



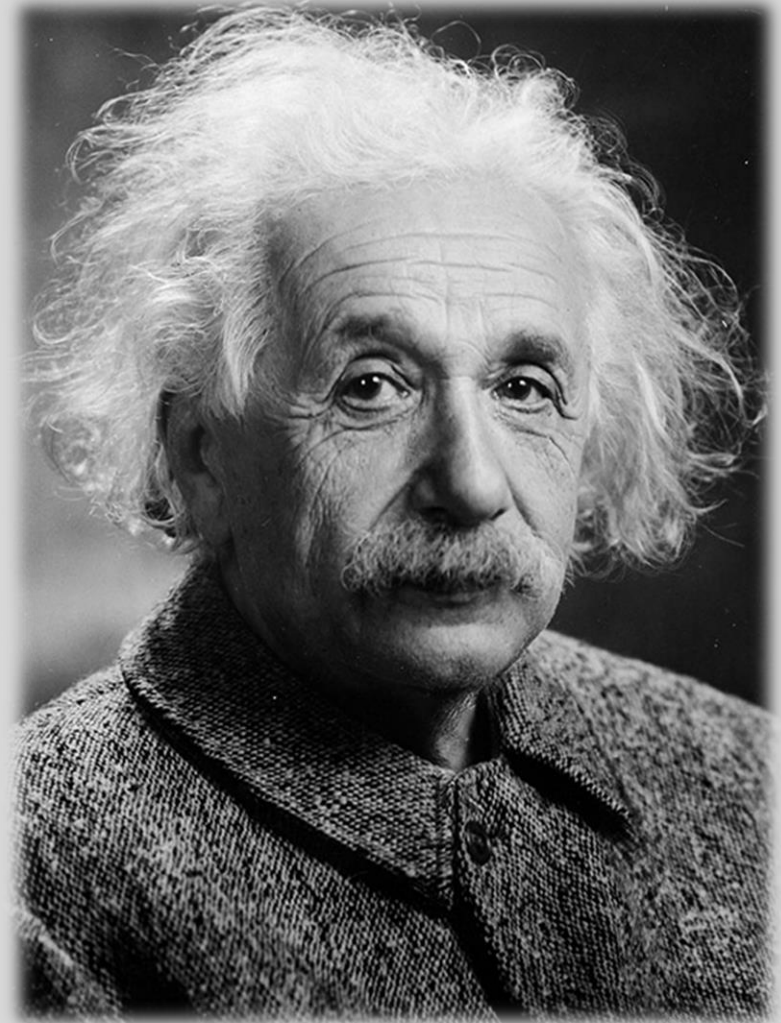
BRAVE CHURCH
TACKLING TOUGH TOPICS
TOGETHER

Engaging in conversations about and
responding to Christian nationalism

Taking a Different Approach(es)

**"We cannot solve our
problems with the
same thinking we used
when we created
them."**

- Albert Einstein



1 Practice Prayer – adapted from Richard Rohr's Daily Meditation for 11/5/2022

Place the palm of one of your hands on your heart. Feel your heart beating, letting its rhythm bring you into the present moment and into the awareness of God's blessing on your life.

Bring to your mind a loved one or anything that fills you with love and joy.

Place that loved one or thing between your palm and your heart space. Relax and feel the warmth and love for that loved one or thing. Smile.

2 Practice Prayer – adapted from Richard Rohr’s Daily Meditation for 11/5/2022

Now imagine the person with whom you disagree about CN. Visualize moving that image between your palm and your heart space.

If you can, visualize the issue that bothers you the most and the reasons why this brings hurt. If you can’t, just hold the image of the person there.

Finally, give the person over to God and ask that your heart’s wisdom and love take over. Rest in the Love of God that loves both you and the other and wants to transform all into its loving image.

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.

How effective is your approach to engaging someone who strongly disagrees with you?

What is working? What doesn't work?

| Working? | Not Working? |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| Meet face-to-face. | Debate over social media. |
| See them as a unique person, child of God. | See them as a caricature of the "other." |
| Listen to understand. Ask questions. | Formulate a response as the other person talks. |
| Acknowledge their perspective, even if you don't agree with everything they say. | Dismiss their perspective. Jump right into a counter. |
| Invest in the long-term. | Expect immediate results. |
| ... | ... |

Engaging a friend or loved one (Stephany Spaulding)

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- Find common ground up front.
- Decide where you are (and are not) willing to go in the conversation.
- Determine whether the person is ready/open to the conversation.
- Assess the level of energy and effort you're willing to put into that conversation.
- Your role is not to persuade or change another's mind (that's an individual's decision) but to open the channel for better understanding.

Discussion

How do you determine whether another person is ready for a meaningful discussion about Christian nationalism? How do you determine if you are ready?

How do you move someone into a more meaningful conversation about what they believe and why they believe it?

If we are not going to change another's way of thinking, what's the purpose of engaging them in conversation?

A more collective approach (Jonathan Wilson-Hartgrove)

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- Instead of trying to change an individual's mind, address CN at the community level.
- Try to “remake the conditions” in which CN thrives.
- So many people hold these beliefs – can't assume they're all crazy in their context.
- This is a culture feeding/reinforcing lies.
- Alternative: Build a better community to invite people into.
- Focus on rural places, places that are “media deserts” controlled by a single source.

Discussion

What does it mean to 'remake the conditions' in which Christian nationalism thrives?

How do we change the underlying culture?

What if Grace sought a partnership with a rural church?

Reclaiming Jesus (Jonathan Wilson- Hartgrove)

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Nationalism Video 17](#)

- The challenge is to get involved!
- Challenge the theology “that Jesus assures you eternal salvation and more or less some peaceful life in this world” but little else.
- Churches, including mainline White congregations, need to “reclaim the Jesus who disturbs the peace” and who embraced/ affirmed “the poor and marginalized.”

Discussion

How can the Christian church “reclaim the Jesus that disturbs the peace”?

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

How could we (Grace) begin to stand against Christian nationalism?

Praying Philippians 2:1-8

If, then, there is any comfort in Christ, any consolation from love, any partnership in the Spirit, any tender affection and sympathy, ² make my joy complete: **be of the same mind, having the same love, being in full accord and of one mind.** ³ Do nothing from selfish ambition or empty conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. ⁴ Let each of you look not to your own interests but to the interests of others. ⁵ **Let the same mind be in you that was in Christ Jesus,**

⁶ who, though he existed in the form of God,
did not regard equality with God as something to be grasped,
⁷ but **emptied himself**, taking the form of a slave, assuming human likeness.
And being found in appearance as a human,
⁸ he **humbled himself** and became obedient to the point of death— even death
on a cross.