

Disarming Leviathan: Loving Your Christian Nationalist Neighbor

Caleb E. Campbell

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Evangelical pastor Caleb E. Campbell's *Disarming Leviathan* is an earnest text that works to understand the phenomenon of rising Christian nationalism in the United States.

Following the upheavals of 2020 and 2021, including the contentious presidential election and the January 6th insurrection, Campbell came to the troubling realization that a wedge had formed between him and the religious congregation he served. This was the catalyst for his book, which first outlines Christian nationalism's origins before illustrating a loving approach to diffusing it. Christian nationalism is introduced as an amalgam of religion and politics that warps biblical teachings into an ideological force bent on political power and policy change. But rather than responding with indignation, reprisal, or logical argumentation, Campbell argues that Christians should engage in religious outreach with nationalists to bring them back into the fold.

Exemplifying a compassionate missionary approach, the book is informed by myriad voices and experiences. It recounts conversations with advocates from Christian nationalist groups and reveals the ordinary people who are drawn toward the ideology. It includes a clear sense of the challenges that face people on both sides of the divide. Further, it leads by example: Campbell himself had an apathetic religious childhood and flirted with Neo-Nazism ("I borrowed the tribe's convictions in order to belong.") before finding his way to an Evangelical church. Paired with scriptural analyses and rigorous inquiries into Christian nationalism's appeal, his book is intimate as it explores what it takes to effect such a change of heart.

Charting a path forward in life, politics, and religion, *Disarming Leviathan* is a compassionate religious text that practices what it preaches, guiding people toward a less divisive future.

WILLEM MARX (July / August 2024)

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