



Christianity and Party Politics: Keeping the faith

(Routledge Studies in Religion and Politics)

Martin H. M. Steven

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Christianity and Party Politics aims to discuss and evaluate the contemporary relationship between party politics and religion. The book focuses on the important role of the Church in both electoral politics and public policy formulation in the twenty first century, and argues that contrary to the established secularisation argument generally applied in Europe, religion continues to be a powerful influence, particularly within British politics.

Steven begins by examining the basics of electoral and party behaviour, how religious affiliation has traditionally influenced the way people choose to vote, and how recent surveys have suggested it continues to do so. Moving on to discuss how this affects the behaviour of party politicians, the role of the Christian church as an interest group is analysed; to what extent are these major societal institutions continuing to influence public policy decisions?

Broadening the debate out to the international context, the work evaluates how the relationship between party politics and religion has been affected by global factors, the 'war on terror' for example. This discussion is developed through analysing the influences on the way in which Christian groups choose to lobby and influence public policy. Steven suggests that increasing European integration is forcing Christian groups to become more pro-active in their approach, to combat the decline in the more 'automatic' domestic influence they previously enjoyed. In relation this to the influence of American politics is analysed, debating whether tactics from the more pluralist US system being adopted by Church leaders elsewhere?

Providing a valuable and long overdue contribution to the field, this work will provide readers with a detailed knowledge of how the worlds of politics and religion interact.

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