

# 2nd Opinion: Eclipse of white Christian America

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For most of the country's history, white Christian America—the cultural and political edifice built primarily by white Protestant Christians—set the tone for our national conversations and shaped American ideals. But today, many white Christian Americans feel profoundly anxious as their numbers



and influence are waning. Robert P. JonesThe two primary branches of their family tree, white mainline and white evangelical Protestants, offer competing narratives about their decline. White mainline Protestants blame evangelical Protestants for turning off the younger generation with their anti-gay rhetoric and tendency to conflate Christianity with conservative, nationalist politics. White evangelical Protestants, on the other hand, blame mainline Protestants for undermining Christianity because of their willingness to sell out traditional beliefs to accommodate contemporary culture.

The key question is not why one white Protestant subgroup is faring worse than another, but why white Protestantism as a whole—arguably the most powerful cultural force in the history of the United States—has faded. The answer is, in part, a matter of powerful demographic changes.

[Read the full column](#) at *The Atlantic*.