



# BRAVE CHURCH

## TACKLING TOUGH TOPICS TOGETHER

Christian Nationalism –part I  
Background

# Opening Prayer

Lord,

We again gather to discuss a difficult topic.

You have said that whenever we are gathered in your name,  
you are among us.

Grant us Wisdom as we study and discuss

In Jesus' name, we pray.

Amen.

# Covenant Rules

## **RULE 1**

We will accept conflict and commit to the way of kindness.

## **RULE 2**

We will take responsibility for how our own words are received.

## **RULE 3**

We will ask permission before we challenge someone's views on a subject.

## **RULE 4**

We will show respect for one another and graciously receive feedback if someone feels disrespected.

## **RULE 5**

We will use 'I' instead of 'you' statements. We will not accuse or attack."

## **RULE 6**

Give everyone who wants to speak an opportunity to do so.

# Topics for This Series

- Background on Christian Nationalism-October 27
- Contrasting Christian Nationalism to Christianity-November 3
- Responding to Christian Nationalism and Engaging with those who Espouse the Ideology-November 10

# What do you think?

- What does the term Christian Nationalism mean to you?
- What images does the term invoke?
- Where have you seen Christian Nationalism?
- What emotion(s) does the term invoke?

We're going to use Zoom's whiteboard. Brief phrases please.

He said to them,  
“Isaiah prophesied rightly about you hypocrites, as  
it is written,

‘This people honors me with their lips,  
but their hearts are far from me;  
in vain do they worship me,  
teaching human precepts as doctrines.’

You abandon the commandment of God  
and hold to human tradition.”

**Mark 7:6-8**

# Topics for This Evening

- What is contemporary American Christian Nationalism?
- How did Christian Nationalism grow?
- Who are Christian Nationalists?
- Why are people drawn to the Movement?
- Political Consequences

# What Is Christian Nationalism?

“...a cultural framework—a collection of myths, traditions, symbols, narratives and value systems—that idealizes and advocates a fusion of Christianity with American civic life.”

Whitehead and Perry. Taking America Back for God.



# How did Christian Nationalism Grow?

“What galvanized the Christian community, was not abortion, school prayer, or the ERA (Equal Rights Amendment)...What changed their minds was Jimmy Carter’s intervention against Christian School, trying to deny them tax-exempt status on the basis of so-called de facto segregation.”

Paul Weyrich  
(Moral Majority,  
Heritage Foundation)

# How did Christian Nationalism Grow?

## Segregation Origins

- Civil Rights Act 1965
- Voting Rights Act 1968
- Dixiecrats
- IRS revoked tax-exempt status 1970
- Green v Connally, Supreme Court 1971

**How did  
Christian  
Nationalism  
Grow?**

**“separation of the races  
was God’s will”**

**Bob Jones University**

**“Protect Religious Freedom”**

# How did Christian Nationalism Grow?

**Moral Majority      1979**

**“The Christian World view”**

**Support**

**Prayer in school**

**family values**

**Oppose**

**abortion (Roe v Wade 1973)**

**gay rights,**

**feminism, ERA**

**social welfare programs**

# How did Christian Nationalism Grow?

**Christian Coalition**

**1989**

**Pat Robertson**

**Focus on The Family**

**The Family Research Council (FRC) 1985**

**Values Voters Summit**

**2006**

**Tony Perkins**

# How did Christian Nationalism Grow?

## Tea Party

Limit size of Federal government

Lower taxes, national debt and spending

Anti-union

Oppose amnesty for undocumented, tighter border security

Mostly evangelical membership

89 % white, 1 %black

# How did Christian Nationalism Grow?

**Tea Party Rallies became a Protest  
against Obama's identity (2008-16)**

- Black
- Foreign
- "we want our country back"

2010 U of Arkansas survey

**The End Justifies the Means  
Rise of Trump**

**What Is  
Christian  
Nationalism?**

**The United States of America  
is, was, and should be  
A Christian Nation**



# What Is Christian Nationalism?

**Divine mandate to control every aspect of American life if not the world.**

- **“have dominion over... every living thing” Genesis 1:28**
- **“Go and make disciples of all nations” Matt hew 28:19**

**What Is  
Christian  
Nationalism?**

**Demands  
The State privilege Christianity  
So  
To be a Good American ,  
one must Be a Christian**

# **Who are Christian Nationalists?**

## **Boundaries & Identity**

- **Religion-Christian, preferably Protestant**
- **Race-White**
- **Nativity-born in USA**
- **Political-social and fiscal conservative**
- **Citizenship-American**

# Who are Christian Nationalists?

Group boundaries are  
defended using  
Christian language

Who we are as a people

Our cultural symbols

Our public Policies

# Who are Christian Nationalists?

**Not synonymous with**

- **Authoritarianism**
- **Ethnocentrism**
- **Racial resentment**
- **White evangelical**

# Who are Christian Nationalists?

## Ideas of Morality

### Fidelity to Religion

Faith in God

Teach others your morals

Convert others to your Faith

### Christian Nationalism

Fidelity to the Nation

Serve in the Military

### Religious Practice

(attend services, pray, read scripture)

Care and Justice

Take Care of sick and needy

Seek social and economic justice

Stewardship

Consume Fewer Goods

# Who are Christian Nationalists?

## America SHOULD be a Christian Nation

Rejectors

Resistors

Accommodators

Ambassadors

Baylor Religion Survey 2017

Whitehead and Perry. Taking America Back for God 2020

# Who are Christian Nationalists?

## Stronger support for Christian Nationalism

- Older
- White
- Fewer with post grad or college
- Fewer high earners
- Rural
- Southern
- Evangelical Protestant
- Politically conservative
- Republican



# Who are Christian Nationalists?

**BUT**

**support for**

**Christian Nationalism  
among EVERY**

- **Socio-demographic group**
- **Religious view**
- **Political perspective**

Whitehead and Perry. Taking America Back for God 2020

# **Why are people drawn to the movement?**

**Need for Belonging and Purpose**

**Fear of loss of white social status,  
resentment, and desire for power**

**Fear of loss of patriarchal authority**

**Allure of conspiracy theories**

# Political Values

**Restrict political freedom and civil liberties of those deemed to be a threat to social order**

- **Immigration**
- **White Supremacy**
- **Jews**
- **Muslim Terrorists**

# Political Values

**Traditional family is essential for  
survival of American civilization**

- **Patriarchal dominance**
- **Pro-life**
- **Gender and Sexuality**

# Political Values

**God's People must fight  
for the good**

- **Military Service**
- **Symbols and Rituals**

# Political Values

## America's Founding Documents are Sacred

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Amendment

- Gun Violence
- Good Guy with a Gun

# Political Values

**Individualistic**  
**“Freedom under God”**  
**libertarian ethos**

- **Public Health**
- **Business Regulation**
- **Welfare**
- **Socialism**

# **Why MAGA?**

## **Perceived Threats to status**

- **Christians are persecuted**
- **Decreasing % Christian affiliation**
- **Increasing % non-white**
- **Economic insecurity**
- **Mistrust of institutions**



**Why  
MAGA?**

Trump is defender of the  
**POWER**  
and **VALUES**  
they perceive are threatened

**The End justifies the Means**

# What Is Christian Nationalism?

“...a cultural framework—a collection of myths, traditions, symbols, narratives and value systems—that idealizes and advocates a fusion of Christianity with American civic life.”

Whitehead and Perry. Taking America Back for God.

**America Should be a Christian Nation**

# Discussion Questions

Why is it detrimental to merge Christian and American Identities? How does this effect American Democracy?

Christian Nationalism is ultimately about privilege. How does this impact one's relationships?

Is it possible to RESTORE America in light of a global economy & increasing diversity?

# Additional Resources

Whitehead and Perry. Taking America Back for God. 2020

Obrery M Hendricks, Jr. Christians Against Christianity. 2021

Pamela Cooper-White. The Psychology of Christian Nationalism. 2022

Ben Howe. The Immoral Majority. 2019

Andrew Seidel. The Founding Myth. 2021

# Closing Reflection

Do not pervert justice, do not show partiality to the poor or favoritism to the great,  
but judge your neighbor fairly.

Do not go about spreading slander among your people. Do not do anything that endangers  
your neighbor's life. I am the Lord.

Do not hate a fellow Israelite in your heart. Rebuke your neighbor frankly so you will not  
share in their guilt

Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your  
neighbor as yourself. I am the Lord

Leviticus 19:15-18