



Jesus and Justice: Evangelicals, Race, and American Politics

Peter Goodwin Heltzel

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This timely book investigates the increasing visibility and influence of evangelical Christians in recent American politics with a focus on racial justice. Peter Goodwin Heltzel considers four evangelical social movements: Focus on the Family, the National Association of Evangelicals, Christian Community Development Association, and Sojourners.

The political motives and actions of evangelical groups are founded upon their conceptions of Jesus Christ, Heltzel contends. He traces the roots of contemporary evangelical politics to the prophetic black Christianity tradition of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the socially engaged evangelical tradition of Carl F. H. Henry. Heltzel shows that the basic tenets of King's and Henry's theologies have led their evangelical heirs toward a prophetic evangelicalism in a shade of blue green—blue symbolizing the tragedy of black suffering in the Americas, and green symbolizing the hope of a prophetic evangelical engagement with poverty, AIDS, and the environment. This fresh theological understanding of evangelical political groups shines new light on the ways evangelicals shape and are shaped by broader American culture.

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