

Introduction:

Matthew 7.21-24 The term “Christian Nationalism” is a new one to me. I grew up hearing our “Founding Fathers Believed in God” and this is a “Christian Nation.” Our money has on it “in God we trust.” In the United States Capitol the declaration “In God We Trust” is prominently displayed in both the United States House and Senate Chambers; in the Cox Corridor of the Capitol where the words “America! God shed His grace on thee” are inscribed; at the east Senate entrance with the words “*Annuit Coeptis*” – Latin for “God has favored our undertakings”; In the Washington Monument not only are numerous Bible verses and religious acknowledgements carved on memorial blocks in the walls, including the phrases: “Holiness to the Lord” (**Exodus 28:26, 30:30, Isaiah 23:18, Zechariah 14:20**), “Search the Scriptures” (**John 5:39**), “The memory of the just is blessed” (**Proverbs 10:7**), “May Heaven to this Union continue its beneficence,” and “In God We Trust”, but the Latin inscription *Laus Deo* – “Praise be to God” – is engraved on the monument’s capstone; inside the Jefferson Memorial into which Jefferson’s words have been carved, four are God-centered, including Jefferson’s declaration that “God who gave us life gave us liberty. Can the liberties of a nation be secure when we have removed a conviction that these liberties are the gift of God? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, that His justice cannot sleep forever.” My point is the very mention of Scriptures and God shows our political leaders were not anti-religion although they themselves did not hold to the teaching of the Bible.

Some day are talking about the dangers of religion and government. Especially in what is being called “Christian Nationalism.”

I) Defining and Understanding “Christian Nationalism”

A) Topic in the news.

1. Christian nationalism is a threat, and not just from Capitol attackers invoking Jesus, USA Today January 31, 2021

- a. *Christian nationalists inside our government are working quietly to take America for Jesus. They are the more resilient danger to religious pluralism.*
- b. *"Then Jacob Chansley, sometimes called the "QAnon Shaman," took his bullhorn and announced gratitude to God for being able to "send a message to all the tyrants, the communists, and the globalists that this is our nation, not theirs."*
- c. *Quoting a Senator, "Pastors and Pews" meeting that their charge is to "take the lordship of Christ, that message, into the public realm and to seek the obedience of the nations — of our nation... to influence our society, and even more than that, to transform our society to reflect the gospel truth and lordship of Jesus Christ."*
- d. *In "Taking America Back for God: Christian Nationalism in the United States," define Christian nationalism as "a collection of myths, traditions, symbols, narratives, and value systems — that idealizes and advocates a fusion of Christianity with American civic life.... It includes assumptions of nativism, white supremacy, patriarchy, and heteronormativity, along with divine sanction for authoritarian control and militarism. It is as ethnic and political as it is religious."*

2. "Christian Nationalism Is Worse Than You Think" MORGAN LEE|JANUARY 13, 2021

- a. Christianity is a religion. It's a set of beliefs about

ultimate things: most importantly, about the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It's drawn from the Bible, from the Nicene Creed, and the Apostles' Creed.

- b. Christian nationalism is a political ideology about American identity. It is a set of policy prescriptions for what the nationalists believe the American government should do.

II) **Dangers of Christian Nationalism**

A) Public displays of religious beliefs.

1. Display of religious art and symbolism in the public square.
 - a. The Ten Commandments
 - b. "In God we Trust"
2. Belief the United States is divinely appointed by God.
 - a. Thomas Jefferson called the United States "the world's best hope." Abraham Lincoln said that the unity of the U.S. and its form of government is "the last best hope of earth."
 - b. Woodrow Wilson said that he believed that he would live to see the day in which America would reach all its hopes and would say, "At last, the world knows America as the savior of the world!"
 - c. Phrases such as "a shining city on a hill" to describe the United States.
3. Wanting to have the Bible read in public schools, public prayer.

B) Beliefs and criticism of Christian Nationalism

1. United States built on religious principles.
2. White Supremacy – Proud Boys – self-described as “Western chauvinists”
3. Applying what some believe the Bible teaches in our government.
4. Danger of making moral issues policy – homosexuality, blue laws, and pro-life.
5. Code language used by CN.
 - a. Freedom of religious assembly
 - b. Economic growth
 - c. National security and defense.

III) Christianity Is Not Christian Nationalism

- A) Christ built His church, not His religious party or His church state.

Matthew 16:16 Simon Peter answered and said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God." **17** Jesus answered and said to him, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. **18** "And I also say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.

1. There is a distinction from the church and the state. Both have divine roles but they are different. ***John 19:11*** Jesus answered, You could have no authority against Me unless it were given to you from above. Therefore he who delivered Me to you has the greater sin.
 - a. The state's role stated in ***Romans 13***.

b. **John 18:36** *Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now My kingdom is not from here."*

2. The church is of divine origin and purpose.

1 Corinthians 3:10 *According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. 11 For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*

3. The church is not a white institution or a black one or any other color. Jesus was not a white male from middle America.

4. Christians comes in all nationalities, colors, regions.

Galatians 3:28 *There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.*

B) There has often the temptation to combine the two.

1. Zealots - **Luke 6:15** *Matthew and Thomas; James the son of Alphaeus, and Simon called the Zealot;*

2. Fought against the Roman Empire at Masada.

3. We must always see the distinction between the two.

4. Danger to the church came when it became associated with the government.

C) As A Christian

1. Obligation to obey the laws of the Government but God comes first.

Acts 4:19 *But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to listen to you more than to God, you judge. 20 "For we cannot but speak the things which we have seen and heard."*

2. To pray for our leaders. **1 Timothy 2.1ff.**
3. To be the salt and light of the world.

1 Peter 4:4 *In regard to these, they think it strange that you do not run with them in the same flood of dissipation, speaking evil of you.*

4. To not go along with sin.

Ephesians 5:11 *And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. 12 For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.*

5. Christianity works on the inside outward.

Matthew 23:26 *"Blind Pharisee, first cleanse the inside of the cup and dish, that the outside of them may be clean also.*

6. Goes from the individual to those around us.

1 Thessalonians 1:6 *And you became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Spirit, 7 so that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe. 8 For from you the word of the Lord has sounded forth, not only in Macedonia and Achaia, but*

also in every place. Your faith toward God has gone out, so that we do not need to say anything.

7. Then to the rest of the world. ***Colossians 1:23 if indeed you continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard, which was preached to every creature under heaven, of which I, Paul, became a minister.***

Conclusion:

Story of a young man who wanted to preach the Gospel to the whole world. He went to a foreign county and tried for years with little success. Giving up he came back home. Got married and taught his children, then taught his neighbor, then a family member, a co-worker, and so on. That is the way Christianity grows.