

FACILITATOR GUIDE

BJC Podcast Series: THE DANGERS OF CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM

HOW TO USE THIS GUIDE:

This facilitator's guide is first and foremost a tool, not a mandate. There is no single "right" way to facilitate a discussion reflection. Every individual and group will have different learning styles, preferences, and needs. Each group leader should choose whichever approach works best for your group – don't be afraid to experiment with different styles or formats. If you have any questions, email BJC Education and Mobilization Assistant Jaziah Masters at jmasters@BJCOnline.org.

BEFORE THE DISCUSSION:

- 1. Prepare yourself:** Listen to the podcast episode one or two times beforehand. Set aside 15 minutes of quiet time to reflect on the questions and consider your own responses to the prompts. Write down any relevant notes or follow-up questions that you want to remember. Review the [FAQs](#) about the Christians Against Christian Nationalism statement to prepare for potential follow-up questions.
- 2. Prepare your group:** Before you meet, send an email to the group with a link to the podcast and the discussion guide for the week. Encourage the group to note quotes or topics they may want to discuss that are not on the discussion guide. Even if you will listen to the podcast as a group, some may want to listen on their own to give them more time to reflect on the topic.
- 3. Prepare your space:** If leading an in-person group, make sure you have a room reserved and set up with chairs in a format that is conducive for your discussion. Bring writing materials, post-its, white boards, discussion guide printouts (if needed), or other relevant materials. If you are listening to the podcast together, make sure all audio equipment is set up and tested.

If leading a virtual group, test your online platform ahead of time to reduce last-minute technical difficulties. Let the group know (via email or another method) how to access the meeting, and note any password or additional steps to connect. Take advantage of the digital platform to share quotes, videos, or other visual content with the group. Offer a pre-meeting for those who may be uncomfortable with the digital format so that you can walk them through all they need to know (turn on camera, unmute microphone, raising hand, chat feature, screen sharing, etc.).

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DURING THE DISCUSSION:

If the group has not listened to the podcast, make sure you do so before discussion

- 4. Start the discussion off right:** Begin with introducing yourself and your role as facilitator, allow group members to introduce themselves, restate the purpose and theme of the discussion, and establish ground rules that you or the group have determined. Some ground rules to consider are whether the group will listen to the podcast together, whether new people may be added each week, and how to make the group a place where hard questions can be pursued.
- 5. Keep the discussion going strong:** Set a strong example by actively listening and having an engaged and curious tone. Encourage and reward balanced participation by giving everyone a chance to speak and emphasizing the importance of listening before responding. Mix-up methods of discussion (individual written reflection, share in pairs, share in small groups, etc.) to support those with all types of learning and reflection styles.
- 6. Navigate the tricky spots:** Be prepared to diffuse conflict. The group should be debating ideas, not engaging in personal attacks. Reference the [FAQ page](#) for common hard questions that may come up. Some members may be hesitant to jump into a conversation, especially in the early weeks. Keep track of any voices not being heard, and find ways to include them without making them uncomfortable or putting them on the spot. Keep the discussion on track by having group members summarize key takeaways, and remember the reflection guide is a tool to focus you but not restrain you — feel free to adjust the script.
- 7. Finish strong:** End the discussion by providing your group with space to talk about overall reflections and key takeaways. Brainstorm next steps individually or collectively. Clarify any follow-up that needs to be done, and determine who will do it. Finally, thank everyone for attending, and invite them to return next week.

AFTER THE DISCUSSION:

- 8. Follow through with your group:** If there were specific follow-up actions assigned, let the group know (via email or other methods) and remind them of any future upcoming, related events.
- 9. Follow up with BJC:** We would love to hear from you about how it went, ways to improve the use of the podcast in a small group setting, and any key takeaways or follow-up your group chose to do. Be sure to post about your discussion on social media, tag us [@BJContheHill](#), and use the hashtag [#ChristianNationalism](#). You can let us know how it went or email any follow-up questions or thoughts to BJC Education and Mobilization Assistant Jaziah Masters at jmasters@BJCOnline.org.