Should Christians be patriotic in a morally depraved culture like America?

While patriotism can be seen as loyalty to one's country, it should not be blind or uncritical[1]. True patriotism involves a discerning love that acknowledges both the positive aspects and moral failures of a nation's history and identity[2]. In extreme cases of government corruption, citizens may have a patriotic duty to withhold support, as exemplified by Germans opposing the Nazi regime[3]. However, even when a government has significant flaws, it may still serve some authentic national interests[3]. Christians are called to exercise discriminating judgment, balancing loyalty to their country with a higher loyalty to their faith[2]. Ultimately, authentic patriotism does not deny reality but involves critical thinking about a country's actions and values, seeking to correct flaws and alter destructive courses[1]. It is rooted in an appreciation of a nation's unique gifts and responsibilities, rather than blind acceptance or flattery[4].

[1] Wilsey, J. D., & Fea, J. (2015). American Exceptionalism and Civil Religion: Reassessing the History of an Idea (p. 161). IVP Academic: An Imprint of InterVarsity Press.

[2] Storrar, W. (1996). "Vertigo" or "Imago"? Nations in the Divine Economy. Themelios, 21(3), 7.

[3] Grisez, G. (1997). The Way of the Lord Jesus, Volume Three: Difficult Moral Questions (p. 729). Franciscan Press.

[4] Luthardt, C. E. (1873). Lecture VIII: The Life of the Christian in the State. In S. Taylor (Trans.), Apologetic Lectures on the Moral Truths of Christianity (p. 195). T. & T. Clark.