Sacred Commitments, Racial Convictions: Religion, Identity, and Racial Attitudes in American Politics

by

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Dedication

To those who share knowledge, cultivate curiosity, and remind us that understanding is both a gift and a responsibility. To the teachers—found not only in classrooms, but in homes, communities, congregations, workplaces, friendships, and everyday encounters—whose willingness to teach is an act of grace. To the learners who approach the world with openness and humility, knowing that education is lifelong process.

This work is dedicated to the countless people who teach and learn in every corner of life, challenging us to see more clearly, listen more carefully, and imagine a more just world. To those whose wisdom, questions, patience, and perseverance deepen our capacity to love our neighbors as ourselves.

To those who teach and those who learn. May we always remain both.

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Abstract

Why do White Christians hold systematically more conservative racial attitudes than other White Americans? And why do political elites so frequently invoke religion when discussing racial issues? This dissertation argues that the answer lies in a process of *religious-racial socialization*—the way in which White Christians' religious identities are formed in contexts that simultaneously emphasize the supremacy of Christian identity over all other group memberships, including race, and frame racism as a matter of individual sin rather than structural inequality. The result is a religious identity imbued with racial meaning, such that religious and racial group attachments become mutually reinforcing forces in shaping political behavior.

The dissertation proceeds in four chapters. Chapter 2 develops the theoretical framework. Drawing on literatures on racial socialization, White racial ignorance, and colorblindness, I argue that religion functions as a critical site of racial socialization for White Christians in ways that are theoretically distinct from how religion shapes the racial attitudes of Black Americans. Two specific processes drive this dynamic: the formation of a supreme Christian identity that transcends and suppresses racial identification, and the connection of colorblind interpretations of racism to divine authority. Together, these processes produce a religious identity that carries racial meaning even in the absence of explicit racial content.

Chapter 3 tests this framework using national survey data from the 2020 American National Election Study and the 2020 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey, as well as two original surveys. I find that White Christians' religious social identity—measured as attachment to and positive affect toward Christians as a group—is consistently and significantly associated with racially conservative attitudes, including greater racial resentment, opposition to government assistance for Black Americans, belief that Whites face discrimination, and negative attitudes toward immigrants. These relationships hold after accounting for partisanship and other demographic characteristics. Additionally, religious social identity is a stronger and more consistent predictor of racial attitudes than traditional measures of religious commitment, including denominational affiliation, church attendance, and biblical literalism. Among Black Christians, by contrast, stronger religious group

attachment is inconsistent, and at times is associated with more racially progressive attitudes, underscoring that the relationship between religion and racial politics is conditioned by the content of one's religious-racial socialization.

Chapter 4 presents experimental evidence testing whether racial cues can activate religious identity and whether religious cues can similarly prime racial attitudes. Across two survey experiments, I find that religious appeals can make White Christians' racial attitudes relevant for policy evaluations, and that racial appeals make religious group considerations relevant for such evaluations. These findings demonstrate that religious and racial identities are not merely correlated but are functionally linked—cueing one identity can activate the other.

Taken together, these findings carry important implications for the study of race and religion in American politics. They suggest that the reach of racial attitudes in American public opinion is broader and deeper than prior scholarship has recognized, operating through religious channels that do not appear racial on their surface. They also suggest that political elites who invoke religious language in racial contexts may be doing more than appealing to religious voters—they may be activating a racialized religious identity that amplifies racial divisions. Understanding how religion and race are mutually constituted in the minds of White Christians is essential to understanding the persistence of racial inequality in American political life.

Chapter 1 – Introduction

In 2020, Trump issued a directive banning the teaching of Critical Race Theory (CRT) in federal agencies. This action quickly diffused to state and local politics, where elected officials sought to ban the teaching of CRT in schools. These policies quickly obscured the lines between CRT and any education about American racial history. To some extent, Trump's attack on Critical Race Theory may have come as a surprise to the public, and even to scholars of race and ethnic politics. Certainly, it would have been less surprising for elected leaders to target policies seeking to address racial inequality by using language of affirmative action or diversity, equity, and inclusion—as they have in Trump's second administration. Before Trump's 2020 directive, Critical Race Theory was a fairly obscure legal theory primarily discussed in academic literature. Simple Google Trends statistics show that searches for "critical race theory" were few before Trump's directive. So, why did Trump focus his concern on Critical Race Theory?

The answer to this question is found—perhaps unexpectedly—in the realm of religion.

One year earlier, in 2019, the Southern Baptist Convention—the largest Protestant denomination in the United States—adopted Resolution 9.[1] Resolution 9 "repudiated the misuse of insights gained from Critical Race Theory, Intersectionality, and any unbiblical ideologies that can emerge from their use…" (Southern Baptist Convention 2019). This resolution framed CRT not merely as a political threat, but as a theological one, positioning opposition to CRT within a distinctly religious worldview. From this perspective, Trump's highly specific focus on Critical Race Theory—as opposed to more common conservative targets such as affirmative action or diversity initiatives—appears less surprising. Rather than solely appealing to racially conservative voters, Trump's directive can also be understood as an appeal that carried religious meaning.

[1] The Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) was established in 1845 as a result of a schism with northern Baptists over the issue of slavery. The southern delegates forming the SBC were staunch supporters of the institution of slavery, which they defended as being biblically justified. It wasn't until 1995, on the 150th anniversary of its founding, that the Southern Baptist Convention officially renounced its origins in the pro-slavery movement and issued a formal apology for its past defense of slavery and systemic racism toward African Americans.

There are also more well-known examples of political elites invoking religion in discussions of racial issues. In June 2020, shortly after calling on the National Guard to "dominate the streets" in order to suppress Black Lives Matter protests, and after security forces had just cleared the area of Black Lives Matter protestors, Trump walked to St. John's Episcopal Church in Washington, D.C. and held up a Bible for a photo op (Gjelten 2020). In pursuit of ramping up their mass deportation campaign and quickly amassing more hires, Immigration, Customs, and Enforcement (ICE) has referenced biblical passages in their recruitment materials and to describe their goals, such as an advertisement with the text, "Here I am Lord, send me," suggesting that joining ICE was to be answering a calling from the Lord (Forasteros 2025).[2] In 2016, as South Carolina Governor Nikki Haley delivered the Republican Party's response to President Obama's State of the Union address, she described her state's response to the murder of nine Black congregants of Mother Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston. She said, "We didn't have violence, we had vigils. We didn't have riots, we had hugs. We didn't turn against each other's race or religion. We turned toward God" (Bade 2016).

These examples are not standalone instances. Political elites routinely draw connections between religion and race that resonate with their audiences. Moreover, the example of Trump's CRT ban suggests that the relationship between religion and race is not simply a matter of politicians using religious language to appeal to religious voters. Rather, a distinctly religious framework for understanding racial issues preceded and likely shaped the political response. The Southern Baptist Convention's CRT debates did not follow Trump's lead; it foreshadowed it.

Observing these connections between religion and race in political rhetoric leads me to the central question driving this dissertation—do racial and religious views intersect and reinforce one another in terms of shaping political preferences? And, if so, under what circumstances does this interaction emerge, especially among White Christians?

The connection between religion and race is not new. Religious rhetoric has historically been used by elites to justify discriminatory policies, and religion continues to be invoked in contemporary discussions of racial issues. During the Civil Rights Movement, for example, White Christian leaders often cited their religious commitments as a reason for their reluctance to endorse the nonviolent protest strategies advocated by leaders like Martin Luther King Jr. King's "Letter from a Birmingham

[2] Although ostensibly race-neutral, U.S. immigration enforcement is a deeply racialized apparatus that disproportionately surveils and deports Latinx immigrants and other people of color (Abrajano and Hajnal 2017; Masuoka and Junn 2013); thus, ICE's framing of deportation as a divine calling sanctifies a fundamentally racialized project.

Jail" directly addresses this issue, critiquing White clergy for failing to support the fight for racial justice due to their perceived religious obligations (King Jr. 1963). Furthermore, religion has been used to justify various positions on racial issues throughout American history, such as the Doctrine of Discovery, preservation of chattel slavery, and opposition to integration (Butler 2021; Hawkins 2021; Jones 2023; Tisby 2019).[3] The Christian church was the first segregated institution, and religion remains one of the most, if not the most, racially segregated social experiences in American life (Dougherty, Chaves, and Emerson 2020; Edwards, Christerson, and Emerson 2013).

It continues into the present day. Data from national surveys show that White Christians report significantly different racial group attitudes and political preferences from Black Christians, and, critically, from White non-Christians. Looking at a wide range of racial and political attitudes in the 2020 American National Election Study (ANES) and the 2020 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey (CMPS) reveals these patterns, as displayed in Table 1.1 and Table 1.2. Across both the ANES and the CMPS, White Christians and Black Christians diverge on the vast majority of racial attitudes examined. White Christians are more supportive of a border wall, less supportive of affirmative action, Black Lives Matter, and reparations, and more likely to say that Whites face discrimination. Black Christians, by contrast, are more likely to say that Blacks, Asians, Latinos, and Muslims face discrimination, less likely to define racism as individual acts of discrimination, and less likely to say that racism is rare. Black Christians report that their racial identity is more important to them, feel closer to members of their own racial group, and are more likely to say that they try to understand the perspectives of members of other racial groups. They score significantly lower on racial resentment than do White Christians.

One might conclude from this comparison that it is race, and not religion, that drives these differences. But White Christians also hold significantly more conservative racial attitudes than do White non-Christians. White Christians are less supportive of affirmative action, more supportive of patrolling Muslim neighborhoods and a Muslim ban, and more likely to say that Whites have too little influence in American politics. They rate Whites more favorably relative to Blacks on feeling thermometers, report stronger White racial identity, and score higher on racial resentment. These differences persist after accounting for partisanship and other demographic characteristics. White

[3] The Doctrine of Discovery refers to a series of 15th-century papal bulls (formal decrees from the Catholic Church) authorizing Christian European powers to claim Indigenous lands and subjugate non-Christian peoples. Regarding chattel slavery, antebellum clergy marshaled scriptural arguments—most notoriously the "Curse of Ham"—to spiritually justify chattel slavery (Haynes 2002). Similarly, southern White evangelicals believed that segregation was also theologically justified (Dupont 2013). The works cited here and in the main text provide rich examinations of these histories.

Christians are distinct not only from Black Christians but also from White non-Christians, and these patterns—in addition to the observation of elite rhetoric and taking stock of the historical (and enduring) connection between religion and race in American society—are what motivates the central question of this dissertation.

Table 1.1: Effect of Christian affiliation among Whites and Blacks, and Difference between Black and White Christians in the 2020 ANES

	Coefficient: Religion = Christian		Coefficient: Race = Black
Outcome	**Whites**	**Blacks**	**Christians**
Oppose ending birthright citizenship	N.S.	-0.1+	0.12***
Oppose border wall	-0.08***	-0.13*	0.29***
Favor allowing refugees	-0.03*	N.S.	N.S.
Support affirmative action in hiring	-0.04*	-0.1+	0.49***
Immigration takes away jobs	0.05***	0.09*	N.S.
Immigrants good for the economy	-0.03*	N.S.	0.04+
Immigrants harm American culture	0.04**	0.11*	N.S.
Immigrants increase crime	0.06***	N.S.	-0.09***
Increasing diversity makes U.S. better	N.S.	N.S.	N.S.
Address urban unrest by solving problems of racism and police violence	-0.07***	N.S.	0.41***
Govt. should help Blacks	-0.06***	N.S.	0.35***
Employers hiring minorities over Whites	0.03**	0.08*	-0.16***
Govt. treats Blacks better than Whites	N.S.	N.S.	-0.29***
Police treat Blacks better than Whites	0.04**	N.S.	-0.23***
Whites have too little influence	0.03**	N.S.	-0.28***
Blacks have too little influence	N.S.	N.S.	0.22***
Discrimination against Blacks	-0.04**	N.S.	0.29***
Discrimination against Whites	N.S.	N.S.	-0.1***
Discrimination against Muslims	N.S.	N.S.	0.16***
Discrimination against Christians	0.09***	0.13***	0.04+
Racial identity important	0.05***	N.S.	0.47***
Concern for other racial groups	N.S.	N.S.	0.1***
Try understanding perspective of other racial groups	N.S.	N.S.	0.1***
Racial resentment	0.05**	N.S.	-0.33***

Note: + $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. Coefficients from OLS regressions. Models within racial group (columns 1 and 2) include controls for education, income, age, sex, and party identification. Models for White and Black Christians (column 3) include controls for education, income, age, and sex. "N.S." indicates the coefficient (Christian or Race: White) is not statistically significant ($p \geq 0.1$).

Table 1.2: Effect of Christian affiliation among Whites and Blacks, and Difference between Black and White Christians in the 2020 CMPS

	Coefficient: Religion = Christian		Coefficient: Race = Black
Outcome	**Whites**	**Blacks**	**Christians**
Support affirmative action	N.S.	-0.03+	0.05***
Support Black Lives Matter	-0.07***	N.S.	0.4***
Support reparations to address racism	N.S.	N.S.	0.25***
Patrol Muslim neighborhoods	0.09***	0.07***	-0.09***
Support Muslim ban	0.07***	N.S.	-0.15***
Support birthright citizenship	-0.05**	N.S.	0.16***
Support family reunification visas	-0.05***	N.S.	0.14***
Whites have advantages	-0.04**	N.S.	0.34***
Racism rare	0.06***	N.S.	-0.23***
Racism as individual acts of discrimination	0.05**	N.S.	-0.13***
Racial identity important	0.09***	0.02*	0.37***
Racial identity ranked more important	-0.03*	N.S.	0.41***
American identity ranked more important	0.04**	N.S.	-0.21***
Discrmination against Whites	0.03+	0.03**	-0.16***
Discrmination against Blacks	-0.07***	N.S.	0.27***
Discrmination against Asians	-0.05***	N.S.	0.16***
Discrmination against Latinos	-0.06***	N.S.	0.16***
Discrmination against Muslims	-0.05***	N.S.	0.15***

Note: + $p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$. Coefficients from OLS regressions. Models within racial group (columns 1 and 2) include controls for education, income, age, sex, and party identification. Models for White and Black Christians (column 3) include controls for education, income, age, and sex. "N.S." indicates the coefficient (Christian or Race: White) is not statistically significant ($p \geq 0.1$).

The connection between religion and race has been acknowledged to some degree by past research. For example, in one of the premier theories of White racial attitudes, symbolic racism or racial resentment, Whites' racial attitudes are described as a belief that Black Americans do not adhere to traditional values, including the *Protestant* work ethic (Kinder and Sanders 1996; Kinder and Sears 1981). This theory alludes to some sort of religious facet of White racial attitudes but does not investigate it. A notable shift in the study of White racial attitudes has been the development of White identity politics—the idea that Whites have a racial identity beyond a mere racial category and hold attachments to their racial group. Research on White identity politics argues that as the United States becomes increasingly racially diverse, Whites increasingly report these racial in-group attachments (Jardina 2019). Importantly, as acknowledged by Jardina (2019, 106) in *White Identity Politics*, "It is not merely that White dominance is challenged by demographic change, but that White *Christian* America is in decline." However, these religious dimensions of White racial attitudes, while acknowledged, are rarely examined beyond including religion as a control variable in statistical models. If the values

underpinning White racial attitudes are partly *religious* values, this has implications both for how we understand the origins of these attitudes and for how durable we should expect them to be.

The literature on religion and politics has found that the effects of religion differ across racial groups (McKenzie and Rouse 2013; Wong 2015, 2018b, 2018a). For example, born-again identity leads to significantly more conservative healthcare and tax policy attitudes among Whites but has weak effects among Latino Americans and Black Americans (Wong 2015). Additionally, there has been important work at the nexus between religion and race, such as research examining political mobilization within the Black church (McDaniel 2008), how Korean Americans maintain a sense of collective ethnic identity through religious experiences (Chong 1998), and in understanding how Muslim Americans, while a religious group, have been racialized and thus can be analyzed by extending theories of racial discrimination (Lajevardi 2020a).

Yet most research in religion and politics simply separates Christians by racial group because, scholars argue, racial minorities' religious commitments are inevitably shaped by shared experiences and commitments to their racial group (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990; Steensland et al. 2000). This analytical move is reasonable, but it carries an asymmetric implication: it suggests that the religion of racial minorities is indelibly shaped by race, but that the religion of White Christians is not. Left unexamined is how White Christians' racial commitments may also be intricately tied to their religion.

More recent scholarship has ventured closer to the intersection of religion and race among White Americans. Research has shown that White evangelicals report higher levels of perceived racial and religious discrimination than White non-evangelicals (Margolis 2026; Mayrl and Saperstein 2013) and that this perception drives their political attitudes (Wong 2015). Additionally, White Christians interpret anti-Christian bias as anti-White bias (Al-Kire et al. 2024), suggesting that religion and race are intertwined among White Christians in ways that make threats to one identity be perceived as threats to the other. This past research, however, is about *racial* discrimination and does not get at the root of the religious elements of racial attitudes. That is, this work shows that White Christians (namely evangelicals) have distinct racial attitudes—as I have done in Table 1.1 and Table 1.2. Still missing is what role religion is playing—are these patterns caused by differences across religious traditions or denominations, religious beliefs, levels of religious practice (e.g. church attendance, frequency of prayer), simple correlations between social categories (i.e. White, Christian, and Republican), or something else about religion entirely? In other words—left unanswered is the question of *why* religion and race are so connected in White Christian political behavior, and *how* religion becomes infused with

racial meaning in the minds of White Christians. Further analysis is warranted in understanding how, as Emerson, Korver-Glenn, and Douds (2015, 349) put it, "*religion is racialized, and race is spiritualized*."

This dissertation examines the extent, nature, and political consequences of the nexus between religion and race among White Christians. Building from theories of racial socialization and centering religion as a critical force in racial socialization, I argue that White Christians' religious identities are formed through a process of religious-racial socialization that promotes colorblindness and that de-emphasizes racial identity. Consequently, White Christians' religious group attachments become inundated with racial meaning. Thus, White Christians with strong religious social identities hold distinct racial attitudes that include rejection of systemic views of racism and opposition to policies designed to address racial inequality, and they become more sensitive to racial messages in politics.

But first, here is what is to come in the rest of this introductory chapter. First, I will very briefly outline the field of political science research on White racial attitudes. Across this body of work, I will argue that considering religion can help illuminate why these racial attitudes are so pervasive and profound. Next, I will outline past approaches to studying religion in political science. I will then outline my approach for studying religion, which is through the lens of social identity. Next, I will touch on the scope of this dissertation in two sections: "Yes, all White Christians" and "Yes, just White Christians." Finally, I will provide a brief roadmap of the chapters to come.

1.1 White Racial Attitudes

White racial attitudes are among the most powerful predictors of public opinion and political behavior in the United States. Decades of scholarship in political science have documented that White Americans' attitudes toward racial groups shape their political preferences, even beyond policy arenas that are explicitly racial (Enders and Scott 2019; Gilens 2000; Kinder and Sanders 1996; Tesler 2012a).

Dominant theories of White racial attitudes rightly understand that prejudice cannot be reduced to simple beliefs about the biological inferiority of racial minorities, namely Black Americans—though this "old-fashioned racism" certainly does exist in the present day (Lajevardi and Oskooii 2018), and current expressions of racial attitudes can be thought of as an artifact of dehumanization (Jardina and Piston 2023). Nevertheless, while overt expressions of racial prejudice declined in the wake of the Civil Rights Movement, Whites' opposition to policies that would actually address racial inequality did not decline at a commensurate rate. This disjuncture—less prejudice in principle, persistent opposition in practice—led to the development of several theories designed to capture what scholars saw as a new, post-civil rights form of racial attitudes.

There are many versions of this story. For example, a dominant theory of White racial attitudes is known as symbolic racism, or racial resentment. Racial resentment is described as a mixture of traditional values and anti-Black affect (Kinder and Sanders 1996; Kinder and Sears 1981). In particular, proponents argue that White Americans express prejudice less in terms of "old-fashioned racism" and more in terms of the belief that Black Americans violate the norms of American society—that they do not try hard enough to get ahead, that they demand too much from the government, and that they have received more favors than they deserve. The four-item racial resentment attitudinal scale is one of the most widely used measures of White racial attitudes in the study of American political behavior, and it is a remarkably powerful predictor of attitudes toward a number of policy issues (Enders and Scott 2019; Engelhardt 2023; Tesler 2012b).

Another theory of White racial attitudes is group position theory, which describes racial and ethnic conflicts as the result of perceived threats to a group's relative status and position in society (Blumer 1958). This theory suggests that majority groups develop prejudices against minority groups when they feel their social position is at risk, which can result in discriminatory practices for the preservation of their privileged status. The "threat" can be economic, political, or based on societal competition for resources. This theory posits that individuals not only view the world through their individual experiences, but also through the experiences of their respective social groups. They act accordingly to protect their group's status and resources out of fear of losing their advantages to minority groups.

Another form is that of laissez-faire racism, which is a disposition that blames Black Americans for their disadvantaged socioeconomic position, citing cultural and individual deficiencies such as laziness or violence (Bobo, Kluegel, and Smith 1997). Laissez-faire racism is akin to setting someone's house on fire and then suggesting that they must be living in a tent only because they love the outdoors too much. Whereas group position theory emphasizes the perceived threat that minority groups pose to the dominant group's status, laissez-faire beliefs preserve the status quo by minimizing the significance of institutional racism, past and present. The theory of laissez-faire racism draws attention to the social and cultural work required to maintain a racial order in absence of the explicit legal scaffolding of Jim Crow.

Finally, though the group position model necessarily considers both in-group and out-group attitudes, models of White Americans' racial in-group attitudes are a relatively recent development. This research, headed by Jardina's (Jardina 2019) *White Identity Politics,* posits that an increasing number of White Americans are beginning to perceive their racial group as threatened, marginalized, or

disadvantaged. This perception leads these individuals to consciously identify with their Whiteness and rally around political leaders who promise to protect their interests (Jardina 2019). Jardina argues that this phenomenon is not purely about White supremacy or a belief in the innate superiority of White people. Instead, it is about a sense of group identity, solidarity, and threat driving political behavior and attitudes. This focus on Whites' attachments to their own racial group foregrounds the important role of identity—not just attitudes towards outgroups—in shaping Whites' political behavior and opinions (Jardina 2021).

These valuable theories of White racial attitudes are united in their attempts, at varying levels, to incorporate the historical, social, and political contexts in which Whites develop their racial attitudes. Racial attitudes are shaped by the institutions in which White Americans are embedded, the messages they receive, and the social networks through which they make sense of the world (Abrajano and Hajnal 2017; Engelhardt 2021; Enos 2014; Jardina 2019; Lajevardi 2020b; Tesler 2016). Consequently, religion is a natural and necessary lens to consider. Religion is arguably the most critical social institution in the United States. About 33 percent of the American population attends a church service at least once a month or more, and over 70 percent of the population identifies with a religion, with 62 percent identifying as Christian (G. A. Smith et al. 2025). The number of Americans who listen to a weekly message from a religious leader far outnumbers the number who watch the State of the Union, presidential debates, or inaugurations (DeSilver 2024; Nielsen 2025, 2026). Both religious messages, such as sermons, and the fellowship of belonging to a community with a shared religious identity have been shown to influence political attitudes (Djupe and Gilbert 2009; Huckfeldt, Plutzer, and Sprague 1993; Olson and Warber 2008; Putnam and Campbell 2010).

Let me put a finer point on it. If we accept that social contexts shape racial attitudes—and the literature reviewed here strongly suggests that they do—then religion deserves particular attention because Americans engage with religion far more frequently and willingly than they engage with politics. Research has shown that many Americans actively avoid political engagement, especially as polarization intensifies (Carlson and Settle 2022; Klar and Krupnikov 2016; Krupnikov and Ryan 2022). This is less the case with religion. Religious participation is, for many Americans, a chosen and valued part of their weekly lives rather than an obligation to be avoided. This potentially makes religious spaces an especially potent site for the formation and reinforcement of political attitudes—including racial attitudes—because individuals are present voluntarily, attentive, and embedded in communities whose members they trust.

And yet, despite religion's outsized role in American social life, the literature on White racial attitudes has largely treated it as a demographic control—a variable to be held constant in regression models rather than a substantive source of racial attitudes to be investigated on its own terms. I argue that this is a significant oversight, and that considering religion will help to illuminate why White racial attitudes are so pervasive and so profound. In Chapter 2 – , I will build from prior work that establishes religion as a site for racial socialization among racial minorities and argue that religion can play a similar role in forming Whites' racial attitudes.

1.2 What is Religion?

Similar to studying race, religion can be thought of as a "bundle of sticks" (Sen and Wasow 2016) that can be disaggregated into multiple components, each which may have distinct connections to politics. The conventional approach to studying religion and politics in political science directs the causal arrow from religion to politics. Perhaps the most widely used conceptualization of religion in this framework is the religious commitment approach, also known as the "three Bs": *behaving*, *believing*, and *belonging* (Layman 2001; Leege and Kellstedt 1993; Smidt 2019; Smidt, Kellstedt, and Guth 2009). Belonging is most commonly measured as the denomination with which an individual identifies and at a more aggregate level, the religious tradition associated with that denomination. The religious tradition approach classifies individuals into broader religious categories such as Mainline Protestant, Evangelical Protestant, Black Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, Other, or Unaffiliated (Steensland et al. 2000). Behaving usually refers to attendance at religious services and at events outside of regular services or frequency of prayer. Believing is often measured through adherence to biblical literalism, or the level at which individuals believe the Bible is the word of God and to be taken literally, or the word of men and not to be taken literally, word-for-word.

Proponents of the religious commitment approach rely on denominational affiliations and religious traditions as proxies for the discussions taking place in those congregations; in other words, these affiliations should capture how people experience religion. However, there is considerable variation in denominational activities and political stances in the on-the-ground experiences within local congregations (Djupe and Gilbert 2009; Wald, Owen, and Hill 1988). To address this important variation, other scholars have taken a "social networks" approach, modeling religion's influence on politics by examining connections among congregants and their relationships with clergy (Djupe and Gilbert 2009; Huckfeldt, Plutzer, and Sprague 1993; Wald, Owen, and Hill 1988). Building from this, other work has taken the "religious communication" approach, measuring the ways that individuals

are exposed to political opinions within religious contexts and the degree to which they adopt these political opinions (Djupe and Calfano 2013, 2019).

There are two relevant critiques of past research on religion and politics.[4] First, religion can be experienced outside of the walls of the congregation, and even outside of a local religious network. Through the broader landscape of religious culture such as social media, Christian radio, and Christian magazines, individuals engage with religion and religious socialization can take place through these alternate settings. The social networks and religious communication approaches have been valuable precisely because they move beyond denominational labels to ask how political socialization actually occurs within religious communities. Work in this area readily acknowledges that congregations are not "closed systems" of political influence (Djupe and Calfano 2013, 30). I argue this is also the case with *religious* influence. For many Americans, engagement with these other media constitutes a significant—and in some cases even a primary—source of religious experiences.

A second and more consequential critique for this dissertation is that categorization is not synonymous with identity. Belonging encompasses more than a dichotomous measure of someone's religious label. One can belong to a group without feeling that they belong; religious affiliation therefore does not capture the attachments that one may feel toward their religious group.

It is well established that Americans understand politics through the lens of groups (A. Campbell et al. 1960). Individuals identify with groups based on shared characteristics such as race, ethnicity, class, or political party. In seeking a positive sense of self, individuals make comparisons between their group and other groups, drawing differences that lead to the perceived distinctiveness of the groups of which the individual is a member (Tajfel and Turner 1979). Consequently, group membership can turn into group attachment (Kalin and Sambanis 2018). Although it is sometimes mentioned in passing as an example of a social identity (e.g., Jardina 2019; Kalin and Sambanis 2018), few studies within political science actually move past religion as a category to examine religious social identity or group attachment. But religion seems a fertile ground for social identity; individuals may identity with a religious group, feel positive affect towards members of their religious group, and seek to differentiate the qualities of their religious group from others.

[4] There are more than two critiques. Another obvious critique is that most conceptualizations of religion in political science have used Christianity, and more specifically evangelicalism, as the starting point. This means that measures of religion rely on an assumption that, to some degree, religion looks the same way across religions. Scholarship in the field of religious studies shows that defining what qualifies as religion is contested (Borja 2023; Wenger 2009). As this dissertation *is* focused on Christians, I avoid spending time on this critique.

Building from this social identity perspective on religion to the case of Christians, who are the subject of this dissertation: Christian social identity consists of an attachment to the label of Christian, positive affect towards Christians as a group, and a set of ideas about what it means to be a Christian in terms of what values the group holds and the boundaries of the group. This perspective can contribute to a fuller understanding of religions' relationship to politics where prior conceptualizations have fallen short. For example, from a denominational perspective, two individuals could both identify as Baptist, attend services weekly, and affirm the Bible as the literal word of God; yet, they could disagree about the extent to which their identity as a Christian is central to their self-concept, in their sense of what it means to be a Christian, and in the boundaries they draw around who counts as a true Christian and who does not. Frequent church attenders and infrequent attenders alike—who would have very different religious social networks and communication—could, in theory, hold similar levels of attachment to their Christian identity. Moreover, a Catholic and a Baptist, who may hold different affiliations and differing religious beliefs, could feel united in their positive feelings towards Christians.

These differences in strength and content of religious social identity, I contend, are critical for understanding the connection between religion and racial attitudes. More specifically, I theorize that it is through the formation of this identity—the religious socialization process through which one comes to understand what it means to be a Christian—that religion can become connected to racial attitudes among White Christians. And because American religion has long been intertwined with American racial politics, an individual's religious social identity is developed in tandem with their socialization into the U.S. racial hierarchy and their formation of racial group attitudes. And as I argue in fuller detail in Chapter 2, the processes of religious socialization and racial socialization are uniquely intertwined for White Christians, where the formation of a common Christian identity often gives rise to a particular kind of racial socialization. This means that racial attitudes may be imbued with religious understandings of the world and that religious identity can be infused with racial meaning, thus leading to the distinct attitudes that White Christians hold towards racial outgroups and race-related policies.

This is not to say that prior conceptualizations of religion are completely independent from racial politics. For example, prior work shows how Southern White evangelicals created and relied on segregationist interpretations of Christianity to solidify their group's commitment to maintaining segregated institutions (Hawkins 2021). It is reasonable to think that a similar process of framing and persuasion may occur in the present day. However, treating religion as a social identity allows us to understand how Christians with lower levels of religious commitment—those who attend church infrequently or not at all—may still hold distinct political preferences that are connected to their

religious identity. Rather than relying solely on processes of exposure and adoption (Djupe and Calfano 2019; Djupe and Neiheisel 2022), I argue that Christians hold an attachment to their religious group that is intertwined with racial politics. Religious practice serves as a potential influence in shaping this racialized religious identity, though it is not an exclusive factor. While local religious experiences and community interactions may contribute to the development and reinforcement of this identity, they are not indispensable for its formation. Racialized religious identity can also emerge from broader societal influences and elite messaging that connect religious and racial identities, even in the absence of regular congregational participation. Future chapters will examine the social identity approach empirically and compare it to the prior approaches to religion described here.

1.3 Yes, All White Christians

There are two ways in which the scope of my dissertation, in terms of defining the population of interest, diverges from past research on religion and politics. Thus, here I briefly attempt to distinguish this project from past scholarship.

1.3.1 Is this just White evangelicals?

Past scholarship and public attention to religion and politics begs a question: is this just White evangelicals? Indeed, White evangelicals are the most politically conservative religious group of Christians and are quite cohesive in their political behavior. Over 80 percent of White evangelicals voted for Trump in 2016, 2020, and 2024 (P. Smith 2024). Some of the most notable scholarship on religion and race in the United States focuses on evangelicals (e.g., Emerson and Smith 2001; Wadsworth 2014; Wong 2018a). Given the outsized role that evangelicals play in American politics and given their durable political alliance with and influence on the Republican Party, it is reasonable ask whether the relationships examined in this dissertation are primarily an evangelical phenomenon. I argue that there are both methodological and theoretical reasons to look beyond evangelicals.

What, exactly, is an evangelical? The term and category of evangelical is contested, and the boundaries of evangelicalism are blurry in ways that matter for research on politics. Denominational sorting schemes that classify Americans as "evangelical" rely on assumptions about the theological and social character of a particular denomination (Steensland et al. 2000)—assumptions that are themselves shaped by the political phenomena scholars are trying to explain. If evangelicalism is defined by theology, there are few doctrinal commitments that distinguish evangelicals from other Protestants in ways that have an obvious causal relationship to racial politics. The core theological tenets of evangelicalism—the authority of Scripture, the necessity of personal conversion, the

centrality of the cross, and the imperative of evangelism (Sutton 2024)—do not, on their face, predict attitudes toward affirmative action or racial resentment. If evangelicalism is instead defined by culture—a shared set of dispositions, practices, and political orientations (Emerson and Smith 2001)—then the category is endogenous to the outcomes under study. Focusing exclusively on the group where religion and racial conservatism are most visibly intertwined, rather than asking whether the underlying process extends beyond them, risks selecting on the dependent variable. This is not merely a measurement problem. It is a problem of inference: if we only look where we expect to find the relationship, we cannot know whether the relationship is specific to that context or reflective of a broader process. This point has been made by scholars who study evangelicals, who claim that evangelicals are simply a "window" into the broader American race problem (Emerson and Smith 2001; Tranby and Hartmann 2008). In sum, focusing on evangelicals would require a specific claim that either attributes the source of racial attitudes to theological differences that have no clear theoretical connection to racial politics or to cultural differences that are in part a product of racial politics.

I advance a different argument about the roots of racial attitudes. I do not claim that particular theological commitments or tradition-specific doctrines necessarily produce conservative racial attitudes. Put simply, I make no argument that there is something inherent to Christian beliefs, Christianity, or Christian practice that makes White Christians' distinct racial attitudes inevitable. Rather, I claim that a process of religious identity formation—one that emphasizes the supremacy of Christian identity over all other identities, including race—connects religious group attachment to racial attitudes. The connection between Christian identity and racial attitudes can thus arise wherever this particular type of religious socialization occurs. The mechanism I describe operates at the level of social identity, not at the level of theological doctrine or denominational culture. And because identity formation processes are not confined to a single tradition or specific doctrines, limiting the analysis to evangelicals would arbitrarily restrict the scope of a theory that is designed to explain a phenomenon that has existed across Christian denominations throughout American history.

The analytical approach in this dissertation does not seek to adjudicate who counts as a "true" Christian. I do not differentiate between "Christians-in-name-only," those individuals who identify with a religious group but do not practice their religion (i.e. infrequent church attenders). I do not seek to identify specific theological commitments that would disqualify a self-identified Christian from "counting" as part of the relationships I am seeking to describe in this work. My theoretical claims require neither such an exclusion. My framework includes any self-identified Christians.

Understandably, there will be variation in this group. But the variation I seek to describe is specific to my theory of religious identity formation and its relationship to racial politics.

1.3.2 Is this just Christian Nationalism by another name?

A significant amount of recent public and scholarly attention has been transfixed on the concept of Christian Nationalism. The literature on Christian nationalism has grown rapidly, and scholars in this tradition have made important contributions by demonstrating that the fusion of Christian and American identities carries racial meaning (Gorski and Perry 2022; S. L. Perry 2023, 2025; S. L. Perry et al. 2024; S. L. Perry and Grubbs 2025; S. L. Perry and Whitehead 2019; S. L. Perry, Whitehead, and Grubbs 2024; Walker et al. 2025; Walker and Haider-Markel 2024). (Whitehead and Perry 2020; Gorski and Perry 2022). Scholars have called Christian Nationalism "America's most effective dog-whistle" (Gorski and Perry 2022, 20) and the "religion of White identity politics" (S. L. Perry and Grubbs 2025).

However, this dissertation is not about Christian Nationalism. This dissertation is theoretically and analytically distinct in at least two respects. First, Christian Nationalism, as most frequently operationalized in scholarly literature, captures attitudes about the proper role of Christianity in American public life—whether the government should declare the United States a Christian nation, advocate Christian values, allow prayer in public schools, and so forth (Djupe et al. 2025; Whitehead and Perry 2020). These are policy preferences about religion's relationship with the state. My argument concerns religious social identity—the strength of one's attachment to Christians as a group and the meaning that identity carries. One can endorse Christian nationalism policy positions without holding a strong Christian identity, and one can hold a deeply felt Christian identity without endorsing the proposition that the federal government should promote or prioritize Christianity. These two attitudes are likely related, but they are distinct and point to two different mechanisms. It is less surprising that one's policy attitudes about religion in public life are related to other policy attitudes, including racialized policies. What I theorize and examine is whether a seemingly unracialized (on its face) identity, absent explicit political content, is related to racialized policy outcomes.

Second, the literature on Christian Nationalism has found that priming racial threat can activate and increase Christian Nationalist attitudes (Walker and Haider-Markel 2024). These findings are important and show that Christian religion and racial attitudes are linked (Al-Kire et al. 2024); however, they do not fully explain *how* they become linked in the minds of individuals. My argument is about the process that could precede these linkages: the religious-racial socialization through which

White Christians' religious identities come to carry racial meaning. In this sense, the identity formation process I describe is likely *an antecedent* to Christian Nationalism. It is part of what makes Christian Nationalism take on its distinct, politically conservative flavor despite Black Americans generally having high levels of Christian Nationalist attitudes (Walker 2025; Whitehead and Perry 2020).

In other words, I contend that there is something even more deeply engrained in the religious commitments of White Christians than their preferences for religion in governance and the public. I am examining something more deeply-seeded within one's religion—the social attachments to one's religion—that I argue is inextricably linked to their racial attitudes and racialized policy preferences. Focusing solely on Christian Nationalism—which may be a bit of a misnomer itself—risks obscuring the ways in which racism is embedded into American politics and how everyday processes, be they genuine and perhaps unintentionally harmful, can still produce the same racially unjust status quo.

1.4 Yes, Just White Christians

One might levy a similar critique about my focus on *White* Christians exclusively—after all, if race is socially constructed, why flirt with essentialism by assuming these relationships only exist among White Christians?

First, my theory does generate expectations about non-White Christians. If the conditioning factor is the content of one's religious-racial socialization rather than an individual's race, then this theoretical framework could hypothetically apply wherever religious socialization emphasizes the primacy of Christian identity and employs colorblind frames to discuss racial issues. If Black Christians' religious experiences emphasize the supremacy of their religious identity and the necessary de-emphasis of racial identity, then strong Christian identity could hold the same relationship to racial policy attitudes that I hypothesize for White Christians. However, past scholarship indicates that Black Christians do not undergo this distinct type of religious-racial socialization that I theorize occurs for White Christians. In the empirical chapters of this dissertation, I perform comparative analyses across Black and White Christians to support these claims.

Second, positionality matters for my theory. Religious messages, which are a part of religious socialization, could be delivered in the same words and with the same theological framing, but carry different meaning depending on the racial context in which it is received. Consider, for example, a sermon calling for love, forgiveness, and reconciliation delivered in the wake of racial violence. When this message is delivered to a predominately White congregation—a congregation whose members have been socialized into White racial ignorance and colorblindness, as I describe in Chapter 2—it

reinforces the racial status quo. It suggests that the path forward is individual goodwill divorced from structural change, suggesting that Christians should forgive those who are racist, and focusing on interpersonal relationships rather than policy to ameliorate racial inequality. However, when the same message is delivered to a Black congregation, the meaning shifts. The target of forgiveness is the oppressor, and the call for reconciliation lands within a context of religious-racial socialization that affirms racial identity.

This dissertation presents multiple opportunities for further inquiry. One of such opportunities is to develop more finely grained measures of the different types of religious-racial socialization that I describe in Chapter 2 and to consider the prevalence of these types of socialization across racial groups. However for now, this dissertation focuses on White Christians for two reasons: because the theoretical framework I develop is most directly applicable to the religious-racial socialization that occurs within majority-White religious contexts, and because the political consequences of that socialization among White Christians are particularly significant.

1.5 Outline of the Dissertation

In the next chapter, I develop my argument. I draw from the literatures on racial socialization, White racial ignorance, and colorblindness, and highlight two foundations of my argument: first, religion is an important site of racial socialization among racially marginalized groups, and especially among Black Americans. Second, White racial socialization is distinct and most frequently entails silence about race and the employment of colorblind frames—rhetorical tools that both minimize the severity of racial inequality and paint racism as a problem stemming from individual faults or cultural deficiencies. I then argue that religion is also a critical source of racial socialization for White Christians. I outline two processes of White Christians' religious-racial socialization: the formation of a supreme Christian identity and the connection of colorblind frames to divine authority. I provide some illustrative examples of how these processes play out in religious rhetoric.

Chapter 3 of the dissertation introduces the first empirical tests of my argument. I use national survey data to examine White Christians' religious social identity and group attachment and how it impacts their racial group attitudes and attitudes towards racialized policies. Three important findings arise: first, White Christians' religious social identity is frequently associated with their racial attitudes and policy preferences. White Christians with stronger religious social identity hold more negative attitudes towards immigrants, are more likely to oppose government assistance to Blacks, are more likely to believe that the police treat Blacks better than Whites, to believe that Blacks have too much

influence and that Whites face discrimination, and to score higher on the racial resentment scale. Second, religious group attachment is associated with different attitudes among Black compared to White Christians. For example, Black Christians' religious importance is associated with the belief that Whites have certain advantages due to their race, increased importance of one's racial identity, and being more likely to say that Blacks, Asians, Latinos, and Muslims face discrimination. Third, White Christians' religious social identity is more consistently associated with their racial attitudes than other prior conceptualizations of religion, such as affiliation (tradition or denomination differences), behavior (frequency of church attendance), and believing (biblical literalism).

If religious and racial identities are intertwined through the process of religious-racial socialization, then activating one identity should have consequences for the other. In Chapter 4, present the results of experiments designed to test both directions of this relationship. First, I examine whether exposure to religious primes activates racial attitudes among White Christians, increasing opposition to race-based remedies to inequality. Second, I examine whether exposure to racial primes activates religious identity among White Christians. These experiments provide a direct test of the bidirectional link between religion and race that my theoretical framework predicts.

Chapter 5 summarizes the findings of the dissertation and discusses their implications for scholarship on religion, race, and American politics. I revisit the theoretical framework in light of the empirical evidence, discuss the limitations of the present work, and identify directions for future research. In particular, I discuss the need for future studies that more directly investigate the mechanisms of religious-racial socialization—including studies of how exposure to particular forms of religious socialization shapes racial attitudes, and whether alternative frames could lead to different attitudinal outcomes.

Chapter 2 – Religious-Racial Socialization and the Making of a Racialized Religious Identity

In this chapter, I present the theoretical framework that guides this dissertation. I argue that White Christians' religious identities are often formed within religious contexts that blur the lines between religious and racial identities. That is, a prevalent and politically consequential form of White Christians' religious socialization emphasizes the formation of a common Christian identity that is to be held above all other "worldly" identities, including race. Simultaneously, this religious socialization often frames racism as a matter of individual sin rather than structural inequality, promoting ideals of colorblindness that are rooted in distinctly religious foundations. The result, for those shaped by this form of socialization, is a religious identity that is imbued with racial meaning—a process I call *religious-racial socialization*.

2.1 "Who Told You That You Were Naked?" Racial Socialization in America

> Now the serpent was more crafty than any of the wild animals the LORD God had made. He said to the woman, "Did God really say, 'You must not eat from any tree in the garden'?" The woman said to the serpent, "We may eat fruit from the trees in the garden, but God did say, 'You must not eat fruit from the tree that is in the middle of the garden, and you must not touch it, or you will die.'" "You will not certainly die," the serpent said to the woman. "For God knows that when you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden. But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." And he said, "Who told you that you were naked?..." *Genesis 3:1-11*

Genesis 3 tells the story of "The Fall" of mankind, the original sin. Adam and Eve, out of their own pride, decided to reject God's authority and to define good and evil for themselves. They ate fruit from the forbidden tree. In doing so, they discovered they were "naked." A meaningless term

and distinction prior to eating the fruit, being "naked" now carried social meaning—they felt shame, covered themselves in fig leaves, and hid from God as to not be seen in such a state. This original sin transformed not only the way that humans relate with God, but also how they identify and relate with one another. Though their physical state did not change, the way that they saw themselves did, and the meaning they attached to their appearance shifted.

America's original sin is racism. Though race is a social construct, America's racial hierarchy is a meaningful and destructive force, created by people in power in order to justify enslavement, colonization, and the denial of citizenship and rights. This system was built to assign people as more or less human on the basis of phenotype and ethnic origin. The creation of race transformed the ways in which Americans identify and relate with one another.

And much like the original sin in Genesis, what has been done cannot easily be undone. Long after Adam and Eve's original sin, men still toil under the sun, and women still painfully labor in childbirth. The United States is far less removed from its original sin. Thus, the creation of race and the assignment of citizenship and humanity on the basis thereof continues to hold social and political import today. Race—or more aptly, *racism*—is a central organizing feature of American society and politics (Hutchings and Valentino 2004; Omi and Winant 2015).

Racial socialization is the process by which individuals learn about race, specifically their own racial identity, the norms and customs of their racial group, differences between their group and other racial groups, and how these groups fare in American society. For example, racial socialization is how a Black American learns they are Black, what it means to be Black, and how this racial identity may shape their experiences in society. Because racial categories, from the start, were designed to aid in the distribution of power—and were legitimized through law and legally enforced—race cannot be divorced from politics. Therefore, racial socialization is not merely about building identity for the sake of identity; it is about learning why these identities matter. Drawing a parallel between America's original sin and the original sin in Genesis 3: Adam and Eve realized their physical state (being naked) and determined that it carried social meaning (they felt shame). Racial socialization is the process by which Americans are taught what race means and how it matters. Adam and Eve's actions brought on a world of estrangement and toil; the invention of race invited a social order marked by hierarchy and exclusion.

Racial socialization is a type of political socialization—the processes by which individuals learn about politics and form political attitudes (A. Campbell et al. 1960; D. E. Campbell 2013; Neundorf and Smets n.d.). Perhaps more accurately, due to the segregated nature of American society, political

socialization is a racialized process (Carlos 2021; Harris-Lacewell 2010; Strawbridge 2025; Walton 1985). Here, however, I am trying to distinguish these concurrent processes of political and racial socialization for the sake of highlighting that group attachment is an essential component of (racialized) political socialization (Strawbridge 2025).

Studies of racial socialization commonly focus on racially marginalized groups, and racial socialization starts during childhood, both through direct interactions and through experiences within one's environment (S. P. Perry et al. 2025). For example, parents may have conversations with their children seeking to instill a positive attachment to one's racial identity, to teach them about their culture, and to prepare them for experiences of racial discrimination (Hughes et al. 2006).

However, racial socialization does not end in childhood. Research on Black political socialization shows that racial group attachment is continually shaped through interactions within racially homogeneous social networks and institutions. These interactions are not simply discursive exchanges but rather serve as spaces where individuals learn how to think about politics through the lens of their social identity. These spaces include Black television and digital media, Black interest groups, and conversations with family (Harris-Lacewell 2010; Strawbridge 2025). However—and of supreme importance for this dissertation—the social sphere that has long been held as the most prominent and influential is the Black church.

2.2 Religion as a Site for Racial Socialization

Du Bois wrote that the Black church is "the social centre of Negro life in the United States" (Du Bois 1990, 164, as quoted in Mayrl 2023). The Black church was (is) a central provider of both material and psychological resources to its congregants. From voter registration drives (Brown 2009) to mental health services and education (Blank et al. 2002; Rowland and Isaac-Savage 2014), churches meet the needs of the Black community. The Black church is also an important location for racial socialization. That is, the Black church is a space for building a positive and collective sense of racial identity (Lincoln and Mamiya 1990), for providing information about the status of Black Americans in society (Dawson 1994), and for mitigating the psychological harms from racist experiences (Graham and Roemer 2012).

In the previous chapter, recall that I briefly distinguished my view of religion as a social identity from past work that focuses on other aspects of religion, including affiliation with specific denominations or traditions. Past work has often argued that Black churches are unique in their theological commitments due to America's racial history. I contended that theologically, there are not

many significantly different religious beliefs when comparing Black Protestants to White Protestants (especially Black and White evangelicals). Instead, it is different racial commitments between Black and White congregations that lead to differential political attitudes. Lincoln and Mamiya's (1990) interviews with Black clergy of Black churches, in *The Black Church in the African American Experience*, illuminate this point well. When asked if their ministry is "essentially different because you are in a black denomination?", 54.8% of Black clergy said "Yes." However, when asked if the black church has "a different mission from the White church," 63.4% of Black clergy said "No" (p. 169). Lincoln and Mamiya reconcile the seemingly contrasting responses to these questions in interviews with Black clergy. Describing qualitative responses to the second question, Lincoln and Mamiya write:

> Another explanation is that the majority of black clergy tend to follow the orthodox understanding that the main purpose of Christian churches is to spread the Word and to save souls. To the extent that this is the case, certainly black clergy would see their mission as no different from White clergy.
>
> The qualitative responses tended to reflect the ambiguity in the question. Pastor number 1810 said, "Main Christian mission is the same but the Black Church has to be related to social issues of black people, pointing to hope" In a similar vein, interviewee number 1950 declared, "Theologically, no, but practically yes. And that difference is to get people liberated on racial grounds and to get their personhood together. The difference is to get the Whites to loosen up from bigotry and prejudice—subtle differences. Not to blame the White man for everything. [But] the White man does not just deal with entities in the community." Finally, the pastor of a rural church said, "Primarily, the Black Church has a responsibility to be involved in the total liberation of black personhood and to help empower the black community." (p. 170)

These examples underscore my argument: it is not differential theological commitments between Black and White Christians that lead to disparate political attitudes; it is differential religious-racial socialization.

Though the bulk of past research on religion's role in racial socialization is about the Black church, scholars have shown that religion is an important site of racial socialization for other racially marginalized groups as well. For example, perceptions of care and belonging with a religious community can lessen the effects of racial microaggressions on psychological well-being among Hispanic and Asian college students, in addition to Black college students (Kim 2017). Additionally, ethnic religious experiences help shape Korean Americans' sense of ethnic group attachment (Chong 1998).

Religion influences racial identity, but it can also, at times, influence racial categorization itself—that is, it not only shapes the strength of attachment to a racial group, but also changes the label one uses to describe their own race or the race of others. Davenport (2016), for example, finds

that biracial Americans' religious affiliations affect their likelihood as identifying with one racial identity or as biracial. Baptist affiliation among Latino-White biracials are more likely to identify as White than nonreligious Latino-Whites, but Catholic Latino-Whites are more likely to identify as Latino over White or multiracial than nonreligious Latino-Whites. Black-White biracial Baptists are more likely than nonreligious Black-White biracials to identify as Black over White or multiracial. D'Urso (2022) shows that religion is a powerful factor in how Americans see the racial classification of others. When hypothetical profiles of Iranian and Russian individuals are labeled as Christian rather than Muslim, respondents are more likely to assign the race of the profile as White. This finding holds regardless of country of origin, and in fact, the effect of religion is similar in magnitude to the effect of country of origin (Russian vs Iranian) on White assignment. These findings demonstrate that racial categories are not immutable but are influenced by other factors, including religion. It also underscores the need to consider how religion affects racial identity and attitudes.

While the question of how religion affects White Americans' racial ingroup and outgroup attitudes, there has been some research on the role of religion in building group attachment and cohesion among racial and ethnic minorities in the United States. In *New World A-Coming*, Weisenfeld (2016) shows that religion is a tool through which Black Americans seek to redefine their racial identity. She explores "religious challenges to conventional racial categories" (p. 13) by examining the members of the Ethiopian Hebrew Congregation, Moorish Temple, Nation of Islam, and Peace Mission Movement. Members of these movements sought to upend the racial categories that had been defined by Whites. Importantly, these new categories constructed were grounded in religious narratives.

This point bears repeating: the affirmation of racial identity (and in the case of Weisenfeld's work, even when those identities run counter to traditional racial categories) is explicit in the religious experiences of racially marginalized populations, especially among Black Americans (and especially among Black Christians).

2.3 The Making of Not-Racists: Racial Socialization among White Americans

To restate, racial socialization is the process of "seeing" race and understanding what it means. What does White racial socialization look like? Whites certainly have racial attitudes—both attitudes towards other racial groups and attachment to their own group—that are powerfully related to their political preferences. Past work on White racial attitudes suggests that these attitudes are primarily developed during adolescence (Sears and Brown 2023). However, research shows that very few White families

talk about race (S. P. Perry et al. 2025). Two theories help articulate why White Americans are less likely to "see" race and, when race does come up, how they understand what it means. These are the theories of White racial ignorance and colorblindness.

White racial ignorance is the idea that, rather than being primarily attached to their racial identity, many White people are centrally motivated by a lack of commitment to their racial identity. They seek to deny and downplay the significance of their racial identity. This insight is captured by philosopher Charles Mills, who describes Whites as having an *epistemology of ignorance*—a way of knowing that leads to not knowing (Mills 2007). In other words, White Americans are not simply ignorant of race in the sense that they have an innocent lack of knowledge about race. Rather, there are structured non-beliefs and false beliefs around race. The history that produced race is erased and with it goes any acknowledgement, or knowledge of, of the systems produced to distribute power and resources unequally to Whites.

This condition has been described throughout decades of scholarship. For example, in *An American Dilemma*, Myrdal wrote about how grossly unaware White Americans, particularly Northern Whites, were about the plight of African Americans. White ignorance on matters of race and racism in America is not an inevitable, fixed disposition. It is a dynamic process wherein White Americans divert attention away from their racial identity and reimagine reasons for their privilege (Mueller 2017).

If White racial ignorance is about the prior conditions that shape what White Americans perceive and know about race, colorblindness is about how White Americans reason through racial questions when they do arise. Colorblind frames are a set of discursive strategies used to explain or justify racial inequality that ultimately reinforce the status quo. Bonilla-Silva's *Racism without Racists* (2022) describes four colorblind frames: abstract liberalism, naturalization, cultural racism, and minimization of racism. Abstract liberalism refers to using ideals like individualism and equal opportunity to oppose race-conscious policies such as affirmative action. Naturalization involves explaining away patterns of racial difference as natural, such as describing racial segregation as a matter of self-segregation. Cultural racism is the process of attributing racial inequality to perceived cultural deficiencies among racial minorities. An example of cultural racism is blaming mass (and disparate) incarceration of Black Americans on violent themes promoted in hip-hop music. The final frame is minimizing racism, which is downplaying the prevalence of racial discrimination in the present day, compared to the past. Other research has described colorblindness as having two dimensions: color-evasion, which de-emphasizes racial difference, and power evasion, which minimizes the reality of racism (Neville et al. 2013; S. P. Perry et al. 2025). Colorblind frames offer White Americans a way to

make sense of a contradiction when confronted with it: racial inequality persists, but neither they, nor most people they know, are racist. [5]

Past scholarship on White racial ignorance and colorblindness have argued that these conditions and frames serve to preserve the racial status quo—that is, to protect White Americans material interests and social status. This is true. They also likely provide psychological resources by absolving White Americans from the moral weight of complicity in—and sometimes outright reinforcement of—a system that affords Whites undue benefits at the expense of people of color.

While theories of White racial ignorance and colorblindness are distinct (Mueller 2020), they can be seen together as a form of racial socialization that is prevalent among White Americans (S. P. Perry et al. 2025). Colorblindness can be seen as a product of White racial ignorance. The ability to employ colorblind frames depends, in part, (or is made easier by) a prior epistemic condition in which the racial structuring of life has been rendered invisible. White racial ignorance shapes what White Americans are able to perceive and know; colorblindness shapes what they say and how they reason when racial questions do arise.

The dominant form of White racial socialization is one that teaches White Americans to not see their racial identity—to understand themselves as raceless, as simply "normal," as individuals rather than members of a racial group. In other words, White racial socialization is a process of obscuring rather than affirming racial identity.[6]

2.4 "Who Told You that You Are White?": Religious-Racial Socialization among White Americans

So far, I have established two claims. First, religion serves as a critical source for racial socialization among racially marginalized groups. That is, religious socialization among racial minorities gives social meaning to race—affirming racial identity, strengthening group attachment, and providing support for racial discrimination. Second, White Americans undergo a unique process of racial socialization, a

[5] Past research has described colorblindness as a "racial ideology" (Bonilla-Silva 2022; Neville et al. 2013) which, according to Bonilla-Silva, contains common frames, style, and racial stories. I opt to refer to colorblindness as a framework, or set of frames, as to avoid conflating colorblindness with an "ideology" in the "Converse-ian" sense—that is, as a relatively coherent and organized belief system (Converse 2006).

[6] Racial ignorance or silence and colorblindness are not the only ways that White Americans can be racially socialized, though it is the most common. Research has shown that some White children are socialized (primarily by parents and in racially diverse environments) to recognize racial inequality, structural racism, and White privilege (Anoll, Engelhardt, and Israel-Trummel 2025). However, racial ignorance/colorblindness are much more common (S. P. Perry et al. 2025). And as I will argue in this dissertation, it is certainly the most common form of religious-racial socialization among Whites. Therefore, that will be the primary focus of this dissertation. Future work could investigate the prevalence and effects of these alternative forms of White racial socialization in religious contexts.

colorblind racial socialization, that teaches them to obscure their own racial identity and to diminish the severity of racial inequality and racism experiences by people of color in the present day. Here, I establish the central argument of this dissertation: religion plays an important role in the racial socialization of White Americans.

In *The Color of Compromise*, Jemar Tisby writes, "Harsh though it may sound, the facts of history nevertheless bear out this truth; there would be no black church without racism in the White church" (2019, 53). While much of the literature on racial socialization has focused on the Black church as a racialized religious experience, I focus on the other side of the coin, that the White church is also a racialized religious experience. The racial meaning-making that happens within the Black church has a counterpart in White religious spaces but it has received far less scholarly attention. In fact, it has been hiding in plain sight, evidenced even in the ways that religion is studied. Black Christians are often sorted into one religious tradition, "Black Protestant," attributing Black Christians' distinct political attitudes and behaviors to their racial group commitments, effectively diminishing the legitimacy of their religious experiences. Meanwhile, variation among White Christians' attitudes across traditions, beliefs, and religiosity is given considerable attention, neglecting to consider how White Christians' common experience within the American racial hierarchy might shape religion's connection to politics among this group.

I argue that White Christians' religious experiences—be they within the confines of a particular congregation (what they hear on Sunday mornings), or whether they are observed in the broader elements of religious culture, such as religious media, parachurch institutions, religious elites, and political elites employing religious frames—offer important opportunities for racial socialization. Specifically, I contend that colorblind racial socialization takes place through two concurrent and intertwined processes: the formation of Christian social identity and the connecting of colorblind frames to religious meaning.

2.4.1 The Formation of Christian Identity

The first facet of religious-racial socialization among White Christians is the emphasis placed on forming a common Christian identity. White Christians' religious socialization stresses that one's identity "in Christ" is the most important identity one holds and should be more important than any other "worldly" identities. Christians should be bonded together across secular boundaries, like race or ethnicity (Edwards, Christerson, and Emerson 2013). This is a distinct process of identity formation. Whereas religious socialization can coexist with the acknowledgement of the social import

of race and the affirmation of racial identity among Christians of color, White Christians are more likely to encounter religious socialization that demands the primacy of Christian identity.

Still, other social groups may seek to elevate that particular identity in pursuit of building solidarity and political power. What makes the formation of this religious identity supremacy distinct even still from these efforts is the idea that not only should Christian identity be the most important, but that acknowledgement of those other identities becomes morally/religiously unacceptable; sinful, if you will. It would call into question whether one is a true and committed Christian. To place any emphasis on racial identity or to interpret one's social experiences through race can be seen as evidence of insufficient faith or misplaced priorities, of attachment to worldly division rather than divine unity in Christ. This is not an inevitable nor universal feature of White Christians' Christian identity formation. It is, of course, possible that White Christians can hold strong Christian identities alongside recognition of racial divisions. However, I argue that there exists a prevalent type of Christian identity formation in which acknowledging race is not just socially undesirable, but morally suspect.

The emphasis on building one's sole identity as a Christian has important implications for how White Christians understand race. If one's identity in Christ is to come before all other identities, then racial identity should be minimized. The formation of a common Christian identity thus necessitates the de-emphasis of race. This process of religious identity formation functions, then, as the making of White racial ignorance. For White Christians, the process of becoming a committed Christian is a process of becoming racially ignorant—not necessarily through malice, but through genuine pursuit of what their religious socialization teaches them is required to be a good Christian. Thus, ignorance is not just bliss; ignorance is faithfulness.

2.4.2 Divinized Colorblindness

The second process relates to how White Christians are socialized to think about racial issues when race becomes unavoidable. White Christians often rely on distinctly religious colorblind frames when grappling with racism. Racism is framed as a matter of individual sin rather than structural injustices. Therefore, the solution to racism is "changed hearts" and "reconciliation" rather than through policy or institutional reform (Wadsworth 2014). Discussions of race that center group identity (race-based policies) or structural analysis are viewed as inherently "worldly" solutions—solutions that run counter to the Christian emphasis on individual accountability before God.

Scholars have referred to this process as *divinized colorblindness* (Mehta, Schneider, and Ecklund 2022). Mehta and colleagues draw on 85 qualitative interviews to show the ways in which White

Christians rely on religious frames when talking about race. They find that White Christians invoke religious colorblind language such as, "…God sees no color. We're all children of God" (2022, 630). One of their interviewees, who is Catholic, drives this point home by saying that religious people "don't really think in terms of identity" (2022, 631). The authors also find that other White Christians they interviewed will employ religious frames of diversity and inclusion, emphasizing human dignity and unity. They argue, however, that these frames can also obscure structural racism by relegating racial inequality to the realm of the personal rather than the political. In this way, both religious frames that de-emphasize racial identity and those that emphasize unity amidst diversity can both serve as distinct form of colorblind racial socialization, because both separate race from power.

These frames also map onto Damon Mayrl's recover of Du Bois's writings on the White church. Mayrl (2023) argues that Du Bois understood the White church as an organization that has both shaped, and been shaped by, White supremacy. This account centers the church as a key force in creating and legitimating the racial order. Mayrl outlines six mechanisms through which Du Bois saw the White church perpetuating racial inequality: legitimation, revisionism, inaction, segregation, missionary work, and charitable giving. All six warrant further investigation, but my theoretical framework builds most directly on legitimation, revisionism, and inaction. Mayrl describes legitimation as the White church's capacity to infuse sacred authority into the racial hierarchy. Revision is the White church's tendency to rewrite its own history of racial segregation and its role in racial oppression. Inaction is about the work that silence does to perpetuate racial inequality. By declining to confront racial injustice, or by treating racism as unfortunate but secondary to more "spiritual" concerns, the White church reifies the racial status quo.

These mechanisms—legitimation, revisionism, and inaction—can be exemplified in colorblind religious frames and are useful for understanding White religious racial socialization. Religious racial socialization can occur through what White churches legitimize, what they remember (and what they forget), and when they stay silent. Being colorblind, then, is not merely a racial or political commitment. It is a sacred one. Direct confrontation with racial injustice is viewed as unnecessarily divisive.

Crucially, these two processes—the formation of a supreme Christian identity and divinized colorblindness—are concurrent and intertwined. As White Christians form their Christian identity, they are taught to diminish their other identities. And when race does come up, the explanations for racial inequality that are offered are rooted in individualistic, deracialized frameworks that are presented as the faithful Christian response. The result is a religious identity that carries within it a

commitment to colorblindness, not as an incidental feature of White Christian life, but as an integral part of what it means to hold a strong Christian identity in the way that many White Christians are socialized to do so. This is, of course, not the only form of religious-racial socialization that White Christians can experience; however, it is a feature of White Christians' religious identities that I argue is pervasive and leads to the uniquely conservative racial attitudes expressed by many White Christians.

Therefore, when race does come up, White Christians who hold strong attachments to their religious identity are supposed to react to these instances with opposition. Their attachment to their religious identity necessitates that they do not talk about race. And if they do talk about race, it must be about individual instances of racism as sin. So if race is coming up in politics, this is an affront to their understanding of the world based on their religious identity. It is not simply that a policy could be disadvantageous for their racial group or advantageous for a racial group they dislike. It is that it runs counter to the narrative built by their religious identity. It is seen as an attack on the idea that the only identity that should matter—if they are a proper Christian—is their identity in Christ and with other Christians.

2.5 Religious-Racial Socialization in Practice

Some examples can help make this process concrete. To illustrate what White Christians' racial religious socialization looks like in practice, I draw on excerpts from an original dataset of over 250,000 sermons from approximately 1,500 U.S. Christian congregations. I use word embeddings to understand the framing of various political topics in sermons and present examples that, in terms of statistical similarity, are representative of how the congregations discuss those topics. For multiple of the below examples, the topic under investigation is the term "racism," while one example comes from an analysis of sermons that mention the word "Republican." I supplement these sermon excerpts with an example from Christian media to demonstrate that religious-racial socialization can extend beyond Sunday mornings in the pews. My purpose here is not to present a systematic content analysis. Rather, it is to illuminate the kinds of messages through which these processes of Christian identity formation and divinized colorblindness take place.

Two preliminary observations about these examples are worth making. First, it is important to attend not only to what religious messages say about race but also to what they do not say. The vast majority of sermons do not mention race at all. That silence is itself a form of socialization. It communicates that race is not important, not central, and not the proper object of Christian concern. In the rare moments when the silence is broken, especially in response to national crises or political

controversies, the frames that emerge reveal the deeper logic at work. Second, the examples below come from congregations of varying denominations, sizes, regions, and racial compositions. The patterns I identify are not confined to a single denominational family or geography. They reflect a broader religious-racial socialization that cuts across White Christian spaces.

The first sermon excerpt comes from a medium-sized non-denominational church in the South, from a sermon delivered in 2021:

> I'm just putting it in terms that we all can understand, you know, in our world right now, and what we're dealing with politically, there are people who identify themselves with factions, "I'm a Republican," "I'm a Democrat," "I'm White," "I'm black," and we put ourselves in factions. Can I tell you something? If that's you, you're walking according to your old nature and you need to repent of it.

This excerpt illustrates both processes at once. The pastor equates partisan and racial identities with one's "old nature," a theological concept referring to the sinful self before spiritual transformation. Identifying as White, Black, Republican, or Democrat is not simply misguided in this framing; it requires *repentance*. The supreme Christian identity demands the abandonment of these other identities, and holding onto them is positioned as a spiritual failing. This is the formation of Christian identity explicitly working against racial identity—not, necessarily, by denying that race exists, but by spiritually delegitimizing the act of claiming or putting emphasis on a racial identity.

The second sermon excerpt comes from a large non-denominational congregation in Missouri, delivered in August 2020:

> There are differences between us but God says those things don't have to stay between us, and so there is a terrible hatred. If you think racism is a problem today, you're right, but it can't hold a candle to the level of racism that was present between Jew and Gentile.

Here, the pastor acknowledges racism as a problem but immediately reframes it through a biblical lens that minimizes its contemporary significance. By comparing modern racial conflict to the ancient division between Jew and Gentile—a division that Christian theology holds was overcome through Christ—the pastor suggests that present-day racism is minor compared to racism of the past. This is divinized colorblindness in action: racial inequality is acknowledged, but reframed in religious terms that strip it of political and structural implications. It is a clear example of a religious version of the *minimization* frame identified by Bonilla-Silva (2022).

The third excerpt comes from an evangelical church in Massachusetts, delivered in June 2020:

> If you think about it, we would solve racism in America in one generation if we would have Christ-centered homes. We would—racism just wouldn't exist in our country anymore largely.

In this sermon, the pastor argues that the solution to racism is not policy, not structural change, not reparations or institutional reform; it is "Christ-centered homes." This framing accomplishes two things at once. First, it positions Christianity as the answer to racial inequality, elevating the religious framework above political ones. Second, it renders political solutions not only unnecessary but implicitly faithless—a turning to worldly solutions rather than trusting in God's design. A less charitable reading of this sermon might point out how easily it slides into the cultural-racism framing: the suggestion that racial inequality is, fundamentally, a problem of insufficient Christian family values would resonate with long-standing stereotypes that Black Americans lack certain "traditional values" (Sears and Henry 2003). Either reading—charitable or less so—aligns with the theory I have outlined. The message offered redirects attention away from structural causes of racial inequality and grounds the alternative in divine authority.

Finally, to demonstrate that these processes extend beyond the pulpit, consider the following excerpt from Answers in Genesis, a non-profit that creates educational materials with the goal of promoting a particular set of beliefs about Earth's creation. In response to the national debate over Critical Race Theory, the organization published the following:

> Even a quick examination of this ideology shows that it does not start with God's Word. Since it doesn't begin with the Bible, there's only one other foundation possible: man's word. CRT is founded on man's word, and therefore it is a secular worldview and will not be in accord with a Christian worldview. In other words, CRT is not the correct worldview because it has the wrong foundation!
>
> So now we need to ask, "In what ways is it not Christian?" Well, God's Word says we are identified as individuals made in God's image, equal in value, but individually accountable to God…
>
> CRT says revolution and redistribution are the solution. God's Word, though, tells us the only true solution is changed hearts through the gospel of Jesus Christ.
>
> In an eternal sense, the Bible divides people into two groups too: the saved and the unsaved. This is the focus of God's justice and should be the focus of Christians as well.
>
> CRT and the Christian worldview are in total conflict. Sadly, there are even church leaders who have adopted aspects of CRT to mesh it with God's Word, but that's no different than those who mesh evolution and/or millions of years with the book of Genesis. It's mixing the pagan religion of our day (in the case of CRT, a works-based righteousness) with the Bible! It's syncretism, and God hates syncretism (Ham 2023).

This passage well exemplifies the process of religious-racial socialization that many White Christians experience. In this blog post, Critical Race Theory, which centers structural analysis of racial inequality, is rejected not on empirical grounds but on theological ones: it does not start with God's Word. The alternative framework offered is one of individual accountability before God—a religious articulation of the colorblind emphasis on individual rather than structural explanations. The solution is not redistribution or policy reform but "changed hearts through the gospel." And the passage explicitly divides the world into two legitimate categories, the saved and the unsaved, while implicitly delegitimizing racial categories as a basis for understanding inequality. The circle closes: a political debate over how to teach American racial history is resolved by positioning one side as faithful and the other as secular, "man's word" against God's. The author goes as far as to suggest that Critical Race Theory is an alternate religion and therefore reliance on CRT is wholly incompatible with righteousness. This example also demonstrates that religious-racial socialization is not confined to Sunday mornings or experiences within congregations. It operates through an ecosystem of Christian media, organizations, and cultural products that shape how many White Christians understand the world. One need not attend church to encounter these frames.

2.6 Hypotheses

The theoretical framework outlined in this chapter leads to a set of testable expectations. If White Christians' religious identities are formed through a process of religious-racial socialization that promotes a supreme Christian identity and invokes divinized colorblind frames, then the tight link between religion and race should manifest in associations between White Christians' religious social identity and racial attitudes and racialized policy preferences. Specifically, White Christians' religious group attachments will be associated with greater opposition to policies that address racial inequality.

Because White Christians are committed to beliefs in colorblindness, the present political moment also opens the door to the belief that it is White people who face discrimination—a belief reflected in policy initiatives pursued by the Trump administration, which I leverage in Chapter 4 of this dissertation. This means that White Christians with stronger religious group attachments will be less likely to believe that racial minorities face discrimination and more likely to believe that White people face discrimination. Similarly, the logic of divinized colorblindness implies that White Christians with strong religious identities will perceive the balance of racial power differently than other Americans. If the racial status quo has been rendered invisible, and if emphasis on group identity is framed as un-Christian, then White Christians should be particularly sensitive to claims of minority

group empowerment. Therefore, White Christians with strong religious group attachments will perceive their racial group to have less power and influence and racial minorities to have more power and influence.

This process of religious-racial socialization shapes how racism itself is defined. If racism is understood as individual sin rather than as a feature of institutions, then White Christians should reject systemic definitions of racism in favor of more individualistic definitions. Additionally, the embracement of individualistic definitions of racism also suggest that White Christians with stronger religious social identity could have higher racial resentment—a belief that Black Americans could get ahead if they only try harder.

Much of my analyses will focus on racial attitudes and policies in which Black Americans are the target. However, it is reasonable to expect that this process of racial-religious socialization extends beyond attitudes towards Black Americans and could shape attitudes towards groups that are racialized in American political discourse, including immigrants and Muslims. I expect stronger religious social identity among White Christians to be associated with less favorable attitudes towards these groups.

Finally, if religious and racial group attitudes are as tightly linked as this theoretical framework suggests, then these attitudes could be activated not only in one direction but in both. That is, political rhetoric and policies that discuss race will activate religious group considerations among White Christians, but also, exposure to rhetoric and policies that invoke religious groups could also prime White Christians' racial attitudes.

A few additional considerations about measurement are worth noting here. Throughout this dissertation, my primary explanatory variable is Christian social identity rather than church attendance. While attendance in a racially homogeneous church may seem like a more straightforward measure of exposure to religious-racial socialization, attendance alone does not capture the mechanism I describe. One need not attend church regularly in order to build a strong Christian identity, and as the Answers in Genesis example illustrates, this racialized religious identity formation can be found outside of the chapel doors. Moreover, prior research has shown that multiracial churches, though designed to ameliorate distance between racial groups, often function as White churches—centering the needs and preferences of White congregants, promoting individualism, and sidelining structural analyses (Edwards 2008; Edwards, Christerson, and Emerson 2013). For this reason, the racial composition of one's congregation is likely a useful proxy for exposure to these frames among Black Christians—where a predominantly Black church is a meaningfully different socialization environment—but not

necessarily for White Christians, for whom the dominant frames are likely to be present regardless of their congregation's racial composition.

While the primary focus of this dissertation is White Christians, these expectations also help define the conditions under which I might expect Black Christians'—and other Christians of color—religious identity to lead to opposition to race-based remedies. If Black Christians' religious experiences were to emphasize the supremacy of religious identity over other identities and the necessary degradation of racial identity, then common Christian identity might hold the same relationship for Black Christians that I hypothesize for White Christians. Conversely, if White Christians' religious experiences included a different strain of racial socialization—discussions of White privilege or structural inequalities, for example—then strong Christian identity attachment might not lead to the same outcomes. The argument I am making is explicitly about race, but the underlying logic—that an identity can be imbued with the meaning of whatever is emphasized or de-emphasized in socialization—could also be relevant for other identities. Particularly interesting is the notion that White Christians who form their Christian identities in this way should also be less attached to their partisan identities, at least in terms of the strength of partisanship as a social identity.

I do not directly test measure exposure to this religious-racial socialization in the present work. Rather, I offer this theoretical framework to establish why White Christians' religious group attitudes could be so intimately tied to their racial politics. The sermon and media examples provided in Section 2.5 offer illustrative evidence that religious-racial socialization is happening, and the experimental work in Chapter 4 tests the downstream consequences. Future work could seek to measure how frequently individuals are exposed to such frames and connect this to their religious social identity and racial attitudes; additionally, one could examine whether exposure to alternate forms of religious-racial socialization might shift attitudes.

2.7 Conclusion

This dissertation represents a conundrum. At face value, the idea that White Christians would want to see past racial identities sounds noble. After all, acknowledgement and attachment to a strong racial identity among Whites has historically been associated with violent and extreme ideologies. But the religious-racial socialization process that I have described—one that perceives a necessary tradeoff between acknowledging a racial identity and being a faithful Christian—obscures reality. Racial inequality exists and it is structured into American institutions in ways that cannot be resolved by individual goodwill or changed hearts alone.

This dissertation, then, makes few claims about the intentional hatred or prejudice or nasty feelings required to keep Black people down or to further perpetuate racial inequality. This dissertation seeks to show how the religious-racial socialization that many White Christians experience can have (perhaps unintended) consequences—how it can reinforce the racial status quo, how these identities can be manipulated by elites, how colorblindness in a religious key can do political work even when those who hold it understand themselves as acting in good faith. This is certainly not to say that prejudice is completely absent—in fact, some of the outcomes hypothesized above have strong correlations with outright prejudice. It is simply to describe a process of identity formation that can have very real consequences for racial progress in the United States today.

This religious-racial socialization among White Christians goes beyond the products of segregated schools, selective curricula, and segregated social networks. It is a particularly potent form of racial socialization because it moralizes racial ignorance and colorblindness. It attributes these ideals to divine authority.

The remaining chapters of this dissertation test the empirical consequences of this theoretical framework. Chapter 3 uses survey data to assess whether Christian social identity is associated with the constellation of racial attitudes predicted in the prior section. Chapter 4 uses survey experiments to test the activation hypotheses, examining whether religious cues activate racial attitudes and whether racial cues activate religious identity. Together, these chapters aim to show not only that religion and race are intertwined in the political attitudes of White Christians, but that this entanglement operates through the identity-based mechanism I have described in this chapter.

Chapter 3 – Religious Identity and Racial Attitudes

In the preceding chapter, I argued that White Christians' religious identities are not formed in a racial vacuum. The religious-racial socialization that shapes White Christians' racial attitudes pushes attachment to a common Christian identity above other "worldly" identities, including race, and laces divine authority into colorblind frames. Evidence in favor of this argument would look like White Christians' religious social identity being tightly bound up with how White Christians think about race. Moreover, because the racial meaning of this identity is distinctive, the relationship between religious identity and racial attitudes should, to some extent, look different among White Christians than among Black Christians. Additionally, because I articulate identity formation and socialization as the mechanism explaining White Christians' racial attitudes, religious social identity should more consistently shape White Christians' racial attitudes than more commonly used measures of religion, such as affiliation, behavior, and beliefs.

This chapter contains the first empirical tests of my argument. I examine the relationship between White Christians' religious social identity and a wide range of racial group attitudes, perceptions of discrimination, power and influence, attributions for racial inequality, and racialized policy preferences across four surveys. I use the following datasets: the 2020 American National Election Study (ANES), the 2020 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey (CMPS), and two original surveys fielded on Prolific in November 2023 and July 2024. The first two are higher-quality samples with extensive batteries of racial outcomes, but less direct measures of religious group attachment. The two original surveys are opt-in online samples that are less representative of the U.S. population but contain original measures of Christian social identity that are adapted from validated measures of racial identity. Taken together, these sources balance data quality with construct validity.

Multiple findings emerge. First, White Christians' religious social identity is associated with a wide range of racial attitudes and racialized policy preferences. Consistent with my argument, stronger religious group attachment among White Christians is linked to greater opposition to policies aimed at addressing racial inequality, greater belief that Whites and Christians face discrimination, lower belief that Black Americans and Muslim Americans face discrimination, higher racial resentment, and

the attribution of racial inequality to individual rather than structural causes. Second, these patterns are most uniform among White Christians, whereas among Black Christians, the role of religious social identity varies across the data sources. Third, and with some exceptions, religious social identity is more reliably related to these outcomes than are many of the prior "3Bs" measures of religion—belonging (affiliation), behaving, and believing—that have dominated political science research on religion.

This chapter unfolds as follows. I being by discussing how I operationalize religious social identity across the datasets. I then present the findings from each dataset in turn, starting with the ANES, then moving to the CMPS, and finally the original surveys. I then move to a discussion of the commonalities across the sources as well as the areas where the findings differ. I conclude by outlining some areas for further research, summarizing the important findings from these observational analyses, and motivating the next chapter.

3.1 Operationalizing Religious Social Identity

Following from social identity theory, religious social identity is the extent to which an individual derives meaning from and feels attached to their religious group (Huddy 2001; Tajfel 1981). I define Christian social identity, then, is the extent to which Christians feel attached to Christians as a group. In the conclusion of this chapter, I muse about the strengths and weaknesses of specifying "Christian" as the target group as opposed to broader or more specific religious group targets.

Operationalizing religious social identity is not entirely straightforward because the highest-quality, traditional sources of survey data were not designed with this construct in mind. Past work in political science has conceptualized religion using the "3Bs": belonging (affiliation or categorization), believing, and behaving (religious practice, most commonly attendance at religious services) (Layman 2001; Smidt 2019). The 3Bs approach has produced decades of rich research, but it does not directly capture religious group attachment. As a result, existing, high-quality datasets such as the ANES do not consistently contain straightforward measures of religious social identity. For this reason, I rely on the question in the ANES that I argue comes closest to religious group attachment in the ANES, *religious importance*:

> Religious importance: *How important is religion in your life?* Response options: *Not at all important, A little important, Moderately important,* and *Extremely important*.

The CMPS features user-generated content in addition to a set of standard survey questions that includes religious importance. The 2020 survey includes an additional question that more closely

taps into religious social identity. Respondents are asked to rank a set of identities from most to least important to them personally: racial identity, gender identity, religious identity, party identity, cultural identity, class identity, city/town/community identity, and American identity. I reverse-code the rank of religious identity so that higher values correspond to ranking one's religious identity as more important.

> Religious ID Ranked More Important: *Higher values indicate respondent ranks religious identity as more important to them personally across the set of identities provided (racial identity, gender identity, religious identity, party identity, cultural identity, class identity, city/town/community identity, and American identity).*

This ranked measure has advantages and disadvantages. One advantage is that it forces respondents to compare these identities to one another, thus pitting religious identity directly against a set of competing identities my theoretical framework highlights, most importantly racial identity. However, the disadvantage of this approach is that it is a relative measure. A respondent might find religion to be very important to them personally but still rank it lower than other identities they feel similarly strong about; that is, there is a chance for ties that are arbitrarily broken. Conversely, there may be some respondents who find none of this set of identities to reflect the ways that they see themselves, thus artificially inflating the importance of these identities.

In the November 2023 and July 2024 Prolific surveys, I measure Christian social identity using a battery adapted from Jardina's (2019) 3-item White identity scale. In the November 2023 survey, I simply switch out references to White people in these items with references to Christians. The questions become:

> (Christian Identity Centrality) *How important is being a Christian to your identity?* Response options: *Not at all important, A little important, Moderately important, Very important, Extremely important*
>
> (Christian Pride) *To what extent do you feel that Christians in this country have a lot to be proud of?* Response options: *None at all, A little, A moderate amount, A lot, A great deal*
>
> (Christian Commonality) *How much would you say that Christians in this country have a lot in common with one another?* Response options: *None at all, A little, A moderate amount, A lot, A great deal*

In the July 2024 survey, I revised the Pride and Commonality items to phrase them in terms of the respondent's own pride and sense of commonality with Christians, rather than their perception of the group's collective pride or commonality:

(Christian Pride – Revised) How much pride do you have in being a Christian? Response options: *None at all, A little, A moderate amount, A lot, A great deal*

(Christian Commonality – Revised) How much would you say that you have in common with other Christians in this country? Response options: *None at all, A little, A moderate amount, A lot, A great deal*

In the results, I treat the three items as a scale (*Christian ID Scale*) and also present each item individually. Table 3.1 displays a summary of the religious identity measures. In the rest of the chapter, I will present results organized by data source, starting with the ANES, then moving to the CMPS, the November 2023 Prolific Survey, and the July 2024 Prolific Survey.

Table 3.1: Summary of Datasets and Religious Identity Variables

Dataset	2020 American National Election Study (ANES)	2020 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey (CMPS)	November 2023 Prolific Survey	July 2024 Prolific Survey
***N* White Christians**	3885	1978	506	693
Religious Identity Measures	Religious Importance	Religious Importance Rank of Religious Identity	Religious Importance Christian Identity Scale: Identity Centrality Pride Commonality	Religious Importance Christian Identity Scale: Identity Centrality Pride (Revised) Commonality (Revised)

In each dataset, I estimate survey-weighted ordinary least squares (OLS) regressions of each racial or policy outcome on each religious identity measure, controlling for education, income, age, sex, and party identification. With the exception of age, all variables are recoded to range from 0 to 1 so that coefficients can be interpreted as the expected change in the outcome when the religious predictor moves from its minimum to its maximum value. I run separate models by racial group—White Christians and Black Christians—to test whether religious social identity has a different meaning in different racial contexts, as my theoretical framework predicts. I also run separate models with the alternative religion measures, such as Protestant tradition, born-again identity, religious attendance, Christian nationalism, and religious exceptionalism—a measure introduced by McDaniel and colleagues (2022) that is closely related to Christian nationalism, meant to capture the belief that the

success of the United States is part of God's plan. Descriptions of these alternate variables can be found in Supplements to Chapter 3. In the remainder of the chapter, I present results from each data source in turn, beginning with the ANES.

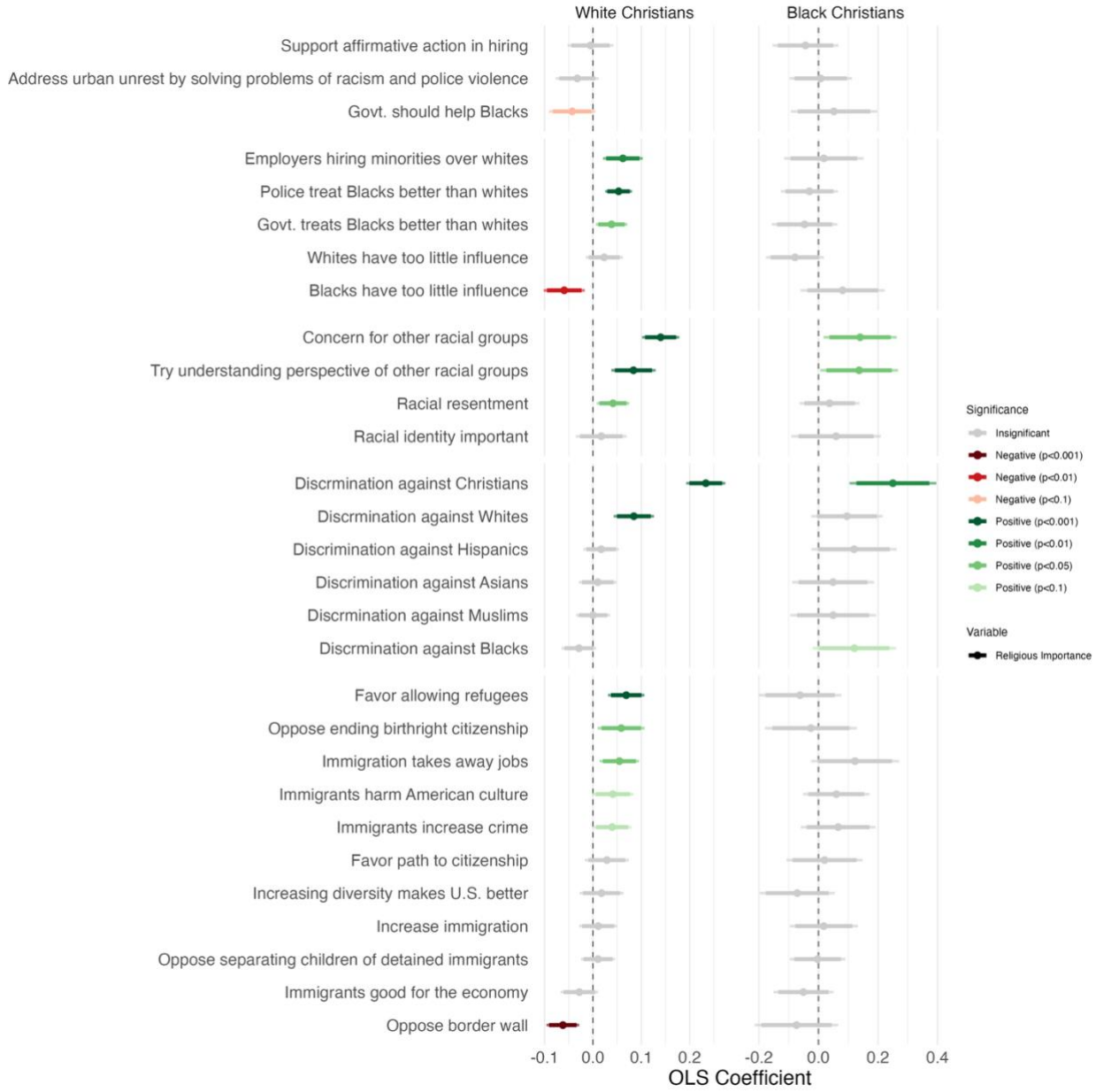
3.2 2020 American National Election Study

In the ANES, I classify respondents as Christian using the ANES's major religion summary; Mainline Protestants, Evangelical Protestants, Black Protestants, Undifferentiated Protestants, Roman Catholics, and Other Christians are categorized as Christian, while Jewish, Other religion, and Not religious respondents are categorized as non-Christian. As such, there are 3,885 White Christians and 546 Black Christians, though the number of observations across models varies due to missingness in the outcome, predictor, or control variables.

As stated above, *religious importance* is the main independent variable of interest. I compare religious importance to the following other religion variables: Protestant affiliation, born-again identification, biblical literalism, and frequency of church attendance.

Figure 3.1 displays OLS coefficients for religious importance from separate models predicting each of the 29 outcome variables among White Christians (left panel) and Black Christians. The outcomes are grouped thematically (from top to bottom): racialized policy preferences, perceptions of power and influence, racial attitudes, perceptions of discrimination, and attitudes toward immigrants and immigration. Positive coefficients indicate that moving from the lowest to the highest value of religious importance is associated with an increase in the outcome; negative coefficients indicate a decrease.

Figure 3.1: Effect of religious importance on racial and policy attitudes, 2020 ANES



Note: Panels show White Christians (left) and Black Christians (right). Coefficients from survey-weighted OLS, controlling for education, income, age, sex, and party ID. Each point is from a separate model. Colors indicate direction and statistical significance.

The pattern among White Christians is somewhat in line with the theoretical expectations outlined in Chapter 2. Stronger religious importance is associated with a set of attitudes that, taken together, describe a respondent who is skeptical of structural explanations of racial inequality, sensitive to perceived threats to Whites and Christians, and hostile toward policies aimed at addressing racial disparities. In particular, religious importance is associated with greater belief that employers are hiring

minorities over Whites ($b = 0.062, p < 0.01$), greater belief that police treat Black Americans better than Whites ($b = 0.053, p < 0.001$), greater belief that the government treats Black Americans better than Whites ($b = 0.038, p < 0.05$), less belief that Black Americans have too little influence in politics ($b = -0.059, p < 0.01$), higher racial resentment ($b = 0.042, p < 0.05$), and less support for the government helping Black Americans ($b = -0.043, p < 0.1$)—meaning greater belief that Blacks should "help themselves." Religious importance is associated with less opposition to building a wall on the southern border of the United States ($b = -0.062, p < 0.001$) and a set of negative perceptions about immigrants: that immigrants take away jobs ($b = 0.55, p < 0.05$), that immigrants harm American culture ($b = 0.41, p < 0.1$), and that immigrants increase crime ($b = 0.04, p < 0.1$). White Christians for whom religion is more important are also more likely to say that Christians face discrimination ($b = 0.233, p < 0.001$) and, more importantly for the purposes of this inquiry, that Whites face discrimination ($b = 0.085, p < 0.001$).

At the same time, religious importance among White Christians is also associated with two outcomes that may appear contradictory on their face but upon closer inspection, are not incompatible with the theoretical framework. Religious importance is positively associated with self-reports of concern for other racial groups ($b = 0.140, p < 0.001$) and of trying to understand the perspective of other racial groups ($b = 0.084, p < 0.001$). These items perhaps capture a dimension of religious-racial socialization that was described in the prior chapter, in summarizing findings from prior research on the topic—some colorblind frames might emphasize unity amidst diversity but still place the source of racial inequality at the individual heart (Mehta, Schneider, and Ecklund 2022). These perspective-taking behaviors do not necessarily capture structural analysis of racial inequality or support for race-conscious policies. That White Christians with stronger religious identity report higher interpersonal concern for racial out-groups, while simultaneously reporting lower support for policy remedies, lower belief that racial minorities face discrimination, and higher racial resentment, illustrates a facet of divinized-colorblindness as described in Chapter 2: racial problems are understood as problems of individual hearts and interpersonal relationships, not as problems of institutions.

However, religious importance is associated with a few attitudes that run counter to expectations. White Christians with stronger religious importance have greater opposition to ending birthright citizenship ($b = 0.058, p<0.05$) and are more likely to favor allowing refugees into the United States ($p = 0.069, p<0.001$). I return to these findings in the discussion section below and put them in conversation with findings from the other datasets.

Religious importance among Black Christians is not significantly associated with most of the attitudes that it predicts among White Christians. Similar to White Christians, Black Christians who have higher religious importance report concern for other racial groups ($b = 0.14, p < 0.05$) and trying to understand the perspectives of other racial groups ($b = 0.137, p < 0.05$), and they are more likely to say that Christians face discrimination ($b = 0.25, p < 0.01$). Black Christians with higher religious importance are more likely to say that Blacks face discrimination ($b = 0.121, p < 0.1$). However, religious importance is not significantly associated with any of the other outcomes of interest. This difference in the role of religious importance between Black and White Christians is in line with the expectations articulated in the previous chapter.

I now turn to the comparison of religious importance—what I put forward as the sole measure of religious identity in the ANES—to other religion variables. To keep the analysis tractable, I report the results of these analyses for White Christians only, but similar results for Black Christians can be found in the Appendix. Figure 3.2 presents a heatmap summary of the relationship between each of the five religion measures (columns) and each of the 29 outcomes (rows) among White Christians. Red cells indicate negative coefficients; green cells indicate positive coefficients; darker shading indicates greater statistical significance.

Figure 3.2: Religion measures and racial attitudes among White Christians, 2020 ANES



Note: Cells show the direction and significance of survey-weighted OLS coefficients, controlling for education, income, age, sex, and party ID. Cell numbers display the model N.

The goal of the heatmap is to be able to compare alternate measures of religion to religious importance. Two patterns emerge. First, religious importance and biblical literalism are more consistently associated with the predicted racial attitudes than are Protestant affiliation, born-again identification, or church attendance. Biblical literalism and religious importance shape these racial attitudes and racialized policy preferences in similar ways, though biblical literalism appears to have more explanatory power than does religious importance.

The main takeaway from the ANES analysis is that religious importance has a fairly reliable relationship with race-related attitudes among White Christians. This relationship is not shared among Black Christians. Additionally, religious importance is more predictive of these attitudes than some prior conceptualizations of religion—such as the difference between Protestants and Catholics, between evangelicals (born-again identifiers) and non-evangelicals, and by frequency of church attendance.

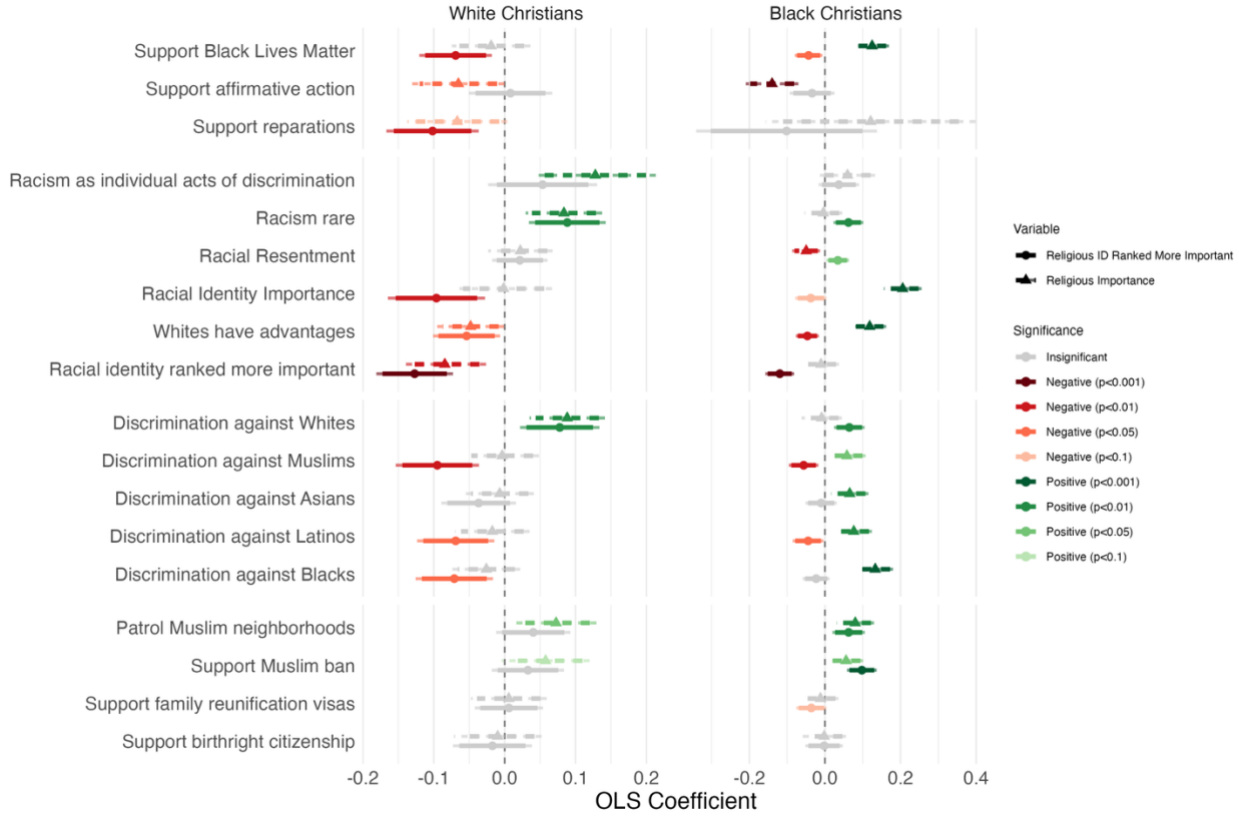
3.3 2020 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey

The CMPS complements the ANES by providing a broad range of race-related outcomes as well as a unique measure of religious identity, which is the ranking of how important one's religious identity is to them personally, relative to other social identities.

Christians in the CMPS include those respondents who identify their religion as Catholic, Protestant, Other Christian, or Mormon/LDS. There are 1978 White Christians and 2822 Black Christians; again, specific numbers of observations will vary across the models based on missing data.

Figure 3.3 presents the coefficients for the two religious identity measures—rank of religious identity (where higher values mean religious identity is ranked more important relative to other identities) and religious importance—on 18 racial and policy outcomes. The left panel shows estimates for White Christians; the right panel shows estimates for Black Christians. The shape of the points and the line type (solid or dashed) delineate the relevant independent variable, with the estimate for religious importance always appearing above the estimate for the religious identity ranking variable for a given outcome variable.

Figure 3.3: Effect of religious identity measures on racial and policy attitudes, 2020 CMPS.



Note: Panels show White Christians (left) and Black Christians (right). Coefficients from survey-weighted OLS, controlling for education, income, age, sex, and party ID. Colors indicate direction and significance of estimates. Point shape and line type delineate the religious identity variable modeled, with "Religious Importance" always appearing above the estimate for "Religious ID Ranked More Important" for a given outcome variable.

The substantive patterns for White Christians in the CMPS are consistent with the ANES results and with the theoretical expectations from Chapter 2. White Christians who rank religious identity as more important are less supportive of Black Lives Matter ($b = -0.069$, $p < 0.01$) and reparations ($b = -0.102$, $p < 0.01$). They are less likely to say that Whites have advantages ($b = -0.054$, $p < 0.05$), more likely to say that racism is rare ($b = 0.088$, $p < 0.01$), more likely to say that Whites face discrimination ($b = 0.078$, $p < 0.01$), and less likely to say that Muslims ($b = -0.095$, $p < 0.01$), Latinos ($b = -0.069$, $p < 0.05$), and Blacks ($b = -0.071$, $p < 0.05$) face discrimination. Those that rank their religious identity as more important are less likely to say that their racial identity is important to them (i.e. "How important is being [insert R's race] to your identity?"; $b = -0.096$, $p < 0.01$) and rank their racial identity as less important to them personally, though this is partially a function of the forced comparison between religious and racial identities in this question. Additionally, religious importance is associated with less support for affirmative action ($b = -0.065$, $p < 0.05$) and being more likely to define racism as individual acts of discrimination ($b = 0.128$, $p < 0.01$). While at times the religious

identity ranking variable and religious importance differ in magnitude and statistical significance, the direction of the effects of these two variables remains largely consistent.

When it comes to Black Christians, there are multiple inconsistencies between the religious identity ranking variable and religious importance, and these variables is associated both with more racially conservative and racially progressive attitudes across the outcomes. Religious importance is associated with greater support for Black Lives Matter but less support for affirmative action. It is associated with higher racial identity importance, being more likely to say that Whites have certain advantages due to their race, lower racial resentment, and more belief that Muslims, Asians, Latinos, and Blacks face discrimination. On the other hand, higher ranking of religious identity among Black Christians is associated with *less* support for Black Lives Matter, being more likely to say that racism is rare and *less* likely to say that Whites have certain advantages, *higher* racial resentment, *lower* racial identity importance, and being *less* likely to say that Muslims and Latinos face discrimination. In sum, it is unclear the extent to which either of these measures adequately captures Black Christians' religious social identity, and if they do, how exactly Black Christians' religious social identity relates to racial attitudes. Further investigation is needed.

Figure 3.4 summarizes the full set of religion measures—including evangelical identity, being raised Christian, church attendance, attending a majority-White church, and attending a majority-Black church—against the racial outcomes among White Christians. The heatmap reinforces the pattern seen in the coefficient plot: religious social identity measures (the ranked importance item and religious importance) are the most consistently predictive of racial attitudes in the theoretically expected direction among White Christians. Measures of categorization (Evangelical), behavior (attendance), and social context (being raised Christian) measures are less consistently associated with racial attitudes.

Figure 3.4: Religion measures and racial attitudes among White Christians, 2020 CMPS



Note: Cells show the direction and significance of survey-weighted OLS coefficients, controlling for education, income, age, sex, and party ID. Cell numbers display the model N.

Together, the findings from the ANES and CMPS largely align with theoretical expectations for White Christians. White Christians with stronger religious group attachments are less supportive of policies designed to combat racial inequality, more likely to perceive discrimination against their own racial group and less likely to perceive discrimination against racial minorities, and are more likely to rely on individualistic rather than structural definitions of racism.

3.4 November 2023 Prolific Survey

I now move to the two original surveys fielded on Prolific. In addition to the religious importance question, these original surveys include three items designed to measure Christian social identity.

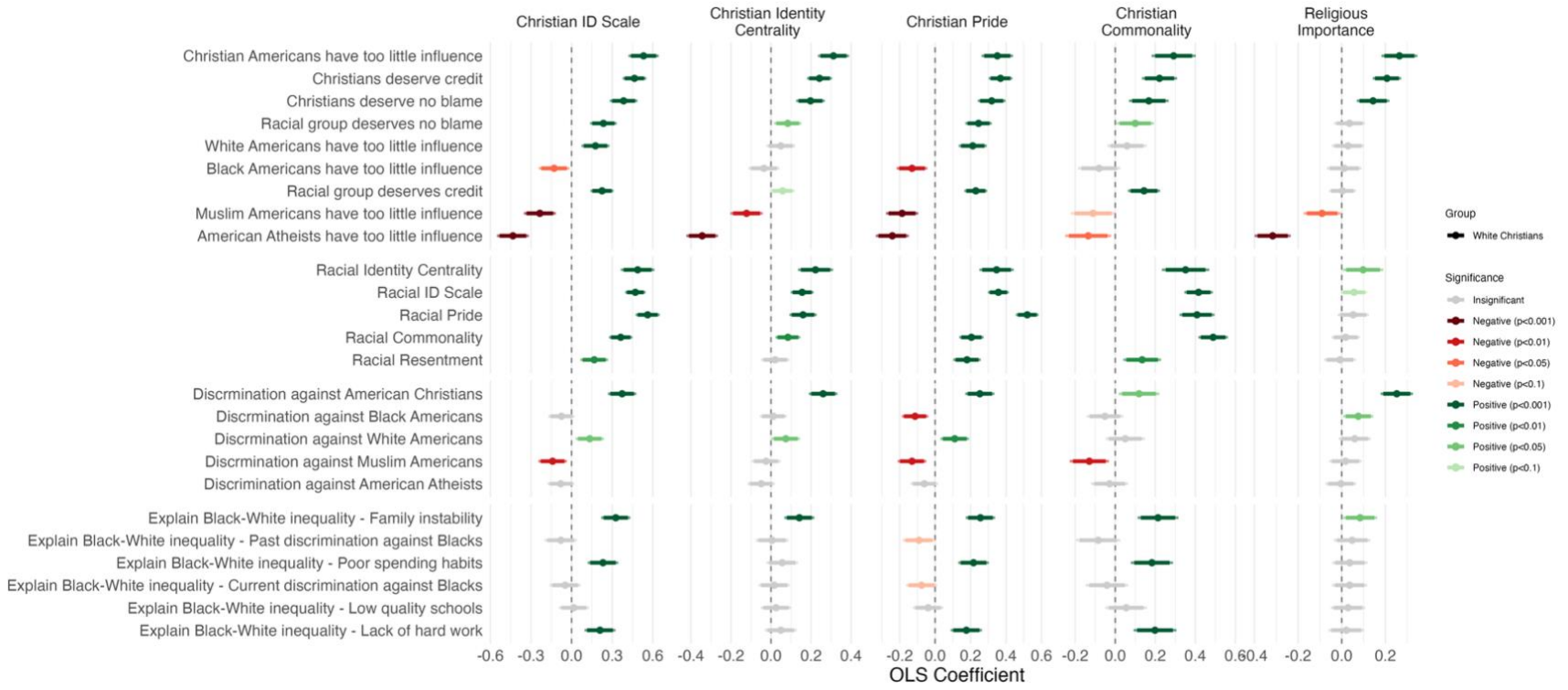
These are the first measures that ask about Christians directly, as opposed to the religious importance question (and for the CMPS, the religious identity rank question) that ask about "religion" generically. Again, this measurement strategy borrows from the 3-item White identity scale (Jardina 2019). I present the results for a 3-item scale as well as for each item separately. Religious importance is also reported for these surveys. The sample includes 506 White Christians and 496 Black Christians.

The survey's outcomes span five broad categories: political power and influence attributed to various racial and religious groups, attributions of credit and blame to one's own racial group and to Christians, racial identity and racial resentment, perceptions of discrimination against different groups, and attributions for Black–White inequality (ranging from structural explanations such as discrimination and poor schools to individual-level explanations such as lack of hard work and poor spending habits).

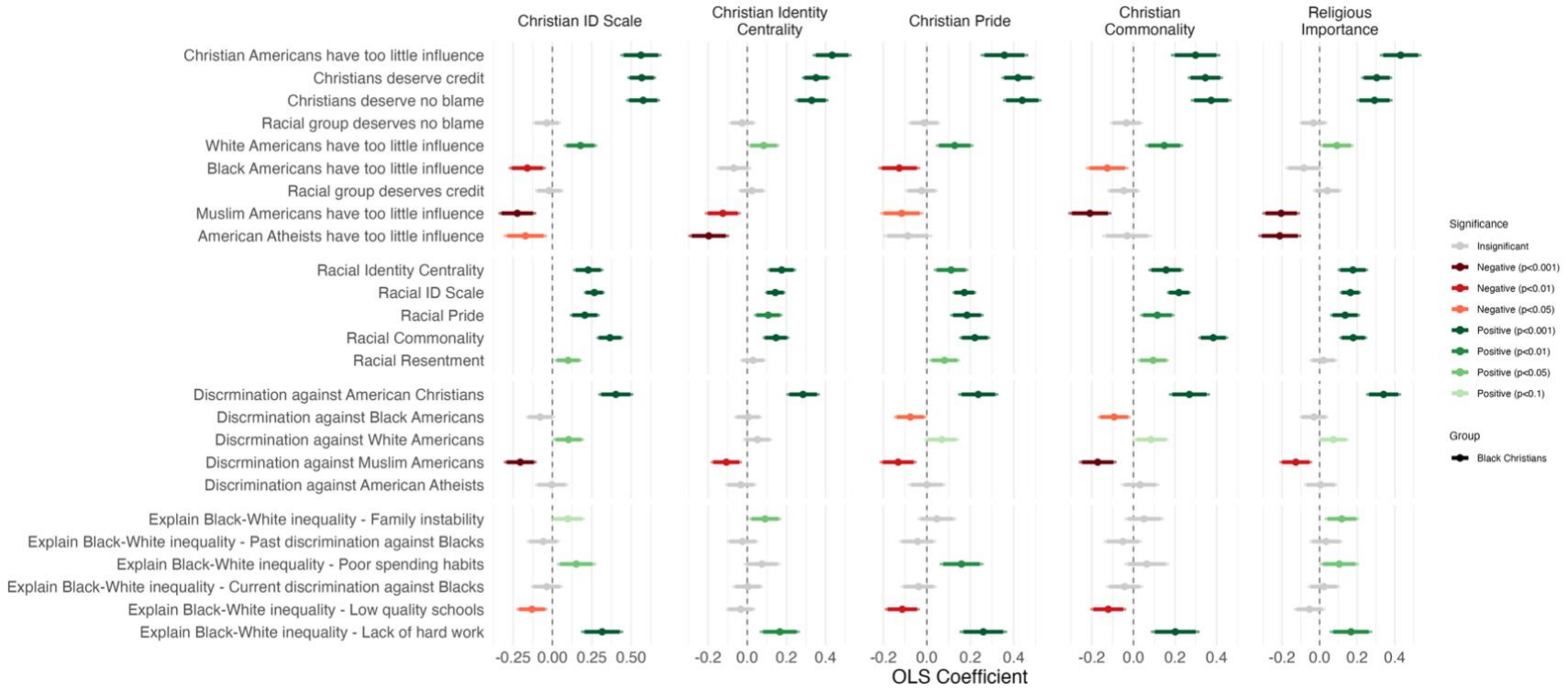
Figure 3.5 displays coefficients for the three individual items and the full Christian ID scale, along with religious importance, on the full set of outcomes among White Christians (top panel) and Black Christians (bottom panel).

Figure 3.5: Effect of Christian identity measures on racial and policy attitudes among White Christians (top) and Black Christians (bottom), November 2023 Prolific Survey

(a) White Christians



(b) Black Christians



Note: Results for White Christians in top panel and Black Christians in bottom panel. Each column is a different religious identity predictor. OLS coefficients, controlling for education, income, age, sex, and party ID. Colors indicate direction and significance of estimates.

Among White Christians, the Christian ID scale is highly predictive of a wide range of racial attitudes that my theory identifies. White Christians with stronger Christian social identity are more likely to say that White Americans have too little influence in politics ($b = 0.177$, $p < 0.001$), that Christian Americans have too little influence ($b = 0.532$, $p < 0.001$), and less likely to say that Black Americans ($b = -0.129$, $p < 0.05$), Muslim Americans ($b = -0.235$, $p < 0.001$), or American atheists ($b = -0.433$, $p < 0.001$) have too little influence. They are more likely to say their racial group deserves credit ($b = 0.225$, $p < 0.001$) for their contributions to society and no blame ($b = 0.235$, $p < 0.001$) for the problems of society, and that Christians deserve credit ($b = 0.465$, $p < 0.001$) and no blame ($b = 0.384$, $p < 0.001$). They score higher on racial identity centrality ($b = 0.488$, $p < 0.001$), racial pride ($b = 0.562$, $p < 0.001$), racial commonality ($b = 0.363$, $p < 0.001$), and the full racial identity scale ($b = 0.471$, $p < 0.001$). They express higher racial resentment ($b = 0.167$, $p < 0.01$). They are more likely to perceive discrimination against White and Christian Americans ($b = 0.134$, $p < 0.05$; $b = 0.373$, $p < 0.001$, *respectively*), and less likely to perceive discrimination against Muslims ($b = -0.140$, $p < 0.01$).

Strikingly, White Christians with stronger Christian social identity are also more likely to attribute Black–White inequality to family instability ($b = 0.326$, $p < 0.001$), lack of hard work ($b = 0.210$, $p < 0.001$), and poor spending habits ($b = 0.232$, $p < 0.001$), while the coefficients on structural explanations—past discrimination, current discrimination, and low quality schools—are weakly negative and mostly non-significant. This is a sharp empirical manifestation of divinized colorblindness, one of the processes I argue undergirds White Christians' religious group attachments. Racial inequality is understood as a consequence of individual choices, family structures, and behaviors, not as a product of past or present discrimination or institutional arrangements.

The findings for Black Christians are different from those in the ANES and CMPS. In these data, Christian social identity has much of the same relationships with these outcomes for Black Christians as it does with White Christians.

Next I turn to the comparison of Christian social identity to other religion measures, including Protestant categorization, born-again identification, church attendance, the racial makeup of one's church, Christian nationalism (Whitehead and Perry 2020) and religious exceptionalism (McDaniel, Nooruddin, and Shortle 2022). Figure 3.6 displays these results.

Figure 3.6: Religion measures and racial attitudes among White Christians, November 2023 Prolific Survey



Note: Cells show the direction and significance of OLS coefficients, controlling for education, income, age, sex, and party ID.

The results again show that Christian social identity is more consistently related to racial attitudes than other common measures of religion, including affiliation, beliefs, and behavior. However, Christian nationalism and to a lesser extent, religious exceptionalism, both powerfully shape racial attitudes. This does not necessarily disprove the theoretical argument put forth in the preceding chapter; as stated in the introduction, it is reasonable to believe that Christian nationalism and religious exceptionalism could be downstream attitudes formed in party by Christian social identity.

Additionally, both Christian nationalism and religious exceptionalism infuse some degree of politics into the measures themselves, thus making it less surprising that these attitudes could be correlated with racial attitudes.

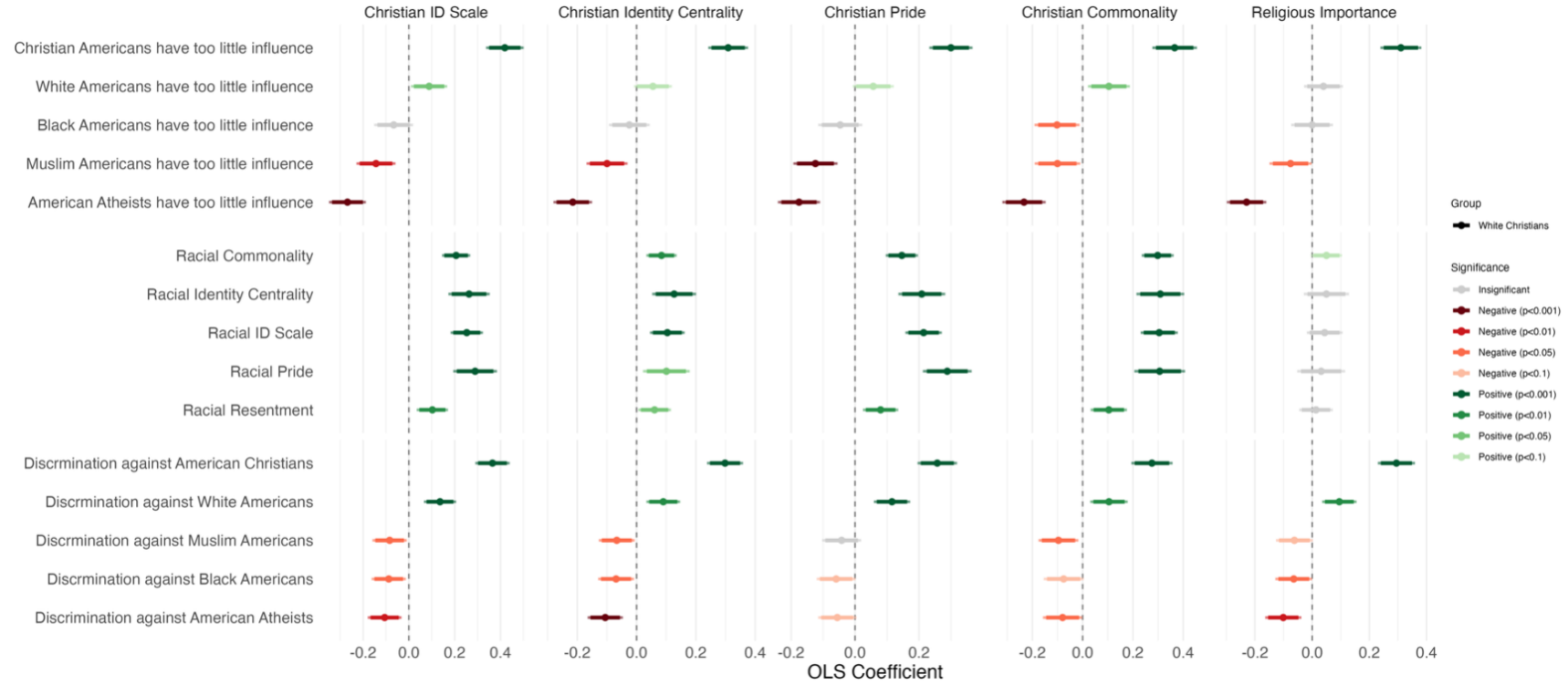
3.5 July 2024 Prolific Survey

My fourth and final dataset comes from an original survey fielded on Prolific in July 2024. This survey mostly serves as a refinement of the measures and replication of results from the November 2023 study. As described in Section 3.1, I revise the Christian Pride and Christian Commonality items to solicit the extent to which the respondent themselves feels a sense of pride and sense of commonality with their racial/religious group, rather than as perceptions of the group's collective status. The sample includes 693 White Christians and 571 Black Christians.

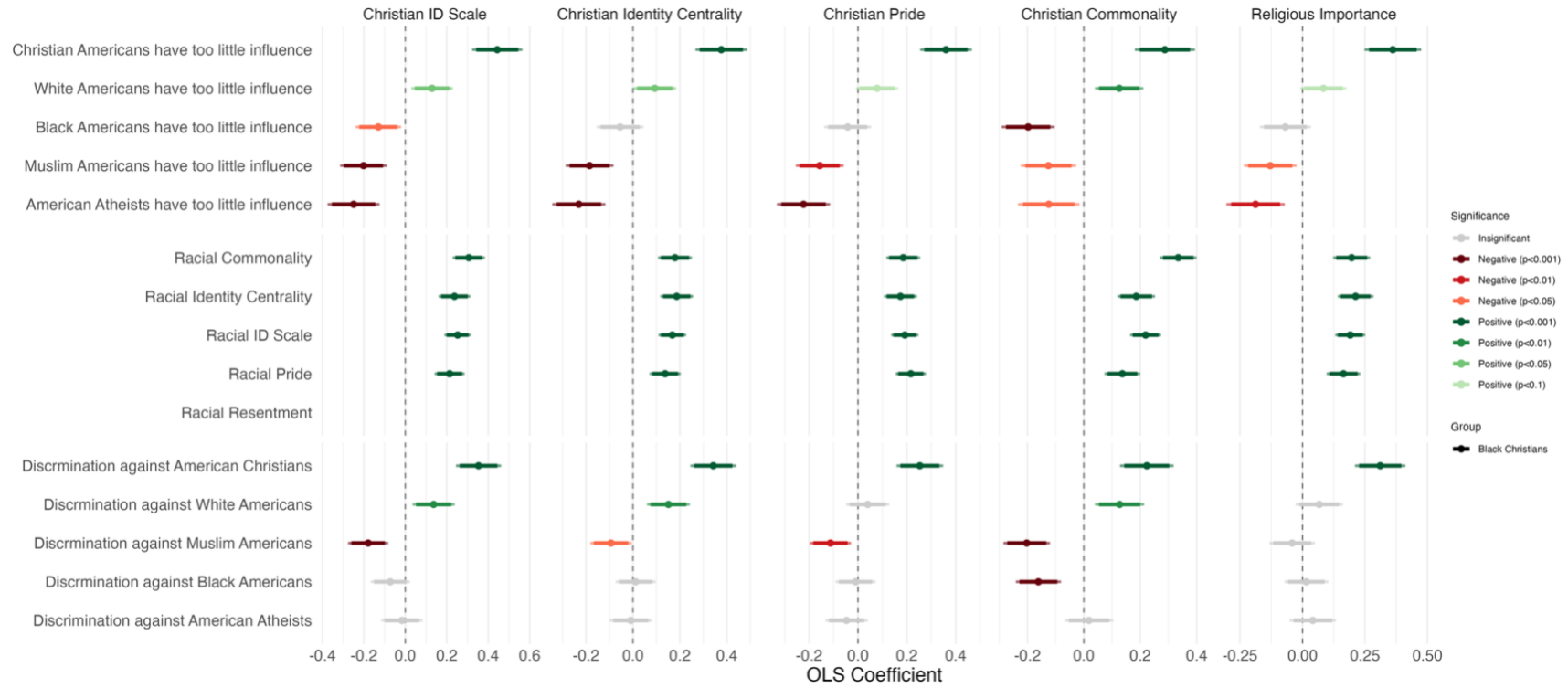
I again start with the results for religious social identity among both White and Black Christians, as displayed in Figure 3.7. The pattern of results for both White Christians and Black Christians closely mirrors those from the November 2023 study. Save for a few coefficients that are not statistically significant, Christian social identity is associated with being more likely to believe that Christians and Whites have too little influence but less likely to believe that Muslim Americans, Black Americans, and Americans atheists have too little influence. It is associated with stronger racial group attachment. It is associated with beliefs that White Americans and American Christians face discrimination but negatively associated with perceptions that Black Americans, Muslim Americans, and American atheists face discrimination.

Figure 3.7: Effect of Christian identity measures on racial and policy attitudes among White Christians (top) and Black Christians (bottom), July 2024 Prolific Survey

(a) White Christians



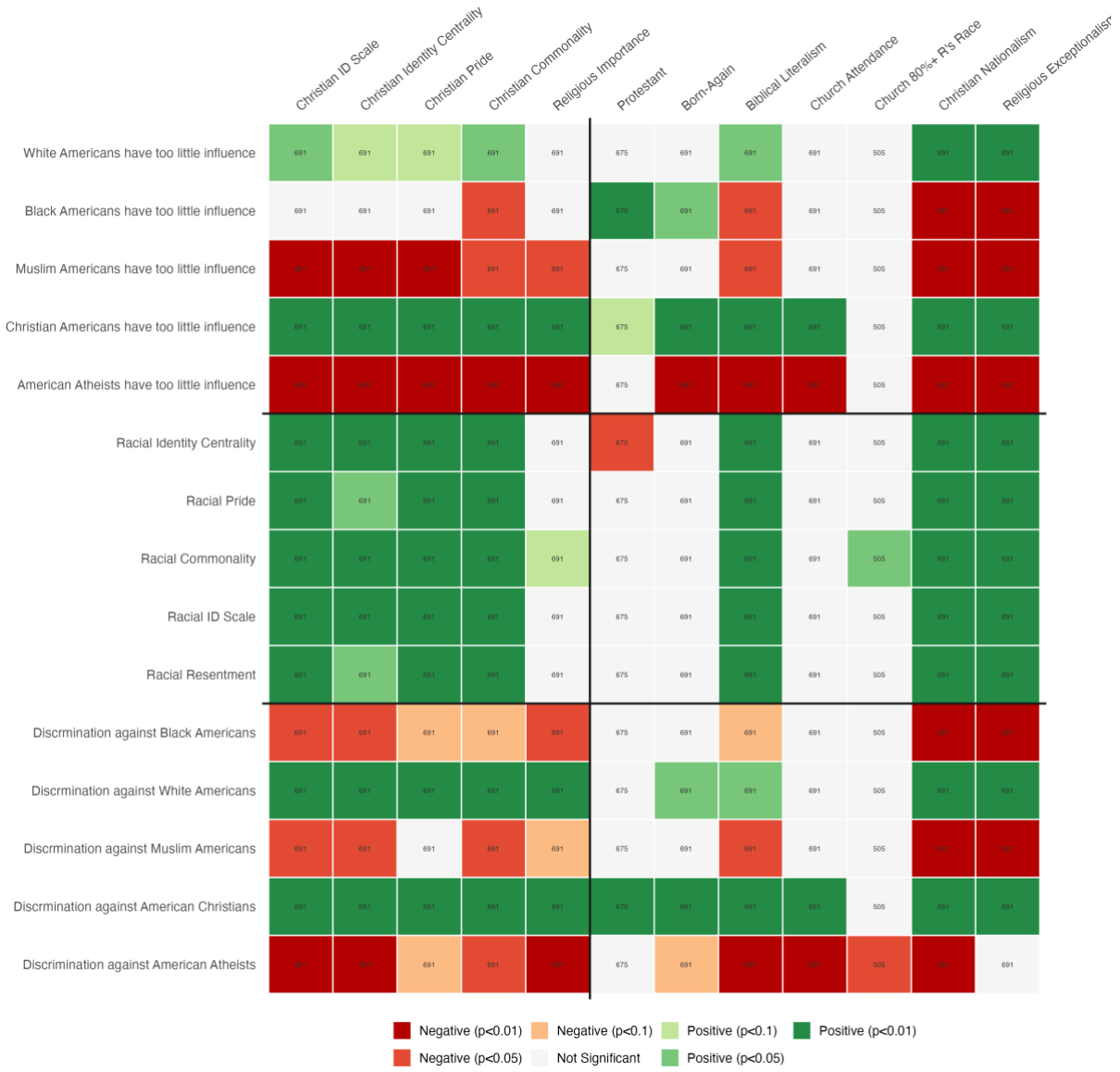
(b) Black Christians



Note: Results for White Christians in top panel and Black Christians in bottom panel. Each column is a different religious identity predictor. OLS coefficients, controlling for education, income, age, sex, and party ID. Colors indicate direction and significance of estimates.

The final set of results for this chapter is the comparison between Christian social identity and the same alternate measures of religion from the first Prolific study—these are, again, Protestant categorization, born-again identification, church attendance, the racial makeup of one's church, Christian nationalism (Whitehead and Perry 2020) and religious exceptionalism (McDaniel, Nooruddin, and Shortle 2022). Figure 3.8 displays these results.

Figure 3.8: Religion measures and racial attitudes among White Christians, July 2024 Prolific Survey



Note: Cells show the direction and significance of OLS coefficients, controlling for education, income, age, sex, and party ID.

The results mostly mimic the results from the first Prolific, however one notable exception is that biblical literalism in this sample is strongly associated with racial attitudes, as it was in the ANES. Again, Christian nationalism and religious exceptionalism strongly shape racial attitudes. However more importantly for the purposes of this dissertation, White Christians' religious group attachments powerfully shape their racial attitudes.

3.6 Discussion

The findings across the four datasets tell a consistent story. Religious social identity among White Christians is associated with a set of racial attitudes and policy preferences that fit the theoretical framework developed in Chapter 2. White Christians with stronger religious group attachment are more likely to oppose race-conscious policy, to perceive that Whites and Christians face discrimination, to perceive that racial minorities face little discrimination and have ample influence, to attribute racial inequality to individual and familial rather than structural causes, and to score higher on racial resentment. These patterns hold across data sources that vary in sample quality, question wording, outcomes, and measurement of religious social identity.

The comparative analyses at times confirm my expectations, and at other points, they are more nuanced. Black Christians' religious group attachments are mostly unrelated to their racial attitudes in the ANES, the relationships vary both within and across the two measures of religious social identity in the CMPS, and in the Prolific samples, the results for Black Christians closely match the results for White Christians. These findings could emerge because of the sample compositions, or they could point to Christian social identity leading to similar attitudes for both White and Black Christians. What is clear is that more work is needed to understand the contours and political consequences of religious group attachment among Black Christians.

Religious social identity more reliably shapes White Christians' racial attitudes in theoretically expected directions compared to some of the most prominent conceptualizations of religion. In the introductory chapter, I note that the past research that does exist on race and religion among White Americans heavily focuses on White evangelicals. It is worth pointing out that I find minimal differences between evangelical and non-evangelical White Christians. I find similarly that religious behavior does not have a strong or consistent relationship with racial attitudes; though at times, frequent religious attendance is associated with more support for racially progressive policies and more positive outgroup attitudes.

I do find that biblical literalism, Christian nationalism, and religious exceptionalism strongly relate to White Christians' racial attitudes. These findings do not necessarily disprove the theoretical framework I propose. One possibility for explaining the biblical literalism results is that these results reflect the religious-racial socialization process I describe for White Christians—that is, biblical literalism reflects the notion that spiritual authority should be placed above other, secular divides. This is somewhat represented in the example I present in Chapter 2 of a blog post from Answers in Genesis: the author of the post critiques Critical Race Theory precisely because it is "founded on man's word, and therefore it is a secular worldview and will not be in accord with a Christian worldview" (Ham 2023).

That Christian nationalism and religious exceptionalism are related to racial attitudes is consistent with my contention in Chapter 1 that these constructs are likely downstream of the identity-formation process I outline in Chapter 2. The fact that Christian social identity—measured with no reference to politics, policy, or the role of Christianity in American government—predicts the same pattern of racial attitudes as Christian Nationalism supports the idea that the racial meaning of Christian identity is embedded into the identity itself, not only in policy preferences about religion's role in public life. Future research should consider how Christian social group attachments may shape and interact with biblical literalism, Christian nationalism, and religious exceptionalism.

One of the more critical questions that arises from these analyses is how exactly Christian social identity relates to White Christians' racial ingroup attachments—their White identity. In the CMPS, I find that stronger religious identity leads to weaker White identity, which seems to align well with theoretical expectations. However, both Prolific studies show the opposite—Christian social identity is correlated with higher White identity. One proposition is that while White Christians may have higher White identity, the content of White identity may be different for White Christians and White non-Christians. I return to this point in Chapter 4, but I do not fully resolve this puzzling result in the present work.

Some limitations deserve mention. These analyses are observational, and the coefficients reported reflect associations rather than causal effects. White Christians who score higher on religious social identity could differ from other White Christians on a range of characteristics. I have controlled for education, income, age, sex, and party identification across analyses, but there may be additional confounders. The design does not rule out, for instance, that White Christians who already hold conservative racial attitudes select into stronger Christian identity, rather than the other way around. The reciprocal relationship between religion and politics has been documented (Margolis 2018;

Patrikios 2008), and as I state throughout Chapter 1, I expect religion and race to be similarly intertwined. The experimental analyses in Chapter 4 are designed to directly test this bi-directional link by asking whether exposure to religious and racial cues activates racial and religious identity among White Christians. The present chapter is a descriptive and inferential foundation for that experimental work. It shows that the relationships predicted by the theory hold in the patterns of attitudes that White Christians actually express.

A second limitation that I preemptively mention in Chapter 2 is that I do not directly measure exposure to the religious-racial socialization I describe in Chapter 2. The Christian ID scale captures the outcome of the identity-formation process, not the process itself. An important direction for future research is to develop measures of the content of religious-racial socialization—the messages heard in congregations, Christian media, and parachurch settings—and to connect exposure to those messages to religious identity and racial attitudes directly. The sermon-based examples in Chapter 2 suggest that this is a promising agenda.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the first empirical evidence for the theoretical argument developed in Chapter 2. Across four datasets—two national and two original—religious social identity among White Christians is associated with the constellation of racial attitudes and policy preferences that my framework predicts. Religious social identity is the dimension of religion that most consistently and strongly tracks with these attitudes.

In the next chapter, I direct my attention more closely to the political consequences of these associations. Why does it matter that religious social identity and racial attitudes are so tightly linked? How might these intertwining attitudes become relevant for evaluating candidates and policies?

Chapter 4 – Racial and Religious Priming

In Chapter 2, I argued that White Christians' religious identities are formed through a process of religious-racial socialization—one that elevates Christian identity above other "worldly" identities, including race, and grounds a set of colorblind commitments in religious authority. In Chapter 3, I presented observational evidence consistent with this argument: across multiple datasets, stronger religious social identity among White Christians is associated with greater opposition to race-conscious policies, greater racial resentment, skepticism about the severity of racism, and a sense that Whites face discrimination. These findings describe a stable relationship between White Christians' religious group attachment and their racial attitudes. In Chapter 1, I motivate this line of inquiry by observing the ways in which religion and race have become rhetorically linked in political discourse. In this chapter, I consider how the tight link between White Christians' religious identities and racial attitudes may shape their reactions to both racial and religious messages in political discourse.

Keeping in line with the theoretical expectations outlined in Chapter 2, if religious and racial identities are deeply intertwined for White Christians, then cues to one should activate the other. A political message that invokes race should not only make racial considerations accessible; it should also summon religious group attachment. And a message that invokes religion should not only activate religious considerations; it should also bring racial attitudes to bear on political evaluations. Empirical support for these expectations would suggest that the wide range of appeals known as "racial appeals"—such as references to crime and welfare—is even broader still, because religion may also function as a racial appeal. Elites who wish to activate racial attitudes among White Christians need not mention race, because invoking religion may do the same work. Similarly, messages that include references to race may also reach White Christians on religious grounds.

I examine these expectations through two questions. First, I ask whether explicit religious appeals—appeals that contain no references to race—nevertheless activate racial attitudes among White Americans, and especially among White Christians. Second, I ask whether explicit racial appeals—appeals that contain no religious content—nevertheless activate White Christians' religious group attachment. I test these implications with two original survey experiments designed to

manipulate the racial or religious content of a political message and measure its effect on support or opposition across racial–religious groups, and across levels of racial and religious group attachment. In the first experiment, respondents read about hypothetical scholarship programs designed to benefit either students of color or nonreligious students. In the second, they read about real policy initiatives proposed during the 2024 election cycle: a set of policies designed to combat "anti-White racism" and a parallel set of policies to combat "anti-Christian bias." In each case, I compare responses across racial–religious groups (White Christians, White non-Christians, Black Christians, and in the second study, Latino Christians) and estimate how racial identity, racial resentment, and Christian identity moderate reactions to the treatments.

The experiments yield three main findings. First, White Christians express distinctive opposition to policies designed to benefit racial or religious out-groups, and distinctive support for policies framed as protecting their racial or religious in-groups, relative to the comparison groups. Second, consistent with the priming logic developed in Chapter 2, racial attitudes—including racial identity and racial resentment—significantly shape how White Americans respond to explicitly religious appeals. White Americans with stronger racial in-group attachment or higher racial resentment are more supportive of policies framed around "anti-Christian bias" and more opposed to a scholarship for nonreligious students, even though these appeals contain no racial content. Third, and importantly, racial appeals activate White Christians' religious group attachment: White Christians with stronger Christian identity are more supportive of policies framed around "anti-White prejudice" and more opposed to a scholarship for students of color, even though these appeals contain no religious content. These patterns do not appear or are weaker among Black Christians, whose religious identity moves their policy evaluations differently, consistent with my argument in Chapter 2 that the religious-racial socialization that fuses religious and racial commitments is particularly concentrated among White Christians.

The chapter proceeds as follows. Section 4.1 situates the experiments within scholarship on racial and religious priming and lays out what this chapter contributes beyond that literature. Section 4.2 presents the hypotheses, which follow from the theoretical argument developed in Chapter 2. Sections 4.3 and 4.4 present the design and results of Study 1 (Scholarships) and Study 2 ("Anti-White/Christian Prejudice") respectively. Section 4.5 discusses the implications of the experimental findings, and Section 4.6 concludes.

4.1 Racial and Religious Priming

The experiments in this chapter build upon a well-developed literature on racial priming in American political behavior. Elites use images and language to appeal to the racial group commitments of White Americans, fostering or diminishing support for candidates and policies based on the presence of these cues (Mendelberg 2001; Stephens-Dougan 2021). For example, a campaign ad may show an image of Black Americans while talking about "wasteful government spending," and then present images of White families when discussing the impact of this waste on good Americans (Valentino, Hutchings, and White 2002). Theories of racial priming are predicated on the idea that these cues can make racial considerations more accessible in one's memory, meaning that they will be made relevant for evaluations (Iyengar and Kinder 1987; Zaller 1992).

There is an ongoing debate about which appeals are most effective at activating racial attitudes. The distinction between implicit and explicit racial appeals has been a central focus within this body of research. Implicit appeals subtly reference race, often through coded language or imagery, without directly mentioning racial groups. This subtlety allows such appeals to influence attitudes without triggering social desirability biases, where individuals might otherwise reject overtly racist messages due to the stigma attached to explicit racism (Mendelberg 2001; Valentino, Hutchings, and White 2002). However, a growing body of research has found that explicit racial cues are no longer punished and can successfully make racial attitudes salient for evaluating candidates and policies (Stephens-Dougan 2020; Valentino, Neuner, and Vandenbroek 2018).

Additionally, more recent work has shown the widespread success of racial priming as a political strategy. In *Race to the Bottom*, Stephens-Dougan (2020) shows that Republicans, Democrats, Black candidates, and White candidates employ signals to distance themselves from Black Americans in order to demonstrate that they are not beholden to Black Americans' interests. These appeals prove quite successful at garnering support from racially conservative and racially moderate voters. Prior studies also demonstrate the success of such appeals at activating a range of racial attitudes, such as racial resentment or symbolic racism, Implicit Association Tests, and Laissez-faire racism (Valentino, Hutchings, and White 2002; Valentino, Neuner, and Vandenbroek 2018).

Separately, some scholars have extended the research on racial priming to the area of religious priming. Similar to the developments within the literature on racial priming, earlier work argues that implicit or multivocal religious appeals—appeals that have a religious meaning to a religious audience but are undetectable to audience members from religious out groups—can successfully influence political behavior (B. L. Albertson 2015). However, recent work suggests that explicit religious appeals

are rewarded by religious voters but do not diminish support among secular voters (Aldama and McClendon 2024). More specifically, Aldama and McClendon (2024) find that when candidates invoke language about that dangers of increasing secularism, religious voters reward these candidates. This is similar to the argument put forth by scholars studying racial attitudes—that increasing racial diversity has renewed, and possibly expanded, the influence of racial attitudes in American politics (Jardina 2019; Tesler 2016; Valentino, Neuner, and Vandenbroek 2018).

However, there are a few questions remaining regarding the success of racial and religious appeals, which I seek to address in the present study. First, research on racial and religious appeals rightly focuses on whether racial appeals activate racial attitudes and whether religious appeals influence religious voters. I consider the other possible effects of such appeals. Namely, I argue that racial appeals may have a differential effect based on the religious identities of the audience.

Secondly, I broaden the scope of cues that may constitute racial appeals, specifically examining whether cues designed to resonate with religious audiences might also activate racial attitudes. As previously discussed, racial attitudes exert influence over a wide range of political issues, regardless of whether any racial appeals—implicit or explicit—are present. One plausible explanation is that increasing racial diversity is enhancing the salience of race in political discourse. A complementary, rather than competing, explanation is that if religion and race are deeply intertwined, religious appeals could also effectively prime racial attitudes. Taken together, these extensions test whether the boundaries between "racial" and "religious" messaging are, for White Christians, more fluid than the existing priming literatures assume.

4.2 Hypotheses

The theoretical framework developed in Chapter 2 generates three hypotheses about how White Christians will respond to racial and religious appeals. The hypotheses are stated in terms of differences across racial-religious groups and in terms of moderation by racial attitudes and religious group attachment. The first hypothesis follows from the argument that White Christians' religious identity is formed through a process that fuses religious group attachment with racial commitments, generating distinct policy preferences relative to other racial–religious groups:

1. White Christians will express greater opposition than White non-Christians, Black Christians, or Latino Christians to policies framed as benefiting racial or religious out-groups, and greater support than these comparison groups for policies framed as benefiting their racial or religious in-groups.

The second hypothesis follows from the argument that religion and race are so tightly intertwined in American political culture that religious cues can serve as a racialized signal, even when they carry no explicit racial content:

2. Explicit religious appeals will activate racial attitudes—including racial resentment and racial in-group attachment—among White Americans, and especially among White Christians. I expect that religious appeals will move White Christians' and White non-Christians' policy evaluations through the same racial attitudes that are typically thought to be activated only by racial appeals.

My third hypothesis follows from the argument that religious-racial socialization ties Christian identity to a particular set of racial commitments, such that messages about race engage White Christians' religious identity alongside their racial attitudes.

3. Explicit racial appeals will activate religious group attachment among White Christians. I expect that White Christians with stronger Christian identity will respond differently to racial appeals than White Christians with weaker Christian identity, even though the appeals contain no religious content.

4.3 Study 1

I test my expectations using two survey experiments. In each study, I ask participants various questions related to religiosity, racial attitudes, partisanship, and ideology. Then, respondents read the experimental manipulation and answer questions related to it. While prior work focuses on appeals by candidates in speeches and campaign materials, the present studies focus on the presence of race or religion in proposed policies and programs. Each study is designed to mimic real instances where participants may be exposed to racial or religious information in everyday life.

The first survey was fielded in November 2023 on Prolific. I obtained samples of White Christians, White non-Christians, and Black Christians based on Prolific's screening questions. Within the survey, I ask respondents their religious identity, and respondents who select "other religion" or "something else" receive a follow-up question similar to a question asked in the 2020 American National Election Study, which asks if their religious identity could be considered "atheist," "agnostic," "Christian," "nothing in particular," or "something else." Individuals who respond with "Christian" to this question are reclassified as such. This procedure yielded 506 White Christians, 500

Black Christians, and 498 White non-Christians. In the first experiment, I ask respondents to read about one of four new scholarship programs and ask whether they would support or oppose the scholarship. I chose to present individuals with scholarship advertisements as college costs are a topic of national discourse, and targeted scholarships for specific racial and religious groups already exist.[7]

The experiment has four conditions, which are summarized in Table 4.1.[8] In the control condition, respondents read about a scholarship for students with a high GPA and record of extra-curricular activities, in which applicants are asked to write on an essay about how extracurricular activities have shaped their academic experience. In a condition designed to invoke thoughts about politics but not racial or religious attitudes, respondents read about a scholarship from the Freedom from Tyranny Foundation, and applicants to the scholarship are asked to write an essay to the prompt "Why is tyranny and politics/government a dangerous mix?" In what I refer to as the "Religious Appeal" condition, respondents read about a scholarship for nonreligious students in which applicants are asked to write an essay on the question, "Why are god and politics/government a dangerous mix?" Finally, in the "Racial Appeal" condition, respondents read of a scholarship program for students of color, in which applicants are asked to write an essay on the question, "Why is whiteness and politics/government a dangerous mix?"

[7]For example, the scholarship advertisements in this experiment are directly modeled after a real scholarship for non-religious students, the basis after which the religious condition is modeled.

[8] The full text of the manipulations can be found in Supplements to Chapter 4.

Table 4.1: Summary of Study 1 Experimental Manipulations

	Control	Tyranny Condition	Religious Appeal	Racial Appeal
Bolton Graduate Scholarship Contest for	Students	Students	Nonreligious Students	Students of Color
Foundation	Student Achievement Foundation (SAF)	Freedom from Tyranny Foundation (FFTF)	Freedom from Religion Foundation (FFTF)	Freedom from Racism Foundation (FFTF)
For _ Students	High-achieving students	Civically-engaged students	Nonreligious students	Students of color
Eligibility	High GPA and record of extracurricular activities	individuals	Agnostics, atheists, and nonreligious individuals	Black, Hispanic, and Indigenous individuals
Essay Prompt	"How have extracurricular activities shaped your academic experience?"	"Why is tyranny and politics/government a dangerous mix?"	"Why are God and politics/government a dangerous mix?"	"Why is whiteness and politics/government a dangerous mix?"

Note: The scholarship advertisements are presented in paragraph form, and the above manipulations are excerpts from the full advertisements. The full advertisements can be found in the Appendix.

After reading about one of the scholarships, participants are asked, "Think about the scholarship advertisement you just read about. How much would you say you support or oppose the new scholarship program?" and responses are measured on a 7-point scale ("Oppose a great deal" to "Support a great deal").

To measure religious and racial identity in the first study, I adapt a common measure of identity centrality, asking respondents, "How important is being [Black; White; a Christian] to your identity?" Prior work has shown that this question can be used as a reliable single-item measure of White identity (Jardina 2019, 2021). Responses are measured on a 5-point scale, from "Not at all important" to "Extremely important." Racial resentment is measured with the standard 4 item scale, consisting of agreement/disagreement with the following four statements: (1) "Over the past few years, blacks have gotten less than they deserve" (reverse coded). (2) "Irish, Italian, Jewish, and other minorities overcame prejudice and worked their way up. Blacks should do the same without any special favors." (3) "It's really a matter of some people not trying hard enough; if blacks would only try harder, they would be just as well off as Whites." (4) "Generations of slavery and discrimination have made it

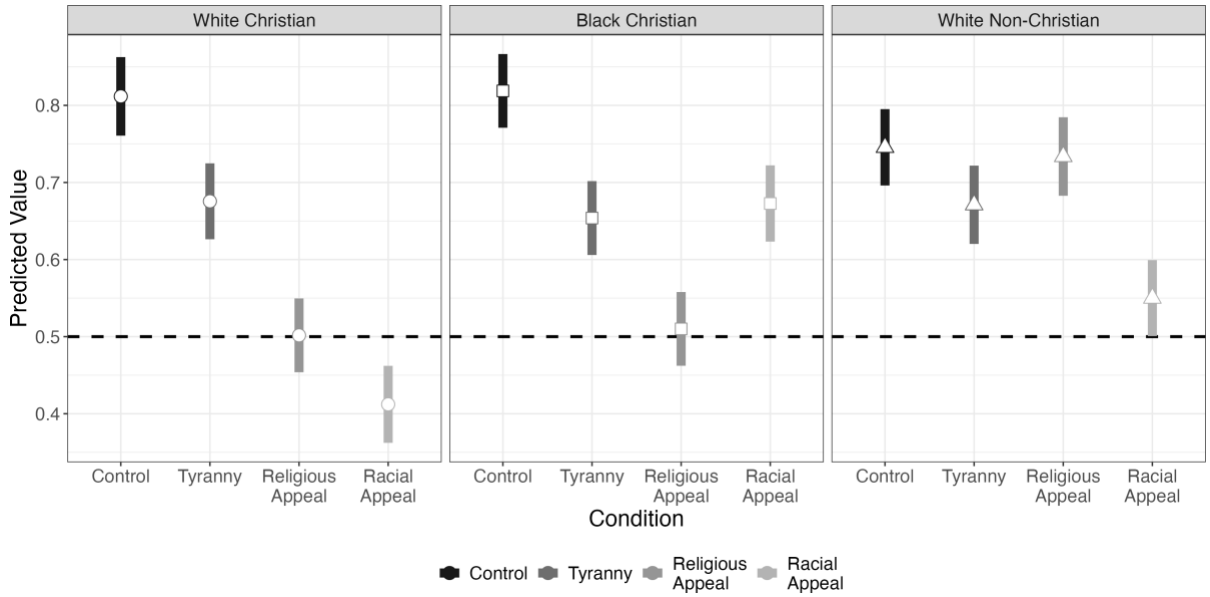
difficult for blacks to work their way out of the lower class" (reverse coded). All variables including the outcomes are coded from zero to one.

Mixed views exist regarding whether moderators should be measured before or after the treatment. While proper procedure is to measure moderators before the treatment (B. Albertson and Jessee 2023; Montgomery, Nyhan, and Torres 2018; Sheagley and Clifford 2023), scholars researching racial priming have expressed concern that measuring moderators pre-treatment could prime attitudes across all conditions including the control, thereby masking the true effect of the treatments (Mendelberg 2001, 2008; Valentino, Hutchings, and White 2002). As such, they measure moderators after treatment. To balance these concerns, in both studies, I ask racial and Christian identity items to 60% of participants before the treatment, 20% percent receive either the racial identity or Christian identity items before the treatment and the other items after the treatment, and the other 20% of participants receive racial and Christian identity items after the treatment. I do not find significant differences in levels of racial identity or Christian identity across these groups.

4.3.1 Study 1 Results

First, I present the average level of support for each scholarship program by racial-religious group and experimental condition. displays the predicted level of support (*y*-axis) for each scholarship program (*x*-axis) among White Christians (left panel), White non-Christians (middle panel), and Black Christians (right panel). Because my hypotheses are that the scholarships will receive differential reactions based on both the language of the scholarship and depending on the racial religious group in question, I model the effects of the treatments conditional on racial religious group. The predictions in Figure 1 come from an OLS regression in which experimental condition is interacted with racial-religious group, and with the inclusion of controls for age, sex, education, income, partisanship, and ideology (table in Appendix). There is a dashed line at 0.5 that corresponds to a response of "Neither support nor oppose." Values below 0.5 indicate opposition to the scholarship and responses above 0.5 indicate support for the scholarship.

Figure 4.1: Scholarship Support by Racial Religious Group and Condition (Study 1)



Note: Predicted support for scholarships by condition and racial religious group. Predictions come from an OLS regression with an interaction between treatment and racial religious group, and includes controls for age, sex, education, income, party identification, and ideology. The outcome is coded from 0 (Oppose a great deal) to 1 (Support a great deal), with values at 0.5 corresponding to a response of "Neither support nor oppose."

This analysis reveals significant effects of the experimental conditions and significant differences across racial and religious groups. The coefficients for the Tyranny Condition ($\beta = -0.136$, $p < 0.001$), Religious Appeal ($\beta = -0.310$, $p < 0.001$), and Racial Appeal ($\beta = -0.399$, $p < 0.001$) show that White Christians are significantly less supportive of these scholarships and are especially opposed to the scholarships for nonreligious students and students of color. Scholarship support among White Christians is greatest for the generic scholarship for students, followed by the scholarship for students against tyranny. The scholarships for non-religious students and students of color are both unpopular with White Christians, and the scholarship for students of color is the least popular. While White non-Christians are slightly less supportive of the control scholarship, respondents across all groups express similar levels of support for the tyranny condition scholarship.

The interaction effects reveal that the impact of these conditions varies across different groups. The Racial Appeal condition, for example, significantly increases support among Black Christians ($\beta = 0.253$, $p < 0.001$) and White non-Christians ($\beta = 0.204$, $p < 0.001$) relative to White Christians. However, scholarship support among White non-Christians (and White Christians) is significantly lower in the Racial Appeal condition relative to the control.

Similarly, the Religious Appeal condition boosts support among White non-Christians ($\beta = 0.298$, $p < 0.001$), while both Black and White Christians have significantly more opposition to this

scholarship. Moreover, there are not significant differences between Black and White Christians' levels of opposition in the Religious Appeal condition.

White respondents significantly oppose the Racial Appeal relative to the control. Additionally, Black and White Christians report significantly more negative reactions to the Religious Appeal than White non-Christians, and White respondents report significantly more negative reactions to the Racial Appeal than Black respondents. Moreover, White Christians have significantly more opposition to the Racial Appeal than White non-Christians. That White respondents have significantly more opposition to the scholarship for students of color and Christians have significantly more opposition to the scholarship for nonreligious students suggests that the treatments could be priming race and religion, respectively.

Next, I examine whether the racial and religious appeals effectively prime racial attitudes and Christian identity. To model the average treatment effect conditional on these attitudes, I estimate OLS regressions in which I interact either racial identity, racial resentment, or Christian identity with the treatment. In these models, the coefficient for each attitude corresponds with its effect on responses to the generic scholarship in the control condition. The coefficients for each condition indicate the effect of each condition when racial identity, racial resentment, or Christian identity has a value of zero. Substantively, this is the effect of the treatments on those who say being Black, White, or Christian is not at all important to their identity, and on those with the lowest possible score on the racial resentment scale. The coefficients for the interactions between an attitude and the treatments represent the effect of the treatments among those who say being Black, White, or Christian is extremely important to their identity, and those with the highest levels of racial resentment. Table 4.2 and Table 4.3 display these results.

Table 4.2: Effects of Racial Identity and Racial Resentment on Scholarship Support, by Condition (Study 1)

	Racial Identity			Racial Resentment	
	Black Christian	White Christian	White Non-Christian	White Christian	White Non-Christian
Intercept	0.718***	0.593***	0.609***	0.635***	0.705***
	(0.096)	(0.071)	(0.071)	(0.079)	(0.079)
Tyranny Condition	-0.156	-0.134*	-0.076	-0.134*	-0.031
	(0.111)	(0.056)	(0.047)	(0.064)	(0.043)
Religious Appeal	-0.243*	-0.243***	-0.028	-0.230***	0.026
	(0.112)	(0.055)	(0.045)	(0.059)	(0.042)
Racial Appeal	-0.409***	-0.462***	-0.061	-0.271***	0.043
	(0.119)	(0.056)	(0.043)	(0.062)	(0.042)
Attitude	0.046	0.046	0.042	-0.004	0.031
	(0.101)	(0.070)	(0.087)	(0.079)	(0.077)
Tyranny Condition x Attitude	-0.017	-0.005	0.020	-0.001	-0.133
	(0.133)	(0.099)	(0.127)	(0.105)	(0.106)
Religious Appeal x Attitude	-0.079	-0.147	0.074	-0.161	-0.126
	(0.133)	(0.095)	(0.127)	(0.100)	(0.106)
Racial Appeal x Attitude	0.323*	0.136	-0.525***	-0.277**	-0.775***
	(0.141)	(0.099)	(0.112)	(0.106)	(0.094)
Num.Obs.	494	503	487	503	487
R2	0.190	0.321	0.208	0.328	0.294
R2 Adj.	0.169	0.303	0.187	0.310	0.275
RMSE	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.26	0.24

$p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

OLS Coefficients. Models include controls for age, sex, education, income, party identification, and ideology.

The first three models in Table 4.2 explore the effects of racial identity on reactions to the scholarship ads for Black Christians, White Christians, and White non-Christians, while the final two models show the effects of racial resentment on scholarship evaluations among White Christians and White non-Christians. These models reveal distinct patterns of responses to the different experimental conditions based on racial attitudes. First, racial identity nor racial resentment have a significant effect in shaping responses to the control, suggesting that that reading about this generic scholarship does not activate a sense of racial group attachment or racial resentment among Black or White individuals. The Tyranny Condition leads to a significant decrease in support among White Christians with low levels of racial identity ($\beta = -0.134, p < 0.05$) and racial resentment ($\beta = -0.134, p < 0.05$), but it does not have a statistically significant effect on Black Christians or White non-Christians.

Racial attitudes significantly shape support for the scholarship for students of color (Racial Appeal). Black Christians—and interestingly, White Christians—who say their racial identity is not at all important to their identity are significantly less supportive of this scholarship for students of color, relative to the control. However, a greater sense of racial in-group attachment among Black Christians is associated with more positive reactions to this scholarship. On the other hand, White non-Christians who say being White is important to their identity are significantly more opposed to the scholarship for students of color. Among both White Christians and White non-Christians, racial resentment is associated with more negative evaluations of this scholarship, suggesting that the scholarship is effectively priming racial attitudes.

In this study, racial attitudes do not seem to significantly shape reactions to the religious appeal. While White Christians with higher levels of White identity and racial resentment do have more negative reactions to the scholarship for nonreligious students, these effects are not statistically significant ($p = 0.123$ for Racial Identity and $p = 0.108$ for Racial Resentment). However, Black and White Christians who say their racial identity is not at all important to their identity, and White Christians with low levels of racial resentment, are less supportive of the scholarship for nonreligious students relative to the control.

Turning to Table 4.3, I examine whether Christian identity moderates support for the scholarships among Black and White Christians. The interaction between the Religious Appeal and Christian Identity is significant and negative for both Black Christians ($\beta = -0.328$, $p < 0.01$) and White Christians ($\beta = -0.372$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that individuals with a stronger Christian identity are less supportive of the scholarship for nonreligious students. Notably, however—and as hypothesized—the interaction between the Racial Appeal and Christian identity is significant and negative for White Christians ($\beta = -0.219$, $p < 0.05$), meaning that White Christians with a strong Christian identity are significantly more opposed to the scholarship for students of color. This suggests that the Racial Appeal is also effectively priming White Christians'—but not Black Christians'—religious group attachments.

Table 4.3: Effect of Christian Identity on Scholarship Support, by Condition (Study 1)

	Black Christian	White Christian
Intercept	0.708***	0.531***
	(0.078)	(0.078)
Tyranny Condition	-0.122	-0.084
	(0.087)	(0.067)
Religious Appeal	-0.085	-0.084
	(0.079)	(0.067)
Racial Appeal	-0.082	-0.274***
	(0.080)	(0.065)
Christian Identity	0.028	0.102
	(0.072)	(0.071)
Tyranny Condition x Christian Identity	-0.067	-0.087
	(0.114)	(0.097)
Religious Appeal x Christian Identity	-0.328**	-0.372***
	(0.106)	(0.097)
Racial Appeal x Christian Identity	-0.095	-0.219*
	(0.106)	(0.097)
Num.Obs.	494	503
R2	0.192	0.335
R2 Adj.	0.170	0.318
RMSE	0.26	0.25

$p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$
OLS Coefficients. Models include controls for age, sex, education, income, party identification, and ideology.

4.4 Study 2: "Anti-White/Christian Prejudice" Experiment

The second survey experiment extends the insights of the first study by examining responses to policy proposals framed as addressing "anti-White" or "anti-Christian" prejudice. The focus of this experiment differs in a two key ways. First, the scholarships experiment features appeals in which, for White Christians, a racial or religious out group stands to benefit. This second experiment focuses on policies that are targeted to benefit White Christians' racial or religious group. Second, the policies featured in this experimental reflect real initiatives covered in the media during the 2024 election, that were proposed by former President Trump and his advisors if he were to win the presidential election.

For example, in an MSNBC opinion piece from April 2024 titled, "How Trumpworld is planning to weaponize DOJ for White nationalism," the author writes about an Axios report outlining Trump's plans to use the Department of Justice (DOJ) to target programs that were originally created to combat racial discrimination because they view these programs as harming White Americans. The author writes,

> "Former President Donald Trump's close allies are drawing up plans to rehaul the Justice Department to focus on what they considered to be the real problem of

> racism in America: 'anti-White racism.' That's according to a new Axios report, which details how longtime Trump aides and allies are angling to use the Justice Department to attack and dismantle public and private programs that attempt to redress structural and historical racial discrimination. Former Trump adviser Stephen Miller, who would likely play a pivotal role in the White House if Trump were to win office again, is already overseeing some of these efforts" (Aleem 2024).

Similarly, in another MSNBC opinion piece from January 2024 titled, "Trump just promised an authoritarian 'task force' to impose Christian ideology," the author discusses Trump's promise to establish a task force that will fight "anti-Christian bias" (Posner 2024). Importantly, while this article comes from January 2024, the 2024 Republican Party Platform proposes a "Federal Task Force on Fighting Anti-Christian Bias" (2024 Republican Party Platform 2024). These serve as examples of how political elites may try to garner support among Whites and Christians by appealing to their racial and religious identities. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to understand both their effectiveness at priming group attitudes through such explicit references, as well as the possible intersecting effects at concurrently priming religious and racial group attitudes—and as theorized, particularly among White Christians.

The study was fielded in July 2024 on Prolific. Using the same screening procedure as the first survey, I aimed to obtain samples of 569 Black Christians, 304 Latino Christians, 691 White Christians, and 601 White non-Christians.[9] Participants were randomly assigned to one of six experimental conditions as outlined in Table 4.4. The experiment is a 3 x 2 design, in which respondents read about policies designed to combat financial crimes, "anti-Christian prejudice," or "anti-White prejudice," and the policies are either being initiated by the Department of Justice or the incoming Trump administration, if he were to be elected. The articles were carefully crafted to reflect the real media coverage of these issues, and the control conditions provided a baseline against which the effects of the racial and religious primes could be measured.

[9] In this survey, I also asked respondents alternative measures of religious affiliation and racial identity. Using these measures, I ended up with some respondents from other racial groups (i.e. Asian and mixed-race individuals). Because the sample sizes of these groups are too small to make reliable inferences and they are not the primary focus of this study, these respondents are excluded from the analysis. These alternate questions are available in the Appendix.

Table 4.4: Summary of Study 2 Experimental Manipulations

	DOJ	**Trump**
Control	Title: DOJ's Proposed Compliance Rules The next year may see a new initiative from the Department of Justice aimed at encouraging companies to self-police... Speaking at the Annual Compliance & Ethics Institute in Washington D.C. on April 4, former U.S. Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco reiterated the proposed strategy... While the DOJ is sending a strong message to the business community...	Title: Trump's Proposed Compliance Rules If Trump wins the election in November, the next year may see a new initiative from the Department of Justice aimed at encouraging companies to self-police... Speaking at the Annual Compliance & Ethics Institute in Washington D.C. on April 4, Trump's former U.S. Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco reiterated the proposed strategy... While the Trump administration would be sending a strong message to the business community...
Religious Appeal	Title: DOJ's Proposed Focus on Combating Anti-Christian Prejudice The next year may see a new initiative from the Department of Justice to address what some perceive as "anti-Christian prejudice." The report outlines efforts led by key advisers and officials who are considering challenging programs aimed at addressing structural and historical discrimination, which some argue are biased against Christians. Critics worry that these changes might dismantle initiatives aimed at redressing historical discrimination...	Title: Trump's Proposed Focus on Combating Anti-Christian Prejudice If Trump wins election in November, the next year may see a new initiative from the Department of Justice to address what they perceive as "anti-Christian prejudice." The report outlines efforts led by former Trump adviser Stephen Miller, who would likely play a key role in a future Trump administration. These efforts include challenging programs aimed at addressing structural and historical discrimination, which some Trump allies argue are biased against Christians. Critics worry that a renewed Trump administration might dismantle initiatives aimed at redressing historical discrimination...
Racial Appeal	Title: DOJ's Proposed Focus on Combating Anti-White Prejudice The next year may see a new initiative from the Department of Justice to address what some perceive as "anti-White prejudice." The report outlines efforts led by key advisers and officials who are considering challenging programs aimed at addressing structural and historical discrimination, which some argue are biased against White people. Critics worry that these changes might dismantle initiatives aimed at redressing historical discrimination...	Title: Trump's Proposed Focus on Combating Anti-White Prejudice If Trump wins election in November, the next year may see a new initiative from the Department of Justice to address what they perceive as "anti-White prejudice." The report outlines efforts led by former Trump adviser Stephen Miller, who would likely play a key role in a future Trump administration. These efforts include challenging programs aimed at addressing structural and historical discrimination, which some Trump allies argue are biased against White people. Critics worry that a renewed Trump administration might dismantle initiatives aimed at redressing historical discrimination...

In the control group, participants read an article about a proposed Department of Justice (DOJ) initiative aimed at encouraging companies to enhance compliance programs and voluntarily report misconduct.[10] In a second version of this article, the policy changes are attributed to a prospective Trump administration. In the treatment groups, participants were exposed to articles containing explicit religious or racial appeals. The Religious Appeal condition involved an article that emphasized efforts to combat perceived "anti-Christian prejudice," framing Christians as a group under threat and highlighting policy proposals designed to protect them. This article also came in two versions, attributed either to the DOJ or to a future Trump administration. Similarly, the Racial Appeal condition involved an article focusing on perceived "anti-White prejudice," framing White Americans as victims of racial bias and discussing policies aimed at addressing this perceived discrimination. Again, this article was presented as either a DOJ or Trump initiative.

Similar to the first study, the main outcome is participants' support or opposition to the proposed policy changes, with response options falling on a 7-point scale ranging from "Oppose a great deal" (0) to "Support a great deal" (1). In this study, I use an altered version of the 3-item White identity scale from Jardina (2019) to measure Black identity, White identity, and Christian identity. The three questions are: (1) "How important is being [Black; White; Latino/Hispanic; a Christian] to your identity?" (2) "How much pride do you have in being [Black; White; Latino/Hispanic; a Christian]?" and (3) "How much would you say that you have in common with other [Black people; White people; Latino/Hispanic people; Christians] in this country?"[11] Racial resentment is again measured with the standard 4-item scale.[12] Participants are presented with the Christian identity and racial identity questions in an order following the same procedure as described for study one.

4.4.1 Study 2 Results

In Figure 4.2, I present the predicted level of support (*y*-axis) for the policies in each treatment condition, by racial religious group. Because I expect effects to differ across racial religious group, I model reactions to the treatment conditional on racial religious group. The top two panels show

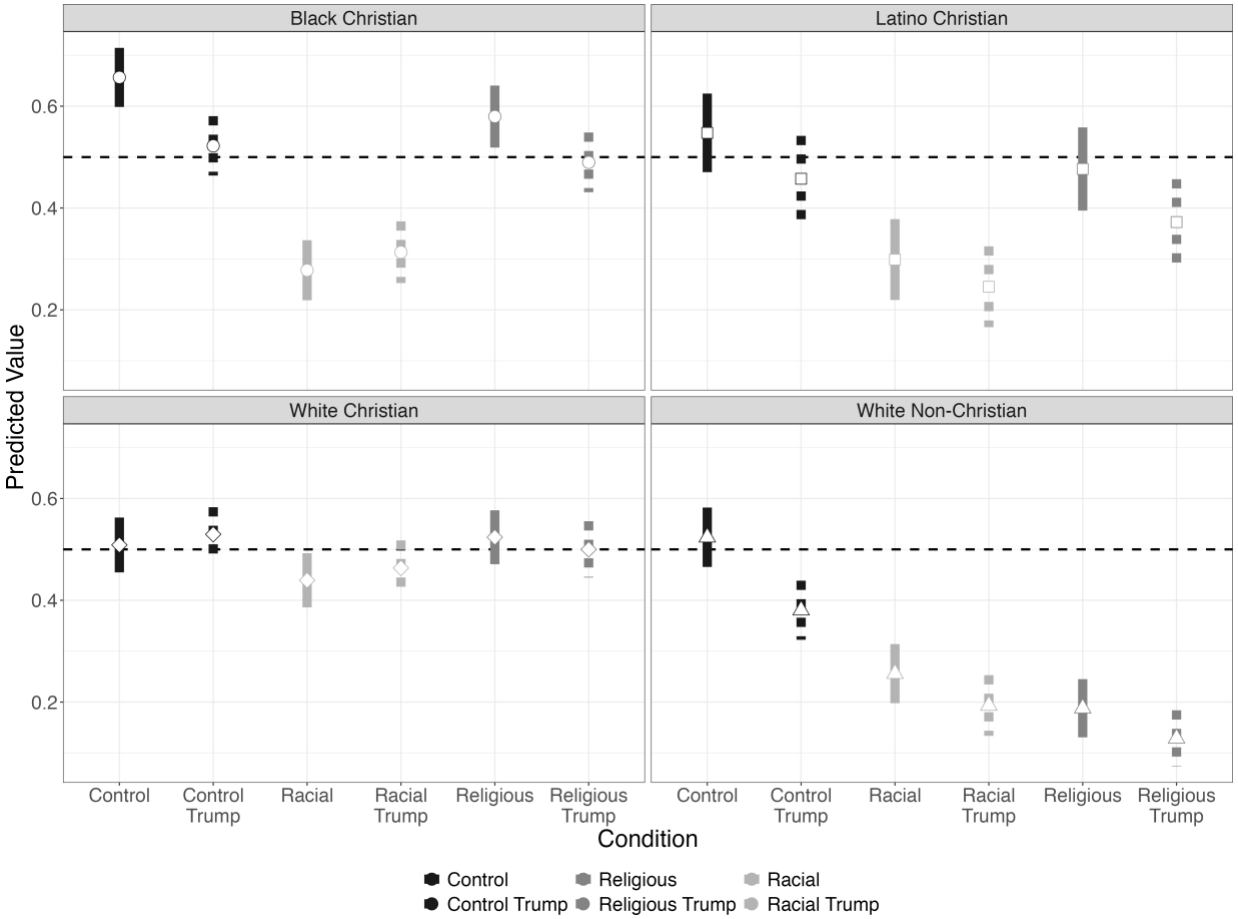
[10] All the policies in this study are based on articles about real, existing (in the case of the control) or proposed initiatives (the two treatments). Respondents are debriefed at the end of the survey, explaining that while they reflect real policies, some of the details had been changed for the purpose of the study. They are provided with the link to a relevant article about the policies in their treatment. The provided articles can be found in the Appendix.

[11] Cronbach's alpha for RID by group: Black Christians = 0.82; Latino Christians = 0.88; White Christians = 0.82; White Non-Christians = 0.71.

[12] Cronbach's alpha for RR by group: White Christians = 0.90; White Non-Christians = 0.91.

predicted support for each policy among Black Christians (left) and Latino Christians (right), and the bottom two panels show support among White Christians (left) and White non-Christians (right).

Figure 4.2: Policy Support by Racial Religious Group and Condition



Note: Predicted support for the policies by condition and racial religious group. Predictions come from an OLS regression with an interaction between treatment and racial religious group, and includes controls for age, sex, education, income, party identification, and ideology. The outcome is coded from 0 (Oppose a great deal) to 1 (Support a great deal), with values at 0.5 corresponding to a response of "Neither support nor oppose."

The results of policy support vary across condition and racial religious group. Among White Christians, there are no significant baseline differences in policy support across the conditions. There is no significant change in support based on the policy in question, nor whether it is attributed to the DOJ or Trump.

However, the interaction terms between the experimental conditions and group identities highlight important differences in how these groups respond to the conditions. Black Christians show a significant reduction in policy support under several conditions. In the Control Trump condition, support decreases by 0.132 points ($p < 0.05$). Similarly, under the Religious Trump condition, there is a significant decrease of 0.127 points ($p < 0.05$). The most substantial reductions are observed under

the Racial and Racial Trump conditions, where support drops by 0.238 points ($p < 0.001$) and 0.242 points ($p < 0.001$), respectively.

Latino Christians also display significant decreases in policy support under the experimental conditions. The Control Trump condition results in a 0.176 point decrease ($p < 0.01$). Under the Religious and Religious Trump conditions, support declines by 0.134 points ($p < 0.05$) and 0.213 points ($p < 0.001$), respectively. The Racial and Racial Trump conditions lead to the largest declines in support, with decreases of 0.221 points ($p < 0.001$) and 0.253 points ($p < 0.001$), respectively.

White non-Christians exhibit similar patterns of decreased support under the experimental conditions. The Control Trump condition is associated with a 0.162-point decrease ($p < 0.01$). The Religious and Religious Trump conditions show even larger decreases of 0.362 points ($p < 0.001$) and 0.385 points ($p < 0.001$), respectively. Additionally, the Racial and Racial Trump conditions result in decreases of 0.233 points ($p < 0.001$) and 0.293 points ($p < 0.001$), respectively.

Black Christians, Latino Christians, and White non-Christians show significantly more support for the policies in the control condition compared to White Christians. Additionally, attributing the policies to Trump does, at times, diminish support among Black Christians, Latino Christians, and White non-Christians. Specifically, all three of these groups are less supportive of the financial policies when they are attributed to Trump, Black and Latino Christians are less supportive of the religious policies when they are attributed to Trump, and White non-Christians are less supportive of the racial policies when they are attributed to Trump.

While White Christians on average are a somewhat opposed to the policies combating "anti-White prejudice" (Racial and Racial Trump conditions), they are significantly more supportive of these policies compared to Black Christians, Latino Christians, and White non-Christians. Similarly, Black, Latino, and White Christians express neutral to slight opposition to the policies combating "anti-Christian prejudice" (Religious and Religious Trump conditions), but White non-Christians are significantly more opposed to these policies.

Next, and as shown in Table 4.5, I model the impact of racial attitudes on reactions to the various policies. Each column represents an OLS regression of policy support on treatment and either the 3-item racial identity scale (models 1-4) or racial resentment (models 5 and 6), with an interaction between the treatment and attitude. These models are within racial-religious group estimates, and they include controls for age, sex, education, income, party identification, and ideology. The results central to my hypotheses are whether racial identity and racial resentment—particularly among White Christians—shape responses to racial and religious appeals.

Table 4.5: Effects of Racial Identity and Racial Resentment on Policy Support, by Condition (Study 2)

	Racial Identity				Racial Resentment	
	Black Christian	Latino Christian	White Christian	White Non-Christian	White Christian	White Non-Christian
Intercept	0.623***	0.624***	0.722***	0.967***	0.780***	0.864***
	(0.131)	(0.123)	(0.072)	(0.059)	(0.068)	(0.062)
Control Trump	-0.234	0.091	-0.051	-0.218***	-0.194**	-0.206***
	(0.181)	(0.150)	(0.072)	(0.057)	(0.062)	(0.042)
Religious DOJ	0.060	0.191	-0.054	-0.468***	-0.283***	-0.462***
	(0.179)	(0.146)	(0.072)	(0.056)	(0.064)	(0.042)
Religious Trump	-0.343+	-0.045	-0.189**	-0.486***	-0.423***	-0.517***
	(0.204)	(0.166)	(0.072)	(0.053)	(0.066)	(0.041)
Racial DOJ	-0.005	0.099	-0.212**	-0.470***	-0.366***	-0.461***
	(0.176)	(0.144)	(0.073)	(0.056)	(0.063)	(0.044)
Racial Trump	-0.227	0.014	-0.291***	-0.577***	-0.475***	-0.503***
	(0.184)	(0.149)	(0.072)	(0.056)	(0.066)	(0.043)
Attitude	0.065	0.445**	-0.075	-0.201+	-0.276***	-0.196*
	(0.146)	(0.149)	(0.096)	(0.116)	(0.080)	(0.100)
Control Trump x Attitude	0.153	-0.384+	0.189	0.334+	0.470***	0.311*
	(0.217)	(0.207)	(0.134)	(0.183)	(0.113)	(0.130)
Religious DOJ x Attitude	-0.120	-0.467*	0.165	0.479**	0.601***	0.514***
	(0.214)	(0.213)	(0.130)	(0.167)	(0.109)	(0.119)
Religious Trump x Attitude	0.244	-0.285	0.419**	0.450**	0.822***	0.603***
	(0.237)	(0.229)	(0.133)	(0.167)	(0.110)	(0.119)
Racial DOJ x Attitude	-0.361+	-0.592**	0.343*	0.619***	0.652***	0.671***
	(0.213)	(0.207)	(0.134)	(0.156)	(0.110)	(0.123)
Racial Trump x Attitude	-0.091	-0.496*	0.505***	0.762***	0.808***	0.595***
	(0.221)	(0.210)	(0.134)	(0.159)	(0.110)	(0.121)
Num.Obs.	569	304	691	601	691	601
R2	0.297	0.324	0.281	0.470	0.349	0.495
R2 Adj.	0.275	0.284	0.262	0.455	0.333	0.481
RMSE	0.28	0.25	0.26	0.22	0.25	0.21

$p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

OLS Coefficients. Models include controls for age, sex, education, income, party identification, and ideology.

The results show that racial group attachment has distinct patterns among racial religious groups. First, apart from Black Christians' responses to the Trump-attributed "anti-White prejudice" policies, racial identity significantly shapes reactions to the Racial conditions. Black Christians and Latino Christians with strong racial group attachments are significantly more opposed to the policies

combating "anti-White prejudice" when these policies are attributed to the DOJ; Latino Christians are also significantly more opposed to these policies when they are attributed to Trump. However, racial identity significantly also shapes Latino Christians' support of the financial policies in the control condition, so these effects are largely driven by the significant positive association between racial identity and policy support in the control condition. Combining the coefficient for racial identity in the baseline condition with the interaction coefficients reveals relatively flat slopes in the Racial DOJ ($0.445 - 0.592 = 0.147$) and Racial Trump ($0.445 - 0.496 = 0.051$) conditions.

White Christians and White non-Christians with high levels of White identity are significantly more supportive of the "anti-White prejudice" policies. These effects are both statistically significant and substantively large.For example, predicted policy support among White Christians at the lowest end of the White identity scale is 0.30 in the Racial condition and 0.22 in the Racial Trump condition; for White Christians at the highest end of the White identity scale, predicted support in these conditions is 0.57 and 0.65 respectively, indicating an approximate increase of two levels on the 7-point scale of support. Moreover, White Christians and non-Christians with higher levels of racial resentment are significantly more supportive of the policies outlined in the Racial conditions, and for White Christians, these effects are even larger in magnitude.

The results also reveal support for the idea of religion serving as a racial appeal for White Christians and non-Christians. This is evident through the significant and positive coefficients for the interactions between White identity—and racial resentment—and both Religious conditions for White Christian and non-Christian respondents, albeit the coefficient for the White identity in the Religious DOJ condition is positive but not statistically significant. These effects are especially pronounced in the case of racial resentment. Racial resentment has a significant influence on policy support in all conditions, including the control. While White Christian and non-Christian respondents with higher levels of racial resentment are less supportive of the DOJ-attributed financial policies, racial resentment is associated with more support for all other policies. The effects of racial resentment in both Religious conditions are comparable in magnitude to the effect of racial resentment in both Racial conditions, for both White Christians and White non-Christians. The results also reveal a significant interaction between racial identity and the Religious Trump condition for Latino Christians, but again, this result is driven by the positive relationship between racial identity and policy support in the control condition. In sum, the religious appeals in this experiment activate in-group and out-group racial attitudes among both White Christians and White non-Christians.

Also central to my hypotheses is whether Christian identity—particularly among White Christians—is associated with responses to racial appeals. In Table 4.6, I present the results of estimating the effects of Christian identity on policy support in each of the experimental conditions, for Black Christians, Latino Christians, and White Christians. As expected, Christian identity is associated with significantly more support in both religious conditions across all three groups. However, Christian identity also shapes White Christians' support in both racial conditions. White Christians with strong attachments to their religious identity are significantly more likely to support the policies combating "anti-White prejudice" than the policies in the control condition and compared to White Christians with lower levels of religious group attachment.

Table 4.6: Effect of Christian Identity on Policy Support, by Condition (Study 2)

	Black Christian	Latino Christian	White Christian
Intercept	0.751***	0.951***	0.732***
	(0.122)	(0.105)	(0.075)
Control Trump	-0.204	-0.317**	-0.132+
	(0.151)	(0.116)	(0.078)
Religious DOJ	-0.485***	-0.340**	-0.253***
	(0.140)	(0.113)	(0.075)
Religious Trump	-0.497***	-0.559***	-0.297***
	(0.146)	(0.118)	(0.079)
Racial DOJ	-0.512***	-0.261*	-0.233**
	(0.146)	(0.111)	(0.075)
Racial Trump	-0.578***	-0.428***	-0.223**
	(0.150)	(0.100)	(0.084)
Attitude	-0.038	-0.132	-0.130
	(0.137)	(0.135)	(0.087)
Control Trump x Attitude	0.125	0.317	0.285*
	(0.191)	(0.195)	(0.119)
Religious DOJ x Attitude	0.634***	0.461*	0.492***
	(0.179)	(0.200)	(0.117)
Religious Trump x Attitude	0.491**	0.676**	0.516***
	(0.184)	(0.212)	(0.120)
Racial DOJ x Attitude	0.291	-0.018	0.333**
	(0.188)	(0.191)	(0.118)
Racial Trump x Attitude	0.363+	0.246	0.277*
	(0.189)	(0.178)	(0.126)
Num.Obs.	569	304	691
R2	0.344	0.346	0.285
R2 Adj.	0.324	0.307	0.267
RMSE	0.27	0.25	0.26

$p < 0.1$, * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$
OLS Coefficients. Models include controls for age, sex, education, income, party identification, and ideology.

Christian identity also seems to have a positive, though only marginally significant, relationship with support for the Racial Trump condition among Black Christians. Predicted support in this condition among Black Christians on the lowest end of the Christian identity scale is 0.01, whereas predicted support in this condition among Black Christians on the highest end of the scale is 0.34. In the Racial DOJ condition, Black Christians' policy support goes from 0.08 to 0.33. This means that, while Black Christians with stronger attachments to their Christian identity are more supportive of the policies combating "anti-White prejudice," substantively they are still opposed to these policies overall. This is also the case for Latino Christians in the Racial Trump condition—predicted support for the Racial and Racial Trump conditions among Latino Christians scoring the highest on the Christian identity scale is 0.23 and 0.33, respectively. For White Christians in the Racial condition, support

moves from 0.32 to 0.52 across the Christian identity scale. For White Christians in the Racial Trump condition, policy support moves from 0.33 to 0.48 across the Christian identity scale. In sum, White Christians' attachment to their religious group leads to distinctively high support for the anti-White prejudice policies.

4.5 Discussion

The findings of this study offer critical insights into the intersection of racial and religious identities within the context of American political behavior, particularly among White Christians. Across two experiments, the results consistently demonstrate that racial appeals can prime religious identity, and vice versa, leading to political behaviors that reflect both religious and racial group interests.

One of the most striking patterns observed across both experiments is the significant role of White Christian identity in shaping responses to both racial and religious appeals. In the first experiment, White Christians showed distinct opposition to scholarships for students of color, which was further intensified among White Christians with a high Christian identity. This suggests that for White Christians, racial appeals effectively prime not only their racial attitudes but also their religious attachments. This is a critical divergence from prior literature that has often treated religious and racial identities as separate or only tangentially related. The present findings challenge this dichotomy, demonstrating that for White Christians, these identities are deeply intertwined, and political messaging that targets one identity can simultaneously activate the other.

The second experiment further solidifies this connection by demonstrating that White Christians are more likely to support policies framed as combating "anti-White prejudice" or "anti-Christian prejudice." The results suggest both that Christian identity strongly shapes White Christians' responses to racial appeals, and that religious appeals can be just as effective as explicit racial appeals at activating White Christians' racial resentment. Moreover, the study provides evidence that religious appeals can serve as a racialized signal for White non-Christians as well, even in the absence of explicit racial content. This is particularly notable because it suggests that religious appeals, even those that seem unrelated to race, can still prime racial attitudes among certain groups. This broadens the scope of what can be considered a racial appeal.

Moreover, the results from Study 2 help adjudicate the psychological mechanisms through which White Christians' religious social identity is related to their racial attitudes. Specifically, one possible conclusion from the first study is that Christian identity constitutes a set of norms about racial ignorance or "colorblind" ideals. Therefore, White Christians with a high Christian identity are more

opposed to the scholarship for students of color simply because it emphasizes one racial group over another. If this were the case, then I would find in Study 2 that White Christians high on Christian identity should also have distaste—or at a minimum, ambivalence—towards the "anti-White prejudice" policies. The results in Study 2 quickly repudiate this explanation. Rather, White Christians with strong religious group attachments are significantly more supportive of these policies, suggesting that White Christians' religious identity comes with an idea of who a prototypical Christian is, and this prototype is racialized.

I theorize that White Christians' religious group solidarity is so tightly intertwined with U.S. racial politics that it will be primed in messages explicitly about race. This emphasis on religion as a social identity is a divergence from prior literature that, among other things, has focused on the distinct opinions of White evangelicals and on the influence of Christian Nationalism beliefs on political attitudes. However, I examine other possible explanations of how religion may be related to racial appeals by estimating the effect of the experimental treatments interacted with other measures such as born-again identity, frequency of attendance at religious services, the racial makeup of one's congregation, and Christian nationalism and religious exceptionalism. I present these results in Appendix Table B.1 through Appendix Table B.4. In Study 1, I find that none of these other measures of religion significantly influence support for the scholarship for students of color. In Study 2, I find that Christian nationalism and religious exceptionalism do moderate reactions to the policies regarding "anti-White prejudice." As Christian nationalism and religious exceptionalism are both beliefs about the role of government in protecting or prioritizing religion, it is not surprising that these beliefs would be associated with individuals' policy evaluations. However, as I outline in my theory, I argue that Christians' in-group attachment is likely a critical antecedent to such beliefs. Moreover, a theory of racialized religious social identity can explain the relevance of religious group attachments across greater contexts even absent explicit ties between religion and government. Overall, these results suggest that religion is not just a matter of beliefs, behaviors, or denominational affiliations; it is a social identity, and that identity is deeply embedded in the broader context of American racial politics.

The findings from these studies invite further investigation of the strength and sensitivity of Christian identity within the context of racial appeals. For example, future studies could examine whether implicit racial appeals garner the same reactions from White Christians. Additionally, these findings could be tested in the context of campaign materials, as this is the standard venue for prior testing of racial priming theories. Such studies could also assess the impact of different contexts,

exploring how elite characteristics and religious settings shape White Christians' reactions to racial and religious messages.

The results of these studies also warrant an examination of the formation and consequences of racialized religious identity. Specifically, are some individuals' religious group attachments more or less connected to their racial attitudes? Do certain religious experiences—such as attending a racially diverse church or hearing religious messages about racial issues—instill racial considerations into one's religious social identity? Such inquiries could help uncover the processes by which religious and racial identities become intertwined, deepening our understanding of how these identities influence political behavior. Ultimately, these insights are crucial for better understanding the nuanced ways in which religious and racial identities interact within the American political landscape.

4.6 Conclusion

These studies shed light on the profound interconnectedness of racial and religious identities in shaping political behavior, particularly among White Christians in the United States. The findings underscore that religious and racial appeals are not isolated influences but rather mutually reinforcing mechanisms that can be strategically employed to mobilize political support. The evidence suggests that for White Christians, religious identity is deeply entwined with racial attitudes, creating a dynamic where appeals to one identity can simultaneously activate the other.

The findings presented in this paper suggest that political appeals in the United States cannot be fully understood without considering the dual influence of racial and religious identities. They imply that political elites who seek to foster Whites' support based on their racial attitudes may do so by invoking religious language. By demonstrating that religious language can serve as a covert channel for racial attitudes, this research challenges the conventional boundaries of what constitutes a racial appeal. Additionally, political elites may use religious rhetoric to subtly reinforce racial group boundaries and mobilize support among White Christians on the basis of their religious group solidarity.

Thus, acknowledging the deep historical connection between religion and race reveals that racial attitudes—and the effectiveness of racial appeals—in American politics are far more pervasive than previously understood. By incorporating this intertwined relationship into studies of race, scholars can better grasp the full extent of how religious and racial identities shape political behavior. Ultimately, this understanding broadens our view of the mechanisms that political elites may use to mobilize support, underscoring the critical role that religion may play in amplifying racial divisions.

Chapter 5 – Conclusion

This dissertation argues that for white Christians in the United States, religious identity and racial attitudes are not two separate domains that occasionally overlap in politics, but are instead deeply entwined through a shared process of socialization. Religion provides a social and moral infrastructure within which racial attitudes are formed, authorized, and expressed. This entanglement is not incidental. It is the product of a long history and a present-day set of institutional, rhetorical, and social practices that teach white Christians to understand Christian identity as the primary identity and to view race as, at best, a secondary or irrelevant category. The result is a distinctive configuration of attitudes in which religious commitment operates as a stable, legitimizing source of opposition to racially progressive policies—one that can be activated by appeals that need not, on their face, mention race at all.

In these closing pages, I revisit the arguments and findings of the preceding chapters, draw out what I see as the central takeaways, and then discuss the contributions, limitations, and unresolved questions that the dissertation leaves for future work. I close by considering why this account matters—both for the scholarly study of religion and race in American politics and for those invested in confronting the patterns the dissertation documents.

5.1 Summary of the Argument and Findings

Chapter 1 introduces the central puzzle. Religion and race are often studied in parallel rather than together, yet American political life is full of moments in which the two are rhetorically fused. Elite political communication routinely draws on a reservoir of shared meaning in which religion and race are already linked for many Americans. Chapter 1 set out the stakes of this inquiry: if religion is not merely an additional predictor of racial attitudes but one of the structures through which those attitudes are formed, then both the religion-and-politics and race-and-politics literatures have been missing a large part of the story.

Chapter 2 develops the theoretical framework that carries the dissertation. I argue that white Christians undergo a distinctive process of religious-racial socialization. In congregations, Christian media, and parachurch settings, Christian identity is taught as the identity that supersedes all other

"worldly" identities, including race. Racism, in turn, is framed as a matter of individual sin to be addressed through changed hearts rather than as a structural condition requiring collective and political response. The result is a moralized, religiously authorized colorblindness that elevates Christian commonality over racial acknowledgement, and that makes race-conscious remedies appear not only misguided but spiritually suspect. From this framework, I develop a set of hypotheses linking white Christians' religious social identity to a range of racial attitudes and to their reactions to racial and religious appeals.

Chapter 3 presents the first empirical tests of the theoretical framework. Using four datasets—the 2020 ANES, the 2020 CMPS, and two original surveys—I show that among white Christians, religious social identity is consistently associated with racial attitudes in ways that support my argument: greater opposition to government assistance for Black Americans, greater racial resentment, greater skepticism that Black Americans face racial discrimination, stronger belief that whites face discrimination, and more negative attitudes toward immigrants. A second key finding is that religious social identity is more consistently and more strongly associated with these attitudes than many of the standard "3Bs" measures of religion—belonging, believing, and behaving. Third, these patterns of associations are less consistent among Black Christians, suggesting a clearer story of religious-racial socialization among white Christians. Together, these findings provide observational evidence that the theoretical framework in Chapter 2 is reflected in the attitudes that white Christians express.

Chapter 4 turns to the political consequences of this entanglement through two survey experiments. If religious and racial identities are intertwined for white Christians, then cues to one should activate the other. The studies provide evidence on both sides of this bidirectional claim. Religious primes shift white Christians' racial attitudes and their support for race-conscious policies even when the prime itself contains no explicit racial content, and racial primes shape white Christians' responses in ways that engage religious identity. White Christians also express distinctive patterns of support for policies framed as protecting white or Christian in-groups and opposition to policies framed as benefiting racial or religious out-groups. These results suggest that the category of "racial appeals" in American politics is broader than previously theorized: religion may function as a racial appeal, and race may function as a religious one. Elites seeking to mobilize white Christians on racial grounds need not invoke race directly, and vice versa.

5.2 Implications for the Study of Religion, Race, and American Politics

White Christians' racial attitudes cannot be understood without attending to the religious identity through which those attitudes may be formed. Scholarship on race in American politics has built powerful accounts of the origins and content of white racial attitudes—symbolic racism and its interpretation as the product of early socialization (Kinder and Sanders 1996; Kinder and Sears 1981), group position theory (Blumer 1958), laissez-faire racism (Bobo, Kluegel, and Smith 1997), and the emergence of white identity as a distinctive political force (Jardina 2019). These accounts have improved our understanding of where racial attitudes come from and how they operate politically. The present work adds to this list a source that has been hiding in plain sight. Religion is more than an additional venue for racial learning. It is a site where racial attitudes are formed and sacralized. Religion can, in this sense, be one of the most powerful sources of white racial attitudes precisely because it is one of the most morally weighted and institutionally and socially embedded in the everyday experiences of millions of Americans.

The findings also speak to the study of religion and politics. Political scientists have long relied on the "3Bs"—belonging, believing, and behaving—to measure religion. That toolkit has produced a rich body of research, and this dissertation does not argue for its abandonment. But religious group attachment—religion as social identity—is distinct from any of the 3Bs and, for the questions I examine, more powerful. Religious group attachment provides a more theoretically grounded and empirically consistent way to track how religion shapes political attitudes when the question is about identity, group meaning, and the social processes through which religion organizes political life. I see the dissertation as making a contribution to both substantive and measurement debates in the study of religion and American politics.

The findings also broaden what we should understand as a "racial appeal." If religion can activate racial attitudes among white Christians without referencing race, then the set of communications that function as racial appeals is substantially broader than the literature on implicit and explicit racial appeals has allowed. Likewise, if racial content activates religious identity, then some ostensibly race-focused appeals do political work through religious channels as well. Both moves suggest that the study of elite rhetoric and of mass responses to it will benefit from attending more carefully to the religious dimensions of racially coded messaging and to the racial dimensions of religiously coded messaging.

5.3 Measurement of Religious Social Identity

This dissertation is not primarily concerned with measurement, but it required the introduction of a measure of Christian social identity. In practice, the measure is not methodologically novel. It was adapted from well-validated measures of racial identity, most directly the 3-item white identity scale (2019), and it captures dimensions of Centrality, Pride, and Commonality with the religious in-group. Adapting the white identity scale to the case of Christian identity carries both advantages and limits. Its advantages include the direct comparability it enables between in-group attachments across identity types, and the construction of a scale that does not build racial content into the measurement of religious identity. Its limits are that the content of Christian identity may differ from the content of racial identity in ways a simple transposed scale cannot fully capture.

Future work should examine whether the meaning of Christian social identity is well represented by these items or whether additional dimensions—perceptions of belonging, perceived competition or difference from other religious groups, or notions of religious identity supremacy or primacy—would sharpen the measurement. The question of supremacy is particularly interesting, because it marks a dimension on which religious identity likely differs from racial identity in content. Racial identity scales typically do not treat supremacy or primacy as core components of in-group attachment; for religious identity, my argument in Chapter 2 suggests that part of white Christians' religious identity is the weight it carries over other identities. Developing instruments that explore these features is a promising next step.

A related measurement question concerns specificity. Some of the measures used in this dissertation refer broadly to "religion," and the Christian identity battery is targeted to the category "Christian." That specificity is a choice, and it is not the only defensible one. Some groups that academic research codes as religious—non-denominational and evangelical Christians in particular—sometimes resist the label "religion" and prefer the language of "relationship with God" to describe their commitments. At the same time, "Christian" is itself a big tent whose members do not always view one another as fully legitimate coreligionists. I focus on the category "Christian" because it mirrors the rhetoric of religious-racial socialization described in Chapter 2 and because the political category invoked by elites in appeals to "Christian values" is typically at this level of generality. Different research questions, however, may call for different levels of specificity. Studies of the effects of religion on attitudes related to gender and sexuality, for example, may be better served by denominational attachment. Studies of elite rhetoric, where appeals tend to operate at the level of "Christian," will be better served by the broad category used here. The general lesson is that the

appropriate specificity of a religious social identity measure may depend on the substantive question being asked.

Finally, I want to be clear about what the measures presented in this dissertation can and cannot adjudicate. They cannot fully rule out that alternative conceptualizations of religion—for example, specific doctrinal beliefs or ritual behaviors—play an additional role in shaping the racial attitudes I study. That is not necessary for the argument I put forward. The claim is that religious social identity is the most compelling and empirically consistent explanation of the patterns documented here, and that religious social identity is the construct best positioned to connect the theoretical account in Chapter 2 to the findings in Chapters 3 and 4. A fuller test against competing religious constructs would require a richer battery of belief and behavior measures administered alongside the identity scale. That is a useful direction for future work.

5.4 Directions for Future Research

The dissertation leaves several questions open. First, I do not directly measure exposure to religious-racial socialization. The theoretical framework in Chapter 2 identifies sermons, Christian media, and parachurch settings as sites of this process, and I provide illustrative examples. The empirical chapters then measure the outcome of the socialization—religious social identity and its effects—rather than the socialization itself. An important next step is to build measures of exposure to particular frames and messages, and to connect variation in exposure to variation in religious identity and racial attitudes. Relatedly, work that experimentally introduces alternative religious frames—frames that foreground rather than obscure racial inequality, for example—could test whether the mechanism is malleable, and under what conditions.

Second concerns the findings presented about Black Christians. Chapter 3 documented that religious importance is associated with an inconsistent set of racial attitudes among Black Christians. Whether this reflects an analogous process of religious-racial socialization operating in a different direction, a distinct process rooted in the historical position of the Black Church, or an interaction between religious identity and racial context, remains an open question. More careful theoretical and empirical work is needed on how Christian identity is formed among Black Americans—and how racial context shapes this formation.

Third, the findings about the relationship between Christian identity and white identity are mixed: in the CMPS, stronger religious identity is associated with weaker white identity, consistent with the theoretical expectation that Christian identity is understood as transcending racial identity. In

the Prolific studies, by contrast, stronger Christian identity is associated with higher white identity. These findings are not easily reconciled, and I do not fully resolve them here. One possibility is that the content of white identity differs between white Christians and white non-Christians—that the "white identity" scale picks up meaningfully different constructs in these two populations. Future work should examine not only how the distribution of white identity varies across these groups but whether its meaning and correlates do as well.

Finally, in Chapter 4 I find religious appeals can activate racial attitudes among white non-Christians, most of whom in the study sample are religious "nones." One interpretation is that the cultural association between Christianity and whiteness in the United States is strong enough that appeals to Christian protection are read as appeals to white protection, even by those who do not themselves identify as Christian. If this is right, the connection between religion and race in the United States has spillover effects well beyond the in-group. Testing this interpretation and distinguishing it from other possible alternatives is a useful direction for further experimental work.

5.5 Sacred Commitments, Racial Convictions

The theoretical throughline of the dissertation can be stated plainly. For many white Christians, religion is a sacred commitment. The identity they understand as most defining—most moral, most meaningful, most eternal—is "Christian." That sacred commitment generates what I would call racial convictions: beliefs about race that are not reducible to bare self-interest or to ordinary prejudice, though they may include elements of both. These convictions are held as moral positions. They are felt to be expressions of faithful commitment rather than as stances on a contested political question. They are defended not (just) because they are advantageous, but because they are believed to be right. Framing the phenomenon this way clarifies why religious social identity is such a powerful predictor of racial attitudes among white Christians and why these attitudes are so difficult to shift.

White racial attitudes are among the most powerful forces in American politics, and understanding where they come from is one of the most important tasks for the study of American political behavior. Reading religion as a source of racial conviction rather than as a separate identity that sometimes correlates with racial attitudes changes how we understand the role of religion in American political life. Religion is not merely one cross-cutting identity among many. Religion is a more insidious and, in some cases, more powerful source of racial attitudes because it is morally meaningful. For many white Christians, it is a foundational identity that shapes the content of other

identities, including racial ones. Accounts of white racial attitudes that treat religion as a control variable, or as one of several parallel sources of conservatism, miss this formational role.

I also want to point to a possible path forward. If the proposed mechanisms are correct—if religious-racial socialization is in fact the process through which many white Christians come to hold the racial attitudes they do—then the absence or inversion of those mechanisms suggests a path forward. Religious messages that foreground rather than obscure racial inequality, congregations that understand racial justice as a matter of faithful practice rather than as a worldly distraction, and religious-identity formation that is not premised on colorblind transcendence are all within the realm of what some Christian communities already teach and do. If the theoretical account is right, then appeals grounded in exactly these alternatives fall on ears that are especially prepared to hear them—ears that take religious conviction seriously, because they already do. That is not a guarantee of change. But it is a reminder that the same processes that make white Christian racial attitudes so durable could also supply the materials for their revision.

The central contribution of this dissertation, then, is to reframe the relationship between religion and race in American political life. Religion does not merely correlate with racial attitudes. For many white Christians, religion is where racial attitudes come from, where they are morally authorized, and where they are made to feel less like political positions and more like expressions of who one is. Understanding American racial politics requires taking this entanglement seriously, and understanding American religious politics requires taking its racial content seriously. The dissertation offers a theoretical vocabulary, a set of empirical findings, and a collection of open questions aimed at making that possible.

Appendices

Appendix A: Supplements to Chapter 3

A.1 Variable Descriptions for 2020 ANES

Appendix Table A.1: Outcome Variables from the ANES

			Mean (SD)		
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**	**White Non-Christians**
Support affirmative action in hiring	What about your opinion – are you for or against preferential hiring and promotion of blacks? (Combined with strength of opinion)	0 = Strongly against preferential hiring/promotion of blacks; 1 = Strongly for preferential hiring/promotion of blacks	0.24 (0.33)	0.76 (0.36)	0.43 (0.37)
Address urban unrest by solving problems of racism and police violence	What is the best way to deal with the problem of urban unrest and rioting? Some say it is more important to use all available force to maintain law and order, no matter what results. Others say it is more important to correct the problems of racism and police violence that give rise to the disturbances. And, of course, other people have opinions in between. On this scale from 1 to 7, where 1 means solve problems of racism and police violence, and 7 means use all available force to maintain law and order, where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?	0 = Use all available force to maintain law and order; 1 = Solve problems of racism and police violence	0.46 (0.37)	0.87 (0.27)	0.74 (0.33)

			Mean (SD)		
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**	**White Non-Christians**
Govt. should help Blacks	Some people feel that the government in Washington should make every effort to improve the social and economic position of blacks. Suppose these people are at one end of a scale, at point 1. Others feel that the government should not make any special effort to help blacks because they should help themselves. Suppose these people are at the other end, at point 7. And, of course, some other people have opinions somewhere in between, at points 2, 3, 4, 5, or 6. Where would you place yourself on this scale, or haven't you thought much about this?	0 = Blacks should help themselves; 1 = Government should help blacks	0.44 (0.31)	0.77 (0.28)	0.67 (0.30)
Employers hiring minorities over Whites	How likely is it that many Whites are unable to find a job because employers are hiring minorities instead?	0 = Not at all likely; 1 = Extremely likely	0.34 (0.27)	0.18 (0.28)	0.20 (0.24)
Govt. treats Blacks better than Whites	In general, does the federal government treat Whites better than blacks, treat them both the same, or treat blacks better than Whites? (Combined with extremity question)	0 = Treats Whites much better; 1 = Treats blacks much better	0.44 (0.26)	0.16 (0.23)	0.28 (0.26)
Police treat Blacks better than Whites	In general, do the police treat Whites better than blacks, treat them both the same, or treat blacks better than Whites? (Combined with extremity question)	0 = Treats Whites much better; 1 = Treats blacks much better	0.31 (0.21)	0.09 (0.19)	0.16 (0.20)
Whites have too little influence	Would you say that Whites have too much influence in American politics, just about the right amount of influence in American politics, or too little influence in American politics?	0 = Too much influence; 1 = Too little influence	0.40 (0.27)	0.13 (0.26)	0.23 (0.28)
Blacks have too little influence	Would you say that blacks have too much influence in American politics, just about the right amount of influence in American	0 = Too much influence; 1 = Too little influence	0.66 (0.32)	0.87 (0.27)	0.82 (0.29)

			Mean (SD)		
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**	**White Non-Christians**
	politics, or too little influence in American politics?				
Racial identity important	How important is being [respondent's race] to your identity?	0 = Not at all important; 1 = Extremely important	0.37 (0.33)	0.85 (0.25)	0.28 (0.30)
Concern for other racial groups	How often would you say that you have tender, concerned feelings for people from another racial or ethnic group who are less fortunate than you?	0 = Not often at all; 1 = Extremely often	0.55 (0.26)	0.64 (0.29)	0.63 (0.27)
Try understanding perspective of other racial groups	How often would you say you try to better understand people of other racial or ethnic groups by imagining how things look from their perspective?	0 = Not often at all; 1 = Extremely often	0.58 (0.25)	0.68 (0.26)	0.66 (0.26)
Racial resentment	4-item racial resentment scale	0 = Low racial resentment; 1 = High racial resentment	0.55 (0.29)	0.23 (0.22)	0.32 (0.30)
Discrmination against Blacks	For each of the following groups, how much discrimination is there in the United States today? Blacks	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.57 (0.26)	0.87 (0.21)	0.72 (0.26)
Discrmination against Whites	For each of the following groups, how much discrimination is there in the United States today? Whites	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.30 (0.24)	0.21 (0.27)	0.20 (0.23)
Discrmination against Muslims	For each of the following groups, how much discrimination is there in the United States today? Muslims	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.61 (0.26)	0.75 (0.26)	0.72 (0.26)
Discrmination against Christians	For each of the following groups, how much discrimination is there in the United States today? Christians	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.37 (0.27)	0.42 (0.30)	0.19 (0.23)
Discrimination against Hispanics	For each of the following groups, how much discrimination is there in the United States today? Hispanics	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.48 (0.23)	0.68 (0.26)	0.60 (0.25)
Discrimination against Asians	For each of the following groups, how much discrimination is there in the United States today? Asians	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.38 (0.21)	0.50 (0.28)	0.45 (0.25)

			Mean (SD)		
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**	**White Non-Christians**
Immigration takes away jobs	Now I'd like to ask you about immigration in recent years. How likely is it that recent immigration levels will take jobs away from people already here – extremely likely, very likely, somewhat likely, or not at all likely?	0 = Not at all likely; 1 = Extremely likely	0.37 (0.31)	0.35 (0.33)	0.21 (0.27)
Immigrants good for the economy	And now thinking specifically about immigrants. Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, neither agree nor disagree, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with the following statement? 'Immigrants are generally good for America's economy.'	0 = Disagree strongly; 1 = Agree strongly	0.65 (0.26)	0.64 (0.25)	0.77 (0.24)
Immigrants harm American culture	Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, neither agree nor disagree, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with the following statement? 'America's culture is generally harmed by immigrants.'	0 = Disagree strongly; 1 = Agree strongly	0.32 (0.27)	0.30 (0.28)	0.17 (0.24)
Immigrants increase crime	Do you agree strongly, agree somewhat, neither agree nor disagree, disagree somewhat, or disagree strongly with the following statement? 'Immigrants increase crime rates in the United States.'	0 = Disagree strongly; 1 = Agree strongly	0.45 (0.30)	0.35 (0.29)	0.25 (0.28)
Increasing diversity makes U.S. better	Does the increasing number of people of many different races and ethnic groups in the United States make this country a better place to live, a worse place to live, or does it make no difference? (Combined with extremity questions)	0 = A lot worse; 1 = A lot better	0.66 (0.27)	0.70 (0.28)	0.79 (0.26)
Oppose ending birthright citizenship	Some people have proposed that the U.S. Constitution should be changed so that the children of unauthorized immigrants do not automatically get citizenship if they are born in this country. Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose this proposal? (Combined with strenght of opinion)	0 = Favor a great deal; 1 = Oppose a great deal	0.51 (0.36)	0.62 (0.35)	0.68 (0.34)

			Mean (SD)		
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**	**White Non-Christians**
Oppose border wall	Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose building a wall on the U.S. border with Mexico? (Combined with strength of opinion)	0 = Favor a great deal; 1 = Oppose a great deal	0.42 (0.41)	0.71 (0.33)	0.75 (0.35)
Increase immigration	Do you think the number of immigrants from foreign countries who are permitted to come to the United States to live should be increased a lot, increased a little, left the same as it is now, decreased a little, or decreased a lot?	0 = Decreased a lot; 1 = Increased a lot	0.45 (0.27)	0.53 (0.26)	0.61 (0.28)
Favor allowing refugees	Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose allowing refugees who are fleeing war, persecution, or natural disasters in other countries to come to live in the U.S.? (Combined with strength of opinion)	0 = Oppose a great deal; 1 = Favor a great deal	0.61 (0.29)	0.62 (0.30)	0.77 (0.27)
Favor path to citizenship	Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose providing a path to citizenship for unauthorized immigrants who obey the law, pay a fine, and pass security checks? (Combined with strength of opinion)	0 = Oppose a great deal; 1 = Favor a great deal	0.68 (0.33)	0.71 (0.29)	0.80 (0.27)
Oppose separating children of detained immigrants	Do you favor, oppose, or neither favor nor oppose separating the children of detained immigrants, rather than keeping them with their parents in adult detention centers? (Combined with strength of opinion)	0 = Favor a great deal; 1 = Oppose a great deal	0.81 (0.27)	0.87 (0.25)	0.91 (0.20)

List of questions used as outcome variables from the 2020 American National Election Study. Summary statistics by racial and religious groups are unweighted.

Appendix Table A.2: Religion Variables from ANES

			Mean (SD)	
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**
Religious Importance	Now on another topic: How important is religion in your life?	0 = Not at all important; 1 = Extremely important	0.67 (0.31)	0.79 (0.27)

Variable	Question Wording	Coding	Mean (SD) White Christians	Mean (SD) Black Christians
Protestant	Coded from major religion summary to include Mainline, Evangelical, Black Protestant, Undifferentiated Protestant, and Other Christian	0 = Not Protestant; 1 = Protestant	0.71 (0.45)	0.95 (0.21)
Born-Again	Would you call yourself a born-again Christian, that is, have you personally had a conversion experience related to Jesus Christ?	0 = No; 1 = Yes	0.39 (0.49)	0.66 (0.47)
Biblical Literalism	Which of these statements comes closest to describing your feelings about the Bible? You can just give me the number of your choice.	0 = The Bible is a book written by men and is not the word of God; 1 = The Bible is the actual word of God and is to be taken literally, word for word	0.60 (0.32)	0.73 (0.32)
Church Attendance	Do you go to religious services every week, almost every week, once or twice a month, a few times a year, or never?	0 = Never; 1 = Every week	0.40 (0.40)	0.48 (0.39)

List of questions used as predictor variables from the 2020 American National Election Study. Summary statistics by racial and religious groups are unweighted.

Appendix Table A.3: Controls from ANES

Variable	Question Wording	Coding	Mean (SD) White Christians	Mean (SD) Black Christians	Mean (SD) White Non-Christians
Age			55.78 (16.48)	49.27 (16.03)	48.69 (17.32)
Education	Respondent 5 Category Level of Education	0 = Less than high school credential; 1 = Graduate degree	0.60 (0.27)	0.54 (0.27)	0.67 (0.27)
Income	Summary: Total (Family) Income, 22 Category	0 = Less than $9,999; 1 = $250,000 or more	0.54 (0.31)	0.37 (0.31)	0.55 (0.32)
Sex	What is your sex?	0 = Female; 1 = Male	0.44 (0.50)	0.33 (0.47)	0.52 (0.50)
Party ID	3-Question Format: 1) Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an independent, or something else?; Do you consider yourself to be a strong {Dem/Rep}, or not?; If you had to choose, do	Recoded to 7-point scale: 0 = Strong Republican; 1 = Strong Democrat	0.38 (0.37)	0.84 (0.25)	0.68 (0.31)

Variable	Question Wording	Coding	Mean (SD) White Christians	Black Christians	White Non-Christians
	you consider yourself closer to the Republican party or the Democratic party?				

List of questions used as control variables from the 2020 American National Election Study. Summary statistics by racial and religious groups are unweighted.

A.2 Variable Descriptions for 2020 CMPS

Appendix Table A.4: Outcome Variables from CMPS

Variable	Question Wording	Coding	Mean (SD) White Christians	Black Christians	White Non-Christians
Support affirmative action	Please indicate how much you support or oppose each of the following policy ideas: Colleges and universities should consider grades and test scores only as part of students' applications for admission, and not race or ethnicity	0 = Strongly Support; 1 = Strongly Oppose	0.23 (0.27)	0.28 (0.31)	0.27 (0.29)
Support Black Lives Matter	Based on everything you have heard or seen, how much do you support or oppose the Black Lives Matter movement?	0 = Strongly Oppose; 1 = Strongly Support	0.39 (0.36)	0.78 (0.27)	0.60 (0.36)
Support reparations	To what degree would you support the following polices: Reparations to Black Americans to address inequities created by generations of racism.	0 = Strongly Oppose; 1 = Strongly Support	0.34 (0.32)	0.69 (0.30)	0.46 (0.35)
Whites have advantages	Please indicate if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: White people in the U.S. have certain advantages because of their race.	0 = Strongly Disagree; 1 = Strongly Agree	0.54 (0.31)	0.85 (0.23)	0.67 (0.33)
Racism rare	Please indicate if you agree or disagree with each of the following statements: Racial problems in the U.S. are rare, isolated situations.	0 = Strongly Disagree; 1 = Strongly Agree	0.43 (0.30)	0.24 (0.32)	0.31 (0.30)
Racism as individual	How would you define racism in this country? Response Option: As acts of discrimination that	0 = Not Selected; 1 = Selected	0.32 (0.47)	0.18 (0.38)	0.22 (0.42)

			Mean (SD)		
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**	**White Non-Christians**
acts of discriminatio n	individuals commit against individuals of another racial group				
Racial Resentment	4-item racial resentment scale	0 = Low racial resentment; 1 = High racial resentment	0.62 (0.26)	0.31 (0.23)	0.46 (0.31)
Racial Identity Importance	How important is being [RACIAL GROUP] to your identity?	0 = Not at all important; 1 = Extremely important	0.39 (0.36)	0.77 (0.30)	0.29 (0.33)
Racial identity ranked more important	How important are the following identities to you personally? Please rank the following from most to least important: Racial identity, Gender identity, Religious identity, Party identity, Cultural identity, Class identity, City/town/community identity, American identity	0 = Racial identity ranked least important; 1 = Racial identity ranked most important	0.38 (0.32)	0.80 (0.27)	0.44 (0.32)
Discriminati on against Whites	How much discrimination, if any, do you think exists against each of the following groups in the U.S. today?: Whites	0 = None at all; 1 = A lot	0.38 (0.30)	0.24 (0.31)	0.30 (0.31)
Discriminati on against Blacks	How much discrimination, if any, do you think exists against each of the following groups in the U.S. today?: Blacks	0 = None at all; 1 = A lot	0.60 (0.30)	0.85 (0.27)	0.72 (0.31)
Discriminati on against Asians	How much discrimination, if any, do you think exists against each of the following groups in the U.S. today?: Asians	0 = None at all; 1 = A lot	0.53 (0.28)	0.68 (0.29)	0.64 (0.30)
Discriminati on against Latinos	How much discrimination, if any, do you think exists against each of the following groups in the U.S. today?: Latinos	0 = None at all; 1 = A lot	0.52 (0.27)	0.68 (0.29)	0.63 (0.30)
Discriminati on against Muslims	How much discrimination, if any, do you think exists against each of the following groups in the U.S. today?: Muslims	0 = None at all; 1 = A lot	0.64 (0.30)	0.77 (0.29)	0.73 (0.31)
Patrol Muslim	Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following policies: We need to empower	0 = Strongly Disagree; 1 = Strongly Agree	0.48 (0.30)	0.39 (0.31)	0.35 (0.32)

			Mean (SD)		
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**	**White Non-Christians**
neighborhoods	law enforcement to patrol and secure Muslim neighborhoods before they become radicalized.				
Support Muslim ban	Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following policies: Ban people from predominantly Muslim countries from entering the U.S.	0 = Strongly Disagree; 1 = Strongly Agree	0.43 (0.31)	0.31 (0.30)	0.29 (0.32)
Support birthright citizenship	Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following policies: Children born in the United States to non-citizen parents should not have automatic birthright citizenship	0 = Strongly Agree; 1 = Strongly Disagree	0.45 (0.35)	0.62 (0.36)	0.57 (0.38)
Support family reunification visas	Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following policies: End family reunification visa policies in the U.S.	0 = Strongly Agree; 1 = Strongly Disagree	0.49 (0.29)	0.61 (0.30)	0.60 (0.32)

List of questions used as outcome variables from the 2020 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey. Summary statistics by racial and religious groups are unweighted.

Appendix Table A.5: Religion Variables from CMPS

			Mean (SD)	
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**
Religious ID Ranked More Important	How important are the following identities to you personally? Please rank the following from most to least important: Racial identity, Gender identity, Religious identity, Party identity, Cultural identity, Class identity, City/town/community identity, American identity	0 = Religious identity ranked least important; 1 = Religious identity ranked most important	0.55 (0.33)	0.55 (0.32)
Religious Importance	How important is religion in your life – very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important?	0 = Not at all important; 1 = Very important	0.69 (0.33)	0.79 (0.28)

			Mean (SD)	
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**
Evangelical	Theologically, do you consider yourself a fundamentalist, evangelical, mainline, liberal, Pentecostal, or none of these? Select all that apply.	0 = Evangelical not selected; 1 = Evangelical selected	0.20 (0.40)	0.15 (0.36)
Raised Christian	What primary religion, if any, did your family practice or follow when you were raised?	0 = Catholic, Protestant, or Other Christian not selected; 1 = Catholic, Protestant or Other Christian selected	0.93 (0.26)	0.94 (0.25)
Church Attendance	Thinking back to before the coronavirus pandemic, generally speaking, about how often did you used to participate in worship services or religious rituals with others?	0 = Never; 1 = More than once per week	0.46 (0.36)	0.57 (0.36)
Church 80%+ White	Please indicate the approximate racial/ethnic composition of your place of religious worship or gathering. Responses must add up to 100 percent.	0 = Church less than 80% White; 1 = Church 80% White or more	0.40 (0.49)	0.06 (0.24)
Church 80%+ Black	Please indicate the approximate racial/ethnic composition of your place of religious worship or gathering. Responses must add up to 100 percent.	0 = Church less than 80% Black; 1 = Church 80% Black or more	0.00 (0.06)	0.44 (0.50)

List of questions used as predictor variables from the 2020 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey. Summary statistics by racial and religious groups are unweighted.

Appendix Table A.6: Controls from CMPS

			Mean (SD)		
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**	**White Non-Christians**
Age	In what year were you born?	2021 - [response]	53.70 (17.85)	47.18 (17.26)	47.29 (18.33)
Education	What is the highest level of education you completed?	7 response options total: 0 = Grades 1-8; 1 = Post-graduate degree	0.67 (0.25)	0.63 (0.25)	0.65 (0.25)
Income	What was your total combined household income in 2020 before taxes. This question is completely confidential and just used to help classify the responses, but it is very important to the research.	12 response options total: 0 = Less than $20,000; 1 = $200,000 or more	0.11 (0.23)	0.12 (0.26)	0.13 (0.27)

			Mean (SD)		
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**	**White Non-Christians**
Gender	What is your gender?	0 = Woman, Non-binary, or Something else; 1 = Man	0.44 (0.50)	0.40 (0.49)	0.45 (0.50)
Party ID	3-Question Format: 1) Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an independent, or something else?; Do you consider yourself to be a strong {Dem/Rep}, or not?; If you had to choose, do you consider yourself closer to the Republican party or the Democratic party?	Recoded to 7-point scale: 0 = Strong Republican; 1 = Strong Democrat	0.36 (0.36)	0.82 (0.27)	0.61 (0.34)

List of questions used as control variables from the 2020 Collaborative Multiracial Post-Election Survey. Summary statistics by racial and religious groups are unweighted.

A.3 Variable Descriptions for November 2023 Prolific Survey

Appendix Table A.7: Outcome Variables

			Mean (SD)		
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**	**White Non-Christians**
White Americans have too little influence	Would you say that the following groups have too much influence in American politics, just about the right amount of influence in American politics, or too little influence in American politics? White Americans	0 = Too much influence; 1 = Too little influence	0.38 (0.29)	0.16 (0.27)	0.38 (0.29)
Black Americans have too little influence	Would you say that the following groups have too much influence in American politics, just about the right amount of influence in American politics, or too little influence in American politics? Black Americans	0 = Too much influence; 1 = Too little influence	0.59 (0.33)	0.79 (0.31)	0.59 (0.33)
Muslim Americans have too little influence	Would you say that the following groups have too much influence in American politics, just about the right amount of influence in American politics, or too little influence in American politics? Muslim Americans	0 = Too much influence; 1 = Too little influence	0.50 (0.35)	0.69 (0.31)	0.50 (0.35)
Christian Americans have too little influence	Would you say that the following groups have too much influence in American politics, just about the right	0 = Too much influence; 1 = Too little influence	0.47 (0.36)	0.44 (0.36)	0.47 (0.36)

			Mean (SD)		
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**	**White Non-Christians**
	amount of influence in American politics, or too little influence in American politics? American Christians				
American Atheists have too little influence	Would you say that the following groups have too much influence in American politics, just about the right amount of influence in American politics, or too little influence in American politics? American Atheists	0 = Too much influence; 1 = Too little influence	0.44 (0.33)	0.48 (0.35)	0.44 (0.33)
Racial group deserves credit	How much more credit do you think [R's race] Americans deserve for their contributions to society than they already receive? Would you say they deserve much less credit, somewhat less credit, the same amount of credit, a little more credit, or a lot more credit?	0 = Much less credit; 1 = Much more credit	0.51 (0.25)	0.83 (0.24)	0.51 (0.25)
Racial group deserves no blame	How much blame do you think [R's race] Americans deserve for the problems in American society?	0 = A great deal of blame; 1 = No blame at all	0.57 (0.27)	0.73 (0.23)	0.57 (0.27)
Christians deserve credit	How much more credit do you think American Christians deserve for their contributions to society than they already receive? Would you say they deserve much less credit, somewhat less credit, the same amount of credit, a little more credit, or a lot more credit?	0 = Much less credit; 1 = Much more credit	0.53 (0.27)	0.55 (0.27)	0.53 (0.27)
Christians deserve no blame	How much blame do you think American Christians deserve for the problems in American society?	0 = A great deal of blame; 1 = No blame at all	0.67 (0.29)	0.63 (0.30)	0.67 (0.29)
Racial Identity Centrality	How important is being [R's race] to your identity?	0 = Not at all important; 1 = Extremely important	0.45 (0.34)	0.80 (0.26)	0.45 (0.34)
Racial Pride	To what extent do you feel that [R's race] people in this country have a lot to be proud of?	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.61 (0.29)	0.78 (0.25)	0.61 (0.29)
Racial Commonality	How much would you say that [R's race] people in this country have a lot in common with one another?	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.54 (0.23)	0.68 (0.23)	0.54 (0.23)
Racial ID Scale	3-item racial identity scale (Identity Centrality, Pride, Commonality)	0 = Low racial identity; 1 = High racial identity	0.53 (0.23)	0.75 (0.18)	0.53 (0.23)
Racial Resentment	4-item racial resentment scale	0 = Low racial resentment; 1 = High racial resentment	0.49 (0.32)	0.26 (0.24)	0.49 (0.32)

			Mean (SD)		
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**	**White Non-Christians**
Discrmination against Black Americans	How much discrimination is there in the United States today against each of the following groups? Black Americans	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.55 (0.28)	0.82 (0.25)	0.55 (0.28)
Discrmination against White Americans	How much discrimination is there in the United States today against each of the following groups? White Americans	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.31 (0.28)	0.21 (0.26)	0.31 (0.28)
Discrmination against Muslim Americans	How much discrimination is there in the United States today against each of the following groups? Muslim Americans	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.56 (0.29)	0.70 (0.27)	0.56 (0.29)
Discrmination against American Christians	How much discrimination is there in the United States today against each of the following groups? American Christians	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.37 (0.30)	0.42 (0.30)	0.37 (0.30)
Discrimination against American Atheists	How much discrimination is there in the United States today against each of the following groups? American Atheists	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.29 (0.25)	0.34 (0.27)	0.29 (0.25)
Explain Black-White inequality - Lack of hard work	On average, Black Americans have lower incomes, worse jobs and worse housing than Whites. How important are each of the following for explaining why Blacks have lower incomes, worse jobs, and worse housing? Lack of hard work	0 = Not at all important; 1 = Extremely important	0.46 (0.31)	0.46 (0.35)	0.46 (0.31)
Explain Black-White inequality - Low quality schools	On average, Black Americans have lower incomes, worse jobs and worse housing than Whites. How important are each of the following for explaining why Blacks have lower incomes, worse jobs, and worse housing? Low quality schools	0 = Not at all important; 1 = Extremely important	0.67 (0.28)	0.80 (0.25)	0.67 (0.28)
Explain Black-White inequality - Past discrimination against Blacks	On average, Black Americans have lower incomes, worse jobs and worse housing than Whites. How important are each of the following for explaining why Blacks have lower incomes, worse jobs, and worse housing? Past discrimination against Blacks	0 = Not at all important; 1 = Extremely important	0.51 (0.34)	0.80 (0.28)	0.51 (0.34)
Explain Black-White inequality - Current discrimination against Blacks	On average, Black Americans have lower incomes, worse jobs and worse housing than Whites. How important are each of the following for explaining why	0 = Not at all important; 1 = Extremely important	0.51 (0.34)	0.81 (0.27)	0.51 (0.34)

			Mean (SD)		
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**	**White Non-Christians**
	Blacks have lower incomes, worse jobs, and worse housing? Current discrimination against Blacks				
Explain Black-White inequality - Family instability	On average, Black Americans have lower incomes, worse jobs and worse housing than Whites. How important are each of the following for explaining why Blacks have lower incomes, worse jobs, and worse housing? Family instability	0 = Not at all important; 1 = Extremely important	0.70 (0.28)	0.72 (0.28)	0.70 (0.28)
Explain Black-White inequality - Poor spending habits	On average, Black Americans have lower incomes, worse jobs and worse housing than Whites. How important are each of the following for explaining why Blacks have lower incomes, worse jobs, and worse housing? Poor spending habits	0 = Not at all important; 1 = Extremely important	0.51 (0.30)	0.56 (0.32)	0.51 (0.30)

List of questions used as outcome variables from the November 2023 Prolific Survey.

Appendix Table A.8: Religion Variables

			Mean (SD)	
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**
Christian ID Scale	3-item Christian ID Scale (Identity Centrality, Pride, Commonality)	0 = Low Christian Identity; 1 = High Christian Identity	0.59 (0.25)	0.64 (0.23)
Christian Identity Centrality	How important is being a Christian to your identity?	0 = Not at all important; 1 = Extremely important	0.59 (0.34)	0.69 (0.30)
Christian Pride	To what extent do you feel that Christians in this country have a lot to be proud of?	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.60 (0.31)	0.64 (0.28)
Christian Commonality	How much would you say that Christians in this country have a lot in common with one another?	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.58 (0.25)	0.59 (0.26)
Religious Importance	Now on another topic: How important is religion in your life?	0 = Not at all important; 1 = Extremely important	0.60 (0.32)	0.74 (0.27)
Protestant	Those whose Christian tradition is one of Evangelical, Mainline, of Non-Denominational	0 = Not Protestant; 1 = Protestant	0.64 (0.48)	0.83 (0.37)

			Mean (SD)	
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**
Born-Again	Would you call yourself a born-again Christian, that is, have you personally had a conversion experience related to Jesus Christ?	0 = No; 1 = Yes	0.40 (0.49)	0.57 (0.50)
Biblical Literalism	Which of these statements comes closest to describing your feelings about the Bible?	0 = The Bible is a book written by men and is not the word of God; 1 = The Bible is the actual word of God and is to be taken literally, word for word	0.51 (0.30)	0.66 (0.30)
Church Attendance	Lots of things come up that keep people from attending religious services even if they want to. Thinking about your life these days, do you go to religious services every week, almost every week, once or twice a month, a few times a year, or never?	0 = Never; 1 = Every week	0.36 (0.37)	0.46 (0.37)
Church 80%+ R's Race	Next, how would you describe the racial/ethnic makeup of your church (or place of worship)?	0 = R did not select 'More than 80% of the attendees belong to my racial/ethnic group'; 1 = R selected 'More than 80% of the attendees belong to my racial/ethnic group'	0.51 (0.50)	0.45 (0.50)
Christian Nationalism	6-item Christian Nationalism scale (Whitehead and Perry 2020)	0 = Low CN; 1 = High CN	0.50 (0.28)	0.54 (0.25)
Religious Exceptionalism	4-item Religious Exceptionalism scale (McDaniel et al 2022)	0 = Low RE; 1 = High RE	0.44 (0.29)	0.44 (0.24)

List of questions used as predictor variables from the November 2023 Prolific Survey.

Appendix Table A.9: Controls

			Mean (SD)		
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**	**White Non-Christians**
Age			49.09 (14.14)	41.14 (12.98)	49.09 (14.14)
Education	Respondent 5 Category Level of Education	0 = Less than high school credential; 1 = Graduate degree	0.62 (0.27)	0.63 (0.27)	0.62 (0.27)

			Mean (SD)		
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**	**White Non-Christians**
Income	Income, 13 Category	0 = Less than $10,000; 1 = More than $150,000	0.55 (0.29)	0.53 (0.29)	0.55 (0.29)
Sex	What is your sex?	0 = Female; 1 = Male	0.49 (0.50)	0.32 (0.47)	0.49 (0.50)
Party ID	3-Question Format: 1) Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an independent, or something else?; Do you consider yourself to be a strong {Dem/Rep}, or not?; If you had to choose, do you consider yourself closer to the Republican party or the Democratic party?	Recoded to 7-point scale: 0 = Strong Republican; 1 = Strong Democrat	0.46 (0.38)	0.76 (0.29)	0.46 (0.38)

List of questions used as control variables from the November 2023 Prolific Survey.

A.4 Variable Descriptions for November 2024 Prolific Survey

Appendix Table A.10: Outcome Variables

			Mean (SD)		
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**	**White Non-Christians**
White Americans have too little influence	Would you say that the following groups have too much influence in American politics, just about the right amount of influence in American politics, or too little influence in American politics? White Americans	0 = Too much influence; 1 = Too little influence	0.38 (0.30)	0.16 (0.28)	0.38 (0.30)
Black Americans have too little influence	Would you say that the following groups have too much influence in American politics, just about the right amount of influence in American politics, or too little influence in American politics? Black Americans	0 = Too much influence; 1 = Too little influence	0.61 (0.33)	0.75 (0.32)	0.61 (0.33)
Muslim Americans have too little influence	Would you say that the following groups have too much influence in American politics, just about the right amount of influence in American politics, or too little influence in American politics? Muslim Americans	0 = Too much influence; 1 = Too little influence	0.54 (0.33)	0.73 (0.31)	0.54 (0.33)
Christian Americans have	Would you say that the following groups have too much influence in American politics, just about the right	0 = Too much influence; 1 = Too little influence	0.47 (0.36)	0.41 (0.35)	0.47 (0.36)

			Mean (SD)		
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**	**White Non-Christians**
too little influence	amount of influence in American politics, or too little influence in American politics? American Christians				
American Atheists have too little influence	Would you say that the following groups have too much influence in American politics, just about the right amount of influence in American politics, or too little influence in American politics? American Atheists	0 = Too much influence; 1 = Too little influence	0.46 (0.32)	0.48 (0.35)	0.46 (0.32)
Racial Identity Centrality	How important is being [R's race] to your identity?	0 = Not at all important; 1 = Extremely important	0.41 (0.33)	0.85 (0.22)	0.41 (0.33)
Racial Pride	To what extent do you feel that [R's race] people in this country have a lot to be proud of?	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.45 (0.35)	0.88 (0.21)	0.45 (0.35)
Racial Commonality	How much would you say that [R's race] people in this country have a lot in common with one another?	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.56 (0.23)	0.74 (0.23)	0.56 (0.23)
Racial ID Scale	3-item racial identity scale (Identity Centrality, Pride, Commonality)	0 = Low racial identity; 1 = High racial identity	0.47 (0.26)	0.82 (0.19)	0.47 (0.26)
Racial Resentment	4-item racial resentment scale	0 = Low racial resentment; 1 = High racial resentment	0.49 (0.30)		0.49 (0.30)
Discrmination against Black Americans	How much discrimination is there in the United States today against each of the following groups? Black Americans	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.57 (0.28)	0.77 (0.26)	0.57 (0.28)
Discrmination against White Americans	How much discrimination is there in the United States today against each of the following groups? White Americans	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.33 (0.27)	0.21 (0.28)	0.33 (0.27)
Discrmination against Muslim Americans	How much discrimination is there in the United States today against each of the following groups? Muslim Americans	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.60 (0.28)	0.66 (0.27)	0.60 (0.28)
Discrmination against American Christians	How much discrimination is there in the United States today against each of the following groups? American Christians	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.40 (0.30)	0.40 (0.31)	0.40 (0.30)
Discrimination against American Atheists	How much discrimination is there in the United States today against each of the following groups? American Atheists	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.28 (0.26)	0.34 (0.27)	0.28 (0.26)

List of questions used as outcome variables from the July 2024 Prolific Survey.

Appendix Table A.11: Religion Variables

			Mean (SD)	
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**
Christian ID Scale	3-item Christian ID Scale (Identity Centrality, Pride, Commonality)	0 = Low Christian Identity; 1 = High Christian Identity	0.58 (0.29)	0.74 (0.23)
Christian Identity Centrality	How important is being a Christian to your identity?	0 = Not at all important; 1 = Extremely important	0.61 (0.34)	0.77 (0.25)
Christian Pride	How much pride do you have in being a Christian?	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.60 (0.34)	0.79 (0.26)
Christian Commonality	How much would you say that you have in common with other Christians in this country?	0 = None at all; 1 = A great deal	0.52 (0.28)	0.66 (0.27)
Religious Importance	Now on another topic: How important is religion in your life?	0 = Not at all important; 1 = Extremely important	0.63 (0.31)	0.76 (0.24)
Protestant	Those whose Christian tradition is one of Evangelical, Mainline, of Non-Denominational	0 = Not Protestant; 1 = Protestant	0.67 (0.47)	0.75 (0.44)
Born-Again	Would you call yourself a born-again Christian, that is, have you personally had a conversion experience related to Jesus Christ?	0 = No; 1 = Yes	0.42 (0.49)	0.71 (0.46)
Biblical Literalism	Which of these statements comes closest to describing your feelings about the Bible?	0 = The Bible is a book written by men and is not the word of God; 1 = The Bible is the actual word of God and is to be taken literally, word for word	0.56 (0.28)	0.74 (0.30)
Church Attendance	Lots of things come up that keep people from attending religious services even if they want to. Thinking about your life these days, do you go to religious services every week, almost every week, once or twice a month, a few times a year, or never?	0 = Never; 1 = Every week	0.40 (0.36)	0.56 (0.36)
Church 80%+ R's Race	Next, how would you describe the racial/ethnic makeup of your church (or place of worship)?	0 = R did not select 'More than 80% of the attendees belong to my racial/ethnic group'; 1 = R selected 'More than 80% of the attendees belong to my racial/ethnic group'	0.54 (0.50)	0.36 (0.48)

			Mean (SD)	
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**
Christian Nationalism	6-item Christian Nationalism scale (Whitehead and Perry 2020)	0 = Low CN; 1 = High CN	0.49 (0.29)	0.57 (0.24)
Religious Exceptionalism	4-item Religious Exceptionalism scale (McDaniel et al 2022)	0 = Low RE; 1 = High RE	0.41 (0.27)	0.52 (0.25)

List of questions used as predictor variables from the July 2024 Prolific Survey.

Appendix Table A.12: Controls

			Mean (SD)		
Variable	**Question Wording**	**Coding**	**White Christians**	**Black Christians**	**White Non-Christians**
Age			44.60 (14.19)	40.11 (12.73)	44.60 (14.19)
Education	Respondent 5 Category Level of Education	0 = Less than high school credential; 1 = Graduate degree	0.61 (0.27)	0.71 (0.25)	0.61 (0.27)
Income	Income, 13 Category	0 = Less than $10,000; 1 = More than $150,000	0.60 (0.30)	0.61 (0.30)	0.60 (0.30)
Sex	What is your sex?	0 = Female; 1 = Male	0.37 (0.48)	0.46 (0.50)	0.37 (0.48)
Party ID	3-Question Format: 1) Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an independent, or something else?; Do you consider yourself to be a strong {Dem/Rep}, or not?; If you had to choose, do you consider yourself closer to the Republican party or the Democratic party?	Recoded to 7-point scale: 0 = Strong Republican; 1 = Strong Democrat	0.39 (0.35)	0.61 (0.38)	0.39 (0.35)

List of questions used as control variables from the July 2024 Prolific Survey.

Appendix B: Supplements to Chapter 4

B.1 Treatment Effects Moderated by Other Religion Variables

Appendix Table B.1: Effects of Other Moderators, by Condition (Study 1)

	Born-Again	Church Attendance	Biblical Literalism	Church Diversity	Christian Nationalism	Religious Exceptionalism
Intercept	0.580***	0.580***	0.565***	0.720***	0.636***	0.589***
	(0.069)	(0.068)	(0.077)	(0.085)	(0.095)	(0.076)
Tyranny Condition	-0.100*	-0.146**	-0.127*	-0.146**	-0.104	-0.181**
	(0.044)	(0.048)	(0.064)	(0.055)	(0.084)	(0.060)
Religious Appeal	-0.272***	-0.242***	-0.157*	-0.375***	-0.108	-0.222***
	(0.043)	(0.047)	(0.063)	(0.057)	(0.089)	(0.062)
Racial Appeal	-0.374***	-0.359***	-0.449***	-0.434***	-0.356***	-0.434***
	(0.045)	(0.048)	(0.065)	(0.056)	(0.096)	(0.062)
Variable	0.073	0.068	0.072	-0.103	0.003	0.034
	(0.050)	(0.064)	(0.072)	(0.152)	(0.107)	(0.080)
Tyranny Condition x Variable	-0.074	0.032	-0.021	0.056	-0.057	0.104
	(0.069)	(0.091)	(0.107)	(0.188)	(0.141)	(0.113)
Religious Appeal x Variable	-0.091	-0.188*	-0.303**	0.120	-0.368*	-0.196+
	(0.069)	(0.090)	(0.106)	(0.196)	(0.149)	(0.116)
Racial Appeal x Variable	-0.046	-0.111	0.091	0.170	-0.075	0.074
	(0.069)	(0.091)	(0.108)	(0.194)	(0.159)	(0.115)
Num.Obs.	495	503	503	327	503	503
R2	0.312	0.318	0.327	0.305	0.322	0.319
R2 Adj.	0.294	0.300	0.309	0.276	0.304	0.301
RMSE	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.27	0.26	0.26

$^{+}p < 0.1, ^{*}p < 0.05, ^{**}p < 0.01, ^{***}p < 0.001$

OLS Coefficients. White Christian respondents only. Models include controls for age, sex, education, income, party identification, and ideology.

Appendix Table B.2: Experimental Effects by Christian Tradition (Study 1)

	(1)
Intercept	0.587***
	(0.080)
Religious Appeal	-0.343***

	(0.068)
Racial Appeal	-0.361***
	(0.068)
Catholic	-0.019
	(0.068)
Mainline Protestant	0.025
	(0.078)
Non-Denominational	0.049
	(0.074)
Other Christian	0.069
	(0.112)
Tyranny Condition x Catholic	-0.003
	(0.094)
Religious Appeal x Catholic	0.078
	(0.092)
Racial Appeal x Catholic	-0.105
	(0.093)
Tyranny Condition x Mainline Protestant	-0.094
	(0.110)
Religious Appeal x Mainline Protestant	0.006
	(0.101)
Racial Appeal x Mainline Protestant	0.102
	(0.109)
Tyranny Condition x Non-Denominational	-0.137
	(0.107)
Religious Appeal x Non-Denominational	0.006
	(0.102)
Racial Appeal x Non-Denominational	-0.158
	(0.101)
Tyranny Condition x Other Christian	-0.130
	(0.151)
Religious Appeal x Other Christian	0.056
	(0.178)
Racial Appeal x Other Christian	-0.123
	(0.162)
Num.Obs.	481
R2	0.350
R2 Adj.	0.314
RMSE	0.25

+p < 0.1,* p < 0.05,** p < 0.01,*** p < 0.001

OLS Coefficients. White Christian respondents only. Model include controls for age, sex, education, income, party identification, and ideology.

Appendix Table B.3: Effects of Other Moderators, by Condition (Study 2)

	Born-Again	Church Attendance	Biblical Literalism	Church Diversity	Christian Nationalism	Religious Exceptionalism
Intercept	0.704***	0.723***	0.704***	0.642***	0.686***	0.680***
	(0.058)	(0.060)	(0.075)	(0.066)	(0.079)	(0.066)
Control Trump	-0.033	-0.037	-0.091	0.055	-0.247**	-0.067
	(0.047)	(0.054)	(0.079)	(0.049)	(0.086)	(0.063)
Religious DOJ	-0.053	-0.110*	-0.166*	0.035	-0.375***	-0.135*
	(0.048)	(0.053)	(0.073)	(0.049)	(0.083)	(0.061)
Religious Trump	-0.068	-0.045	-0.197*	0.044	-0.542***	-0.244***
	(0.047)	(0.053)	(0.078)	(0.056)	(0.086)	(0.062)
Racial DOJ	-0.103*	-0.097+	-0.191*	-0.013	-0.299***	-0.212***
	(0.046)	(0.052)	(0.077)	(0.052)	(0.081)	(0.061)
Racial Trump	-0.067	-0.097+	-0.162*	-0.013	-0.424***	-0.224***
	(0.048)	(0.056)	(0.079)	(0.048)	(0.087)	(0.066)
Variable	-0.081	-0.110	-0.097	0.150	-0.156	-0.097
	(0.051)	(0.069)	(0.090)	(0.123)	(0.104)	(0.089)
Control Trump x Variable	0.161*	0.177+	0.229+	-0.088	0.507***	0.242+
	(0.071)	(0.095)	(0.126)	(0.160)	(0.145)	(0.127)
Religious DOJ x Variable	0.175*	0.346***	0.363**	0.088	0.734***	0.399**
	(0.070)	(0.097)	(0.121)	(0.168)	(0.142)	(0.122)
Religious Trump x Variable	0.192**	0.129	0.369**	-0.122	1.037***	0.671***
	(0.074)	(0.101)	(0.127)	(0.190)	(0.149)	(0.131)
Racial DOJ x Variable	0.144*	0.126	0.265*	-0.118	0.459***	0.387**
	(0.072)	(0.097)	(0.126)	(0.185)	(0.138)	(0.118)
Racial Trump x Variable	0.024	0.097	0.188	-0.164	0.655***	0.387**
	(0.071)	(0.100)	(0.124)	(0.179)	(0.144)	(0.129)
Num.Obs.	691	691	691	505	691	691
R2	0.252	0.252	0.262	0.232	0.340	0.299
R2 Adj.	0.234	0.233	0.244	0.205	0.324	0.281
RMSE	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.25	0.25

$^{+}p < 0.1, ^{*}p < 0.05, ^{**}p < 0.01, ^{***}p < 0.001$

OLS Coefficients. White Christian respondents only. Models include controls for age, sex, education, income, party identification, and ideology.

Appendix Table B.4: Experimental Effects by Christian Tradition (Study 2)

	(1)
Intercept	0.614 (0.071)***
Control Trump	0.068 (0.070)
Religious DOJ	0.114 (0.072)
Religious Trump	0.113 (0.077)
Racial DOJ	-0.028 (0.081)

Racial Trump	-0.004 (0.068)
Catholic	0.180 (0.070)*
Mainline Protestant	0.121 (0.074)
Non-Denominational	-0.072 (0.077)
Other Christian	-0.004 (0.120)
Control Trump x Catholic	-0.146 (0.096)
Religious DOJ x Catholic	-0.253 (0.098)*
Religious Trump x Catholic	-0.219 (0.101)*
Racial DOJ x Catholic	-0.101 (0.104)
Racial Trump x Catholic	-0.073 (0.099)
Control Trump x Mainline Protestant	-0.066 (0.109)
Religious DOJ x Mainline Protestant	-0.053 (0.108)
Religious Trump x Mainline Protestant	-0.170 (0.110)
Racial DOJ x Mainline Protestant	-0.085 (0.113)
Racial Trump x Mainline Protestant	-0.160 (0.101)
Control Trump x Non-Denominational	0.174 (0.102)+
Religious DOJ x Non-Denominational	0.068 (0.102)
Religious Trump x Non-Denominational	0.118 (0.114)
Racial DOJ x Non-Denominational	0.148 (0.108)
Racial Trump x Non-Denominational	-0.010 (0.111)
Control Trump x Other Christian	-0.017 (0.185)
Religious DOJ x Other Christian	-0.215 (0.201)
Religious Trump x Other Chrisitan	-0.112 (0.158)
Racial DOJ x Other Christian	0.061 (0.190)
Racial Trump x Other Christian	0.236 (0.159)
Num.Obs.	675
R2	0.276
R2 Adj.	0.236
RMSE	0.26

+p < 0.1,* p < 0.05,** p < 0.01,*** p < 0.001

OLS Coefficients. White Christian respondents only. Model include controls for age, sex, education, income, party identification, and ideology.

B.2 Experimental Effects by Racial-Religious Group

Appendix Table B.5: Experimental Effects by Racial-Religious Group (Study 1)

	No Controls	With Controls
Tyranny Condition	-0.128***	-0.136***
	(0.035)	(0.034)
Religious Appeal	-0.294***	-0.310***
	(0.034)	(0.033)

Racial Appeal	-0.390***	-0.399***
	(0.035)	(0.034)
Black Christian	0.071*	0.007
	(0.035)	(0.035)
White Non-Christian	-0.006	-0.066+
	(0.035)	(0.035)
Tyranny Condition x Black Christian	-0.044	-0.029
	(0.049)	(0.048)
Religious Appeal x Black Christian	-0.010	0.001
	(0.049)	(0.047)
Racial Appeal x Black Christian	0.247***	0.253***
	(0.050)	(0.048)
Tyranny Condition x White Non-Christian	0.067	0.062
	(0.049)	(0.048)
Religious Appeal x White Non-Christian	0.298***	0.298***
	(0.049)	(0.048)
Racial Appeal x White Non-Christian	0.202***	0.204***
	(0.049)	(0.048)
Num.Obs.	1493	1484
R2	0.188	0.234
R2 Adj.	0.182	0.226
RMSE	0.27	0.26

+p < 0.1,* p < 0.05,** p < 0.01,*** p < 0.001

OLS Coefficients. Controls included in second model are age, sex, education, income, party identification, and ideology.

Appendix Table B.6: Experimental Effects by Racial-Religious Group (Study 2)

	No Controls	With Controls
(Intercept)	0.509***	0.674***
	(0.027)	(0.036)
Control Trump	0.021	0.036
	(0.039)	(0.035)
Religious DOJ	0.015	0.028
	(0.039)	(0.035)
Religious Trump	-0.009	0.008
	(0.039)	(0.036)
Racial DOJ	-0.069+	-0.045

	(0.039)	(0.035)
Racial Trump	-0.045	-0.054
	(0.039)	(0.035)
Black Christian	0.148***	0.177***
	(0.040)	(0.037)
Latino Christian	0.039	0.122**
	(0.048)	(0.044)
White Non-Christian	0.015	0.144***
	(0.040)	(0.038)
Control Trump × Black Christian	-0.155**	-0.132*
	(0.057)	(0.052)
Religious DOJ × Black Christian	-0.092	-0.051
	(0.058)	(0.053)
Religious Trump × Black Christian	-0.158**	-0.127*
	(0.058)	(0.052)
Racial DOJ × Black Christian	-0.309***	-0.238***
	(0.057)	(0.052)
Racial Trump × Black Christian	-0.298***	-0.242***
	(0.058)	(0.053)
Control Trump × Latino Christian	-0.111	-0.176**
	(0.070)	(0.064)
Religious DOJ × Latino Christian	-0.086	-0.134*
	(0.069)	(0.063)
Religious Trump × Latino Christian	-0.167*	-0.213***
	(0.070)	(0.064)
Racial DOJ × Latino Christian	-0.179**	-0.221***
	(0.068)	(0.062)
Racial Trump × Latino Christian	-0.257***	-0.253***
	(0.069)	(0.062)
Control Trump × White Non-Christian	-0.164**	-0.162**
	(0.057)	(0.052)
Religious DOJ × White Non-Christian	-0.351***	-0.362***
	(0.057)	(0.052)
Religious Trump × White Non-Christian	-0.386***	-0.385***
	(0.057)	(0.052)
Racial DOJ × White Non-Christian	-0.198***	-0.233***
	(0.057)	(0.052)
Racial Trump × White Non-Christian	-0.285***	-0.293***
	(0.058)	(0.052)
Num.Obs.	2172	2165
R2	0.191	0.339
R2 Adj.	0.182	0.330
RMSE	0.29	0.26

+p < 0.1,* p < 0.05,** p < 0.01,*** p < 0.001

OLS Coefficients. Controls included in second model are age, sex, education, income, party identification, and ideology.

B.3 Balance and Summary Statistics

Appendix Table B.7: Summary Statistics by Racial-Religious Group (Study 1)

		White Christian (N=506)		Black Christian (N=496)		White Non-Christian (N=491)	
		Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Age		49.087	14.139	41.141	12.983	42.264	13.038
Education		0.621	0.273	0.631	0.265	0.592	0.273
Income		0.552	0.291	0.530	0.295	0.511	0.290
Ideology (Liberal)		0.439	0.310	0.612	0.270	0.738	0.258
Christian Identity		0.586	0.343	0.690	0.303		
Racial Identity		0.455	0.338	0.799	0.258	0.254	0.273
Racial Resentment		0.487	0.322	0.258	0.237	0.275	0.303
		N	Pct.	N	Pct.	N	Pct.
Condition	Control	120	23.7	126	25.4	128	26.1
	Tyranny Condition	128	25.3	127	25.6	118	24.0
	Religious Appeal	135	26.7	125	25.2	116	23.6
	Racial Appeal	123	24.3	118	23.8	129	26.3
Sex	Female	257	50.8	338	68.1	243	49.5
	Male	249	49.2	158	31.9	248	50.5
Party ID	Democrat	204	40.3	380	76.6	369	75.2
	Independent	36	7.1	41	8.3	58	11.8
	Republican	266	52.6	74	14.9	64	13.0
	NA	0	0.0	1	0.2	0	0.0

Appendix Table B.8: Balance Statistics by Racial-Religious Group (Study 1)

		Control		Tyranny Condition		Religious Appeal		Racial Appeal		All	
	Group	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Age	White Christian	49.60	14.40	49.78	13.69	48.93	14.33	48.03	14.24	49.09	14.14
	Black Christian	42.02	13.50	42.55	13.77	41.52	12.07	38.28	12.18	41.14	12.98
	White Non-Christian	42.63	12.75	42.48	13.76	42.03	13.18	41.91	12.64	42.26	13.04
Female	White Christian	0.52	0.50	0.51	0.50	0.51	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.51	0.50
	Black Christian	0.72	0.45	0.62	0.49	0.70	0.46	0.68	0.47	0.68	0.47
	White Non-Christian	0.46	0.50	0.51	0.50	0.53	0.50	0.49	0.50	0.49	0.50
Income	White Christian	0.52	0.29	0.60	0.29	0.54	0.29	0.54	0.28	0.55	0.29
	Black Christian	0.51	0.28	0.52	0.31	0.52	0.29	0.57	0.29	0.53	0.29
	White Non-Christian	0.51	0.29	0.50	0.29	0.55	0.29	0.49	0.29	0.51	0.29
Education	White Christian	0.61	0.28	0.65	0.26	0.59	0.28	0.64	0.27	0.62	0.27
	Black Christian	0.63	0.28	0.61	0.26	0.68	0.25	0.60	0.27	0.63	0.27
	White Non-Christian	0.59	0.29	0.63	0.27	0.62	0.27	0.54	0.26	0.59	0.27
Party ID (Democrat)	White Christian	0.42	0.38	0.45	0.38	0.50	0.38	0.47	0.39	0.46	0.38
	Black Christian	0.76	0.30	0.72	0.30	0.76	0.29	0.78	0.29	0.76	0.29
	White Non-Christian	0.70	0.30	0.75	0.27	0.75	0.27	0.77	0.27	0.74	0.28
Ideology (Liberal)	White Christian	0.40	0.30	0.44	0.31	0.46	0.33	0.45	0.30	0.44	0.31
	Black Christian	0.60	0.26	0.59	0.28	0.62	0.27	0.64	0.27	0.61	0.27
	White Non-Christian	0.72	0.27	0.74	0.25	0.75	0.25	0.75	0.26	0.74	0.26

Christian Identity	White Christian	0.60	0.34	0.60	0.35	0.60	0.33	0.54	0.35	0.59	0.34
	Black Christian	0.69	0.33	0.71	0.27	0.67	0.30	0.69	0.31	0.69	0.30
	White Non-Christian										
Racial Identity	White Christian	0.47	0.35	0.45	0.32	0.46	0.34	0.45	0.34	0.45	0.34
	Black Christian	0.81	0.24	0.79	0.27	0.80	0.27	0.81	0.25	0.80	0.26
	White Non-Christian	0.27	0.28	0.27	0.25	0.23	0.25	0.25	0.31	0.25	0.27
Racial Resentment	White Christian	0.51	0.33	0.52	0.31	0.46	0.34	0.46	0.31	0.49	0.32
	Black Christian	0.24	0.23	0.29	0.26	0.23	0.21	0.27	0.25	0.26	0.24
	White Non-Christian	0.32	0.32	0.25	0.28	0.24	0.28	0.29	0.33	0.27	0.30

Appendix Table B.9: Sample Statistics by Racial-Religious Group (Study 2)

		Black Christian (N=571)		Latino Christian (N=306)		White Christian (N=693)		White Non-Christian (N=602)	
		Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.
Age		40.112	12.726	35.327	11.301	44.597	14.190	39.748	13.388
Education		0.710	0.254	0.606	0.245	0.612	0.274	0.592	0.273
Income		0.608	0.303	0.577	0.299	0.598	0.300	0.570	0.313
Ideology (Liberal)		0.564	0.314	0.541	0.275	0.413	0.292	0.722	0.257
Christian Identity		0.771	0.250	0.565	0.330	0.611	0.340		
Racial Identity		0.849	0.221	0.683	0.292	0.415	0.328	0.218	0.263
Christian ID Scale		0.739	0.227	0.524	0.269	0.579	0.287		
Racial ID Scale		0.823	0.187	0.671	0.248	0.475	0.264	0.282	0.193
Racial Resentment				0.379	0.280	0.493	0.298	0.246	0.273
		N	Pct.	N	Pct.	N	Pct.	N	Pct.
Condition	Control	99	17.3	56	18.3	115	16.6	98	16.3
	Control Trump	98	17.2	47	15.4	118	17.0	99	16.4
	Religious	90	15.8	50	16.3	119	17.2	102	16.9
	Religious Trump	97	17.0	47	15.4	109	15.7	110	18.3
	Racial	96	16.8	53	17.3	118	17.0	99	16.4
	Racial Trump	91	15.9	53	17.3	114	16.5	94	15.6
Sex	Female	306	53.6	176	57.5	435	62.8	373	62.0
	Male	265	46.4	130	42.5	258	37.2	229	38.0
Party ID	Democrat	349	61.1	153	50.0	220	31.7	442	73.4
	Independent	52	9.1	50	16.3	59	8.5	60	10.0
	Republican	169	29.6	103	33.7	413	59.6	100	16.6
	NA	1	0.2	0	0.0	1	0.1	0	0.0

Appendix Table B.10: Balance Statistics by Racial-Religious Group (Study 2)

		Control		Control Trump		Religious		Religious Trump		Racial		Racial Trump		All	
	Group	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Age	Black Christian	37.95	11.77	39.39	13.19	40.50	11.79	40.28	13.49	42.65	13.97	40.01	11.70	40.11	12.73
	Latino Christian	35.39	10.96	37.40	10.80	35.38	13.37	33.40	10.99	37.38	11.28	33.02	9.97	35.33	11.30
	White Christian	44.54	13.33	43.81	14.16	44.26	15.23	46.22	13.72	44.19	14.91	44.70	13.79	44.60	14.19
	White Non-Christian	41.31	13.77	40.42	14.69	38.45	11.67	41.28	13.45	39.46	13.63	37.32	12.80	39.75	13.39
Female	Black Christian	0.41	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.54	0.50	0.68	0.47	0.59	0.49	0.54	0.50
	Latino Christian	0.54	0.50	0.62	0.49	0.46	0.50	0.60	0.50	0.66	0.48	0.58	0.50	0.58	0.50
	White Christian	0.70	0.46	0.59	0.49	0.57	0.50	0.63	0.48	0.67	0.47	0.60	0.49	0.63	0.48
	White Non-Christian	0.54	0.50	0.68	0.47	0.63	0.49	0.69	0.46	0.60	0.49	0.57	0.50	0.62	0.49
Income	Black Christian	0.61	0.32	0.62	0.28	0.59	0.30	0.62	0.31	0.58	0.31	0.63	0.31	0.61	0.30
	Latino Christian	0.66	0.30	0.54	0.28	0.54	0.31	0.55	0.30	0.61	0.31	0.56	0.29	0.58	0.30
	White Christian	0.64	0.27	0.65	0.28	0.58	0.31	0.60	0.31	0.55	0.31	0.57	0.31	0.60	0.30
	White Non-Christian	0.55	0.32	0.54	0.30	0.57	0.31	0.64	0.30	0.56	0.31	0.54	0.33	0.57	0.31
Education	Black Christian	0.72	0.28	0.71	0.23	0.71	0.25	0.72	0.24	0.71	0.24	0.69	0.28	0.71	0.25
	Latino Christian	0.64	0.25	0.63	0.23	0.56	0.27	0.59	0.27	0.59	0.24	0.62	0.22	0.61	0.24
	White Christian	0.61	0.27	0.65	0.27	0.59	0.29	0.64	0.26	0.60	0.27	0.59	0.29	0.61	0.27
	White Non-Christian	0.59	0.30	0.61	0.28	0.58	0.27	0.60	0.27	0.61	0.25	0.57	0.27	0.59	0.27

Party ID (Democrat)	Black Christian	0.52	0.41	0.59	0.39	0.64	0.37	0.62	0.39	0.74	0.31	0.59	0.39	0.61	0.38
	Latino Christian	0.62	0.33	0.49	0.36	0.54	0.36	0.55	0.35	0.57	0.33	0.62	0.31	0.57	0.34
	White Christian	0.36	0.35	0.41	0.35	0.40	0.35	0.41	0.38	0.43	0.36	0.36	0.34	0.39	0.35
	White Non-Christian	0.71	0.29	0.76	0.26	0.72	0.29	0.73	0.32	0.69	0.28	0.67	0.30	0.72	0.29
Ideology (Liberal)	Black Christian	0.47	0.33	0.57	0.33	0.57	0.31	0.56	0.32	0.64	0.28	0.58	0.30	0.56	0.31
	Latino Christian	0.57	0.27	0.47	0.28	0.54	0.30	0.53	0.24	0.53	0.27	0.59	0.28	0.54	0.28
	White Christian	0.37	0.29	0.43	0.28	0.43	0.28	0.42	0.30	0.44	0.31	0.38	0.29	0.41	0.29
	White Non-Christian	0.71	0.24	0.74	0.23	0.73	0.26	0.76	0.27	0.69	0.27	0.70	0.27	0.72	0.26
Christian Identity	Black Christian	0.83	0.22	0.77	0.22	0.72	0.29	0.76	0.25	0.76	0.25	0.78	0.26	0.77	0.25
	Latino Christian	0.53	0.35	0.60	0.32	0.56	0.31	0.56	0.27	0.61	0.34	0.54	0.37	0.57	0.33
	White Christian	0.62	0.32	0.61	0.35	0.59	0.35	0.61	0.35	0.57	0.35	0.66	0.31	0.61	0.34
	White Non-Christian														
Racial Identity	Black Christian	0.82	0.26	0.85	0.21	0.85	0.23	0.88	0.18	0.85	0.21	0.84	0.22	0.85	0.22
	Latino Christian	0.64	0.29	0.71	0.31	0.66	0.30	0.72	0.28	0.68	0.29	0.69	0.29	0.68	0.29
	White Christian	0.42	0.32	0.40	0.32	0.42	0.34	0.41	0.34	0.43	0.33	0.40	0.33	0.41	0.33
	White Non-Christian	0.21	0.25	0.20	0.25	0.22	0.26	0.17	0.25	0.27	0.29	0.25	0.29	0.22	0.26
Christian ID Scale	Black Christian	0.78	0.21	0.74	0.21	0.70	0.25	0.74	0.23	0.72	0.22	0.75	0.23	0.74	0.23
	Latino Christian	0.48	0.26	0.58	0.27	0.52	0.25	0.52	0.24	0.56	0.27	0.49	0.31	0.52	0.27
	White Christian	0.58	0.29	0.59	0.29	0.56	0.30	0.59	0.29	0.54	0.29	0.62	0.26	0.58	0.29
	White Non-Christian														
Racial ID Scale	Black Christian	0.81	0.20	0.82	0.18	0.82	0.20	0.86	0.16	0.80	0.19	0.81	0.18	0.82	0.19
	Latino Christian	0.63	0.25	0.72	0.26	0.63	0.25	0.70	0.24	0.67	0.25	0.69	0.24	0.67	0.25
	White Christian	0.48	0.26	0.46	0.26	0.49	0.27	0.47	0.27	0.48	0.26	0.47	0.27	0.47	0.26
	White Non-Christian	0.27	0.20	0.25	0.16	0.29	0.18	0.25	0.18	0.32	0.21	0.31	0.21	0.28	0.19
Racial Resentment	Black Christian														
	Latino Christian	0.35	0.26	0.43	0.27	0.38	0.31	0.42	0.27	0.39	0.28	0.31	0.28	0.38	0.28
	White Christian	0.51	0.31	0.43	0.28	0.51	0.30	0.52	0.30	0.45	0.29	0.53	0.30	0.49	0.30
	White Non-Christian	0.23	0.24	0.21	0.24	0.25	0.29	0.23	0.28	0.28	0.27	0.28	0.30	0.25	0.27

B.4 Study 1 Treatments

Religious Appeal

Bolton Graduate Scholarship Contest for Nonreligious Students
Deadline: January 15th
Since 1979, the Freedom from Religion Foundation (FFRF) has offered four scholarships for nonreligious students, including the Bolton Graduate Scholarship Contest. Ranging from $5,000 to $15,000, this program grants prizes to agnostics, atheists, and nonreligious individuals who are attending accredited institutions or graduate schools for advancement.
The application includes an essay of 600 to 800 typed words answering this question: "Why are God and politics/government a dangerous mix?"
Contact
Bolton Graduate Scholarship Contest
P.O. Box 850
Madison, WI 53711
(608) 258-9800
scholarship.info@ffrf.org

Racial Appeal

Bolton Graduate Scholarship Contest for Students of Color
Deadline: January 15th
Since 1979, the Freedom from Racism Foundation (FFRF) has offered four scholarships for students of color, including the Bolton Graduate Scholarship Contest. Ranging from

$5,000 to $15,000, this program grants prizes to Black, Hispanic, and Indigenous individuals who are attending accredited institutions or graduate schools for advancement. The application includes an essay of 600 to 800 typed words answering this question: "Why is whiteness
and politics/government a dangerous mix?"

Contact

Bolton Graduate Scholarship Contest
P.O. Box 850
Madison, WI 53711
(608) 258-9800
scholarship.info@ffrf.org

Tyranny Condition

Bolton Graduate Scholarship Contest for Students

Deadline: January 15th

Since 1979, the Student Achievement Foundation (SAF) has offered four scholarships for high-achieving students, including the Bolton Graduate Scholarship Contest. Ranging from $5,000 to $15,000, this program grants prizes to individuals that have maintained a
high GPA and record of extracurricular activities, who are attending accredited institutions or graduate schools for advancement. The application includes an essay of 600 to 800 typed words answering this question: "How have extracurricular activities shaped your academic experience?"

Contact

Bolton Graduate Scholarship Contest
P.O. Box 850
Madison, WI 53711
(608) 258-9800
scholarship.info@ffrf.org

Control

Bolton Graduate Scholarship Contest for Students

Deadline: January 15th

Since 1979, the Student Achievement Foundation (SAF) has offered four scholarships for high-achieving students, including the Bolton Graduate Scholarship Contest. Ranging from $5,000 to $15,000, this program grants prizes to individuals that have maintained a
high GPA and record of extracurricular activities, who are attending accredited institutions or graduate schools for advancement. The application includes an essay of 600 to 800 typed words answering this question: "How have extracurricular activities shaped your academic experience?"

Contact

Bolton Graduate Scholarship Contest
P.O. Box 850
Madison, WI 53711
(608) 258-9800
scholarship.info@ffrf.org

B.5 Study 2 Treatments

Religious Appeal

[Trump's/DOJ's] Proposed Focus on Combating Anti-Christian Prejudice
April 6, 2024, 6:00 AM EDT
By Dan Curtis, Washington Post
[If Trump wins the election in November,] The next year may see a new initiative from the Department of Justice to address what some perceive as "anti-Christian prejudice." According to a recent Axios report, significant changes are being proposed to focus on combating discrimination against Christians.
The report outlines efforts led by [Trump adviser Stephen Miller, who would likely play a key role in a future Trump administration. These efforts include/key advisers and officials who are considering] challenging programs aimed at addressing structural and historical discrimination, which some argue are biased against Christians.
Critics of these proposed legal initiatives express concern about their broader politico-cultural implications. They argue that this movement increasingly views Christian Americans as victims of religious bias, a perspective they fear could undermine multicultural democracy.
Supporters of the proposed changes believe they address real issues of anti-Christian sentiment. They argue that the government should intervene to protect Christian Americans from discrimination and to ensure equal treatment under the law.
The proposed focus on anti-Christian prejudice comes at a time when the legal and corporate environments appear to be shifting against diversity and inclusion efforts. Critics worry that [a renewed Trump administration /these changes] might dismantle initiatives aimed at redressing historical discrimination and could potentially neglect the enforcement of voting rights protections.
By framing Christian Americans as under threat from religious minorities and other groups, the proposed changes aim to solidify support among certain communities. Supporters argue this approach provides necessary protections, while critics see it as potentially reinforcing existing societal inequities.

Racial Appeal

[Trump's/DOJ's] Proposed Focus on Combating Anti-White Prejudice
April 6, 2024, 6:00 AM EDT
By Dan Curtis, Washington Post
[If Trump wins the election in November,] The next year may see a new initiative from the Department of Justice to address what some perceive as "anti-White prejudice." According to a recent Axios report, significant changes are being proposed to focus on combating discrimination against White Americans.
The report outlines efforts led by [Trump adviser Stephen Miller, who would likely play a key role in a future Trump administration. These efforts include/key advisers and officials who are considering] challenging programs aimed at addressing structural and historical discrimination, which some argue are biased against White people.
Critics of these proposed legal initiatives express concern about their broader politico-cultural implications. They argue that this movement increasingly views White Americans as victims of racial bias, a perspective they fear could undermine multicultural democracy.
Supporters of the proposed changes believe they address real issues of anti-White sentiment. They argue that the government should intervene to protect White Americans from discrimination and to ensure equal treatment under the law.
The proposed focus on anti-White prejudice comes at a time when the legal and corporate environments appear to be shifting against diversity and inclusion efforts. Critics worry that [a renewed Trump administration /these changes] might dismantle initiatives aimed at redressing historical discrimination and could potentially neglect the enforcement of voting rights protections.

By framing White Americans as under threat from racial minorities and other groups, the proposed changes aim to solidify support among certain communities. Supporters argue this approach provides necessary protections, while critics see it as potentially reinforcing existing societal inequities.

Control

[Trump's/DOJ's] Proposed Compliance Rules

April 6, 2024, 6:00 AM EDT

By Dan Curtis, Washington Post

[If Trump wins the election in November,] The next year may see a new initiative from the Department of Justice aimed at encouraging companies to self-police, voluntarily report misconduct, and improve compliance programs. Companies that implement strong compliance programs and proactively report bad behavior may benefit from reduced fines and other incentives.

Speaking at the Annual Compliance Ethics Institute in Washington D.C. on April 4, [Trump's] former U.S. Deputy Attorney General Lisa Monaco reiterated the proposed strategy to curb financial crime in the workplace:

"Gone are the days when executives could view corporate enforcement matters as the cost of doing business," Monaco said. "In this new era, corporate executives need to redouble their time and attention to compliance programs, compensation programs, and diligence on acquisitions."

Monaco's speech, which introduced new M&A-focused self-disclosure rules, follows her remarks at an American Bar Association (ABA) conference six months earlier, where she formally rolled out the revamped approach.

These policy changes represent a significant shift in enforcement and are part of an effort to push companies to actively police themselves, voluntarily report misconduct to the federal government, and improve compliance programs—or risk civil or criminal penalties.

The new enforcement guidance provides a comprehensive roadmap for companies and their legal teams on corporate compliance programs. It also includes incentives and deterrents that will affect the structuring of executive pay and the maintenance of "business-related electronic data and communications" on messaging apps and other forms of encrypted electronic communications.

While the [Trump administration would be/DOJ is] sending a strong message to the business community, the new guidance provides a clear pathway for general counsel, risk managers, and other compliance-focused officers to limit risk and ensure compliance. By enlisting the right expertise, companies can review their current policies to determine if they are effective in practice or if a new approach is needed.

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