THE SEVEN MOUNTAINS MANDATE

EXPOSING THE DANGEROUS PLAN TO CHRISTIANIZE AMERICA AND DESTROY DEMOCRACY

BY MATTHEW BOEDY

A GUIDE FOR GROUP BIBLE STUDY

Access chapter introduction videos fom the author that are a perfect addition to group study at https://bit.ly/7MMVideos

It has long been a refrain for many Christians to clarify we're "not that kind of Christian," distancing ourselves from certain forms of Christianity—the kinds that carry signs condemning certain sins, the kinds who overlook scandal if it's committed by the right party, the kinds trying to force their version of faith and morals into laws and public institutions. Most readers of *The Seven Mountains Mandate* would say they're not that kind of Christian. They're not striving to "Christianize America and destroy democracy," as the subtitle says, but might not be entirely sure what their faith does say about these seven areas of culture, or how they should respond to others' efforts to conquer them. This Bible study will help Christian readers reflect and discuss the subject matter of the book through the lens of their own faith.

The eight sessions of this Bible study correspond to the seven chapters of Boedy's book, plus the introduction. Each session begins with a short excerpt from the book and a few verses of Scripture from the New Revised Standard Version Updated Edition. Allow some time for silent reflection after reading these passages. You may invite people to share any thoughts they have on those reflection passages or jump into the questions for discussion. Questions invite participants to consider how their faith influences their views on each "mountain" of culture. Some suggest reading certain passages from the book or portions of Scripture, which are from the NRSVUE unless otherwise noted. Read these aloud, dividing long readings among two or three people if needed.

Remind participants that there may be a diversity of political and theological opinions in the room and to be respectful throughout the discussion. Part of the challenge and benefit of studying a book at the intersections of religion and politics is the opportunity to practice civil discourse about very personal and important topics. Watch for participants who tend to dominate conversation and be intentional about inviting quieter participants to share if they desire. Close the session in prayer and/or by sharing ideas and commitments for next steps to make a positive impact on the area of society that has been discussed.

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SESSION 1

Introducing the Seven Mountains Mandate Movement

READ: PREFACE AND INTRODUCTION (PP. IX-20)

REFLECT

"The story of the seven mountains movement told in this book is the story of those who inspired and shaped that 1975 list. It's also about how the list has come to dominate American political life in the 21st century without most Americans even having heard about it. This insidious victory is the work of a new generation of believers who have pushed it with more and more aggression, pushing us closer and closer to violence, threatening our society through their claim to divine urgency. In short, this is the story of how the list became a mandate." (p. 2)

"The earth is the LORD's and all that is in it,
the world, and those who live in it,
for he has founded it on the seas
and established it on the rivers." (Psalm 24:1-2)

DISCUSS

1. Discussing the seven spheres of culture, Francis Schaffer said, "If Christianity is truth as the Bible claims, it must touch every aspect of life. . . . At every sphere of our lives Christ will be our Lord and the Bible will be our norm" (p. 13). Do you agree or disagree with this statement? How does your faith influence various aspects of your life?
2. Read Psalm 33:8-12. Verse 12 is a favorite of Christian nationalists: "Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD" (KJV). Do you think this indicates that the U.S. should collectively, officially adopt a Judeo-Christian affiliation? How do you interpret this passage?
3. Christian nationalists tend to agree with statements like "The U.S. was founded as a Christian nation" and "Christian values should be privileged by the U.S. government." To what extent do you think religious values should shape the laws and culture of the U.S.?
4. What changes do you think Christians should be trying to make in today's society? How should they go about those efforts?
5. Seven mountains movement leaders have used Luke 19:13, "Occupy until he comes" (KJV) and Genesis 1:28, "fill the earth and subdue it and have dominion over . . . every living thing that moves upon the earth" to justify their actions. Read each text in context. Do you think these passages support what the movement advocates? Why or why not?
6. Read pages 17-18, from "Kirk has always identified . . ." to ". . . 'inform my political decisions.'" Does it surprise you that Charlie Kirk later adopted the seven mountains mandate? How does Kirk's shift compare to Donald Trump's appeals to conservative Christian supporters?

SESSION 2

The Mountain of Education

READ: CHAPTER ONE (PP. 21-42)

REFLECT

"Unlike previous attacks on education from supporters of the seven mountains mandate, the plan isn't to build a parallel education system where conservative White families can flee the evils of integration and evolution. . . . Its goal is to punish public education as a system for curriculum choices that go against God." (p. 24)

"Train children in the right way,
and when old, they will not stray.
. . . . . .
The eyes of the LORD keep watch over knowledge,
but he overthrows the words of the faithless." (Proverbs 22:6, 12)

DISCUSS

1. Movement leaders suggest that public schools replaced Christianity in schools with indoctrination into "humanism." What is your definition of humanism? Do you think it is necessarily at odds with Christianity?
2. Read pages 31-32, from "Like Kirk, Hertzberg . . ." to ". . . for the good of the nation." Do you think public schools used to be neutral about religion or are neutral today? If a change occurred, when and how do you think it happened?
3. What do you think parents should do when schools teach things that contradict their religious beliefs or values?
4. Read Daniel 1:3-21. As an example of a faithful person being trained in an ungodly environment, what should we learn from Daniel's story? Do you think this is an appropriate parallel for Christian students in U.S. public schools, as mandate-aligned pastor Stephen Martin does? (See pp. 33-34.)
5. Have you seen evidence of the strategies described on pages 35-39 (teacher watchlists, "school choice" or voucher initiatives, or changes to curriculum) being used to challenge public education in your area? What organizations or ideologies are behind these strategies?
6. On page 42, Boedy writes, "Democracy is the informed debate about policies and values, good-faith discourse about our disputed history and disputed moral codes, especially in a religiously pluralistic society. This is why education matters in a democracy." Do you agree? How do you think education impacts our democracy?

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SESSION 3

The Mountain of Government

READ: CHAPTER TWO (PP. 43-58)

REFLECT

"Since the '70s, White evangelicals as politically conservative actors have argued for a massive reduction in the size of the federal government. . . . Many of those same White evangelicals who support the rights of states also support the seven mountains mandate. This is not a coincidence. The political goal has a theological mandate. They want to undermine the role of the federal government to smooth the way for the installation of biblical governments across America." (pp. 43-44)

"So Samuel reported all the words of the LORD to the people who were asking him for a king. He said, 'These will be the ways of the king who will reign over you: he will take your sons and appoint them to his chariots and to be his horsemen, and to run before his chariots . . . . He will take one-tenth of your flocks, and you shall be his slaves. And on that day you will cry out because of your king, whom you have chosen for yourselves, but the Lord will not answer you on that day.'" (1 Samuel 8:10-11, 17-18)

DISCUSS

1. On page 46, Boedy says that seven mountains movement predecessor R. J. Rushdoony "dismissed democracy because it replaced God with humans as the central authority." Do you think it is possible for God to be the central authority of a country?
2. At the beginning of chapter two, Boedy describes a conversation between Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene and Charlie Kirk regarding a "civil war" or "national divorce" between red states and blue states (see pp. 43-45). What do you think of this idea?
3. Read pages 49-50, from "In more recent times . . ." to ". . . believe in [God] or not." Do you think these communities with "thick Christian culture" reflect a simple desire to live with like-minded neighbors or something more dangerous? Are theocracies okay on a small, voluntary level?
4. The most commonly cited Scripture passage about government is Romans 13:1-7. Read the passage in the context of Paul's surrounding instructions to the Romans. Do you think there's a consistent attitude Christians should have about the government? What do you think of Charlie Kirk's use of the passage (discussed on p. 55)?
5. Throughout chapter two, mandate supporters talk about the "tyranny" of government and their desire to overthrow democratic government, violently if necessary. What do you think the seven mountains mandate's definition of tyranny is? What is your definition of tyranny? Is there any circumstance in which you would consider participating in violence to overthrow the government?
6. Some mandate supporters excuse Donald Trump's unchristian behavior by likening him to Persian king Cyrus, a non-Jew who God called to restore the exiled Jews to their homeland and rebuild Jerusalem (see Ezra 1). What do you think about this comparison? Is a leader's religion important to you? Why or why not?

SESSION 4

The Mountain of Religion

READ: CHAPTER THREE (PP. 59-75)

REFLECT

"It should perhaps go without saying that Christians already run the church. But for supporters of the seven mountains mandate, the church is included in the powerful places controlled by Satan. The movement wants to purify the church from demonic influences, make it more willing to act as the nation's moral enforcer, and make it more militant in that action. This claim was born in traditionally White churches within American evangelicalism, whose conservative theology often saw mainline denominations as culturally corrupt and historic Black churches as theologically suspect." (p. 60)

"If any think they are religious and do not bridle their tongues but deceive their hearts, their religion is worthless. Religion that is pure and undefiled before God the Father is this: to care for orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself unstained by the world." (James 1:26-27)

DISCUSS

1. Have you heard Christians describe others as "not real Christians"? Have you said things like that yourself? Do you think people can accurately judge the authenticity of another's religion? What are some potential outcomes of doing so?
2. On page 61, Boedy quotes megachurch pastor D. James Kennedy saying "We have failed to obey the Great Commission in this country as a whole." Read Matthew 28:18-20. Do you think the seven mountains mandate's goal is to make disciples of everyone in the U.S.? Why or why not?
3. Turning Point and other organizations in the movement want more pastors to preach and teach about being a "Christian nation" and practicing "Christian citizenship." Have you heard pastors preaching about the intersections of faith and government? What do you think churches opposed to Christian nationalism should be doing to combat it?
4. Read Philippians 3:12-21. What do you think it means to have citizenship in heaven, while striving to live faithfully on earth?
5. Read pages 71-72, from "One early adopter . . ." to ". . . majority are not Christians." What do you think the U.S. would look like if churches took on the leadership role of city councils and state assemblies?
6. Mandate supporters emphasize "religious freedom" and "religious liberty," but simultaneously privilege their own conservative evangelicalism. Do you think it is possible to allow freedom for all religions while having one sect in charge?

SESSION 5

The Mountain of Family

READ: CHAPTER FOUR (PP. 77-96)

REFLECT

"In the seven mountains movement's plan for the mountain of family, the masculine heart is called into action as a kind of national moral guard for America. Men have long been primed for this call due to the use of military tropes amid a supposed crisis of manhood in evangelical churches. . . . In short, the movement wants to build up for national and community leadership a minority of White evangelicals through family building." (pp. 80-81)

"'In the last days it will be, God declares,
that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh,
and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
and your young men shall see visions,
and your old men shall dream dreams.
Even upon my slaves, both men and women,
in those days I will pour out my Spirit,
and they shall prophesy.'" (Acts 2:17-18, quoting Joel 2:28)

DISCUSS

1. Much of evangelicals' efforts to enforce "traditional" gender roles and oppose LGBTQ+ rights center on the idea of protecting children. (See pp. 79, 92-93). Do you think this concern is genuine or an excuse to advance their worldview?
2. Read Ephesians 5:22-33, Colossians 3:18-23, and 1 Peter 3:1-8. How do you reconcile Paul's instructions on wifely submission with a belief in women's equality, or with Paul's own words that in Christ "there is no more male and female" (Galatians 3:28)?
3. Conquering the mountain of family means enshrining a household structure in which the husband is considered the leader of his wife and children. What is the impact of this vision on households with single parents, same-gender couples, and adults without children?
4. Read pages 85-86, from "Manhood for the Nation" to ". . . as an influence." Why do you think evangelicals' vision of Christian manhood has grown more militant in recent years? Why do you think Turning Point used a quote from the American Psychological Association critiquing "traditional masculinity" in its promotional video?
5. Read Proverbs 31:10-31, often held up as a model for Christian women. Does this vision of womanhood align with the seven mountains mandate vision for the role of women in society? Why or why not? Do you think it is a good model for women?
6. Read the final section of the chapter, "Danger to Democracy" (pp. 95-96). How do you think the mandate's vision for family dynamics will impact democracy at large?

SESSION 6

The Mountain of Business

READ: CHAPTER FIVE (PP. 97-112)

REFLECT

"Liberal ideas about the relationship between government and the economy since the '30s had been successful in a different time, [Pat Robertson] conceded, but now they were constricting growth and helping the Communist enemy gain ground on America. This should mean less spending, particularly on social welfare programs conservatives thought bred helplessness. These policy ideas had emerged as conservative Christians reengaged government, particularly in response to the federal government's threat to remove tax exemptions from churches that ran afoul of the 1964 Civil Rights Act." (p. 97)

"'Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust consume and where thieves break in and steal, but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust consumes and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also. . . . No one can serve two masters, for a slave will either hate the one and love the other or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and wealth.'" (Matthew 6:19-21, 24)

DISCUSS

1. The seven mountains mandate emerged during the Cold War and, like many Americans, promoted capitalism as the antidote to "godless" communism. Do you think this alone explains why mandate supporters see accumulation of wealth as God's desire?
2. Read the Parable of the Talents in Matthew 25:14-30, a favorite text of mandate supporters. Do you think Jesus' point is about financial investments, or something else? What lesson do you take from this parable?
3. Read pages 101-2, from "Prosperity and Prophets" to ". . . the Kingdom of God!" What is the impact of prosperity theology on people who struggle financially? What is the impact on people who are wealthy? Do you see evidence of prosperity theology in U.S. laws and policy?
4. Read Luke 18:18-30. How do you think prosperity preachers and mandate supporters interpret this story? Does this story make you feel uncomfortable? What do you take away from this story?
5. Even as mandate leaders aim to influence business leaders with coaching and seminars, the mandate movement itself is highly influenced by business principles. What evidence of this do you see? What do you make of this chicken-and-egg situation?
6. Why do you think Turning Point makes such an effort to emphasize the free market with racial minorities? (See pages 106-8.)

SESSION 7

The Mountain of Media

READ: CHAPTER SIX (PP. 113-26)

REFLECT

"Secular media remains, in their view, the devil's well-financed and well-ensconced propaganda machine with no end in sight. So the plan to Christianize America and destroy democracy begins with developing a highly tuned conspiracy radar. Spiritual paranoia—to think all the time as if there is a conspiracy against God—is what drives the seven mountains mandate. And that paranoia is both the message and the medium of their media. Those who 'know' what is really happening, those who 'see' the big picture, conquer the mountain of media." (pp. 115-16)

"Lying lips are an abomination to the LORD,
but those who act faithfully are his delight.
One who is clever conceals knowledge,
but the mind of a fool broadcasts folly." (Proverbs 12:22-23)

DISCUSS

1. On p. 116, Boedy writes, "A conspiracy mindset is what unites these people. But it is also what destroys democracy because it removes them from any broader community conversation." Where have you seen evidence of conspiracy theorists' impact on civil discussion in your life or community?
2. Boedy cites a study that says 67 percent of White evangelical Republicans believed in the conspiracy of a liberal "Deep State" pulling the strings in Washington, compared to 52 percent of White Republicans of other or no religious affiliations (p. 116). Why do you think evangelical Christians are more likely to believe in such theories?
3. End times theology has played a big role in how evangelicals interpret world events. Read Mark 13:21-37. Knowing that there are many ways of interpreting Scriptures about the "Second Coming," how do you think Scriptures like this should shape how Christians receive and respond to world news?
4. Conservative and evangelical media outlets proliferated based on the idea that mainstream media has a liberal bias. Many would counter that conservative media is itself strongly biased. Do you think it is possible to have a completely bias-free news outlet? What media sources do you think are least biased?
5. Read page 120, from "The thesis that journalism . . ." to ". . . the news too." How do you think Christians can view secular media with a faithful lens? How does your faith affect the news media you choose and how you respond to current events?
6. Kirk uses the Tower of Babel story to support his conspiracy theory about a one-world government. Others interpret the story as condemning pride and celebrating diversity. Read Genesis 11:1-9. What lesson do you think our world currently needs to learn from this story?

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SESSION 8

The Mountain of Entertainment

READ: CHAPTER SEVEN (PP. 127-43)

REFLECT

"At the same time Crouch was affirming the strategy behind decades worth of Christian culture—from Veggie Tales to Thomas Kinkade to the Left Behind books and movies—there was another, growing strategy from advocates of the seven mountains mandate movement. They were not interested in merely offering a Christian alternative to secular entertainment. The movement wanted its cultural content to do more for the nation's politics." (p. 128)

"Let no evil talk come out of your mouths but only what is good for building up, as there is need, so that your words may give grace to those who hear. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with which you were marked with a seal for the day of redemption. Put away from you all bitterness and wrath and anger and wrangling and slander, together with all malice. Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ has forgiven you." (Ephesians 4:29-32)

DISCUSS

1. On page 129, Boedy quotes Andrew Breitbart saying "politics is downstream from culture." What do you think this means? Do you agree?
2. One mandate strategy to retake the mountain of entertainment seems to be through a war of ridicule, "mocking the mockers" like *Saturday Night Live* and *The Daily Show* (p. 129) and using internet memes more effectively than those on the left (pp. 139-40). What do you think of humor as a political strategy? Is it effective? Is it Christian?
3. Mandate supporters claim that sports used to be a neutral, apolitical arena for entertainment that "woke" athletes and networks ruined. Do you agree that sports should be apolitical? What about movies, music, or other forms of entertainment?
4. Read pages 132-33, about Turning Point pop culture commentator Alex Clark, from "Clark was also . . ." to ". . . affected her negatively." What does this excerpt tell you about the attempt at or desire for neutrality in entertainment?
5. The Bible says very little about entertainment, but many would consider Philippians 4:8 a guide. Read verses 4 through 9 and discuss how Paul's advice might shape our attitude toward entertainment and its role in public discourse.
6. Read the section "Entertaining Our Democracy to Death" on page 143. How does our culture's tendency to reduce political discourse (and everything else) to entertainment, requiring everything to be amusing or memeable, do damage to democracy? How could reforming our relationship to entertainment save democracy?