

This Spiritual War Won't End Until America Realizes One Thing

In his book *Trump Aftershock*, best-selling author Stephen E. Strang exposes how America is at war ... with itself. He brings up a motto long forgotten by many Americans even though it can be found on coins and currency: *E Pluribus Unum*. Or "Out of Many, One."

This Latin motto goes back to when the 13 colonies joined together to create one cohesive nation—out of many states, one country. The Founding Fathers adopted *E Pluribus Unum* in 1782 as part of the country's great seal. Further along the history line, Abraham Lincoln emphasized the importance of a united nation, quoting Matthew 12:25:

"Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation. And every city or house divided against itself will not stand."

However, as Strang explains in his writing, *E Pluribus Unum* no longer reflects the national spirit.

"The motto once celebrated the birth of a new republic built on mutual interests and our common heritage, along with an almost universal devotion to faith, family and freedom. But that bond is no longer there," he says.

Amid the social and political divides that have come to characterize the nation, Americans have had to ask themselves: Who are we, and what do we stand for?

The culture war is not just made up of disagreements over policies. It's a battle over principles. As opposing views sharpen in the harsh light of the Trump era, the society not

only grows increasingly polarized, but it's also being challenged to confront the core values that once united it.

Patriotism ... Or What Is Thought to Be Patriotism

Strang reflects on the results of a national survey conducted in October and November of 2017 by the American Culture and Faith Institute. Turns out, the word "patriotism" means vastly different things to different people.

While a majority of respondents agreed that "freedom of speech" mattered to them on a personal level, there was a great split along party and political ideology regarding what it means to be patriotic.

Conservatives listed the most patriotic organizations to be the NRA, Chick-fil-A, Fox News, the Republican Party and Hobby Lobby. Meanwhile according to liberals, the most patriotic institutions included Planned Parenthood, *The New York Times* and the NFL—all of which conservatives deemed least patriotic. In turn, liberals considered Chick-fil-A, Fox News and Hobby Lobby to be least patriotic.

Perhaps, to be "patriotic" is to embody the convictions you most agree with. And to be un-patriotic is to represent the beliefs you're most opposed to. With such a fluid understanding of what it means to stand for American values, a society can be torn over what it means to flourish.

"We're at the point, as we see so often in today's news, that one man's view of free speech is another man's definition of hate speech," Strang says.

Strang references poll organizer George Barna, who places enormous value in a person's worldview when evaluating a nation's future. For America, the war of worldviews is pulling the nation apart. The best indicator of the nation's ability to thrive as a cohesive nation, as Barna concludes, is the society's attitude towards God, religion and the role of

faith. Naturally, these are the hot topics of today's sociopolitical debates.

In *Trump Aftershock*, Strang positions Trump as the president who will re-center the nation on its original values, such as religious freedom. Trump's campaign to "make America great again" seeks to restore what American evangelicals believe has been lost over the years.

"Evangelicals all across the nation told [Trump] they were sick and tired of the disrespect they experienced from the secular media. They were concerned about government policies regarding abortion, same-sex marriage and the right of business owners to determine whom they serve. They wanted a leader who would defend their interests," Strang says. "Donald Trump made it clear he was their guy."

Trump Aftershock explores how the president has impacted American culture and what he has accomplished since his unlikely election in 2016. {eoa}

This article is based on Trump Aftershock (Frontline, 2018) by Stephen E. Strang. Strang is the best-selling author of God and Donald Trump, which was brandished by the president during his appearance at Davos World Economic Forum in 2017. The CEO and founder of Charisma Media, Strang was voted by Time magazine as one of the most influential evangelicals in America. He has traveled to more than 50 countries, interviewed four U.S. presidents and has been featured on Fox News, CNN, MSNBC, CBN, "Family Talk With Dr. Dobson" and The .