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***Trump's Unholy Alliance with the Baptist Church: between  
Loyalty and Pragmatism***

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**Abstract:**

The unexpected support of Evangelical Protestants to the elected President in 2016 Donald Trump reveals a tumult of suspicion between the candidate and the American Baptist Church. From previous researches, being a non-religious candidate in the United States' elections, prevent the nominee from getting support of the largest Religious Groups that dominate the American societies, which represent the majority of voters who may determine the winner of the Presidential elections. America is known for the whole world as a secular state, where politics and religion can never be joined together or put in the same column, but taking into consideration the results of the last elections where two thirds from the supporters of Donald Trump were Baptists and Evangelicals, the research is to point out the impacts of church's influence on elections and politics. The debate is about the unconditional support of Evangelical Christians behind someone who seems the very antithesis of most everything they have ever claimed to stand for; to what extent does the promises of Donald Trump affect Evangelicals towards their support in the last elections? Does he represent the awaited protector for the Baptist Church? Dealing with such topic requires the use of analytical descriptive approach; it is an overview about the reasons why evangelicals voted for Trump, was it for purpose of fidelity or pragmatism. Ultimately, the infernal relationship that appointed the non-Religious Donald Trump a President thanks to the Baptist Church is determined as a quid pro quo between the two fragments; so that both Donald Trump and Evangelical voters have mutual benefits from these elections.

**Key Words:** Baptist Church, Evangelicals, Trump, pragmatism, unholy alliance.

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# **General Introduction**

# General Introduction

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## 1. Background of the Study:

Searching for power was and still always something the church is craving for, something they once had during times past, a thing Donald J. Trump, the actor and the business man have. They long for it, they thirst and hanger for power, every day they feel they are losing a grip on it. The last events in America spotlight the coming 2020s elections whether Evangelicals will stand by Donald Trump or not. What makes this study significant is the opposition of church, how do they abandon their rules and principles in fonts and morality in order to make a room for Donald Trump. One of the main reasons that pushed Evangelicals in the United States to make from Donald Trump a pillar to reinforce their ambitions is their fear from the interference of foreign cultured candidates; they just wanted an invincible champion to fight the culture wars.

Baptist Church is generally subscribed to the principles of soul capability, it has some sorts of beliefs and principles that make it difficult to accept any unfamiliar activities that can influence its entire structure. To be a part of the Baptist Church, means that man needs to apply correctly all the fonts and the moralities which the church imposes. Furthermore, the religious affiliations of Presidents of the United States affect their reasonable chance of being elected; shape their attitude and organization towards policy matters in addition to their visions of society also how they want to lead it.

## 2. Statement of the Problem:

Studying about the Religious Activists and how they can influence the results of elections conceals the truth about Donald Trump's victory in gaining the presidential elections of 2016.

How much does the faith of Donald Trump achieved the needed perfection to win the support of 85% of Evangelicals and Baptists? And what was their aim behind their

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strong belief that Trump can be their protector and leader, is it a matter of loyalty or pragmatism?

### 3. The Literature Review:

Throughout history, the United States was known for its interesting relationship between two sensitive concepts in a society that are Politics and Religion. Interestingly, since the coming of Thomas Jefferson the relationship between the Church and the State started to be suspicious; he convinced that the state and the religious orthodoxy should be taken differently, and religion cannot be as equal as politics.

America started to be considered as a secular state, and Religious activists strived always to take control of the country. Very radical changes happened and created a modern use of religion in political issues in which religion is far away from the constitutional matters but also a vital part in it; religion's position in societies became stronger. "In the early 1970s, many evangelicals Christians were not active in politics. Within a few years they had reshaped American politics for generation... white evangelicals are among president Trump's most important supporters. But more than forty years ago, they were the margins American politics." (Clyde Haberman.)

Due to these concepts; Presidents religious affiliations became essential elements that control the entry of the candidate to the Oval Office. Religion gained a power that cannot be ignored when comparing it with politics, the thing that pushed American politicians to use religion in what serves their political interests, it reshaped to include almost all political matters, starting from Ronald Reagan's election campaign in 1980 to Donald Trump's one, the used religion as a weapon to achieve their electoral goals also to attract voters and presidents focused on religious beliefs and faith to address the public opinion.

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## 4. The Research Questions:

- How can we consider a state two thirds of its voters in elections are Evangelicals, a secular state?
- Why do Evangelicals Christians rally behind someone who seems the very antithesis of most everything they have ever claimed to stand for?
- How much can the Baptist church shift the results of the presidential elections up?
- To what extent does the promises of Donald Trump affect Evangelicals towards their support in the last elections? Does he represent the awaited protector for the Baptist church?
- How can the political parties value the position of the USA presidents in the church?

## 5. The Significance of the Study:

Subsequently the subject is a current fact in the United States and the entire world, Furthermore, the last events in America spotlight the coming elections whether Evangelicals will stand by Donald Trump or not. What makes this study significant is the opposition of church, how do they abandon their rules and principles in front of morality in order to make a room for Trump.

## 6. Aim of the Research:

Since the debate for the elections of Donald Trump as a president is still a current subject in America, the work is to examine the reasons behind the strong support of the Baptist Church and White Evangelicals, since nearly 82% of them contributed in the impressive victory of the actual President.

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### **7. The Methodology:**

In order to obtain the essential data needed to fulfill the requirements of this research by using the analytical descriptive approach to analyze and describe the current events that happened in USA during the period, using also the critical analyzes approach, in order to shed the light on the coming facts.

### **8. The Structure of the dissertation:**

The present dissertation is basically divided into three chapters; the first chapter introduces a general overview about the relationship between the church and the state, than the relationship between the church and the political parties, and spotlights also the secularism in United States. As it is worthy to discover the Quid Pro Quo; the second chapter focuses on the Baptist Church in general, Donald Trump from an actor and a businessman to the Oval Office director, than his awaited promises. The last chapter is proven to present the impact of involving religion in the American politics and how it contribute in reshaping the United States 2020's elections.

# **Chapter One:**

The Politics of Religion in the United States.

# **Chapter One: The Politics of Religion in the United States**

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## **Introduction:**

When sociologists mention the term “Church and State”, they refer to the Christian sight of churches on one hand and the secular part of the society on the other hand; where religion and politics are two concepts that are separated but interrelated with each other, the relationship between the two faced very radical changes that was emphasized by the secularization of societies throughout history, the thing that led to the modern use of religion in political issues in which many secular realms such as state, law, economy, science and administration became separated from many other religious institutions. Many civil registrations such as marriage, divorce and adoption were defended by the religious statutes and laws, even in the Christians, several Catholics and Christian-Orthodox countries all over the time, but when dealing with political matters, especially in the United State, the value of religion decrease and it reshape to what serve the political goals.

# **Chapter One: The Politics of Religion in the United States**

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## **1. The Relationship between the Church and the State:**

The term Church and State generally refers to the relationship between the authority in a government and the devout religious part of this government. It somehow links between the Christian view of churches and the political or secular part in the society.

During the 19<sup>th</sup> century, many tenors had contributed to develop a closer relationship and a better understanding between the churches; great cooperation appeared among Christians and their churches, due to the Christianization of America and the evangelization of Asia, Africa and Australia “19<sup>th</sup> Century”. Evangelical Protestants started to get in touch with many assignments and dealt with nearly all domains, the thing that changed social orders frame to deal with abolition, restraint, prisons and education “19<sup>th</sup> Century”. Charles Darwin for example developed the evolution theory depending on his traditional Christian view, also Karl Marks’s communism and Sigmund Freud’s psychology did. By the 1830s America ranged many different categories of different Christian minds that led to a large critical evangelical tension. What above all, evangelicalism and Christianity in general branched out in a large extent, to appear as a dynamic, active and a wild energy that was released “19<sup>th</sup> Century”.

The 20<sup>th</sup> century also spotlighted three critical improvements that formed American devout life; the development of evangelical churches, where evangelicalism began to reassert itself in the second half of the 1930s at first (Sundberg 27). The second is the divisive impact of political activism on the communal life of groups; where political matters have always divided the church into Methodists, Baptists and other churches between the north and the south, but by the twentieth century, it was a necessity for America to engage in many wars, fight over slavery and racism, and socialism; the thing that impacted on the organizational life of the church and Christianity (Sundberg 22). And

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the third is the lessening of the part of religion in open life, by giving permission to the preeminent Court to permit the partition of the church and the state (Sundberg 29). Eight denominations had been resulted due to the facts: American Baptist Churches in the USA, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), and Episcopal Church, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Presbyterian Church (the United States ), and Reformed Church in America, United Church of Christ, and the United Methodist Church. All United States Presidents who declared themselves Christian came from mainline dominations, except for John F. Kennedy, Jimmy Carter and Bill Clinton (Sundberg 23).

Within the 21<sup>st</sup> century people started to get away from religious affairs. American societies reshaped to take a political aspect rather than the religious one that differentiates the secular liberal whites from the conservatives, legislative issues and politics has misplaced religion's impact within the last decade, the church lost its credibility and public trust, and Christianity was almost persecuted (Thompson).

Over the last three decades, religious men, sociologists and Christians in general couldn't accept the idea of modernity leading to secularization (Dorel 1). Many issues had contributed to restructure the value of religion and to push people to complain against their actual situation; people stand away from religious practices, and social democracies took a large place in their everyday life situations (Dorel 1). As a response to this, the non-existence of God and the neglect of religion has to be demonstrated, and also atheism and skepticism. Religion was changed, particularly due to some political matters (Dorel 1).

### **2. The Relationship between the Church and the Political Parties**

It was surprising for American constitutional framers that being a president of the United States of America virtually consist to be involved in all political matters and issues, especially when presidents have become an essential element to complete the American

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political propaganda after they represented only a part of the government with limited shared powers (Rozell, Whitney and Genovese 3); in other words, if it was for someone to portray the full image of the American Constitution it would be for the congress not the president. In the long time, Presidency in America reshaped because of wars, industrialization, crises and depressions, their authorities and powers increased and served to add strength to presidents (J. Rozell et al 3). “The problem of religion, intended in its lay rather than its confessional sense, is that of the unity, sanctified by faith, between a world view and a conforming norm of behavior; but why call this “religion” and not call it “ideology” or simply “politics”?” (Gramsci); the similarity here is between religion and ideology; the first represents a social-cultural system that evaluates ethical and behavioral traditions, as well as the second; the thing in which religion and ideology can be the same (Warner 17). In recent years, there has been a great involvement of religious groups and churches in the legislative issues; they particularly started to back up with some other groups or even some political parties, if that is the case, many religious and churchmen will easily engage in many constitutional affairs (Warner 23).

Another thing that cannot be ignored is the clash between the political parties and the religious groups; the Republican Party is separated from evangelicals, tea party activists and institutional politicians, which threaten its existence and same thing for Democrats; where they are partitioned between institutional politicians and progressive activists (Rees).

### **2.1. The Republicans:**

The Republican Party or the Grand Old Party as it is known is one of the leading political parties in the United States added to the Democratic Party (Wagner 7). In fact, the Republican Party has been founded during the 19th century in order to oppose and reduce

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the spread of slavery into the western territories and by the 21st century the party attained the title of “Grand Old Party” due to its association with laissez-faire capitalism, low taxing addition to conservative social policies (Wagner 9). Actually, the party took its first appointment in Philadelphia in 1856 by John C. Frémont and took the support of two-fifth electoral votes and take 11 states in the north, it emerged to stand against the discrimination applied over the slaves in the American territories (Wagner 9). After the elections of President Abraham Lincoln in 1860, the party became more powerful and strong because of the Great victory in the Civil War (Wagner 7-19).

In the early 20th century, The Republican Party's policy has always aimed to preserve the rights secured to American citizens by the Constitution and the treaties of nations, locally and at the international level. In addition, the Republican Party has relied on peace and neutrality as basic principles of its foreign policy, as it called for the pacific settlement of international disputes. Moreover, The Republican Party defended Moreno's doctrine and considered it Necessary to the US policy. As well as, it has called for the necessity of forming an effective and regular army and establishing a national defense ready for any emergency in order to preserve the safety and security of American citizens, stressing the need to have a coherent and fully equipped naval force (Woolley 1).

### **2.1.1. Ronald Reagan**

The 40th president of the United States of America from 1981 to 1989. Ronald Reagan was a republican, who reached a great success in his political life, he promised to return the country to a simpler time of low taxes, smaller government, strong military and conservative moral values, and he also assured Conservative Evangelical Christians to restore the Christian values in America.

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During his reign as a president, Ronald Reagan did not frequently attend church, and his absence was a major reason to push Christian Conservatives to neglect him, Reagan said that during his presidency, he was a “churchgoer all his life”, even if he “didn’t always attend every week.” indeed in case he didn’t continuously go to every week, and for all of his life, Reagan attended church, ordinarily week after week (Kengor 176). The Middle East Terrorism was an excuse for the fourteenth President to stay away from church and religious affairs, he declared: “I don’t feel that I have a right to go to church, knowing that my being there could cause something of the kind that we have seen in other places, in Beirut, for example” (Kengor 176).

Ronald Reagan apparently believed that he was not in need of guidance and church advice because he received enough fulfillments in his own relationship with God, and he didn’t care about the political repercussions that were resulted from his attendance shortage in church (Kengor 178). At the same time many evangelicals supported him believing that, thanks to his policy of low taxation and military security, people may live in a sure comfort and that he can keep them away from many dangers (Robinson and Wilcox 226).

### **2.1.2. George W. Bush:**

George W. Bush is an American politician and businessman who served as the 43rd president of the United States from 2001 to 2009, He was a member of the Republican Party best known by his policy over terrorism; as a response to the 9/11 attacks, he launched a series of wars on Afghanistan and Iraq. Bush gained the support of the Christian Right, and he benefited from the partition happened in 2004 to get the backup of the Christian view.

“I don’t see how you can be president . . . without a relationship with the Lord”. (George W. Bush, at the start of his second term) a thing that cannot be ignored is that

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George W. Bush's faith was overlapped on a clear political tendency, he formed his Cabinet and White House cadre based on a large number of Conservative Christians, that illustrated bush's Evangelical faith, and he believed that God called him to be the president of the United States, and same thing for Evangelicals who consider their deeds as an order from God (Robinson and Wilcox 224). George W. Bush started his first presidency years fighting terrorism, the 9/11 attacks pushed him to focus only on the important domestic political issues; to keep the country safe, he changed his policy and employed all his tension on his War on Terror, War on Afghanistan and War on Iraq, in 2004 those priorities were a major reason for Christian Evangelicals to vote and strongly support Bush in the elections, same thing with abortion and gay marriage, which was not actually applied but also gained the attention of religious voters at the time (Robinson and Wilcox 226-227).

Bush has never linked his political matters to his religious faith, but he didn't waive it in his domestic issues, he didn't show his real faith but he also didn't neglect the religion's importance to his supporters; in wars, in speeches and in all his acts.

### **2.2. The Democrats**

For more than two centuries, America has known different political parties claiming different ideologies and defending certain concepts. One of the two major parties is what is called the Democratic Party. This party is one of the ancient parties and its existence rooted itself after the Civil War. It opposed mainly the civil rights of the African Americans and even encourage on some kinds of slavery.

The party saw no harm in slavery and supported this hurtful act during the 19th century, and in order to draw back the support from the Southern voters, it showed no acceptance to the adaptation of the civil rights after the American Civil War "Political Party United States". It had experienced a dramatic ideological innovation by the mid-20th

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century, and remodeled itself as a supportive of organized labor, the civil rights of minorities, and progressive reforms. The party has also aimed to favor greater government intervention in the economy and to disagree with the government's interventions in the private economic-free affairs of the citizens since Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt's New Deal of the 1930s "Political Party United States".

The changes in the actions of Democratic Party through the centuries came just to show how it is attached to its ideologies in the name of defending rights and reserving them. The minorities, and despite the voices that called for justice and equality, never benefited from all of these movements until the late century when the party shifted its support to adopt a new identity that encouraged the civil rights and offered protection to the citizens' personal businesses.

### **2.2.1. Bill Clinton**

William Jefferson Clinton is a American politician who served as the 42<sup>nd</sup> president of the united states from 1993 to 2001, he is a member of the democratic party, most presidents have been formal members of a particular church or religious body, for Clinton Christianity had fulfill his soul, since childhood his religious path was influenced by the Baptist church (Penning 192), Clinton spoke evangelicals' language easily and often, baptized at age 9 in the Park Place Baptist Church in Arkansas, at an early age Clinton built his strong relationship with God, as a result of the uncomfortable conditions that he experienced in his family, despite of the hard situation Clinton continued believing in God ( Penning 193-195) in a speech he argued "I was fascinated by the catholic church, its rituals and the devotion of nuns, but getting on my knees on the seat of my desk and leaning on the back with rosary beads was often too much for a rambunctious boy whose

## **Chapter One: The Politics of Religion in the United States**

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only church experience before then had been in the Sunday school and the summer vacation bible school of the first Baptist church in hope”(Clinton 23).

Clinton as a president of the united states and as a religious Baptist man succeeded in blending politics and religion, organizing trips all over the world in the name of establishing safeness between two churches in one hand the catholic church, and from another hand protestant, Clinton used religious expressions in order to grasp the attention of the American people” (Penning 204). To give examples on the misfortunes that faced Clinton's foreign adventures, Clinton and his wife Hillary, received the Eucharist at a Catholic Church despite being Catholic himself, which was a contrary act to the Catholic teaching, the local priest seems to have given reluctant acquiescence without the bishop's knowledge in order to not be rude to the president, despite the fact that the White House claimed that the act was done at the invitation of this priest (Penning 204-205).

After the shaming Lewinsky scandal, Clinton did not have to pass through another journey of re-election, yet his scandalous and irresponsible actions in office opened the doors of new opportunities to the 2000 Republican presidential candidate Christian George W. Bush to swear bringing morality back to Washington.

### **2.2.2. Barak Obama**

Barak Hussein Obama is an American politician and attorney who served as the 44<sup>th</sup> president of the united states from 2009 to 2017 and a member of the democratic party, he was the first African-American president of the united states; as any other president Obama’s faith has been always a question of doubt for all citizens , some statistics from a research had been made in order to identify president Obama’s religious life ,weather he was Christian or a Muslim, but in June 2009 Cairo he delivered his famous speech and declared his private faith to the public saying that he was a Christian (Mansfield 5).

## **Chapter One: The Politics of Religion in the United States**

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Even after Obama's confession of his real religious path, the majority suspected that he was saying the truth and his codification of belonging to Christianity was just a code to win the presidential elections or he was right ((Mansfield 6); though after the critics, Obama and his democratic administration lost their credibility in the American congress, and after his access to white house his absence during Sunday Churches and many religious ceremonies pushed the public opinion to question his religiosity focusing on his family's behavior (Mansfield 9-27). During Obama's tenure as president of the united states, America's history witnessed a year of collision, from a one side black Christian as president, and from another side his support to the same sex marriage, for the Americans this support has been just astonishing and disappointing, even when he respected the decision of some states to refuse the application of the same sex-marriage into boycott (Baim 172-174).

In America, the debate on the same sex marriage did not stop just on Obama's support, but the religious groups, however churches such as the Evangelical Lutheran church and the Moravian church had strongly believed in it too, arguing that everyone had the right to choose his personal relationships (Duncan and Jones 40-41).

### **3. Religion and Politics: The American Issue**

Religion and politics are two cooperative concepts in a society, that are separated but interrelated with each other; Religion is "a set of beliefs that connects the individual to a community, and in turn to a sense of being or a purpose that transcends the individual and the mundane" (Bohrnstedt 1450). Throughout the American history, the religious beliefs of the American presidents raised a debatable discourse concerning their acceptance of God and Christianity during their presidency, many presidents such as Ronald Reagan, Bill Clinton and even Donald Trump had strategically used religion to attract the public opinion

## **Chapter One: The Politics of Religion in the United States**

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during their campaign; religious opinions spread to affect precisely the American societies, so that they reshaped religion to what serves their own policy's objectives (Djupe and Olson 9).

Starting from the eighteenth century, American formers supported the idea of making a division between both religion and state issues ; Thomas Jefferson the third American President, for example, strived to split the government from the religious matters in the American society, and he emphasized his view saying that: "Believing with you that religion is a matter which lies solely between Man and his God, that he owes account to none other for his faith or his worship, that the legitimate powers of government reach actions only, and not opinions, I contemplate with sovereign reverence that act of the whole American people which declared that their legislature should make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof, thus building a wall of separation between Church and State" (Jefferson Jan. 1. 1802); Jefferson claimed that the Americans' legislature and ruler should respect the establishments of religion, make no laws that discriminate religions, or prohibit the acts of worship which is a free right because religion is a private matter between man and God, no one can meddle, and no one owes explanations or justifications to understand the person's faith and the kind of worshipping he chooses, hence, this can construct a mass of disengagement between church and politics, and by the end of the nineteenth century, religion started to be considered as a cultural practice in daily life situations rather than being a core issue in government (Corbett 338). Despite that fact, religious interest groups couldn't totally get rid of their desire of being involved in many US political issues, i.e. the civil rights movement, abortion, women's role in society, homosexuality and certain foreign policy matters; and they show their strength in the 1980's elections, where new Christian right groups appeared and supported Ronald Reagan (Corbett 338-344). During the twentieth

## **Chapter One: The Politics of Religion in the United States**

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century, religion's role in the state started to fade away because of the First Great Awakening, modernization and rationalization, and the state-church separation became a principle that might be applied in the American societies under the desire of the American people even the anti-Catholics in New York and North Carolina, and for many of them it became a matter of liberty and a path to their freedom, but also a principle that cannot be ignored (Green 7).

The appearance of secularism and the separation of the church from the political issues gave religion a power that cannot be ignored when comparing it with politics, the thing that pushed American politicians to use religion in what serves their political interests, it reshaped to include almost all political matters, starting from Ronald Reagan's election campaign in 1980 to Donald Trump's one, where they used religion as a weapon to achieve their electoral goals also to attract voters and presidents focused on religious beliefs and faith to address the public opinion (Coe and Domke 3), they address the audience and public using religious language, the thing which played a very important role in influencing people for such sensitive matters; Since Reagan's elections in 1980 religious groups, White Evangelicals, Black Protestants and Mormons occupied a major class in the electoral process, until the 2016 elections (Hughes 531).

As a liberal democratic state, America thinks of religion as an important factor that contributes to the primary and basic values of a society and plays a principal role politically, starting from cultural heritages to religious beliefs and practices to powers and authorities (Wald and Brown 37). The use of Christianity has become an effective tool to hide the personal goals and objectives of the presidents in its shadow, by using carefully built speeches and charming and carefully worded public political statements. It has been used to introduce those ideas, claims and desires in a sugar-coated image, given to the mass with a religious touch (Hughes 544).

## **Chapter One: The Politics of Religion in the United States**

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### **Conclusion**

Studying about the United States with its political system and parties, clarify the hidden images about how legislature issues can be influenced by religion, and how can this one be an integral part in America even if it is considered as a secular state. Democrats and Republicans play a vital role in American Presidency when dealing with constitutional matters, however the President's religiosity also can be an influencer point that links between the Christian views of churches and political or secular part in government, the President either a democrat or a republican use somehow religion in what serve his political interests and also in order to achieve his electoral goals and attract voters. Religion is a complementary field in the United States constitution; in short it cannot be partitioned from the governmental matters.

## **Chapter Two:**

Donald Trump and the Baptist Church: a Quid  
Pro Quo;

## **Chapter Two: Donald Trump and the Baptist Church: a Quid Pro Quo;**

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### **Introduction:**

Since 1600s, during the protestant reformation, England's Church get separated from roman catholic church, they became known as "The Puritans" or "The Separatists"; Historians strongly marked that the earliest Baptist Church's back to 1609 in Amsterdam by the Baptist separatist John Smith, where he rejected the infant baptism and supported the idea that baptism should be for the believers who baptized in a personal confession of faith.

In 1639 Roger Williams established in Northern America the First Baptist Church, and the Baptist movement started to emerge to become the largest Christian community in many southern states and all over America. The 19th century was the significant growth of the Baptist movement, today's Baptists represents an international forum for the exchange of Baptist thoughts , in which Baptists are congregational i.e., each church is self-governing and self-supporting and with an absolute autonomy, this applies to any secular power in almost all the states; being involved in church matters for the United States presidential elections can be described as selective not elective, that is because of the high influence and manipulation of the Baptist church and Evangelicals, taking as a clear example the recent elections in America in 2016, that witnessed the illogical result and the unacceptable fact that made from a father of six children by three wives, an actor and a businessman who do not have any political background, a president of the United States, by showing off with his unexpected promises, Donald John Trump was elected as president in the 2016s election faced with Hilary Clinton, where the majority of his voters were from the White Evangelicals.

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### 1. The Baptist Church:

Baptists, also known as the Evangelical Christians, are a group of protestant Christians who shared the basic beliefs of most Protestants, but who insist that only believers should be baptized and that should be done by immersion (Kidd and Hankins 1). “Baptize” is a Greek word that means to “dip” or “submerge”, it is a traditional practice of Christians acted to give “the absolution of transgression” for Jesus’s believers (Kidd and Hankins 2). From the second till the sixth century, the emergence of baptism had reached the highest level of faith, Christians stick to the idea that their children should be baptized at early age convinced that they give them forgiveness for their sins also to insert them to Christian church (Kidd and Hankins 3).

Baptist history tells story of men who were known as the leaders of an England small section to the largest religious movement, men like: John Smyth, Thomas Helwys, Henry Jessy, and Roger Williams. In the sixtieth century a religious revolution took place in the Western church named as the reformation, Within the Baptist tradition, there are several branches. In the U.S., a significant split occurred within the Baptist tradition along a North/South distinction in 1845 with the formation of the Southern Baptist Convention (Chute et al 22-24). There are still significant differences between northern and southern Baptists regarding theology, missions, and worship, protestants reject the idea of secular state, thus the reformation of church made both protestants and catholic church, named as “Anabaptists”, however some of them refused the idea of a national church, the clash of ideas between supporting infant baptism and the freedom of individuals confusion to believe baptism. Anabaptist thought that the right way to be baptized was by effusion where water is poured on the head of the person being baptized (Chute et all 24-26).

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By the coming of the fifth century, infant baptism was a subject that had the most important case for all Christians. , Some agreed that children should be baptized when they are born in order to give them protection and forgiveness from their sins that had born with, a German priest named as Martin Luther revived the clash between Protestants and Roman catholic church, discussed the corruption of church saying that “the salvation only come as a free gift of God and could not be earned”. From here the infant baptism started to be questioned, also some stand to support a secular state and some viewed that state foster religion. Baptist movement continued to rose until the late of sixteenth and the early of seventeenth century. The reformation and purifying the church of England from corruption caused the creation of a new group known as the separatists , who demand the refuse of infant baptism , with the speared of Baptist church in England reaching to Holland . A member of separatist John Smyth pointed out as the father of the first church in Lincoln, however the emergence did not stop in England but it moved to America, to settled in Massachusetts, it was a puritan act done by Roger Williams , he was known as the most famous colonial Baptist man , this religious arrival had just made a huge difference to American’s faith, it effected the social class such as “publishing houses ,missions organizations, disaster relief agencies, advocacy groups, phenomenally popular authors and speakers” (Kidd and Hankins 1-19). Nowadays the southern American Baptist church is considered the controlling church and most of its Baptists members are evangelicals who believed that “that salvation requires a personal conversion experience” (Kidd and Hankins 19).

Studying the American religious history and by emphasizing on Protestantism, and the process of baptism since the second century till to the twentieth century, starting from England as a small sect than moving to America to be rooted and speared however

## **Chapter Two: Donald Trump and the Baptist Church: a Quid Pro Quo;**

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becoming as the controlling power, evangelicals are the pillar of the American politics they are almost the decision makers especially in elections, they almost represents the focal part that can change the election results.

### **2. Donald Trump an Actor and a Businessman:**

Donald John Trump was born on June 14, 1946 in New York City exactly in Queens, his father was a builder and a real estate developer, while, his mother was Scottish by origin. In fact, Trump was an energetic, assertive child and this is what prompted his father to send him to New York Military Academy at the age of 13 in order to direct his energy in a good manner “Donald Trump”. In 1964, Trump was able to graduate after becoming a student leader and star athlete, and in 1968, he graduated from Pennsylvania's university with a degree in economics “Donald Trump”.

Donald Trump has become a real estate developer similar to his father, which has brought his business ambitions to the family business. In addition, he has achieved several commercial projects including Trump Organization and Trump Tower as well as, he has obtained many television franchises including Miss Universe and The Apprentice “Donald Trump”. Moreover, Trump has several other real estate projects in various regions of the United States, including Florida, New York and Los Angeles in addition to casinos in Atlantic City, Trump owns several other financial projects like aircraft and Trump's golf courses “Donald Trump”. Furthermore, Donald Trump is an American television personality and author, Since the 1980s, Trump has appeared in several movies, TV series and advertisements, as well as being famous for producing reality TV shows in the last two decades including The Apprentice and The Celebrity Apprentice “Donald Trump”.

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Despite the fact that Donald Trump has switched parties many times in the last three decades, he was registered as a Republican in 2016; After Donald Trump became an official candidate for the Republican Party, On July 21, 2016, he announced in his speech the issues that he would tackle as a President and fight against terrorism and violence in the United States “Donald Trump”. Moreover, he promised that he will repeal the Affordable Care Act and to review the immigration law, and that what helped him, to some extent, to defeated his Democratic counterpart, Hillary Clinton, in Defying polls and media projections, on November 8, 2016 “Donald Trump”. like all republicans, during the electoral campaign, Trump delivered a series of promises and messages concerning Social Security and Medicare that attracted the American voters.

On January 20, 2017, and after being a real estate mogul and a former reality TV star, Donald John Trump took over as President of the United States of America, becoming the 45th President in the history of the United states, Trump officially sworn in by Chief Justice John Roberts, and delivered his opening speech at the same day, where he stressed the need to place the American people above politics as he stated: “What truly matters is not which party controls our government, but whether our government is controlled by the people,” he said. “January 20, 2017, will be remembered as the day the people became the rulers of this nation again.” “Donald Trump”.

One of the biggest causes that pushed Americans and Religious Right Activists to rely on candidate Donald Trump and support him in 2016 elections was their belief in his power to rule the government with what serves their goals, also to protect their rights and drive them to better life conditions; because of his ability to convince “Donald Trump”. Trump influenced almost any religious group with his delivered speeches, portraying himself as the awaited champion who will save the United State and “Make America Great

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Again”. After 6 months of his presidency, on July 1, 2017, the 500-voice choir of First Baptist Dallas celebrated the “Judeo-Christian foundation” in Washington DC and gave honor to Donald (Fox 503). The megachurch’s lead pastor, Dr. Robert Jeffress said during the event that they were “grateful that President Trump has created an atmosphere in which Evangelical Christians feel at home once again in our Nation’s Capitol ... believe that the surprising election results “represented God giving us our next chance, perhaps our last chance, to make America great again (Fox 503). Almost religious groups, Mormons, White Evangelicals and White Catholics represented the majority of Trump’s supporters during his election with 81% of white evangelicals and 60% of white Catholics (Oliva and Shanahan 87). The Christian Right has proved to be a majestic and well-organized political power since 1970s, they were locating themselves as merits voters concerned with moral character as well as specific social worries and troubles including abortion, gay marriage, traditional family values, the right to carry weapons, free enterprise, low taxation, strong defense and support for Israel, Trump was hardly a natural choice for them as Republican candidate, but relaying on such a haughty, crude, and a without political experience as Donald Trump, undermined the Christian Right position in the American society (Oliva and Shanahan 95). In addition to all the critics that were addressed to Trump, being a father for six children by three different wives was always a debatable question for Conservative Christians.

### **3. The Promises of Donald Trump:**

In Pennsylvania, Virginia, New Hampshire and many other battleground States, The coming of a real estate entrepreneur and a billionaire such as Donald J. Trump as a President for the United States was not as much accepted as other Presidents before; Trump’s hostile campaign using social media and public influence helped him to quickly

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gain popularity and support of many Republican voters, many critics strived to minimize his power and ability to gain the elections concerning his sanity and imperious leadership, but this did not stop him or made obstacles to spread his electoral campaign, moreover Trump gained the public support by delivering open speeches, emphasizing on his famous slogan “ Make America Great Again” and promising Americans to do which the former presidents could not dare to deal with (Oliva and Shanahan 3) .

### **3.1. The Abortion Issue:**

Before he entered the White House, and by shedding the light on the most common sensitive matters that concerns the Americans; Candidate Donald J. Trump promised the American people to restrict Abortion and Immigration. Taking Abortion as one of the most divisive issues between Democrats and Republicans; Donald Trump saved his place in the White House during the debate of the 2016 elections with Hilary Clinton when they were asked about the pro-life issue, where Trump described the situation as giving priority to the mother to take out the baby from the womb even before moments from his birth, his answer was the key to gain the prop of most of the battleground states’ citizens, and also embodied him as the issue defender (Tackett, 1).

Starting from the 1973 turning point decision of the Supreme Court “Roe v. Wade”, that gives women the full right to decide whether to have abortion or not, it came as a revolt against Texas statue which prohibit abortion unless woman was in danger, the landmark made a huge split between supporters and opponents, where the Supreme Court gave the highest level of protection to women to decide about her pregnancy on one side, and the lawmakers rebel against the situation and pass laws that ban abortion on the other side (Gold, 1). In order to reinforce his opposition of the abortion issue, Donald Trump appointed new members in the Supreme Court Justice Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh,

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especially after the retirement of Justice Anthony Kennedy, in which the court had been shifted to the right (Liptak 1). The President selected his part by describing himself as a very pro-life choice, in which he expressed his hate over abortion; during a speech to the National Republican Congressional Committee in April 02, Trump explained his hatred that was due to the place he was living in, where abortion was preferential in Manhattan, “To defend the dignity of every person, I am asking the Congress to pass legislation to prohibit the late term abortion of children who can feel pain in the mother’s womb”, Trump said; even when he was asked about Roe V. Wade issue and if women would have the right to decide, Trump always referred to describe himself as a pro-life.

By describing the situation as a “profound honor” and by showing off with his famous slogan “Make America Great Again” written in a red hat, Donald Trump was the first president to attend The March for Life in its 47 year history, the president delivered a speech on the National Mall, within view of the Capitol, in which he appointed himself as the first defender of the unborn children in the White House and to fight with the anti-abortion activists, with this action Trump aimed to minimize the image of the democrats and show them as the radical and extreme positions on abortion, also to protect the religious liberty that serves his goals (Zauzmer and Boorstein 1). The presence of Trump was not an habitual event, so that the Americans were used to the absence of the authorities and the presidents in such events, even if they are not against the action, both Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush didn’t oppose the March, but they also didn’t appear in, choosing to express their support using phone calls or guiding letters to the representatives also invite them to the White House (Stanglin and Jackson 1). In addition to the appointment of the two anti-abortion judges, Trump attempted to separate the federal funds from the abortion service, giving more protection to the doctors who refuse to do the

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abortion operations and signing one of the most important accomplishment for the pro-life supporters which was the bill that gives permission to the state to refuse giving funding to the Birth Control, moreover, in January 2019, a law was passed to completely prohibited abortion after the 24 weeks in certain cases in New York ( Trump 56).

This puts Trump in the intention of many of the Abortion Rights Activists, where they referred to the situation as an attempt from the President to gain more support and more voices, describing his policy as a trick to gain the public opinion and also to strengthen his position side to side with religious right, where he for the first time gave the opportunity for Evangelicals to be a welcomed part in the White House and appointed the vice president Mike Pence in order to consolidate evangelicals support (Tackett 1). With this Trump was almost enhancing his electoral base and campaign for the coming elections “to prove his loyalty... But also to remind them of what he has already done for their movement and to tell them that he is prepared to commit even more to it" says Bacharan (Tackett 1).

### **3.2. The Immigration Issue:**

Donald Trump’s focal interest was not only on Abortion, Immigration also was an initial task for Trump to deal with in order to improve his ability to rule and to attract multiple voters; When he dealt with Abortion, the president focused on a life-taking issue, portraying the Abortion Right Activists as the demons who do not care about innocent’s life, but when dealing with Immigration, as one of the biggest struggles in the American societies, Trump enacted very strict laws that control the American Immigration, where he said: “To defend American Workers and Families from every walk of life, my Administration has undertaken an unprecedented effort to secure the Southern Border of

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the United States” (Trump 1) , his immigration policy was an attempt to save both American industry and employees.

Since the nineteenth century, the United states changed its policy to what serve the regular immigration process, the American administration didn't paved the road to immigrants from different countries, focusing on terrorism, illegal immigration and refugees from other countries, a series of laws were enacted from 1921 to 1924 to prevent the different ways of immigration, giving priority to the Europeans, especially the comers from the northern and the southern countries, several laws were passed until the coming of Barak Obama in 2012, who gave the chance for illegal immigrants to be a part of the American society by allowing them to work and live a normal life (Cohn 1).

After the end of the Obama's presidency U.S. immigration policy has changed in many ways. Donald Trump has radically changed the immigration control and he continued to develop the prevention agenda, moreover Trump passed very strict laws through legislation; by planning to end up the flow of immigrants from other neighboring countries, the president signed collaboration contracts with Mexico, Honduras, El Salvador and Guatemala. Focusing on Mexican's deploy, the president ordered to build a wall between San Diego and Tijuana with more than 1000 miles and forcing Mexico to pay for the wall, in order to put an end to the criminal commitments and the deadly drugs across the borders (Trump 2), The New York billionaire referred always to his immigration plan in order to remind Americans about his wall program and severe policy over the Mexicans, in other words it became a priority that deserve to be proud of during his debates, where he said “We will soon begin the construction of a great wall along our southern border. It will be started ahead of schedule” (Oliva and Shanahan 138), unlike the republicans, the action didn't receive a most welcome from the democrats.

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In order to stop the rely on the public benefits charge, Trump's Administration stopped the immigrant's aides under the law that consists to protect Americans taxpayers, and obliging them to earn their living with minimized benefits known as the "public charge" only for those who were entered to America before. Furthermore, they strived to lessen the number of asylum seekers by returning any illegal immigrant especially those between the Mexican-American borders, where The Migrant Protection Protocols forced them to live in the camps with terrible violated conditions. On June 22, 2017 President Donald Trump delivered a speech were he demand the congress to ban the social security for the first five years of the immigrant in the country, also he banned the traveling, the business, and the tourist visas for the refugees from many countries such as Syria, North Korea, Chad, Iran, Yamen and Venezuela.

### **3.3. Jerusalem Issue:**

Additionally, one of the biggest struggles between the Middle East, Arab and Islamic countries on one side, America and Israel on the other side is the Palestinian case. More than 100 years ago, since 1917 the British General Edmund Allenby entered Jaffa Gate and took control of Jerusalem from the Ottoman Empire, from that time Jerusalem became the attention of Jews, Christians Muslims and many other foreign forces, where Palestine started to receive Jewish communities after the WWI, and the turning point was the Belfour Declaration, that consists the support for a national home for Jewish people there and Jerusalem became the hospitable city for Jewish immigrants, Christians and many institutions under the rule of the British authority (Hashem Talhami 1-8).

Since 1960s, one of the most important relations in the history was the United States- Israeli relations, the United States strong support of Israel had resulted the government overall policy in the Middle East, by promoting good relations between Israel

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and Jordan, Lebanon and Egypt , and from 1976 to 2004 Israel had been the largest annual recipient of American aides , in addition to the US presidents' interest in Jerusalem due to the Arab- Israeli conflict, their military reinforce the Israeli armed branch in order to gain the land and post it as capital of Jews, "Jerusalem is a symbolic, emotional and real issue" said Itamar Rabinovich , a former Israeli ambassador to the united states and the president of the Israel institute ,it matters to many Israeli Jews because it would indicate that the united states actually recognize Jerusalem as Israeli capital, which now it effectively does not" (Baker1). Jerusalem was not only a land or a place that was taken from the Palestinians and even the Arabs; also it was an initial interest for Jews and Americans, where US presidents supported the idea to make Jerusalem as Israel Capital.

Taking as an example the fortieth president of the us Ronald Reagan, in an interview made by Steven R. Weismann and Frank X. Clines ; Reagan declared that " it would be most unwise for the united states to move its embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, and he strongly suggested that he would veto legislation in congress to require such a step " also he said " a bill requiring the embassy to be moved should never have been introduced in congress , adding to that he said the disposition of Jerusalem , the west bank of the Jordan river and other areas , must be negotiated between Israel and the Arab countries" , although the administration has opposed the legislation, Ronald Reagan has not addressed the issue publicly. He said the United States "has no right to put itself in the position of trying to lean one way or the other on those areas for negotiation" (Backer 1).

Bill Clinton and George W. Bush both promised during their presidential campaign to move the embassy to Jerusalem, but both backed away from their promises, George w bush, whose policy emphasis on the necessity to solve the world's issue however his strategic plan towards the Arab-Israeli also to create Muslims support in order to get help

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in his war against the Taliban in Afghanistan in addition to the next Iraqi war; moreover, President Barrack Obama during his campaign shown his point of view in an interview where he declared: “Jerusalem has historically been an issue that provoked great passions, often as result of false claims that did trigger violence “, he thought of the violent response in the Arab world if the embassy moved (Backer 1).

Among all presidents of the United States , the coming of President Donald J. Trump overturned 70 years of U.S. policy under 11 Presidents, six Democratic and five Republican, by recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and moving the U.S. embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem in the absence of a comprehensive peace agreement (Backer 1). Trump’s took during his campaign a familiar decisions that the former presidents of the United States already spoken about , but Trump unlike the others kept his promise on December 6, 2017 that America would begin recognizing Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and officially open the embassy there; Taking into account that Israel is the only entity in the world that had not the right to choose its capital, and despite the refuse of all the Arab countries and the tension that happened between America and the Middle East; so that Jerusalem was not only a city that has historical importance for the Palestinians, but it was also a source of identity for both Muslims and Jews, President Donald Trump did not only save his campaign and portrayed himself as the American Hero, but he also strengthen the American Israeli relation and gain a faithful ally (Backer 1).

After six months on May 14,2018 the United States opened officially the embassy in Jerusalem, however trump’s declaration had been a debatable subject all over the world, the united nations security council held an emergency meeting to review trump’s declaration, critics started to clash from the majority of countries such as: Britain, France, Sweden, Italy and Japan, adding the Islamic countries critics were out of the leaders, taking

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President Mahmoud Abbas, who view that trump's decision is just a hatred against the Palestinian people and the leader of the Islamist movement Hamas, Ismail Haniya, called for a new "intifada", furthermore the prime minister of Israel comment that it was the right decision to be made in order to establish peace , he added that Donald trump is a name who would never be forgotten in history (Backer 1).

### **4. Why Evangelicals Voted for Trump in 2016's Elections**

Since 1920s, Conservative White Evangelicals has been known for their pragmatism, sophistication and coherence in using political power, where they were interested in selecting only the politicians, who may help them to achieve their goals, despite their imperfection and personal failures (Sutton). They are a group of Protestant Christians that is characterized by its diversity and increase (Gorski 3).

Since the late 17<sup>th</sup> century and the early 18<sup>th</sup>, Evangelicals preferred to follow their own religious path and spread a severe religion in Massachusetts and Connecticut (Kidd 1). Evangelicals, Baptists and Methodists strived to separate the Church from the state Issues, the thing that paved the road for them to explore their religion under the precept of the Religious Liberty (Kidd 1). After they gained dominance, their presence in the public square and during the meetings could not be without their moral beliefs (Kidd 1). With the appearance of the "Republican insider evangelicals" in the southern Baptist congress, a huge split divided Evangelicalism in the United States and things started to be taken between supporters and opponents (Kidd 1).

In 2016 elections, candidate Donald J. Trump was not the first choice for most American Evangelicals, who were divided to support Ted Cruz, Marco Rubio and Ben Carson, but he was also the choice for many White Evangelicals (Kidd 12). Unlike the

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Jews, black Protestants and people who do not have religious memberships, White Evangelicals and White Christians viewed in Trump what others did not, they found plenty of reasons that pushed them to select Donald Trump and not Hilary Clinton or the others to be the President (Kidd 3); Several announcements by Trump gave him an opportunity to be the coming President of the United States, starting from the recognize of Jerusalem as the Capital of Israel, which was one of the most significant move in the biblical prophecy, to Immigration and Abortion issue.

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### **Conclusion:**

In a state such as America, the word secularism is only the surface that showed to the world how the United States' legislative matters are an independent authority from any other powers in the government i.e. the political system there is an autonomous power that is balanced between democrats and republicans where the Church generally and the White Evangelicals specifically represents a powerful side that may balance the political perspectives, especially on a sensitive field such as the elections. But when taking into account the last presidential elections things changes; Baptists and Evangelicals support towards a specific candidate can probably be the biggest chance for both the President and the Religious parts to achieve their goals and the results showed that religion is an integral part in the American society, a part that can be as equal as any other effective branch in the United States and also that can shift the elections to the an unexpected.

## **Chapter Three:**

### Evangelicals and Trump: The 2020's Elections

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### **Introduction:**

Religion has always played an important role in the United States' Politics, but due to some legislative and historical aspects, the right meaning of how the relationship between Church and States can be in America took another way. The controlling factor "Secularization" had always been a measure to differentiate between the political and the religious matters; though American societies could not completely get rid of its religious practices and the combination between both faith and government became doubtful. Despite the strong uphold of American Constitutional Farmers to divide the Church from the State, there is plenty religious references, almost 70 mentions of God in US symbols, courts, ceremonies and currency "in God we trust" is written in dollar bills; which clarify the integrity of religion in the United States constitution.

Even with the prevalent influence of religion on American electoral politics, its role in governmental institutions cannot be ignored. President Donald trump for example has used his Presidency to establish a remarkable and resilient alliance with white self-identified born-again or evangelical Christian voters. The President knows that religion will matter in determining who wins the November election, same thing for the two Political Parties, and the struggle between the candidate members in gaining support is unfinished, i.e. the Republican Party which is considered as the largest religious group in term of its numerous number of religious voters on one side, and the Democratic Party that is considered less faithful and religious on the other side.

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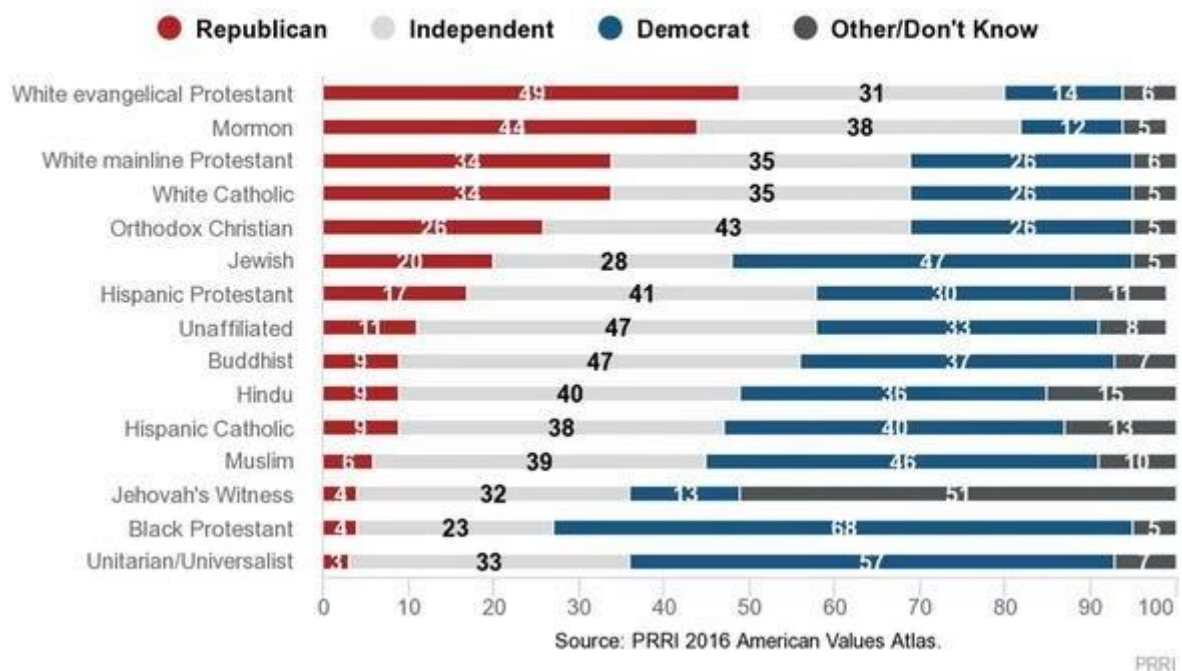
## **1. The Impact of Involving Religion in Politics**

Despite the call for Church- State separation from many political theorists in the United States, the relationship between the two continued to emerge and branched out (Callaway). This development pushed the American societies to tackle with many rising religious groups; in “A Letter Concerning Toleration” by John Locke, he mentioned that as long as religious practices do not meddle in other’s duties, it is banned to pin it (Callaway). The contribution of the religious affairs in the governmental and legislative issues became than a remarkable aspect in their social lives and thanks to the Media and information literacy, people accepted the idea that religion and politics are integral and complementary (Moyser 1).

Many reasons were behind the strong uphold of white evangelicals, Protestants and Christian groups to separate the church from the state, Religion’s role started to be ebbing, and American societies were divided between Republicans who were claiming that Religion is more than a field that organizes people’s moral life, and more than a third of Democrats who were a bit uniformly seculars and anti-religious persons (Lipka). But this did not completely ignored the influence of Churches on American’s daily life situations (K. Green7); Now, after nearly a century, Americans continued to emphasize their religiosity by doing religious practices (Believing in God, praying regularly, reading Bible ...etc.), In short, nonetheless of the secularization and the separation of religion and state, American societies hang on their faith (Gaudefroy). Religion continued to grow and almost took a part in all social, governmental and political issues, and touched both the White House and the Congress in the level of decision’s making (Gaudefroy).

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### Party Affiliation by Religious Affiliation



Party Religious Affiliations. Theconversation.com Viala-Gaudefroy, Jérôme. How strong a role does religion play in US elections, March 18, 2020.

### 1.1. Religion in the White House:

One of the biggest struggles that faced the sittings in the Oval Office of the United States was the candidates' faith and their religious attitudes (Balmer 1). Many presidents, starting from the first Roman Catholic in the presidency, John F. Kennedy in 1961, who claimed that religion has no relation to the voting decision, and presidents are free in choosing their religious practices (Balmer 2). In 1974, Jimmy Carter opposed the idea, and because of the rise of the Religious Right activists, he delivered his speeches under a religious cover (Balmer 2); by following the ideas of the theologian Reinhold Niebuhr who said: "the sad duty of politics is to establish justice in a sinful world.", he strongly followed his Baptist principles and faith focusing on the racial equality and the human rights, where he won the

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elections (Haberman). Nonetheless, a strong opposing group of Evangelicals raised and stood up to his agenda, where he lost the Oval Office against the Republican Ronald Reagan in 1980, the one who got two-thirds of the support from White Evangelicals (Haberman).

Many other religious persons who took support from the Religious Right and the Evangelical Protestants also could take place in the Oval Office (Balmer 3). Moreover, religious speeches have been always a profitable way for the Presidents to gain the public support and many of them, even Donald Trump, by using “God bless America” (Coe and Domke 38) in order to link the State with God. In spite of the fact that Donald Trump is the least religious tenant of the White House at the current time, all Presidents of the United States were Protestant Christians (Viala-Gaudefroy).

This shift in system pushed the Conservative Evangelicals and the Fundamentalist religious movement to strive to take a place in the political agenda, in what is called “The Politicization of religion” (Viala-Gaudefroy). Many new decisions impacted the foreign policy-making, the national security matters such as terrorism, and even the election’s results; in other words, more than 80% of the Americans were Christians (Protestants and Conservative White Evangelicals), and they represented the pass in their electoral campaigns. Regarding the modern Presidency in America, religious groups gave to themselves the right to meddle in many political matters claiming that they are representing God, and having the opportunity to be involved in all governmental issues (Grant et al 39). Religiosity and religious identity also plays a very important role in choosing who will be the United States’ coming Leader, the thing that pushed almost all the Presidents to use their faith in what serves their political goals (Rozell and Bass 136-140). In addition to this, the acceptance of the Presidents’ use of religion with abloom way and the progressive development of religious groups in the United States also helped to flourish the importance of religion and its involvement in all domains (Rozell and Bass 149).

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Since 2017, political decision' making had been influenced by an Evangelical outlook; the nomination of Judge Neil M. Gorsuch to the Supreme Court, the recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel and the brought evangelical Christian leader Jerry Falwell Jr to head the White House education reform task force was widely understood as the strong uphold of President Donald J. Trump on the Scriptural prediction (Jain).

### **1.2. Religion in the Congress:**

Comparing the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress of the United States with the other, confirm that this one is more various in the level of religion; but 88.2 % of the members (54.9% Protestants) 291 of the 293 Republicans, 80% of the Democrats are Christians (Sandstrom). Gregory A. Smith, an associate director of research at Pew Research Center, claimed that the number of the composition of the American Congress is stable from a long time despite the different characteristics of 535 separate elections that formed the Congress ( Bromwich).

Many outside political persons were involved in the American government and get in touch with political matters Sunday school teachers, deacons, Christian college graduates, mission trip participants, prayer advocates, a former aspiring pastor, and plenty of churchgoers (Shellnutt). The combination between the two sectors Religion and Politics had strongly affected both the Christian Community and the legislative matters of the country. Even before the nineteenth century, Evangelical Protestants were a great force that has its effect on many governmental issues such as Billy Graham or Jerry Falwell Sr. and this made it a political power to be reckoned with, but many factors contributed to its decline and tried to vanish it, such as Media and the lack of attention that it receives.

There are many reasons why religion is so important in American societies, one of the most important reasons is that Evangelical Christians who represents the moral majority of the Religious Groups in the United States, strongly influenced the Political Leaders since the

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1970s and pushed them to combine religion in politics (Barber). In doing so, Democrats became obliged to follow the religious path in order not to lose their strong statues in the country (Barber).

By considering America as a secular state, there are enough reasons that push to assume that religion has little or no influence in the political and governmental issues. Nevertheless, when going in deep of the United States constitution, things changes between supporters and opponents; religion keeps a very important political field in the United States and can directly affect the policy making and election results. Because of the 2008 elections, Candidates where notably tending to use religious speeches to attract voters, the thing that pushed to wonder: “candidates for the White House seem to aspire more to the position of pastor-in-chief than commander-in-chief” (Wald and Brown 1). By forming an important strand in American culture, religious affiliations expelled in deep of the political life, and convinced Americans to believe in the serious contribution of religion in the development of the new constitution under the precepts of Christianity, civil government and Christ (Wald and Brown 63).

Nearly all the United States Presidents knew what important involving religion in American politics is, through several campaigns in the presidential elections both Democratic and Republican candidates tend to hold religion as a political weapon to gain the support of Religious Activists and to justify their attitudes in what serve their goals. After gaining Presidency policy making takes another path, where Presidents strive to use religion politically, i.e. The Politicization of Religion; religion's influence in the interfaces between states and its role in international politics also became a serious challenge to scholars of international relations and religion and politics. Religion has emerged as an important field in some analyses of international relations, debatable and new questions remain concerning the role of religion in the foreign policies of states.

## **Chapter Three: Evangelicals and Trump: The 2020's Elections**

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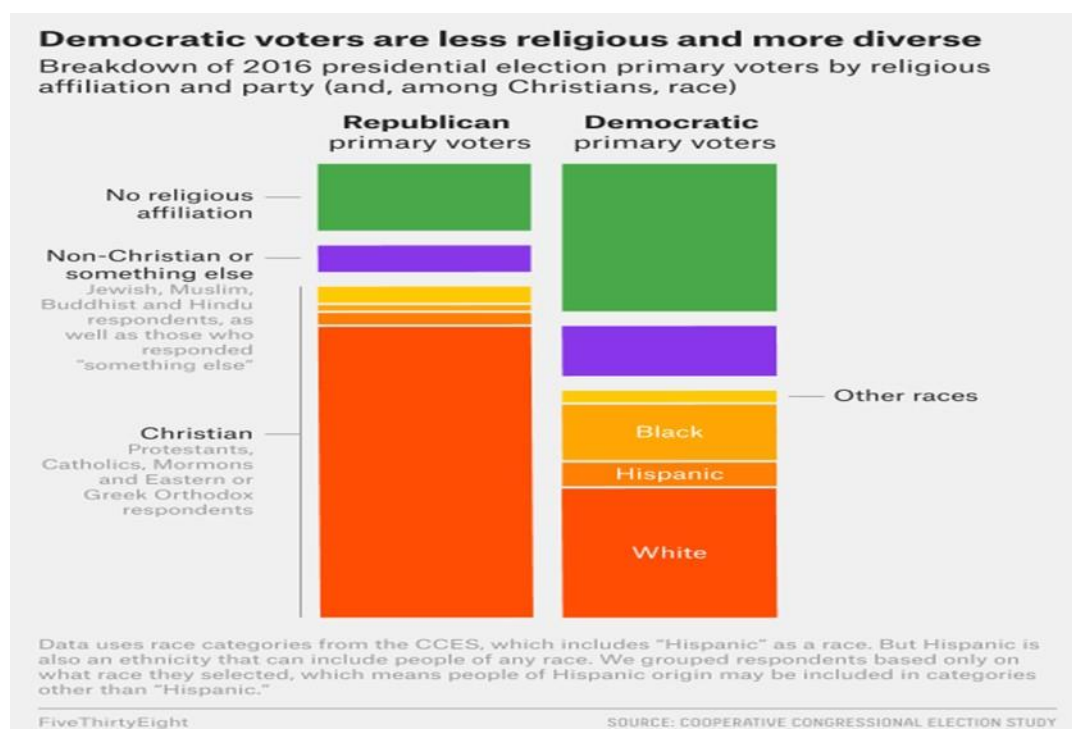
### **2. How Democrats React to this Tactic?**

One of the biggest struggles that faced religion in the United States was its marginalization from the Democratic Party Platform in 2012 (Sides). It was a “war on religion” by the Democrats as Republicans describe, and religiosity was driven to be banned (Sides). Republican Party members began to attract Religious Right Activists and Christianity penetrate inside their thoughts, as a simple reaction, those who do not belong to any religious affiliation joined the Democratic Party and the secular idea was clarified (Sides). The remarkable increase in the number of Evangelicals in the American societies and their higher educational level was also a reason why Republicans accepted religiosity as a base of their agendas; in other words, if the number of voters increases, the chance of gaining elections will obviously increase, and that is the goal. Evangelicals' loyalty for the GOP is the logical reason that makes it considered as the preliminary part of why they control the largest religious group as faithful Protestant members of Republican activists (Sides). After the appearance of the God Gap between the Democratic members inside the American societies, the lack of doing religious practices became habitual and Democrats' relationship with religion became a notable problem (Cook). Democratic candidates tend to avoid using religious words and expressions to pass their electoral campaign, starting from long time ago, since Jimmy Carter, Bill Clinton, and Barack Obama.

Unusually, this year the efforts made by Democrats in order to impose their religious beliefs and to announce the strong support for abortion and the same sex marriage differently, also defending their rights as American citizens (Cook). In criticizing the Republicans' policy that tends to consider religion as an essential element in American politics, Democrats seem unsupportive to the idea and will reconsider the biblical traditions as a social aspect to think about others, particularly poor people and mistreated, rather than being spiritual aspect (Cook).

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Democrats strived to make politics and legislative decision under a religious base, though voters preferred to tackle with social religion that works with their recommendations (Cook). The unity of beliefs and principles of the evangelical Republican Party members is the absolute scorecard that makes it the winner and largest religious group, Unlike the notable diversity in the Democratic Party, so that it includes 69 percent of Buddhists, 64 percent of Jews and 62 percent of Muslims, As a result the lack of the faith usage and religious speeches as well as the God Gap became usual in the Democratic campaign trails in the American elections (Ferullo). By doing so, the number of Religious Democrats increased, and over 65% of Democratic voters started to show their religious affiliations, meanwhile their diversity marked the shift between religious Republicans and Varied Democrats ( 31 percent are white Christians, 22 percent are nonwhite Christians, and 12 percent belong to a non-Christian religious group (Jews, Muslims, Hindus, etc.) (DeVeaux).



[www.fivethirtyeight.com](http://www.fivethirtyeight.com) Thomson DeVeaux, Amelia. Why Democrats Struggle To

Mobilize a 'Religious Left', May 29, 2019.

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As a reaction to the involvement of Religion in the American Politics, Democratic candidates started to attract different religious groups and Media attention, thus religious audience became larger (DeVeaux).

### **3. Will Evangelicals Stand with Donald Trump in 2020s elections?**

Religion is considered in the United States as an essential element in the political issues; Jews, Christians and especially white Christians viewed that the United States' President should be a religious person who is characterized by a strong religious beliefs as important as morals and ethics, the thing that made a controversial point in the public opinion between the Religious Groups and the Political parties about ethics and beliefs of many Presidents such as Donald Trump (Cooperman).

When Donald trump won the last American elections in 2016 and preside the Oval Office, most Americans did not consider the new President as a religious man but his unconditional support from the Baptist church typically the Protestants was a logical reason that makes Religious Groups and especially White Evangelicals appointed him as their protector (Cooperman). Donald J.Trump was the scorecard that serves Religious Right Activists' goals, and help them to achieve their main point which is protecting their rights and driving them to better life conditions "Donald Trump". By delivering open speeches to public, Trump portrayed himself as the awaited Leader who has the United States development's key and "Make America Great Again" the thing that strongly convinced the Religious Groups "Donald Trump". Nonetheless, many critics that were addressed to Trump, and being a father for six children by three different wives was always a debatable question for Conservative Christians "Donald Trump".

Trump's relationship with Evangelical voters has long been suspicious, they are considered like Trump's most loyal constituencies (Cooperman). But it's still not clear why,

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some from the public opinion comment that they voted for Trump purely for pragmatic purposes, they do not view Trump as a very religious, honest or moral person that he deserve towards that huge support by the majority of white Christian or evangelicals in the 2016 election; Unlike his lovers who viewed him as a hero and stand up for them, describing him as a very well honest President, “White Evangelical Protestants overwhelmingly feel that the Trump administration has helped (59%) rather than hurt (7%) the interests of evangelical Christians, and three-quarters of white evangelicals say they agree with the President on many, nearly all or all important issues facing the country” (Cooperman). During his Presidency Trump won the support not only from Evangelicals but also white Catholics expressing their like of his policies commenting and describing him as intelligent, and more than half of people in both groups say that they agree with Trump on many important issues facing the country (Cooperman).

Recently, an incident happened in Minnesota in the United States has reverberated America and all the world, on May 25, 2020 a black man was murdered by a white police officer and his death became a global case that influenced all people around the World. He is George Floyd 46 years old an African-American man who was killed during his arrest by the police officer Derek Chaffing pressed Floyd's neck with his knee to anticipate him from moving when he started screaming that he cannot breath Floyd was begging but the officer did not attempt to help him (Shalal).

After the death of George Floyds, his case curtain and revival a very sensitive subject for the Americans, a subject that have never be forgotten which have existed long time ago but still happening that is Racism (Shalal). In May 27,2020 Conservative and religious leaders made Protest March with Black churches, progressive Catholics and Protestants, Jewish and other faith groups demanding for police reforms and efforts to break up racism, an action that didn't happened since the civil rights movement till Floyd's murder (Shalal).

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Floyd's death has turned to a religious and a political case, that became an electoral issue for the President Trump, for his injustice and racism over the black victim, where he threatened to send military forces to control the violent protest, he warned Friday that, "when the looting starts, the shooting starts.", Many critics were delivered over Trump to destroy his religious image foreground to his supporters, nevertheless to the decline of voters in his reelection campaign (Shalal). The Pastor of Greenleaf Christian Church in Goldsboro North Carolina declared about Floyd's case that: "We are in a deep moral crisis and What we have to do at this moment is not only address what happened to George Floyd, but the interlocking problems of systemic racism, police brutality, the lack of healthcare, poverty and militarism" (Shalal).

Running for the Presidency in the United States was always a debatable discourse between which candidates from the Republican Party or the Democratic Party is more religious, his faith is a reason to improve his chance to get elected and being a moral person is obligatory (Dallas), and by coming to the 2020 United States Presidential election, that is programmed on December 14, 2020, to either elect a new President and Vice President or reelect Donald Trump and Mike Pence, the question to be asked is that will evangelicals stand by Donald trump in the next elections?

Evangelicals are now divided into two different groups of voters; between 82% who would vote for trump and gives him a second term and others who plane to return to Democratic Party and vote for "Joe Biden" (Smith and Lipka). It is known that White Evangelical Protestants is the largest Religious Group in the United States, that is overwhelming Republicans who express their hatred to the democratic candidate "Joe Biden" describing him as he would be a terrible President, unlike a small group by 2% who believe in his greatness (Smith and Lipka). In fact so many other groups are unsupportive to Trump, large majorities of Black Protestants and Hispanic Catholics, who tend to the democratic that gives

## **Chapter Three: Evangelicals and Trump: The 2020's Elections**

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the positive image to Joe Biden as a President and portray Trump as the wrong choice (Smith and Lipka).

Between opponents and supporters, many Americans see in Donald Trump's competitor Joe Biden the perfection and the mercy that Trump does not have (Associated Press). Joe Biden, the former vice President and Presumptive Democratic Presidential nominee, clarified his image over the churches and religion in general when he met on June 1, 2020 with community leaders at a predominantly African American church in Delaware on Monday morning where he in his first 100 days in office vowed to address "institutional racism" (Associated Press). As a response to the action, and by holding the Bible in hand, Donald Trump visited St. John's Church in Washington the same evening (Associated Press). Robert Jeffrees, a Dallas mega church pastor, told The Atlantic that he thought the moment was "completely appropriate." He added: "By holding up the Bible, he was showing us that it teaches that, yes, God hates racism, it's despicable but God also hates lawlessness (Jankowicz).

Regardless of his irregular behaviors, taboo language and doubtful biblical teachings, 81% of White Evangelical Protestants had supported him and bore his mistakes (Segers). According to a recent poll by Public Religion Research Institution, 99% Republican White Evangelical Protestants refuse to remove Mr. Donald Trump from his actual position and 77% refuses the House opening impeachment inquiry into him (Segers).

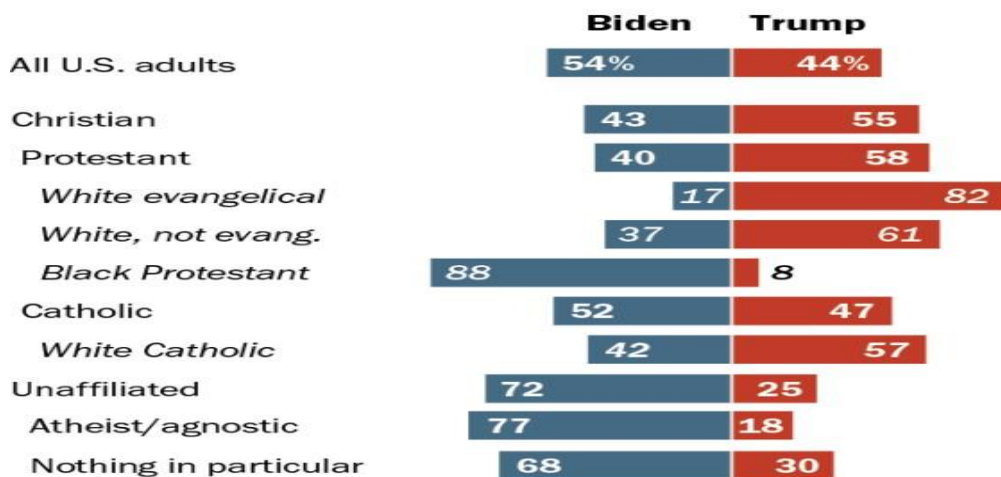
White Evangelical Protestants and more than half of the White Christians are the biggest supportive groups to Trump, in addition to other supports who are non-Evangelicals share the idea that Donald trump is doing great as a President and he absolutely knows how to use his position and do his job, as do 54% of white Catholics claim that they are ready to reelect him (Smith).

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### Most white Protestants and white Catholics say they intend to vote for Trump; most Black Protestants and religious 'nones' back Biden

*% of registered voters who would vote for/lean toward voting for \_\_\_\_\_ if the election were today*



Note: The survey did not obtain enough interviews with Hispanic Catholic registered voters to analyze separately. White and Black adults include those who report being only one race and are not Hispanic.

Source: Survey of U.S. adults conducted June 16-22, 2020.

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Lipka, Michael and A. Smith, Gregory. White evangelical approval of Trump slips, but eight-in-ten say they would vote for him, July 1, 2020.

To end up with, and according to the public opinion and researches made by different institutions; White Evangelical Protestants, White Christians and other Religious Groups who voted for Trump in 2016s elections will for sure stand by him in the 2020s elections due to the mutual interests of both candidate and voters.

## **Chapter Three: Evangelicals and Trump: The 2020's Elections**

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### **Conclusion:**

Most Americans believe that Trump is chosen by God because God had an exceptional relation to America. Trump trusted only White Evangelicals to include them in his re-election plans; it was a quid pro quo between both candidates and voters; so that Evangelicals also have personal affairs from making Donald Trump the non-religious businessman a President, in order to improve their alliance with him in 2016 elections he secured 80% of those voters which are considered as the largest religious group in the United States, and during his presidency he has delivered the promises he made in 2016 when he was a candidate.

The majority of those supporters are satisfied from what America became during his Presidency, despite the other events that happened and changed the usual. Now in 2020, the world is betting on the continuity of Donald Trump's reign; whether Evangelicals will stand by him because of his applied promises in his 2016s campaign, or they will turn on him.

# **General Conclusion**

## General Conclusion

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### Conclusion:

The conclusion that can be drawn is that the role which Democrats and Republicans play in American Presidency concerning the legislature matters cannot be ignored; yet President's religious path can also contribute to both political and secular matters of the constitution in terms of law making, electoral campaigns and public support. Baptists and Evangelicals support towards a specific candidate can probably be the biggest chance for both the President and the Religious parts to achieve their goals, and the results show that religion is an integral part in the American society, a part that can be as equal as any other effective branch in the United States and also that can shift the elections to the an unexpected.

Coming to the next elections on November 3, 2020, Donald Trump is more likely to gain the support of Evangelical Protestants again, where 82% of the Religious voters declare that they are ready to stand by Donald Trump in his campaign despite all the critics that faced him during his presidency about the unholy alliance between two sections that are disproportionate; Religious Right Activists who were known all over the time by their natural view over any candidate, exposed to the world how can the end justifies the means.

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## ملخص:

يكشف الدعم غير المتوقع من البروتستانت الأنجليكان للرئيس المنتخب "دونالد ترامب" في عام 2016 عن حالة من الإرتياب بين المرشح والكنيسة المعمدانية الأمريكية. بناءً على أبحاث سابقة، كون الرئيس مرشح غير ديني في إنتخابات الولايات المتحدة الأمريكية، يمنعه من الحصول على دعم أكبر المجموعات الدينية التي تهيمن على المجتمعات الأمريكية، والتي تمثل غالبية الناخبين الذين من الممكن أن يحددوا الفائز في الإنتخابات الرئاسية.

تعرف أمريكا للعالم كله كدولة علمانية، حيث لا يمكن الجمع بين السياسة والدين أو وضعهما في نفس الكفة، ولكن بالنظر إلى نتائج الإنتخابات السالفة حيث شكل أنصار "دونالد ترامب" من المعمدانيين والإنجيليين الثلث، يوضح البحث مدى تأثير الكنيسة على الإنتخابات والسياسة. يدور الجدل حول الدعم غير المشروط من المسيحيين الإنجيليين لشخص يبدو النقيض تمامًا لمعظم كل من زعموا الدفاع عنه؛ إلى أي مدى تأثر وعود "دونالد ترامب" على الإنجيليين تجاه دعمهم في الإنتخابات الماضية؟ هل يمثل هذا الأخير الحامي المنتظر للكنيسة المعمدانية؟ يتطلب التعامل مع هذا الموضوع استخدام منهج وصفي تحليلي. هو لمحة عامة عن أسباب تصويت الإنجيليين لـ "ترامب"، هل كان ذلك لغرض الإخلاص أو البراغماتية.

في النهاية. تم تحديد العلاقة الغير مقدسة التي نصبت الغير متدين "دونالد ترامب" كرئيس بفضل الكنيسة المعمدانية على أنها مقايضة بين الشظيتين؛ بحيث يحصل كل من "دونالد ترامب" والناخبين الإنجيليين على منافع متبادلة من هذه الإنتخابات.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:** الكنيسة المعمدانية، الإنجيليون، ترامب، البراغماتية، تحالف غير مقدسة.