



Overview of Christianity

Brian P. Sheets

Overview

Google lists 136 million sources under the heading of “History of Christianity”. This overview is not intended to be a treatise on all aspects of Christianity. Rather, in the context of exploring the existence of this religion as a comparison to Islam, it will provide a very brief overview of selected aspects of Christianity that may be helpful to those for whom Christianity is not their religion of choice.

History

The history of Christianity could be thought of as a study in dichotomy. Founded on the importance of love and faith in Jesus Christ, his violent death was brought about by Roman torture and crucifixion. As his followers began spreading this same message of love and faith, many of them also met violent deaths.

Jesus – the Start of It All

Most historians now believe that Jesus was a real person, born approximately 4 BCE¹. This is in contrast to the original Gregorian calendar², named after Pope Gregory XIII, who introduced it in October 1582. This calendar used the dating system devised by Dionysius Exiguus of Scythia Minor in 525 CE that was widely adopted after 800 CE. Dionysius’ dating system was founded on the notion that our calendar era was based on the traditionally accepted year of Jesus’ birth, with AD (Anno Domini) representing the years starting with this event and BC (Before Christ) denoting years before this event. There is no year zero in this scheme, so the year AD 1 immediately follows the year 1 BC.³ Accordingly, as it pertains to Dionysius’ dating system, Jesus was originally thought of as having been born in 1 AD.

The term “Common Era” (CE) is a year-numbering system (calendar era) for the Julian and Gregorian calendars that refers to the years since the start of the present era, that is, the years beginning with AD 1. The period of time before AD 1 is referred to as before the “Before Common Era” (BCE). The expression has been traced back to 1615 and became more widely used in the mid-19th century by Jewish academics. In the later 20th century, the use of CE and BCE was popularized in academic and scientific publications, and more generally by authors and publishers, wishing to emphasize sensitivity to those who were non-Christians, by not explicitly referencing Jesus as “Christ” and Dominus (“Lord”) through use of the abbreviations “BC” and “AD”.⁴

What we know of Jesus is primarily taken from the Bible. According to the text, Jesus was born to a young Jewish virgin named Mary in the town of Bethlehem, south of Jerusalem in

modern-day Palestine. Christians believe the conception was a supernatural event, with God impregnating Mary via the Holy Spirit. While we know very little about Jesus's childhood, the Bible reveals that he grew up in Nazareth and that he may have learned his earthly craft from his father Joseph, a carpenter.⁵

When he was approximately 30 years old, Jesus started his public ministry after being baptized in the Jordan River by the prophet known as John the Baptist. For approximately three years, he traveled with twelve disciples, teaching large groups of people and performing what have been termed miracles. Some of the most well-known miraculous events included raising a dead man named Lazarus from the grave, walking on water, curing people of illnesses, and casting-out demonic spirits.

The demise of Jesus' ministry may have been politically motivated but shrouded in religion. With more and more people following Jesus, the Jewish governing class of priests and scholars may have become worried that such losses in synagogue attendance would have a corresponding negative impact on the synagogue's finances as well as a dwindling number of Jews over whom they exerted control.

Thus, the resulting hatred exhibited by the Jewish Pharisees and Sadducees against Jesus and his followers continued to grow over time, culminating in his arrest and trial. Although not found guilty of any crime, he was sentenced to crucifixion as a result of the Jerusalem population selecting a criminal for release by the Roman prefect, Pontius Pilate, who served under Emperor Tiberius.

Key to the Christian religion is the belief that Jesus was raised from the dead after he had been in his burial tomb for three days. It is this notion of death and resurrection which supports the Christian belief in resurrection to eternity. In addition, they believe that the Bible is the "inspired Word of God" and, as a result, unerring in its application to mankind.

Although Jesus was crucified in approximately 27 CE, his followers were not referred to as "Christians" until 18 years later in approximately 45 CE. This name did not surface in Jerusalem; rather it was first recognized as having occurred in Antioch in Syria.⁶ Prior to that time, the pre-Christian movement was simply known as "the Way"⁷.

Apostolic Periods

Early Christianity may be divided into 2 phases. The first is known as the 'apostolic period' and represents the time period when the first apostles were alive and led the Church. The first

Christians were essentially all ethnically Jewish or Jewish proselytes. Because of the new religion they were preaching, all were eventually cast out of the Jewish synagogues. As a result, “Christianity acquired an identity distinct from Rabbinic Judaism”.⁸

The second is known as the ‘post-apostolic period’, and represents that period when an early episcopal structure developed and persecution was periodically intense. The Roman persecution of Christians ended in AD 324 when Constantine the Great decreed that Christians could practice without fear of persecution. He then called the First Council of Nicaea in AD 325, beginning of the period of the First Seven Ecumenical Councils.⁹

Early Persecution (30 CE – 324 CE)

Beginning with the Jewish Council in Jerusalem, early Christians were persecuted as a way to eliminate their movement. This later morphed into persecution by the Roman government that lasted for a number of years. Some of the more notable events included:

- Persecution under Emperor Nero¹⁰

The first documented case of state-sponsored persecution of Christians in the Roman Empire begins with Nero (Emperor 54 CE–68 CE). In 64 CE, a great fire broke out in Rome, destroying portions of the city and economically devastating the Roman population. While some people suspected that Nero himself was the arsonist, the purpose of which was to reclaim the land for new construction, he deflected the guilt by accusing Christians of the misdeed. This was his premise for beginning a severe persecution against Christians. Given their Allegiance to God as opposed to the Emperor made Christians an easy scapegoat for the devastating fire. From executions in the arena to burning Christians alive as evening lamps for his gardens, Nero was reported to have been most sadistic.

- The Persecution in Lyon in 177 CE¹¹

The persecution in Lyon in 177 CE was a persecution of Christians in present-day Lyon, France, during the reign of Marcus Aurelius (Emperor 161 CE-180 CE). According to the historian Eusebius, Christians were reportedly slaughtered en masse by being thrown to wild beasts for refusing to renounce their faith.

- Emperor Decius¹²

Under the reign of Emperor Decius (Emperor 249 CE-251 CE), a decree was issued requiring public sacrifice as a way of demonstrating allegiance to the Emperor and the established order. Since such sacrifices were intended to have the population worship the emperor as a god, many Christians refused. Such refusal was punished by arrest, imprisonment, torture, and executions.

- The Great Persecution¹³

The last major Roman persecution of Christians occurred during the reigns of Diocletian (Emperor 284 CE-305 CE) and Galerius (Emperor 305 CE-311 CE). Beginning with a series of four edicts banning Christian practices and ordering the imprisonment of Christian clergy, the persecution intensified until all Christians in the empire were commanded to sacrifice to the Roman gods or face immediate execution. Estimates of Christians killed for religious reasons before the year 313 vary 10,000 to 100,000 people.

Emperor Constantine's Reprieve

In 313, Constantine (Emperor 306 CE – 337 CE) and Licinius (Emperor 308 CE - 324 CE) co-issued the Edict of Milan which decriminalized Christian worship.¹⁴ He later convened the First Council of Nicaea in 325 CE, convened in the Bithynian city of Nicaea, that was made up of Christian bishops. Constantine organized the Council based upon the organizational tenets used by the Roman Senate.¹⁵

This ecumenical council was the first attempt to obtain “a consensus in the Church through an assembly representing all of Christendom. Its main accomplishments were settlement on the issue of the divine nature of God-the-Son and his relationship to God-the-Father, the construction of the first part of the Nicene Creed, establishing uniform observance of the date of Easter, and promulgation of early canon law.”¹⁶ In addition, Council of Nicaea identified Antioch, Rome, and Alexandria as the preeminent churches in the empire.¹⁷ This, in turn, began a rivalry for religious supremacy that would entail substantial fighting and bloodshed between competing factions of the early church.

However, despite the solemn image we may have about religious councils of today, author Philip Jenkins reveals that “In reality, councils rarely bore much resemblance to the intended pattern of collective holiness and usually looked more like the very worst of American political party conventions. The councils were marked by name-calling and backstabbing (both figuratively and literally) by ruthless plotting and backstairs cabals, and by a pervasive threat of intimidation.”¹⁸ “Even after a decisive vote was taken, the council still had to seek ratification from the emperor, which introduced splendid new opportunities for lobbying and influence peddling.”¹⁹

Persecution during the Middle Ages

Primarily due to the expansion of Christianity, executions during this period of time occurred in other regions and by other groups.

- Persecution of Christians by Persians and Jews²⁰

Several months after the Persian conquest in AD 614, an uprising occurred in which a band of young Christians killed the Jewish governor and his council who had been making plans for building of the Third Temple. Shortly thereafter, events grew into a full-scale Christian rebellion, resulting in a battle between Jews and Christians inside Jerusalem. In the aftermath, many Jews were killed and survivors fled to Caesarea, still held by the Persian Army. In response, the Persian Sasanian general Xorheam assembled Judeo-Persian troops laid siege to Jerusalem for 19 days, eventually conquering the city. As a result of the battle, the Christian death toll was estimated to have been as high as 66,509.

- Persecution of Christians under Islamic rule²¹

During the time of the Arab Islamic conquest of the mid-7th century CE, the populations of Mesopotamia and Assyria (modern Iraq, north east Syria, south east Turkey and Kuwait), Syria, Phoenicia (modern Lebanon and coastal Syria), Egypt, Jordan, North Africa (modern Sudan, Tunisia, Morocco, Libya and Algeria), Asia Minor (modern Turkey), and Armenia, were predominantly Christian and non-Arab.

Once these regions were conquered by Muslim forces, Christians were given “dhimmi status”, which was inferior to the status of Muslims. Not only did they face religious persecution, but Christians were also banned from proselytizing in lands conquered by the Muslims on the threat of death. Under sharia law, non-Muslims were obligated to pay excessive taxes, together with periodic heavy ransoms levied upon Christian communities by Muslim rulers, in order to fund Islamic military campaigns. The result was contributing a significant proportion of income to the Islamic states while conversely reducing many Christians to poverty. Consequently, these financial and social hardships forced many Christians to convert to Islam. Christians unable to pay these taxes were forced to surrender their children to the Muslim rulers as payment, who would sell them as slaves to Muslim households where they were forced into Islam.

Tamerlane instigated large-scale massacres of Christians in Mesopotamia, Persia, Asia Minor, and Syria in the 14th century CE. Most of the victims were indigenous Assyrians and Armenians, members of the Assyrian Church of the East and Orthodox

Churches. By the end of these events, this genocide resulted in the mass slaughter of the Assyrian population.

- French Revolution²²

September Massacres, 1792

The de-Christianization of France during the French Revolution in 1789, is a description of a campaign, conducted by various Robespierre-era governments of France, to eliminate any symbol that might be associated with the past history of the former monarchy. The program included the following policies:

- the deportation of clergy and the condemnation of many of them to death,
- the closing, desecration and pillaging of churches, removal of the word "saint" from street names and other acts to banish Christian culture from the public sphere
- removal of statues, plates and other iconography from places of worship
- destruction of crosses, bells and other external signs of worship
- the institution of revolutionary and civic cults, including the Cult of Reason and subsequently the Cult of the Supreme Being,
- the large scale destruction of religious monuments,
- the outlawing of public and private worship and religious education,
- forced marriages of the clergy,
- forced abjuration of priesthood, and
- the enactment of a law on 21 October 1793 making all nonjuring priests and all persons who harbored them liable to death on sight.

- Mass shootings at Nantes, 1793²³

A climax was reached with the celebration of the Goddess "Reason" in Notre Dame Cathedral on 10 November 1793. Under threat of death, imprisonment, military conscription, or loss of income, approximately 20,000 priests were forced to abdicate or hand over their letters of ordination and 6,000 – 9,000 were coerced to marry, many ceasing their ministerial duties. By the end of the decade, approximately 30,000 priests were forced to leave France, and thousands who did not leave were executed. Most of France was left without the services of a priest, deprived of the sacraments, and any nonjuring priest faced the guillotine or deportation to French Guiana.

The March 1793, a conscription requiring Vendéans to fill their district's quota of 300,000 enraged the populace, who took up arms as "The Catholic Army" and fought for the reopening of their parish churches. A massacre of 6,000 Vendée prisoners,

many of them women, took place after the battle of Savenay, along with the drowning of 3,000 Vendée women at Pont-au-Baux and 5,000 Vendée priests. Old men, women, and children were killed by drowning at the Loire River.

In addition to these massacres, farms were destroyed, crops and forests burned, and villages were destroyed. There were many reported atrocities and a campaign of mass killing targeted at residents of the Vendée regardless of their combatant status, political affiliation, age, or gender. By July 1796, the estimated Vendean dead numbered between 117,000 and 500,000, out of a population of around 800,000.

Persecutions from 1800 to Present

As the foregoing demonstrates, there were numerous persecutions of Christian communities and cultures over the ages. These continued during the last two centuries across the globe and involved incidences in China, India, Japan, and Asia. The following statistics provide some measure of understanding on the magnitude of persecution that has occurred in recent times.

- According to Dan Wooding via www.christianity.com, “more people have died for their faith in the 20th century than in all of the previous centuries combined. During this century, we have documented cases in excess of 26 million martyrs. By comparison, from 33 CE to 1900 CE, we have documented only 14 million martyrs.”²⁴
- Just during the year 2012, the Center for the Study of Global Christianity (CSGC) agrees with the Vatican that the worldwide Christian death toll was estimated to be 120,000 people.²⁵
- The following information was contained in a report released by Voice of the Martyrs USA via www.christiantoday.com. The data, compiled by researcher David Barrett, puts the number of Christians martyred since the time of Jesus at 70 million.²⁶
 - The number of Christians systematically exterminated in Nazi Germany is estimated to be one million, while the number of Orthodox Christians and others murdered in Russia between 1917 and 1950 at 15 million.
 - In China, at least 200,000 Christians and foreigners were killed in the Boxer Rebellion of 1898 to 1900. Another 700,000 were killed in communist China between 1950 and 1980.

- The number of Catholics killed in Mexico from the late 1800s to 1930 is estimated at 107,000, while 300,000 Christians are believed to have been killed under Idi Amin in Uganda between 1971 and 1979.

Turmoil from Within

The emergence of the Christian religion has not been without its own internal struggles. Political intrigue, murder, and all-out war have plagued the Catholic church's past and eventually resulted in its being splintered into many different denominations. You are encouraged to read Philip Jenkins book "Jesus Wars" to gain a greater understanding of this bloody conflict within the early church. The following is a brief recap.

- Only ~390 years after Nero's persecutions in 59 CE, the Second Council of Ephesus in 449 CE edicted "May those who divide Christ be divided with the sword, may they be hewn in piece, may they be burned alive!"²⁷
- In his book "Jesus Wars", author Philip Jenkins states that during the 200 years following the Council at Chalcedon (451 CE), there were sufficient "schisms within the church that led directly to the rise of Islam and to the destruction of Christianity through much of Asia and Africa."²⁸
- Regarding the post Chalcedonian splits that resulted into "several great transcontinental divisions-Orthodox/Catholic, Monophysite, Nestorian, and Arian. Although each church may have agreed on a common doctrine, each also declared itself to be the one and only true church and did not associate with the others. By 550 CE, the Christian church was as divided as it would be during the great early-modern split between Catholics, Protestants, and Orthodox."²⁹ This split within ancient Christianity essentially provided an opening for the emergence of the outside powers who would exploit this intra-Christian divisions - first were the Persians and eventually came the Muslims.³⁰
- The attraction of Islam was that it offered a clean break from the historic cycle of violence and persecution that characterized the late-antique Christianity. Islam offered "toleration, peace, and an enviable separation of church and state." Christianity ultimately faded in the lands that fell under Muslim power. "The fifth century struggles involving a war for dominance between the heads of the Rome, Alexandria, Antioch, and Constantinople churches had clear winners and losers. Today, the last three of those cities are now in countries overwhelmingly Muslim in population and tradition, with Christians falling to the minority."³¹

- In the 5th century, bishops and other Christian leaders had tremendous political power independent of the state. In addition, monks served as private militias, doing battle with monks of rival Christian theologies.³²
- The Protestant Reformation was a break from the Catholic Church initiated by Martin Luther and continued by John Calvin, Huldrych Zwingli, and other early Protestant Reformers in 16th-century Europe. It is usually considered to have started with the publication of the Ninety-five Theses by Luther in 1517 and lasted until the end of the Thirty Years' War with the Peace of Westphalia in 1648.³³ Protestants reject the Roman Catholic doctrine of papal supremacy, the sacraments, and the sale of indulgences by the Roman Catholic Church.³⁴

Dark Times in Christianity

Like many religions, the emergence of Christianity has not been without periods of conflict which seem diametrically opposed to its teachings. In addition to the 'turmoil from within' mentioned above, the following is a brief summary of other unfortunate events.

- Christians and Holy War³⁵

Pope Gregory VII (Pope 1073 CE-1085 CE) made the Holy War possible by drastically altering the attitude of the church towards war. Up until this time, a soldier could obtain remission of sins only by giving up arms. But, in 1095 CE, Pope Urban II (Pope 1088 CE-1099 CE) declared at the Council of Clermont that some wars could be deemed as not only a 'just war', but could, in certain cases, rise to the level of a 'holy war'. Under Pope Urban II, soldiers could now obtain forgiveness 'in and through the exercise of his martial skills'. In essence, a holy war was defined by the Roman Catholic Church as "war that is not only just, but also a war that confers positive spiritual merit on those who fight in it".

This was an astounding turn in church philosophy in that a religious faith, based upon the premise of 'love thy neighbor as thyself', could transform its attitude on violence enacted on society.

- Period of Inquisition (1560 CE – 1774 CE)³⁶

The Inquisition is a group of institutions within the judicial system of the Catholic Church whose aim was to combat heresy.

The Spanish Inquisition is often cited as an example of Catholic intolerance and repression. The total number of people who were processed by the Inquisition

throughout its history was approximately 150,000; of which it is estimated that 3,000 – 5,000 were executed.

In the Portuguese Inquisition, those who had converted from Judaism to Catholicism were suspected of retaining their practice of Judaism and, thus subject to persecution. Many of these were originally Spanish Jews, who had left Spain for Portugal. The number of victims is estimated to be around 40,000.

The Goa Inquisition was the office of the Portuguese Inquisition acting in Portuguese India and in the rest of the Portuguese Empire in Asia. It was established in 1560, briefly suppressed from 1774–1778, and finally abolished in 1812. Based on the surviving records, approximately some 16,202 people were brought to trial of which 57 were executed.

The Roman Inquisition, conducted during the second half of the 16th century, was responsible for prosecuting individuals accused of a wide array of crimes relating to religious doctrine or alternate religious doctrine or beliefs. Out of 51,000-75,000 cases judged by the Inquisition in Italy after 1542, around 1,250 resulted in a death sentence.

During the 15th to the 18th centuries was a period of witch trials in Early Modern Europe. The fear was brought about by the belief that malevolent Satanic witches were operating as an organized threat to Christendom. A variety of punishments was imposed upon those who were found guilty of witchcraft, including imprisonment, flogging, fines, or exile. Many people faced capital punishment if they were convicted of witchcraft during this period, either by being burned at the stake, hanged on the gallows, or beheaded. It was during this time (February 1692 and May 1693) that in the U.S., specifically in colonial Salem, Massachusetts, people were convicted of witchcraft and hanged. Most scholars estimate that the total number of executions for witchcraft ranged from 40,000 to 60,000 people.

The legal basis for some inquisitorial activity came from Pope Innocent IV's papal bull *Ad extirpanda* of 1252, which explicitly authorized the use of torture by the Inquisition for eliciting confessions from heretics. By 1256, inquisitors were given absolution if they used instruments of torture. When a suspect was convicted of unrepentant heresy, the inquisitorial tribunal was required by law to hand the person over to the secular authorities for final sentencing, at which point a

magistrate would determine the penalty, which included death by burning, imprisonment for life, or banishment.

Except for the Papal States, the institution of the Inquisition was abolished in Europe in the early 19th century after the Napoleonic Wars (1815). In the Americas, it was abolished after the Spanish American wars of independence (1898).

- Christian terrorism³⁷

Christian terrorism comprises terrorist acts committed by groups or individuals who use Christian motivations or goals for their actions. As with other forms of religious terrorism, Christian terrorists relied on unique interpretations of the Bible. Such groups have cited Old Testament and New Testament scriptures to justify violence and killing or to seek to bring about the "end times" described in the New Testament.

One example of this is the Gunpowder Plot of 1605. This was a failed assassination attempt against King James I of England by a group of provincial English Catholics. The plan was to blow up the House of Lords during the State Opening of England's Parliament in 1605 as the prelude to a popular revolt in the Midlands, during which James's nine-year-old daughter, Princess Elizabeth, was to be installed as the Catholic head of state. The plot was discovered and those involved were captured and executed.

- Forced conversions³⁸

After Constantine became the patron of the Christian faith, Christianity became entangled with government. Anthropologists have shown that, throughout history, religious institutions have been used coercively by governments and that they have used coercion themselves. Augustine (an early North African Christian theologian) found that persuasion by argument was insufficient to the task of correcting heresy. He advocated government force in his Epistle 185, A Treatise Concerning the Correction of the Donatists, justifying coercion from scripture.

Examples of forced conversion to Christianity include: the Christian persecution of paganism under Emperor Theodosius I; the forced conversion and violent assimilation of pagan tribes in medieval Europe; the Inquisition, including its manifestations in Goa, Mexico, Portugal, and Spain, the forced conversion of indigenous children in North America and Australia; and the forced conversion of Hindus in Northeast India in the 1990's.

Basic Christian concepts³⁹

- Christians are monotheistic - they believe there's only one God, and he created the heavens and the earth. They believe in a divine Godhead that consists of three parts: the father (God himself), the son (Jesus Christ), and the Holy Spirit.
- The essence of Christianity revolves around the life, death, and Christian belief on the resurrection of Jesus. Christians believe God sent his son Jesus, the messiah, to save the world. They believe Jesus was crucified on a cross to offer the forgiveness of sins and was resurrected three days after his death before ascending to heaven.
- Christians contend that Jesus will return to earth again in what's known as the 'Second Coming'.
- The Holy Bible includes important scriptures that outline Jesus's teachings, the lives and teachings of major prophets and disciples, and offers instructions for how Christians should live.
- Both Christians and Jews follow the Old Testament of the Bible, but Christians also embrace the New Testament.
- The cross is a symbol of Christianity.
- The most important Christian holidays are Christmas (which celebrates the birth of Jesus) and Easter (which commemorates the resurrection of Jesus).

End Notes

¹ <https://www.livescience.com/45510-anno-domini.html>

² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gregorian_calendar

³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anno_Domini

⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Common_Era

⁵ <https://rlp.hds.harvard.edu/life-and-teachings-jesus>

⁶ http://www.generationword.com/bible_school_notes/Timeline%20of%20Acts.htm

⁷ Good News Bible, Acts 18:26.

⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Christianity

⁹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/History_of_Christianity

¹⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persecution_of_Christians

¹¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persecution_of_Christians

¹² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persecution_of_Christians

¹³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persecution_of_Christians

¹⁴ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Constantine_the_Great

¹⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Council_of_Nicaea

¹⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/First_Council_of_Nicaea

¹⁷ Philip Jenkins, *Jesus Wars* (New York, Harper Collins), 2011), p.78.

¹⁸ Ibid. p.22.

¹⁹ Ibid. p. 24.

²⁰ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persecution_of_Christians

²¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persecution_of_Christians

-
- ²² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persecution_of_Christians
- ²³ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Persecution_of_Christians
- ²⁴ <https://www.christianity.com/church/church-history/timeline/1901-2000/modern-persecution-11630665.html>
- ²⁵ <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2013/september/counting-cost-accurately.html>
- ²⁶ <https://www.christiantoday.com/article/70-million-christians-martyred-faith-since-jesus-walked-earth/38403.htm>
- ²⁷ Philip Jenkins, *Jesus Wars* (New York, Harper Collins), 2011), p.1.
- ²⁸ Ibid. pp. xiii-xiv.
- ²⁹ Ibid. pp. 12-13.
- ³⁰ Ibid. p. 16.
- ³¹ Ibid. pp. 16-17.
- ³² Ibid. p. 28.
- ³³ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reformation>
- ³⁴ <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Protestantism>
- ³⁵ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity_and_violence
- ³⁶ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity_and_violence
- ³⁷ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity_and_violence
- ³⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christianity_and_violence
- ³⁹ <http://www.history.com/topics/history-of-christianity>