



Articles and Sermons :: Can Patriotism be Idolatry? - Andrew Strom

Can Patriotism be Idolatry? - Andrew Strom, on: 2012/3/8 19:30

-Can Patriotism be Idolatry? (ie. Can our country become a kind of 'god' to us?)

- Can Patriotism also become "prideful"?
- Is this a problem in the church today?
- Will many Christians get mad if we question this?
- If we mix Patriotism in with Christianity, will it start to distort the whole message and mission of the church?
- In other words, will we start to become "activists" not just for Jesus, but for Patriotism too?
- Is it true that Hitler used Patriotism to manipulate the German people – and whip them up to go to war?
- Are there voices in TV and Radio today using Patriotism to whip up the Christians?
- Do you think we can be easily manipulated if they appeal to our Patriotism?
- Now just a couple of questions about the USA-
- Is the US still a force for "righteousness" in the earth?
- When we look at the movies, the TV and the music put out by the USA – which dominates Western culture all around the world -
- what kind of influence does the US have today?
- When we look at this massive influence and leadership, does she seem to be a force for 'light' or more for greed, sex, materialism and spiritual corruption?
- So is America mostly spreading 'good' or spreading 'evil' in the world?
- Why then should we "defend" her – as though what she is doing in the earth is "Christian"?

I realize that these questions will make some people mad. But I am hoping that we will really think about these things and I would love to hear your opinions.

Re: Can Patriotism be Idolatry? - Andrew Strom, on: 2012/3/8 19:32

A comment on Andrews forum read:

earthly patriotism is idolatry, absolutely. there is only one nation believer's should be loyal to and that is israel (((and i am not talking about the zionist political state in the middle east)))) but the true KINGDOM of YAH. paul was a roman citizen and while it afforded him certain benefits he was able to use for YAH's glory, namely taking the gospel to pagans with the added testimony of being in chains for his beliefs, he never came across as "patriotic" to the roman state in any sense of the word. america is absolutely spreading evil lies and a false picture of christianity. the god mentioned on her paper money is in no way the Almighty Father in heaven.

as an american citizen i do find that people become extremely offended when someone tries to speak the truth about america and her counterfeit-israel. there are christians here who are extremely "patriotic" and claim they are willing to die for "israel" unfortunately they are blind, and their loyalty is to earthly political entity's.

i do not know how much influence america's movies and television has had globally, but america's vain and perverted entertainment has definitely got its own citizens thinking they are living in some hollywood movie that they themselves are the star of. praying to someday get their "big break" and make a few million so they can be even lazier and get a so-called-reality tv show to brag about it on.

no one with sense should be defending america, they should be exposing her for what she is (a whore) and warning her to repent before its too late.

i didn't answer every question you asked here.. but felt a fire kindled by them enough to rant this off.

peace.

Re: , on: 2012/3/8 20:20

I have been making that charge for years and taking a beating for it :) bro Frank

Re: - posted by pilgrim777, on: 2012/3/8 22:07

Me too, Frank, me too.

Keep shining your light.

Pilgrim

Re: - posted by RobertW (), on: 2012/3/8 22:14

I think we are seeing in many cases a mixture of both patriotism and conservatism in with Christianity. Obviously, these are not the same things and don't belong together.

Re: , on: 2012/3/8 23:58

Amen bro Robert. I see something very dark on the horizon as we see this mixture. This is far from the first time in history where nationalism, conservatism and Christianity get mixed up, good things do not happen when that happens.

Its ironic for me because prior to coming to the Lord at the age of 27, I was a very nationalistic Scotsman. Scotland has a nationalism that is legend, goes back almost 1000 years, so I have had that coursing through my veins. Yet, that blood was replaced by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and amongst many other radical changes, I found it completely disappeared. Now I am very nationalistic for the New Jerusalem, the Kingdom of God of which we as Christians are citizens. We are sojourners here on earth. We have been called to be Ambassadors. An Ambassador is sent to a foreign land to represent his leader, his country. He can only speak what his president or King or Prime minister's policy is. He does not get embroiled in the politics of the land that he has been sent too. He is a representative..... bro Frank

Re: Can Patriotism be Idolatry? - Andrew Strom - posted by dspks, on: 2012/3/9 8:54

Answer: Yes.

Next Question. :)

Re: A New Idolitry, on: 2012/3/9 16:30

Patriotism is idolitry. Perhaps in recent history where nation worship was idolitrous was Nazi Germany. When you view the archival footage you see the torch light parades, the banners, the hysteria, and the crowd worshipping Adolf Hitler who embodied Germany. Of course there was evil evil demonic presence behind Nszism. To speak of that would require another thread. But the Germans who followed Hitler were loyal and patriotic.

Then there were the fanatical Japaneese. They were loyal to thre empereor whom they considered divine. The armed forces of Japan had a strict patriotism that gave no regard to their own lives. This was why, in many days, the Pacific war was more brutal. The Japaneese fault to the last man out of patriotic loyalty to their emperor. This is why you have kamikazi pilots diving planes full of explosives into U S ships. The pilots knew it was suicide. Patriotism compelled them to do it.

Communism commands worship of the state. The state is god. And you belong to the state. You worship anything other than the state then you are jailed or executed. This is why Christians are persecuted in places like Eritrea, N. Korea, Laos, Cambodia, Vietnam, Cuba, China, etc. The state is supreme. It will not tolerate any challenge to its control over individuals.

And their is America? Do we worship America? Yes, we do. I have met Christians who believe the U S Constitution is as inspired as the Bible. They believe the American flag is just as sacred as the cross. You go into many American churches the American flag is up at the front of the church with the cross. This would have been unthinkable in a first century church. You would not have seen the Roman eagle standard at the front of the church. Though the first century Christians obeyed ceasar's laws and prayer for him, namely for his soul. They would not worship Caesar or pray to him. Because of their lack of patriotism the early Christians were persecuted.

Believers have this misguided idea that America is special in God's eyes and we are the new Jerusalem. Nothing can be further from the truth. America is no more special in God's eyes than any other nation. Particularly regarding the judgment to come. Our American citizenship will not save us but only the blood of Jesus.

We must repent of this worship of America and worship Jesus. We must repent of this nationalistic pride and boast only in Jesus. For the Constitution will not save you, the American flag can not save you, Rick Santorum or Kit Romney or Barack Obama cannot save you. Only Jesus Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords can save you.

Posted by Blaine Scogin

Re: Caesar or Christ, on: 2012/3/9 16:56

In the first two centuries Christians were persecuted because they would not offer a sacrifice to Caesar. In effect, worshipping him as god. The Roman government viewed this as indication of being a good citizen. Pledging their allegiance to Caesar and the government. The Christians saw this idolatry. They saw sacrificing to Caesar as worshipping another god. For such a view thousands were martyred.

Do we not do the same thing in our Pledge of Allegiance to the flag? When we put our hand over our heart are we not worshipping the flag over Christ? When we give our allegiance to the flag and the country for which it stands are we not worshipping America over Christ?

As I have pondered the above questions my answer is a resounding YES. When we hold our hand over our hearts and pledge allegiance to the flag we are committing the biggest act of idolatry imaginable.

I cannot not will not pledge allegiance to a piece of cloth. For me to do so is an act of idolatry as the first century Christians envisioned. It is an act of idolatry against Christ. There is only One who is worthy of allegiance and that is Jesus.

Several years ago Ray Boltz wrote a song entitled I Pledge Allegiance to the Lamb. Very powerful words written to honor the Lamb who was slain for our sins. Only he, Jesus, is worthy of our devotion and praise. Only Jesus is worthy of our allegiance.

Blaine Scogin

Re: Pivotal Ideologies????, on: 2012/3/9 17:29

If patriotism is idolatry then so is the philosophy that drives the patriotism. Marxist doctrine demands worship and allegiance to the state. Various other ideologies such as national socialism or nazism, Japanese militarism, Russian communism, and so forth ultimately resulted in patriotism.

What of our liberal or conservative ideologies. In their own way they compel patriotism, allegiance, even worship of the state. If liberal then it gives rise to state control. If conservatism then a large military and business. Simplistic but true. The bottom line is state allegiance.

Again our doctrine must be the word of the Lamb. It must be the Word of God himself who lives in us that directs our hearts into his allegiance.

Posted by Blaine Scogin

Re: , on: 2012/3/9 19:43

"Sacralism - often called Constantinianism"

I was thinking about some recent SI posts where professing Christians are railing on President Obama and how he is destroying America. That shows the people involved are caught up in the affairs of the world and do not have a pilgrim mind set. To them, their kingdom (America) is coming under attack by those nasty Muslims/communists/liberals/fill in the blank so they must protect their kingdom (America).

They get angry when people talk like I am because, to them, I am attacking their kingdom (America). They have the wrong kingdom.

Re: , on: 2012/3/9 19:49

Let me say it another way.

I rail that patriotic idolatry is coming into the church and it is wrong. I say this because my concern is Gods kingdom. They get angry at me for this and call me names in other threads.

Yet the very same will rail against president Obama. Its not my railing that they are against - it all comes to where our allegiance is. The first group are upset that their kingdom (america) is coming under attack by muslims/liberals/etc. The second group are upset that their kingdom (of God) is coming under attack by the first group by way of patriotic idolatry. Both groups are defending the kingdom they cherish in their hearts.

Re: - posted by ADisciple (), on: 2012/3/9 19:54

Jim said, "as an american citizen i do find that people become extremely offended when someone tries to speak the truth about america and her counterfeit-israel."

It's a little hard to tell where the comment from Andrew Strom's forum finishes, Jim, but in any case I agree with you.

And I know you will take a lot of flak for it. This is an extremely sensitive issue; there is so much misunderstanding over this whole matter of who is "Israel" and who isn't-- with people who love the Lord on both sides of the issue.

The answer lies in a thorough and enlightened understanding of the New Covenant.

At the same time I don't think it's wrong to be patriotic for the country we live in-- within limits defined and governed by our patriotism to the heavenly Zion. What I mean is, I live in Canada. And I love Canada. But I am broken hearted over Canada these days. I hate some of the things she has sold herself to.

I agree with you that "no one with sense" should be defending America (or Canada) these days. But we should be making intercession (as Abraham did when he got the news of Sodom's pending destruction).

...We love the nations we live in. But ultimately as Christians (whether Jew or Gentile) our citizenship is in Heaven-- in the heavenly Zion. Here we have no continuing city. Jerusalem which is above is our "mother-land," if I can use that word (Gal. 4.26). Israel-- the heavenly Israel-- is our homeland. This is where our inheritance lies. And they that say such things confess they are strangers and pilgrims in the earth, regardless of what country they sojourn in.

I am thankful to read that, though they be despised in the earth, God says He is not ashamed to be acknowledged as the God of those who make such a claim. "For He hath prepared for them a City" (Heb. 11.14-15).

Allan Halton

Re: , on: 2012/3/9 20:01

"To them, their kingdom (america) is coming under attack by those nasty muslims/communists/liberals/kill in the blank so they must protect their kingdom(america)."

The ultimate end of this is a young christian putting on a uniform and going to war for his kingdom (america) to protect her interests (oil among the top) against her perceived enemies. Where Christ called us to lay down our lives to reach the world with the Gospel - american jesus calls his followers to lay down their lives to reach her perceived enemies with a bullet. My heart is broken within me over this. It all starts with the brainwashing of the christian right, subtle hatred towards democrats, muslims, homosexuals... fear mongering, hatred, lies, corporate greed... "god" bless america. Its the greatest kingdom most church members will ever be a part of.

Re: - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2012/3/9 21:08

When I first read the thread title my response was: "Of course it can, anything can be an idol even the best of things."

Re: , on: 2012/3/9 21:23

"It's a little hard to tell where the comment from Andrew Strom's forum finishes, Jim, but in any case I agree with you."

Sorry for the confusion brother/sister. The original comment was all copy-pasted from the old revival school site. None of it was me writing.

In Christ -jim

Re: - posted by pilgrim777, on: 2012/3/9 21:42

I was impressed by Richard Wurmbrand response when Russia invaded Romania. He saw it as an opportunity for the Kingdom of God. So, being wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove, he outfitted children with Christian tracts and let them go out into the streets to give them to the Russian soldiers. He mentioned that the Russian soldiers loved little children and they eagerly took the tracts.

I am brushing up on my Spanish so that I can share the Gospel with the illegal immigrants from Mexico and other South American countries. More and more Indians (from India) are coming to America and of course Muslims. I don't have to go to other countries since God is bringing them to me. Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, Rosicrucians (from Iran), etc, etc.

These are all opportunities the Lord is giving us to reach people we would never have had a chance to reach with the Good News.

Pilgrim

Re: - posted by pilgrim777, on: 2012/3/9 21:46

Remember the Lord's and His Apostles' conduct while on earth? Israel was occupied by a foreign army and they did not resist (protest or fight in the flesh). "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight".

What will American Christians do if their country is ever occupied? I already know what many who name the name of Jesus would do. They would pick up arms and fight flesh and blood in the name of Jesus Christ.

May the Lord help us all to see Him and to know Him.

Pilgrim

Re: , on: 2012/3/9 21:59

"What will American Christians do if their country is ever occupied?"

Our country can never be occupied but by blood bought soldiers of our King - for our country is not of this world! Amen.

"I already know what many who name the name of Jesus would do. They would pick up arms and fight flesh and blood in the name of Jesus Christ. "

Just look at what is happening in the churches today. We have no draft, yet Christians are commended for joining ceasefires, army and going over to the desert to shoot and kill. They are applauded when they come back home during service and this is just a perceived threat (propagated by the military industrial complex) that we are dealing with - all Muslims are bomb making boogey men type mentality.

I do not write this against those who have served in the military - but against the whole rotten stinking system that leads us away from Christ and His Kingdom that is not of this world.

In Him -Jim

Re: , on: 2012/3/9 22:01

Pilgrim writes.....

"Remember the Lord's and His Apostles' conduct while on earth? Israel was occupied by a foreign army and they did not resist (protest or fight in the flesh). "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight".

It is interesting who did fight the occupiers, Barrabas for one. And who did the multitude clamor for when they had the choice? Pilate laid before the crowd, a zealot or Jesus. They of course chose Barrabas. I wonder who the crowd would choose today? (rhetorical question)..... bro Frank

Re: - posted by rbanks, on: 2012/3/9 22:09

Jim I agree that patriotism can be idolatry but are you also saying that Christians should not want America to defend herself against her enemies like any other country would do.

Just trying to understand...brother rbanks

Re: , on: 2012/3/9 22:25

"Jim I agree that patriotism can be idolatry but are you also saying that Christians should not want America to defend herself against her enemies like any other country would do."

I have no problem with America defending herself. I am speaking of the church. Pledging allegiance to flags and nation, war and killing, these things are for the people of the world. This is idolatry for those who profess Christ. Our kingdom is not seen and all saints are part of that kingdom no matter what physical country they spend their time of pilgrimage in. Our allegiance is to King Jesus and His kingdom. Not to king ceaser. We should pay taxes to ceaser and pray for him, not pledge allegiance to him. That is idolatry.

When I hear of a US troop coming home and receiving a round of applause from his evangelical church it makes me want to vomit. When they stand and sing god bless america it makes me want to cry. When my friend receives a gospel of John with an american flag on the cover and hear god bless our troops it makes my jaw drop.

This is what I mean. Replacing the kingdom and commandments of our Lord Jesus for the kingdoms and commandments of ceaser and calling it christianity still. The ultimate example of this is rome from Constantine up through the dark ages.

Thank you for your honest question rbanks, even if we dont agree. God bless.

Re: - posted by rbanks, on: 2012/3/9 22:44

Jim we agree more than you realize I guess I just leave some things alone because of lack of understanding of how to go about it to keep away from the risk of being misunderstood for the good I want to achieve for the Lord. I just focus more on the preaching of the Word in positive fashion concerning the altar, the blood, and the cross in the power of the Holy Spirit.

I read some on your blogs and I can see you have done a lot of study and research on this and it has become a passion to you to get this message out and I do hope you the best brother even if I haven't felt the call to go about the way you have. Blessings...brother rbanks

Re: - posted by pilgrim777, on: 2012/3/9 22:49

Jim,

It is the way young Christian men have been taught.

They have been taught that Christianity and Patriotism are synonymous.

There were many born-again Christians taught the same thing in Germany. If you refused their draft you could go to jail or be killed, too.

Picture this: Born-again Christians in Germany killing born-again Christians in America in WWII and vice-versa.

Even John the Baptist said to a soldier, "Be content with your wages and do harm to no man". And that was before the New Covenant was "signed" in Jesus' blood.

But again, we must look at Israel at the time of Christ. We're not talking America, but the Nation of Israel!!! They were occupied by a foreign army. I challenge anyone to show me where early church Christians resisted their occupiers. You won't find it because they knew that Jesus taught non-resistance. So did Paul (Romans 12 and 13).

I have found through the years that this is a very difficult thing for American Christians to receive and understand. They will call you passive and quote that famous quote, "The only thing for evil to triumph is for good men to do nothing". This quote is treated like God's Word.

I think we have to keep gently and patiently telling people what God's word says and be encouraged because I have seen some come around to seeing the truth. We should not be fighting this world's battles. Most if not all of them revolve around greed and power but America's wars are always presented as altruistic. Of course they are! They have to be in order to get Christians to voluntarily join their armies to kill the "bad guys".

I have realized that there will always be those that will fight wars in the flesh in the name of Jesus Christ.

Pilgrim

Re: , on: 2012/3/9 22:53

" I just focus more on the preaching of the Word in positive fashion concerning the altar, the blood, and the cross in the power of the Holy Spirit."

Amen. I preach these things too on the streets to the lost and teach them in my living room to my family. Yet I have to cry aloud and lift my voice like a trumpet to the house of Jacob - the visible church. To not do so would be to let my conscience down. I understand you are not called to do the same. There is one body and many members...

Re: , on: 2012/3/10 0:12

WWI prepared Israel for the Jews, WWII prepared the Jews to return to Israel, WWIII will be much of the world against the Jew, WWIV will be all of the world against the Jew, and WWV will be Satan's Dominion against the Dominion of Christ. Christ Himself fights the last war, BEFORE He executes the Great White Throne judgment.

There is a time and a place for each war, that is why even the apostles carried swords. The only problem comes when each side determines that theirs is the righteous cause. In most cases there is no righteous cause, at best there may only be pockets of 'righteousness' within a cause.

Recommended reading is "War and Grace" by Don Stephens

Eccl 3:1-8

3 To every thing there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven:

2 A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted;

3 A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up;

4 A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance;

5 A time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together; a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;

6 A time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away;

7 A time to rend, and a time to sew; a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;

8 A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace.

OJ