University of Oklahoma Graduate College

GOD BLESS (MY) AMERICA: RELIGION, CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM, AND AMERICAN IDENTITY

A Thesis
Presented to
The Graduate Faculty

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

By

Alexander W. Davis

Norman, Oklahoma
May 2019

GOD BLESS (MY) AMERICA: RELIGION, CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM, AND AMERICAN IDENTITY

A THESIS APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE BY

Dr. Allen Hertzke
Department of Political Science
University of Oklahoma

Dr. Allyson Shortle
Department of Political Science
University of Oklahoma

Dr. Joe Ripberger
Department of Political Science
University of Oklahoma

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Abstract

There has been ample academic research exploring the concept of ”Christian Nationalism” and how it affects the political views and activities of its adherents. Christian Nationalism can be defined as the belief that being Christian is important to being authentically American. This paper takes a different approach to understanding the concept, and seeks to find which people are most likely to hold Christian Nationalist views. Ultimately I examine the relationship between religious fundamentalism, attendance, and Christian Nationalism.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

In January of 2017, shortly after taking office, President Trump signed an executive order banning immigration from seven countries, all of which were predominantly composed of Muslims. After an extensive legal battle, the Supreme Court upheld a version of the ban. With the help of his advisor Stephen Miller, Trump and his administration have made efforts to curtail the amount of legal immigration the United States takes in. Beyond what many consider to be the morally reprehensible nature of these actions, along with others undertaken by the Trump administration, these actions raise questions of who gets to count as an American. Especially among supporters of Donald Trump and these proposed policies, these efforts bring questions of national identity and what the basis of American national identity should be into popular political discourse.

The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of who some people consider to be American. Questions of national identity have always been of extreme importance, seeing as the out-group tends to be more easily marginalized than the in-group. Perhaps now more than ever, it is imperative that we better understand the processes undertaken by some when processing questions of national identity. With the election and presidency of Donald Trump, such questions are more salient than in the past. Numerous efforts undertaken by the Trump administration raise questions of national identity and who gets to qualify as being "American".

Throughout the course of this paper, my attention is primarily on the Religious Right. Scholarship on evangelical Christians and their relationship with the Republican Party has been ubiquitous. Even now, the white evangelical community by and large remains a stalwart of Trump support. In this paper, I will examine questions of religious and national identity and political support of the Republican Party. As a student of religion and politics,

and having focused on the Religious Right for most of my graduate education, I focus my attention on said Religious Right.

Perhaps there is a personal stake in these questions, having been raised in an environment in which I was exposed to much of the thinking associated with Christian conservatism, but I contend that my interest in these questions runs deeper than that. Questions of who counts as American matter much beyond some abstract, theoretical interest. The people affected by these policies count as human just as much as anyone else, and therefore it is important to understand the people pushing policies that will likely hurt them. If we are going to create a society that respects the dignity of human life, that respect must extend to those who are different than us. In seeking to understand who the Religious Right considers different than them, I hope steps can be taken to create a more inclusive nation and world.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW: THE CHRISTIAN RIGHT AND CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM

The natural jumping off point for this exploration is the origins of the Christian Right and previous scholarship on it. Observers have long noted a relationship between religion and politics in the United States. In his seminal work on American democracy, Alexis de Tocqueville wrote "On my arrival in the United States, the religious aspect of the country was the first thing that struck my attention; the longer I stayed there, the more I perceived the great political consequences resulting from this new state of things (Tocqueville 1840, 1; 319-320). For much of American history, the dominant religious divide was between Catholic Christians and Protestant Christians (Layman 1997). Religious minorities existed in the United States, but comprised a much smaller proportion of the population than they do today.

The traditional divide between Catholics and Protestants was largely mirrored by a similar partisan divide. Protestants tended to be Republicans, while the Democrats were the part of "rum, Romanism, and rebellion", in the eyes of 1875 GOP Representative James Blaine (Fowler et al. 2018; 8). This divide was not to last, though. As secularization increased and proliferated throughout the United States, new trends in partisan-religious affiliation would emerge.

With the growth of secular life and the shaking off of traditional religious roots, as well as the culture war that ensued, doctrinal orthodoxy among members of churches increased in importance. As some mainline Protestant churches began to trend towards cultural liberalism, evangelical and conservative Christians began to band together more strongly. As Layman (1997) details, this all resulted in a shift away from Catholic vs. Protestant to a new divide, with religious conservatives on one side and religious liberals, paired with

secularists, on the other. This division began to become mirrored in the electorate, with doctrinal orthodoxy and conservatism increasingly aligned with voting for the Republican Party.

This realignment can be largely traced back to Jerry Falwell. With the creation of the Moral Majority, Falwell started a movement intended to unite conservative Christians against the forced of secularization and cultural liberalism. The avenue through which this goal would be achieved was the Republican Party. Through exploiting this "us versus them" narrative, Falwell and his allied planted the seeds of the alliance between conservative Christians and the Republican Party that we still observe in large part today (Jelen 1993).

With partisan identity being very strong (Campbell et al. 1960), it makes sense that we still see that alignment of Republicans with conservative, evangelical Christians. Political science scholarship has extensively documented the ways in which the religious right has been politically active in support of the Republican Party for the last four decades. Indeed, the Republican Party has been very skillful at framing elections as matters of morality, and utilizing them as battles in a larger culture war (Leege et al. 2002). In fact, the relationship between Republicans and evangelicals is so strong that the GOP routinely employs the use of certain "code words", phrases with meaning for evangelicals only (Calfano and Djupe 2009).

2.0.1 Christian Nationalism

The question most pertinent to this paper is whether or not the Christian Right processes questions of American identity differently than others. More specifically put: Do members of the Religious Right believe that Christianity is integral to American identity? This type of thinking, the belief that Christianity is necessary to be authentically American, is known as Christian Nationalism. The purpose of this paper is to investigate if members of the Christian Right hold higher levels of Christian Nationalism than other Americans.

Documenting the levels of Christian Nationalism in America between 1996 and 2014,

Whitehead and Sheitle (2018) found that Christianity as a symbolic boundary for inclusion into America society initially increased from 1996 to 2004, and then declined from 2004 to 2014. Interestingly, the authors found that while Christianity was still linked to American identity in 2004, other symbolic boundaries no longer were. This suggests that specific events and periods of time can exert independent influence on symbolic boundaries of national identity.

The literature on Christian nationalism contains many investigations into what attitudes and views are closely linked with the contention that being Christian is important to being American. McDaniel, Noordudin, and Shortle (2011) found that holding Christian Nationalist beliefs predicted more affective attitudes towards immigration. Defining Christian nationalism as believing that God favors the United States and has a special role for the nation, the authors argue that Christian nationalists see immigrants as a threat to American identity. Additionally, Dahab and Omori (2018) examined what Christian Nationalists believe about Muslim Americans and infractions on their civil liberties. Perhaps unsurprisingly, they found that Christian Nationalists were less concered with violations of Muslims' civil liberties than other groups. In a related study, Shortle and Gaddie (2015) found that Christian nationalism and Biblical literalism were strongly related to holding anti-Muslim views more generally.

There has historically been a bit of disagreement among scholars of Christian Nationalism on whether or not it creates hostile attitudes towards immigrants. Bloom, Arikan, and Courtemanchie (2015) note that some scholars claim that religion creates negative attitudes towards immigrants, while others find that it can create feelings of compassion and inclusivity. In an attempt to clear up that ambiguity in the literature, the authors find that those who hole religion as a social identity carry more hostile views towards immigrants if the immigrants are of a different religious or ethnic group. However, the same people tend to have warmer feelings towards immigrants of similar religious or ethnic groups.

Sherkat and Lehman (2018) continue down the same line of inquiry and examine how

different Christian sects tend to feel towards immigrants and Muslims. The authors find that elite Protestant churches (Episcopalian, Methodist, Presbyterian, etc.), as well as the Catholic Church, make efforts to create feelings of inclusion and compassion towards immigrants. On the other hand, sectarian Protestants (evangelicals), white Catholics, and those who believe the Bible to be the literal word of God tend to have more negative views about immigrants and Muslims. This finding perfectly illustrates the new divide in American religion and politics. Catholics, traditionally identifying staunchly with the Democratic Party, are divided down racial lines, with many white Catholics reflecting more evangelical cultural and political tendencies.

Individuals sympathetic to views of Christian Nationalism have been found to hold more conservative views on a variety of topics. Perry and Whitehead (2015) found that Christian nationalist are more opposed to inter-racial marriage than others. The authors credit this sentiment to notions of social identity complexity. They argue that the convergence of religious and national identity (like Christian Nationalism) reinforces in-group boundaries. Indeed, the authors find that Christian nationalism strengthens concerns about racial purity, and that it influences how Christian Nationalists regulate racial boundaries.

Additionally, views of Christian Nationalism have also been linked to attitudes about police brutality. In one study conducted, Christian nationalists were more likely to believe that police treat blacks the same as they treat whites, and any disproportionate police violence against blacks is because they are more violent (Perry, Whitehead, and Davis 2019). Indeed, the authors also argue that Christian Nationalists construct rigid boundaries of ethnic and national group membership, and that those boundaries influence their racial prejudice. Interestingly, the same study found that their result held even when they controlled for specific religious and political views, suggesting that Christian Nationalism exerts an independent influence over and above traditional political and religious views.

The above research is further reinforced by Davis (2018), who found that Christian Nationalism is linked to much more punitive attitudes about crime, including higher support

for the death penalty. The author linked these beliefs about "cracking down on troublemakers" to the fact that the convergence of religious and national identity increases desires for group homogeneity, and that said desire increases how much someone believes levels of social control are necessary. In this case, the findings suggest that Christian Nationalist was a more homogeneous society, one more like themselves, and in order to achieve that goal, they support executing criminals and jailing "bad people". In a separate study, Davis (2018) also found that Christian Nationalism is also linked to more covert and subtle forms of racism. Specifically, the author found that Christian nationalists are less supportive of racially-coded government spending, such as increased welfare spending. Instead, Christian Nationalists would rather increase funding for the border and efforts to crack down on crime.

Are these effects uniform across race? Perry and Whitehead (2018) examined this question, and found that black Americans who believe American is a Christian nation actually hold higher levels of support for ideas of racial justice The authors argue that this suggests that for white Christian Nationalists, part of their Christian Nationalist identity is rooted in some measure of white supremacy.

The strength of the Christian Nationalist ideology can be found even outside Christians. In fact, Delehanty, Edgell, and Stewart (2018) found that a majority of Americans, not just evangelicals, respond positively to platitudes that include evangelical discourse. The authors argue that conservative Christianity influences politics above and beyond simply giving beliefs and identities, but that it provides a set of boundaries and a picture of American identity that impacts groups even outside the evangelical community.

CHAPTER 3
THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

Missing from much of the scholarship on Christian Nationalism are questions of how fundamentalism and religious attendance impact views about Christian Nationalism, In much of the scholarship on the Christian Right more broadly, religious attendance has been shown to be an separator within Christian circles vis-a-vis political action. Smith and Walker (2013) found that, especially for evangelicals, increased religious attendances tends to garner increased political participation. Normatively, it is reasonable for this paper to examine how religious attendance affects perceptions of American identity. If I want to understand how religious views impact how individuals process questions of ethnic and national identity, it makes sense to attempt to identity which types Christians will be most likely to act on those beliefs in the political arena.

Research has shown that measures of Biblical literalism impact views about Muslims and immigrants (Shortle and Gaddie 2015; Sherkat and Lehman 2018). To take this one step further, I am interested in how more encompassing measures of fundamentalism impact attitudes of Christian Nationalism. If Biblical literalism engenders negative feelings towards immigrants and Muslims, it stands to reason that those self-identifying as fundamentalist would hold similar views. Because of this, fundamentalists should tend to believe that being a Christian is more important to American identity than other groups.

It has been demonstrated that there is a difference in political activity between more religiously-attendant Christians and those who attend services less frequently. Therefore it is reasonable to propose that Christians who attend church more often will be more likely to hold Christian Nationalist views than Christians who attend church less often. Additionally, there could actually be an interaction effect between religious attendance and fundamentalism in predicting whether or not an individual holds Christian Nationalist views. This

would suggest that there is variation within levels of fundamentalism determined by how often an individual attends church in predicting Christian Nationalism.

3.0.1 Hypotheses

Based on the literature and theory above, I specify the following hypotheses:

H1: Individuals who self-identify as fundamentalist will be more likely to be Christian Nationalists than individuals who do not.

H2: Individuals who attend religious services more often will be more likely to be Christian Nationalists

H3: There will be an interaction effect between fundamentalism and religious attendance, such that more religiously-attendant fundamentalists will be more likely to be Christian Nationalists that their less religiously-attendant counterparts.

CHAPTER 4

DATA AND METHODS

The data used for this project came from the 2014 iteration of the General Social Survey, or GSS. The GSS is run out of the University of Chicago and is a well-regard survey of Americans on a wide variety of political and sociological questions and issues. Of most interest for the purposes of this paper were three variables: a measure of fundamentalism, a measure of religious attendance, and a measure of Christian Nationalism.

In order to assess a respondent's fundamentalism level, the interviewers asked respondents if they considered themselves to be fundamentalist, moderate, or liberal. For the purposes of this paper, I reverse-coded this variable so that it ran liberal, moderate, and then fundamentalist. While self-identification can have its drawbacks, I argue that this type of measure actually creates a conservative test of my hypotheses, because of the social desirability bias and people not wanting to appear "bigoted' or "backwards". This would suggest that there could plausibly be individuals who are fundamentalist, but don't respond that they are.

The measure of religious attendance is a simple measure, with the researchers asking respondents how often they attend religious services. The variable runs on a scale of 0 to 8, with 0 indicating never, and 8 indicating more than once per week.

The variable used for a measure of Christian Nationalism comes from the researchers asking respondents how important being a Christian is to being an American. The variable runs on a scale of one to four with a one initially indicating very important and a four indicating not important. For the purposes of this paper I reverse-coded the variable so that a four indicates the respondent believing being a Christian is very important to being an American and a one indicating that it is not important.

In order to assess the probability of an individual being a Christian Nationalist, I utilize

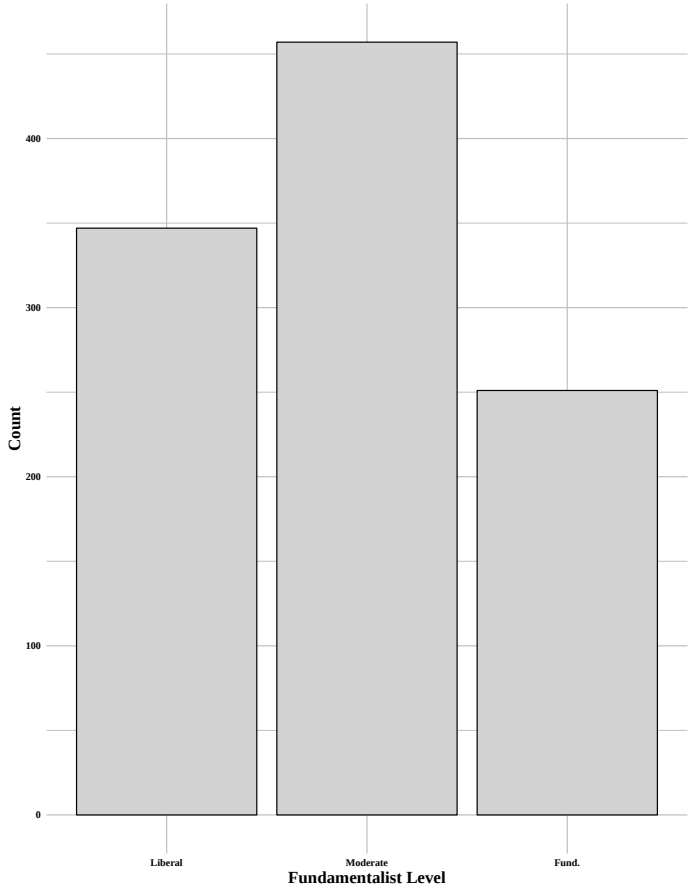
the method of logistic regression. Logistic regression is used to calculate the probability of a binary outcome occurring. In order to use this method, I turned the measure of Christian Nationalism into a binary variable. Responses of three and four, those who answered that Christianity is "fairly important" or "very important" to being American, were coded as a 1. Responses of one or two, those who answered that Christianity is "not very important" and "not important at all" were coded as 0.

While the decision to make the dependent variable binary limits some of the methodological flexibility afforded to me as a researcher, it allows me to use the method of logistic regression. Logistic regression with a binary dependent variable creates results that are more intuitive than some of the more complex statistics methods like ordered logistic or ordered probit regression, while being an overall superior statistical method for predicting outcomes than ordinary least squares regression. Additionally, this decision is driven by my primary motivation, which is to understand a particular set of people. If Christian Nationalism was an independent variable, keeping it ordered would make sense. But as a dependent variable, making it binary allows me to have a larger size of respondents in the categories.

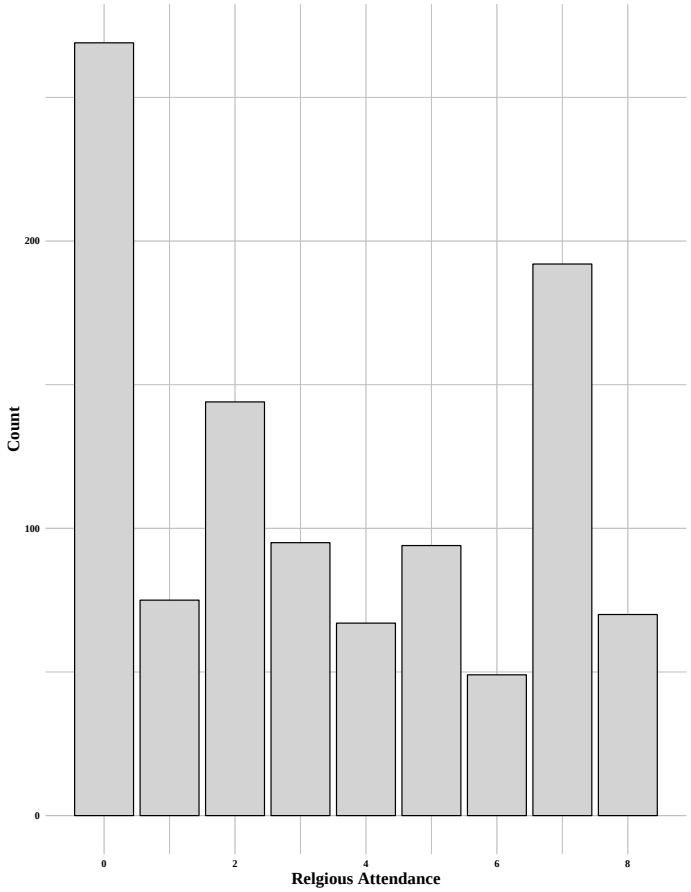
In order to test my hypotheses I constructed two logistic regression models. The first model has the binary measure of Christian Nationalism as the dependent variable, the fundamentalist measure and religious attendance measure as key independent variables, and measures of income, education, and political ideology as independent variables held constant at their means. The first model was used to test hypotheses one and two. The second model is identical to the first, except fundamentalism and religious attendance are interacted. This allows me to test for variations in impact that the independent variables have on the dependent variables within the independent variables themselves. Better put: this method allows me to see if the impact fundamentalism has on Christian Nationalism varies by level of religious attendance. This model was used to test hypothesis three.

4.0.1 Data Characteristics

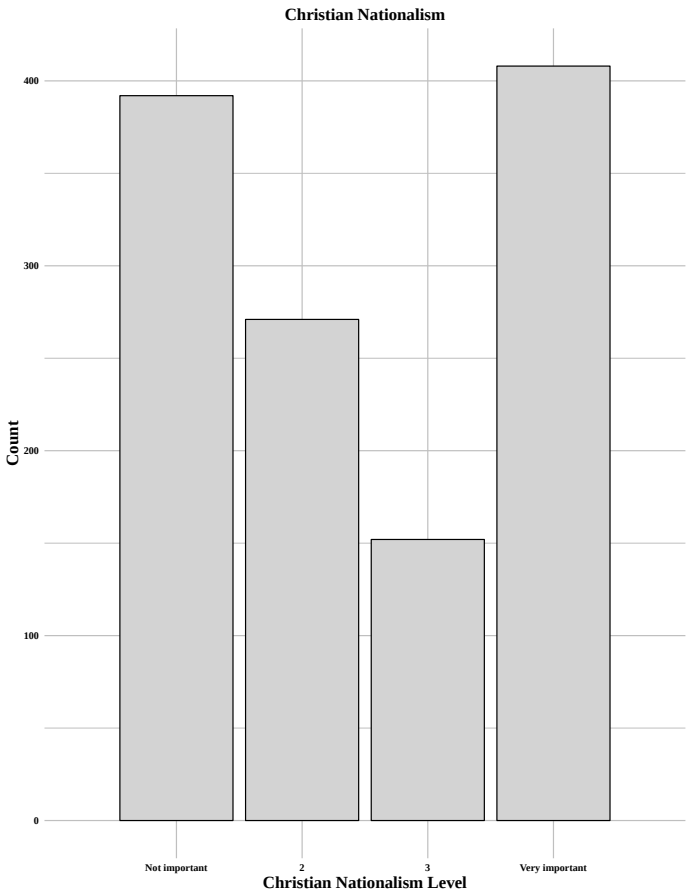
The first bar plot shows the breakdown of fundamentalism levels throughout the respondents of the survey. It is evident that the modal response is moderate, the second most likely responses liberal, and the third is fundamentalist. Again, this should create a more conservative test of the hypotheses.



The second bar plot shows the distribution of the religious attendance variable. Ranging from zero to eight, zero indicates that the respondent never attends a religious service, while eight indicates that the respondent attends services more than once per week. The spike at the value seven is because a seven indicates that the respondent attends church weekly.



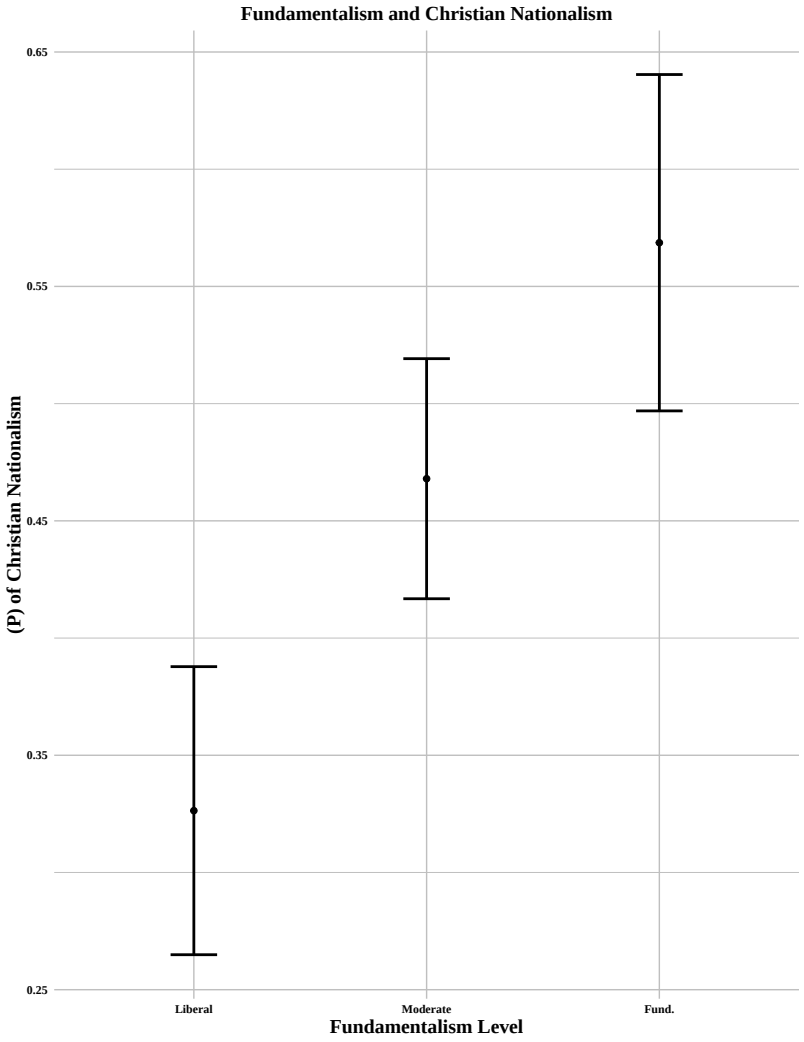
The third bar plot illustrates the original breakdown of the primary dependent variable: Christian Nationalism. As mentioned earlier, this variable was re-coded to be a binary indicator. This visualization is meant to provide a deeper picture of the variable.


Christian Nationalism
400
300
200
100
0
Count
Not important
2
3
Very important
Christian Nationalism Level

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

The results of model one are reported in table one in the appendix. The coefficients are reported in logged odds, but converted to probabilities for the purposes of analysis and visualization. The first figure displays the predicted probabilities of being a Christian Nationalist with 95 percent confidence intervals, based on respondents' reported levels of fundamentalism.



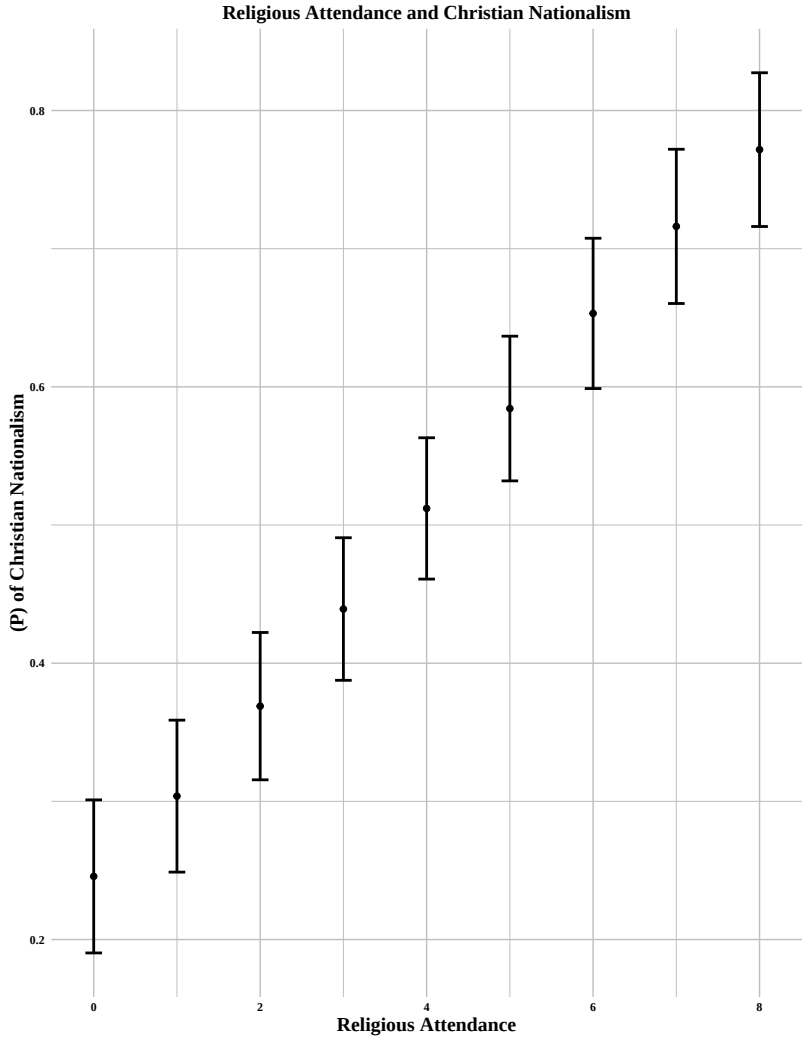
The results are very conclusive. Fundamentalists have a greatly increased probability

of being a Christian Nationalist, with the upper bound of the confidence interval stretching beyond .6, or 60 percent probability. The reported probability is .569 for fundamentalists. Those reporting as liberal and moderate were less likely to be Christian Nationalists, with liberals have a .326 probability of thinking Christianity is important to American identity, and moderates reporting a .468 probability of being a Christian Nationalist. These results were calculated while holding religious attendance, income, education, and political ideology constant at their respective means.

Hypothesis one stated that individuals who report as fundamentalist will be more likely to be Christian Nationalists. Given that fundamentalists have a greater probability of being Christian Nationalists than liberals completely, and largely moderates, I can safely reject the null hypothesis associated with hypothesis one.

I also used the first model to test hypothesis two. In this case, I held the control variables constant at their respective means, sequenced religious attendance from zero to eight, and held the measure of fundamentalist constant at moderate. This created a more conservative test of the hypothesis, as holding the fundamentalist measure constant at fundamentalist would likely create even more pronounced results.

The second figure displays these results with 95 percent confidence intervals.



There is a clear increase in the predicted probability of being a Christian Nationalist as the respondent's religious attendance increases from zero to eight. The predicted probability of being a Christian Nationalist at the maximum level of religious attendance is a stunning .772, indicating a highly-likely outcome. The predicted probability of being a Christian Nationalist at the lowest level of religious attendance is .246, much less likely. This comes out to a first difference of .526, which is a stark difference between the top and bottom.

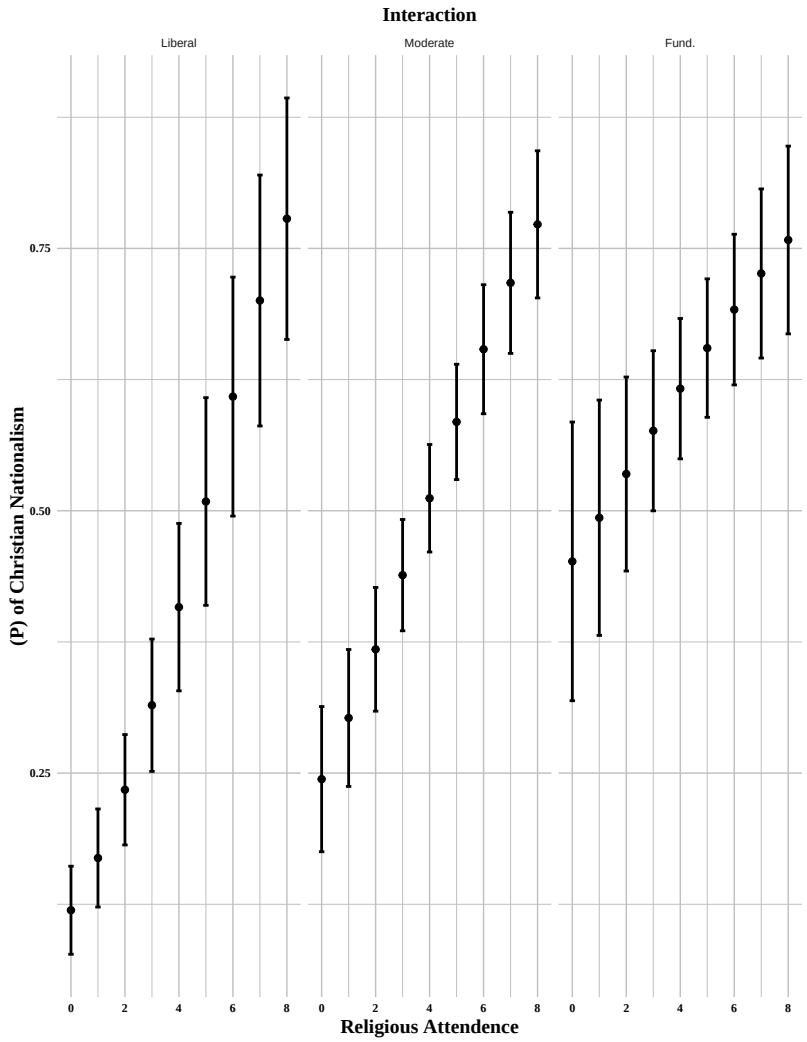
Admittedly there are fewer respondents at the extremes of religious attendance. Therefore it is proper and necessary to report the predicted probabilities of individuals in the middle of religious attendance. With 95 percent confidence intervals, the results of the

model and predictions indicate that individuals whose religious attendance measure is below four (less than once a month) have a negative probability, a decreased likelihood, of holding Christian Nationalist views. On the other hand, those respondents who have a score of five on religious attendance (meaning they attend religious services at at least two to three times per month) have an increased probability of believing that being a Christian is important to being authentically American.

Hypothesis two posited that individuals with higher levels of religious attendance will be more likely to hold Christian Nationalist views. The results above certainly corroborate that claim. Additionally, the results in table one in the appendix indicate that the coefficient for religious attendance is statistically significant at the .001 level, easily passing conventional statistical significance tests. All things considered, I can safely reject the null associated with hypothesis two.

Hypothesis three posited that there would be an interaction effect between religious attendance and fundamentalism. An interaction exists when the effect that a variable x has on variable y changes with a third variable, z. They theory behind this hypothesis is that more religiously-attendant fundamentalists may act differently than less religiously-attendant fundamentalists. Additionally, more religiously-attendant moderates or liberals may behave differently than less religiously-attendant fundamentalists.

Model two tested this hypothesis, and the results are in the third plot, as well as table two in the appendix.



The interaction effect between fundamentalist and religious attendance is statistically significant at the .01 level, and negative. Even with the interaction effect included in the model, measures of fundamentalism and religious attendance are both statistically significant at or below the .01 level.

When predicted probabilities are generated and plotted, the picture becomes more clear. the third plot demonstrates this. There is a positive association for all three levels of fundamentalism between religious attendance and the predicted probability of being a Christian Nationalist. However, this plot demonstrates a more complicated picture than the previous plots.

At low levels of church attendance, there is a large gap between all fundamentalist cat-

egories in reported levels of Christian Nationalism. The predicted probability of Christian Nationalism for the lowest-attending fundamentalist is .45, with predicted probabilities of .24 and .12 for moderates and liberals of the same religious attendance respectively. Meanwhile, the most religiously-attendant fundamentalist, moderate, and liberal each have a predicted probability of holding Christian Nationalist views of .76, .77, and .78 respectively. The actual differences between these probabilities is indistinguishable from zero. As levels of religious attendance increase, the gap between fundamentalists, moderates, and liberals begins to shrink, to the point that the three groups are indistinguishable from each other at the highest levels of religious attendance regarding their levels of Christian Nationalism.

All things considered, I can partially reject the null hypothesis associated with H3. There is an interaction effect, but not necessarily what I expected. I anticipated religious attendance and fundamentalism to interact in a manner that pronounced the differences between the categories of fundamentalism, not obscure them.

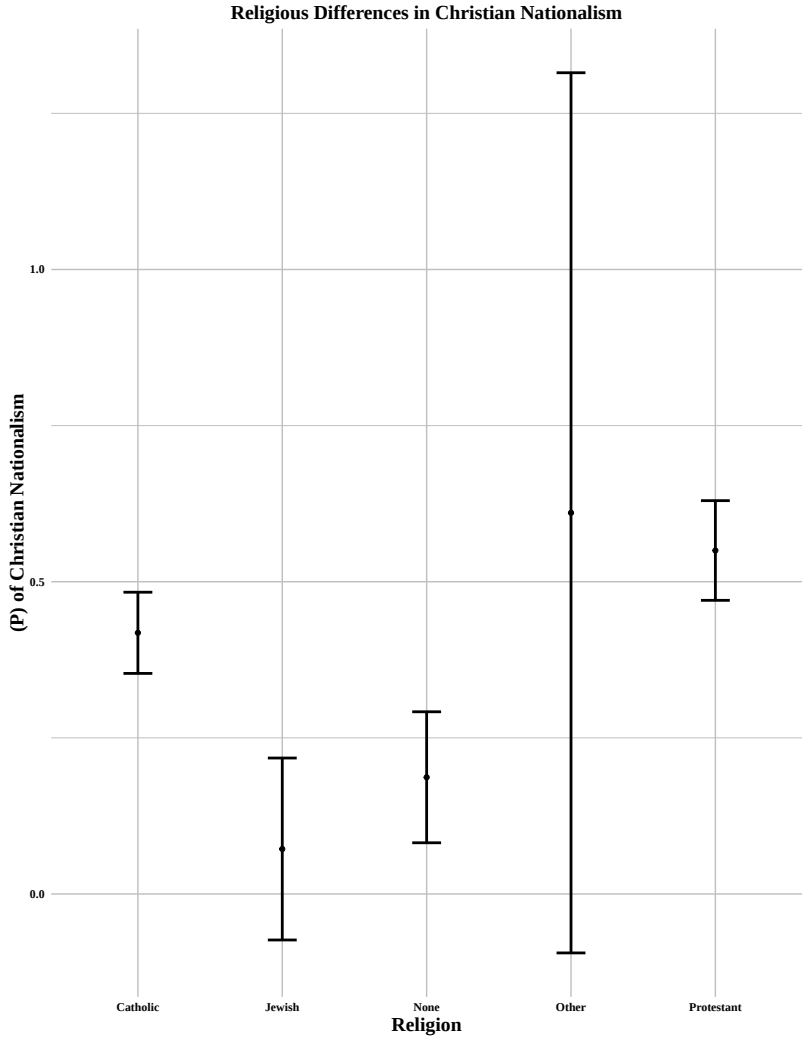
5.1 Additional Discussion

The purpose of this section is to provide some additional exploration into the data. Most specifically, I delve into questions of religious and denominational differences in order to see how specific religious groups and sects relate to Christian Nationalism.

To begin, I added respondent's religious identification into the logistic regression model. The results of the model are displayed in the Religious Differences in Christian Nationalism visualization. Both Catholics and Protestants displayed an statistically significant increase in the probability of being Christian Nationalists. Meanwhile, those who selected "none" as their religious affiliation displayed a significant decreased probability of being a Christian Nationalist.

Interestingly, including specific religious affiliation in logit model rendered self-reported levels of fundamentalism no longer predictive of Christian Nationalist beliefs. Some po-

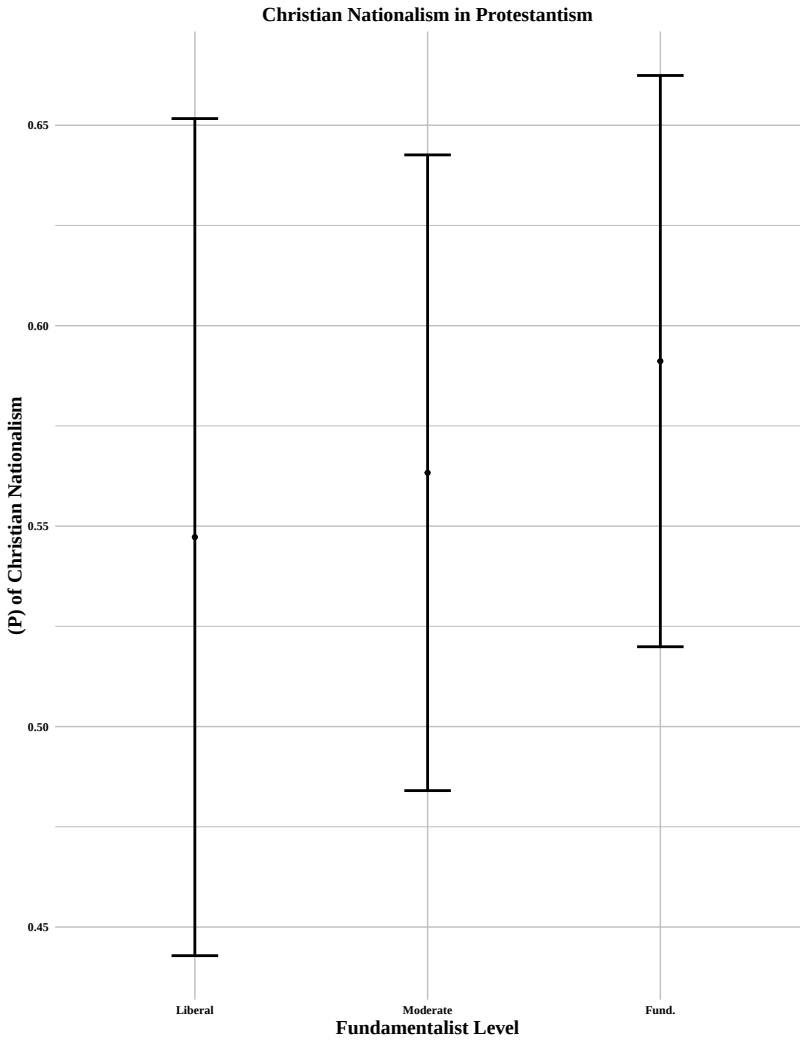
tential reasons for this are explored further below.



Next, I subset the data set to include only Protestants in order to identify what the relationship was between fundamentalism and Christian Nationalism for Protestants specifically. The results of this model are plotted on the Christian Nationalism and Protestantism visualization.

Most critically, fundamentalism does not appear to play a role in measures of Christian Nationalism for Protestants. The differences between the three levels are completely indistinguishable from zero. This gives reason to pause. It appears that, at least for Protestants, there could be something else going on doing the heavy-lifting regarding levels of Christian Nationalism, because the results of my model indicate that Protestants of all fundamental-

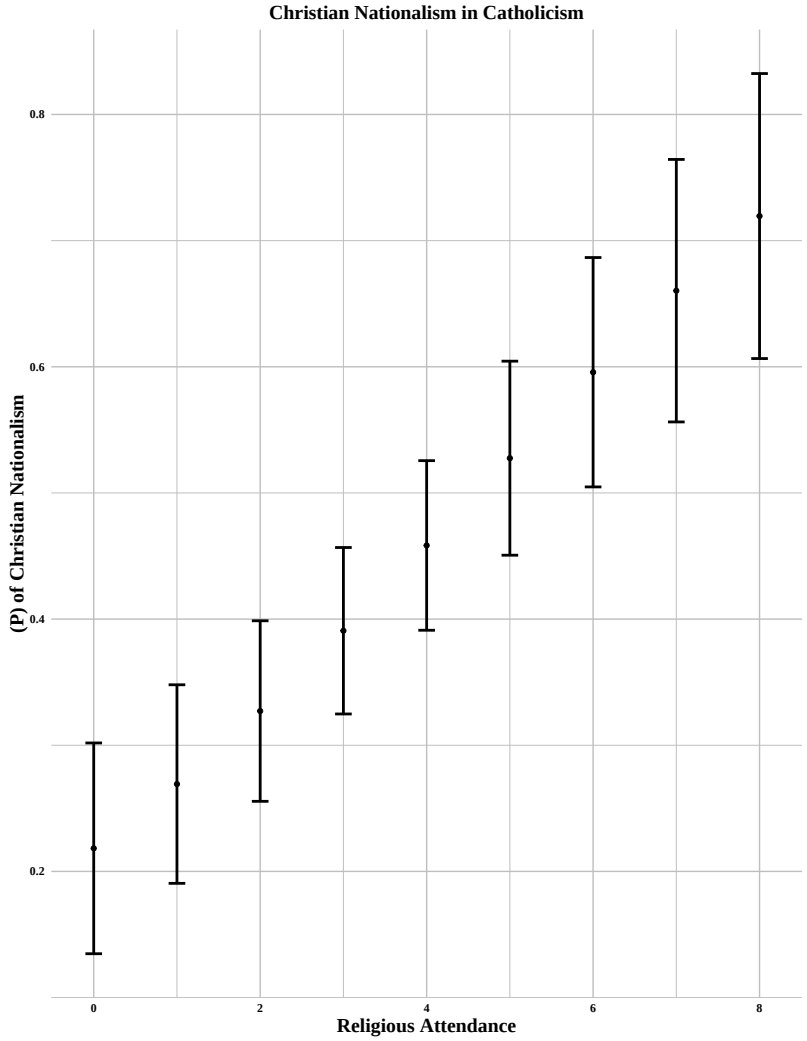
ism levels, on average, display an increased probability of being Christian Nationalists. Future research will need to explore what the actual cause of this could be.



Finally, I subset the data to include only Catholics. Catholics displayed, on average, an increase in probability of Christian Nationalism. I wanted to explore what the cause of that could be, and what the relationship between fundamentalism and Christian Nationalism was for Catholics.

Interestingly, there were no Catholics in the data set who identified as anything other than moderate on the fundamentalism question. Future research should investigate why this might be, and what the overall relationship is between Roman Catholics and religious fundamentalism in the United States.

With the measure of fundamentalism rendered obsolete, I elected to include the measure of religious attendance. In this way, I was examining how religious attendance might affect Catholics' propensity to be Christian Nationalists. The results are displayed in the Christian Nationalism in Catholicism visual.



Highly religiously-attendant Catholics displayed increased probabilities of holding Christian Nationalist views. Beginning at the sixth level of religious attendance, which corresponds with attending church a few times a month, Catholics displayed probabilities distinguishable from and greater than zero of Christian Nationalism.

The findings of this model suggest that Catholics who attend church on a very regular basis exhibit similar propensities towards Christian Nationalism that Protestants do, regard-

less of their fundamentalism level. Future research should further explore the manners in which Catholics and Protestants are becoming more politically homogeneous.

CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSION

The results of hypothesis one are largely in step with what is to be expected from the literature on religion and Christian Nationalism. With previous literature already demonstrating that Biblical literalists tended to hold more Christian Nationalist views, it was not much of a leap of faith to hypothesize that a more robust understanding of fundamentalism would also predict stronger levels of Christian Nationalism. Still, the contribution is productive, and future research should examine more aspects of fundamentalism and how it relates to the conflation of national and religious identity.

Because of the social desirability bias, individuals might not want to identify as a fundamentalist even if they hold those views. Future research should consider using a battery of questions to determine someone's level of fundamentalism, with a scale that has more levels than three.

Hypothesis two sought to take a part of the religion and politics literature and apply it to the discussion of Christian Nationalism. There is an abundance of academic research on how religious attendance augments discussions of religion and political involvement. My intention in bringing measures of religious attendance into the study of Christian Nationalism was to see if religious attendance still played an important role. The results of hypothesis two suggest that religious attendance does have an effect on the probability of being a Christian Nationalist. Future research should consider what it is about increased religious attendance that lends itself to the conflation of national and religious identity. Perhaps going to church more often increase the salience of religion and its importance in one's understanding of identities.

The results of hypothesis three merit the most discussion, and subsequently the most attention from researchers in the future. In interacting fundamentalism and religious atten-

dance, I was interested in finding if there was variation within levels of fundamentalism in their predicted levels of Christian Nationalism. The results were not exactly. Initially, it would have made more sense if increased religious attendance caused fundamentalists to separate themselves from the rest of the levels, moderates and liberals. Put differently, I did not expect moderates and liberals to have any substantive difference in predicted probability of holding Christian Nationalist views.

What I found when I interacted fundamentalism and religious attendance is that religiously-attendant liberals and moderates essentially had the same probability of believing that being a Christian was important to being an American. This is perhaps the most important contribution of this paper to the literature on Christian Nationalism. Going into this project, I held a pre-conceived notion that Christian fundamentalism was both an inherently conservative view and an normatively bad concept. The findings that Christian nationalist views are widespread challenge that notion. There are a wide variety of reasons someone might contend that being Christian is important to being American.

Future research should explore some of these potential reasons. Justifications for this view might be different for immigrants than it is for American citizens. Perhaps some see being Christian as being authentically American in order for them to feel more welcome and at home in an otherwise hostile environment.

Future research in this area is needed to further tease out some of the other intricacies. Why are religious liberals seemingly as likely as religious fundamentalists to be Christian Nationalists? Perhaps there is something happening with specific denominations. There could be racial elements, or even gendered differences. Additionally, the qualities that very religious people, regardless of their specified fundamentalist level, hold to be important could be similar because their religion is remarkably important to them and their identity. If someone is attending church at least once a week, their faith is likely to hold a foundational role in their lives. It then stands to reason that there could be some mixing of identities, even for the religiously-liberal.

One important limitation to keep in mind is that this project utilized one conception of Christian Nationalism, specifically whether or not an individual believed that being Christian is important to being authentically American. There are other ways to conceptualize Christian Nationalism. Indeed, not all fields in academia operationalize the concept in the same way, and there can be healthy scholarly disagreement about what exactly amounts to Christian Nationalism.

The motivation for this paper stems from what I have seen in current events. Who people believe to be authentically American is remarkably important to understand. If we are going to create a society that welcomes all people, we must gain insight into who a large portion of the population considers to be outsides. With a President that has attempted to ban individuals of a different majority religion, as well as an administration that is seeking to limit the amount of people we accept as immigrants, it is imperative that there is a greater understanding of how American identity is processed.

In identifying that there is an interaction between fundamentalism and religious attendance, this paper makes a unique contribution to the literature on Christian Nationalism.

Appendices

APPENDIX A

APPENDIX

Table A.1: Logistic Regression Model with no Interaction

	Christian Nationalism
Moderate	0.596^{***}
	(0.179)
Fundamentalist	1.001^{***}
	(0.210)
Religious Attendance	0.292^{***}
	(0.029)
Education	-0.262^{***}
	(0.029)
Income	0.015
	(0.033)
Ideology	0.092^{*}
	(0.054)
Constant	1.375^{***}
	(0.511)
N	1,055
Log Likelihood	−566.115
AIC	1,146.231

$^{*}p < .1$; $^{**}p < .05$; $^{***}p < .01$

Table A.2: Logistic Regression Model with Interaction

	f.b.amchr
Moderate	0.869^{***}
	(0.276)
Fundamentalist	1.805^{***}
	(0.339)
Religious Attendance	0.407^{***}
	(0.056)
Education	-0.263^{***}
	(0.030)
Income	0.020
	(0.033)
Ideology	0.097^{*}
	(0.054)
Moderate * Religious Attendance	-0.113
	(0.069)
Fundamentalist * Religious Attendance	-0.240^{***}
	(0.077)
Constant	1.030^{*}
	(0.533)
N	1,055
Log Likelihood	-561.262
AIC	1,140.524

$^{*}p < .1$; $^{**}p < .05$; $^{***}p < .01$

REFERENCES

[1] G. A. Petrow, J. E. Transue, and T. Vercellotti, "Do white in-group processes matter, too? white racial identity and support for black political candidates," *Political Behavior*, vol. 40, no. 1, pp. 197–222, Mar. 2018.

[2] P. Ben-Nun Bloom, G. Arikan, and M. Courtemanche, "Religious social identity, religious belief, and anti-immigration sentiment," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 109, no. 2, pp. 203–221, May 2015.

[3] J. Delehanty, P. Edgell, and E. Stewart, "Christian america? secularized evangelical discourse and the boundaries of national belonging," *Social Forces*, vol. 97, no. 3, pp. 1283–1306, Mar. 1, 2019.

[4] E. Leon McDaniel, I. Nooruddin, and A. Faith Shortle, "Divine boundaries: How religion shapes citizens attitudes toward immigrants," *American Politics Research*, vol. 39, no. 1, pp. 205–233, Jan. 2011.

[5] S. L. Perry and A. L. Whitehead, "Christian nationalism and white racial boundaries: Examining whites' opposition to interracial marriage," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, vol. 38, no. 10, pp. 1671–1689, Aug. 9, 2015.

[6] S. L. Perry, A. L. Whitehead, and J. T. Davis, "Nationalism shapes americans views about police (mis)treatment of blacks," *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*, p. 17,

[7] J. Davis, "Enforcing christian nationalism: Examining the link between group identity and punitive attitudes in the united states: ENFORCING CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, vol. 57, no. 2, pp. 300–317, Jun. 2018.

[8] J. T. Davis, "Funding gods policies, defending whiteness: Christian nationalism and whites attitudes towards racially-coded government spending.," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, pp. 1–20, Oct. 4, 2018.

[9] R. Dahab and M. Omori, "Homegrown foreigners: How christian nationalism and nativist attitudes impact muslim civil liberties," *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, pp. 1–20, Aug. 6, 2018.

[10] A. F. Shortle and R. K. Gaddie, "Religious nationalism and perceptions of muslims and islam," *Politics and Religion*, vol. 8, no. 3, pp. 435–457, Sep. 2015.

[11] D. E. Sherkat and D. Lehman, "Bad samaritans: Religion and anti-immigrant and anti-muslim sentiment in the united states*: Negative sentiment toward immigrants," *Social Science Quarterly*, vol. 99, no. 5, pp. 1791–1804, Nov. 2018.

[12] J. B. Straughn and S. L. Feld, "America as a "christian nation"? understanding religious boundaries of national identity in the united states," *Sociology of Religion*, vol. 71, no. 3, pp. 280–306, Sep. 1, 2010.

[13] A. L. Whitehead, S. L. Perry, and J. O. Baker, "Make america christian again: Christian nationalism and voting for donald trump in the 2016 presidential election," *Sociology of Religion*, vol. 79, no. 2, pp. 147–171, May 19, 2018.

[14] S. L. Perry and A. L. Whitehead, "Christian america in black and white: Racial identity, religious-national group boundaries, and explanations for racial inequality," p. 22,

[15] A. L. Whitehead and C. P. Scheitle, "We the (christian) people: Christianity and american identity from 1996 to 2014," *Social Currents*, p. 16,

[16] G. C. Layman, "Religion and political behavior in the united states: The impact of beliefs, affiliations, and commitment from 1980 to 1994," *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, vol. 61, no. 2, pp. 288–316, 1997.

[17] B. R. Calfano and P. A. Djupe, "God talk: Religious cues and electoral support," *Political Research Quarterly*, vol. 62, no. 2, pp. 329–339, 2009.

[18] T. G. Jelen, "The political consequences of religious group attitudes," *The Journal of Politics*, vol. 55, no. 1, pp. 178–190, Feb. 1993.

[19] L. E. Smith and L. D. Walker, "Belonging, believing, and group behavior: Religiosity and voting in american presidential elections," *Political Research Quarterly*, vol. 66, no. 2, pp. 399–413, Jun. 2013.