

Survey finds pockets of support for Christian nationalism

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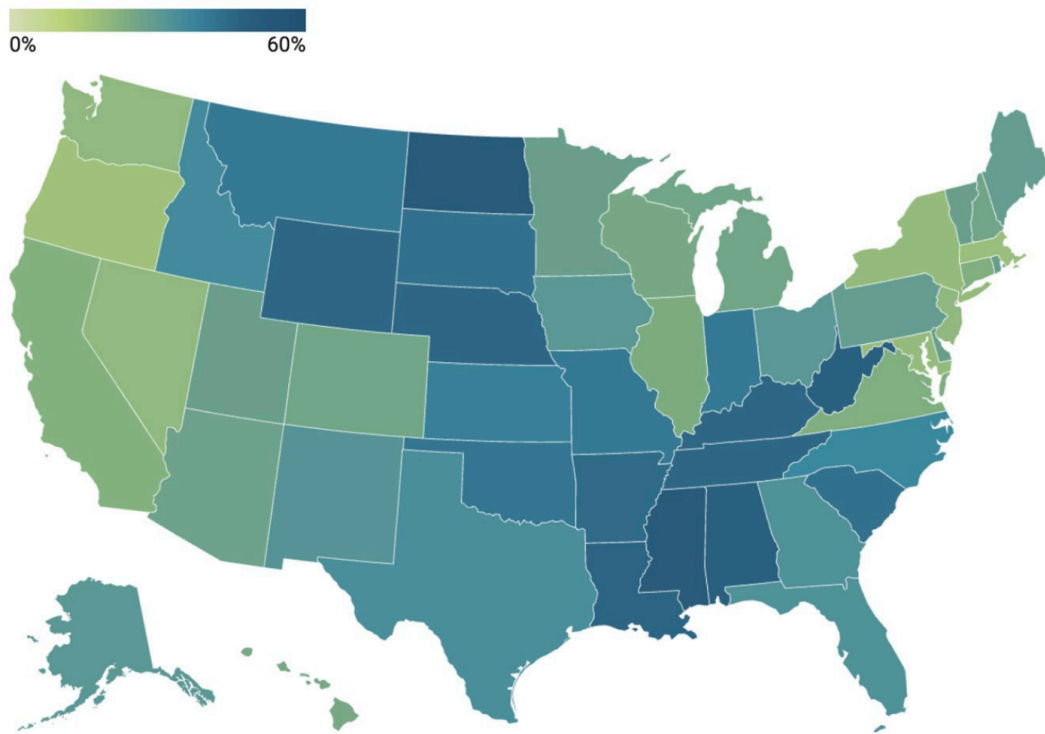
(RNS)—A new report released Feb. 28 found roughly 3 in 10 Americans express some sympathy for Christian nationalism, with its greatest popularity concentrated in the Southeast and Upper Midwest.

The findings appear in a [study](#) from the Public Religion Research Institute, which probed public support for Christian nationalism as part of a broader survey of more than 22,000 adults.

To assess feelings about Christian nationalism, respondents were asked whether they completely agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree or completely disagree with five statements, including “the U.S. government should declare America a Christian nation” and “U.S. laws should be based on Christian values.”

PRRI broke out four categories depending on how people responded to the questions. Those most supportive of the ideology—10 percent of the country—were dubbed Adherents, followed by Sympathizers, who represent 20 percent of the country. Those who disagreed with the statements were classified as Skeptics (37 percent) or Rejecters (30 percent).

Support for Christian Nationalism (Adherents and Sympathizers), by State



Source: PRRI, American Values Atlas, March 9-Dec. 7, 2023. • Created with [Datawrapper](#)

Christian nationalism by state

Mississippi and North Dakota showed the highest levels of support for Christian nationalism, with Adherents and Sympathizers making up 50 percent of those states. They are followed by Alabama (47 percent), West Virginia (47 percent), Louisiana (46 percent), Tennessee (45 percent), Kentucky (45 percent), Nebraska (45 percent) and Wyoming (45 percent).

States exhibiting the least support for Christian nationalism were Oregon (17 percent), Massachusetts (18 percent), Maryland (19 percent), New York (19 percent), New Jersey (20 percent) and Washington (20 percent).

Adherents make up 12 percent and Sympathizers make up 22 percent of

Texas. Skeptics are the largest group in Texas at 39 percent, followed by Rejecters at 24 percent.

Voting patterns reflected the presence of Christian nationalist ideas as well. “Residents of red states are significantly more likely than those in blue states to hold Christian nationalist beliefs,” the report reads. Researchers later note, overall, nearly 4 in 10 residents of red states express support for Christian nationalism.

Christian nationalism by party

The survey also noted a strong correlation between support for Christian nationalism and support for the Republican Party, as well as for former President Donald Trump, who long has made appeals to Christian nationalists on the stump.

Last week, in [addressing the annual gathering](#) of National Religious Broadcasters, a disproportionately evangelical Christian group, [Trump promised](#) the crowd: “If I get in, you’re going to be using that power at a level that you’ve never used before.” He later added: “With your help and God’s grace, the great revival of America begins on Nov. 5.”

In PRRI’s survey, among those who hold favorable views of Trump, 55 percent qualify as Christian nationalists (21 percent Adherents and 34 percent Sympathizers). Only 15 percent (4 percent Adherents and 11 percent Sympathizers) of those who hold favorable views of President Joe Biden were identified as Christian nationalists.

“As the proportion of Christian nationalists in a state increases, the percentage of residents who voted for Trump in 2020 also increases,” the report reads. “If the analysis is restricted to white Americans only, the relationship between state-level support for Christian nationalism and votes for Trump in 2020 becomes even stronger.”

Christian nationalism by faith

The survey found support for Christian nationalism concentrated in two religious groups: white evangelical Protestants (66 percent) and Hispanic Protestants (55 percent).

Christians who ascribe to beliefs often associated with Pentecostals and charismatic Christianity—such as modern-day prophecy, spiritual healing and the prosperity gospel—were particularly drawn to the ideology.



Trump supporters—some holding Bibles and religious banners—gather outside the Capitol, Wednesday, Jan. 6, 2021, in Washington. (AP Photo/John Minchillo)

Christian nationalism has been associated with political violence in part because of the ideology's [visible influence on the Capitol insurrection](#) that took place on Jan. 6, 2021.

According to PRRI's survey, there's reason to suspect that association is not a coincidence: Christian nationalists are about twice as likely as other Americans to believe political violence may be justified, with 38 percent of

Adherents and 33 percent of Sympathizers agreeing “because things have gotten so far off track, true American patriots may have to resort to violence to save the country.”

The survey also offered a potential preview of how Christian nationalism—and the political coalitions associated with it—could end up shaping this year’s presidential election. Asked about immigration and access to guns, about 50 percent of Adherents said they would vote only for a candidate who shared their views on the issues.

But the most ardent Christian nationalists hardly will be the most powerful force come November. Asked about abortion, half of Rejectors—who alone nearly outnumber Adherents—said they were unwilling to support a candidate who differs from them on their mostly liberal abortion views.

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