

Review: American Idolatry: How Christian Nationalism Betrays the Gospel and Threatens the Church

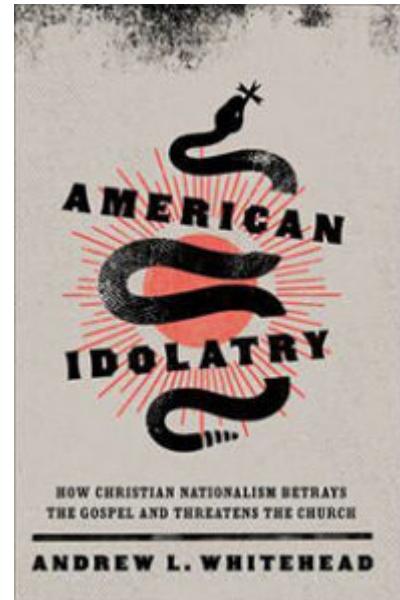
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American Idolatry: How Christian Nationalism Betrays the Gospel and Threatens the Church

By Andrew L Whitehead (Brazos Press)

Plenty of political pundits view Christian nationalism as a threat to American democracy. Author Andrew Whitehead doesn't disagree with that opinion, but he sees it as an even greater threat to the church and its witness. As one who grew up in Midwestern evangelicalism and earned his Ph.D. from Baylor University, he understands conservative Christians. Because he cares about the gospel, he wants fellow believers to recognize the danger Christian nationalism poses to the faith he loves.

As a trained sociologist, Whitehead recognizes power, fear and violence as tools Christian nationalism uses to maintain privilege, gain greater influence and oppress the marginalized “other.” As a Christian committed to the radical gospel message of Jesus, he sees power, fear and violence as idols—false gods that demand an allegiance and command obedience rightly due only to God. And he recognizes how contrary Christian nationalism is to the example Jesus set.



Whitehead routinely refers to Christian nationalism as “white Christian nationalism” for good reason. He points to empirical data that demonstrates the link between Christian nationalist ideology and xenophobic racism. Moreover, he quotes Scripture to illustrate how the methodology and approach of Christian nationalism—along with many of its goals—are antithetical to biblical teachings about loving one’s neighbor, caring for the vulnerable and welcoming the stranger.

A discussion regarding religious liberty should be of particular interest to Baptists. The Christian nationalist quest for power, control and domination are at odds with true religious freedom for all—and totally opposite of the Golden Rule.

Whitehead not only diagnoses the problem; he also prescribes remedies. Pay attention to what the Bible really emphasizes. Seek the common good, not selfish interests. Embrace political activity but reject any attempt to equate partisan identity and Christian faith. Listen to the voices of those who are at the margins, because that’s where God usually is at work.

Brazos Press will release *American Idolatry* in August. Reserve your copy

today.

Ken Camp, managing editor

Baptist Standard