



A public education and mobilization campaign

MARCH 2024

CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM 101

A Basic Overview of Key Concepts

Author: Faithful America.

© Faithful America

"White Christian Nationalism is the most urgent threat to democracy and the witness of the Church in the United States today."

- Dr. Jemar Tisby, public historian, author, cofounder of The Witness: A Black Christian Collective

STC 2025 Note: This document is excerpted from "A Preacher's Toolkit for Confronting Christian Nationalism" by Faithful America, a progressive Christian community 'putting faith into action for love and social justice.' It was developed as a guidance document for Christians to discuss Christian nationalism.

Christian nationalism 101: The basics

- Christian nationalism is a political ideology that claims America was founded to be – and should remain – a so-called "Christian nation," despite the clear intent of the Constitution to separate church and state and to honor religious liberty for all.
- Christian nationalism merges our religious and civic identities, proclaiming that only conservative Christians are true Americans. According to a recent Brookings/PRRI [survey](#), 27% of Americans say they "would prefer the U.S. to be a nation primarily made up of people who follow the Christian faith.
- A major goal of Christian nationalism in the U.S. is for conservative Christians to seize complete power by any means necessary, no matter who gets hurt or how many elections have to be overturned -- even though Jesus refused political authority when tempted by Satan in the wilderness.
- Christian nationalism can be identified not just by its rhetoric, but also by its **theocratic policy agenda**. Despite Christ's commandments to love, adherents advocate for oppressive legislation -- rooted in far-right religious beliefs -- that strips away equal rights the LGBTQ community, non-Christians, women, people of color, and immigrants, among others. [According to the Human Rights Campaign](#), more than 540 anti-LGBTQ bills have been introduced in state legislatures this year (a record) and at least 45 of them have already passed.
- Christian-nationalist leaders like [David Barton](#) and [Lauren Boebert](#) claim that the Constitution does not include a separation of church and state, downplaying correspondence by Thomas Jefferson and selectively editing letters by John Adams to give a false view of history and the



A public education and mobilization campaign

Constitution. Speaking in 2021 at a ReAwaken America rally in a megachurch known for its antisemitic founding pastor, Michael Flynn declared that America should have only ["one religion."](#)

- This means that Christian nationalism is antisemitic and Islamophobic, and that it poses a threat to democracy and to the religious freedom of America's non-Christians – including Jews, Muslims, Indigenous peoples, atheists and agnostics, and more.
- Christian-nationalist leaders speak as if their conservative brand is the only authentic form of Christianity – thus erasing not just non-Christians but also mainline Protestant Christians, progressive Catholics, the Black church tradition, and more.
- Christian nationalism encourages political violence
 - 40% of its adherents say that "American patriots may have to resort to violence in order to save our country"
 - The ideology helped fuel the January 6th insurrection
 - The Anti-Defamation League has found that [antisemitic incidents](#) in the U.S. are at an all-time high after rising 36% last year.
- As the [Christians Against Christian Nationalism](#) campaign notes, "[Christian nationalism] often overlaps with and provides cover for white supremacy and racial subjugation." This is why you will also often hear the related and important term "white Christian nationalism."
- Just as Christian nationalism distorts the Bible, it also distorts the Constitution, using selective editing and mental gymnastics to claim these documents say things they don't say. Sometimes Christian-nationalist leaders insist on a literal reading of Scripture and an originalist interpretation of the Constitution; other times they claim the Bible doesn't mean what it says or they ignore the explanations given by the Constitutional framers. This is hypocrisy, something Jesus repeatedly condemns.
- **Unholy, anti-democracy Christian nationalism is not Christian, and every church should reject it as heresy and sin.** This is a political ideology, not a religion, that hijacks our faith by distorting and abusing religious imagery to seize power.

To access the full Toolkit, go to: [A Preacher's Toolkit for Confronting Christian Nationalism | Faithful America](#)

Faithful America is a progressive Christian organization that is not affiliated with any institutional church, denomination, or other parent entity. It was founded as a project of the National Council of Churches in 2004 and is now a separate grassroots 501(c)4 nonprofit organization. Faithful America supports "social, economic, and racial justice, standing with the Black Lives Matter movement and upholding the Gospel's values of love, equality, and dignity. Together, we're helping make a difference for immigrants, refugees, the climate, the LGBTQ community, and more."

##