**When Christianity is Under Attack - A church synopsis from the 2nd Great Awakening until Roe v. Wade (1840-1973)**

The early Church flourished in the mist of persecution and Gnostic heresies. In the Middle Ages the church contended with corruption, plague, and Mongols and Tamerlane. The church has had to rapidly adapt to evolution, persecution, false religions without and false brethren within. But unlike other ages, the pace of change challenges, and opportunities accelerates.

# The Pace of Change

In ancient times a new invention would take a century, or more, to catch on. Information itself was not spread very quickly either. Imagine trying to explain to someone in the past about the industrial revolution and trains. Then explain how the world had no radio, telephone, cars, plastic, antibiotics, TV or airplanes, and then, all of a sudden, within 50 years it had all of that. Then tell them after that the pace gets faster: two World Wars, submarines, atomic energy, anti-matter, lasers, space travel, black holes, relativity, personal computers, cell phones, internet, holograms, robotic surgery, artificial limbs, commodity futures, 3-D printing, drones, nano-materials, the cloud, social media, tele-medicine, YouTube, gene therapy, and artificial intelligence. Why can’t you keep up with everything? Human knowledge is expanding at 200 million words per hour. Daniel 12:4 says that knowledge will greatly increase in the future.

# Darwin and Evolution

Micro-evolution is in the Bible: humans of all races came from one couple. But macro-evolution not only says that all life evolved from one cell, but atheistic evolution says our Creator was time and chance, and God was not over that. “Survival of the fittest” was used to justify racist policies, and espouse amorality.

# Persecution

The following chart offers just a glimpse of all the persecution; out of a total of 70M martyrs, 46M were since 1914. Atheist Communists and Muslims killed the most Christians. We live in an age of martyrdom. In some places Christianity is diminishing because the Christians are getting killed off just too fast.

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| **Year AD** | **Timeline from the 2nd Great Awakening until now (1840 A.D. - )** |
| 1790-1840 | Second Great Awakening: NA and UK |
| 1844 | 4,000 circuit riders in the U.S. |
| 1844 | K. von Tischendorf finds Codex Sinaiticus |
| 1845 | Southern Baptist Convention started |
| 1846-1848 | Vatican enforces prior Jewish restrictions |
| 1184-mid 19th cent. | Medieval Inquisition in France & Europe |
| 1825-1850 | Adoniram & Ann Judson minister in Burma |
| 1852 | Harriet B. Stowe’s *Uncle Tom’s Cabin* |
| 1629-1856 | Trample the Crucifix persecution in Japan |
| 1843-1864 | Ta-ping Rebellion in China by “Jesus’ brother” 35 million killed. |
| 1872- | Jehovah’s Witnesses |
| 1813-1873 | “Dr. Livingstone, I presume” |
| 1843-1883 | Sojourner Truth ministry to end slavery |
| 1843-1891 | Missionary from Sierra Leone to Nigeria |
| 1854-1892 | Charles Spurgeon. Almost 3,600 sermons |
| 1895- | Turks & Kurds kill 300K Armenians |
| 1897 | Discovering malaria’s cause helps mission |
| 1830-1898 | George Muller. Helped 10K orphans, 117 schools. Accorded of “raising the poor…” |
| 1825-1899 | Many preachers: Charles Finney, William Booth, Henry Drummond |
| 1848-1899 | Evangelists D.L. Moody & Ira Sankey |
| 1899- | Gideons International started |
| 1906 | Pentecostal C.F. Parham. British-Israelism. Said natives will understand missionaries speaking in tongues. |
| 1886-1918 | Walter Rauschenbusch preaches the social gospel. He denied Jesus died for our sins. |
| 1872-1918 | Julius Wellhausen (JEPD theory) |
| 1922- | Communist persecutions Europe & Asia |
| 1888-1931 | C.T. Studd, Cricket player turned missionary |
| 1834- | Cam Townsend. Wycliffe Bible translators |
| 1891-1935 | Billy Sunday, famous American evangelist |
| 1924-1937 | Shantung Baptist revival throughout China |
| 1941- | Rudolf Bultmann & higher criticism |
| 1873-1942 | Wilson Carlile. executive. worked in slums |
| 1908-1944 | Aimee S. McPherson, charism. preacher |
| 1944 | Colombia La Violencia kills 300K Protestants |
| 1944 | Chinese missionary John Sung trains 5K 3-person teams in Indonesia |
| 1946 | Dead sea Scrolls found |
| 1948- | World Council of Churches (liberal) |
| 1950 | ~856M Christian 34%. **881K martyrs/year** |
| 1951- | Cru (formerly Campus Crusade for Christ) |
| 1950- | Gustavo Guitierrez & Liberation Theology |
| 1958- | David (Paul) Yonggi Cho 830K church |
| 1962 | Vatican II Council. Still have indulgences |
| 1965- | Chuck Smith, 17K Calvary Chapel churches |
| 1898-1963 | C.S. Lewis *Mere Christianity, Narnia* |
| 1970 | Hal Lindsey, *Late Great Planet Earth* |
| 1964- | Josh McDowell. *More Than a Carpenter* |
| 1971 | In Uganda Idi Amin kills 300K Christians |

**False Religions Without**

Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam have been around for millennia, but the wealth of oil fueled Islamic expansion and terrorism. John 16:2f says, “…Yes, the time is coming that whoever kills you will think that he offers service to God.” (World English Bible)

But there is a new counterfeit on the block, the New Age. This religion claims to offer an easy way to spirituality with few if any obligations.

But the religious viewpoint that has killed the most Christians is atheism, which includes communism. If there is no God, then there is no basis for right and wrong. Or else, as some Communists think, the only basis for what is right is whatever helps communism. But if a person is not more valuable in God’s eyes than a germ, since there is no God, why is killing a person any worse than killing a germ?

There is a more recent from of atheism, called “New Atheism” which is basically atheists with an Anti-Christian “chip on their shoulder”. They claim that religion has killed more people than anything else. While if you include Islam (with Tamerlane and Mahmud of Ghazni), religion has killed a lot, so has atheism with Stalin, the Gang of Four, and Pol Pot. But we don’t follow a religion, or even a church, but we are to follow Jesus, who is called the Prince of Peace.

**Spiritual Counterfeits Within**

But there is a more sinister threat; false brethren within the church. The lighter green on the chart are a few examples of liberal theology, that does not hold to the Bible as God’s Word. Rather than be used by God to spread his message, they use the church and the Bible to teach their own messages. Some deny the physical resurrection of Jesus, deny that His death on the cross paid for our sins, deny the homosexuality and heterosexual immorality are sins,

Denominations where this false, liberal theology are rampant are the Episcopal church, Presbyterian Church USA, Evangelical Lutheran Church, United Methodist Church, and Disciples of Christ. But note that other Presbyterians, Lutherans, and Methodists are not necessarily that way.

But the blame is not just on the false brothers and sisters who claim to be Christians but do not hold Jesus as Lord of their life. Part of the blame also falls on genuine Christians who do not separate from these, despite their denying crucial doctrines of the faith.

**There are Great Opportunities Too**

But with these greater challenges come greater opportunities. Evangelists of past generations did great things with radio and TV. The Jesus film, and the internet give us so many more tools to rapidly share the gospel. There are times, like John 9:4 says “…The night is coming, when no one can work.” We should use these tools while we can.

There might come a day when the internet will not be so friendly to Christians. We should both cherish and use what we have while we can.

The mass media of TV, social media, and the internet are “power factors” that can multiply our work; but unfortunately, they can also magnify our mistakes. As an example, a couple of well-respected Christian books incorrectly say that from just quotes of Christians in the first three centuries would could reconstruct every verse of the New Testament except for eleven verses. This has been on the Internet, on atheist and Muslim sites, as a falsehood that Christians tell. The real number is not 11, but about 2,859, or 36%. We need to correct that and be careful that what we say is true. For anything that we say on social media or the internet, we need to remember that someone hostile to Christianity could copy and paste our words and preserve what we said. So make sure you speak out of love, in the right tone.

**Verses for Us to Remember**

Matthew 24:9-14 “Then they will deliver you up to oppression and will kill you. You will be hated by all of the nations for my name’s sake. Then many will stumble, and will deliver up one another, and will hate one another. Many false prophets will arise and will lead many astray. Because iniquity will be multiplied, the love of many will grow cold. But he who endures to the end will be saved. This Good News of the Kingdom will be preached in the whole world for a testimony to all the nations, and then the end will come.” (World English Bible)