Christianity: A Straggler on the Road to Liberty?

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Drawing on new historical analysis, political scientist Daniel Philpott challenges the conventional wisdom that Christianity was on the wrong side of history—or a latecomer at best—in the struggle for freedom in the modern West in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. Some Christian leaders and groups opposed democracy, defended slavery, and worked to reinstate traditional monarchies. However, many Christian leaders and groups also challenged these anti-democratic agendas. Philpott documents the influential activism of important Christian advocates of liberal democracy who were often more politically progressive and liberal than many secular modernizers. He concludes that these Christians were innovators, not laggards, in the historical development of freedom.