

# HUMAN NATURE HAS MADE MEN HUMAN DEVILS

“But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men, and needed not that any should testify of man: for he knew what was in man.” John 2:24-25

“I said in mine heart concerning the estate of the sons of men that God might manifest them, and that they might see that they themselves are beasts” Ecclesiastes 3:18.

*By Pastor Del Wray*

## Human Nature Condemns Us

This treaty is not penned to condemn any race of peoples for all races of men stand condemned and guilty before God. It is our own human nature that condemns us as it is written “For God sent not His Son into the world to condemn the world; but that the world through Him might be saved” John 3:17. The Creator knows what is in man and that man needs to be protected from himself. It is the very purpose for which He gave us His Word by sending His Son into the world. It is human nature that has turned men into human devils. And this treaty is written to bear out the facts that through human history men have proven themselves to be but human devils.

It was human nature that crucified Jesus Christ.

We all are guilty, whether we are Jew, Gentile or of the Church of Jesus Christ, our sin our human nature killed the Son of God and put God on the Cross. Human nature being what it is apart from grace would do it again if it were possible. Humankind apart from the saving grace of God is nothing more than a human devil.

The same forces which crucified Jesus Christ over nineteen hundred years ago are today trying to crucify His body, His Church and every single living member of His body is the object of their persecution with a death contract. And to accomplish their goal in America it means the incitement of revolution and the overthrow of the United States Constitution, the only truly free country left in the world.

**WE MUST KNOW OUR ENEMY!**

Many Christian leaders have not yet realized it, but Christianity is in the grip of a life and death struggle at the present time.

International Jewish Communism, which has already undermined all nations, firmly expects to exterminate all Christians. What the Cause of Christ has endured in Russia the last 100 years surpasses its suffering at the hands of bloody Nero.

One of the purposes of this present writing is to show that this struggle is not of recent origin.

**THE JEWISH ASSAULT ON CHRISTIANITY**

In the first twelve chapters of the book of Acts, five specific persecutions, sponsored by Jews against the infant Christian Church, are recorded. Failing to blot the new religious conception from the face of the earth by putting its Leader to death, they invented every conceivable scheme for torturing and murdering those who pledged allegiance to His plan for redeeming the world from the curse of sin.

The Jews regarded Christianity as being an illegitimate child of Judaism. Therefore, in their hatred, they believed it to be their solemn duty to stamp it out. After the divine visitation at Pentecost, so many thousands of Jews were converted that the leaders became alarmed.

One thing stood in their way, the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Had His body remained in the tomb, they would have found it easy to combat the new Faith which had suddenly sprung into existence. But with the resurrection being discussed on every side, they found themselves confronted with an insurmountable difficulty. When first faced with the fact of the empty tomb they did not hesitate to resort to deliberate falsehoods.

"And when they were assembled with the elders and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying say His disciples came by night and stole him away while we slept. And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day."

The first few months of the Church's history witnessed five distinct persecutions. What the Cause of Christ has endured at the hands of Jews, through the centuries, far surpasses anything the Jewish people have suffered from Christians.

The attitude of the Jews toward the early Church reminds us that there would be no Christianity in the world today had Paul and others not taken the Gospel message to the Gentiles.

First persecution: Acts 4:1-22. A pitiful beggar, a man born a cripple, was placed near the gates of the Jerusalem temple every day to beg for alms. On a certain occasion, as Peter and John were about to enter, the poor, helpless creature stretched forth a dirty, bony arm and pleaded for a coin.

"Silver and gold have I none," said Peter, "but such as I have give I thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk."

Instantly the resurrection life of Christ smote the recipient of divine mercy and he jumped to his feet "walking, and leaping, and praising God." The man was more than forty years of age and had therefore been a familiar object on the streets of Jerusalem for years.

This miracle caused a great stir throughout the city. Large crowds of curious people gathered around the apostles and the healed beggar.

Peter was quick to take advantage of the opportunity and turned the occasion into a sermon. "Why marvel ye at this?" he asked, and then explained that a far more wonderful miracle had occurred a short time before in Jerusalem, namely the resurrection of Christ from the grave.

When the report of this healing reached the treacherous Jews, their minds got busier than ever. They began devising new plans for putting an end to everything that was being done in the name of Christ.

Their first thought was to deny that the miracle had been performed. Then they realized that this was useless because the man was so well known. At that moment he was rejoicing, praising God, testifying to his deliverance and telling everybody what had happened. "And we cannot deny it," mourned the Jews who would have lied to discredit the story if it would have advanced their selfish purposes.

The members of the Sanhedrin came together and the little band of Christians was forced to appear before them. A torrent of abuse was turned loose upon the trembling group until finally Peter, "filled with the Holy Ghost," became bold. As spokesman for the group, he made it clear that the Christians proposed to obey God rather than man.

Had it not been that the mobs were at that time favorable toward the apostles because of the miracle which had been performed, the Jewish leaders would have no doubt put the entire body of believers to death.

Second persecution: Acts 5:17-42. "Many signs and wonders" were wrought among the people by the apostles. All manner of diseases were healed. But the Jews could see no good in any of this relief of human suffering because it did not come through the narrow, selfish channels of their bigoted nationalism.

The leaders agreed to the use of physical weapons in their attempt to destroy spiritual power, the same as Communists are doing today in trying to exterminate Christianity by killing Christians.

Repeated acts of supernatural intervention preserved the early Church. Without divine assistance, it would have perished. These early miracles confirmed the words of the Founder that the gates of hell would not be able to prevail against the Church.

The Jews "laid hands on the apostles and put them in the common prison. But the angel of the Lord by night opened the prison doors, and brought them forth." Next morning when the Jewish senate convened and messengers were sent to bring the apostles for trial, it was discovered that unknown to the jailors, they had escaped and were at that very hour preaching in the area of the temple.

Jerusalem was in turmoil by this time. Had the officials dared, they would have killed the Christians without a legal trial. When the saints appeared before the tribunal they were told that they had been previously warned not to teach in the name of Jesus. "Ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us," said the high priest.

From this, it is evident that the apostles had been denouncing the Jews and charging them with the responsibility for Christ's death. Here we find the leaders complaining about His blood being upon them, forgetting apparently their previous utterance: "His blood be on us, and on our children."

It is to the credit of our spiritual ancestors that they were able to fill a whole city with the

doctrines of Christianity in the face of such defiant opposition.

Peter finally dared to shout: "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree." Next, he called upon his persecutors to repent of their sins. We read that this "cut them to the heart." Who was this upstart that he should have the audacity to rebuke them!

When they were almost ready to demand the lives of the apostles, Gamaliel, a tolerant member of the Sanhedrin, lifted a warning voice. If the new cult was not of God, he declared that it would come to naught and fall by its own weight. "But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." At length, this line of common sense reasoning prevailed, and the passions of the leaders cooled a bit.

The result was, instead of killing the apostles they were given another warning and a severe flogging. This form of punishment was cruel, brutal, cowardly and unjust. But even though bitter and painful to the flesh, it caused rejoicing to the spirits of the faithful few. As the wounds healed they "rejoiced that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for His name."

The only way the Jews had of striking at the Christ Whom they hated was to injure His followers; they availed themselves of this opportunity.

Boldly and properly disregarding their illegal judges, the Christians kept on preaching Christ and reminding the Jews of their crimes against the government of God.

Third persecution: Acts 7:54-60. The blood of martyrs began flowing in the same year that the Lord ascended into heaven. The Jews' first victim after Christ was a man named Stephen, whose primary crime was belief in the deity of the Son of God. This was regarded as blasphemy.

The story of the murder of Stephen is one of the saddest in all the history of the Church. It is significant that a Hellenist, rather than an apostle, should have become the first Christian martyr.

Stephen was accused of three things: blaspheming God, setting aside the Old Testament, and belittling the Temple. Each of these charges was untrue. Even while lying witnesses were being introduced against him, the members of the Jewish counsel saw his countenance light up with a spiritual glow like "the face of an angel."

After listening to the charges, the priests asked their helpless victim: "Are these things so?" But instead of devoting himself to an answer of questions which everyone knew to be based upon falsehoods, Stephen entered into a discussion of Israelites' history and closed by rebuking his judges for their hypocrisy.

He declared that their devotion to God, the Law, and the Temple, was hypocritical. Here are his words: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your father's persecuted? And they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers."

Thus Stephen laid bare the full measure of their guilt. The blood of the Son of God was

upon their heads; they had ignored the miracles which testified of His deity; they had rejected the Pentecostal program of the new Church; they had also spurned the wooing of the Holy Spirit. Before God, they stood condemned, and judgment was sure to overtake them! Taking no thought of his own safety, Stephen shot his words of truth, like barbed arrows, into the hard hearts of his merciless tormentors.

As he spoke, the Jewish leaders yelled and screamed to drown his words. They stopped their ears with their fingers to avoid hearing the truth about themselves. Like serpents, they hissed their poison at the courageous Christian. They rushed upon him with one accord.

In their madness they dragged him outside the city, removing their outer garments as they ran. With stones, they pelted the body of the first Christian martyr until his life ebbed away. This execution was illegal because the matter was not submitted to the Roman Governor.

Emulating the blessed Saviour, Stephen cried with a loud voice: "Lord lay not this sin at their charge." "And when he had said this, he fell asleep."

Fourth persecution: Acts 8:1-3. The first three persecutions were spontaneous and did not result from deliberate planning. There had been no coordination of effort. Events had transpired so rapidly that there had been no time to sit down and quietly work out a concerted plan of attack.

But the spilling of Stephen's blood seemed to whet the Jewish appetite for more Christian suffering. From that hour, nothing but a terrible pogrom could possibly satisfy them. The sight of blood, the appearance of the first deadly wound in the flesh of a believer, seemed to stir all their criminal instincts.

They came to the conclusion that an organized effort was imperative if the new Faith was to be put down. Up until that time, their attempts to suppress the truth had proved ineffective. In searching for a persecutor who would be both cunning and brutal they selected a brilliant young rabbi by the name of Saul from the city of Tarsus.

It will be recalled that this was the young man who had guarded the coats of those who stoned Stephen. Saul stood grinning at the contortions of the martyr squirming and writhing in death agonies, under the barrage of rocks which were heaped upon him.

Jesus told his followers to go everywhere proclaiming the glad tidings. This was done following the Pentecostal harvest feast which brought Jews to Jerusalem from all parts of the civilized world. Those who accepted the Gospel message, on that great occasion, returned to their various communities to kindle spiritual fires.

Unwittingly, in the fourth persecution, the Jews contributed to the success of this very plan of evangelizing because when Saul began scattering believers, driving them from their homes, forcing them into exile, "persecuting them from city to city," every such Christian became an evangelist.

Until this time, the activities of the Christians had been confined for the most part, to the city of Jerusalem and its immediate environs, although a skeleton of Church organization was set up reaching into other areas, resulting from the embers which blew

in all directions after the experience Pentecost.

"As for Saul, he made havoc of the church, entering into every house, and haling men and women, committed them to prison. Therefore they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word."

The very name Saul became a terror to the early Christians because of the heartless methods which he used. He and his helpers were happiest when they could rush into a house and catch a little group of believers in the act of worshipping, they would kill and wound some, banish others, and torture still others in ways too numerous and terrible for words.

The irony of this organized attempt on the part of the Jews to blot the cause of Christ out of existence was the fact that their own ringleader got gloriously converted on the road to Damascus and became the greatest missionary and evangelist the world has ever known.

But, in later years, Paul never forgave himself, nor was he ever able to erase the memories of his early attacks upon the little Church, which he came to love so dearly and for which he finally sacrificed his life.

Fifth persecution: Acts 12:1-19. The next spasm of Jewish terror, mentioned in the early part of the book of Acts, was directed against Peter. This persecution is of particular importance because it introduces a new element in the Jewish plan of destroying Christianity. It reveals the scheme, which was continued for hundreds of years, influencing Gentile rulers to do their dirty work for them.

During the first few centuries of Church history, when the pagans slaughtered Christians by the tens of thousands, a careful study will show that time and again the pogroms were precipitated by powerful Jews who were able to maneuver things from behind the scenes. They simply used pagans to carry out their crimes against Christians in the same manner that the player moves chessmen on the board.

St. Justin said in the middle of the second century: "The Jews were behind all the persecutions of the Christians. They wandered through the country, everywhere hating and undermining the Christian faith."

Tertullian said about the same time: "The Jews formed the breeding ground of all anti-Christian action."

A plain example of Jews causing unbelieving Gentiles to destroy Christians is to be seen in this, the fifth persecution. We read that Herod the king has James put to death by the sword because of Jewish influences being brought to bear upon his throne. This ruler was the grandson of Herod the Great who murdered the babes of Bethlehem after the birth of Christ. James was one of the three, with Peter and John, who enjoyed the sweetest possible fellowship with the Lord.

No details are given in the Scriptures about the killing of James. And yet underneath the simple statement, a deep anguish and sympathy may be felt. Then the next verse shows that the wicked king had planned to make away with Peter in the same way. "And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. And when he apprehended him, he put him in prison ... Peter, therefore, was kept in prison: but prayer

was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him."

The Jews desired a public execution of Peter. They wanted his death to be viewed by all because he was one of the principal leaders of the despised Christians. This would give them a chance to gloat over their ability to wrap Gentile monarchs around their fingers. It was quite an achievement, in their estimation, to get a Roman king such as Herod, to do their bidding.

But a strange thing happened during the night proceeding the day when Peter was to be put to death. Another miracle occurred.

Although execution awaited him, the faithful apostle who spent the night chained between two soldiers, slept as sound as a babe. Suddenly a shaft of light shot into the darkened cell like a bolt of lightning and an angel smote Peter on the side. He dressed quickly and followed the heavenly visitor to the outer court, through the gate, and down the street. Not until then did he realize that his deliverance was real and not merely a dream.

Making his way to the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark, Peter found that an all-night prayer meeting was being held in his behalf. He came into the presence of the saints rejoicing "that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from all the expectation of the Jews."

The angel smote Peter and the result was life and liberty. A short time later the same angel smote Herod and the result was disease, death, and worms devouring his flesh. And this king was not the last to be cursed for allowing himself to come under the domination of Jews.

So Herod having consented to an ignominious death for Peter, himself suffered one much more ignominious.

Following thru history, we find it was ten, 10 Roman Emperors that sat out to wipe Christianity from the face of the earth, ten periods of Roman persecution where millions of Christians were martyred for their faith in Jesus Christ. Would you dare take a look at this period in Roman history where these ten Emperors sought to wipe Christianity from the Roman Empire?

#### THE BLOODIEST ROMAN EMPERORS IN HISTORY:

Ruthless and violent, Roman emperors are famous for their tyrannical reigns of terror. But who were the worst Roman emperors?

We all know about the Roman Emperors, don't we? Mad, bad and decidedly dangerous to know. Who can forget Peter Ustinov's Nero in the 1951 epic Quo Vadis? Or John Hurt's tortured and murderous Caligula in the BBC's I, Claudius?

In fact, as historians point out (to anyone who will listen), many of the emperors on the list below were competent, even gifted administrators, and the sources for some of the more lurid stories about them are not always above suspicion of exaggeration or invention. And some of the crimes that most shocked their contemporaries like a penchant for performing in public would not necessarily offend us so much today.

Some emperors, like Nero or Domitian, have passed into history as models of erratic, paranoid tyrants; others, like Diocletian, were able administrators, providing good government (unless you happened to be a Christian, in which case you were in great peril). Even under the worst emperors, Rome continued to function, but involvement in public life could become a decidedly dangerous business.

Tiberius (ruled AD 14–37)

Tiberius was the successor to Augustus, though Augustus did not particularly want Tiberius to succeed him, and it was only the untimely death of the emperor's grandsons Gaius and Lucius, and Augustus's decision to exile their younger brother, Agrippa Postumus, that put Tiberius in line for the imperial throne.

Tiberius was a gifted military commander and respected the authority of the Senate. However, he had a gloomy and increasingly suspicious outlook that won him few friends and led him into a bitter dispute with Agrippina, the widow of his war hero nephew Germanicus. Fatally, Tiberius relied heavily on the ambitious and ruthless Aelius Sejanus, who instituted a reign of terror until Tiberius, learning that Sejanus planned to seize power himself, had him arrested and executed.

Tiberius sank into morbid suspicion of everyone around him: he retreated to the island of Capri and revived the ancient accusation of *maiestas* (treason) and used it to sentence to death anyone he suspected. Roman historians Suetonius and Tacitus give us a picture of Tiberius living on Capri as a depraved sexual predator, which may owe more to the colorful imagination than to fact, though he certainly made use of a sheer drop into the sea to dispose of anyone he took issue with. Tiberius was not a monster in the mold of some of his successors, but he certainly set the tone for what was to come.

Gaius (Caligula) (ruled AD 37–41)

Gaius ('Caligula, or 'little bootee' a childhood nickname given him by his father's troops) is best known for a series of eccentric actions, such as declaring war on the sea and proclaiming himself a god.

His reign actually began quite promisingly, but after a serious bout of illness, he developed a paranoia that led him into alarmingly erratic behavior, possibly including incest with his sister, Julia Drusilla, whom he named as his heir.

Gaius took particular delight in humiliating the Senate, claiming that he could make anyone consul, even his horse (though contrary to the popular story, he didn't actually go through with this). As the son of Germanicus [a prominent general], Gaius was keen to establish his military credentials, though his campaign in Germany achieved little and his abortive invasion of Britain had to be turned into a battle with the sea god Neptune: he is said to have told his troops to attack the waves with their swords and gather seashells as booty.

Gaius declared himself a god and used his divine status to establish what was, in effect, an absolutist monarchy in Rome, he followed Tiberius's example of using treason trials to eliminate enemies, real or imagined. In the end, it was his rather childish taunting of Cassius Chaerea, a member of the Praetorian Guard which brought Gaius down. Chaerea

arranged for his assassination at the Palatine Games. He is supposed to have protested that he couldn't be killed because he was an immortal god, but he turned out to be rather less immortal than he thought.

Nero (ruled AD 54–68)

Nero is the Roman Emperor we all love to hate, and not without reason. He was actually a competent administrator, and he was aided by some very able men, including his tutor, the writer Seneca. However, he was also unquestionably a murderer, starting with his step-brother Britannicus, with whom he had been supposed to share power, and progressing through his wife Octavia, whom he deserted for his lover, Poppaea, and then had executed on a trumped-up charge of adultery.

Probably on Poppaea's prompting he had his own mother murdered, though the initial attempt, using a collapsible boat, went wrong, and she had to be beaten to death instead. He then kicked Poppaea to death in a fit of anger while she was pregnant with his child.

Contrary to the myth, Nero did not start the great fire of Rome, nor did he 'fiddle' (nor even play the lyre), while the city burned, in fact, he organized relief work for its victims and planned the rebuilding. But Nero's fondness for his own music and poetry, which made him force senators to sit through his own interminable and talentless recitals, meant people could easily believe it of him.

Nero was much hated for building his huge, tasteless 'golden house' complex [aka the Domus Aurea, a large landscaped portico villa] in the ruins of what had been the public area of central Rome. He undoubtedly persecuted Christians in large numbers, and his childish insistence on winning the laurels at the Olympic Games in Greece, whether or not he actually won, or indeed finished the race brought the whole empire into disrepute.

Nero was toppled by an army revolt that sunk into a destructive three-way civil war.

Domitian (ruled AD 81–96)

Domitian was the younger son of Vespasian, the general who had emerged from the chaos after Nero's fall and restored a certain element of stability and normality to Roman public life.

Domitian inherited none of his father's charm and, like others on this list he suffered from a deep suspicion of those around him, amounting to paranoia, possibly a result of his narrow escape from being killed during the civil war. He was particularly suspicious of the Senate and had a number of leading citizens executed for conspiracy against him, including 12 ex-consuls and two of his own cousins.

Domitian's rule became steadily more autocratic, and he demanded to be treated like a god. He turned against philosophers, sending many of them into exile, and he arranged the judicial murder of the chief vestal virgin, having her buried alive in a specially constructed tomb.

Domitian was eventually brought down by a conspiracy arranged by his wife, Domitia, and was somewhat inexpertly stabbed by a palace servant. Some historians think Domitian's tyranny has been overstated; others have compared him to Saddam Hussein

at his most vengeful.

Commodus (ruled AD 180–192)

Commodus was the emperor immortalized by Joaquin Phoenix in Ridley Scott's *Gladiator* (2000). Commodus was indeed a passionate follower of gladiatorial combat, and he fought in the arena, sometimes dressed as Hercules, for which he awarded himself divine honors, declaring that he was a Roman Hercules.

Commodus was the son of the philosopher-emperor Marcus Aurelius and, although the film's scene in which Commodus kills his own father is invention, it is true that Commodus was the very opposite of all that his father had stood for. Vain and pleasure-seeking, Commodus virtually bankrupted the Roman treasury and he sought to fill it up again by having wealthy citizens executed for treason so he could confiscate their property.

Soon, people began plotting against him for real, including his own sister. The plots were foiled, however, and Commodus set about executing still more people, either because they were conspiring against him or because he thought they might do so in the future. Eventually, the Praetorian prefect and the emperor's own court chamberlain hired a professional athlete to strangle Commodus in the bath.

Marcus Aurelius Antoninus I (Caracalla) (ruled AD 211–217)

Marcus Aurelius Antoninus was the son of the highly able and effective emperor, Septimius Severus. 'Caracalla' was a nickname, derived from a hooded coat from Gaul that he introduced into Rome.

Severus named his younger son, Geta, as co-heir with Caracalla, but the two quickly fell out and civil war seemed imminent until Caracalla averted this scenario by having Geta murdered.

Caracalla dealt brutally with opponents: he set about exterminating Geta's supporters and similarly wiped out those caught up in one of the cities of Alexandria's regular local risings against Roman rule.

Caracalla is remembered for the magnificent bath complex named after him in Rome, and for extending Roman citizenship to all free men within the empire, though he was probably simply trying to raise the money he needed for his own lavish spending. He certainly turned the surplus he inherited from his father into a heavy deficit.

Caracalla was a successful, if ruthless, military commander but he was assassinated by a group of ambitious army officers, including the Praetorian prefect Opellius Macrinus, who promptly proclaimed himself emperor.

Marcus Aurelius Antoninus II (Elagabalus) (ruled AD 218–222)

Elagabalus was a relative of Septimius Severus's wife, put forward to challenge Macrinus for the throne after the murder of Caracalla. Elagabalus overthrew Macrinus and promptly embarked on an increasingly eccentric reign. His nickname came from his role as priest of the cult of the Syrian god Elah-Gabal, which he tried to introduce into Rome

to universal consternation, even having himself circumcised to show his devotion to the cult.

Elagabalus deliberately offended Roman moral and religious principles, setting up a conical black stone fetish, a symbol of the sun god Sol Invictus Elagabalus, on the Palatine Hill and marrying the chief Vestal, for which, under normal circumstances, she should have been put to death.

Romans were particularly offended by Elagabalus's sexual behavior as well as a string of marriages he also openly took male lovers, and he seems to have been what would nowadays be recognized as transgender.

Few historians have much good to say about Elagabalus, and eventually, the Romans' patience gave out: Elagabalus was murdered in a conspiracy organized by his own grandmother.

Diocletian (AD 284–305)

It may seem unfair to include Diocletian in this group, since he is best known for the risky but sensible decision to divide the government of the Roman empire in two, taking Marcus Aurelius Maximianus as his co-emperor, each with a subordinate known as a Caesar, in a four-way division of power called the tetrarchy.

Diocletian was a good administrator and managed to hold his divided command structure together at a time when the Roman Empire was coming under increasing pressure from its enemies outside its boundaries. What gets Diocletian included here, however, is his utterly ruthless persecution of Christians.

Christians had long been regarded by most Romans with a mixture of distaste and a rather amused tolerance, but Diocletian set about the total eradication of the religion. Churches were to be destroyed, scriptures publicly burnt, and Christian priests imprisoned and forced to conduct sacrifices to the emperor on pain of death. Christians who refused to give up their faith were tortured and executed.

It was an unusually vicious persecution, given that the Romans were usually accepting of other religions, and it reflects Diocletian's fear that, at a time when unity of purpose was essential for the empire's survival, Christianity represented a rejection of Roman religious values that he could not afford to allow. These were all human devils demonstrating the wickedness of human nature turning men into wicked beasts.

#### TEN HORRIFYING TORTURES OF EARLY CHRISTIANS:

Early Christians sometimes faced persecution and even death for their beliefs. Many were tortured first; some were not. Of Jesus' 11 disciples (not counting Judas) Peter, Simon the Zealot, Phillip, Jude the brother of James, and Andrew were all crucified in various parts of the world. Peter requested to be crucified upside down, a request the Romans were only too happy to grant. Andrew's Cross was in the shape of an X, which is now called St. Andrew's cross and appears on the Scottish flag. This list contains ten, 10 of the most bizarre and painful methods of torture inflicted upon the Christians of antiquity through the Early Middle Ages. Much of this information has been gleaned from John Foxe's Book of Martyrs and corroborated elsewhere.

Many Were Cooked To Death; Saint Lawrence of Rome is better known for the manner of his death than his ministry in life. When a Roman prefect demanded that the tithes of the Catholic Church be handed over to the Roman state, Lawrence brought forth his impoverished congregation, who he stated were the tithes, as the money had been given them for food. The infuriated prefect ordered metal plates to be set over a bed of coals and heated until they were red-hot. Lawrence was then bound and laid naked on them, face up. His flesh sizzled, smoked, and was burned black, yet Lawrence made no outcry, nor did he beg forgiveness from the prefect. He finally called in a clear voice, "I'm done on that side. Turn me over and eat." He is now the patron saint of cooks. Peter, a eunuch of Diocletian's household, was discovered to be a Christian and cooked in the same manner as Lawrence.

Dragged to Death; It was Evangelist Mark, who wrote the Gospel of Mark, founded the Christian Church in Alexandria and preached to the masses that they should give up their Egyptian gods and goddesses. It's not clear how long he was able to keep this up, but he did convert many before A.D. 68 when an angry mob tied a rope around his neck and dragged him through the streets behind a chariot for two days without interruption. The dragging continued even after his death until his bones were showing. According to some sources, Hippolytus of Rome, an elder under Pope Pontian, was dragged to death behind a wild horse on the island of Sardinia. He is now the patron saint of horses. In 257, Saturninus of Toulouse was dragged behind a bull around the city until the bull was chased down a flight of stone steps and Saturninus's brain was dashed from his skull. Julian the Apostate succeeded Constantius II (who succeeded his father, Constantine the Great) in 361. Julian restored the pagan religions to the empire and horribly persecuted Christians. Within two years, he was ordering them sought out and dragged to death in every city and along the caravan routes throughout Palestine.

Skinned Bartholomew: Removal of the skin is so excruciating that victims invariably passed out multiple times during the torture. To prevent this, they were usually hung upside down so the excess blood flow to their brains forced them to remain conscious. The skin is not easy to remove, and torturers rarely made an effort to remove it in one piece unless they wanted a trophy. Typically, the skin was sliced into strips, and then each strip peeled from the body with the aid of a knife. Often, the skin was thrown into a fire or to animals, or dangled before the victim's eyes. This is how Bartholomew, one of the 12 apostles, was killed by locals in Armenia, into whose language he translated Matthew's Gospel. The Armenians refused to abandon their idols and executed Bartholomew by crucifying him upside down and skinning him.

Sewn into Skins and Eaten by Dogs; Siemiradski Facke, in this torture was devised by Nero himself, not merely to cause Christians pain but to entertain him and his guests. Nero was infamously rumored to have crucified Christians on trees in his gardens, coated them with wax, and set them on fire to light his nightly walks (he evidently didn't mind the stench). Others he ordered sewn into hides, any large animal was skinned, and the prepared skin sewn around the victim except for the head, hands, and feet. Then ravenous dogs were set loose. The victim could only scuttle around on all fours like a crab. Nero was said to have laughed heartily as the dogs gnawed at the skin as they would a bone. Julian of Antioch was tortured every day for an entire year and displayed to the crowds in every town in Cilicia, (a southern coastal region of what is now Turkey). He was then sewn into a skin filled with asps and scorpions and flung into the Aegean Sea. He was said to have floated all the way across the Mediterranean to Alexandria,

Egypt.

Starved to Death, Martyrdom of St-Stephen, Emperor Decius ruled from 249 to 251, when he was killed at the Battle of Abrittus in Bulgaria. During his short reign, he had a temple built in Ephesus and required that all Christians sacrifice for the good of the emperor (not “to” the emperor, since this would impute divinity to Decius, who was still alive). This was against Roman law, but the Christians largely considered any similar sacrifice counter to their faith and refused, even when warned that they would be tortured to death. Pope Fabian himself was beheaded over the issue. The next year, seven of Decius’s best soldiers, Constantinus, Dionysius, Malchus, Martianus, Maximianus, Joannes, and Seraion, were discovered to be Christian converts. Decius attempted to bribe them back to the Roman faith by giving them a long furlough while he was away. They fled the area and hid in a cave. Upon Decius’s return, he was told of their whereabouts and had the cave sealed. All seven died from starvation or dehydration. There is a legend, similar to Rip van Winkle, that these seven men fell asleep and woke up 360 years later, exited the cave and amazed the people in the town.

Boiled To Death; boiling-cauldron boiling water causes almost instant first-degree burns and will cause third-degree burns after 10 minutes. Eventually, the flesh will slough away deep into the muscle, and death is usually marked by the water turning red as it finally breaches the blood vessels. Tradition holds that John the Apostle, who wrote the Gospel of John, survived without harm after being boiled in a cauldron of oil, after which he was exiled to Patmos Island in the Aegean. In 222, a woman named Cecilia, possibly Saint Cecilia, was boiled in a bathtub over a bed of coals for a day and a half, after she converted her husband and brother. They were beheaded, as was the captain who led them to their deaths because he converted in view of the victims’ fearlessness. After Cecilia was drawn alive from the tub, she is said to have sung a song of praise to God, which is why she is the patron saint of music. She was then beheaded. This inspired the Second Nun’s Tale in Chaucer’s Canterbury Tales.

The Inquisition’s by the 13th century, everybody expected the Spanish Inquisition. The church formed inquisitions in every country in Western Europe, but the Spanish were the most brutal and feared. Anyone found guilty even of reading the Bible in his or her own language was tried, usually convicted, and often executed. The ceremony of execution and torture was called an “Auto da Fe,” or “Act of Faith.” The Inquisition was required not to spill any blood in performing tortures, but this requirement was usually ignored. The most common method called for the victim to be stripped to his underwear and laid face-up on an elevated platform. Thin cords were passed through holes and wrapped around the limbs, then drawn so tightly that they cut through the victim’s flesh to the bones. If no confession was made, the process was repeated up to four times. If this elicited no confession, the next stage involved folding the arms back behind the victim with the palms outward, then, both arms were tied to a winch that ratcheted them closer and closer until the backs of the hands touched. This ripped both shoulders out of the sockets with such pressure that blood spewed from the mouth. A surgeon would then set the joints and the victim was given two months in prison to recover. Two months later, the last torture involved a heavy chain lashed around the body with both ends attached to a winch. The arms were pinned straight at the sides and the chain was passed around the wrists. Then it was tightened like a tourniquet until the shoulders and wrists dislocated. The joints were then reset, and the torture immediately inflicted a second time. If the victim still did not confess, he was sent to be burned at the stake. If he did, he was placed in prison for another month or two, then, released a cripple.

Ground to death in a Mill; under the rule of Maximian, Saint Victor Maurus may have suffered the most excruciating death of all. He secretly ministered to his parishioners in Milan until about 303, when he was discovered and immediately dragged through the streets behind a horse while the crowds stripped him naked and beat him, then, demanded he recant. He refused and was stretched on the rack for a day, during which time he prayed to God for patience. He was then imprisoned and immediately converted three of his guards. When Maximian heard of this, he ordered the guards beheaded, and Victor racked again, while the torturers beat him savagely with clubs. He was ordered to recant and refused a third time. Maximian had a Roman altar built and ordered Victor to sacrifice incense on it to Jupiter. This enraged Victor, who kicked over the altar. Maximian furiously ordered the offending foot cut off, after which Victor was flung into a stone mill used to grind wheat into flour, and the torturers ground him to death.

Broken on the Wheel; the breaking wheel is a horribly painful method of torture in which the victim was tied to the side of a wheel laid flat on the ground. Then one of two methods was employed: Either the torturer used a sledgehammer to smash every limb to a pulp, or the wheel was made to turn in transaction with another, like gears, so that the victim's body was crushed between them. No bone or section of bone was spared, except the torso and head to keep the victim alive. Sometimes the genitals were smashed. Then the victim was left in this condition to die from exposure, blood loss, or to be eaten by birds and ants. This was the fate of a man called Peter, in Lampsacus, Mysia (now Lapseki in Turkey), in about 250. He was martyred along with three others: Paul, Andrew, and Dionisia. Dionisia was condemned to be raped to death, but tradition holds that an angel spared her and the three nominated rapists ran away in fear. She then escaped prison, but desired to be martyred like her friends and allowed the authorities to recapture her. She was beheaded, and Paul and Andrew were stoned. Peter was broken on the wheel, then, beheaded.

Having Their Guts Eaten by Pigs; In 363, under Julian the Apostate, Saint Marcus was Bishop of Arethusa, a town near modern Apameia, Syria. Julian ordered Marcus to repair a dilapidated pagan temple, but Marcus destroyed it instead, then, fled the city. He soon realized that his Christian followers would pay for what he had done if he did not return and so he did. The enraged townspeople dragged him through the streets, stripped him naked, stabbed him all over his body with their pencils and quills, then smeared him with honey and suspended him in a basket in a town square, where the wasps and bees would swarm into the basket and devour him. Several of his followers were discovered and dragged down by the mob, which ripped their bellies open with their bare hands. Corn was packed into their abdomens and pigs were set on them. The pigs devoured the corn and their intestines.

## CHRISTIANITY TODAY

Christianity is passing through a crisis the like of which it has never faced before. Whether or not it possesses sufficient moral and spiritual resistance to survive remains to be seen.

Paul said the Christian's instruments of battle were not physical: "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds."

The same thought is emphasized in the supernaturally inspired words to Zerubbabel:

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

The strength of the Church is in its ability to influence the hearts and lives of men by the demonstration and proclamation of divine truth. Questions like the following constantly haunt the writer: "Will the Church be able to demonstrate sufficient power to triumph over its foes in the present crisis? Or has it become so weakened by apostasy and pernicious teachings that it will have to be drenched in its own blood before it can be brought to its senses?"

Persecution has always had a purifying effect upon the Church. Like the individual saints of which it is composed, its "strength is made perfect in weakness."

Unless the Christian forces of the western nations come under a new baptism of old-time spiritual power, the Church will go down and Soviet Atheism will come up. The Russian Empire was destroyed by the Red hordes, many years ago, because it did not possess sufficient spiritual vitality to resist the onslaught.

The Greek Orthodox Church, which governed the religious life and thought of Russia, was a cold, dead, pagan institution. It lacked life, emotion, and creative energy. Consequently, it yielded to the first attack of organized Atheism. Its gorgeous temples have been turned into museums, brothels, and centers of entertainment and vice. Its wealth has been confiscated. Its priests and other leaders have been put to death. Its members have been slaughtered by the millions. Church life is a memory of the past. This very day the Russian "gulags" concentration camps are overflowing with Christians.

Now let us turn our attention toward Germany. Next, to the British, the German people are the most religious people in Europe. Protestantism was cradled there. Out of a sixty-seven million population, sixty million Germans are today identified with some kind of a Christian Church.

For several years, the Moscow conspirators focused their attacks upon Germany. It looked for a time as if the Country was doomed. But by degrees, the Church began to assert its moral and spiritual strength. Finally, the deep, underlying principles of Christian truth manifested on the surface with the result, that by a single stroke, Communism was destroyed.

Dynamic Holy Spirit evangelism is the only dependable antidote for Soviet Atheism.

Everyone is acquainted with the phrase, "The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse?" Rev 6: 1-8. The horses are of different colors, each color representing some event of far-reaching proportions which is to come upon the earth. They are White, Red, Black and Pale. It is predicted that these horses will gallop over the earth in the end-time of the present age.

Each horse possesses characteristics which make possible its identification. The objective of the Red Horse is to "Take Peace from the Earth." Is it a mere coincidence that the one great system of government in the world today which exists for the open and avowed purpose of destroying peace, should be called Red?

Since the butchering of the Czar and his royal family, Russia has become the parade ground of Communist practice. Moscow is the center from which world-wide

revolutionary activities are being directed. The Red leaders concentrate first upon one part of the world, then another. The plan has been to keep revolutions breaking out systematically in different parts of the earth. In the year 1922, when the great strikes were being directed from Moscow, the United States government was very near collapse. Few people outside of government circles knew how serious conditions really were. And our country is once more being made the target for Red propaganda and agitation. For very good reasons Moscow believes that the time is ripe to start the Red Horse galloping over our land again, with the ultimate objective of destroying our churches, bombing our government, confiscating our property and introducing a reign of terror, out of which a heartless dictatorship is expected to be set up.

During the first communist regime under Lenin, an investigating Committee in 1919 reported this incident: "The entire floor of a large garage was used as an execution site in the provincial city of Kiev. It was swimming with blood. It did not flow, but formed a layer several inches thick and was a grisly mixture of brain and skull fragments, as well as strands of hair and other human remains.

"The entire walls were holed with thousands of bullets and were splattered with blood and fragments of brains as well as the skin that adhered to them. A ditch ran from the middle of the garage to a subterranean outlet pipe. This drainage ditch was 25cm wide and 25cm deep. It was filled to the top with blood.

"Immediately after the executions, the corpses were removed by Lorries or horse-drawn carts and were buried in a mass grave. In one corner of the garden, we found an older grave which contained some 80 corpses, in which we discovered the most varied and unimaginative cruelties and mutilations. There were corpses with their entrails removed; others had their eyes poked out and there were deep wounds in their hands, face, and neck. Further on we found a corpse with an ax buried in its breast, while others had no tongues. In one corner of this mass grave, we discovered many arms, legs and severed trunks."

You may be inclined at this point to say: "What a gross description.

Who would believe it?"

Well you better, if you want to stop it from coming here. I have been told of worse in Korea. Have you ever seen a man impaled alive on a sharp bamboo pole, while his pregnant wife is stripped before him and then raped over and over, before being chopped into pieces before his dying eyes? Have you ever seen a young woman stripped of her clothing, while she is nailed to a tree with spikes driven through her breasts and a bundle of rice straw, soaked in oil is bound between her bare thighs and set on fire? Have you ever seen an elderly nun crucified against the walls of her church, with bayonets driven through her hands and rib cage and listened for agonizing hours as she screamed, and cried, and begged for mercy from men who knew no mercy? Have you ever seen a tiny baby snatched from his mother's arms and then tossed back and forth between two drunken soldiers, as they caught the little body on the points of their bayonets? Of course, you haven't and many of you are going to say or think: "How can you be so gross?" You don't even understand the meaning of the word "gross." I do because I saw these things in Vietnam and had a friend who was tortured having wooden spikes driven thru his skull in the shape of a crown as his captors were mocking his Lord. I promised God if He ever got me out of that mess, and safely back to the country I love and the

people I love, I would do everything in my power to see that these things never happened in America. I can tell you without equivocation, that I get angry when I see plans underway in America, to bring that same kind of terror here. But look at the record. This terror is not unusual for Talmudic-Communism they have done it too well over 100-million people in the past seventy years.

**WHAT MAKES YOU THINK AMERICA IS IMMUNE?**

Human devils are the results of men's fallen human nature!

Under Stalin, Lenin and Trotsky over 60 million Russians, their own people were murdered during the Bolshevik revolution, most of them Christians killed by Talmudic Jews. During the II World War under the reign of the Nazis, Hitler was responsible for murdering six 6 million Jews. When China was taken over by the Communist, twenty 20 million more Christians were slaughtered by the Reds. One of my best friends was a missionary in China and got out just as they closed the doors to all American missionaries. He had to leave his wife, who was Chinese and his two sons behind who were not allowed to leave. He came home a broken man. They have recently admitted that over 336 million babies have been aborted many forcibly. That's not speaking of the murder of millions of unborn babies in America as America's government seeks to rid our country of all recognition of Christianity and its founder Jesus Christ. You say it can't happen here, you are blind to your own nature. Let me not forget to mention the millions that the Muslims have been killing. This is not taking into effect all the other crimes of rape and murder going on in the United States every day. Just yesterday, a man returned home in our area and shot his wife in the head and then turned the gun on his three children killing all four, then committed suicide, five dead. We must be insane not seeing the tragedy of human nature. We must stop lying to ourselves human nature is "deceitful above all things and desperately wicked..." Jer. 17:9. Human nature in its fallen state hates God and is out to eradicate all reference to Him.

If free America is to remain the land of the free and the home of the brave, it's imperative that her leaders and her churches turn back to God NOW!

You may kill this preacher and like, many other believers but you will never stop the prophetic fulfillment of Holy Scripture and the return of Jesus Christ to rule and reign. "Every knee will bow" "Every tongue confess" and "Every man will give an account to God".

**FALLEN HUMAN NATURE INDEED HAS MADE MEN HUMAN DEVILS!**