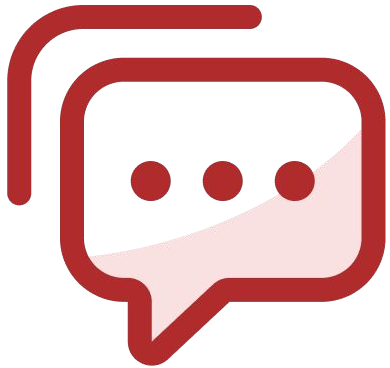


CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM (UN)DEFINED

American Christian Nationalism in 2024 –
What should we be worried about?

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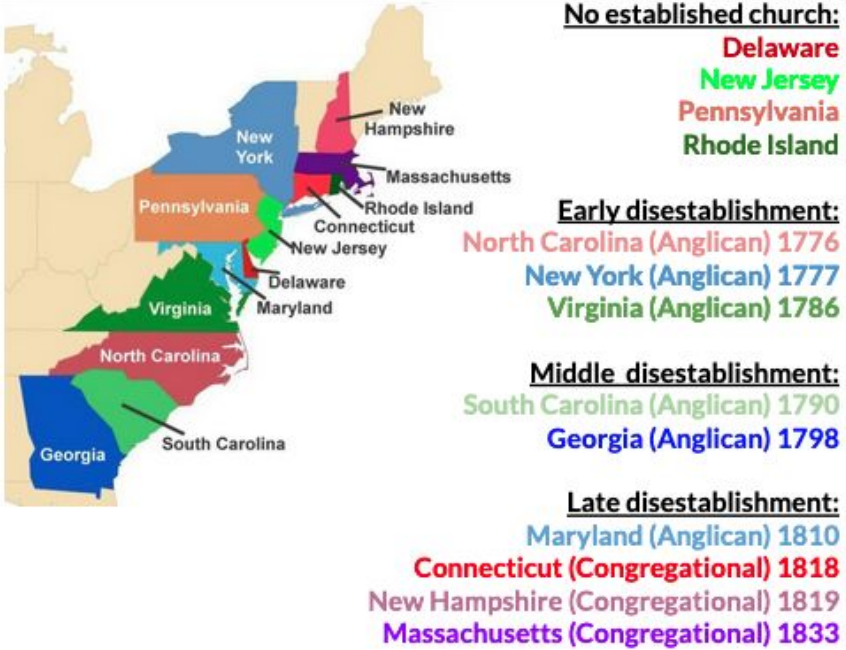


Audience Q&A Session

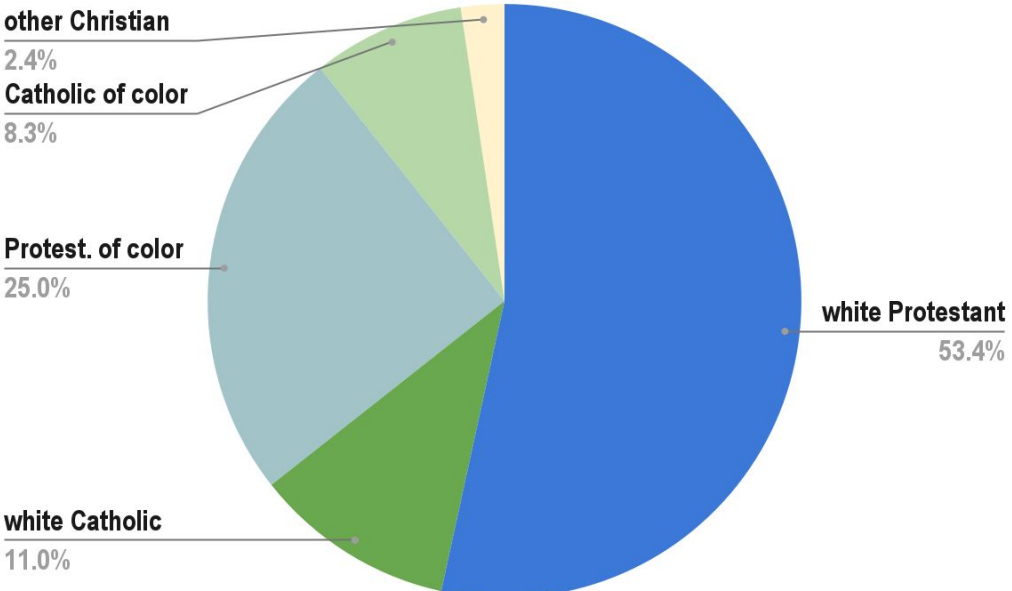
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Review from Sessions 1 & 2

- Christian nationalism isn't new. It's anchored in deep-seated debates about the relationship between the church and the state and visions about America as a Christian (or Judeo-Christian) nation.



- American Christian nationalism today is entwined with race but is not exclusively white. Like the U.S. in general, Christian nationalism has diversified in the past 70 years.



Review: Our 3 Overlapping American Crises

A vicious circle:
Christian nationalism is amplified by all three of these while also aggravating and accentuating each of them.



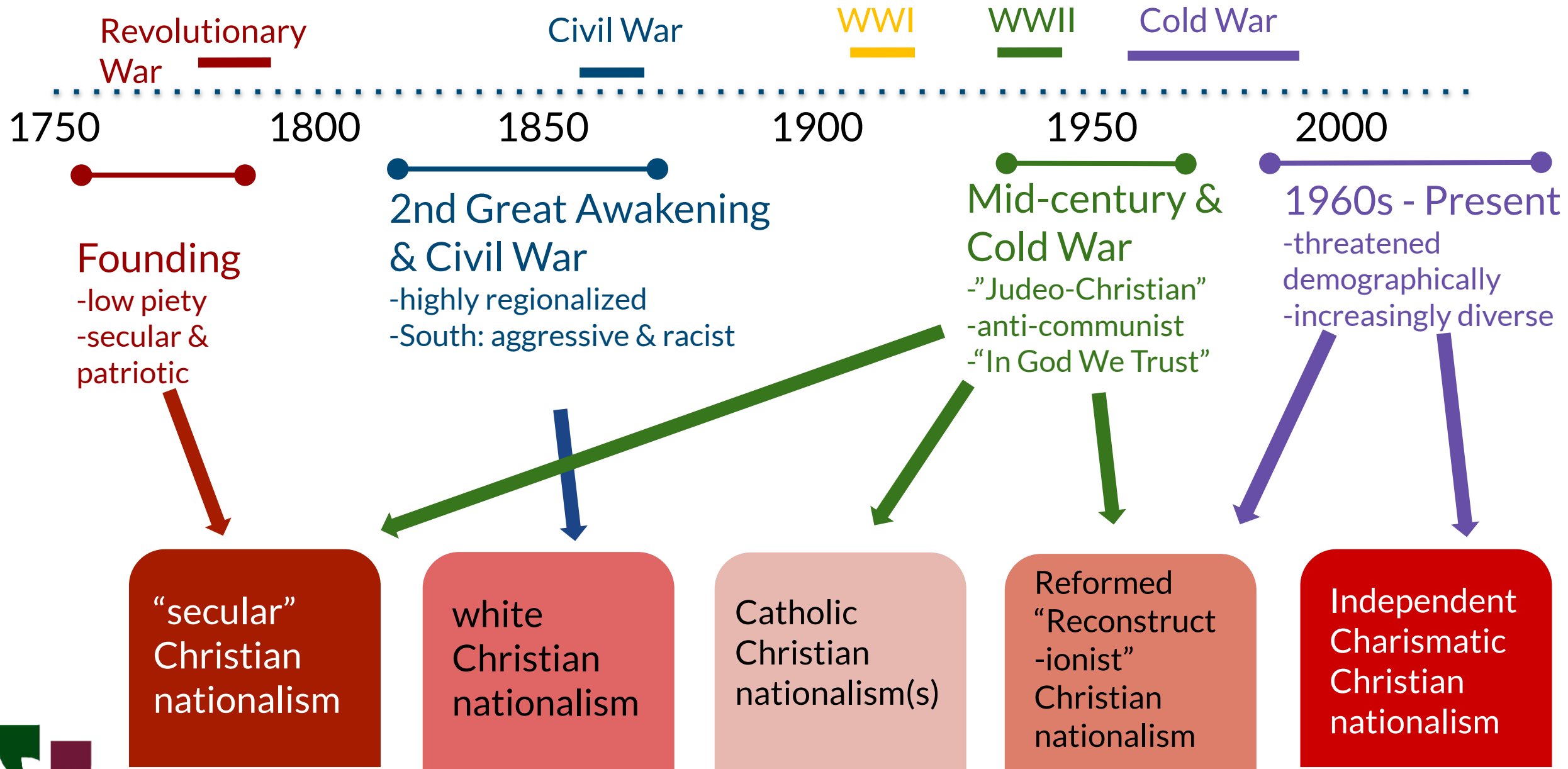
★ **Governance** – Due to polarization, our elected leaders can't/won't compromise, so we can't pass legislation or address real-world needs.



★ **Polarization** – Americans are divided and all issues are politicized: rural/exurban vs. urban/suburban; red vs. blue states; college-educated vs. everyone else.



★ **Epistemology** – Different kinds of Americans live in different informational universes, so that we can't even have a common conversation about shared facts.



So which of these styles did we see on January 6th?

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What are your impressions of the Christianity/Christian nationalism on display around the US Capitol on January 6th, 2021?

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

January 6th - The Capitol Riot

“secular” Christian nationalism



Battle Hymn of the Republic in the Capitol Rotunda



The Q Shaman's prayer in the Senate chamber

- less a coherent theology or ideology and more a style of invoking an Americanism that is vaguely Christian
- constantly referencing the American founding & “Judeo-Christian heritage”
- the Proud Boys and Oath Keepers straddle this and “white Christian nationalism” - very little God-talk or pious expressions
- blends easily with QAnon conspiracy theories and anti-vaccine sentiments

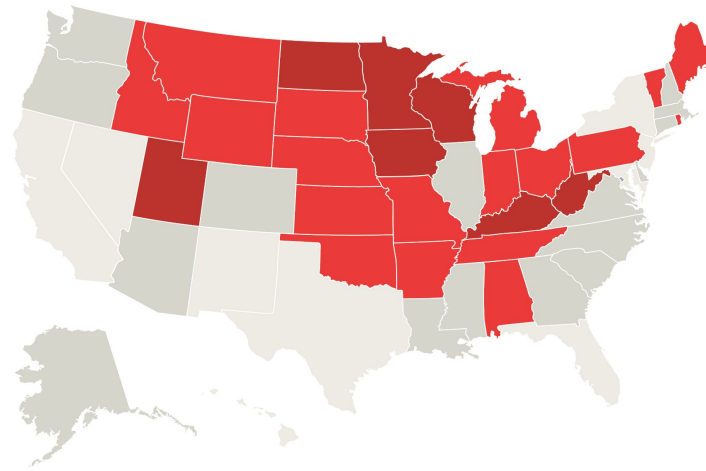
January 6th - The Capitol Riot

white 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



Source: PRRI 2015 American Values Atlas; Adapted from Robert P. Jones, *The End of White Christian America* (Simon & Schuster, 2016).



Confederate flag carried inside Capitol building

- seems to be more concentrated in places where white Christians still hold cultural dominance (South & Midwest)
- sometimes blends patriotic & Christian symbols with white supremacist images
- very invested in Trump for religious *and* racial reasons
- can mix easily with other styles of Christian nationalism

January 6th - The Capitol Riot

Catholic Christian nationalism(s)



Dominican nuns



priest who performed an exorcism inside the Capitol

- American Catholicism is huge (~23% of the U.S. population), ethnically diverse, and has many regional variations
- it's probably more accurate to speak of Catholic Christian *nationalisms* (plural) with different support bases, intellectual architectures, and approaches to Christianizing America

January 6th - The Capitol Riot

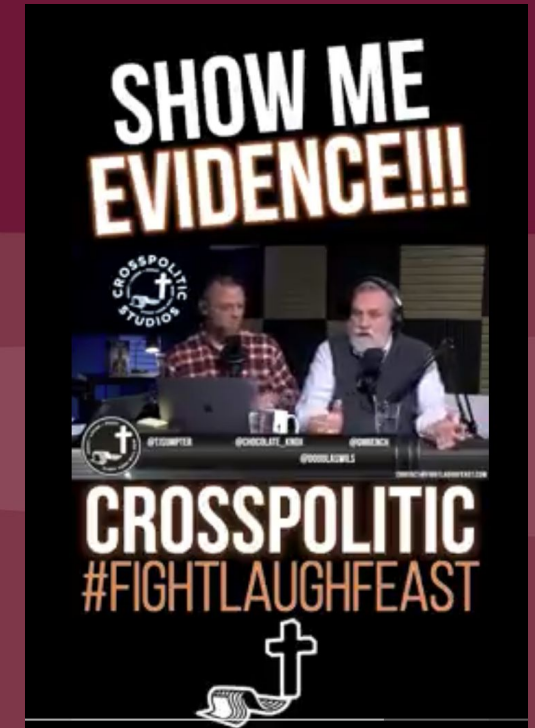
Reformed “Reconstructionist” Christian nationalism

consent by non-Christians. Non-Christians living among us are entitled to justice, peace, and safety, but they are not entitled to political equality, nor do they have a right to deny the people of God their right to order civil institutions to God and to their complete good.

We lack the spirit for this sort of dominion today—a once-uncontroversial spirit that animated the magisterial Protestant reformers and Christians prior to the Reformation. We must revitalize and return to it. The Christian’s posture towards the earth ought to be that it is ours, not theirs, for we are co-heirs in Christ.



Jason Storms
(Operation Save America)



Doug Wilson questioning the 2020 election results

From Stephen Wolfe’s, *The Case for Christian Nationalism* (2022)

- emerges in the 1960s and 1970s
- very influential in the rise of the religious right in the U.S.
- tends to be more intellectual and theologically tied to Calvinism
- noticeable in particular Christian leaders who supported Trump & Trump’s election lies
- not as directly or collectively involved in January 6th (too lowbrow)

AN APPEAL TO HEAVEN



January 6th - The Capitol Riot



But the overwhelmingly most influential version of Christian nationalism on display during the Capitol Riot was the Independent Charismatic style.

This is arguably the newest style of American Christian nationalism, the most energetic, and the most mysterious.

Robin D. Bullock
@Robin_D_Bullock

STAND!



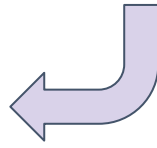
8:46 PM · Jan 6, 2021 · Twitter for iPhone

20 Retweets 1 Quote Tweet 96 Likes



What is Independent Charismatic Christianity?

*charismatic (Gk, *charismata*) - seeking the supernatural gifts from the Holy Spirit as described in the life of the early church



YES

DENOMINATIONAL?

NO

CHARISMATIC?

NO

DENOMINATIONAL, NON-CHARISMATIC

Most Catholics
Most Mainline Protestants
Many Historically Black Protestants
“Classical Evangelicals” (e.g., Southern Baptists)

**NON-DENOMINATIONAL,
NON-CHARISMATIC**

“Independent Evangelicals”
(Bible churches, often Calvinist-Reformed)

YES

DENOMINATIONAL, CHARISMATIC

Pentecostals
Charismatic Catholics
Charismatic Mainline Protestants (e.g.,
charismatic Episcopalians)

NON-DENOMINATIONAL, CHARISMATIC

“Independent Charismatics”
usually identify as evangelical or charismatic
(a.k.a., Spirit-filled, Pentecostal,
continuationist)

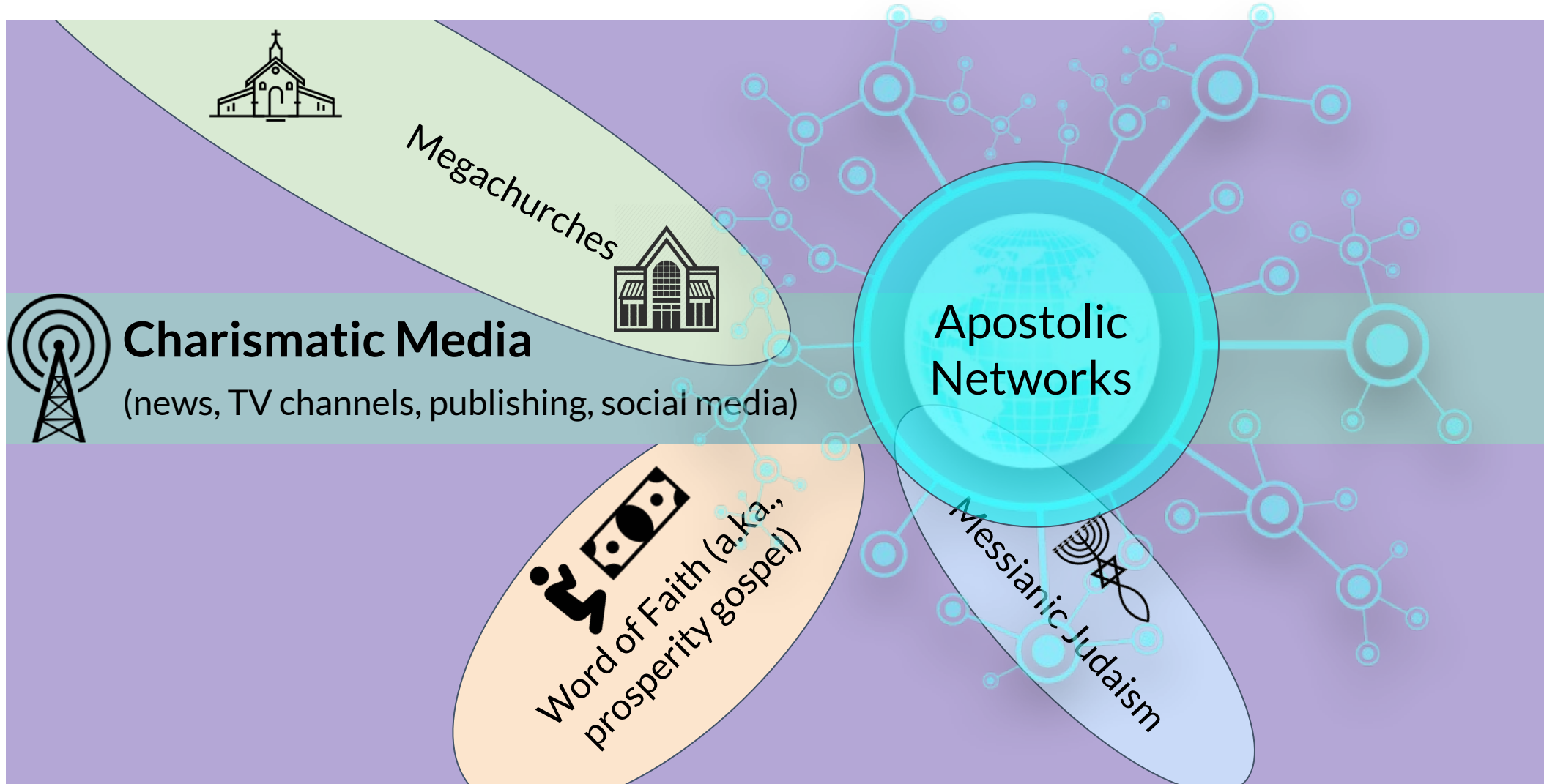


Fourth Quadrant (Independent Charismatic) Christianity

- rapid growth since 1970s (1970 = 40 million Independent Charismatics in the world, 2020 = 330 million)
- a world with few clear boundaries or unifying structures except a shared media/celebrity culture
- the Silicon Valley of the American Church - fast growing, ethnically diverse, entrepreneurial, media savvy

Ephesians 4:11-12

Jesus Himself gave some to be **apostles**, some **prophets**, some **evangelists**, and some **pastors** and **teachers**, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ



Markers of Independent Charismatic Belief and Practice



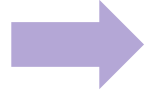
- ecstatic and experiential worship
- belief in modern prophecy
- longing for – and activity toward bringing about – local and/or global revival
- emphasis on spiritual warfare (angels/Christians vs. Satan/demons)
- (often) belief in Fivefold Ministry (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, teachers) with a primacy of apostles and prophets
- tracking charismatic media and the celebrity televangelists, apostles, prophets, Messianic rabbis, revivalists in that class



How did we get to today?



Paula White-Cain
Independent Charismatic
pastor/televangelist



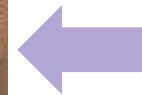
friend, pastor, & adviser to
Donald Trump since ~2001



series of Trump Tower meetings
w/ Independent Charismatic
leaders beginning fall 2015



Independent Charismatic celebrities/leaders
become the vanguard of Christian Trumpism
both locally and nationally



Independent Charismatics dominate
Trump's evangelical adviser circles


January 6th - The Capitol Riot

Independent Charismatic Christian nationalism



shofars as symbols
of spiritual warfare



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January 6, 2021 · 🌐

[Overview](#) [Comments](#)

It's going to be okay folks! The battle belongs to Yahweh (The LORD)!

(This shofar came all the way from Jerusalem. My great friend Noel was obedient in what he heard to blow it at the Capitol Bldg./ why he came with us)

January 6th - The Capitol Riot

Independent Charismatic Christian nationalism



roving charismatic prophets were present in the crowds



January 6th - The Capitol Riot

Independent Charismatic Christian nationalism



Appeal to Heaven
flags signaling a
prophecy-driven
revolution



January 6th - The Capitol Riot

Independent Charismatic Christian Nationalism



worship in groups or
with speaker systems



January 6th - The Capitol Riot

Independent Charismatic Christian nationalism



dozens of Independent Charismatic celebrities
who were present in DC for January 6th



The events of January 6 were a focusing and crystalizing moment where deeply embedded forms of American Christian extremism, conspiratorial thinking, racism, anti-government militia-organizing, and anti-democracy activism all came together.

**Christian nationalism, in general, and
Independent Charismatic Christian nationalism, in particular,
were integral to the mobilization for and behavior during the Capitol Riot.**

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How is this Independent Charismatic style of Christian nationalism similar to and different from the other we have seen so far?

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So what has happened since January 6th?

Many of the individual and group participants who broke into the Capitol have been prosecuted, but the Christian leaders, the theologies, and the spirituality that inspired the riot are, if anything, even more popular today than they were in January 2021.

AN APPEAL TO HEAVEN



The Appeal to Heaven campaign

Revolutionary War flag appropriated as a prophecy of a new American revival by apostle Dutch Sheets in 2013



AZ state senator



US Rep. Glenn Grothman



House Speaker Mike Johnson's office - Nov 2023



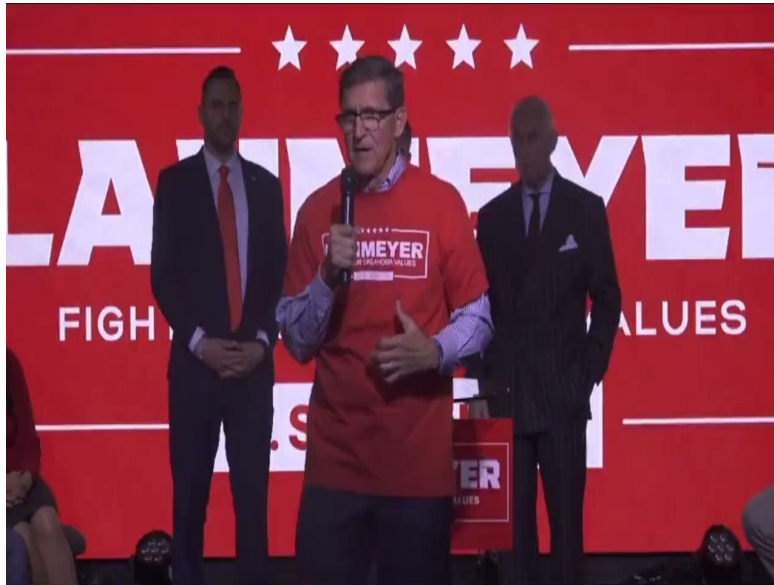
Doug Mastriano



Oregon white nationalists

The ReAwaken America tour

convened by former NSA Michael Flynn &
Independent Charismatic entrepreneur Clay Clark



FlashPoint

a cable-news style prophecy show carried on televangelism networks and uploaded online



Wrap-up: What should we be paying attention to in 2024?



★ **Governance** – Due to polarization, our elected leaders can't/won't compromise, so we can't pass legislation or address real-world needs.



★ **Polarization** – Americans are divided and all issues are politicized: rural/exurban vs. urban/suburban; red vs. blue states; college-educated vs. everyone else.



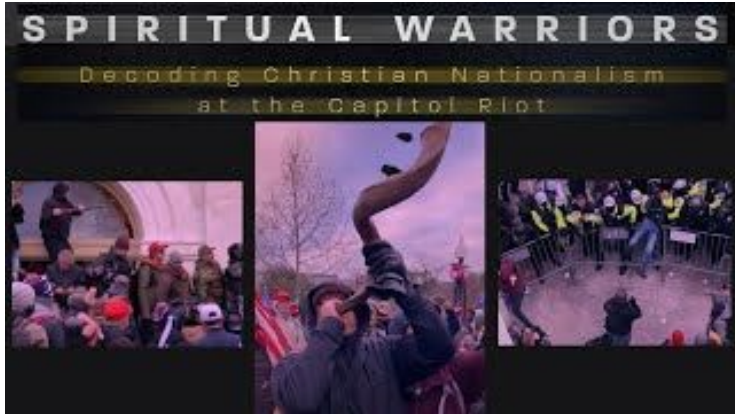
★ **Epistemology** – Different kinds of Americans live in different informational universes, so that we can't even have a common conversation about shared facts.



- Our three crises (polarization, governance, epistemology) appear to be getting worse, and all three are bound up with insurgent new (and old) forms of Christian nationalism.
- There's a real correlation between the discourse of spiritual violence and spiritual warfare and outbreaks of real-world violence. How much more of a fever pitch can be built, and can anything arrest the malignancy of this rhetoric in our politics?
- Donald Trump and his advisers have figured out how to stoke the fires of devotion and fervor among American Christian nationalists. What are they willing to do with that boiling rage?



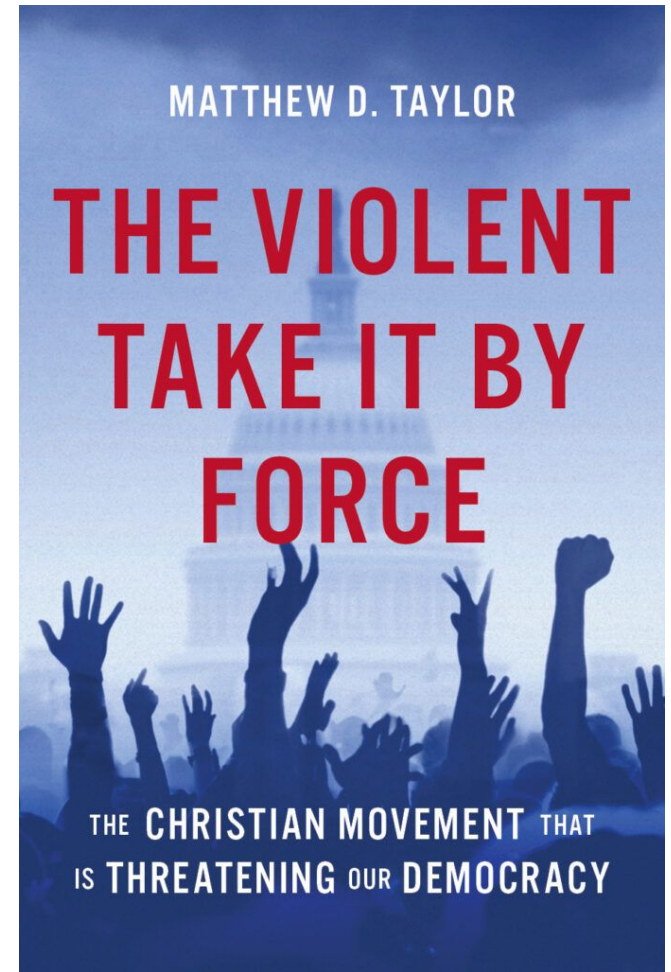
Resources to go further



a free, 25-minute documentary about Independent Charismatic leaders and the Capitol Riot



an 8-hour podcast / audio-documentary on the Christian leaders & theology behind January 6
(\$20 w/ discount code: CRF)

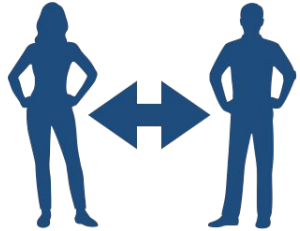


available for pre-order now
(publication date: Sept 24)

What can we do?



- 1) Spread the word about the threat of Christian supremacy
 - Share the sources and resources we've looked at about Christian nationalism.



- 2) Engage people who are sympathetic to Christian nationalism in humanizing, constructive dialogue
 - There's not much room for dialogue with hardline adherents to Christian nationalism (a.k.a., Christian supremacists). They must be debated and countered democratically.
 - The people who are sympathetic to Christian Nationalism include your neighbors, friends, coworkers, family members, and so on. You don't have to convince them to share your views on all matters. Try to find ways to humanize them, humanize yourself, and humanize the real-world consequences if Christian nationalists were to overturn American pluralism.



- 3) Prepare yourself to defend democracy
 - Democracy is not about passive systems or abstract checks and balances. Democracy and the rule of law must be defended through peaceful means and mobilizing citizens.
 - Assess your current involvement in American democracy, and try to come up with one or two concrete steps you could take to be more involved.

