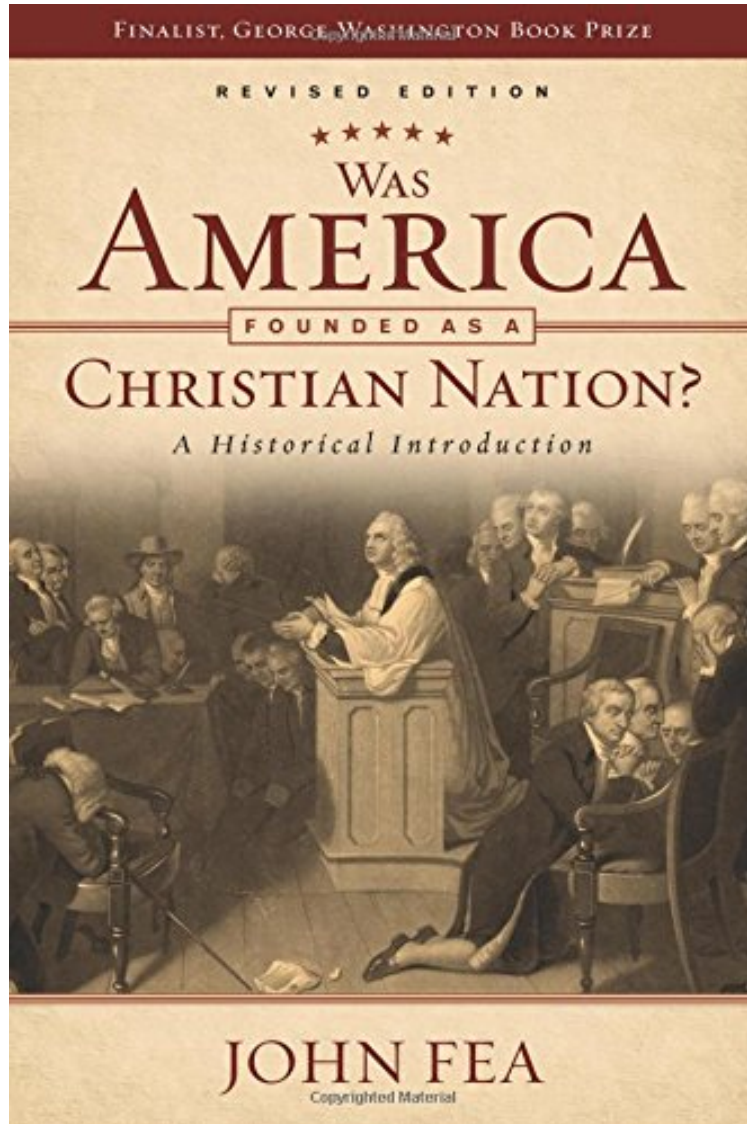


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book really helped me get a better understanding of the religious beliefs of the Founding Fathers.

John Fea offers a thoroughly researched, evenhanded primer on whether America was founded to be a Christian nation, as many evangelicals assert, or a secular state, as others contend. He approaches the titles question from a historical perspective, helping readers see past the emotional rhetoric of today to the recorded facts of our past. This updated edition reports on the many issues that have arisen in recent years concerning religions place in American society including the Supreme Court decision on same-sex marriage, contraception and the Affordable Care Act, and state-level restrictions on abortion and demonstrates how they lead us to the question of whether the United States was or is a Christian nation. Fea relates the history of these and other developments, pointing to the underlying questions of national religious identity inherent in each. "We live in a sound-bite culture that makes it difficult to have any sustained dialogue on these historical issues," Fea writes in his preface. "It is easy for those who argue that America is a Christian nation (and those who do not) to appear on radio or television programs, quote from one of the founders or one of the nations founding documents, and sway people to their positions. These kinds of arguments, which can often be contentious, do nothing to help us unravel a very complicated historical puzzle about the relationship between Christianity and America's founding."

A remarkably useful guide for navigating the arguments about Americas Christian origins. Randall Balmer, Barnard College, author of *God in the White House*. Should be the last word for all who would claim America as a Christian nation. . . . Deserves to be widely read. Stanley Hauerwas, Duke Divinity School, coauthor of *Resident Aliens* (with Will Willimon) and *The Peaceable Kingdom*. Should be the last word for all who would claim America as a Christian nation. . . . Deserves to be widely read. Stanley Hauerwas, Duke Divinity School, coauthor of *Resident Aliens* (with Will Willimon) and *The Peaceable Kingdom* "This is a timely book that will help make sense of one of the most important divides in American politics. John Fea offers a clear and balanced reinterpretation of how this debate has shaped American culture and society for more than 200 years." John Wigger, University of Missouri, author of *American Saint and Taking Heaven by Storm* "Fea challenges his readers to think like historians, and presents them with the facts they need to weigh the evidence for themselves. Those who are ready to move past simplistic answers will be well served by this thought-provoking work." Mary V. Thompson, author of *In the Hands of a Good Providence: Religion in the Life of George Washington* "John Fea has produced a carefully balanced and thought-provoking addition to the long-running debate about the role of religion in America's founding." Ira Stoll, author of *Samuel Adams: A Life* "Was America Founded as a Christian Nation? explores this controversial question with remarkable objectivity and admirable scholarship. This is a book that every intelligent reader should have in his library." Thomas Fleming, author of *The Intimate Lives of the Founding Fathers* "This is a book for Christians who want a credible account of how religion affected the settlement and founding of the United States." Richard Bushman, Emeritus, Columbia University, author of *From Puritan to Yankee and The Refinement of America* "Informed, judicious, insightful, and genuinely delightful." Scot McKnight, North Park University; author of *The Jesus Creed* "Well-researched and up-to-date, [this book] is full of timely wisdom on a topic far more complicated than many people think. If I could recommend but one source on the Christian America thesis, this would be it." Douglas A. Sweeney, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, author of *The American Evangelical Story* About the Author John Fea is Professor of American History and Chair of the History Department at Messiah College in Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania. He is a leading interpreter of American religious history and identity and has written for such media outlets as the Washington Post, Sojourners, Patheos.com, RealClearPolitics.com, and more. He blogs at www.TheWayofImprovement.com.