

Christian Nationalism

Text: Mat 5.13-16 City on a Hill

Passage used by both sides of the issue, is America the City God is building? Or a shining example?
Or is the church the example, and America irrelevant?

1 Cor 1.26-29 For ye see your calling, brethren...not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, noble...

Heb 1.13 ...confessed were strangers and pilgrims on the earth

1 Pe2.11 ...as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts

Does this mean Christians are never to lead, never to form political parties, form governments, rule over others?
I don't think so.

1. God set up the Israelite Government, judges, then kings
2. It appears to me God providentially set up many unequivocal Christian governments: Constantine (?), Byzantium, Ireland, Germany, Holland, Scotland, England (Cromwell), many European cities such as Milan and Geneva, and America?
3. Many excesses and inappropriate decisions were made using the power of government coercion.
Forced conversions, execution of heretics, taxing for the state church, wars between sectarian states
4. Church leaders are not called to exercise power, but lead by example (though many Christians serve in political roles)
2 Cor 1.24 Not that we have dominion over your faith, but helpers of your joy
1 Pet 5.1-3 ... neither as being lords over God's heritage, but ensamples

Charlie Kirk is considered a mainstream Christian Nationalist. He was not really a radical about it but hated for it.

He wanted a Christian Moral framework (family, sexuality, value of life)

Rejected strict secularism, that religion must be excluded from politics or public institutions

Wanted America to acknowledge Christian roots, and that Christian ideals should shape policy.

There are many problems with this objective, and other Christian Nationalists are even more radical.

Text: John 18.36 but now is my kingdom not from hence...

1. Outline the current debate/problem

A. Is America a Christian Nation? Was America founded as a Christian nation?

Majority Christian? Yes

Culturally Christian? Yes

Foundationally Christian? Yes?

Government structured as a Christian Society? No

Structured to favor Christian Ideals? No

Structured theocratically? No

B. Claims by Christian nationalists (many types, different ideals,)

1. Pilgrims established theocratic governments and societies

(but these were tyrannical, consider Roger Williams)

2. The great awakening caused the revolution (movie Awaken)

Far from proven, and even if some truth, extreme oversimplification

3. The population was nearly entirely Christian

4. The founders were Christians.

Benjamin Rush, Patrick Henry, Samuel Adams, John Jay, Roger Sherman, John Witherspoon,

William Williams, John Hart, all confessional Christians

Charles Carroll was Catholic, from Maryland

John Adams: We have no gov't armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality, and religion. Avarice, ambition, revenge or gallantry, would break the strongest cords of our constitution as a whale goes through a net. Our constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.

5. Most left Christian wills (however, wills were a formal legality, not an expression of faith)

6. All invoked God (true, but using Deistic language, "providence, heaven, divine, etc.")

7. Many were pew-paying Anglicans, Presbyterians, Congregationalists

8. George Washington wrote a poem when he was 17 years old extolling the redemption of Christ

9. George Washington called himself on several occasions a "churchman".

10. State constitutions established religious tests, and used explicit Christian language

(true, but the Federal government explicitly rejected such tests)

11. Congressional meetings began with prayer

12. Scripture quotations on walls (ten commandments, Isaiah 2.4 swords into plowshares, etc.)

13. Oaths on Bibles

14. Christian Holidays embedded into civic life

C. Claims by secularists (and atheists)

1. The constitution never mentions Christianity or the Bible.

2. The constitution expressly forbids establishment of religion.

3. The constitution specifically forbids religious tests (Article IV)

4. Jefferson mentioned in a letter that they had intended a "wall of separation between church and state."

5. The treaty of Tripoli (unanimously approved by Senate and signed by President John Adams) states:

"The government of the United States of America is not, in any sense, founded on the Christian religion."

6. Many founders were unbelievers, Deists, Unitarian.

None were atheistic, secularistic, nor anti-religion, and their “unbelief” was specific. In fact, only Thomas Paine, Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin and Ethan Allen were publicly non-Christian (Deistic/unitarian). George Washington, Madison, Hamilton, John Adams participated in public Christianity. However they were never explicit in their confessions, and public statements were strictly non-confessional. All the rest were silent / non-confessional. No evidence of their personal beliefs (other than Christian wills, including Gouverneur Morris, Aaron Burr, Robert Morris, John Hancock, etc.).

7. All founders used Deistic terms (providence, the Supreme Being, nature’s God, divine favor, Heaven...)
Likely for ecumenical, non-sectarian reasons, to keep peace. In public they nearly all practiced theological minimalism appeal to shared moral order. This doesn’t indicate faith or unbelief
8. American Deists were not like European Deists – Spinoza, Voltaire, Rousseau, Hume, Hobbs, Paine, Diderot
Protestant/Catholic
Religion friendly/Anti-clerical
Providence and Virtue/Rational Criticism
Feared moral decay/Hated Clergy’s power
Believed in human depravity/believed in human supremacy

D. Relevant points:

1. **Founders were a mixture of Christians and enlightenment rationalists**, with most non-confessional
Even their rationalism had Biblical roots, rejection of dogma, emphasis on reason
The Bible emphasizes reason, John 1.1 Logos (the Word)
Gen 1.3 let there be...that nature is a product of instructions, laws, words
Heb 11.3 the worlds were framed by the word of God
2. America, like all European Christian states **had Biblical foundations for much of their civic institutions**,
 - a. Monarchs **under God** (not divinities, governed by laws themselves)
2 Sam 23.3 He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God
Eccl 5.8 perverting of justice? Marvel noth... higher than the highest regardeth...
 - b. Public service of leaders (called ministers – Rom 13)
 - c. Marriage
 - d. Dignity of individuals
 - e. Equality under law (even though society still divided by class structures)
 - f. Rights sourced from the Biblical creation
 - g. Jurisprudence and punishment (adding the concept of redemption)
Deterrence, Retribution (to undermine vigilantism), Restitution, **Rehabilitation**,
 - h. Jurisdiction (Caesar and God), leading to federalism?
3. The **concept of no federal religion was new!** All European states had state religions. As colonies they had state religions.
They intentionally crafted something different.
4. The **founders created a federal system that eliminated all confessional language**, prohibited religious tests, and specifically prohibited a federal religion.
5. Individual states maintained religious tests and confessional language for a generation, but all states eliminated state religions by 1833 (Massachusetts was last). The **consensus of American politicians and statesmen** was that the state governments should also not be religious.
6. After the Civil War and the 14th amendment the Supreme Court began applying the **federal bill of rights to controversies in the states**.
7. So under that **established precedent** states cannot establish an official church, prefer one religion over another, or coerce religious participation.
8. Nevertheless, all founders believed in **providence!** That America was special, intended by God for a light to the world.
An opportunity to do government right.
1630 John Winthrop we shall be as a city upon a hill
1765 John Adams I always consider the settlement of America as the opening of a grand scene and design in providence.
1775 Samuel Langdon (sermon) The Israelites...were delivered from Egyptian slavery...and formed into a free state...if we follow their example...God will deliver us
1777 Continental Congress It is therefore recommended...to confess and deplore our many sins...and...through the merits and mediation of Jesus Christ, obtain his pardon...
1781 Moses Mather (sermon) God brought our fathers into this land...as he did Israel of old...and planted them here...
1783 Ezra Stiles (election sermon) It is certain that the American states...have been raised up by God...and if we trust in him...he will carry us through all difficulties...as he did ancient Israel

Text: Acts 17.24-28 hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation...

All nations are in some sense providential

Notice

2. The providential nature of America itself

Revelation 3.14-22 Laodicean church (people verdict/judgment /focus/standard)

Proud (self-absorbed), rich, materialistic, independent, and yet spiritually complaining, poor, blind, naked

European Roman/Christian mixture

Islamic Stalemate till fall of Constantinople (1453)

The reconquest of Iberian peninsula

Invention of printing press

Discovery of new world

English 3-way Reformation

Millenarian imaginations

Persecution mentality

Refugee colonies, starting fresh, much human liberty, and millennial fantasies

Great Awakening

Primed for last days superpower status

Geography, natural harbors, navigable rivers, great lakes, forests, plains, coal, petroleum, gulf stream

Unlimited expansion, resources, population growth, progress mentality (new standards, decimal currency, etc.)

3. The intended role of the Church

God's outline of Imperial progression (Dan 2, 7, 9, etc.)

Kingdom parables, Tares and Mustard Tree

Jurisdiction

Mat 22:20, Luke 20.24 Caesar and God

Acts 5.29 we ought to obey God rather than men

Acts 4.19 right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God...

Christian precedence:

Noah Gen 9.1

Jesus (jurisdiction)

Apostles

Edict of Milan

Augustine's two cities

Medieval separation, holy office didn't execute

Reformation's limited magistrate

Protestant Salt and Light theory?

God's intent for the church was not political dominion, although believers have often found themselves in the majority, and achieved political power. But God expects us to be wary of political power, because:

a. Constraint – political power is weak compared to our spiritual power

b. Confusion – with political power the objectives of the gospel become secondary

c. Corruption – power corrupts, absolute power corrupts absolutely, even Christians in power become corrupted

d. Compromise – to maintain political power one must compromise, unequal yokes, joining hands with the wicked

e. Coercion – political power is coercion, using government to impose our will, yet coercion is the opposite of faith

4. **The plausible objective of the Church**, (in America, in the world, in the last days.)

Is democracy a Christian concept? (Acts 14.23 Congregationalists, democracy)

What is the appeal of Christian Nationalism? What do they want? (some have maybe not thought it all the way through)

A. **Christian theocracy does not work**. Been tried, many times, disaster

Rome, Constantinople, Milan, Spain, Geneva (Calvin), Scotland, England (Cromwell), most American colonies

Use coercion to collect taxes to fund specific church organizations, burns heretics or witches,

Every sectarian group oppresses all others, Roman, Anglican, Reformed, Calvinist, Puritan, even Quaker

The founders unanimously rejected it and expressly forbid it

B. But (they do have a point) when Christianity is rejected as a founding principle, **society is undermined**

1. By **secularists**, pushing agnostic humanism, creates an immoral society (without a grounding in morality beyond self)

2. By **socialists**, justifying government theft of property because of inevitable inequalities

3. By **anarchists**, hedonists, who want no limits imposed by society, no punishment, no bail, no jail, no police, no border

4. By **Islamists**, who take advantage of our free society to create an incompatible subgroup intended to dominate by force

C. Christians are correct to insist on a government based on universal morality (Christian morality is far ahead of all others)

2 Sam 23.3 He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God

Psalm 82.3 Defend the poor and fatherless, do justice to the afflicted

Prov 31.9 Open thy mouth, judge righteously, plead the cause

Isa 11.4 with righteousness shall he judge the poor

Isa 32.1 Behold, a king shall reign in righteousness

2 Chr 19.7 let the fear of the Lord be upon you, no iniquity with the Lord,

Ecc 5.8 he that is higher than the highest regardeth

Rom 13.4 he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil

D. Christian principles of government include:

- a. **Value of individuals**, priority over collective
personal dignity of every person, (image of God), rights sourced from biblical creation account
- b. **Value of life**. Life is a gift of God,
abortion on demand and unrestricted euthanasia undermine society
- c. **Priority of marriage**, biblical definition of marriage (Christ's specific equalization of wife)
- d. **Private property**, both rich and poor have rights (Exodus 23.3,6)
- e. **Jurisprudence** (Deterrence, Retribution (to undermine vigilantism), Restitution, **Rehabilitation** (redemption))
- f. **Jurisdiction** (This is the defining principle)

Historical precedence:

Jesus (Mat 22.20, Luke 20.24 Render to Caesar and to God)

Edict of Milan

Augustine's two cities

Medieval separation of powers, even the holy office did not execute

Reformers' limited Magistrate doctrine

E. God has supplied governments throughout the world and throughout history with Bible believing advisers, Jews and Christians. All improvements in government have come by following the Bible's advice. We should strive to teach these principles to rulers and politicians, even unbelievers. And when we have political power, we should govern appropriately, according to the principle of jurisdiction. We should not use (or even aspire) political power to impose Christian doctrine beyond basic universal morality (informed by Christian doctrine).

F. Israel was God's founded government, elders, judges, prophets, kings, etc. but when they rejected him, they were destroyed

Mat. 12.43 last state is worse than the first

Luke 11.24

Text: Mat 25.3 inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world

F. The **purpose of God in the world**, at least since the fall, is laid out in the Bible

Daniel 7.9-14, 17-18, 22, 27 kingdom given unto the saints

Matthew 25.34 come blessed, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world

(Mat 21.38 let us seize the inheritance)

Luke 4.5-8 all the kingdoms of the world, that is delivered unto me

John 12.31 now is the judgment of this world, ... the prince of this world be cast out

(John 14.30, 16.11)

2 Cor 4.4 the god of this world hath blinded the minds

Eph 2.2 the course of this world, the prince of the power of the air

Eph 6.12 against the rulers of the darkness of this world, spiritual wickedness in high places

Rev 13.7 given to him to make war with the saints, to overcome them, power over all nations

15-18 no man buy nor sell save he that had the mark (666)

2 Thes 2.6 what withholdeth that he might be revealed in his time (holding him back till a certain time)

7 mystery of iniquity(!) he who now letteth (hinders) till he be taken out of the way