

When DARKNESS FALLS

INVESTIGATING RELIGION'S HISTORY OF EVIL

Part 2: The Crusades

We must remember our history because it calls us to humility. We must remember our history because it forces us to evaluate our future. We must remember our history... because the Muslims do.

~ Emir Fethi Caner, *Christian Jihad*

Holy War: Any war that is regarded as a religious act or is in some way set in a direct relation to religion.

~ Carl Erdmann, *The Origin of the Idea of Crusade*

Church history exposes repeatedly the gap between the ideal as exemplified in the teachings of Jesus and the way Christians have lived and actually behaved.

~ Charles Kimball, *When Religion Becomes Evil*

We hang our heads to admit it, but *jihad* is not a Muslim invention.

~ C.S. Cowles

Especially since they represent violence that was actually instigated by the church for religious ends, the Crusades are unparalleled as the worst example of Christian advocacy of violence and bloodshed.

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

Cursed be the man who holds back his sword from shedding blood.

~ Pope Gregory VII

In the Crusades we see most clearly how Christianity fully absorbed and was transformed by, rather than transforming, the prevailing cultural ethos.

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

It is during the era of the Crusades that the behaviour of many Christians was furthest removed from the teachings and example of Jesus.

~ Charles Kimball, *When Religion Becomes Evil*

Tell me, how can a Christian defend Scripturally retaliation, rebellion, war, striking, slaying, torturing, stealing, robbing and plundering and burning cities, and conquering countries?

~ Menno Simons

In the midst of violence, war, and the use of military force, Christians are called to offer peaceful and nonviolent alternatives.

~ Brethren In Christ 1992 General Conference

Without strong roots in the life and faith of Jesus, Christianity easily reconciles God and Christ with the distorted values and priorities of the dominant culture that both ignores and accelerates a global crisis of injustice.

~ Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer, *Jesus Against Christianity*

It is not enough to defeat our oppressors – we want to convert them! We cannot win by hating our oppressors. We have to love them into changing.

~ Rev. James Bevel (1960's Civil Rights Activist)

When asked why he did not consider becoming a Christian, Gandhi answered that he loved Jesus and His teachings, but he could not identify with Christendom as a whole because it generally does not follow Jesus. He was right. Christians are among the only people in the world who do not see Jesus and his teachings as clearly nonviolent.

~ Dale W. Brown, *Biblical Pacifism*

Jesus challenged and was executed by the domination system of his time; many Christians today proclaim the Christ of faith while conforming to, embracing, and receiving rewards from the domination system of our time. Jesus invites us out of that domination system and into an alternative community where abundant life is experienced.

~ Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer, *Jesus Against Christianity*

Is it possible that we do not want to readmit Jesus of Nazareth back into Christianity. We probably prefer things as they are.

~ Robert Funk, *Honest To Jesus*

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

~ Colossians 1:18 (NLT)