

contentious ISSUES

A Biblical Perspective on Tough Topics

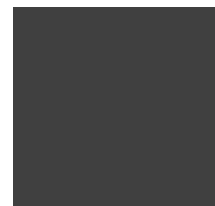
SERMON NOTES

Week 4 January 26, 2025

“Christian Nationalism”

Matthew 4:8-9, 20:25-28;

Ephesians 4:25-27, 29-32



I. Nationalism

- A. Nationalism doesn't define a nation by geography or all the people living in a country, but by people of a certain _____ in a country.
- B. In nationalism, regardless of what your faith is, the nation ultimately becomes your _____.
- C. Christian Nationalism is an _____ that unites a certain expression of Christianity with nationalism.

II. Defining Christian Nationalism

- A. Some have suggested four ideas as to what a _____ Nationalist is:
 - 1. America was founded as Christian nation and should remain so.
 - 2. America's identity, values and U.S. laws should be shaped by Christian values.
 - 3. Christians should retain a privileged place in American life and culture.
 - 4. Christians should exercise greater dominion, authority and leadership in America.
- B. The spirit of Christian Nationalism is forcing a particular _____ of Christianity upon our nation.
- C. We need to be careful that our own bias and fears don't lead us down a path of non-Christian _____.

III. Was America Founded as a Christian Nation?

- A. People came to America looking for religious _____. They were not looking for a new country with an official state church or even an official state religion.
- B. When you look at the _____ it doesn't show evidence that the idea of the Founding Fathers was to create a Christian Nation.
- C. What Jefferson meant by the separation of church and state was that the government could not establish a _____ church, nor could it prohibit the free exercise of religion.
- D. Christians have had a very _____ impact on our nation and that should continue.

IV. Making a Positive Difference

- A. Christian Nationalism doesn't seem focused on fostering generosity, compassion, and kindness, but on gaining _____ and control.
- B. Jesus calls us to be salt and light and demonstrate compassion and concern for the least of these; and to be _____.
- C. The Apostle _____ tells us to get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, and slander, along with every form of malice; and to be kind, compassionate and forgiving.

ASBURY DAILY STUDY GUIDE *Jan. 27 - Feb 1, 2025*

INTRODUCTION

Christian Nationalism is an ideology that unites a certain expression of Christianity with nationalism. The Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) did a poll on this topic and found that 10% of Americans were Christian Nationalist as it is defined and 20% found themselves sympathetic toward the movement. So how should we as Christians view this movement?

Monday: Genesis 12:1-3, Jeremiah 29:1-7

God called Abram to leave his homeland and become a blessing to all peoples. This radical command disrupted Abram's comfortable life for a greater purpose. In our interconnected world, God calls us too to think beyond our immediate circles. How might God be calling you to step out of your comfort zone to bless others? What fears or hesitations do you have about reaching out to people different from you? How can Jesus' Golden Rule guide you in this?

Tuesday: Jonah 4:1-11

Jonah was angry that God showed mercy to the Ninevites, Israel's enemies. His reaction showed his belief that God should limit divine love to Jonah's nation. Today we often encounter people with different beliefs or backgrounds. Is there any person or group of people you'd rather see God "zap" than to see them repent? How can embracing God's inclusive love help you better live out Jesus' Golden Rule in your daily interactions?

Wednesday: Matthew 5:38-42, John 13:12-15

Jesus set aside the Biblical law of proportional revenge, saying "turn the other cheek." This wasn't about weakness, but about meeting hostility in a way that upheld human dignity without escalating violence. Jesus knew that hatred or revenge just create more of the same. How might applying Jesus' teaching change your response when wronged or insulted? How could unexpected kindness lead to better outcomes?

Thursday: Romans 13:8-10

Paul said love fulfills the entire law. This simplified the complex religious rules he had learned in his youth into one guiding principle. You may often face situations where multiple ethical principles seem to conflict. How might focusing on love as the ultimate standard change your approach to difficult decisions? Can you think of a recent situation where prioritizing love would have led you to act differently? How would this align you with Jesus' Golden Rule?

Friday: Ephesians 4:29-5:2

Treating one another in un-Christian ways ("bitterness, losing your temper, anger, shouting, and slander, along with every other evil") damages and often destroys relationships. But qualities like compassion, kindness, and a forgiving heart strengthen our relationships. What stands out to you about this passage?

MOVING FORWARD

Many people may support some of the ideas of Christian Nationalism in section IIA on page 1. But unfortunately, the spirit of Christian Nationalism is forcing a particular interpretation of Christianity upon our nation. And it demonizes people who don't align with this ideology. By contrast, Jesus calls us to be salt and light and demonstrate compassion and concern for the least of these. The concern with Christian Nationalism is that it may play to our bias and fears and lead us down a path of non-Christian behavior.

Answers to the sermon notes: IA) identity, B) god, C) ideology.

IIA) Christian, IIB) interpretation, C) behavior. IIIA) freedom, B) constitution, C) state, D) positive.

IVA) power, B) servants, C) Paul.