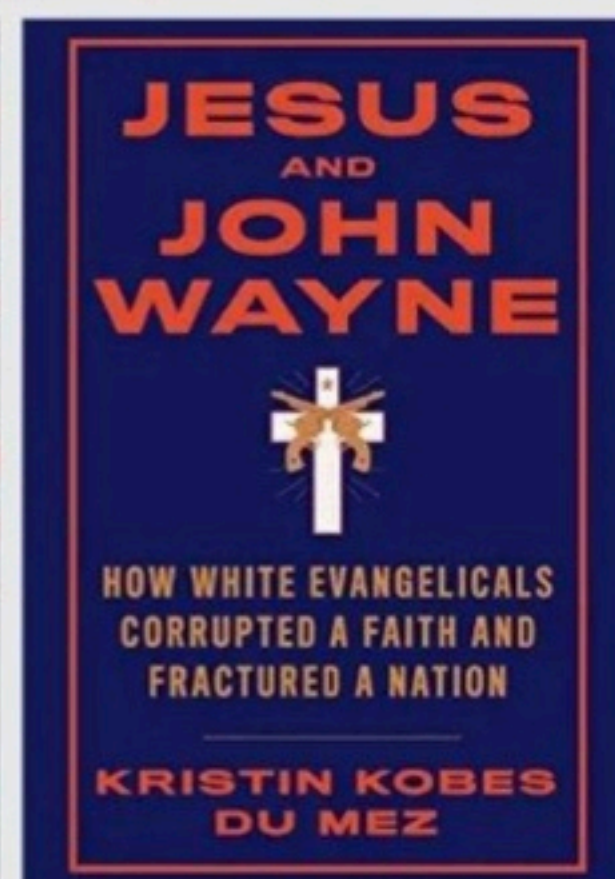
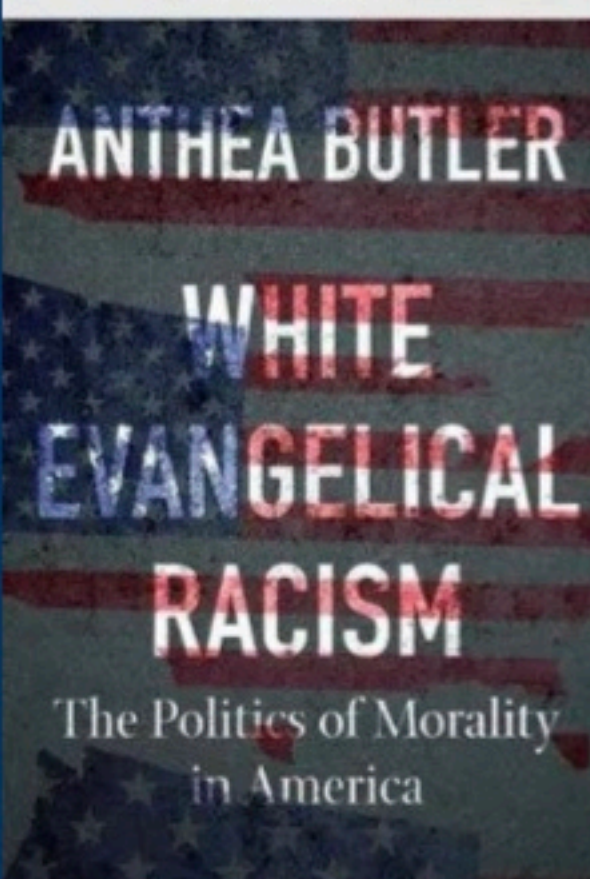
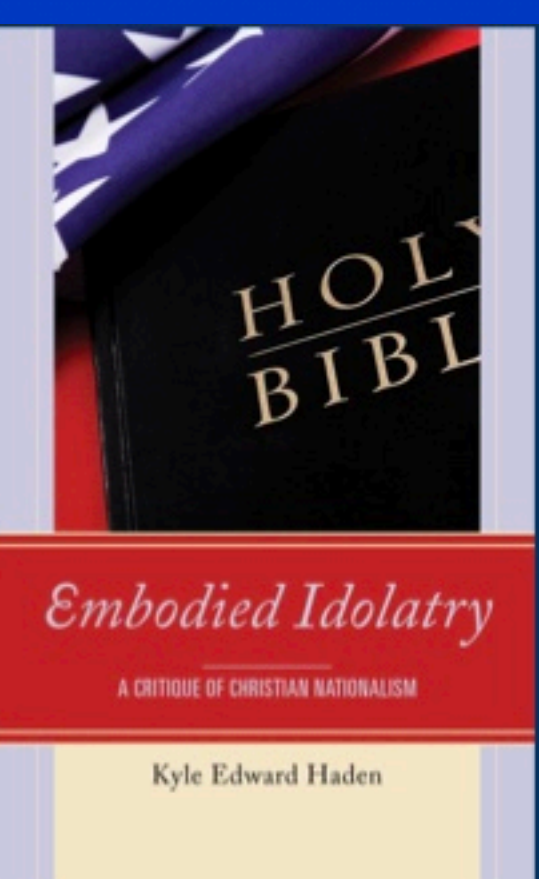
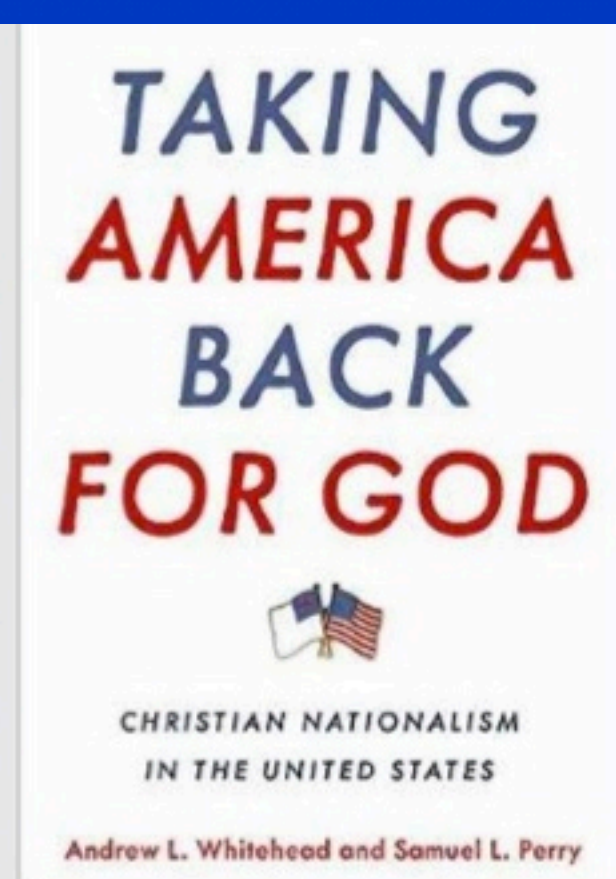
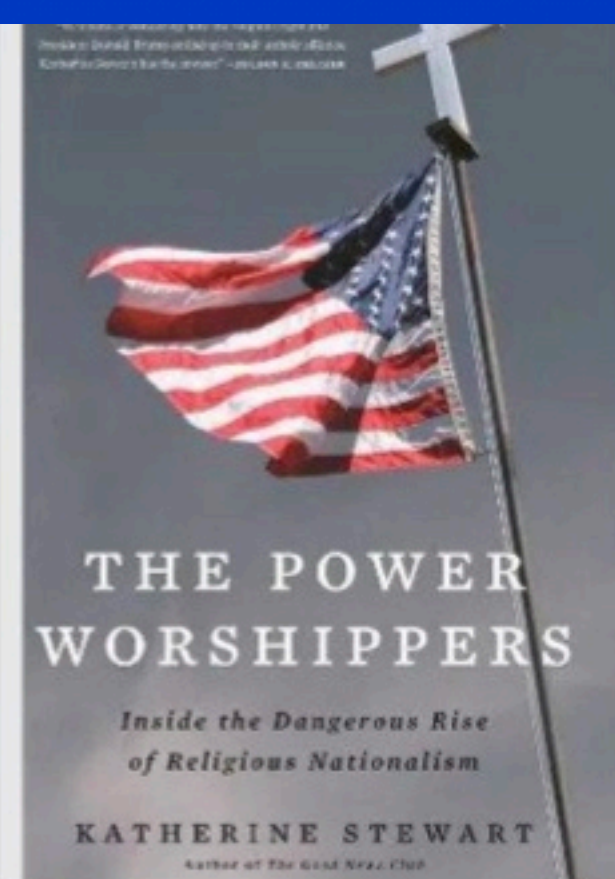
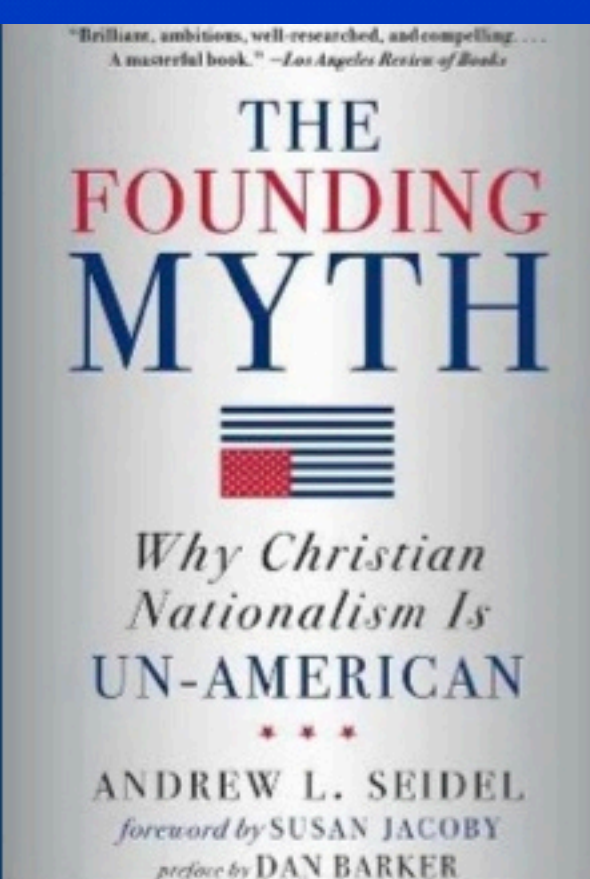
The degree to which a national religion is imposed on citizens varies from country to country. For example, Saudi Arabia and Iran impose their national religion on citizens to a high degree, while Greenland, Denmark, England, Iceland, and Greece impose it to none at all. Christianity in multiple forms is the state religion of the following.

15 nations: Argentina (*Catholic Church*), Armenia (*Armenian Apostolic Church*), Tuvalu (*Church of Tuvalu*), Costa Rica (*Catholic Church*), Kingdom of Denmark (*Evangelical Lutheran Church in Denmark*), England (*Church of England*), Greece (*Church of Greece*).

The REAL Problem with Christian Nationalism



a **HOLY POST** video



If you want to dig into Christian Nationalism, this bedtime reading list is a great place to start.

Thoughts So Far?

Week Two: What is our collective current understanding of Christian Nationalism?

“Cultural eats Logic for Breakfast, lunch, & Dinner.”

Is Christian Nationalism brewing in the US? People are not sure how to understand and address it but say they think they “see” it around them. Is it becoming a bucket to catch other societal concerns and ills and mix them all together?

Sitz im Leben

Sitz im Leben is a German phrase that roughly translates to "**setting in life**." Historians and biblical scholars use it to describe the context in which a text, metaphor, art, music, or object was created and its purpose and function at the time. It also refer to the circumstances in which a story or saying was created, preserved, or transmitted either through oral or written tradition.

I didn't go to religion to make me "happy." I always knew a bottle of Port would do that.

If you want a religion to make you feel really comfortable, I certainly don't recommend Christianity.

LIFE



Leakey stated that he was an atheist and a humanist. He died at his home outside Nairobi, on 2 January 2022, less than a month after his 77th birthday. In accordance with his wishes, he was buried on a hill along the Rift Valley

Rule Earth, Rule the World is God's Grand Purpose for Humans.

To rule Earth is the reason you are here.

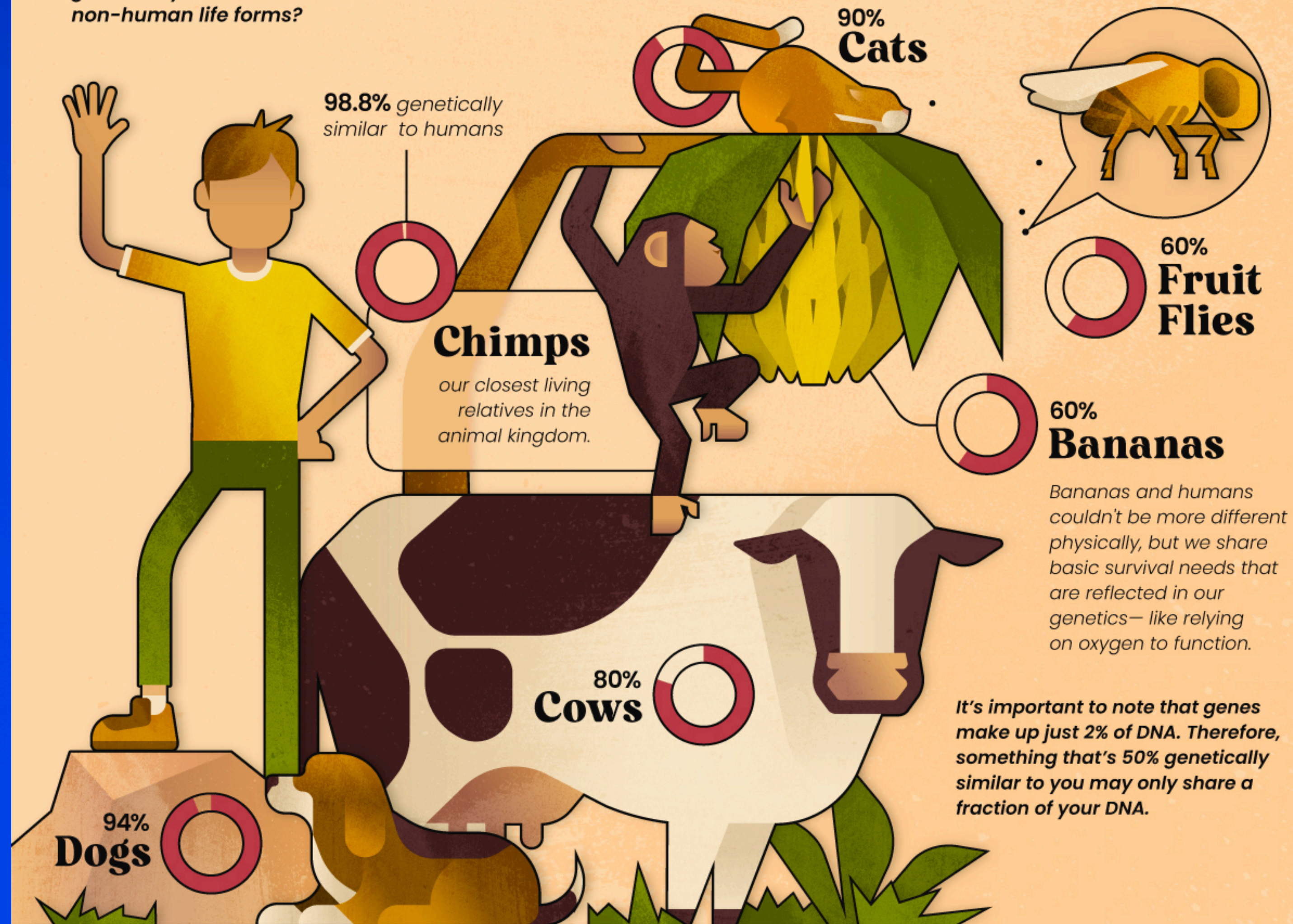
Why is the ordonnance to rule Earth the first and foremost purpose given to humankind by their Creator? Because **God is, first and foremost, the Ruler of the Universe.**

*Origin of Humankind, chapter 1.8
Richard Leakey*

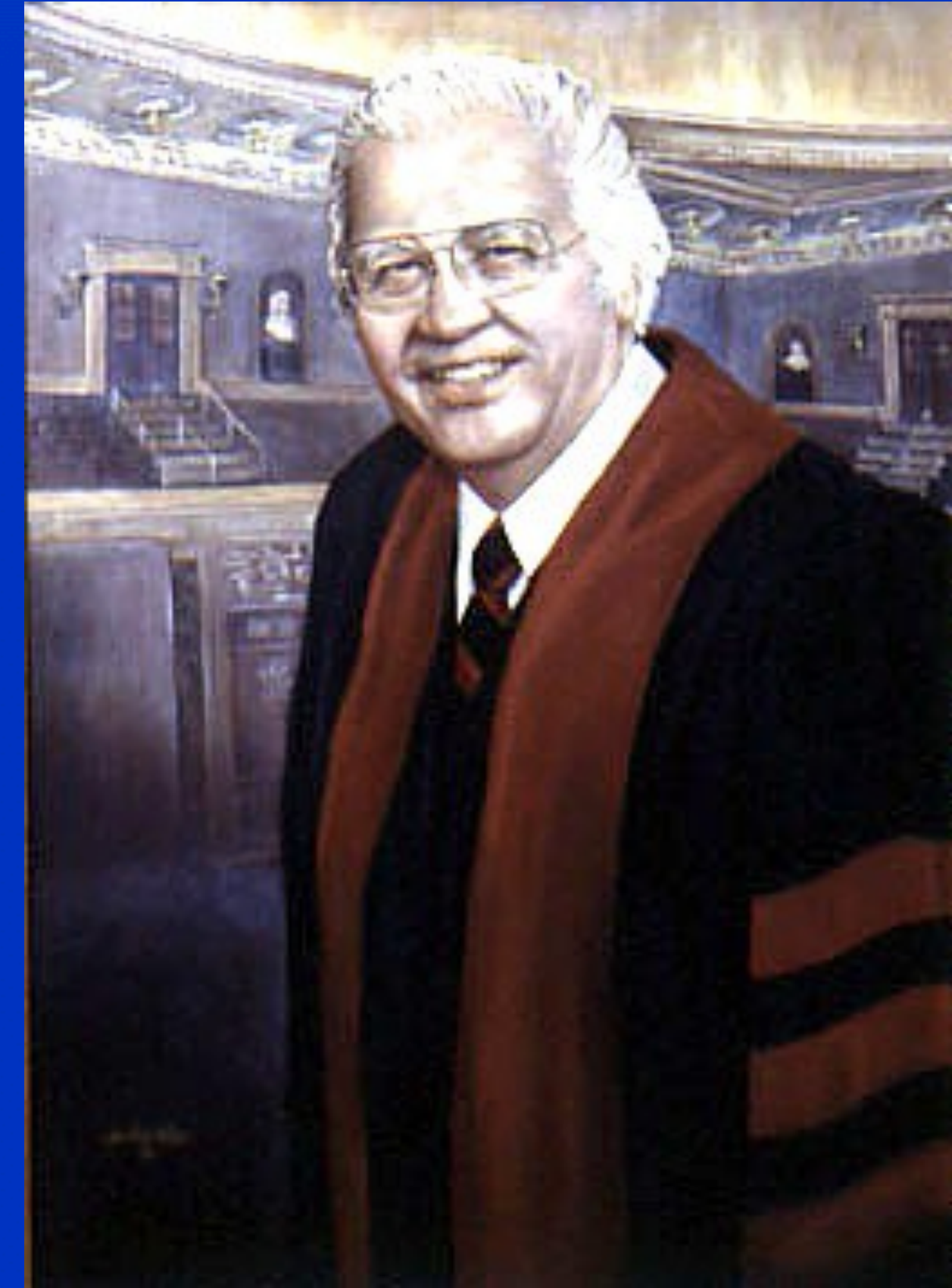
How Genetically Similar

Are We To Other Life Forms?

Of the 3 billion genetic building blocks that make us living things, only a handful are uniquely ours. **Humans are 99.9% genetically similar to one another, but what about other non-human life forms?**



*“In the beginning, the church was a fellowship of men and women centering on the living Christ. Then, the church moved to Greece, where it became a philosophy. Then it moved to Rome, where it became an institution. Next, it moved to Europe, where it became a **culture**. And, finally, it moved to America, where it became an enterprise.”*



Rev. Richard C. Halverson, 1916-1995, Chaplain of the U.S. Senate; painting for the North Dakota Capitol by Ann Linton Hodge



“Last Saturday night I walked out the door of my building to go to the store and get milk and yogurt. My building is on a corner facing the pont Tournelle and amassed on that bridge were about 1000 young people with torchlights and just a few police. A crowd gathered and I asked a young man what is was, he did not know. I walked around the corner got my groceries and came back 10 minutes later. No movement I stood and watched and a man younger than me on a bike, it is dark except for the street lights and torches, said to me, “ *You are an American. It is like your KKK. It is terrible this is the French version of Christian Nationalism, it is like 1939 all over again*”. Today the housekeeper came and told me it was a *very extreme Catholic version of Christian Nationalism spreading in France*. They were marching to the Pantheon not far from me and close to the SSPX parish just around the corner. It is, as the man said, terrible.”



Apotheosis of George Washington, fresco painted by Constantine Brumidi in 1865 that is visible through the oculus of the dome in the rotunda of the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. Public Domain.





The Church
Militant and the
Church
Triumphant,
fresco
by Andrea da
Firenze in Sant
a Maria
Novella, c.
1365

The religious breakdown of the US population is as follows:

- Protestantism (34%)
- Catholicism (23%)
- Non-specific Christian (11%)
- Christian Mormonism (2%)
- Judaism (2%)
- Other religions (6%)
- Unaffiliated with organized forms of religion (21%) This group is often called “Nones”. includes non-religious, Spiritual but not religious, Secular, Humanist, Freethinker, Atheists, Agnostics, and *Nothing in particular*.

A CHRISTIAN NATION? UNDERSTANDING THE THREAT OF CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM TO AMERICAN DEMOCRACY AND CULTURE

Findings from the 2023 PRRI/Brookings Christian Nationalism Survey



Survey Methodology

- Conducted November 21 – December 14, 2022, with responses from a representative sample of American adults (ages 18 and up).
- Designed by PRRI and the Brookings Institution.
- Made possible through the generous support of the Foundation to Promote Open Society, with additional support from the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Wilbur & Hilda Glenn Family Foundation, and the Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock Capital Group

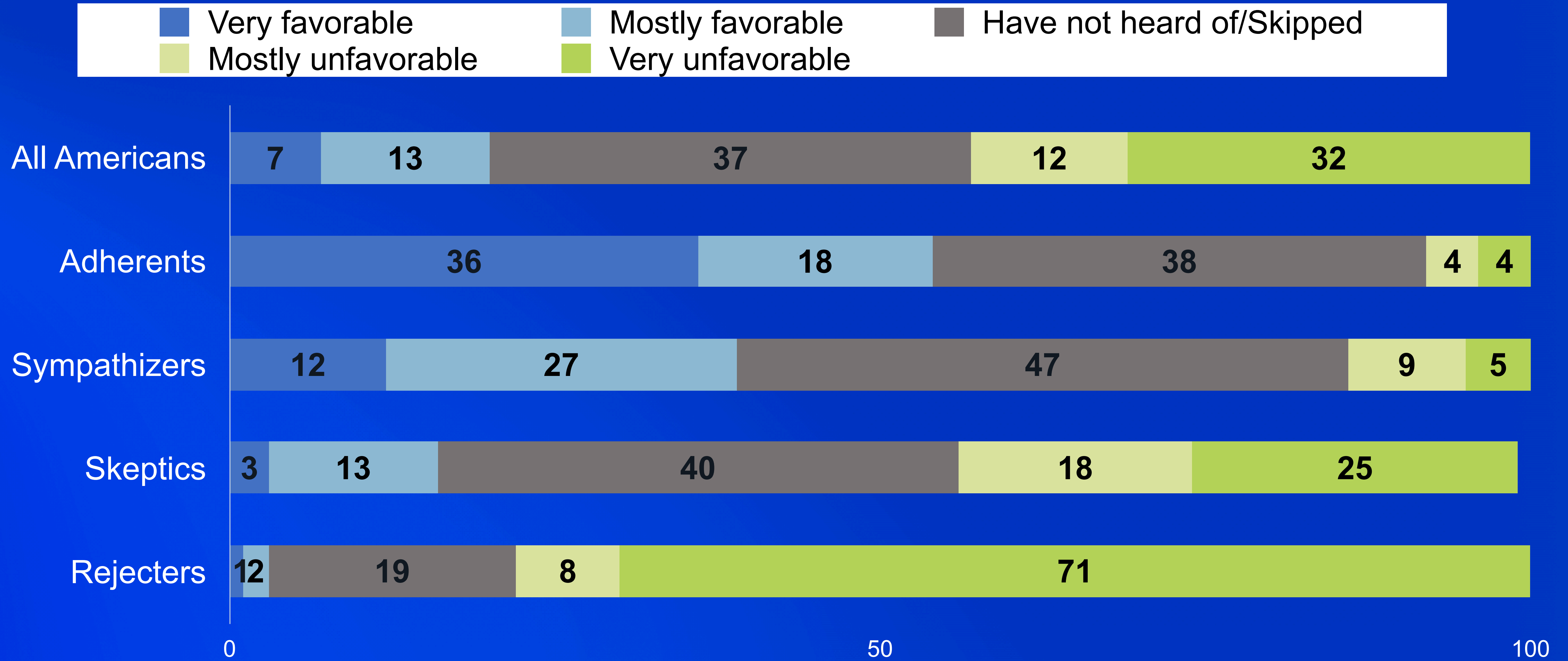
Statements Constituting the Christian Nationalism Scale

Statement	Percent who agree
God has called Christians to exercise dominion over all areas of American society.	40
The U.S. government should declare America a Christian nation.	37
Being Christian is an important part of being truly American.	60
If the U.S. moves away from our Christian foundations, we will not have a country anymore.	58
U.S. laws should be based on Christian values.	53

Four Christian Nationalism Groups

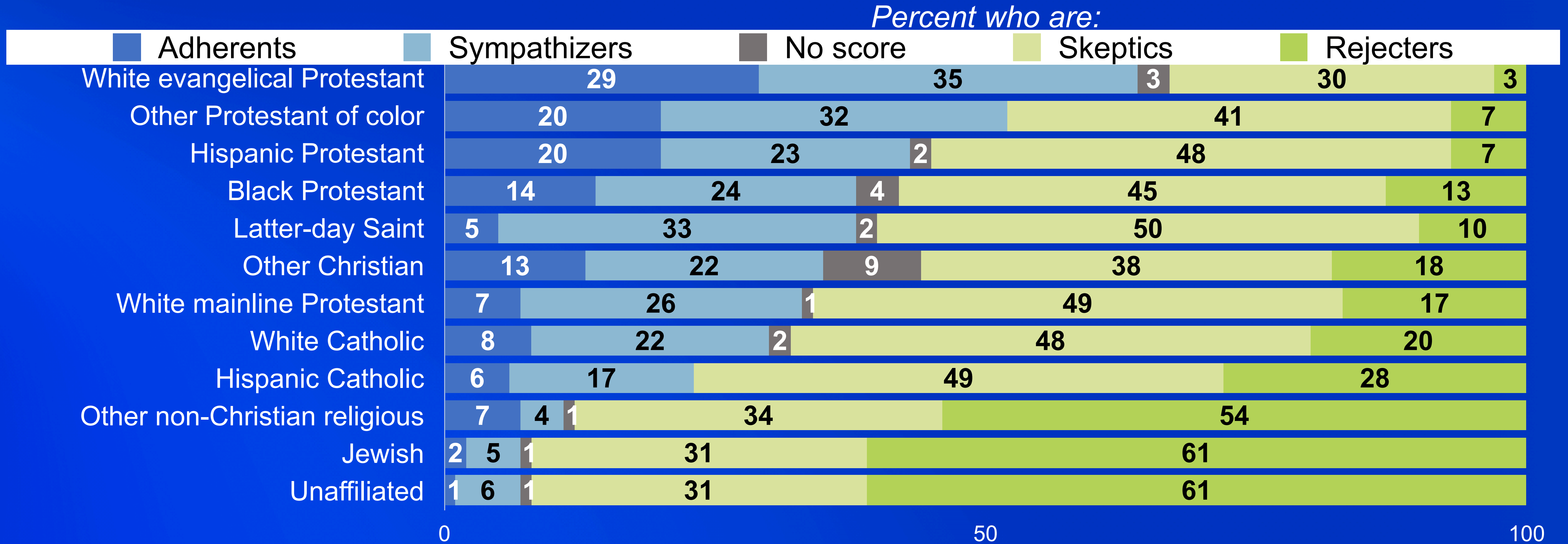
Group	Orientation to Scale Questions	Scale Score Range
Adherents	Overwhelmingly agree or <i>completely</i> agree	0.75-1
Sympathizers	Agree, but less likely than adherents to <i>completely</i> agree	0.5-0.74
Skeptics	Disagree, but less likely than rejecters to <i>completely</i> disagree	0.01-0.49
Rejecters	<i>Completely</i> disagree with all 5 questions	0

Impressions of the Term “Christian Nationalism”



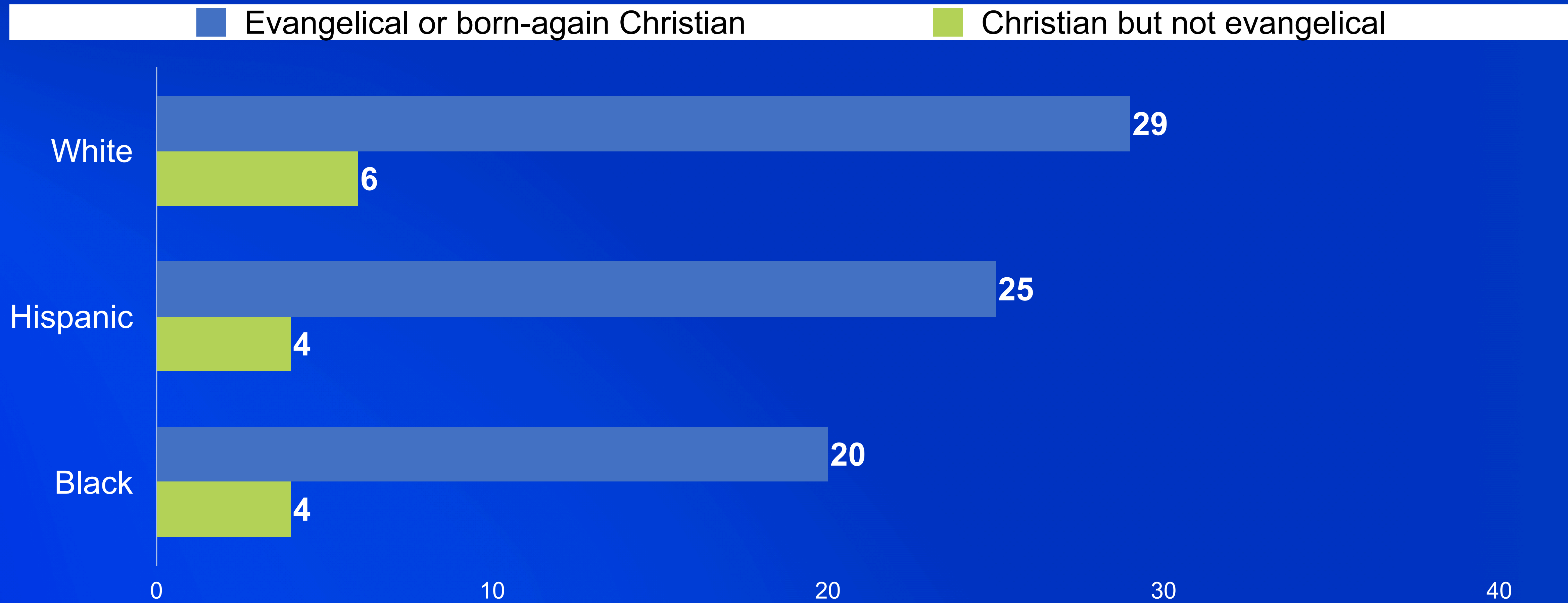
Source: PRRI/Brookings Christian Nationalism Survey, 2023.

Christian Nationalism Scale, by Religious Groups



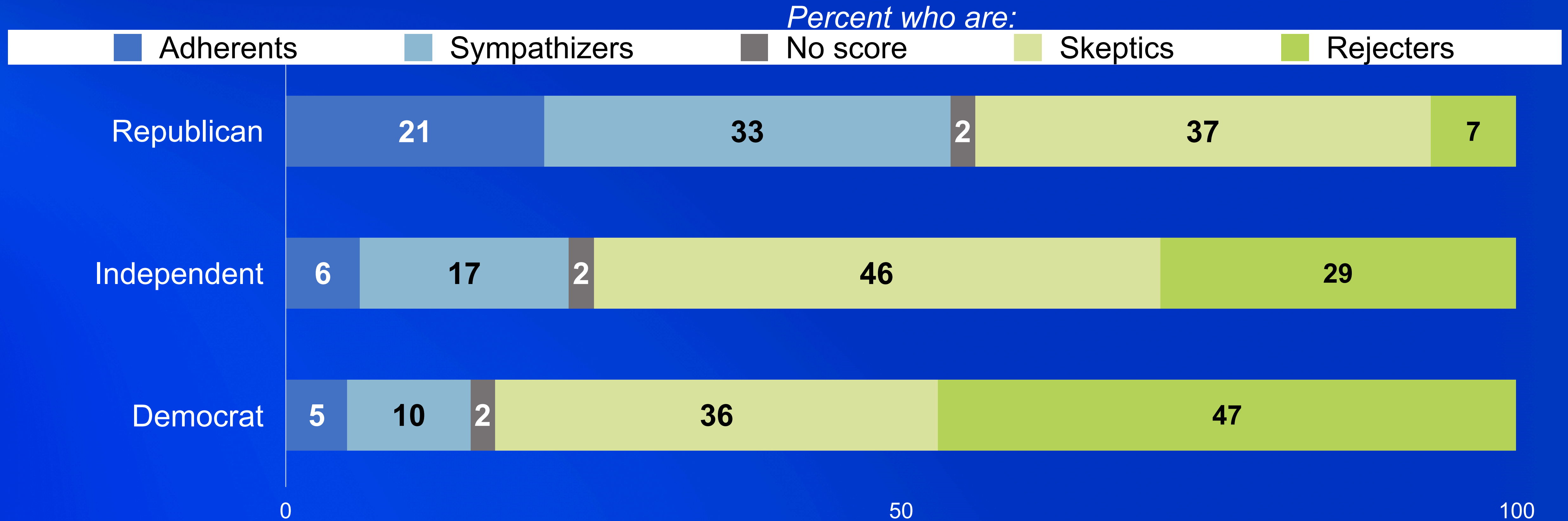
Source: PRRI/Brookings Christian Nationalism Survey, 2023.

The Evangelical Effect on Christian Nationalism Adherents, by Race



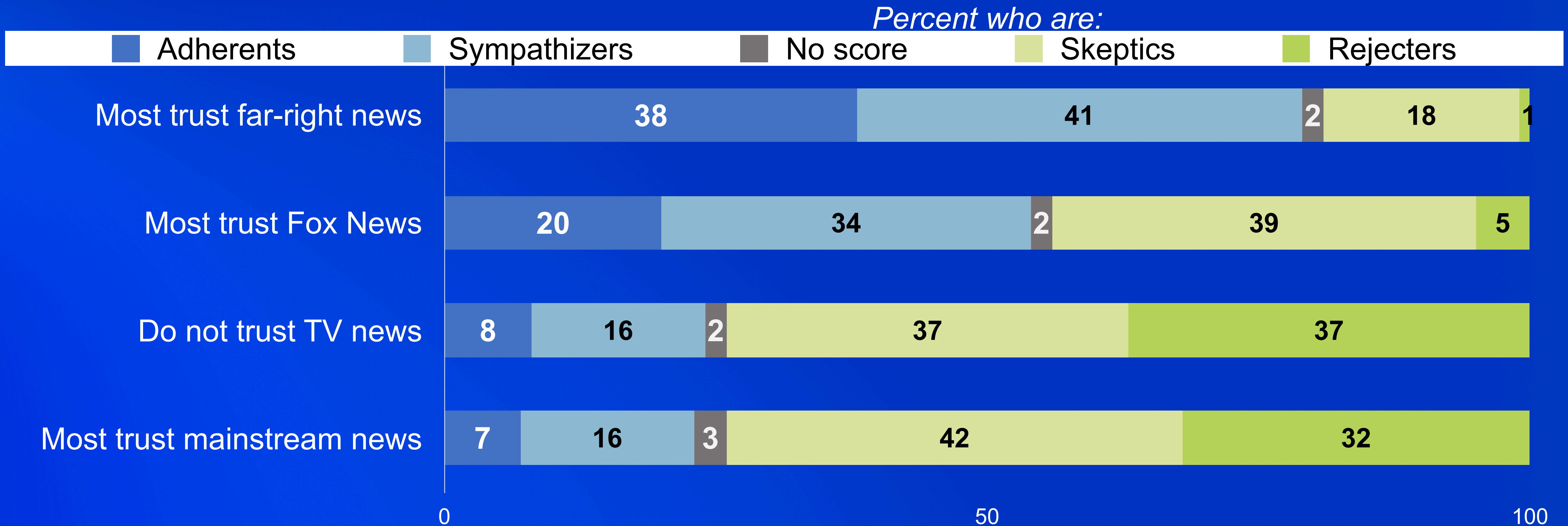
Source: PRRI/Brookings Christian Nationalism Survey, 2023.

Christian Nationalism Scale, by Party



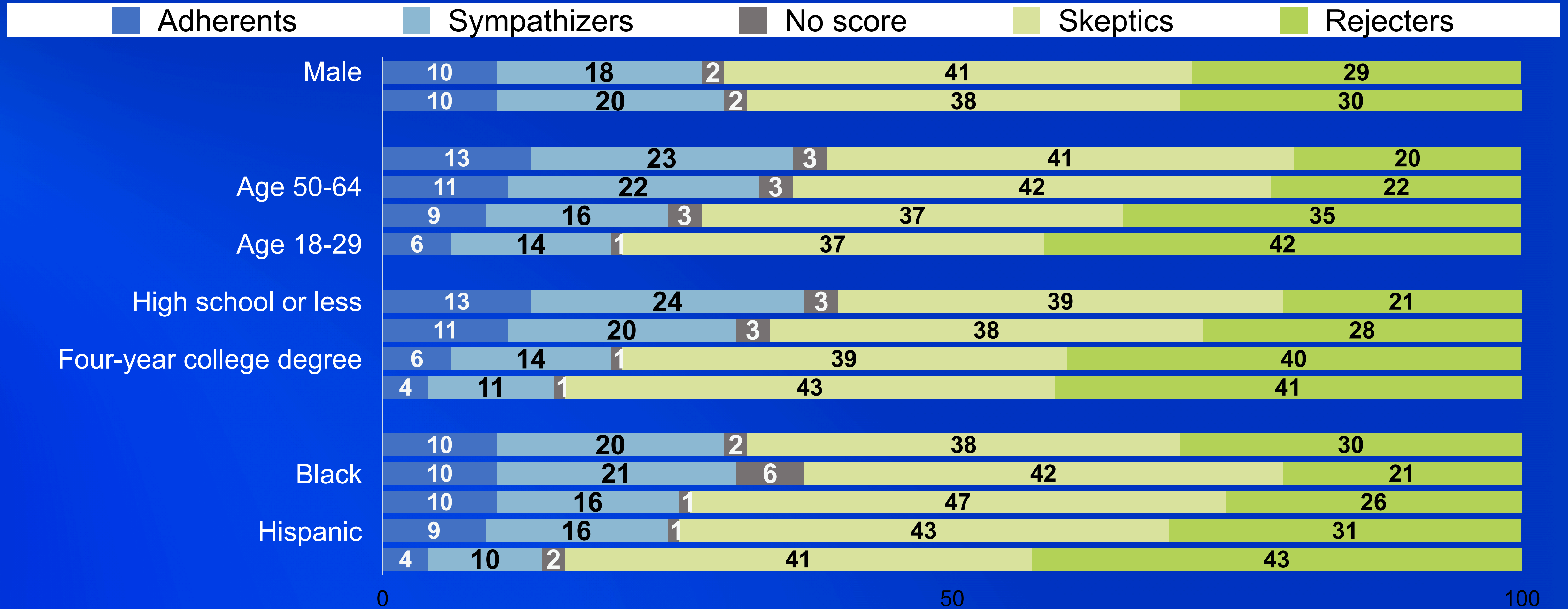
Source: PRRI/Brookings Christian Nationalism Survey, 2023.

Christian Nationalism Scale, by Media Trust



Source: PRRI/Brookings Christian Nationalism Survey, 2023.

Christian Nationalism Scale, by Demographic Groups



Source: PRRI/Brookings Christian Nationalism Survey, 2023.

Christian nationalism is a complex and multifaceted concept with various interpretations, making it difficult to pinpoint a single, universally accepted understanding from many peoples point of view and perspective. However, here are some key aspects that are commonly included in its definition:

Fusion of Christian and National Identity:

- ***Blending religious and nationalistic beliefs:*** Christian nationalists see their nation as uniquely blessed by God and view Christian values as fundamental to national identity.
- ***National exceptionalism:*** They often believe their nation is chosen by God for a special purpose, leading to a sense of national superiority and a tendency to view other nations as less worthy.

- ***A prominent role for Christian values in government and law:*** Christian nationalists advocate for policies that reflect their interpretation of Christian morality and the role of men and women in society.
- ***Resistance to secularism:*** They view secularism as a threat to their values and may oppose policies that promote religious neutrality in public spaces.

Varying Degrees of Inclusivity:

- ***Some interpretations emphasize inclusivity:*** These often focus on shared Christian values as a unifying force for all citizens, regardless of specific Christian denominations or interpretations.
- ***Others tend towards exclusion:*** These may view non-Christians or certain Christian denominations as threats to national unity and advocate for policies that favor or privilege specific Christian groups.

Potential Concerns:

- ***Erosion of religious freedom:*** Critics argue that Christian nationalism can lead to the suppression of minority religious traditions and the imposition of one interpretation of Christianity on all citizens.
- ***Social division and conflict:*** The emphasis on national exceptionalism and the exclusion of certain groups can contribute to social division and conflict within and between nations.

It's important to remember that ***Christian nationalism is a spectrum of beliefs***, and not all who identify with it endorse all of these aspects.

Additionally, understandings of the concept can vary depending on cultural and historical context.



Amanda Tyler
ChristiansAgainstChristianNationalism.org

THREAT 
of CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM

Christian nationalism refers to a *political* and *cultural* ideology that combines *Christianity* with a strong sense of national identity. It often involves the belief that the foundation and success of a nation are tied to its adherence to Christian principles and values.

Here are some key points regarding our collective understanding of Christian nationalism:

The intersection of Religion and Nationalism: Christian nationalism involves the intertwining of religious beliefs and national identity, where Christianity is seen as a crucial factor in shaping the identity and policies of a nation.

Cultural and Political Influence: Advocates of Christian nationalism seek to influence the cultural and political landscape of a country based on their interpretation of Christian principles. This can manifest in efforts to shape laws, policies, and public discourse.

Diverse Manifestations: Christian nationalism can manifest differently in various regions and denominations. It is not a monolithic concept, and its expressions can vary based on cultural, historical, and political contexts

Concerns and Criticisms: Critics argue that the fusion of religious and national identity can lead to exclusionary policies, discrimination against religious minorities, and challenges to the principles of religious freedom and separation of church and state.

Political Movements: Christian nationalist sentiments are sometimes associated with political movements or parties that aim to advance policies aligned with specific interpretations of Christian values. This can be observed in various countries around the world.

Relationship with Extremism: In some cases, Christian nationalism has been linked to extremism, especially when it involves the justification of violence or the rejection of pluralism and diversity.



What words or images come to mind when you think of Christian nationalism?

Where have you seen examples of Christian nationalism on display nationally or locally?

Is your initial reaction to Christian nationalism positive, negative, or neutral?

Week Three: What does Christian nationalism look like in the United States?

Does it get confused with Catholic Social Teachings?

Through the Eye of a Needle: Wealth, the Fall of Rome, and the Making of Christianity in the West, 350-550 AD, gives us a pretty good idea of how we got to where we are today. ...just saying 😎

The screenshot shows the ReligionLink website interface. At the top left is the logo "religion link" with the tagline "Ideas and resources for every journalist". To the right are social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and RSS, and a "Select Language" dropdown menu. A dark navigation bar contains links for HOME, TOPICS BY, TOOLS, TRAINING, and ABOUT RELIGIONLINK. The main content area features a large article title "Religion in 2024: Ongoing conflicts, elections, tech transformations and more ..." with a sub-headline "2024" in a dark box. The article text discusses the Israel-Hamas war and antisemitic incidents in the U.S. A list of topics for 2024 is provided at the bottom left. On the right side, there is a search bar and several filter dropdown menus for Faith, Subject, Region, Resource type, and Tag. At the bottom right, there are "Search" and "Reset filters" buttons, and a prominent orange button that says "JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST".

religion link
Ideas and resources for every journalist

HOME TOPICS BY TOOLS TRAINING ABOUT RELIGIONLINK

Religion in 2024: Ongoing conflicts, elections, tech transformations and more ...

By Editor. Updated on Jan 16, 2024. Posted on Jan 11, 2024

As 2023 came to a close, members of the [Religion News Association](#) selected the Israel-Hamas war, along with the rise in antisemitic and Islamophobic incidents in the U.S., as [the top international and domestic religion stories of the year](#).

As 2024 begins, these stories are ongoing, sure to continue capturing headlines.

But what other news will snare our attention in the year to come? What trends, storylines and events will occupy our social media feeds and fly across the airwaves?

This edition of ReligionLink is dedicated to stories that could possibly top the lists in 2024, providing background, resources and expert sources for you to turn to as the news unfolds over the next 12 months.

- Swords into plowshares?
- 2024 elections
- Rising prejudice
- U.S. Supreme Court news cools off?
- The spirits of the games
- Artificial religion

Search

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JOIN OUR EMAIL LIST

In their own words: How Americans describe 'Christian nationalism'

"It means those who desire to acknowledge God in our country as the Declaration of Independence did. And the follow-through of many verses inscribed on public buildings in Washington, D.C."

Born-again/evangelical Protestant, age 65+

"One religion is trying to direct the government to follow their creed. They believe that they are the true and right religion for America. White nationalists thought process."

Catholic, age 50-64

"It is prioritizing a very specific interpretation of the Bible over tolerance towards other people's beliefs and faiths. It's saying "if you don't follow these beliefs, you can't live here" and taking a very violent approach to ensuring that reality."

Religious none, age 18-29

For millions of conservative Christians of various denominations and Evangelicals, **America is their kingdom**—a land set apart, a nation uniquely blessed, a people in special covenant with God.

This love of country, however, has given way to a nationalist fervor, a reckless blood-and-soil idolatry that trivializes the kingdom of Jesus Christ.

What we are seeing is half-empty churches and standing-room-only convention halls across the country, and what we see in churches via Cable TV gaining members are those of the Prosperity Gospel, a growing fracture inside American Christianity and a new journey with followers finding comfort, finding comradeship, and acceptance through this strange new environment in which loving your enemies is "woke" and owning the bleeding hearts is the answer to WWJD.

Joel Osteen's daily program is available on TBN, which is available on WRTV ABC 6 in South Bend, Indiana on Sundays at 10 AM.

You can also listen to Joel Osteen on SiriusXM 128, which is available 24/7.

<https://watch.tbn.org/>

<https://www.joelosteen.com/>

We Believe

... the entire Bible is inspired by God, without error, and the authority on which we base our faith, conduct, and doctrine.

... in one God who exists in three distinct persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. We believe Jesus Christ is the Son of God who came to this earth as Savior of the world.

... Jesus died on the cross and shed His blood for our sins. We believe that salvation is found by placing our faith in what Jesus did for us on the cross. We believe Jesus rose from the dead and is coming again.

... water baptism is a symbol of the cleansing power of the blood of Christ and a testimony to our faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

... in the regular taking of Communion as an act of remembering what the Lord Jesus did for us on the cross.

... every believer should be in a growing relationship with Jesus by obeying God's Word, yielding to the Holy Spirit, and by being conformed to the image of Christ.

... as children of God, we are overcomers and more than conquerors, and God intends for each of us to experience the abundant life He has in store for us.



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LOVE SPEAKS

WITH CARL WESLEY ANDERSON

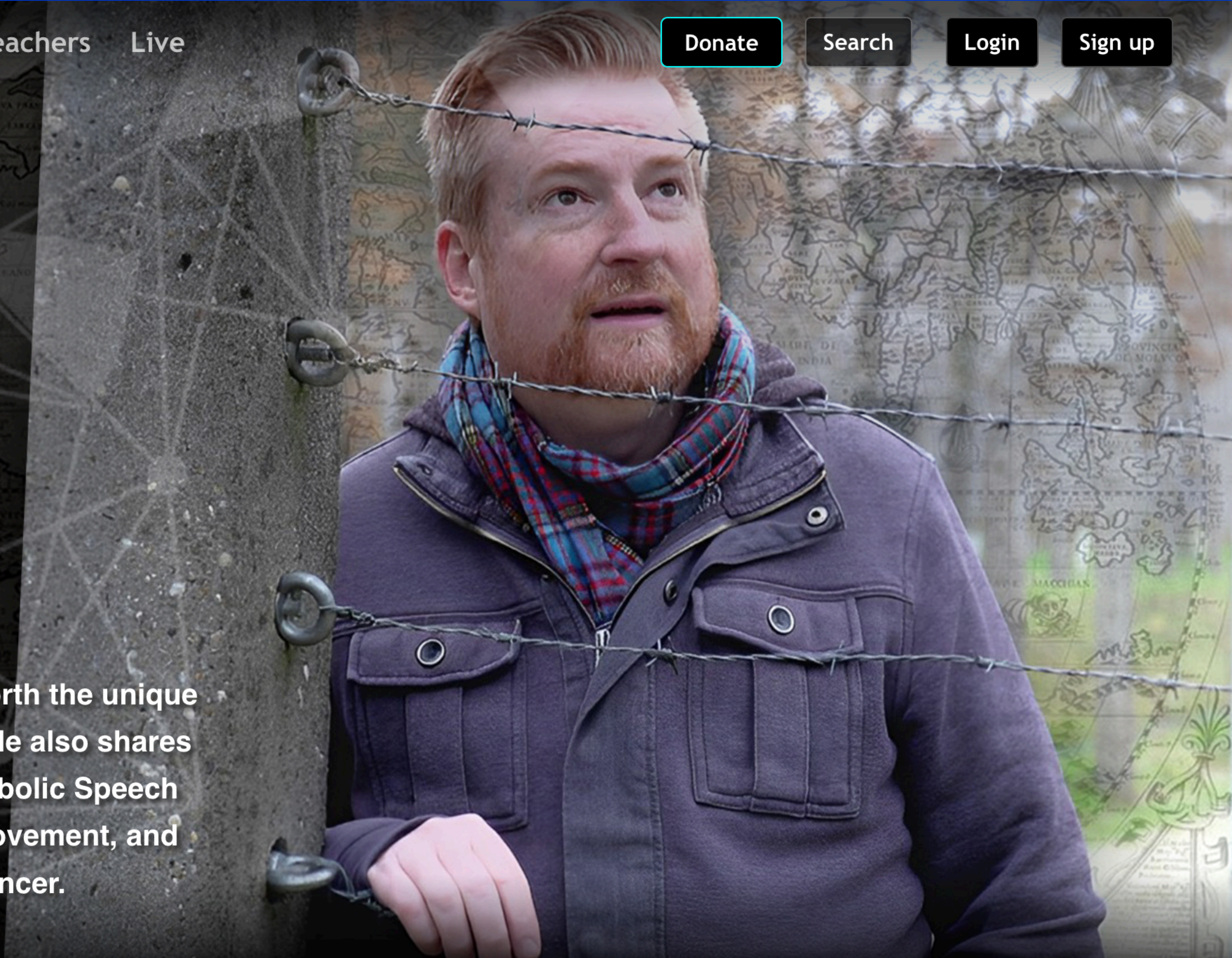
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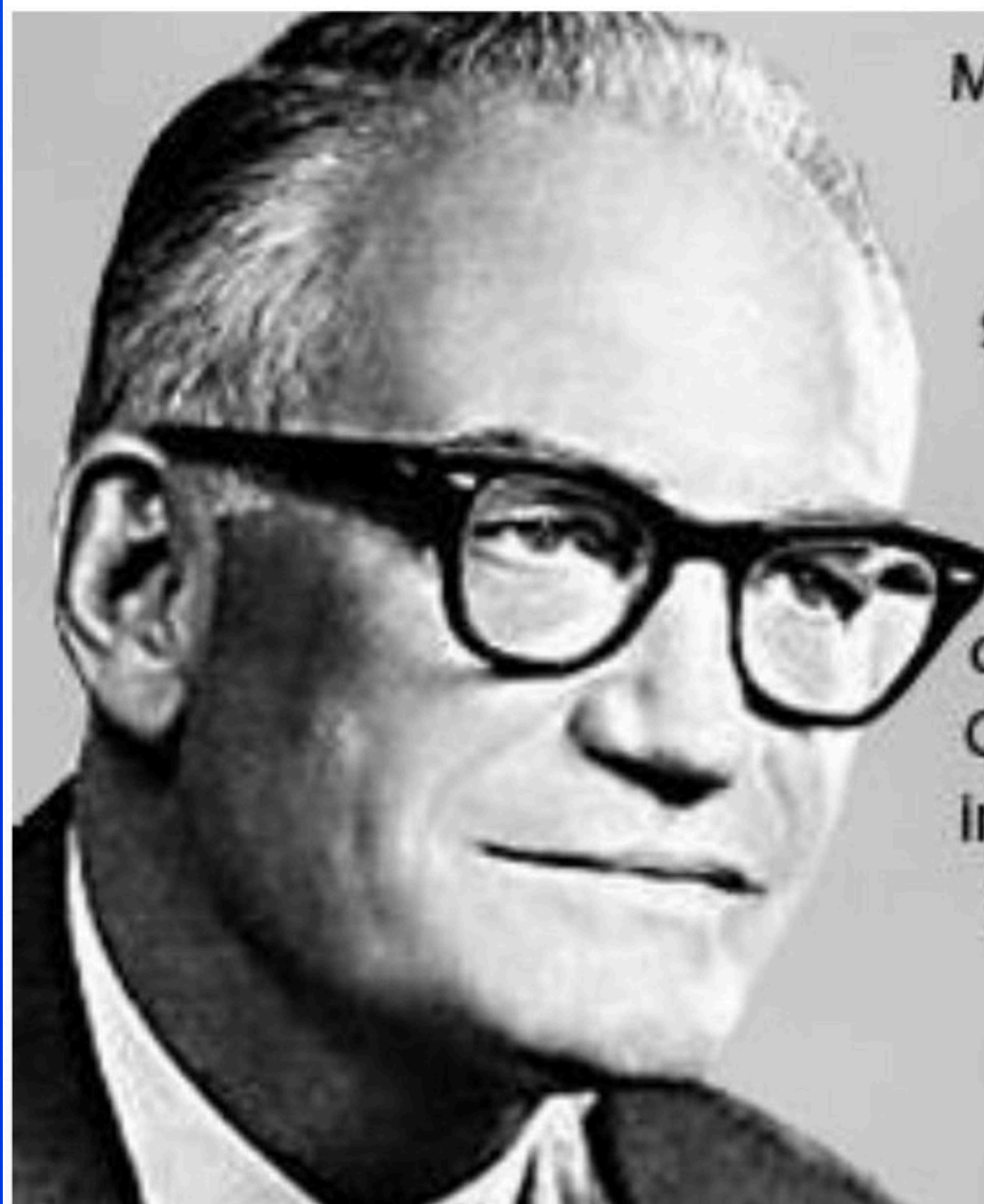
TV-G • 14 episodes

S2:E5 - Christ the Warrior King

Carl travels back to ancient England and brings forth the unique symbolism of the world's oldest recorded poem. He also shares some very practical stories of how God used Symbolic Speech to birth a prayer movement, an entire missions movement, and even speak powerfully during Carl's battle with cancer.



Researchers warn that Christian nationalists are becoming more radical and are targeting voting



Mark my word, if and when these preachers get control of the [Republican] party, and they're sure trying to do so, it's going to be a terrible damn problem. Frankly, these people frighten me. Politics and governing demand compromise. But these Christians believe that are acting in the name of God, so they can't and won't compromise. I know, I've tried to deal with them.

-Republican Barry Goldwater

- Said in November 1994, as quoted by John Dean, in
- *Conservatives Without Conscience* (2006).

Died: May 29, 1998, Paradise Valley, AZ



A NIGHT AT THE GARDEN

BY MARSHALL CURRY



ACADEMY AWARD® NOMINEE
BEST DOCUMENTARY - SHORT SUBJECT

FIELD_
OF_
VISION

Think about what your initial responses were in your head —both thoughts and feelings —to the scene of the events at Madison Square Garden.

Is there anything that makes this image troubling? Is there anything in the imagery that could be similar to what we see today?

What are some core beliefs of Christian nationalism that are found in the event at Madison Square Garden? Think about how those core beliefs were on display in the video. Do we see similar patterns today?

@HawleyMO

*“America has been profoundly shaped by the Bible. If Christians want to renew that influence today, we’re going to have to start thinking about what a truly Christian *economy* would look like - one with good jobs, high wages, and strong families.”*



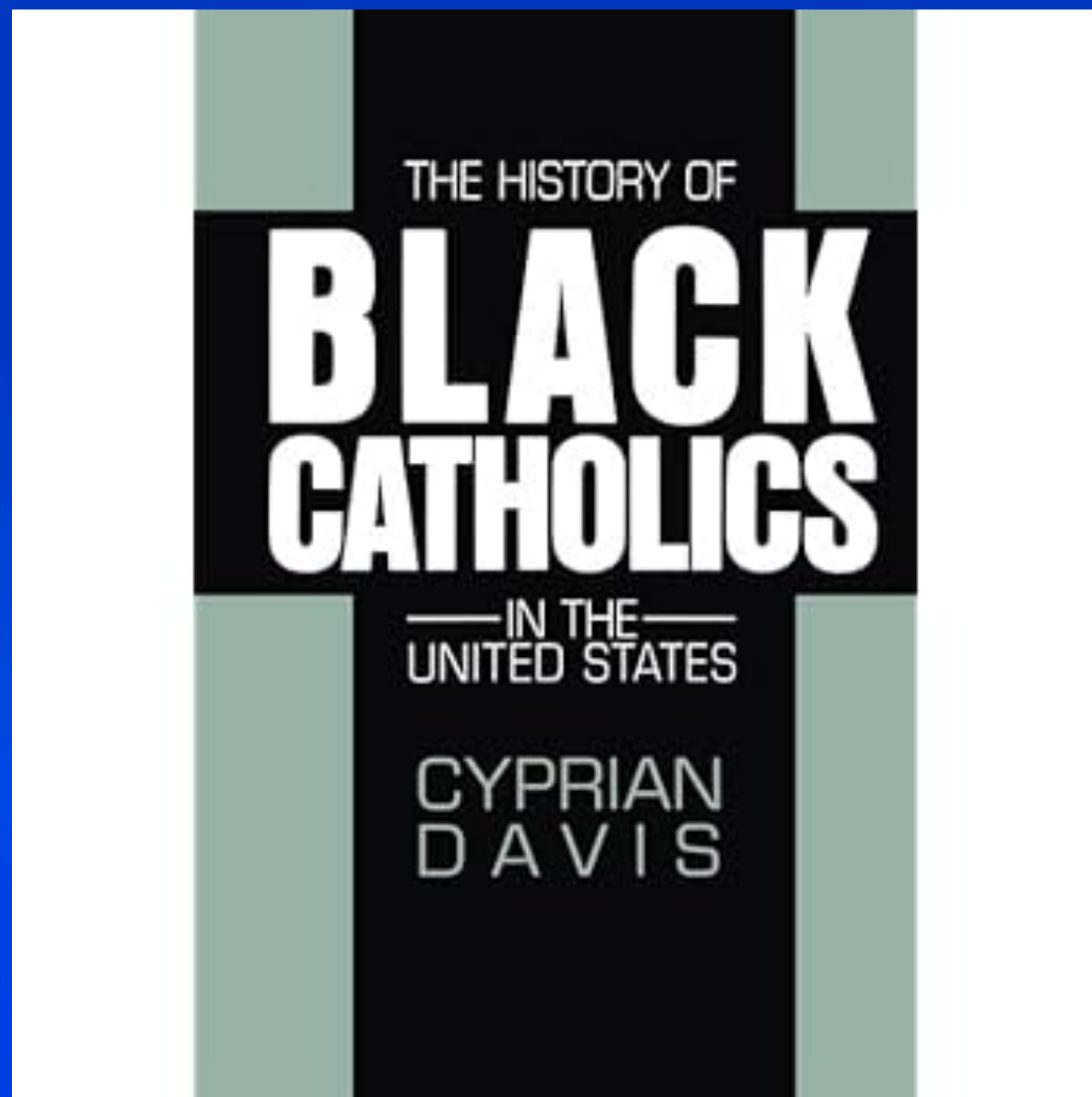
Our Christian Nation | Josh Hawley

From [firstthings.com](https://www.firstthings.com)

16 January 2024, Nikki Haley Tells “Fox & Friends” that the U.S. Has ‘Never Been a Racist Country’ *Weeks After Omitting Slavery as Civil War Cause*. “Fox & Friends” host Brian Kilmeade flat out asked Haley if she is involved in a racist political party, meaning the Republican Party, as they discussed her campaign efforts post-Iowa...*“We’re not a racist country. Brian. We’ve never been a racist country. Our goal is to make sure that today is better than yesterday.”*

“Catholic Social Teachings is the only social teachings that come close to looking like what Jesus taught.” ~ David Galston PhD

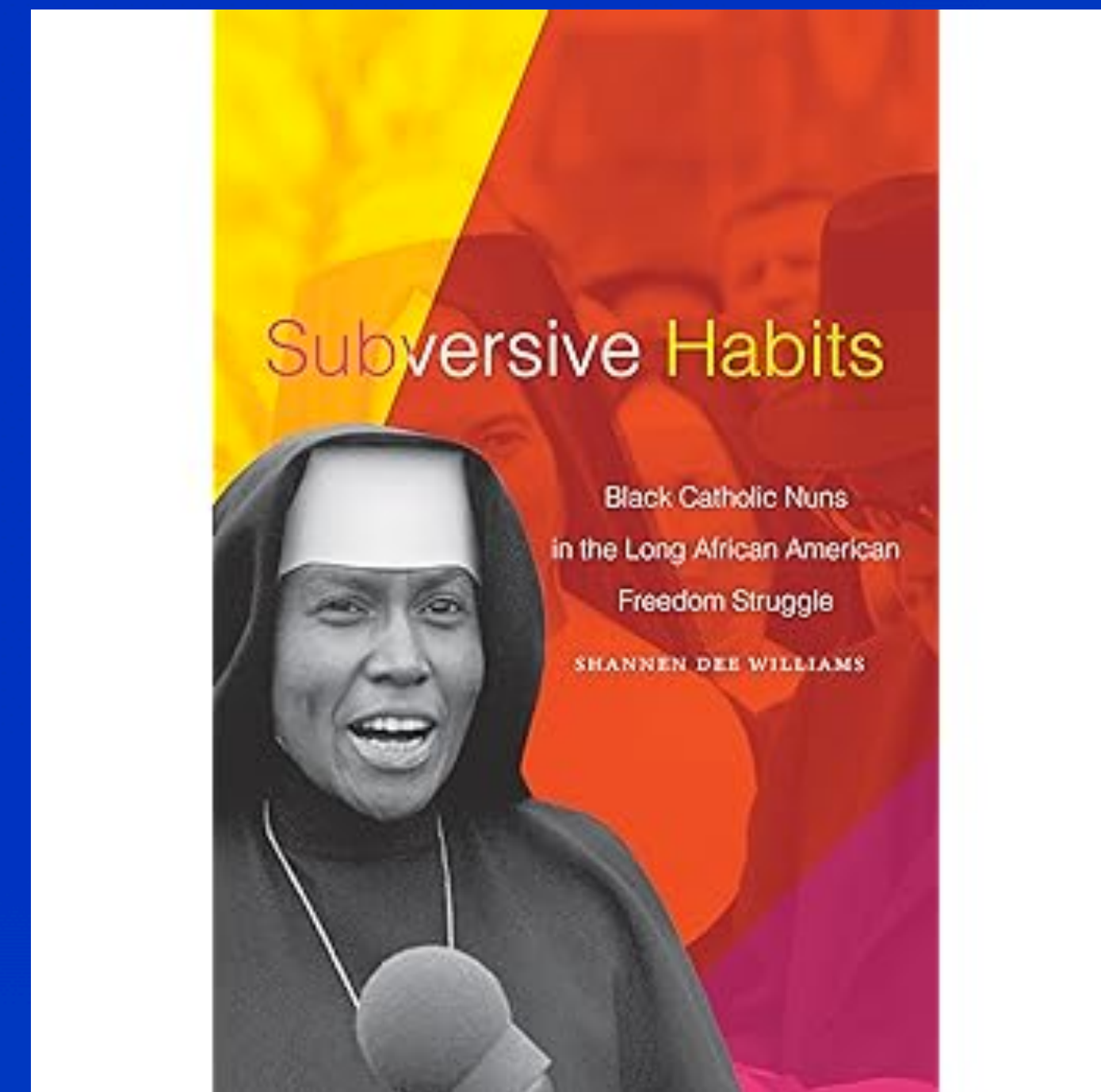
David Galston is the co-founder and past president of The SnowStar Institute of Religion and is currently its academic adviser and an editor of its magazine, AXIAL. He was formerly a university chaplain at McGill University. David is the Westar Institute's Executive Director and a Westar Scholar. David has a B.A. from the University of Winnipeg, an M.Div. from the Vancouver School of Theology and a Ph.D. from McGill University in the Philosophy of Religion.



Cyprian Davis, O.S.B. (born **Clarence John Davis**; September 9, 1930 – May 18, 2015) was an African-American Catholic monk, priest, and cultural historian at St. Meinrad Archabbey in Indiana. He is known for his work on the history of Black Catholicism.

Deborah Dwyer: Building Racial Harmony

Dr. Shannen Dee Williams is an Associate Professor of History at the University of Dayton. She is an award-winning scholar of the African American experience and Black Catholicism with research and teaching specializations in women's, religious and Black freedom movement history.



Some within the Catholic Church might hold views that resonate with Christian nationalism. In contrast, some Christian nationalists might find common ground with certain aspects of Catholic social teachings that reference Morals and Ethics, for example.

Here are some additional points to consider:

- Christian nationalism is a relatively recent phenomenon, while Catholic social teachings have been developed over centuries.
- Theologians argue that Christian nationalism is fundamentally incompatible with the Catholic faith, as it contradicts the universal message of the Gospel and undermines the Church's role as a bridge between cultures and religions.
- Others argue that the two can overlap, especially when defending shared values like family or morality. However, they emphasize the importance of avoiding the pitfalls of nationalism and upholding the core principles of Catholic social justice.

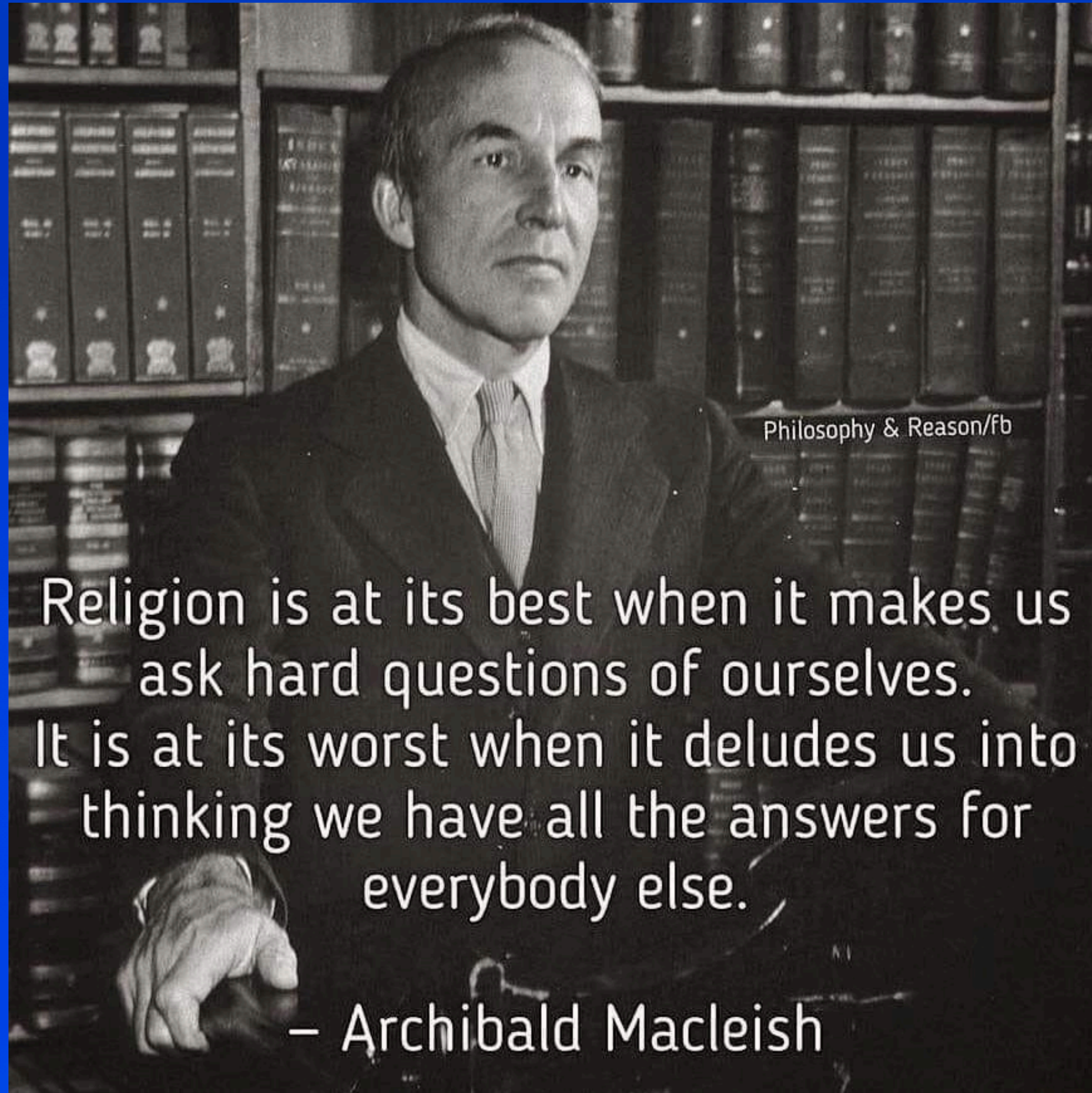
“Thomas F. O’Meara, O.P., provides a description and critique of Catholic fundamentalism in his *Fundamentalism: A Catholic Perspective* (1990). Catholic fundamentalism, he suggests, is a corruption of Catholic values, especially of sacramentality. It sees the world as evil and dangerous, forgetting that God is its Creator, Redeemer, and Sanctifier. It limits the manifestation of grace to the extraordinary and even the bizarre, forgetting that God is present to ordinary people, in ordinary situations of life. And it limits access to God’s grace to a chosen few, the righteous within the larger community of the unrighteous, forgetting that God wishes to save all and has won salvation for all in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ (pp. 80–93).

Catholic fundamentalism has two forms: biblical and doctrinal. Catholic biblical fundamentalism, like Protestant biblical fundamentalism, interprets Scripture “literally” and selectively. But Catholic proof-texts differ from Protestant proof-texts. For Catholics, “You are Peter...” (Matthew 16:18–19) is the hermeneutical prism through which all else in the Bible is to be read. Catholic doctrinal fundamentalism interprets the official teachings of the Church “literally” (which is to say unhistorically) and selectively. Like worldwide fundamentalism, Catholic fundamentalism tends to be militant in style, and more antagonistic to the “enemies within” than to those outside.

The council’s Pastoral Constitution urges a different approach. The Church’s mission “to shed on the whole world the radiance of the gospel message, and to unify under one Spirit all people of whatever nature, race, or culture” requires that within the Church itself there be “mutual esteem, reverence, and harmony” and a “full recognition of lawful diversity.” This imposes upon all members the need for dialogue. “For the bonds which unite the faithful are mightier than anything which divides them. Hence, let there be unity in what is necessary, freedom in what is unsettled, and charity in any case” (n. 92).”

~ Richard McBrien, *Catholicism*

“Catholic fundamentalism has two forms: Biblical and Doctrinal...Catholic fundamentalism tends to be militant in style and more antagonistic to the “enemies within” than to those outside.”



Philosophy & Reason/fb

Religion is at its best when it makes us
ask hard questions of ourselves.
It is at its worst when it deludes us into
thinking we have all the answers for
everybody else.

– Archibald Macleish

"The church needs all of its lay-folk, not just the clergy, to bring the kingdom of God into the present-day world."

~Louis J Putz CSC 1957

"God is using us, God needs us to accomplish the work, this is a great joy. Without our help, God cannot bring about the miracle that God intends to effect in each of one of us: through us but not without us."

Catholic social teachings and Christian nationalism: Think of their focus and values:

- Catholic social teachings:
 - **Universal:** Focuses on the dignity of all human beings regardless of *nationality, ethnicity, or religion*.
 - **Common good:** Prioritizes the well-being of the entire community, emphasizing social justice, solidarity, and the *preferential option for the poor*.
 - **Subsidiarity:** Advocates for solutions at the lowest possible level, empowering individuals and communities to solve their own problems.
 - **Dialogue and cooperation:** *Promotes engagement* with people of different faiths and backgrounds to build a more just and peaceful world.

Christian nationalism:

- **Particularistic:** Emphasizes the specialness and superiority of a *specific Christian nation*.
- **National identity:** Blends Christian faith with national identity, often *conflating national interests with God's will*.
- **Exclusionary:** May view non-Christians or specific social groups as threats to the nation's Christian character.
- **Domination:** Seeks to impose Christian values and norms on the nation's laws and policies.

Christian nationalism is a type of religious nationalism that focuses on the internal politics of society. Christian nationalism is the belief that a nation should become a **theocracy**. Christian nationalists believe that a nation's leaders should publicly practice the tenets of a single interpretation of Christianity..

Catholic social teaching (CST) is a **hermeneutic** that focuses on human dignity and the common good in society

CST is rooted in Biblical revelation and the experience of proclaiming God's justice. Some principles of CST include:

- Human dignity
- The common good
- Solidarity
- Subsidiarity
- Preferential option for the poor
- Stewardship of creation

• a faithful response for the Common Good •



Doug Pagitt



Stephany Spaulding

THREAT

OF CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM

Week Four: How does Christian nationalism exist in Politics and Religion? How do we understand the cause/effect of why it works?

"Christian nationalism is a political ideology that seeks to merge Perceived Christian beliefs and American identities, distorting both the Christian faith and America's constitutional democracy. Christian nationalism demands Christianity be privileged by the State and implies that to be a good American, one must be Christian."

“Does Christian nationalism demand Christianity be privileged by the State”?

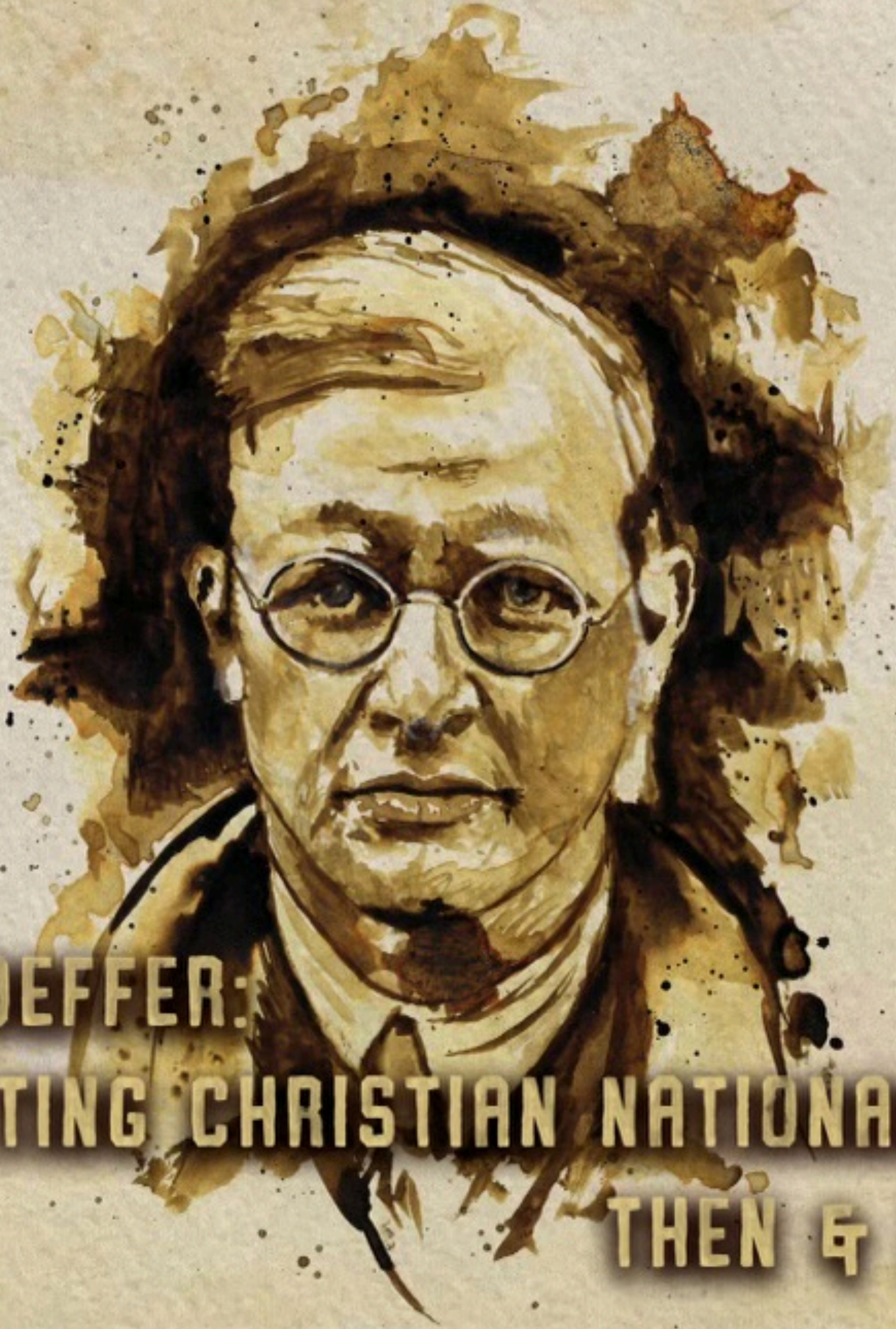
In what ways could the U.S. government privilege Christianity over other religions?

Are there detrimental factors to merging Christian and Political identities?

What adverse effects would this merging of identities have on American democracy?

What adverse effects would this merging of identities have on the Christian faith?

What happens to a religious system when it is privileged by a government?



**BONHOEFFER:
RESISTING CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM
THEN & NOW**

In August of 1933 Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote to his Grandmother: “**The issue really is Germanism or Christianity.**” German Christians placed Nazi flags alongside the communion table and believed God’s will worked through the National Socialist Party. For many, loyalty to the Arian race and the German nation (“**blood and soil**”) had usurped loyalty to God. The Nazi party promoted a slogan about Jews poisoning the blood of good Germans.

<https://www.youtube.com/live/J6NbYdDJIVw?si=UCv0Uyda1yrksEZu>

Dr. Jeffrey Pugh, Dr. Lori Brandt Hale & Dr. Tripp Fuller have a conversation about Bonhoeffer and Justice.

He spent the 1930–1931 academic year as a postdoctoral student in New York. Bonhoeffer found a home at Abyssinian Baptist, a Black church in Harlem. There, he taught children’s Sunday school alongside his new friend, (Albert) Franklin Fisher. Bonhoeffer also visited church members’ homes and helped out with a weekday church school and organizing church suppers. In the Black church, *Bonhoeffer encountered people who remained faithful to Christ, though they were the objects of racism because of Christianity.* In a new way, he learned how Christ identifies with the oppressed. Later, *Bonhoeffer would say that at Abyssinian, “the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Savior of the sinner, is really preached.”*





As a newly ordained pastor, young **Dietrich Bonhoeffer** stood boldly before a large group of German clergy and church-goers and delivered his call-to-action, “***the Church and the Jewish Question.***” It was **April 1933** in Germany, and Hitler had recently been elected Chancellor. Bonhoeffer, incensed by the Nazi regime and the acquiescing church, Bonhoeffer urged Germans to consider how they could respond to and resist injustice. He proclaimed “***an unconditional obligation to the victims of any ordering of society.***” Several walked out, but undeterred, Bonhoeffer continued:

“We are not to simply bandage the wounds of victims beneath the wheels of injustice; we are to drive a spoke into the wheel itself.”

In 1939, Bonhoeffer returned to the US. Bonhoeffer considered taking refuge in the United States but returned to Germany after only two weeks in New York City, writing to his sponsor, the theologian Reinhold Niebuhr, that *“I will have no right to participate in the reconstruction of Christian life in Germany after the war if I do not share the trials.”* Bonhoeffer returned to Germany with a clearer *understanding of social justice, particularly racial justice*, and the rest of his life was an application of these convictions. As the Nazis came into power, with the blessings of the two major churches, the implications of their discriminatory rhetoric were not lost on him. Over the months and many years following Hitler’s election, Bonhoeffer spoke out against the rise of *Christian Nationalism* and the marriage with Nazism. He wrote, published, and even attempted to speak on the radio along with his notable *“call-to-action.”* In opposition to Nazi ideology and Christian Nationalism. He founded an underground seminary for the anti-Nazi Confessing Church.

The Gestapo, with the blessing of the church leaders in Germany, eventually closed the seminary, arresting and imprisoning 27 of Bonhoeffer’s students. Although now forbidden to print or publish, and though aware of the danger to himself, Bonhoeffer felt compelled to remain in Germany during the war. He worked with the resistance as a spy, and in 1941, he joined in Jewish rescue action Operation 7. Not limited to rescue efforts alone, he collaborated with Admiral Canaris and others in clandestine operations to undermine the Nazis.

For Bonhoeffer, the foundation of ethical behavior lay in how the reality of the world and the reality of God were reconciled with the reality of Christ.

In his thinking and life, **ethics** were centered on the demand for action by responsible men and women in the face of evil.



Adolf Hitler was raised as a Catholic, as was Joseph Goebbels. Hitler's mother, Klara Hitler, was a practicing Catholic, daily mass Catholic and Hitler was baptized and confirmed in the Roman Catholic Church.

Nazis sought to suppress the power of the Catholic Church in Germany. Catholic press, schools, and youth organizations were closed, property was confiscated, and about one-third of its clergy faced reprisals from authorities; Catholic lay leaders were among those murdered during the *Night of the Long Knives*.

“To my mind a truly Christian society would be one whose skyline would be crowded not only with churches, but with synagogues, temples, mosques, viharas, torii, gudwaras, and so on. (Something of the sort worked well enough in the empire of Graeco-Roman late antiquity or the empire of Kublai Khan.)” ~ David Bentley Hart



Amanda Tyler
ChristiansAgainstChristianNationalism.org

THREAT

of CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM

what is the difference between policy and law

While both policy and law aim to guide behavior and influence decisions, there are some critical differences between them:

- **Law:** Formally enacted by legislative bodies, following established legal procedures, and often codified in written documents like constitutions, statutes, and codes.
- **Policy:** Policy is not always formally enacted but rather determined through various mechanisms like executive orders, agency regulations, internal company protocols, or even informal agreements.

Enforcement:

- **Law:** Typically carries the force of law, with violations enforceable through fines, imprisonment, or other legal sanctions.
- **Policy:** Enforcement varies. Some policies have legal consequences for violation, but many rely on social pressure, internal disciplinary procedures, or voluntary compliance.

Specificity:

- **Law:** Generally broad and overarching, establishing general principles and prohibitions.
- **Policy:** Often more detailed and specific, outlining concrete steps and procedures for implementing a law or achieving a particular goal.

Flexibility:

- **Law:** Relatively rigid and difficult to change, requiring formal legislative processes and often judicial interpretation.
- **Policy:** More flexible and adaptable, often undergoing revisions and adjustments based on experience and changing circumstances

Here's an analogy to illustrate:

- Think of **law** as the foundation of a building, setting the basic framework and parameters.
- The **policy** then acts as the blueprint and building materials, shaping the specific details and functionality of the structure.

Here are some additional points to consider:

- **Policies** can be based on existing laws, further clarifying or operationalizing them.
- **Laws** can sometimes emerge from successful policies that become widely accepted and formalized.
- The relationship between **policy** and **law** can be complex and dynamic, with constant interplay and influence between the two.



Vote Common Good

THREAT

of CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM

zoom

#1 NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER

Caste

The Origins
of Our
Discontents



Isabel
Wilkerson

Winner of the Pulitzer Prize

Author of THE WARMTH OF OTHER SUNS

“As we go about our daily lives, caste is the wordless usher in a darkened theater, flashlight cast down in the aisles, guiding us to our assigned seats for a performance. The hierarchy of caste is not about feelings or morality. It is about power—which groups have it and which do not.” ~ Isabel Wilkerson

"THE SYSTEM OF TERROR OF THE HITLER STATE CAN ONLY BE UNDERSTOOD IF ONE RECOGNIZES THAT IT WANTED ABOVE ALL TO TURN THE FREEDOM OF THE INDIVIDUAL AND SPONTANEOUS ACTION INTO WILLING SERVILITY." ~ DIETRICH BONHOEFFER

Week Five:

How should people, religions, and governments consider Religious (Christian) Nationalism?

The key is to *Observe ~ Judge ~ Act.*

Look at history for the patterns.

Pax Romana

The phrase:

“Loosely Coupled but Naturally Aligned”

Provides a sense of timelines in the growth of Religious Nationalism and the growth of religion itself. It also provides us with a glimpse of nation-building.

All religions focus on some form of organizational structure.

When do religions, governments, monarchs, dictators, etc., become tightly aligned?



SAMUEL PERRY

ANDREW WHITEHEAD

According to Andrew L. Whitehead, an associate professor of sociology at *Indiana University–Purdue University Indianapolis*, *the rise of Christian nationalism has found its footing in Indiana.*

Andrew Whitehead often finds that his research studying Christian nationalism intersects with significant events across the country and the state he lives in. His expertise and unique point of view have been even more important as the events of unfolded.

‘Christian nationalists’ heretical form of religion parallels the “morality” of the Roman Empire that Jesus challenged.

Jesus challenged Pax Romana.

Pax Romana is a Latin phrase that refers to the period of relative peace and prosperity in the Roman Empire from 27 BC to 180 AD. The Pax Romana is said to have contributed to the spread of Christianity by providing a stable government, better communications systems, and safer travel.



Christianity first arose in the Roman Empire during the Pax Romana but was not initially accepted. Christians were persecuted and killed, but by the 380s and 390s, Christianity had become a major religion in the Roman Empire. **In 380 CE**, the emperor Theodosius issued the Edict of Thessalonica, making Christianity the Roman Empire's official religion. Christianity was now Pax Romana.

The term “Pax Romana” signified a military strategy of divide and conquer that included rape and pillage and all forms of what the Apostle Paul calls porneia — the ways that the rich and powerful use and abuse sex, sexuality, and procreation for their own benefit. It was called “Roman Peace,” but it meant war and death, especially for the poor.

The emperor in power at the time of Jesus, Caesar Augustus, was known for ushering in the Golden Age of Moral Values. To establish and preserve this Golden Age, he legislated who could marry whom and who could relate to whom, controlling the bodies and sexuality of his poor subjects.

Historians say that the Golden Age had three primary qualities: **peace and security** (that was established through war and plunder); **the flourishing of the traditional virtues and values** (that were upheld through marriage laws and other sexual mores); and **prosperity under a glorious divine leader** (a “divine leader” who is not the God who led the people out of bondage under empire, but one who executed Jesus as a revolutionary challenging empire).

During the Pax Romana, the Roman Empire expanded its economy through military expansion. This brought wealthy regions under the empire's control, including the province of Dacia and its gold mines. The empire also constructed 50,000 miles of new roads under Emperor Augustus.

The Pax Romana also had social and political impacts. Socially, the Pax Romana returned stability to social classes and increased emphasis on the family. Politically, the Pax Romana created a civil service and developed a uniform rule of law.

Christian nationalists' heretical form of religion parallels the "morality" of the Roman Empire that Jesus challenged. It mirrors Pax Romana.

Despite their diversity, the various names did not include “Adherents of the Anointed (christianos)” in the first century and only rarely during the second century



EXODUS

84. So he said his brethren privily, and they departed: and he said unto them, I see that ye will not go for this time.
 85. ¶ And they went up out of Egypt, and came into the land of Canaan upon Jacob their father.
 86. And told him, saying, Joseph is not alive, and he is gone out of the land of Egypt. And Jacob's heart failed, for he believed them not.
 87. And they told him all the words of Joseph, which he had said unto them: and when he saw the waggon which Joseph had sent to carry him, the spirit of Jacob then failed.
 88. And Israel said, It is enough, Joseph my son is yet alive: I will go and see him before I die.

EXODUS
CHAP. XIX.

I The people come to Sinai: **A** God's promises to them out of the mount. **B** Their consent. **C** His fearful presence.
IN the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai.
 2. For they were departed from Raphidim, and were come to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness: and there Israel encamped before the mount.
 3. ¶ And Moses went up unto God, and the LORD called unto him out of the mountain, saying, Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob, and tell the children of Israel:
 4. Ye have seen what I did unto the Egyptians, and how I bare you on eagles' wings, and brought you unto myself.
 5. Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people: for all the earth is mine:
 6. And ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and an holy nation. These are the words which thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel.
 7. And Moses came and called for the elders of the people, and laid before their faces all these words which the LORD commanded him.

EXODUS

8. ¶ And all the people answered together, and said, All that the LORD hath spoken, we will do. And Moses reported unto the LORD all the words which the people said unto him.
 9. ¶ And the LORD said unto Moses, Lo, I have seen thee, and thou art faithful: therefore will I take thee, and will make thee a father of many people.
 10. ¶ And he said unto Moses, Go into the people, and bid them to be ready against the third day: for the third day will I come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai.
 11. ¶ And he said against the third day: for the third day will the LORD come down in the sight of all the people upon Mount Sinai.
 12. ¶ And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves, that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount, or that which is bound thereto, he shall surely be put to death: whether it be beast or man, it shall not live: when the trumpet soundeth long, they shall come up to the mount.
 13. ¶ And Moses went down from the mount unto the people, and sanctified the people: and they washed their clothes.
 14. ¶ And he said unto the people, Be ready against the third day: come up at your wives.
 15. ¶ And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings, and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of the trumpet sounding long; so that all the people that saw in the camp trembled.
 16. ¶ And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the nether part of the mount.
 17. ¶ And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the LORD descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole remnant quaked greatly.



It is essential to step back for a minute and unpack the matrix of interlocking and interrelated values and beliefs incorporated in Christian nationalism. We understand these to include a few core features, though the list that follows is by no means exhaustive:

- **First**, a highly exclusionary and regressive form of Christianity is the only valid religion.
- **Second**, Ethnic supremacy, along with patriarchy and heteronormativity, is “the natural order” of the world and must be upheld in our personal lives as well as in public.
- **Third**, militarism and violence, rather than diplomacy and debate, are the right ways for the country to exert power; connected to this, it is fitting that the U.S. should exert its power over other countries.
- **Fourth**, scarcity is the economic reality of life, and we (Americans vs. the world, white people vs. people of color, natural-born citizens vs. immigrants, etc.) must compete for resources.
- **Fifth**, people oppressed by systemic violence are to blame for the profound social and economic problems of the world. The poor are to be blamed for their poverty, LGBTQIA+ people are responsible for disease and social rupture, documented and undocumented immigrants are “rapists, thieves, and murderers” who are stealing so-called American jobs, and so forth.
- **Sixth**, the Bible, especially the Old Testament, is the source of moral authority on these (and other) social issues and should be used to justify an extremist agenda, no matter what is contained in the “New Testament.”

Social media was abuzz on the topic of white Christian Nationalism for much of last summer, with the likes of Marjorie Taylor Greene selling T-shirts that proudly proclaim her identity as a Christian nationalist, encouraging followers to join in.

As each part of the Jan. 6 hearing unfolded, the influence of white Christian nationalism showed through — whether it was the Jericho march directly preceding the Jan. 6 attack or the “crusade” to challenge election results that followed.

Christian Nationalism has influenced the course of American politics and policy since the country's founding, and the movement behind it is particularly emboldened now. The most recent victory of this nationalistic movement culminated in the Dobbs ruling, BUT....

But the strength of these Christian nationalists is not limited to sexual legislation and privacy rights. It can also be seen in the “Don’t Say Gay” campaign in Florida, the fight against critical race theory, the rolling coup of voter suppression laws across U.S. states throughout 2021 and 2023, and even Putin’s drive to establish the supremacy of the Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine.



**PROUD
CHRISTIAN
NATIONALIST**

AVAILABLE NOW!

**STAND AGAINST
THE GODLESS LEFT**

Forbes
BREAKING
NEWS



Paul did not see himself as switching religions. He came to realize that Christ was the fulfillment of Judaism, of everything that God had planned and revealed within the sacred Jewish Scriptures.

Bart Ehrman

“Christian nationalism’s tactics create division, which in turn leads to violence, but buried deep in Christianity’s memory is a Jesus movement’s proclamation of no male or female, slave or free, Jew or gentile, us or them. Secular social democracy is closer to the spirit of early Jesus movements than Christian nationalism, which sounds suspiciously like Pax Romana.” ~ David Galston PhD



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Average Indiana Resident

3,437 posts



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Average Indiana Resident

@GunHeritage

Christ is King Repent and be baptized

Shooting & Hunting Range Indiana, USA Joined March 2023

265 Following 1,164 Followers

Not followed by anyone you're following

Republican attorney general calls separation of church and state 'a myth'

ROKITA'S NEW 'PARENTS BILL OF RIGHTS' INDIANA



- ❑ **ROKITA: SEPARATION OF CHURCH, STATE 'MYTH'**
- ❑ **FINAL INSTALLMENT OF BILL**
- ❑ **SCHOOLS MUST CATALOGUE BOOKS**

The Parents' Bill of Rights, now at 151 questions covering 108 pages, touches on a **variety of topics**, including Critical Race Theory and other so-called "Marxist theories," school choice, vaccinations, and school governance.

According to Rokita, the document was created so parents could have confidence and knowledge when interacting with school boards, school administrators and teachers.

He also cited declining standardized test scores as a reason parents should read it.

When questioned about the principle of separation of church and state, the attorney general replied that the concept of separation of church and state is a "myth" coming from case law decades ago.

Valparaiso University responds to AG's concern China is 'infiltrating' Indiana schools

“Indiana Attorney General Todd Rokita announced his office is launching a civil investigation into Valparaiso University and Chinese cultural institution the Confucius Institute over fears the relationship between the two is promoting communist propaganda in Indiana and contrary to Christian beliefs.

The attorney general's office declined to tell IndyStar what specific evidence it has to support the insinuation that Beijing is attempting to brainwash Hoosiers through the Valparaiso University-Confucius Institute relationship, which partially relies on funds from private donations. “We are not able to comment on the specifics of an ongoing investigation,” a spokesperson said.”

Johnny Magdaleno and Arika Herron of the Indianapolis Star

Congressman Jim Banks's Pressure on Indiana University to Police Antisemitism and Wokeness Is Duplicitous and Dangerous



The **Statesmen Academy** elevates the profiles of these legislators and helps them promote legislation rooted in baseless distortions of science and medicine, particularly with regard to reproductive and trans rights.

Amanda Banks has been the Academy's director since 2019. At an online conference hosted by the Family Policy Alliance last October, she lauded Lundstrum's role in authoring the SAFE Act, calling it "groundbreaking" legislation that *"we hope will be replicated in many states in the coming year."*

This July, the organization awarded Lundstrum its Coburn Statesmen Award, named for the late ultraconservative Senator Tom Coburn of Oklahoma, who was a frequent speaker at the Academy's training programs.

Banks has said that the Statesmen Academy trains roughly 30 legislators each year. *“That is going to multiply into effective policies, God-honoring policies,”* she said in a promotional video. *“If they’re all pursuing those biblical values through the work that they do, I think ultimately God is going to be honored, and His will is going to be done on earth as it is in heaven.”* The Family Policy Alliance did not respond to interview requests about the Statesmen Academy.

Banks is the wife of the hard-right, pro-Trump Congressman from Indiana, Jim Banks, who previously served in the Indiana legislature and is an alumnus of the Statesmen Academy. Jim Banks has also worked as a National Field Director with Focus on the Family. Amanda Banks’ own legislative experience was serving in the Indiana statehouse for one year in 2014 and working as a federal policy analyst for Focus on the Family.

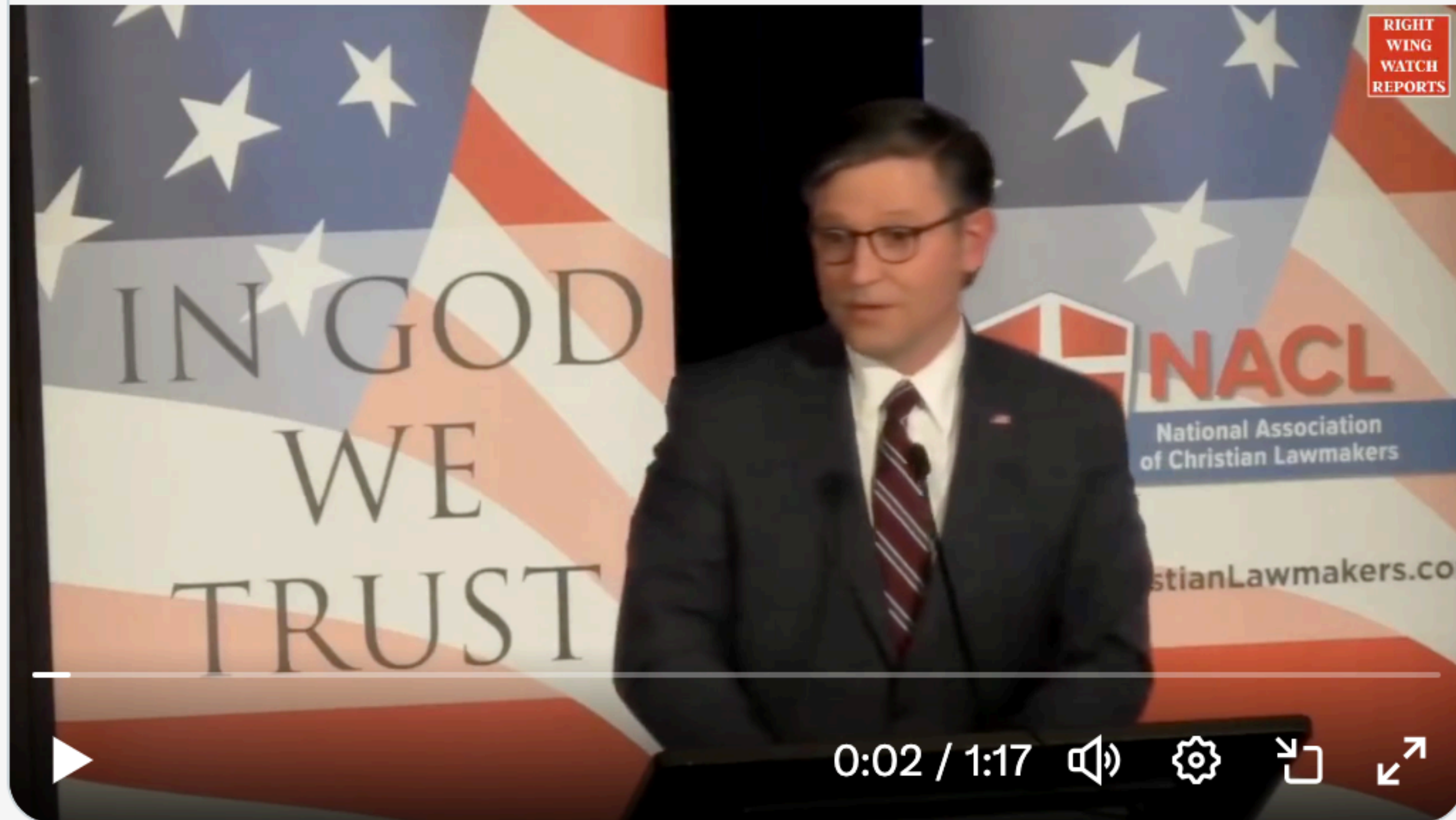
Nearly one in three white Protestant men in Indiana were members of the Ku Klux Klan (KKK) in the early 1920s.

They came from all walks of life: lawyers, preachers, legislators — including Governor Ed Jackson — and everyday folk. And they put on robes and hoods and burned crosses throughout the Hoosier state.

While the Ku Klux Klan in Indiana peaked nearly 100 years ago, its spiritual members' support of Christian nationalism is reflected in various political, militia, and hate groups today. **Writer Laurie D. Borman of the Limestone Press** interviewed several experts who suggest the ideologies espoused by today's far-right groups are a continuation of the country's racist past.

 **The Intellectualist**  @highbrow_nobrow · Feb 1

Mike Johnson: The Lord told me "very clearly" to prepare to become "Moses". @RightWingWatch



 131

 111

 318

 5.4K

House Speaker Mike Johnson was the keynote speaker at an event for the **National Association of Lawmakers**. The group is working to take conservative Christian control at every level of government.

Mike Johnson's ties to Christian nationalism are well documented, but a new report reveals his long-standing connection to a particularly extremist strain of Christianity—and the House speaker's comments supporting the group are worrisome.

An investigation published by The Daily Beast and the New York Times reveals Johnson has particularly close relationships with leaders of **Christian Dominionism**, a radical sect of Christian fundamentalism that supports establishing an entirely Christian nation, to oppose LGBTQ rights, Wokeness, and even defends slavery as having social value.

Fr. Robert Ballecer, SJ

@padresj

Jesuit theologian in Rome.

Consider this:

“There is a Christian sect that not only believes they (and they alone) will be saved during Armageddon but that it is their **DUTY** to help bring the end times to fruition.

They are some of the strongest Trump supporters b/c they believe HE alone will bring the end.”

'I'm wearing the armor of God': New Arizona GOP chair vows more anti-voting lawsuits

“I'm Wonder Woman ...I'm fueled by God. I have to say, I'm wearing the armor of God. I think that the reason God made me my nerdy election-self is for this time.” *29 January 2024*



If we fast-forward to today...

- Trump and his mantra of “I and I alone can fix your problems”
- the contemporary and historic attacks on abortion, same-sex marriage and trans youth in the name of family values, at the same time as cutting welfare, healthcare, wages and other life-sustaining programs
- and the emphasis on policing and militarizing communities, allowing guns to proliferate, all the time talking about peace and security and thoughts and prayers for the victims of violence

...are revealed to be not just characteristics of our contemporary political and religious life, but parallels of the very Roman Imperial “morality” that Jesus was challenging.



INDEPENDENT

Week Six:

Why should Christians critically reflect on Christian Nationalism?

How different is Christian Nationalism to the Gospel or the understanding of the followers of Jesus?

What signs and symbols of the rise of Christian Nationalism do we experience around us?



**Look what
I invented**

**That's the
best thing
since ripped
up bread**

Sitz im Leben

Fact Check Scripture

Think: *“Loosely Coupled but Naturally Aligned”*

See-Judge-Act

If-Then-Because why?

Definitions matter. Who decides what “Christianity” means? Who controls which parts of the tradition are emphasized, neglected, or suppressed? And crucially, who benefits (and loses out) due to these decisions?

I would tell my classes about ancient history and religion, in particular.

“If you are not at the table, you might end up on the menu.”

My Recommendation:

*With the rise of Christian Nationalism coming from our politicians, and when they and others quote scripture, fact check the **Sitz im Leben**. Also, study what the followers of Jesus were thinking in the **first few centuries** before the medieval period and why they were thinking that way.*

Authentic Paul

1 Thessalonians, 1&2 Corinthians, Philippians, Gallatin's, Romans, Philemon

Maybe authentic but a stretch

1 & 2 Timothy, Titus, Colossians, Ephesians, 2 Thessalonians

By “**early Christianity**,” Or if you wish, think of it as “**Phase I Christianity**,” I don’t mean the Christianity represented by the major figures in the **fourth and fifth centuries when the church had risen to power**—for example, *Athanasius, Constantine, and Augustine*. Instead, I’m referring to the period immediately after the apostles, mainly the **second and third centuries**, when “*Christianity*” was still in its infancy, struggling to find its way in a hostile Roman world.

All the scholarly work being done shows a radical gap between the two, so we might conclude that the *Christianity* that arose to dominance is not the “*real*” or “*intended*” Christianity after all. Instead, do we have a man-made construction that is out of sync with the earlier (*and maybe more authentic*) version? Today, do we have a “Christianity” born of politics, empire, power, or just random chance?

Keep the *Sermon on The Mount* in the back of your mind. Go back from time to time and re-read MT 5-6-7 & 25.

PERSECUTING THE “*CHURCH*”

We begin by trying to understand what Paul is writing, which raises the translation problem. Here are five representative translations of Gal 1:13:

KJ, how that, beyond measure, I persecuted the church of God and wasted it.

NIV, how intensely I persecuted the church of God and tried to destroy it.

NRSV, I was violently persecuting the church of God and was trying to destroy it.

NAB, how I persecuted the church of God beyond measure and tried to destroy it.

ESV, how aggressively I harassed God’s new community, trying to wipe it out.

DBH, For you have heard of my conduct, When I was inside Judaism: that I persecuted and besieged God’s assembly with such extravagance.

*“The theological point here is that “truth” is supposed to make us fear because truth reveals our deeply shadowed selves. Standing in the light, theologically, is not a self-righteous act but a self-reconciling act. **What do we think Paul was talking about when he referred to his former self (Gal 1:13)?** Paul’s insight into Jesus forced him to reconcile with his shadow side of intolerance. He turned from condemning the Jesus movement to seeing how that movement included the nations that did not practice circumcision and that he now understood did not need to. **To use fear to hide the truth is the inverse of the theological act.** Fear not confronted buries the call for change in the shadows of our psyches, but fear affirmed necessitates change, exposes the need for change, which is what theology means when it speaks of revelation and what history means when it speaks of woke.” ~ David Galston PhD*

- “The Story of Christianity” *by David Bentley Hart*
- “Jewish-Christian Dialogues on Scripture in Late Antiquity” *By Michal Bar-Asher Siegal*
- “Jesus Before Christianity” *by Albert Nolan OP*
- “Christ Associations: Connecting and Belonging in the Ancient City” *by John S Kloppenborg*
- “Resurrecting Easter” *by Dominic Crossan*
- “In the Shadow of the Temple: Jewish Influences on Early Christianity” *by Oskar Skarsaune*
- “In Memory of Her: A Feminist Theological Reconstruction of Christian Origins” (1983) *Elisabeth Schüssler Fiorenza*
- “Christian Origins in Ephesus and Asia Minor” *by Mark R. Fairchild,*
- “After Jesus Before Christianity: A Historical Exploration of the First Two Centuries of Jesus Movements” *By Bernard Brandon Scott, Erin Vearncombe, and Hal Taussig*

- # Christian Nationalism in the US

An ideology that states that the United States is a *Christian Nation* and should be one in the future. It is a *political ideology* and *cultural framework* that seeks to combine Christian and American identities.

- Christian Nationalism supports and often insists on the presence of Christian symbols in the public square, such as the Ten Commandments on school walls, school prayer, and the Christian Cross (not a crucifix). It also supports state patronage for the practice and display of religion. State support for private education and *Modern Libertarian* views.

Christian nationalists gathered Friday night (2/10/24) in Colorado to collectively decree and declare that the US government will honor God, pass only laws that are righteous, and issue only rulings that are biblical: "*The blood of Jesus protects and covers our nation.*"



Dear Hillsdale, college

I am in 4th grade this year.

I just wanted to ask if I could have a U.S. constitution.

That would be amazing if you guys could!

I also think you guys are

amazing! I also think you guys are

really nice. (I hope) But I hope you

guys also had a good summer! I also hope

you are having a great time in college!

I love America! Thank you!

Bailey



HILLSDALE COLLEGE

Dear Fellow American,

K-12 education in America is at a crisis point.

Activists and entrenched education bureaucrats in our nation are pushing to replace the American idea of equal individual rights with the destructive idea of unequal rights based on identity using critical race theory and other Marxist ideologies.

And they're doing so in K-12 classrooms in your state.

The situation is especially sad, given an experience that brought so much joy to our office here at Hillsdale College.

One fall day, the mail arrived with something unusual: a box full of letters from fourth graders asking for Hillsdale College pocket-sized copies of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

Each child took a moment to say how excited they were to learn about America's founding documents. I've enclosed a copy of one letter from a little girl named Bailey so you can read it for yourself. After reading it, I'm sure you'll agree that we cannot let them down now.

These letters demonstrate how you can make a meaningful difference in the lives of our youngest citizens. And because Hillsdale College has distributed an astonishing 700,000 pocket-sized copies of the Constitution to schools nationwide, you can make a difference in your community as well.

Today, would you join us in providing Constitutions for young students like Bailey, who learn about America's founding documents and history?

A small gift can go a long way: \$15 can provide booklets to 75 students, \$25 reaches and teaches 125 students, \$35 reaches and teaches 175 students, and \$50 helps 250 students.

This pocket Constitution will help promote the principles of liberty that have made our country the freest and most prosperous nation in history, contrary to critical race theory ideologies.

I've enclosed a copy of the pocket Constitution we send to schools across the country as a gift for you. You can keep the booklet for yourself or give it to a young person you know who might need some encouragement.

Efforts like this are more important than ever.

Even before critical race theory found its way into K-12 classrooms, far too many of our children received an education that ignored or misrepresented the principles of liberty underlying America's founding documents.

It isn't a secret that American civics education—education in American history and government—has been abandoned in far too many of our schools. We've witnessed how countless young people are unaware of the importance of the Constitution to liberty—threatening freedom itself!

We must do something about this knowledge gap, especially right now ... and with your help, we can take action.

You're someone who believes that K-12 students can benefit from having their own copy of the most important documents in U.S. history—that's why you're receiving this letter ... and you can provide the resources necessary to give them away for free to anyone who wishes to learn. I hope you will help.

When we send out pocket-sized Constitutions to teachers, principals, and administrators across the country, we make an important promise:

To send as many pocket Constitutions as our educators need so that they can properly teach

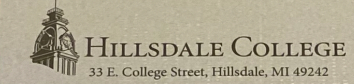
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\$35

CONSTITUTION CERTIFICATE

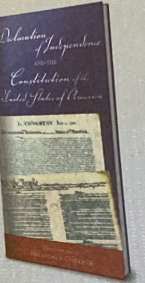
This certificate for \$35, which provides pocket Constitutions to 175 students and expands other programs that reach and teach millions of young Americans, is sponsored by:

Mr. Richard Putz



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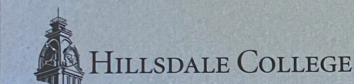


\$50

CONSTITUTION CERTIFICATE

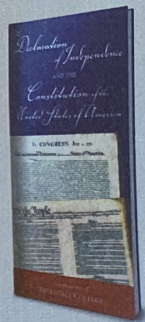
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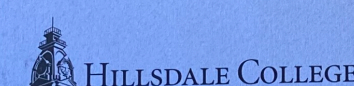


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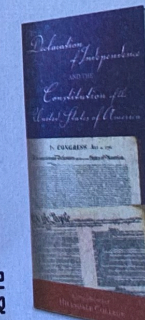
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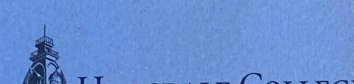


YOUR CHOICE OF AMOUNT

CONSTITUTION CERTIFICATE

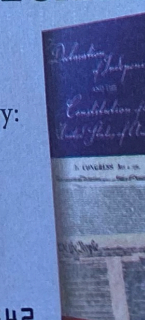
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How often has your church or community of faith discussed the existence or the dangers of the ideology of Christian nationalism?

In attempting to create a "Christian nation," how does Christian nationalism use power, boundaries, and order to elevate its ideology? How do people who subscribe to Christian nationalism seek to disempower other groups to protect their own power?



"Christ is king!" shouts a man after getting baptized at "God's Army"
#borderconvoy the US Mexico border rally in Quemado, Texas

Republican Colorado representative Lauren Boebert has suggested that children in public schools should be forced to undergo “biblical citizenship training”.

“We need to have some sort of legislation that requires... biblical citizenship training in our schools. And that’s how we get things turned around.”

Boebert is referring to a course run by one of her fellow Flashpoint colleagues, former Texas state legislator and now owner of Patriot Academy, Rick Green.

Green’s Patriot Academy runs a course titled “Biblical Citizenship in Modern America,” which claims they can teach people the ins and outs of the US Constitution while basing good citizenship entirely on the Bible.

Boebert confirmed that she had taken the eight-week video course, which includes a host of anti-LGBTQ+ guests like Liberty Counsel chairman Mat Staver and Christian activist David Barton, who has compared same-sex marriage to incest.

Green has said that the course aims to train millions of voters before the next presidential election.

← Post



The Intellectualist

@highbrow_nobrow



Pennsylvania State Rep. Stephanie Borowicz (R): 65 percent "of all of the founding documents" came "from Jesus' words and the Bible."

[@RightWingWatch](#)



From **Right Wing Watch**

9:25 AM · Feb 2, 2024 · **200.7K** Views



Communism, Authoritarianism, and dictatorships all resemble religion through their emphasis on the concept of creating a community and actions aimed – at least theoretically – at strengthening that community.

The very fact that it prescribed universal belief in one vision had the hallmarks of 'group building.'

The philosophy of these movements, which are characterized by *historical materialism*, is already developing *metaphysical* pretensions among its most ardent devotees, which go beyond the realm of pure science and partake of the attributes of religious worldviews.

When thinking of Christian Nationalism, how often do we consider the elements of “Historical materialism”, which posits that history is made due to the struggle between different social classes rooted in the underlying economic base?

Historical materialism suggests that all human institutions, such as government and religion, are a result of economic activity. It also suggests that changes in a society's productive forces lead to social conflict.*(think of the three Revolutions humans have experienced)* The specific forms of social organization that emerge reflect the underlying structure of the means of production.

According to historical materialism, each main epoch in the development of human society constitutes a specific mode of production or socio-economic formation, of which five are now known as *Primitive Collectivism, Slavery, Feudalism, Capitalism, and Social Democracy.*

Think where religious nationalism (for us today Christian Nationalism) plays into the equation of each formation.



THREAT

of CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM

zoom

Vote Common Good

Pope Francis:

As for the *anthropological difficulties* the Catholic faith discerns in libertarianism, Francis was quite clear in his talk:

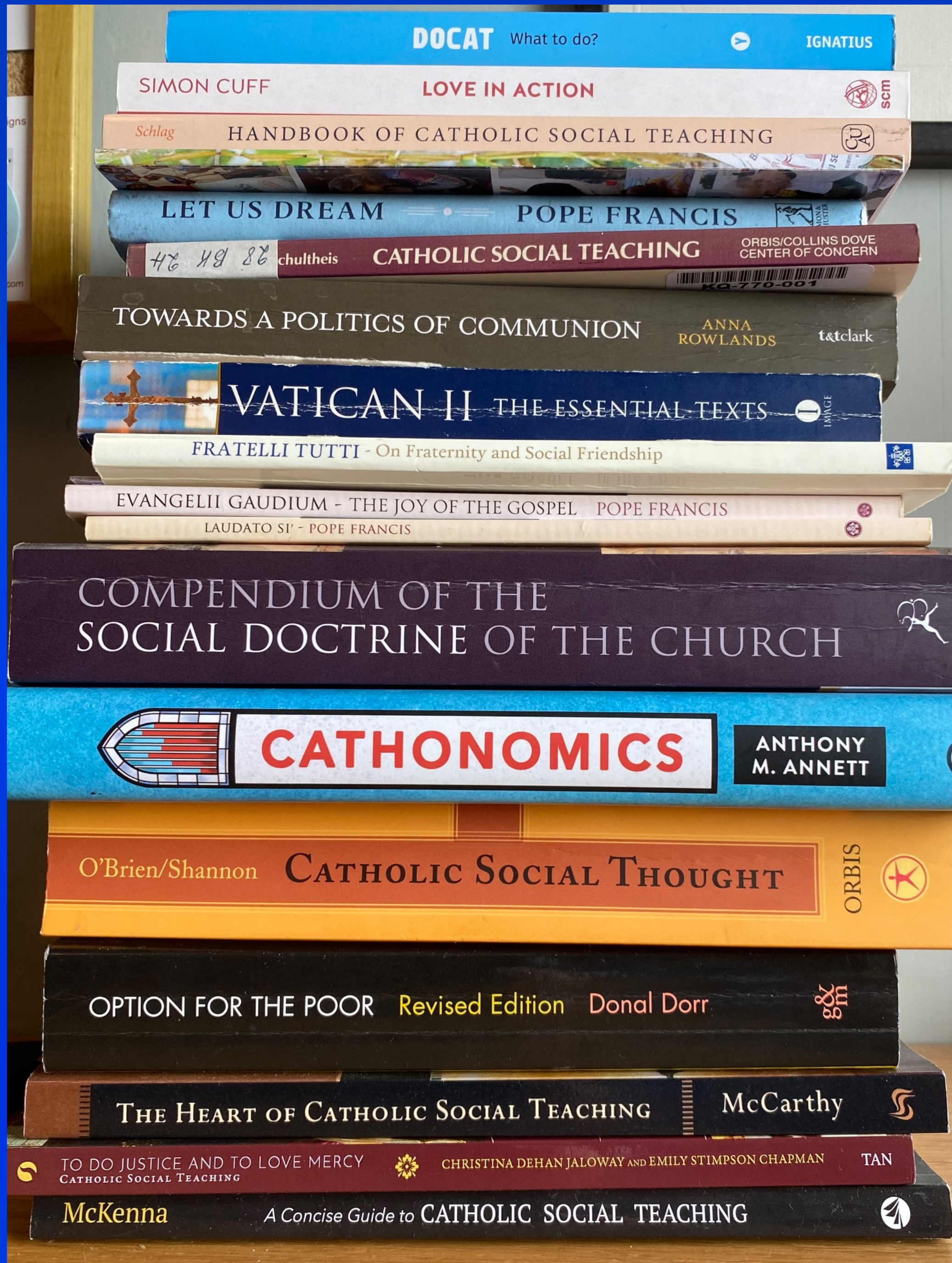
“The radicalization of individualism in libertarian and, therefore, anti-social terms leads to the conclusion that everyone has the “right” to expand as far as his power allows, even at the expense of the exclusion and marginalization of the most vulnerable majority. Bonds would have to be cut since they would limit freedom. By mistakenly matching the concept of “bond” to that of “constraint,” one ends up confusing what may condition freedom — the constraints — with the essence of created freedom, that is, bonds or relations, family and interpersonal, with the excluded and marginalized, with the common good, and finally with God.”

What is our next step in taking a stand against the threat of Christian nationalism? What are some things we can do?

How can the Christian church "reclaim the Jesus that disturbs the peace"?

How would a church intent on this type of reclamation begin to think or act differently?

How could your church begin to stand against Christian nationalism?



“Catholic Social Teachings are the only social teachings that come close to looking like what Jesus taught.” ~ David Galston PhD

Think of this as Christian Social Teachings

Christian Social Teaching (CST) is rooted in Biblical revelation and the experience of proclaiming God's justice. CST argues that how society is organized in economics, politics, and law directly affects human dignity and community.

Here are some principles of CST: *These seven principles are not intended to be a comprehensive list of Christian social teachings, but they provide a good starting point for understanding this vital body of Christian thought based on the teachings of Jesus.*

- ***The Dignity of the Human Person:*** *Every person is created in the image and likeness of God and, therefore, has inherent dignity and worth. This dignity is not based on external factors like race, gender, or social status. It is essential to respect the dignity of all people, regardless of their circumstances.*
- **The Common Good:** The common good is the sum of all the conditions of social life which allow people, individually and in groups, to achieve their full potential. It includes peace, justice, security, education, and healthcare. Christians are called to work for the common good, not just their own private interests.

- **Solidarity:** Solidarity is the recognition that we are all interconnected and interdependent. We are all members of the human family, and we have a responsibility to help each other. This means standing up for the rights of the poor and marginalized and working to create a more just and equitable society.
- **Preferential Option for the Poor:** The preferential option for the poor is the principle that we should give special attention to the needs of the poor and vulnerable. This is not because they deserve more than others but because they are the most in need. Christians are called to advocate for the poor and work to alleviate their suffering.

- **The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers:** Work is not just a way to earn a living; it is also a way to contribute to society and fulfill our potential as human beings. All workers have the right to fair wages, safe working conditions, and the ability to join unions. Christians are called to support workers' rights and advocate for just labor practices.
- **Stewardship of Creation:** God has entrusted us with the care of creation. We have a responsibility to protect the environment and use its resources wisely. This means caring for the earth, its plants and animals and working to address climate change.
- **Participation:** All people have the right and responsibility to participate in the life of society. This includes voting, running for office, providing leadership, and participating in community organizations. Christians are called to be active citizens and work to make their communities better places.

See What is happening?

1. Who are the people involved?
2. Who gains from this situation? Who loses?
3. What is the situation doing to people?
4. Why is it happening? Why does it continue?

Act

1. What can we do to bridge the gap between what is happening (the reality) and what should be happening (the ideal/what our faith says)?
2. What action are we going to take? Who can we involve in our actions?

Judge

1. How do you feel about this situation?
2. Have you ever behaved or acted like anyone in the situation? If so, what happened? Why? How did you and/or those involved feel?
3. What do you think should be happening?
4. What does your faith say about it?
5. What does our Theological/Philosophical Tradition say about it?

See-Judge-Act

Reflection (Discernment) Constructing a Solution

What are my/our values?
What does faith bring to this?
How is my/our spirituality, my/our inner-life force, informed and inspired by what I'm experiencing?
What is making me uncomfortable? Why?
How do we transition from now to the future?

What to Change to? (Judge)

Adds new information and theory linked to the patterns in what people know
What ideas or models have been successful in addressing the problem?
What resolves the conflict?

3

Challenge
Assumptions

4

5

ACT How to Cause the Change to Happen

Apply what's been learned in the world, practice skills, strategize and plan for action
What actions, is/are most needed?
Given my/our resources, what can I/we do?
With whom can I/we connect? For wisdom and solidarity? For a stronger voice and impact.
How do we address Buy-In
Resolve issues for Skeptics and Address Resistance

1

What to Change? (See/Observe)

Identify the problem
start with the experience and knowledge of the participants
What do I/we see?
What is happening?
What are the constraints and roadblock we can see?
(The Linking Faith with Action section introduces many social.I justice issues

2

Analysis identifies patterns

Why is this happening?
Who is benefiting?
Where is the conflict?
In what ways are vulnerable Impacted?

6

Monitor

Policies~Measurements~Behaviors



THREAT

of CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM

zoom

“There is a considerable lag in the awareness of the Church as the People of God,” ~ Louis J Putz CSC 1958

“The Church needs all of its lay-folk, not the clergy, to bring the kingdom of God into the present day world.” ~ 1959

“God is using us; God needs us to accomplish the work; this is a great joy. Without our help, God cannot bring about the miracle that God intends to affect each one of us; through us but not without us.” ~ 1959

Thank You for the past six weeks

What If Jesus Was Serious about The Kingdom of God/Heaven?

What will be your Guide to Experiencing God's Kingdom Among Us in
a World of Rising Christian Nationalism?