



***ur Country* explores how many northern white evangelical Protestants, believing their devotion to the Union was an act of faithfulness to God first and the Founding Fathers second, sacrificed racial justice on behalf of 4 million African American slaves (and then ex-slaves) for the Union's persistence and continued flourishing as a Christian nation.**

**By examining Civil War–era Protestantism in terms of the Union, author Grant Brodrecht adds to the understanding of northern motivation and the eventual “failure” of Reconstruction to provide a secure basis for African Americans’ equal place in society. Complementing recent scholarship that gives primacy to the Union, *Our Country* contends that non-radical Protestants consistently subordinated concern for racial justice for what they perceived to be the greater good. Mainstream evangelicals did not enter Reconstruction with the primary aim of achieving racial justice. Rather, they expected to see the emergence of a speedily restored, prosperous, and culturally homogeneous Union, a Union strengthened by God through the defeat of secession and the removal of slavery as secession’s cause.**

**Brodrecht eloquently addresses this so-called proprietary regard for Christian America, considered within the context of crises surrounding the Union’s existence and its nature from the Civil War to the 1880s.**

**Northern evangelicals’ love of the Union arguably contributed to its preservation and the slaves’ emancipation, but in subsuming the ex-slaves to their vision for Christian America, northern evangelicals contributed to a Reconstruction that failed to ensure the ex-slaves’ full freedom and equality as Americans.**

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