

Nationalism seems to rising in the world these days, and even many Christians are caught up in its fervor. Is Nationalism appropriate for Christians?

THE MESSAGE OF NATIONALISM

The underlying thrust of Nationalism is – "*My nation, my country, right or wrong!"*

"Can a corrupt throne be allied with you – a throne that brings on misery by its decrees?" (Psalm 94:20 NIV) With all of a nation's benefits, the historical facts are that many nations were built on rebellion, land seizure, and broken promises, treaties, murder, oppression, etc. A nation's status in the world is often achieved through "misery" on the

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backs of the rest of the world. Is this something to be proud of? Nationalism exalts one's nation over all other nations.

CHRISTIAN CITIZENSHIP

Nationalism focuses on one's identity in this world. Jesus counsels the opposite:

"If you belonged to this world, the world would love its own, but because I have chosen you out if the world, the world hates you" (John 15:19 NAB)

A Christian's identity, on the other hand, is with God's kingdom under Christ.

"But our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Philippians 3:20 NIV).*"'But our citizenship is in heaven'. This phrase emphasizes the believer's true identity and allegiance. In the Roman world, citizenship was a prized status, granting rights and privileges. Philippi, a Roman colony, was populated by many Roman citizens who understood the value of this status. Paul uses this concept to remind believers that their ultimate allegiance is not to earthly kingdoms but to the heavenly kingdom. This aligns with Jesus' teaching in John 18:36, where He states His kingdom is not of this world. The idea of heavenly citizenship also connects to Hebrews 11:13-16, where the faithful are described as strangers and exiles on earth, seeking a better, heavenly country."—Bible Hub Study Bible*

Since a Christian's primary "citizenship" is in heaven, not this world, Nationalism is completely out of harmonize with Biblical Christianity. This is why Peter refers to genuine Christians as being **"foreigners and exiles" (1 Peter 2:12 NIV)**

BIBLICAL VIEW

Nationalism moves national identities into the foreground.

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The New Testament counsels **“that there be no divisions among you” (1 Corinthians 1:10), “there is neither Jew nor Greek . . . you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28).** Biblical Christianity blurs national identities into the background, making them non-issues.

“In which there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave and freeman, but Christ is all in all” (Colossians 3:11 LSB). Nationalism creates ugly identity distinctions. Genuine Christianity eliminates divisions under Christ, our leader.

Early Christians were corrected for having **“made distinctions among yourselves” (James 2:4 ESV; LSB).** What the world emphasizes and exalts is what the New Testament specifically counsels against, and is exactly what Biblical Christianity is not – *divisive!*

While Nationalism exalts one nation, or “*throne*“, over all other nations, or “*thrones*“, true Christians, on the other hand, serve a higher throne.

What is that?

“To him who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb be praise and honor and glory and power, for ever and ever!” (Revelation 5:13 NIV). Serving Almighty God through his Son, Jesus Christ, should be at the forefront of a Christian’s life. Nationalism impedes such servitude.

CHRISTIAN ALLEGIANCE

Early Christians gave their **“allegiance”** to **“God”** and “Jesus”. We read nothing in the New Testament about early Christians aligning themselves with Jewish Nationalism, Nationalism of the Roman Empire, or with any earthly nationalism.

In contrast to Nationalism, early Christians, at times, were said to be **“all guilty of treason**

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against Caesar, for they profess allegiance to another king, named Jesus" (Acts 17:7 NIV).

"Let us offer through Jesus a continual sacrifice of praise to God, proclaiming our allegiance in his name" (Hebrews 13:15 NLT). Early Christians gave their **"allegiance"** to **"God"** through"Jesus".

In one of the last books of the Bible written, likely in the late 90's, notice to whom Christians are to give their primary allegiance, according to the scriptures:

"His command is that we should give our allegiance to his Son Jesus Christ, and to love one another"—1 John 3:23 REB

"You have given your allegiance to the Son of God; This letter is to assure you that you have eternal life"— 1 John 5:13 REB

CONCLUSION

Since a genuine Biblical Christian's real citizenship is in heaven, and his/her allegiance is to be given to God through Christ, Nationalism is in direct violation Bible principles, and is totally out of place for Christians.

For more information about this subject, please see:

> *Is Nationalism Idolatry?*

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