



Christian Nationalism and the Rewriting of American Culture

In recent years, Christian nationalism has emerged as a potent political and cultural force in the United States, blending religious identity with national identity in a way that seeks to redefine the nation's values and direction. This movement, rooted in the belief that America was founded as a Christian nation, has grown increasingly vocal in its demands for laws and policies that reflect conservative Christian values. More than a mere religious movement, Christian nationalism represents a political and cultural project—one aimed at reclaiming what adherents view as a lost national identity and erasing the progressive gains of recent decades.

Historically, the United States has upheld a constitutional separation between church and state, though religious influence has never been far from politics. However, the current wave of Christian nationalism goes beyond participation in public life. It pushes for an overhaul of foundational principles, seeking to align American laws and institutions more explicitly with Christian doctrine. This includes calls to impose Christian teachings on education, reproductive rights, LGBTQ+ issues, and even immigration policy. What distinguishes the movement today is its unapologetic stance that America's cultural and legal norms should reflect a singular religious worldview—one they believe has been eroded by secularism and multiculturalism.

Christian nationalism is not just reactive; it is revisionist. It often attempts to rewrite history to fit its narrative, claiming that the Founding Fathers intended the U.S. to be a Christian nation, despite ample historical evidence of their commitment to religious liberty and pluralism. By promoting this version of history, the movement attempts to legitimize policies that would otherwise be seen as exclusionary or unconstitutional. For example, efforts to ban books that explore queer identities, restrict discussions of race and systemic injustice in schools, or dismantle protections for trans individuals are framed not as acts of censorship or discrimination, but as necessary corrections to what they see as a culture gone astray.

One of the most striking recent developments underscoring the growing influence of Christian nationalism in American governance is the appointment of the current Trump administration's Chief of Staff and her mother to the Kennedy Center Board of Trustees—a move that, on the surface, may appear ceremonial but carries deeper implications. Behind the scenes, the Chief of Staff is increasingly viewed by insiders as the true power broker of the White House, quietly steering national policy and messaging in alignment with Christian nationalist ideals. Her strategic positioning—coupled with her family's elevation to cultural institutions—signals a deliberate effort to entrench these values not only in government but in the arts and broader cultural heritage. This quiet consolidation of influence reveals how Christian nationalism operates not just through loud public rhetoric, but also through methodical placements of ideological allies in key roles across the federal and cultural landscape.

In doing so, Christian nationalism has found fertile ground in a broader cultural backlash against diversity and inclusion. Many of its adherents view recent social progress—notably in areas like same-sex marriage, gender identity, racial justice, and reproductive rights—as a threat to the “traditional” American way of life. For them, the gains made by historically marginalized groups represent not progress, but a loss of moral and cultural order. As such, Christian nationalism's agenda is not merely about religious freedom or values—it is about power: the power to define who belongs in America and what kind of future is acceptable.

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this movement also draws strength from a growing populist sentiment that distrusts institutions, intellectualism, and pluralism. By framing themselves as under siege by liberal elites, Christian nationalists tap into feelings of

alienation and economic insecurity, offering a narrative that explains national decline as a result of cultural decay. Their solution, then, is cultural reclamation—a political theology that centers Christianity not just in personal belief but in governance, law, and national identity.

In essence, the recent surge in Christian nationalism represents an attempt to reclaim the cultural narrative of the United States, often by challenging and aiming to erase the progressive strides of the past two decades. By promoting traditional values and policies, this movement seeks to create a new cultural landscape aligned with its vision for America's future—one that is more exclusive, more religiously defined, and less tolerant of difference. As this ideology gains ground in politics and public discourse, it raises pressing questions about the direction of American democracy and the continued viability of a pluralistic society.

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Citations:

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