



When DARKNESS FALLS

INVESTIGATING RELIGION'S HISTORY OF EVIL

Part 1: Prologue Of Peace

The Christian church has left a legacy, a world view, that fosters sexism, racism, the intolerance of difference, and the desecration of the natural environment. The Church, throughout much of its history, has demonstrated a disregard for human freedom and dignity. It has attempted to control, contain, and confine spirituality, the relationship between an individual and God. As a result, Christianity has helped to create a society in which people are alienated not only from each other but also from the divine.

~ Helen Ellerbe, *The Dark Side of Christian History*

More people have been killed in the name of Jesus Christ than any other name in the history of the world.

~ Gore Vidal

How in the world did we get from “turn the other cheek” to “Slay the infidels!”?

~ Robert Bilmont, *Philosopher*

Nothing is more clear in the moral message of Jesus than his exhortations to and example of forgiveness, mercy, and meekness in the face of abuse or assault.

~ Lisa Sowle Cahill, *Love Your Enemies: Discipleship, Pacifism, and Just War Theory*

The overwhelming evidence suggests that the followers of Jesus were pacifists for the first three centuries. Many early church leaders and documents underscore the unwavering commitment to nonviolence.

~ Charles Kimball, *When Religion Becomes Evil*

As the early Christians knew, the rejection of war is not an optional ethical issue. Rather, it is the clearest indication of the church's calling to be a community free from nationalist and other forms of domination.

~ Richard Deats, *Fellowship of Reconciliation*

Before Constantine, Christian leaders were saying things like this...

We who hated and destroyed one another, and on account of their different manners would not live with men of a different tribe, now, since the coming of Christ, live familiarly with them. We pray for our enemies.

~ Justin Martyr, (155 C.E.)

We Christians no longer take up sword against nation, nor do we learn to make war any more, having become children of peace for the sake of Jesus who is our leader.

~ Origen (248 C.E.)

We have learned from the precepts and laws of Christ not to repay evil for evil, to endure injury rather than inflict it, to shed our own blood rather than to stain our hands and conscience with the blood of another.

~ Arnobius (304 C.E.)

After Constantine, Christian leaders were saying things like this...

Does anyone doubt that it is better for man to be led to the worship of God by teaching rather than forced to it by fear of suffering? But just because the former group is preferable it does not follow that those of the latter should be neglected.

~ Augustine (354 C.E. – 430 C.E.)

What indeed is wrong with war? That people die who will eventually die anyway so that those who survive may be subdued in peace? A coward complains of this, but this does not bother religious people.

~ Augustine (354 – 430 C.E.)

Whenever the church and the state enter into a relationship, inevitably the church ends up becoming the state's whore. She is used for the political expedience of the state and the state is inevitably an abusive spouse.

~ Emir Fethi Caner, *Christian Jihad*

Jesus, who was experienced by some as good news and revelation of God and by others as a subversive threat worthy of scorn and death, has all but disappeared from Christianity.

~ Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer, *Jesus Against Christianity*

Christ is the head of the church, which is his body.

~ Colossians 1:18 (NLT)

