

welcome

At Gateway it is our mission to lead people into a growing relationship with Jesus Christ. Our doctrine is simple; we just want to follow Jesus like Christians did in the New Testament. We have a variety of spiritual, relational, and inspirational activities throughout the St. Louis metro area. For more information visit us at gatewaycitychurch.com or scan the QR code for our church app.

upcoming events

- **Women's Midweek (Wednesday February 27th, 7pm)**
- **Marrieds Date Night (Saturday April 6):**
Register by March 6th:
bowl.gatewaycitychurch.info
- **Singles Ministry Lunch (Sunday March 3, following church)**
- **Singles Devotional (Friday March 8th, 7pm)**
- **Men's Midweek (Wednesday March 13th, 7pm)**

For more info:

calendar.gatewaycitychurch.info

I'm new: what to expect

We're glad you're here! Worship begins at 10am. If the sanctuary is full, additional seating with live video streaming has been set up in our Fellowship Hall.

Church service typically lasts 75-90 minutes. At Gateway we take communion every Sunday; you are also welcome to take communion if you'd like to do so. Like other churches we also take up a weekly offering, however most of our members prefer to give their contribution online through our app, or via "Text 2 Give".

Gateway Kids offers free childcare upstairs each Sunday during the church service. We feature age-appropriate, action-based Bible lessons for children ages 3 months through 5th grade.

If you enjoy the service and would like to go deeper, we would love for you to join one of our weekly small group Bible studies. Talk to one of our ushers or staff members after service for more information.

resources

All phone numbers also accept text messages.
9300 Stansberry Avenue (63134)
314.653.1615

Vince Hawkins - Evangelist 573.489.6573
Robin Hawkins - Women's Ministry Leader
573.489.6719

Elders:
Lu Garcia: 314.952.7308
Tink Sullivan: 573.528.7568

Text 2 Give
Text "Give \$1" to 314.384.9099

Marrieds
Jeff & Julie Hovey 314.698.3036
Steve & Stacy Blassingame 314.489.2512

College

Jeff Hughes: 314.660.5418
Rani Singh: 608.445.7778

Singles

Alex Hanna: 314.302.5065
Rebecca Schneider: 314-691-4037

Youth & Family/High School Ministry

Jeff & Shelly Ryan 469.417.9054

Middle School

Karanja & Denise Kiburi 314.249.6682

Gateway Kids

John Rosario 314.732.8687



Wifi: Gateway

Pass: gateway.church



facebook.com/gatewaycitychrch

Patriotism and Christianity

What is the difference between patriotism and nationalism?

By Ryan Hamm

For American Christians, there might not be an issue more complicated or wrapped in history and politics than patriotism. So how ought Christians to think about patriotism? Is there a Christian response to patriotism? And how can faithful Christians hold in tension their love for country and their primary love and commitment to the kingdom of God?

Patriotism vs. Nationalism

First, it's important to make a distinction between patriotism and nationalism. It's a distinction that's been blurred (and blurred often), but it's a helpful one.

Patriotism can be defined simply as love of country—it's a love that seems to include much of the world's population. It's the kind of love that makes you thankful you're an American whenever you hear the National Anthem. It's that feeling of altruistic gratitude for freedom, or democracy, or culture, or any of the other values people around the world treasure in their nation.

Nationalism, on the other hand, takes that love of country and expands it to mean love of country *at the expense of other nations*. It's when someone believes they are better because they come from a particular place, or that someone else is less valuable because of the country that issued their passport. It's saying, "My country is better than yours, and you are less civilized/enlightened/good because of where you are from." There are ways to say, "The nation that you belong to should consider adopting some of my country's freedoms" without it being nationalism. But nationalism never considers what one's nation could learn from others.

It's not just Americans who struggle with nationalism, of course. Most nations do. And it wasn't a foreign (no pun intended) problem in the New Testament church. There's a reason Paul writes repeatedly about the need for the Jews to recognize the full participation of Gentiles in the kingdom of God. The Jews' national and religious identity made it difficult for them to understand how a Greek, Ethiopian, or slave from Asia Minor could be just as much a part of God's new work. But Paul's famous assertion that there is

"neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" ([Gal. 3:28](#)) demonstrates that nationalism must never be part of the new kingdom of God.

A Good Kind of Patriotism

So how, then, should Christians distinguish between patriotism and nationalism? Well, as in most things, it's best to know what Jesus did.

In [Luke 19](#), there's a peculiar story about Jesus. In the midst of the pomp and glory of the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, Jesus begins to weep. He weeps because the city—and, by extension, all Israel—failed to recognize his lordship, and because he knew the impending destruction of Jerusalem. The scene echoed a previous lament over Jerusalem ([Luke 13:31-35](#)), where Jesus said, "How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!" (v. 34, ESV).

Jesus, it seems, loved his people, his city, his nation—so much so that he cried over it. He didn't despise his country or wish ill upon it—instead, he wanted nothing but the best for it, and it grieved him to see how his people had rejected his teachings.

If we apply Christ's words to today, it might mean that we celebrate the times our nation does something great—the times it gives a voice to the voiceless. It doesn't mean we totally deny a love or appreciation for our country, or throw up our hands feeling we can't make it better. Like it or not, we're part of whatever community into which we're born, and proper patriotism takes note of the in-born love many of us have along with a desire to make our home nations as good as they can be.

But Jesus' lament also means we mourn the times when our nation does something wrong. It means tempering our love for country with the knowledge that there are times our countries will get it wrong. Because if you look just under the pomp of most nations, there are some pretty ugly wounds.

Primary Allegiances

Perhaps the most important distinction to be made by Christians is that our first love must be the kingdom of God, over

and above any love of country, no matter how pure and honorable that love might be.

It's easy for Christians to begin to worship their country as an idol. In *The Four Loves*, C. S. Lewis puts the matter quite succinctly. He notes that love of country "becomes a demon when it becomes a god." In short, we can too easily allow our celebration of nation to intertwine with and pervert our love of God, and in many cases, usurp our love for God. We see how humanity has twisted almost every gift of God into an idol that can sinfully replace him. Money, sex, work, food, drink—each of these (among others) have become damaging idols for too many Christians. It wouldn't take long for any of us to think of examples of when Christians have placed love of country above love of God—and what disastrous consequences this has had.

Jesus taught us that loving one's country is a godly thing. But Jesus also died for people of all nations—putting his own nation's interests below the needs of every person. To the people of Israel, this might have seemed lunacy—Jesus was betraying his own people by spreading his message to Gentiles. But the example stands tall to us. Jesus asks that we lay all of our loves—including our love of country—at his feet so that we may grant him the first fruits of our love.

When Christians put love of country below love of God and love of Christian brothers and sisters, we see a glimpse of the future God has promised his church. John's vision in Revelation includes this stunning scene:

After this I looked, and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were holding palm branches in their hands. And they cried out in a loud voice: Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb." (Revelation 7:9-10)

"Every nation, tribe, people and language." It's an image of Christians crying their allegiance to God and to one another over and above any allegiance to country. It's a reminder that we can do the same, even now.