

Why Do Evangelicals Worship Trump? The Answer Should Be Obvious

Movement conservatism operates like a religion. In the president, it's found its savior.

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Why do white right-wing Christian evangelicals support Donald Trump? The answer is quite simple. Their agenda is his agenda. Trump and the Republican Party are working to take away women's reproductive rights, and to extending special "conscience" protections to "Christians" who feel that their faith should somehow supersede the law. They view the poor, the disabled, and others as "useless eaters," and are working to protect white privilege and the power of white right-wing Christians in all areas of American life. Trump is also a petit-fascist and an authoritarian. This vision of the world is embraced in every way by right-wing Christians.

Too many pundits and other members of the chattering class prefer to make riddles out of the obvious: They obsess about evangelical leaders offering "[mulligans](#)" for Trump's "sins" and other assorted examples of right-wing Christian hypocrisy.

While the answer to this supposed riddle is nothing more than crude realpolitik, the context, logic and implications of right-wing Christian support for Trump remain important.

Consider the following.

As shown by his words, deeds and action, [Donald Trump is evil](#). Right-wing Christian evangelicals continue to support him despite their obsession with the mythological figure known as the anti-Christ.

Writing at the History News Network, [Ed Simon explores](#) this theme:

There is an irony in all of this. Since the resurgence of politicized evangelical Christianity with the ascendancy of Ronald Reagan, many apocalyptic minded conservative Christians made a sort of prophetic parlor game out of conjecturing who the potential anti-Christ could be. Figures from Hal Lindsey, to Pat Robertson, Oral Roberts, and Jerry Falwell often fingered world leaders or liberal politicians as being in league with Satan. An irony, since if the anti-Christ is supposed to be a manipulative, powerful, smooth-talking demagogue with the ability to sever people from their most deeply held beliefs, who would be a better candidate than the seemingly indestructible Trump?

Well, I don't believe in a literal anti-Christ, and to accuse Trump of being one gives the president far too much credit. At his core he is simply a consummate narcissist with little intelligence and less curiosity, one who has somehow become the most powerful man in the world. And that's certainly dangerous enough without invoking anything supernatural. Still, it's surprising that evangelical Christians, who for years preached about such a figure, seem to lack the self-

awareness to identify something so anti-Christian in Trump himself. Or worse yet, they certainly recognize it, but don't care.

Conservatism and racism are now one and the same thing in post-civil rights era America. Donald Trump is the human embodiment of that convergence and an avatar for white identity politics and white rage. Right-wing Christianity is central to the triumph of white supremacy over the Republican Party. Right-wing evangelical Christians supported the American apartheid of the Jim and Jane Crow era, and now support Trump's "Make America Great Again" (i.e., white again) agenda. The global color line is a story of continuity that is often masked by superficial change. Trumpism is not a surprise; it is another iteration of the white rage and white backlash politics that have plagued America since before the founding.

In many ways, Donald Trump is "White Jesus." Writing at the Huffington Post, [Minister Brandi Miller explains](#) this powerful metaphor, defining White Jesus as a tool used by many whites, both religious and secular, to justify their votes for Trump:

We must consider how one can use the name Jesus — a marginalized Palestinian who espoused non-violence, love, inclusion and a preferential option for the poor — to endorse a president whose violence, bigotry and love of money is unprecedented. ...

It seems as if white evangelicals will overlook every moral inconsistency and offense if it means ushering in the Kingdom of White Jesus. They will overlook the assault and dehumanization of women if it means stopping legal access to abortion. They will overlook the belief in traditional family models if it mean having a president who will espouse and protect "traditional marriage" despite having been in multiple problematic marriages of his own. Trump allows white evangelicals to protect whiteness and its benefits and tenets because white supremacy and the values of evangelical Christianity are so intertwined.

Trump has become a pseudo-Christian savior, to whom evangelicals offer their votes their allegiance and their political donations, worshiping at the altar of this false image of God.

Movement conservatism, after all, can be considered a [type of political religion](#). It relies on untrue fables and faith divorced from empirical reality, it drives out heretics and other non-believers and it offers a creed and rites which are not to be questioned or violated under any circumstances. In total, American conservatism at present is deeply fundamentalist. But it is also deceptively inclusive: authoritarians, bigots, racists, misogynists, white supremacists, nativists, gangster capitalists, the willfully ignorant and anti-intellectual, and those who eschew reason for passion are all welcome.

As the American people (and the world) watch Donald Trump's State of the Union address on Tuesday evening they should ask themselves who worships this false god, and why.

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