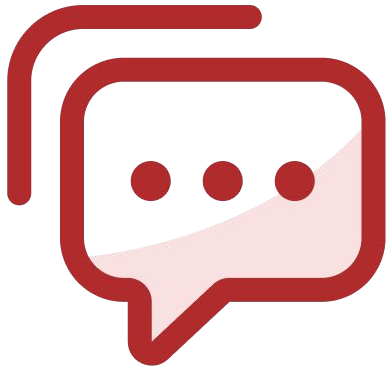


CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM (UN)DEFINED

How white is “white Christian nationalism,”
and does it matter what we call it?

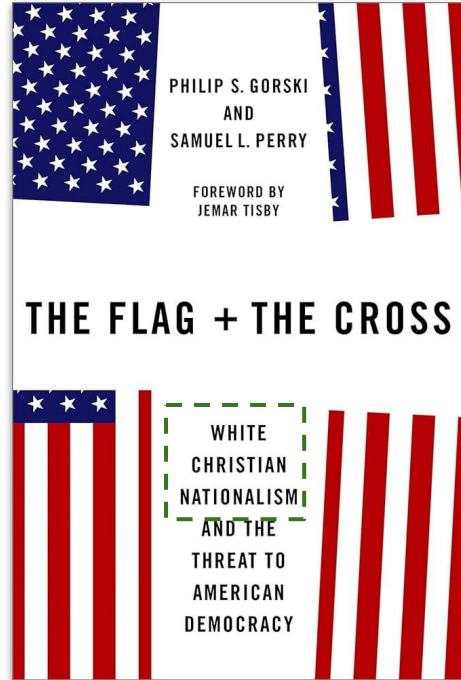
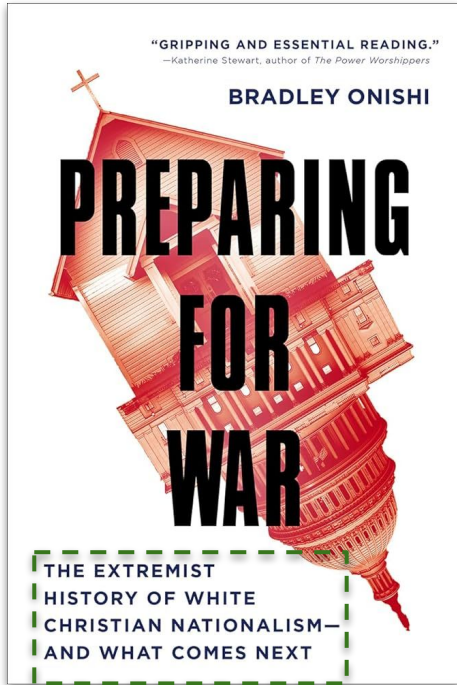
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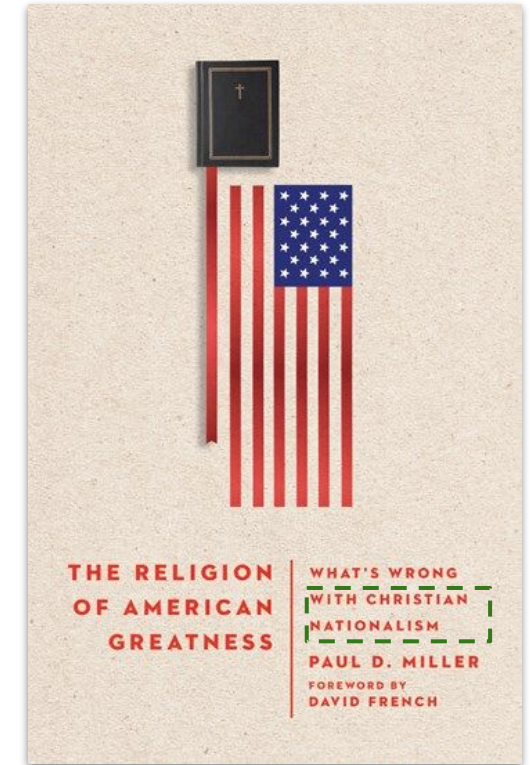
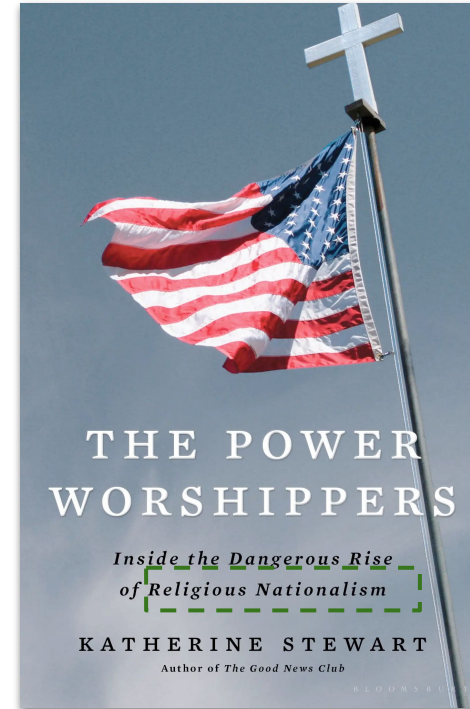
Audience Q&A Session

① Click **Present with Slido** or install our [Chrome extension](#) to show live Q&A while presenting.

An Important Terminological Debate



VS.



The 'White' in White Christian Nationalism

Remember to "say the white part out loud!"

JEMAR TISBY, PHD
FEB 22



What is at stake if we choose one phrase over the other?

Our Plan for Today

- 1) What is the history of interlinking whiteness and Christianity in the United States?
- 2) How do the sides in this debate frame their positions?
- 3) Does this debate even matter? (*HINT: Yes! In fact, from a certain angle, the 2024 election could hinge on it.*)
- 4) What are the actual racial/ethnic demographics of Christian nationalism in the U.S.? (*and taking a Christian nationalism self-diagnostic*)
- 5) Is there a better way forward in this debate?

slido



What is the difference between saying "Christian nationalism" (CN) and saying "white Christian nationalism" (WCN)?

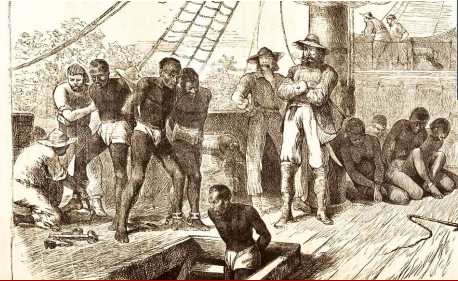
① Click **Present with Slido** or install our [Chrome extension](#) to activate this poll while presenting.

History of Whiteness & Christianity in the U.S.

(This could easily be a 3-week course unto itself.)

3rd KKK

1607 - Jamestown colony founded



1619 - first enslaved persons brought to North America

1776 - "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights"

1st KKK

2nd KKK

1787 - Three-Fifths Compromise

most Protestant denominations fracture over slave-holding



Black Protestants forced to start their own churches & denominations

Civil Rights Movement

Doctrine of Discovery justifies (Catholic) colonialism & American anti-indigenous abuse

American Slavery theologically justified

Jim Crow theologically justified

1600 1700 1800 1900 2000

Revolutionary War

Civil War

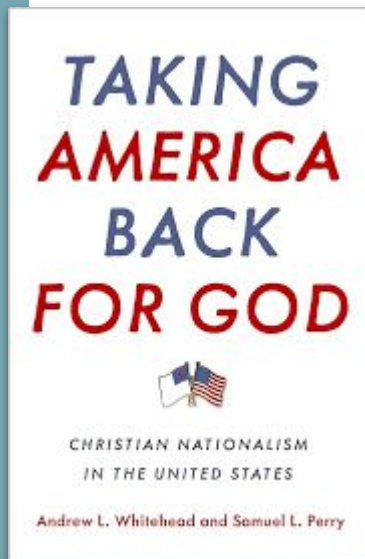
WWI
WWII



Arguments for “white Christian nationalism” terminology

“Christian nationalism is fundamentally about *preserving or returning to* a mythic society in which traditional hierarchical relationships (e.g., between men and women, whites and blacks) are upheld, and authority structures are biblical and just.”

-Whitehead & Perry



- Look at this history! White American Christianity built the structures and scaffolding of Christian nationalism.
- While not all of the Americans who participate in Christian nationalism today are white, white Christian dominance is the “deep story” (Gorski and Perry) of American Christian nationalism.
- Surveys show that there’s a strong correlation between views upholding whiteness and Christian nationalism



Race is a central element in white Christian nationalism, and it speaks to the kind of social structure they want to create—namely one with white, monied men at the top and all others in degrees of subordinate roles.

-Jemar Tisby

Arguments for just “Christian nationalism” terminology

- Christian nationalism is a global phenomenon. Labeling it “white Christian nationalism” imposes a very American lens on the broader movement or tendency.
- Yes, American Christian nationalism is deeply bound up with race, but what about all of the non-white people who also participate in Christian nationalism? Are they inherently racist or bought into white supremacy?
- While the majority of Christian nationalists (like the majority of all Americans) are white, their language and rhetoric is rarely overtly racist and often intentionally ethnically inclusive.



... when I told friends I was attended services at charismatic and fundamentalist churches, the reaction was often 'They're all a bunch of racists.' I found that some of the most racially integrated spaces I've experienced have been in nondenominational megachurches, whether in Oklahoma or Times Square.

- Anne Nelson

☰ 🔍 TNR LATEST / BREAKING NEWS / POLITICS / CLIMATE / CULTURE / MAGAZINE / NEWSLETTERS

Politics

Katherine Stewart / May 11, 2022

LOSING GROUND

The Democratic Party Is Shedding Latino Voters. Here's Why.

Republicans have deftly targeted this election-swinging voter demographic with a massive investment in media and messaging.

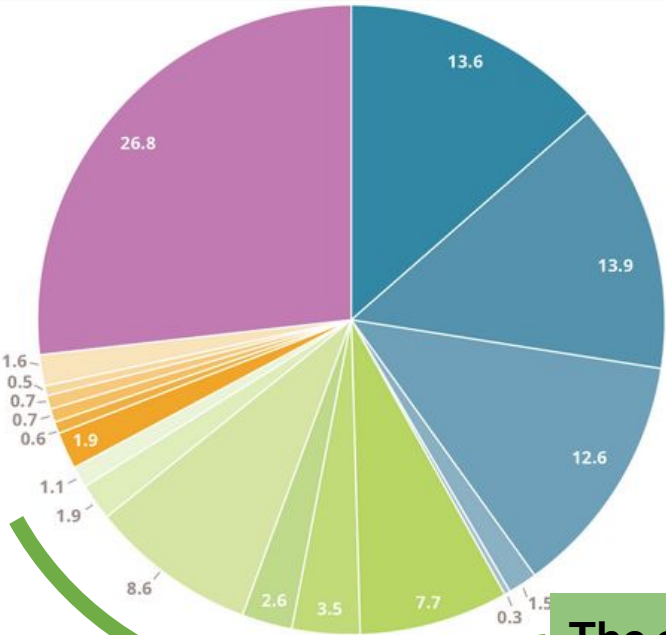

Here's why it matters...

2018

WHICH EVANGELICALS VOTED TRUMP:

77% of whites | **9%** of blacks | **41%** of Hispanics | **48%** of other ethnicities

SOURCE: BILLY GRAHAM CENTER INSTITUTE, LIFEWAY RESEARCH
Note: Evangelicals classified by belief. For methodology, visit christianitytoday.com/go/81percent



AUGUST 30, 2021

Most White Americans who regularly attend worship services voted for Trump in 2020

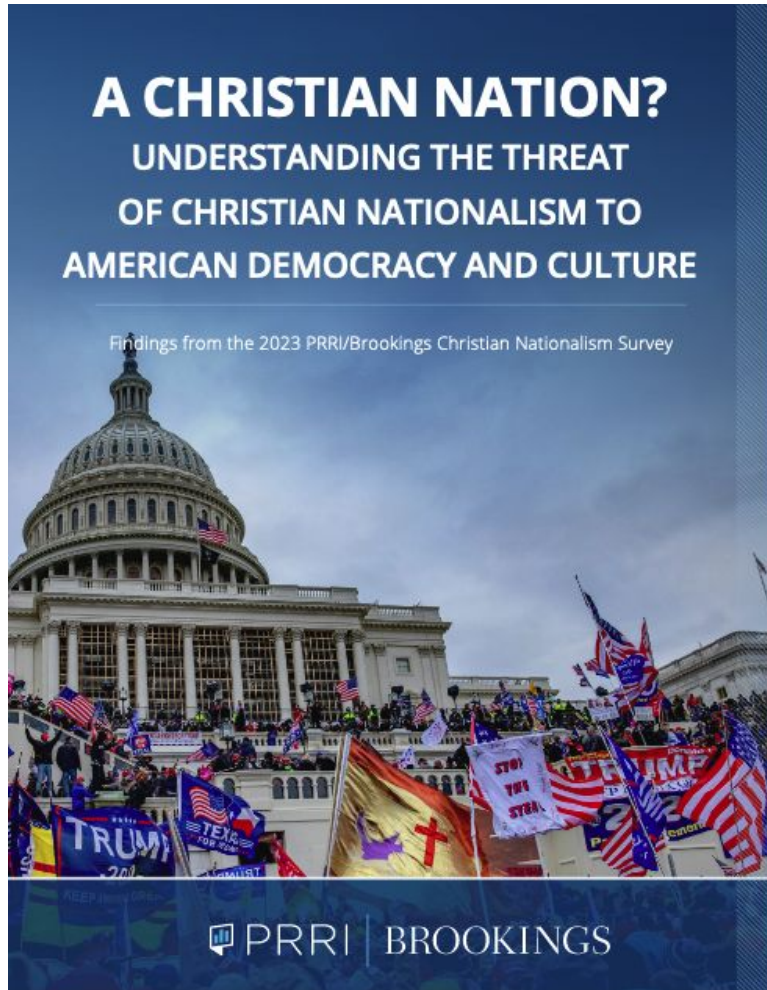
BY JUSTIN NORTEY

- Most white Christians (not to mention a huge majority of white Christian nationalists) have aligned solidly around Donald Trump in 2016 and 2020. This included white mainline Protestants and white Catholics.
- Most religiously unaffiliated and people of other religions voted for Democrats in both elections.
- Christians of color make up 25% of the U.S. population, and many of them are swing voters whose cultural affinities might lean Democrat but whose religious sensibilities might lean Republican.



The outcome of the 2024 election could very well hinge on the degree to which American Christians of color are embracing Christian nationalism, and I can't find anyone paying attention to that or closely measuring it, because it doesn't fit our categories.

So, what are the actual racial/ethnic demographics of American Christian nationalism today and has Christian nationalism made inroads among non-white Christians??



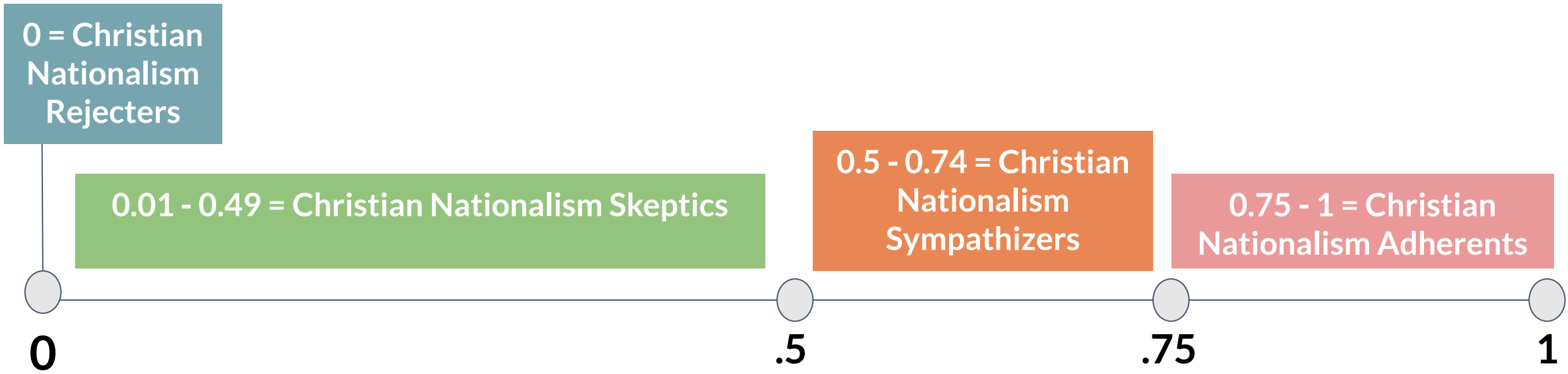
- survey conducted Nov-Dec 2022
- ~6000 adult respondents coming from all 50 states
- Based on their responses to 5 statements, respondents were sorted into 4 categories: CN Adherents, CN Sympthizers, CN Skeptics, CN Rejecters
- So let's take the survey!

- A. The U.S. government should declare America a Christian nation.
- B. U.S. laws should be based on Christian values.
- C. If the U.S. moves away from our Christian foundations, we will not have a country anymore.
- D. Being Christian is an important part of being truly American.
- E. God has called Christians to exercise dominion over all areas of American society.

Completely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Mostly Agree	Completely Agree
Completely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Mostly Agree	Completely Agree
Completely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Mostly Agree	Completely Agree
Completely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Mostly Agree	Completely Agree
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	Completely Disagree	Mostly Disagree	Mostly Agree	Completely Agree
A.	0	.33	.67	1
B.	0	.33	.67	1
C.	0	.33	.67	1
D.	0	.33	.67	1
E.	0	.33	.67	1



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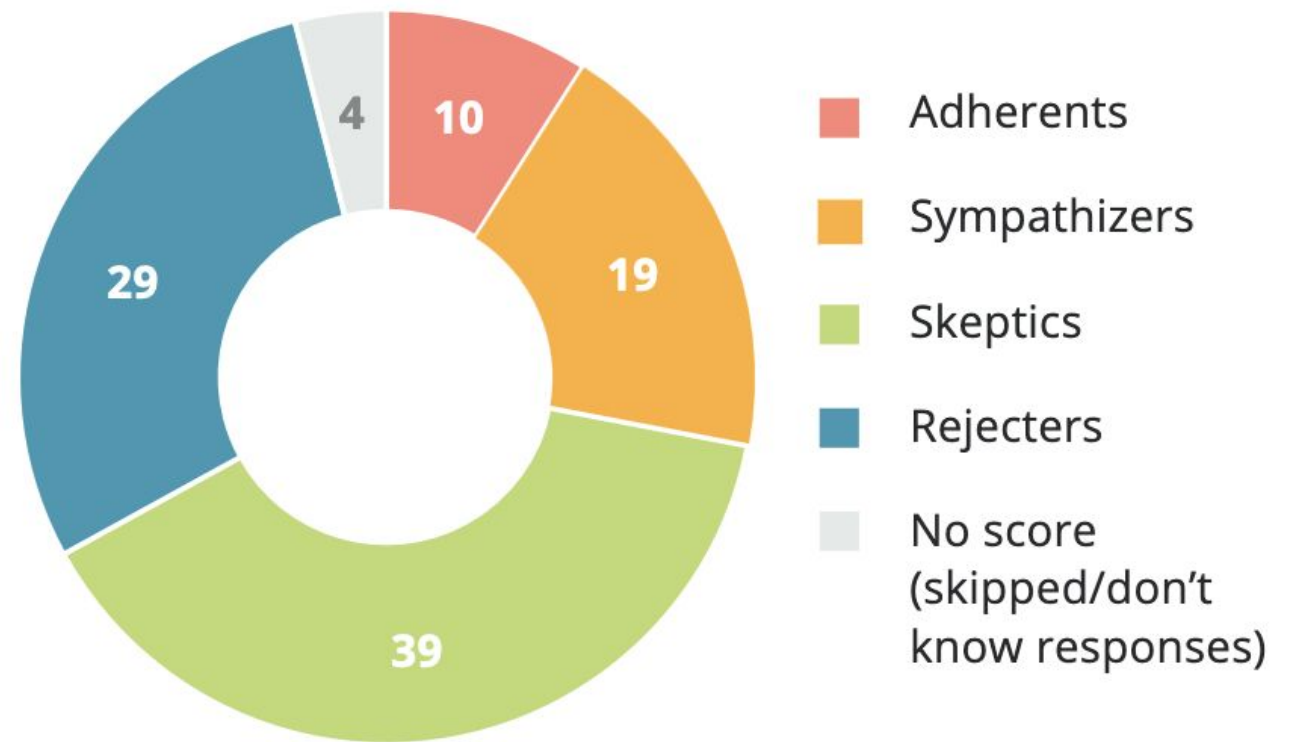


So where did you fall?

① Click **Present with Slido** or install our [Chrome extension](#) to activate this poll while presenting.

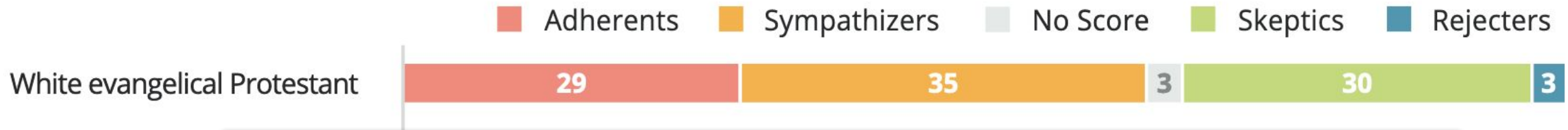
The PRRI/Brookings survey results (entire U.S. population):

Percent who are:



Source: PRRI/Brookings Christian Nationalism Survey, 2023.

How does Christian nationalism break down by religious identity?



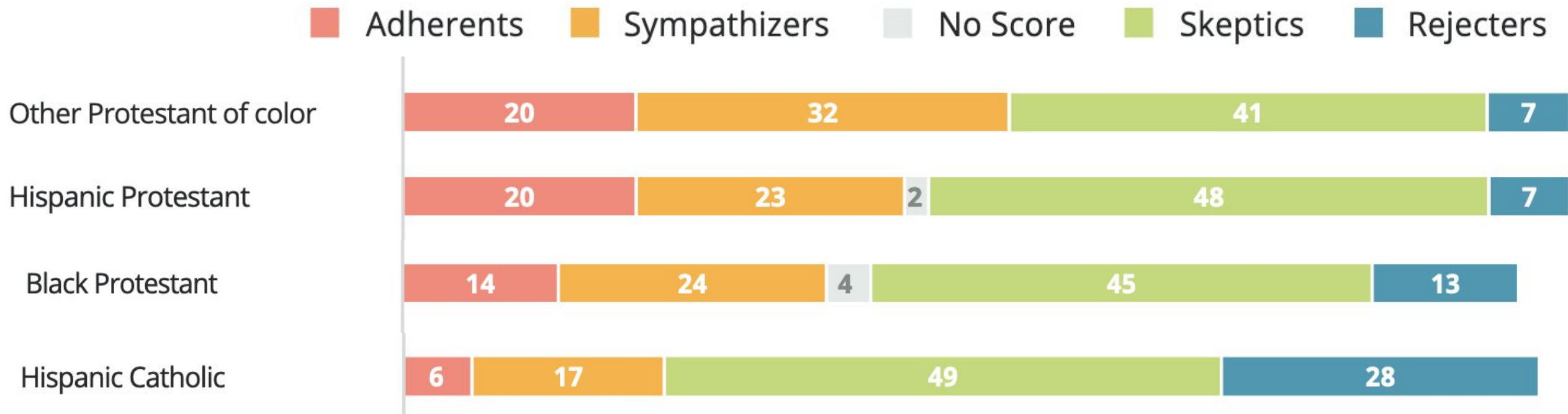
Almost 2/3 of white evangelicals are either adherents or sympathizers.

Approximately 1/3 of white mainline Protestants and Catholics are either adherents or sympathizers.

*Footnote: One of the five diagnostic questions was about “dominion theology” which has not historically been a Catholic concept, so the Catholic numbers may skew low overall.

How does Christian nationalism break down by religious identity?

PRRI typically only counts “white evangelicals” and splits Protestants of color into Hispanic (Latino/a) Protestants, Black Protestants, and “Other Protestants of Color.”



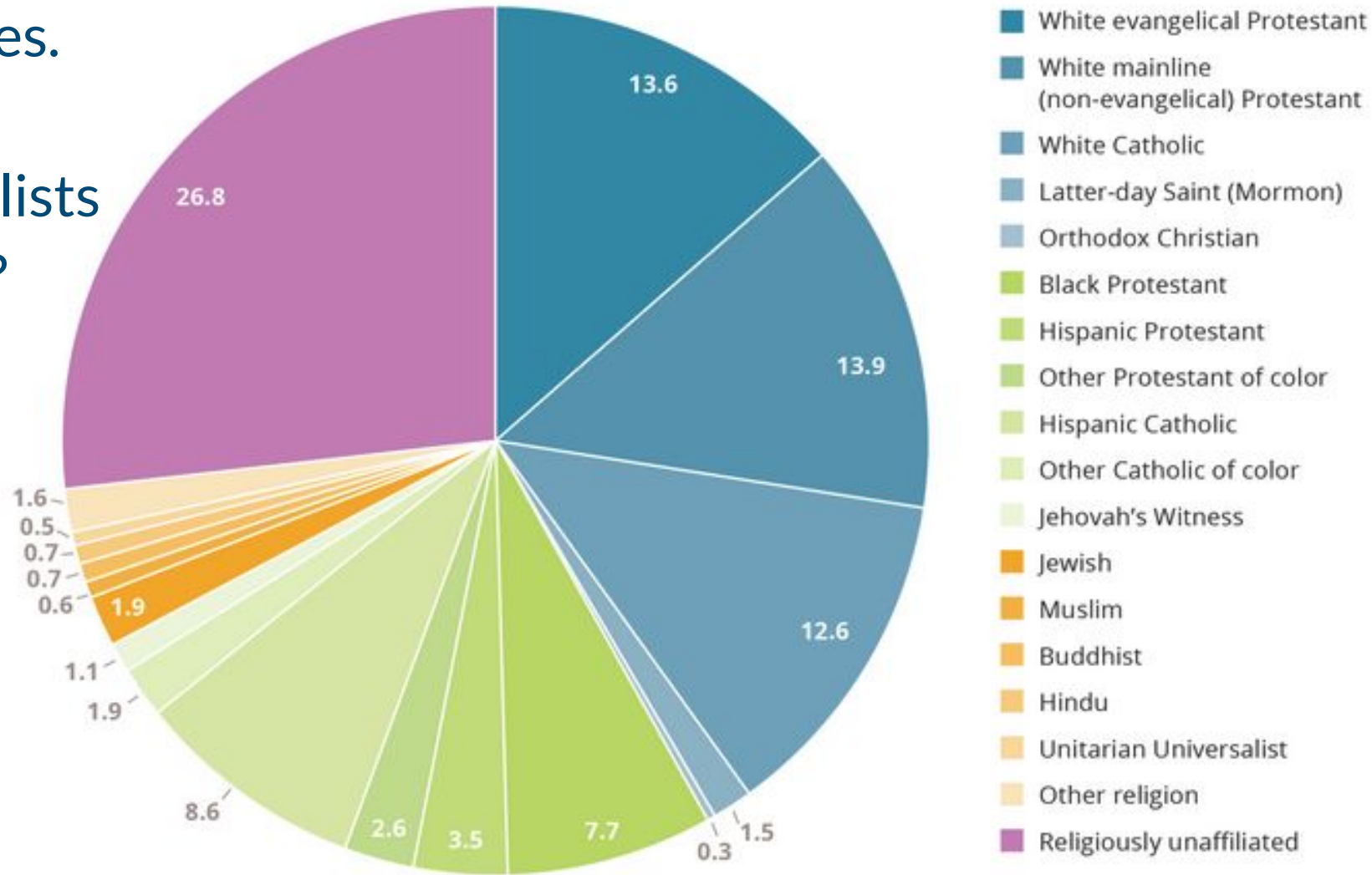
According to this survey, all three categories of Protestants of color are more likely to adhere to or sympathize with Christian nationalism than are white mainline Protestants or white Catholics.

FIGURE 1. The American Religious Landscape in 2022

Percent who identify as:

But those are just percentages.
 What about real numbers?
 How many Christian nationalists
 are white vs. people of color?

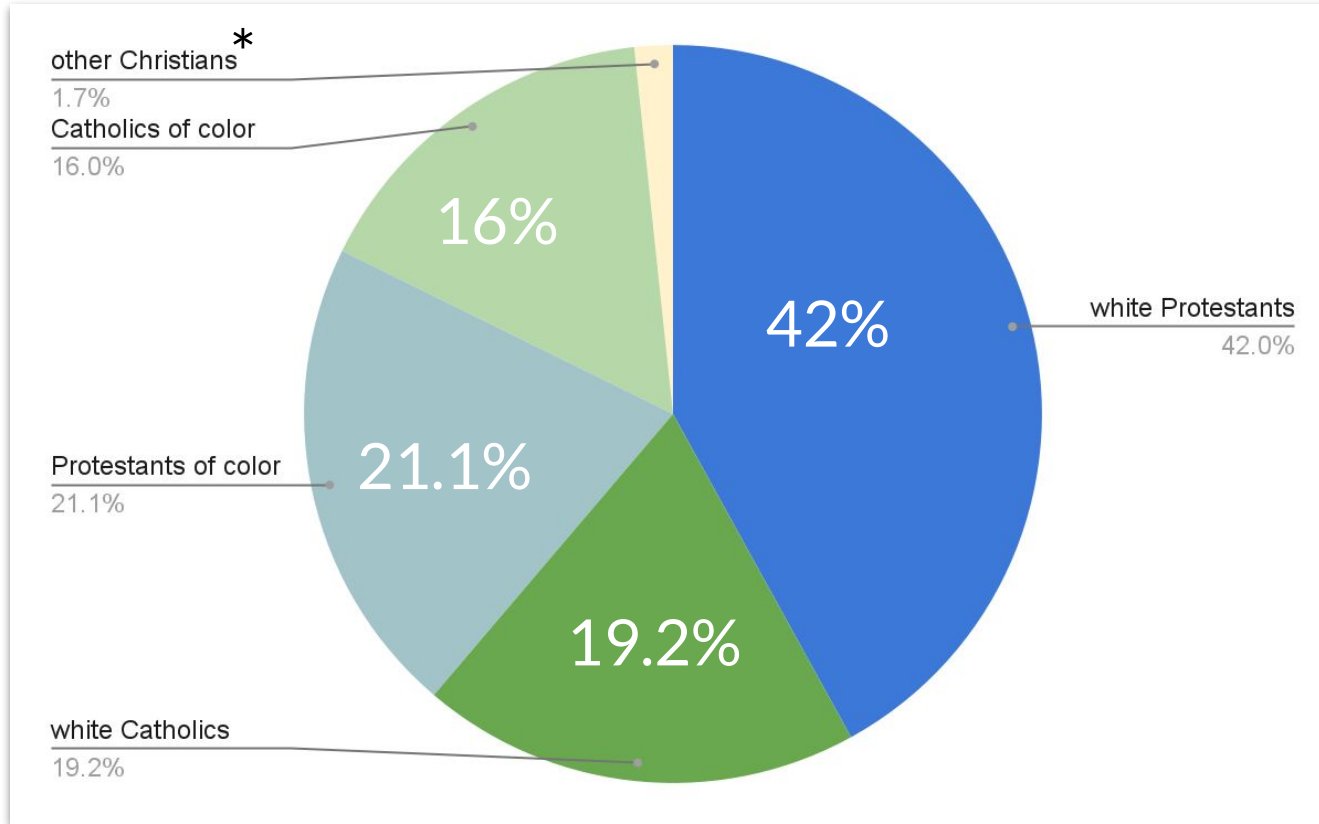
blue + green = 67% of all
 Americans are Christians



Source: PRRI 2022 American Values Atlas.

Let's take the non-Christians (unaffiliated & other religions) out of the equation

Breakdown of U.S. Christians by racial identity/sect

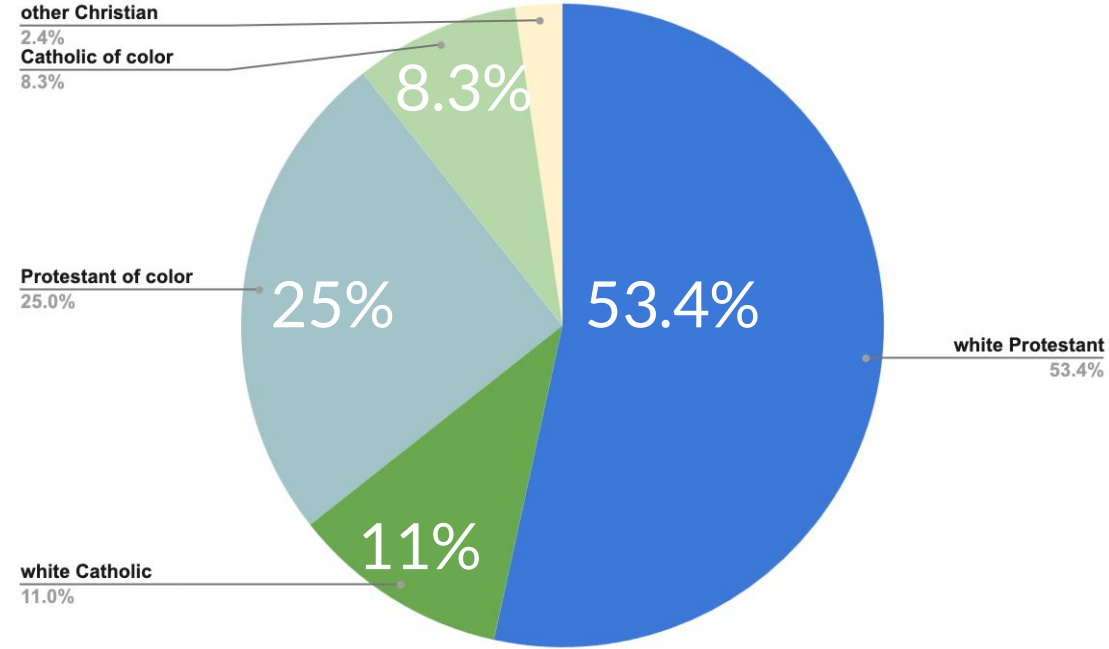


Christianity in the U.S. is approximately 60% white & 37% people of color.



**Other Christians includes LDS & Orthodox, which PRRI does not break down by race.*

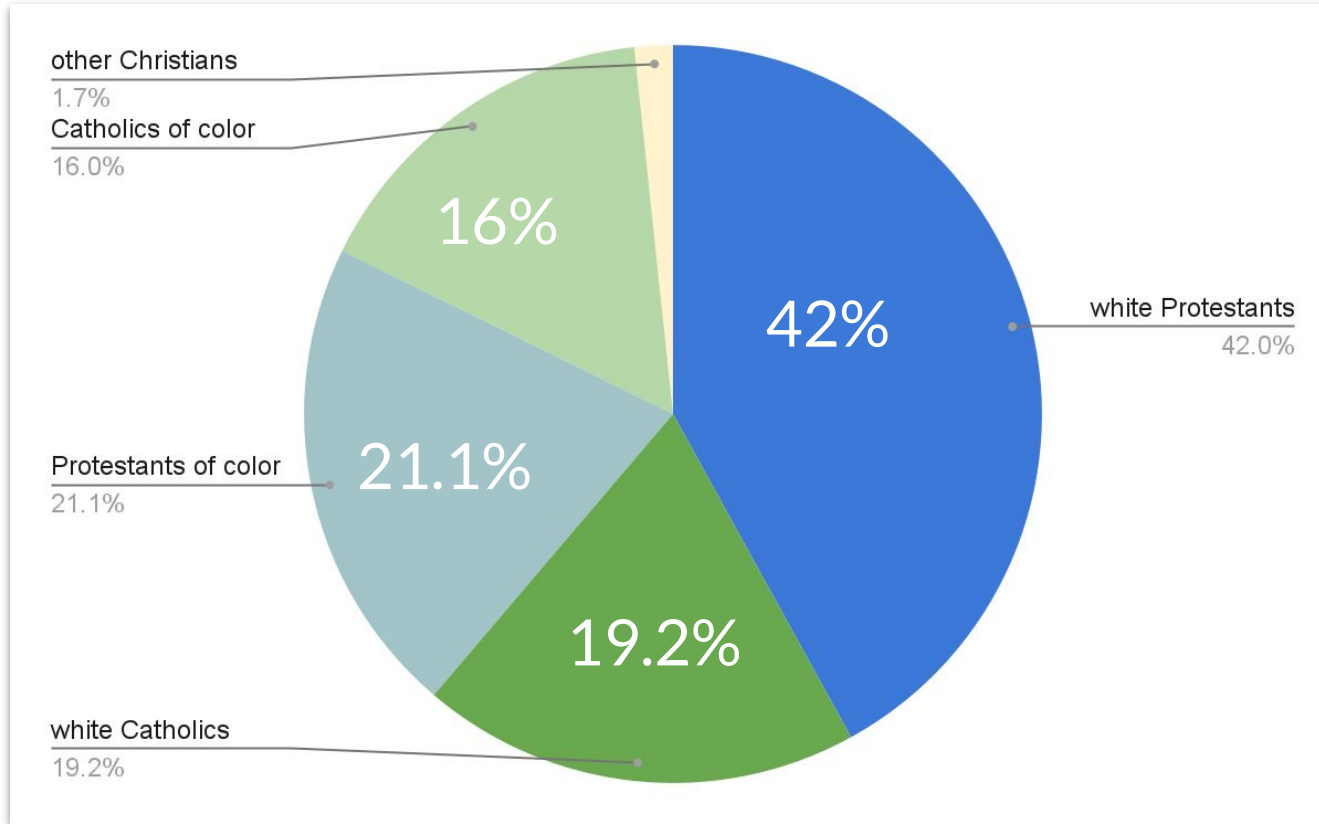
Breakdown of CN Adherence



Christian nationalist Adherence among U.S. Christians is approximately 64% white & 33% people of color.

Let's take the non-Christians (unaffiliated & other religions) out of the equation

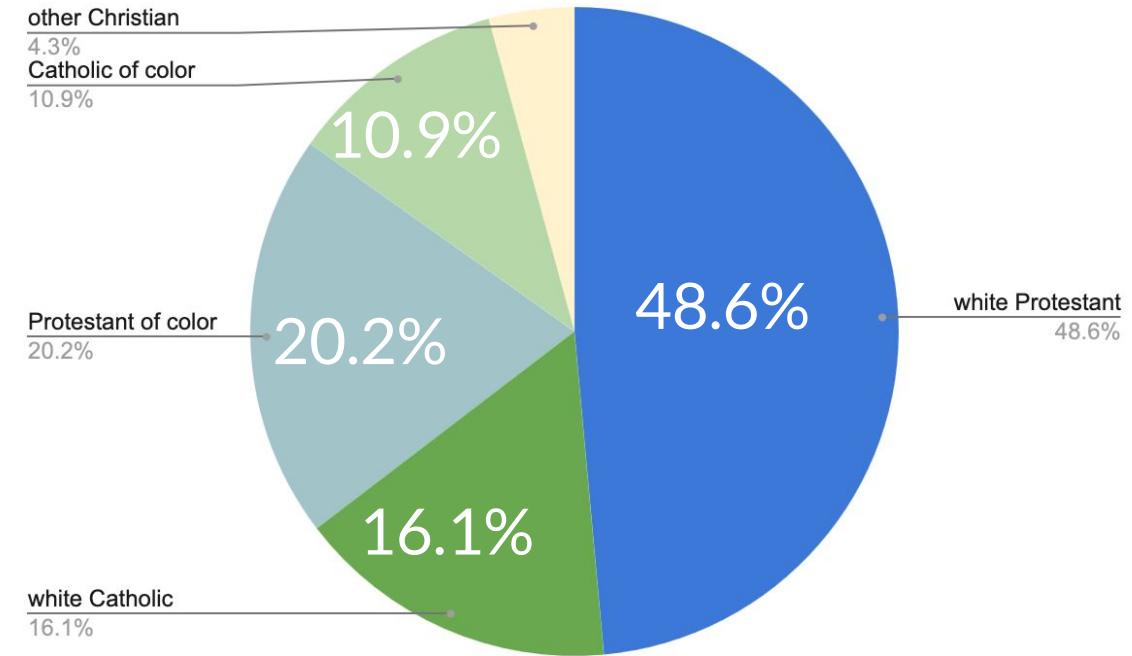
Breakdown of U.S. Christians by racial identity/sect



Christianity in the U.S. is approximately 60% white & 37% people of color



Breakdown of CN Sympathy



Christian nationalist sympathy among U.S. Christians is approximately 65% white & 31% people of color

Conclusions from Our Numerical Deep Dive

- 1) White Christians in the U.S. overall show mildly elevated rates of Christian nationalism adherence (64%) and sympathy (65%) compared to their 60% share of the Christian population.
- 2) Christians of color in the U.S. overall show mildly lower rates of Christian nationalism adherence (33%) and sympathy (31%) compared to their 37% share of the Christian population.
- 3) But it is quite clear, demographically, there is something more than simple “white Christian nationalism” going on in this survey.

So what are we supposed to call it?

On the one hand, race and white racism are inextricable from American Christian history, and clearly there is a racial dimension at play in American Christian nationalism.

On the other hand, if we simply call it all “white Christian nationalism,” we risk mislabeling and misunderstanding roughly one-third of the people involved.

The problem is that both sides are acting as though “Christian nationalism” is one clear and undifferentiated phenomenon.

LSE

THE LONDON SCHOOL
OF ECONOMICS AND
POLITICAL SCIENCE

Jeffrey Haynes

October 5th, 2023

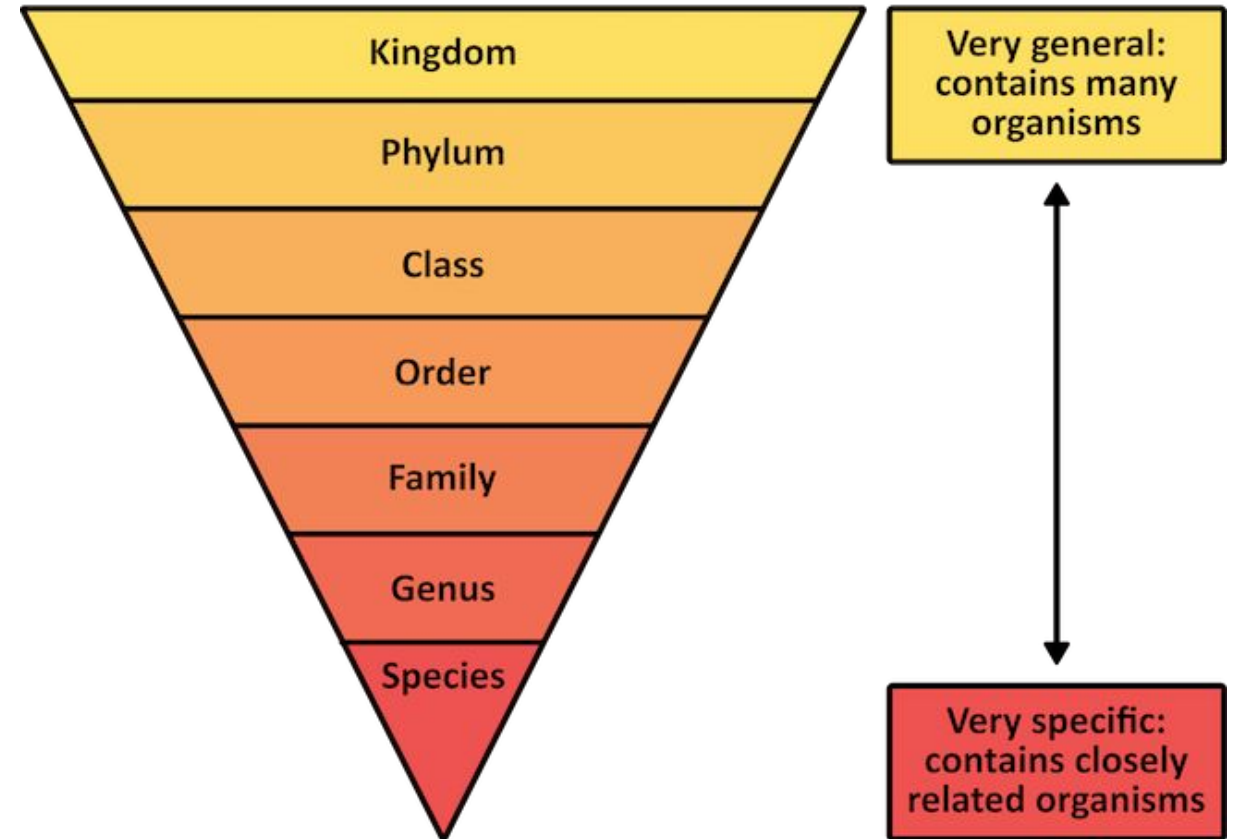
Christian nationalism is a
growing force in Ghana

Christians Represented Significant Faction of Capital Rioters in Brazil

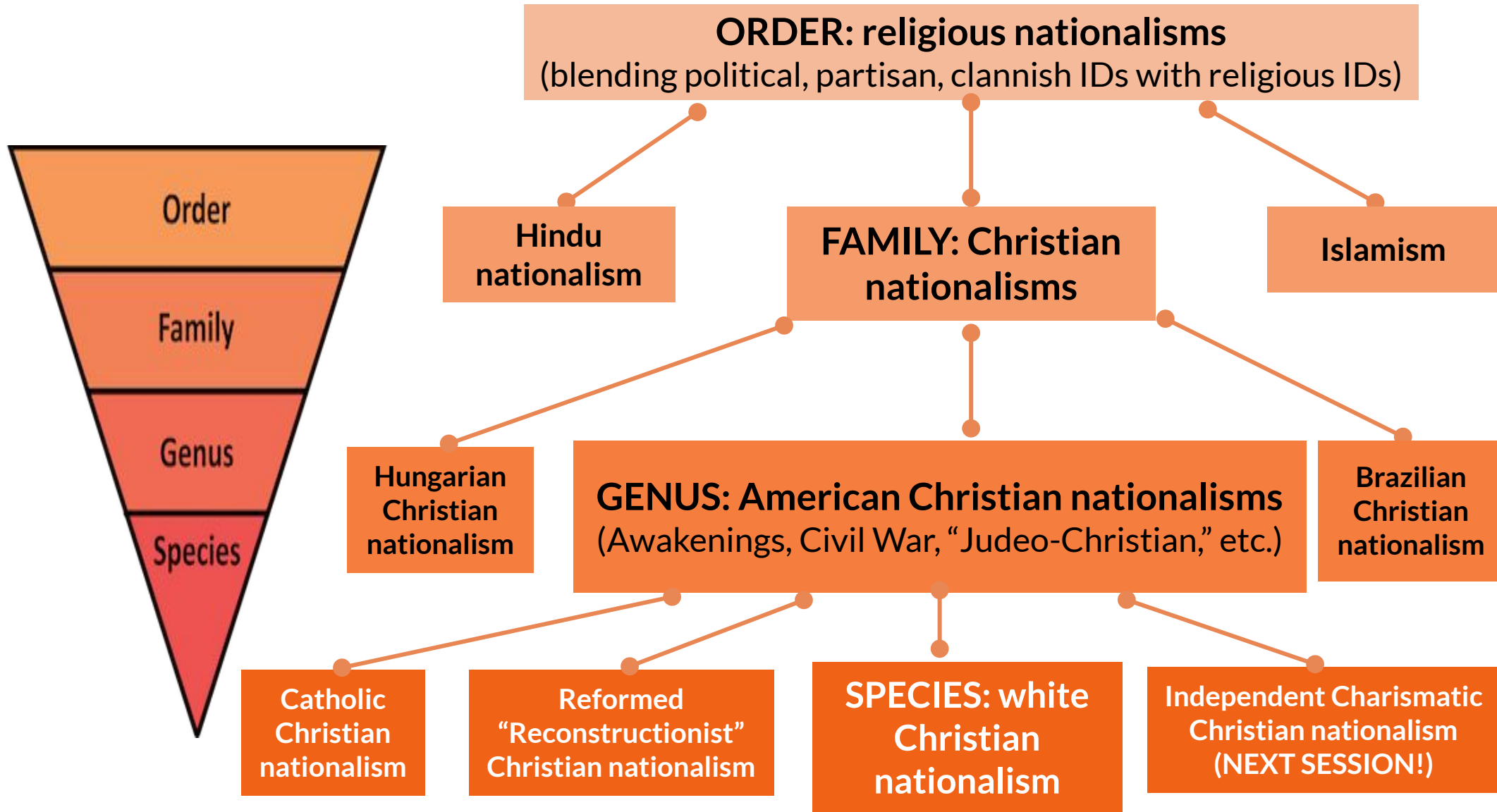
By Eduardo Campos Lima - January 18, 2023



What is our taxonomy of Christian nationalism?

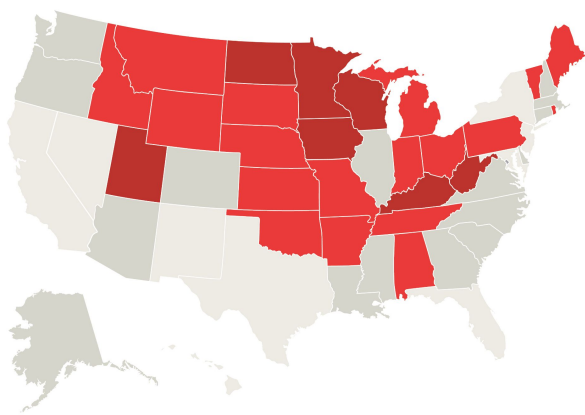


What is our taxonomy of Christian nationalism?



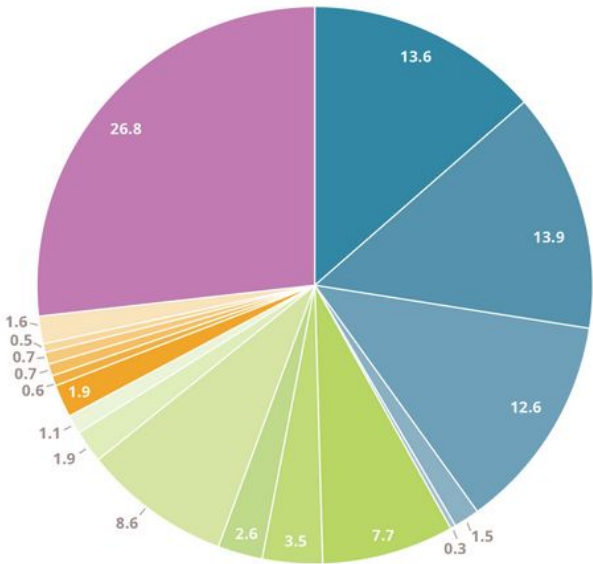
States Where White Christians Remain Dominant

> 60 percent white Christian 51-60 percent white Christian 41-50 percent white Christian < 41 percent white Christian



Conclusions

- We should never analyze or understand religion as detached from race in the United States. Our history has assured that those two dimensions of identity are thoroughly entwined.
- But it would be equally simplistic to think that “white Christianity” = bad / anti-democratic and “non-white Christianity” = good / pro-social. The race-religion interface in the U.S. is complicated, regionalized, and layered.
- Christian nationalism, like the United States itself, has become diversified. (More on how this happened next week.)
- Yes, “white Christian nationalism” is a real force in American politics, but if we only pay attention to “white Christian nationalism,” we risk not seeing the subterranean spread of these ideas into communities of Christians of color who are a pivotal voice in our society.



Recommended Reading

