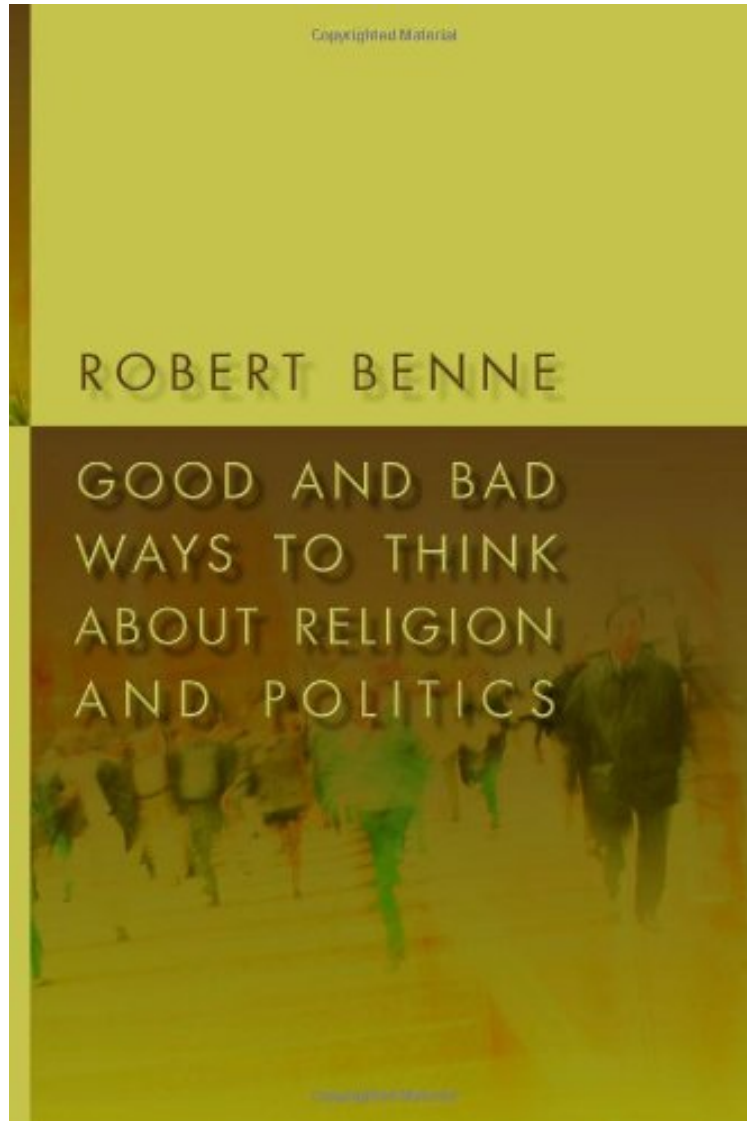


(Pdf free) Good and Bad Ways to Think about Religion and Politics

Good and Bad Ways to Think about Religion and Politics

Robert D. Benne

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Robert D. Benne : Good and Bad Ways to Think about Religion and Politics before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Good and Bad Ways to Think about Religion and Politics:

0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. GreatBy CustomerI recommend this book. Enlightening in to how our thinking becomes distorted and how to be a discerning thinker and reader.1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Very Even Handed and Short book on the topicBy Shark MomI removed one star because this book lacks footnotes. I think the book needs them.But the content itself is very good. Benne approaches two approaches to

politics and religion that he rejects: separatist and fusion. He rejects both as either unrealistic or incorrect. He then moves on to the continuum of church involvement in politics. He recommends steering away from the highest levels and gives reasons for that recommendation, but even there he also gives examples from historical events of when such high levels of involvement for the church might be necessary. He also gives counter examples of when such a high level of involvement is counter productive. While Benne mentions some hot button issues along the way he does not spend time justifying these issues, but uses them as examples of his points. He cautions churches against aligning themselves with one political party over the other and points out with negative examples how this hurts rather than helps both the church and the political issues endorsed.

In this book, Benne describes and analyzes the wrong ways to relate religion and politics and offers a better way. Benne calls the two main bad ways of relating religion and politics separationism and fusionism. Secular separationists decry all involvement of religion in politics; religious separationists, on the other hand, advocate abstaining from politics in the name of religious purity. Fusionism comes in many types, but the type that most concerns Benne is the use of religion in this case Christianity for political ends, which turns religion into an instrument for purposes other than its own main reason for being. Rejecting these bad ways of relating religion and politics, Benne offers a better way that he calls critical engagement which derives from the Lutheran tradition, with a few tweaks to adapt the tradition to deal well with the new challenges of our present situation. As Benne points out, The question is not so much whether American religion will have political effects. It most definitely will. The more serious questions are: Should it? How should it? In this book, Benne offers a clear and useful guide to a subject too often characterized by confusion and loud rhetoric.

Robert Bennes thoughtful take on the right relation between religion and politics is both theologically perceptive and politically shrewd. Our politics would be better if those active in the public square followed his wise and balanced prescriptions. James Nuechterlein Senior Editor at Large, First Things Drawing on the classic traditions of both Protestantism and Catholicism, Benne artfully states contemporary theological options and outlines the practical implications for both believers and practicing policy-makers on the most controversial issues. Excellent for clergy and politically interested laity alike. Max L. Stackhouse Princeton Theological Seminary Bob Bennes engaging and provocative analysis of religion and politics deserves close attention by those on both sides of the debates that currently roil our polity and churches. Robert Tuttle George Washington University