

A Companion to
The Case for Christian Nationalism

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Introduction: The Great Renewal

Summary:

Secularists have been so successful in banishing Christianity from the public square that evangelicals themselves relish their own marginalization and treat Christian nationalism as a bogeyman to be avoided at all costs. In this book, Wolfe shows that Christian nationalism, understood as an explicitly Christian nation seeking its own good, is desirable and defensible according to classic Christian orthodoxy.

Key Points:

“At its worst, theology is wielded to find pleasure in one’s humiliation. Many Christian leaders today are children of Rousseau in this regard, actively undermining Christian political action that opposes political atheism. They advance a sort of Stockholm-Syndrome theology.” (p. 4)

“Christian nationalists seek the *instauratio magna*—the Great Renewal. We struggle for the instauration of our homeland and the revitalization of our people. We are not ‘conservative,’ nor even ‘traditionalist.’ We do not merely look to the past, nor to some past golden age. This is not an ideology of nostalgia. Still, we do not repudiate the past, nor desire to progress from some ‘checkered’ ancestry. Rather, we look forward: We strive to take the future because we love our past, we love our homeland and its people.” (p. 38)

Questions for Discussion:

1. Why do Christians often reject “cultural Christianity”? Why do they reject the idea that a nation should be explicitly Christian (pp. 4-5)?
2. What is wrong with most definitions of Christian nationalism (pp. 5-8)?

3. Wolfe defines Christian nationalism in this way: “Christian nationalism is a totality of national action, consisting of civil laws and social customs, conducted by a Christian nation as a Christian nation, in order to procure for itself both earthly and heavenly good in Christ.” What does he mean by “a totality of national action”? What are some examples Wolfe gives of actions, great and small, that support the good of the nation (pp. 11-13)?

4. Wolfe explains that when a nation is Christian it “is conscious of itself as a Christian nation and acts for itself as a Christian nation.” What are some analogies that Wolfe uses to illustrate this (p. 14)?

5. Why does Stephen Wolfe assume the Christian tradition (pp. 16-18)? How has our time drifted away from complexity and rational demonstration towards emotional appeals (pp. 19-20)?

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Nations Before the Fall: What is Man? (Part I: Creation)

Summary:

Adam was made for two purposes or “ends”: an earthly end and a heavenly end. His earthly end was to subdue the earth, and his heavenly end was union with God. Things like the family, social life, and geographically limited, culturally distinct communities were part of the good world God made before the fall. Not only that, but hierarchy, government, and distinct masculinity and femininity were good things that existed before the fall. All of this is foundational for understanding how man is supposed to live here on earth, in this

life and in light of eternity, and how the gospel restores us to the gifts God gave us at creation.

Key Points:

“Human dignity is far more than a status we can enjoy passively; it is a call for the dignified to act in ways that are worthy of his elevated station in the cosmic order.” (p. 55)

“Cultural diversity is...a necessary consequence of human nature and so it is good for us. It is good that particular practices are made habitual by localized socialization and are ‘owned’ in a sense by a particular place and people. It is good that the particularity of each community distinguishes each from the others.... Man’s limitedness was not a divine mistake; nor is cultural diversity, separated geographically, an error. It was God’s design for man and thus a necessary feature of his good.” (p. 65)

Questions for Discussion:

1. How was Adam created for both an earthly and heavenly end (pp. 42-44)?
2. Why is it important to distinguish between man in his prelapsarian state (before the fall) and his

postlapsarian state (after the fall) (pp. 46-49)?
What purpose does it serve to provide an account
of human society before the fall (pp. 53-57)?

3. How do human limitations make local communities necessary? Why is it natural for human communities to have their own local distinctives (pp. 63-65)?

4. Why is hierarchy not something that results from the fall (pp. 66-68)? Why was some government needed, even before the fall (pp. 70-73)? Why would the martial virtues have been needed before the fall (pp. 74-76)?

