



Written by [Luis Miguel](#) on July 23, 2022

Why is the Left So Afraid of Christian Nationalism?

The Left loves accusing conservatives of zealously obsessing over baseless conspiracy theories. But in modern America, it's leftists who now fearfully see a "radicalized right-winger" under every rock.

This is highlighted by the media and academic left's growing obsession with what they term "Christian nationalism" or "white Christian nationalism," on the Right. Granted, there's nothing wrong with Christian nationalism when "nationalism" refers to the desire to preserve the sovereignty and culture of one's nation — the opposite of the globalism the modern Left has adopted as a key doctrinal tenet.



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But as the Left is not only globalist, but secular and anti-Christian, the merging of the two into Christian nationalism constitutes the ultimate boogeyman for today's liberals.

This can be seen in a [recent op-ed](#) at NBC News titled "January 6, Trump and the rise of America's dangerous 'shadow gospel.'"

According to the byline, the piece has three authors: "Whitney Phillips, an incoming assistant professor in the University of Oregon's School of Journalism and Communication, Mark Brockway, faculty fellow in religion and political science at Syracuse University and Abby Ohlheiser, senior editor at MIT Technology Review."

In their piece, the authors give an in-depth analysis of what they consider to be the "the election-denying, culture-warring, satanic-conspiracy-theorizing" threat Christian nationalists pose to the country.

"The danger doesn't just lie with what proponents of a stolen election — including Republican politicians — did in the lead-up to the insurrection; it's what they are doing now to undermine future elections and reframe election challenges as a 'crusade,'" they write.

As with everything else the Left doesn't like, the op-ed describes Christian nationalism as a threat to "democracy" (which should actually be taken as a good thing, since America's founders, knowing the failings of democracy throughout history, did not create a democracy, but a republic).

The authors make sure to make Christian nationalism sound frightening enough to readers, but what exactly is it? How do you recognize it when you see it?

Basically, Christian nationalism is the modern conservative movement. It's Tea Partiers, medical freedom fighters, parental rights advocates, Trump supporters, anti-human trafficking activists, non-interventionists, abortion critics, election integrity proponents.

The op-ed acknowledges that, despite the term "Christian nationalism," there are many secular aspects to the ideology. But they argue that Christian, specifically evangelical, theology underlies even the



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secular political philosophies in this modern strain of conservatism.

The authors write:

As they have for decades, these fights center on liberalism and its perceived threat to “real” America. Echoing the Satanic Panics of the 1980s and ’90s, those on the extreme edges of the shadow gospel openly claim that liberals are in league with the literal figure of Satan, or are Satan worshipers (an accusation sometimes also leveled at conservative people and organizations deemed inadequately right wing). At the very least, liberals are described as morally evil.

But the shadow gospel can also be more subtle and much more secular, focusing instead on “liberal indoctrination” and “parents rights.” The explicitly religious messaging — not to mention the fire and brimstone — might be tamped down, but the same conspiratorial argument and apoplectic call to action remains: They are trying to take America away from us, with the stakes no less than the end of our world as we know it.

The NBC piece points to Cold War-era anti-communism as one of the sources of modern-day Christian nationalism. “Joel Kovel chronicled how anti-communist ideology defined what counted as ‘real’ Americanism, in the process helping cleave the world into two distinct moral universes,” it contends.

In the view of the three writers, there is a “shadow gospel” of forces and financial interests that are not official churches, but rather online ministers and other unofficial influencers, who are radicalizing conservatives into Christian nationalists.

These three are far from alone in their fears. As *The New American* previously [covered](#), Robert Jones, CEO of the Public Religion Research Institute, attributed what he considers violence on January 6 to Christian nationalism. Jones said those who backed the idea that America is a “promised land” “were far more likely to agree that ‘true American patriots may have to resort to violence ... to save our country.’ To my mind, white Christian nationalism is really the threat.”

So why is the left really so afraid of Christian nationalism? Again, for one, it merges the faith (Christianity) and the political system (nationalism) that are most opposed to their worldview.

In addition, Christian nationalism, unlike neocon, corporate movement conservatism, has the popular appeal and intellectual integrity to actually lead to political victory — in contrast to the Old School conservatives like Paul Ryan and John Boehner who were content with endlessly losing to the Left.

Finally, leftists see that Christian nationalism, by whatever name you want to call it (America First, Trumpism, etc.), is rapidly becoming the dominant ideology of the Republican Party and thus has a platform to become a political reality — and thereby bring an end to the neo-Liberal World Order.



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