

**Time to
Reflect,
Time to
React,
Time to
Stand
Up**

Human Rights and the Christian Church



We have no more thought of using our own powers to escape the arm of authorities than had the Apostles of old. **No more are we ready to keep silent at man's behest when God commands us to speak. For it is, and must remain, the case that we must obey God rather than man.** *Martin Niemöller*

Last sermon before being imprisoned by the Nazi regime of Germany (27 June 1937), as quoted in Religion in the Reich (1939) by Michael Power, p. 142

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<http://themajestysmen.com/here-i-stand-bravery-boldness-martin-luther/>

Christianity, Nazis, and the Alt-Right

- What did the Hebrew Bible say about foreigners, non-Hebrews (Jews as they were later known)?
- What were Jesus' attitudes toward the Gentiles? What principles does he establish for the treatment of non-believers?
- Did the Gospel of John open the door to Anti-Semitism?
- How did reformers like Martin Luther react to Anti-Semitism?
- How did Christians react to Hitler?
- What is the Alt-Right Movement and what is its relation to Christianity and Christian history?
- What can Christians do to keep from repeating the mistakes of the past?

Hebrew Bible Precedent: Treatment of Outsiders “Foreigners” or “zarim”

- Ancient Israel was acquainted with two classes of strangers, **resident aliens** and **foreigners who considered their sojourn in the land more or less temporary**. The latter were referred to as zarim (זָרִים or nokhrim (נוֹכְרִים), terms generally applied to anyone outside the circle the writer had in view (e.g., Ex. 21:8; 29:33).
- They retained their ties to their original home and sought to maintain their former political or social status. On occasion they came as invaders (II Sam. 22:45–46; Obad. 11).
- More often they entered the land in the pursuit of trade and other commercial ventures.
- The usual laws were not applicable to them, and they were **protected by folk traditions concerning the proper treatment of strangers** (cf. Job 31:32) and by special conventions resulting from **contractual arrangements between the Israelites and their neighbors** (cf. I Kings 20:34). Zarim In the legislation of Deuteronomy, **an Israelite may charge a foreigner usury** though he may not do so to a fellow Israelite (Deut. 23:21), and the **septennial remission of debts does not apply to the debts of foreigners** (Deut. 15:3). On the other hand, barred from the cult (Ex. 12:43), **the foreigner was also not bound by the ritual laws**, and it was **permissible to sell him animals that had died a natural death** (Deut. 14:21). The fact that Deuteronomy includes a special prohibition against foreigners' ascending the throne (Deut. 17:15) and that Solomon specifically requested that God listen to their prayers (I Kings 8:41) may indicate the important position some foreigners occupied during the age of the monarchy.

Summary

Zarim or “Foreigners” retained their home status and were not forced to follow Jewish practices. They could be charged interest.

Jewish Virtual Library Strangers and Gentiles
<http://www.jewishvirtuallibrary.org/strangers-and-gentiles>

Hebrew Bible Precedent: Treatment of Outsiders “Resident Aliens” or “Ger”

- In contrast with the foreigner, the ger (גֵּר) the resident alien, lived more or less permanently in his adopted community. Like the Arabic jār, he was **“the protected stranger,”** who was totally dependent on his patrons for his well-being. As W.R. Smith noted, his status was an extension of that of the guest, whose person was inviolable, though **he could not enjoy all the privileges of the native**. He, in turn, **was expected to be loyal to his protectors** (Gen. 21:23) and to be **bound by their laws** (Num. 15:15–16).
- **Prior to the Exodus**, resident aliens as a class were unknown in Israel. On the contrary, **the Israelites themselves were gerim** (Ex. 22:20) as were their ancestors (Gen. 15:13; cf. 23:4; Ex. 2:22). Aliens were apparently attracted to their ranks when they left Egypt (Ex. 12:38, 48), and their numbers were further augmented during the time of the conquest of Canaan (Josh. 9:3ff.).
- By far **the greatest number of gerim consisted of the earlier inhabitants of Canaan**, many of whom were **neither slain** as Deuteronomy commands (cf. e.g., 7:2) **nor reduced to total slavery** (cf. I Kings 5:29; II Chron. 2:16–17). **Immigrants** also were numbered among them – foreigners who sought refuge in times of drought and famine (cf. Ruth 1:1) and refugees who fled before invading armies.
- Since **all of the landed property belonged to Israelites** (cf. Lev. 25:23–24), the gerim were **largely day laborers and artisans** (Deut. 24: 14–15; cf. 29:10). Both the Book of the Covenant which classed them among those who were dependent (Ex. 23:12) and the Decalogue which referred to them as “your stranger” (gerkha; Ex. 20:10; cf. Deut. 5:14) attest their inferior position in Israelite society. While a few acquired wealth (cf. Lev. 25:47), **most of them were poor and were treated as the impoverished natives**. Thus, they were permitted to **share in the fallen fruit in the vineyard** (Lev. 19:10), **the edges of the field**, and the **gleanings of the harvest** (Lev. 23:22; see also Poor, Provisions *for). Like the other poor folk they were also **granted a share in the tithe of the third year** (Deut. 14:29) and the produce of the Sabbatical Year (Lev. 25:6).

Summary

“Ger” Resident Aliens Earlier inhabitants and immigrants. Could not own property, Allowed only harvest remnants, but did get a part of the tithe.

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The “Gerim”



Ruth of the Biblical story was a Ger

- With the passage of time, **the gerim were assimilated culturally and religiously.**
- Doeg the Edomite, for instance, was a worshiper of YHWH by the time of Saul (I Sam. 21:8), as was Uriah the Hittite in the reign of David (II Sam. 11:11).
- Hence, the ger, in contrast to the nokhri, was **required in many cases to conform to the ritual practices of the native Israelite.** Thus, gerim were subject to laws dealing with ritual purification (Num. 19:2–10), incest (Lev. 18:26) and some of the food taboos (Lev. 17:10–16; but cf. Deut. 14:21). They were expected to observe the Sabbath (Ex. 20:10; Deut. 5:14), participate in the religious festivals (Deut. 16:11, 14), and fast on the Day of Atonement (Lev. 16:29).
- They were permitted to offer up burnt offerings (Lev. 17:8; 22:18; Num. 15:14ff.) and, if circumcised, even to sacrifice the paschal lamb (Ex. 12:48–49; Num. 9:14). Indeed, they, no less than the Israelites, were expected to be loyal to YHWH (Lev. 20:2; cf. Ezek. 14:5–8).

Since the foreigners' defenselessness made them vulnerable, **the Israelites were frequently reminded of God's special concern for the weak** (Ex. 22:21–22; cf. Deut. 10:17–19) and were enjoined not to molest them (Ex. 22:20; cf. Jer. 7:6). They were not to be abused (Deut. 24:14) and were to **receive equal treatment before the law** (Deut. 1:16; cf. 24:17; 27:19). In case of accidental homicide, the cities of refuge were open to them as well (Num. 35:15), for there was to be "one standard for stranger and citizen alike" (Lev. 24:22). Moreover, the Israelites were enjoined to be especially solicitous of the welfare of the ger and to befriend him as one of their own, **since they could recall the sufferings of their own people in the land of Egypt** (Lev. 19:34; cf. Deut. 10:19).

Summary
 Hebrew scriptures reminded them to be good to the weak, and the Ger were to be treated equally before the law. Over time they assimilated to the Hebrew culture and were allowed participation in rituals.

Jesus and the Gentiles

Jesus' primary mission was to the Jews

- Matthew 10:5-6: “Go not into the way of the gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans enter ye not: But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel.”

However ...

- Matthew 15:21-28 Jesus did help a Canaanite [Ger] woman whose daughter was possessed by a demon.
- Matthew 28:19 Jesus extends the Christian mission to Gentiles: “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations. . . .”
- John 10:16 Jesus refers obliquely to the Gentiles: “And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.”



<https://ezracommentary.wordpress.com/2016/02/28/mark-07v24-30-jesus-among-the-gentiles/>

“The Jews” in the Gospel of John

From *“Anti-Judaism” in the Gospel of John* <http://www.westmont.edu/~fisk/Lecture%20Outlines/Anti-JudaismInJohnAndJohn8.htm>

The Synoptic Gospels portray Jesus as at odds with specific segments of the Jews, particularly the powerful ruling class of Sadducees, as well as some legalistic Pharisees, but overall, Jesus speaks as a Jew to fellow Jews within the predominantly within Pharisaiic Rabbinic tradition. The Gospel of John, probably penned late in the first century CE, a period when Judaism and the Christian faith had fully and bitterly parted, portrays a different relationship between Jesus and the Jews.

1. Evidence that the author stands removed from Judaism

- 2:13; 11:55 “the Passover of the Jews”
- 5:1; 6:4; 7:2 “feast of the Jews”

2. Negative Portrayal of “the Jews”

The phrase “*The Jews*” used 71 times in John (and only 16 in the Synoptics), usually by the narrator

- typically *the Jews* are on the side of the “world”--those who do not believe
- 3:1-4; 6:52; 7:35; 8:57 *the Jews* fail to understand Jesus
- 5:16-18; 7:1; 10:31, 39; 11:8, 53 *the Jews* persecute Jesus and seek to kill him
- 5:39-40; 7:19; 8:39-44; 10:31-39 *the Jews* are untrue to their tradition/Torah



The Priests Ask Jesus By Whose Authority He Acts by James Tissot

<http://truthbook.com/jesus/passion-of-the-christ/who-killed-jesus-and-why-did-they-want-him-dead>

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3. Negative Portrayals of the Leaders

- 19:15 the leaders seem more faithful to Caesar than to God
- 9:40-41; 11:46-53 the Pharisees are blind, false teachers
- 4:1; 7:32; 8:13; 12:42 the Pharisees oppose Jesus
- 12:10; 19:6, 15, 21 the chief priests oppose Jesus



<https://www.lds.org/bible-videos/videos/render-unto-caesar-and-unto-god?lang=eng>

“The Jews” in the Gospel of John

From “Anti-Judaism” in the Gospel of John <http://www.westmont.edu/~fisk/Lecture%20Outlines/Anti-JudaismInJohnAndJohn8.htm>

4. Jewish Responsibility for *Jesus’ death*

- 18:3, 12, 19-24; 19:15-16 Jewish responsibility declared
- 18:31, 38-40; 19:4-8, 12-16 Pilate succumbs to the desires of the Jewish leaders
- 18:38; 19:4, 6, 12 Pilate declares Jesus innocent



https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sanhedrin_trial_of_Jesus

“The Jews” in the Gospel of John

From “Anti-Judaism” in the Gospel of John <http://www.westmont.edu/~fisk/Lecture%20Outlines/Anti-JudaismInJohnAndJohn8.htm>

- **5. Jewish Links with the Devil**
- John 8:41b -44: “We are not illegitimate children,” they protested. “The only Father we have is God himself.”⁴² Jesus said to them, “If God were your Father, you would love me, for I have come here from God. I have not come on my own; God sent me.⁴³ Why is my language not clear to you? Because you are unable to hear what I say.⁴⁴ **You belong to your father, the devil, and you want to carry out your father’s desires. He was a murderer from the beginning, not holding to the truth, for there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks his native language, for he is a liar and the father of lies.**⁴⁵ Yet because I tell the truth, you do not believe me!⁴⁶ Can any of you prove me guilty of sin? If I am telling the truth, why don’t you believe me?⁴⁷ Whoever belongs to God hears what God says. The reason you do not hear is that you do not belong to God.”
- **6. Occasional Positive Portrayals**
- 7:15; 10:24; 11:26-27 neutral or positive stance toward Jesus
- 3:1-15; 7:50-52; 19:39 Nicodemus seeks Jesus, defends Jesus, helps bury him

Mel Gibson [who based his film *Jesus of Nazareth* on the Gospel of John, when arrested for drunk driving, “blurted out a barrage of anti-Semitic remarks about “(profanity redacted) Jews.” Gibson yelled out, “The Jews are responsible for all the wars in the world!”

“Transcript: Mel Gibson arrest.” *Los Angeles Times*. Copyright © 2017, Los Angeles Times <http://www.latimes.com/local/la-gibson1aug01-transripit-story.html>

Who are “The Jews” in the Gospel of John?

From “Anti-Judaism” in the Gospel of John <http://www.westmont.edu/~fisk/Lecture%20Outlines/Anti-JudaismInJohnAndJohn8.htm>

- *all* Jews (but the disciples and other followers were Jews; cf.9:22)
- the religious *leaders* at the time John wrote
- the *majority* of Jews at the time John wrote
- the *leaders and/or the masses* at the time of Jesus' ministry

Possible Explanations for Anti-Jewish Sentiments in John

From “Anti-Judaism” in the Gospel of John <http://www.westmont.edu/~fisk/Lecture%20Outlines/Anti-JudaismInJohnAndJohn8.htm>

- Ultimately, Pilate and the Romans are blamed for Jesus’ death (19:14-24)
- ***The Jews*** and ***the Pharisees*** seem to function synonymously; elsewhere ***the Jews*** may stand for the ***priestly*** classes.
- The word “multitudes” is used of believers, who would be Jewish.
- Early Jewish Christians saw themselves as insiders being cast out.



5 FAST FACTS Why the JEWS Rejected JESUS CHRIST as the MESSIAH !!!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J-kmxplfWZI>

Summary

- Jewish practices established the exclusion of resident aliens: inability to own property, lending them money with interest, offering low paying labor jobs, etc. Over time many *Gerim* assimilated.
- Jesus was a Jew speaking to Jews, and his ministry focused predominantly on the Jewish community. His challenge to the Jews was targeted to hypocrisy and legalism.
- By the time of the writing of the **Gospel of John**, however, Judaism and Christianity had split, and the Gospel's **predominantly negative portrayal of Jews opened the door to centuries of Anti-Semitism**.
- Anti-Semitism continued to be a part of the teaching of the **Christian Fathers**.
- Though much of the work of the Protestant Reformers was positive, because the Jews did not respond to his teachings on "justification by faith alone," **Luther and other reformers denounced Jews and Judaism based in isolated and misappropriated Old and New Testament passages.**

John Chrysostom (344-407 A.D.) – One of the "greatest" of church fathers; known as "The Golden Mouthed." A missionary preacher famous for his sermons and addresses.

The synagogue is **worse than a brothel...it is the den of scoundrels and the repair of wild beasts...the temple of demons** devoted to idolatrous cults...the refuge of brigands and dabauchees, and the cavern of devils. It is a criminal assembly of Jews...a place of meeting for the assassins of Christ... a house worse than a drinking shop...a den of thieves, a house of ill fame, a dwelling of iniquity, the refuge of devils, a gulf and a abyss of perdition."..."**I would say the same things about their souls...** As for me, I hate the synagogue...I hate the Jews for the same reason.

From "The Roots of Christian Anti-Semitism" by Malcolm Hay

See Anti-Semitism and the Church Fathers:
<http://www.yashanet.com/library/fathers.htm>

Martin Luther and the Reformation

- Luther taught that salvation and, consequently, eternal life are not earned by good deeds but are received only as the **free gift of God's grace through the believer's faith in Jesus Christ as redeemer from sin**. His theology challenged the authority and office of the Pope by teaching that the Bible is the only source of divinely revealed knowledge from God^[4] and opposed sacerdotalism by considering **all baptized Christians to be a holy priesthood**.^[5]
- His **translation of the Bible into the German vernacular** (instead of Latin) made it more accessible to the laity, an event that had a tremendous impact on both the church and German culture. It fostered the development of a standard version of the German language, added several principles to the art of translation,^[6] and influenced the writing of an English translation, the Tyndale Bible.^[7]
- **His hymns influenced the development of singing in Protestant churches**.^[8] His marriage to Katharina von Bora, a former nun, set a model for the practice of clerical marriage, allowing Protestant clergy to marry.^[9]

Wiki Source

In two of his later works, Luther expressed antagonistic views towards Jews, writing that Jewish homes and synagogues should be destroyed, their money confiscated, and liberty curtailed. Condemned by virtually every Lutheran denomination, these statements and their influence on antisemitism have contributed to his controversial status.[10]



Martin Luther "On the Jews and Their Lies"

Texts from the History of the Relationship
 MARTIN LUTHER, "On the Jews and Their Lies" (1543) - Parts 11-13
 Written by Martin Luther
 [Martin H. Bertram, translator, Luther's Works (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1971)]
 Part 11

What shall we Christians do with this rejected and condemned people, the Jews? Since they live among us, **we dare not tolerate their conduct, now that we are aware of their lying and reviling and blaspheming.** If we do, we become sharers in their lies, cursing and blasphemy. Thus we cannot extinguish the unquenchable fire of divine wrath, of which the prophets speak, nor can we convert the Jews. With prayer and the fear of God we must practice a sharp mercy to see whether we might save at least a few from the glowing flames. We dare not avenge ourselves. Vengeance a thousand times worse than we could wish them already has them by the throat. I shall give you my sincere advice:

- First, to **set fire to their synagogues or schools and to bury and cover with dirt whatever will not burn**, so that no man will ever again see a stone or cinder of them. This is to be done in honor of our Lord and of Christendom, so that God might see that we are Christians, and do not condone or knowingly tolerate such public lying, cursing, and blaspheming of his Son and of his Christians.

In Deuteronomy 13:12
 Moses writes that **any city that is given to idolatry shall be totally destroyed by fire**, and nothing of it shall be preserved. If he were alive today, he would be the first to set fire to the synagogues and houses of the Jews. For in Deuteronomy 4:2 and 12:32 he commanded very explicitly that nothing is to be added to or subtracted from his law. And Samuel says in I Samuel 15:23 that disobedience to God is idolatry.

<http://www.ccrj.us/dialogika-resources/primary-texts-from-the-history-of-the-relationship/273-luther-1543>

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- Second, **I advise that their houses also be razed and destroyed.** For they pursue in them the same aims as in their synagogues. Instead they might be lodged under a roof or in a barn, like the gypsies. This will bring home to them the fact that they are not masters in our country, as they boast, but that they are living in exile and in captivity, as they incessantly wail and lament about us before God.
- Third, I advise that **all their prayer books and Talmudic writings**, in which such idolatry, lies, cursing, and blasphemy are taught, **be taken from them.**



Final Sale: The End of Jewish Owned Businesses in Nazi Berlin
 BU Today, 12.03.2014 By Samantha Pickette
<https://www.bu.edu/today/2014/final-sale/>

<http://www.ccrj.us/dialogika-resources/primary-texts-from-the-history-of-the-relationship/273-luther-1543>

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- **Fourth, I advise that their rabbis be forbidden to teach henceforth on pain of loss of life and limb.** For they have justly forfeited the right to such an office by holding the poor Jews captive with the saying of Moses (Deuteronomy 17:10) in which he commands them to obey their teachers on penalty of death, although Moses clearly adds: "what they teach you in accord with the law of the Lord." Those villains ignore that. They wantonly employ the poor people's obedience contrary to the law of the Lord and infuse them with this poison, cursing, and blasphemy. In the same way the pope also held us captive with the declaration in Matthew 16:18, "You are Peter," etc., inducing us to believe all the lies and deceptions that issued from his devilish mind. He did not teach in accord with the word of God, and therefore he forfeited the right to teach.

This photo was published with a RECENT story about Neo-Nazis in Germany on the need for Jews not to wear anything identifying them as Jewish..



<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1344682/Leading-rabbi-warns-German-Jews-wear-clothes-identify-religion-spate-neo-Nazi-attacks.html>

<http://www.ccrj.us/dialogika-resources/primary-texts-from-the-history-of-the-relationship/273-luther-1543>

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- **Fifth, I advise that safe-conduct on the highways be abolished completely for the Jews.** For they have no business in the countryside, since they are not lords, officials, tradesmen, or the like. Let them stay at home. I have heard it said that a rich Jew is now traveling across the country with twelve horses his ambition is to become a Kokhba devouring princes, lords, lands, and people with his usury, so that the great lords view it with jealous eyes. If you great lords and princes will not forbid such usurers the highway legally, some day a troop may gather against them, having learned from this booklet the true nature of the Jews and how one should deal with them and not protect their activities. For you, too, must not and cannot protect them unless you wish to become participants in their abominations in the sight of God. Consider carefully what good could come from this, and prevent it.

<http://www.ccrj.us/dialogika-resources/primary-texts-from-the-history-of-the-relationship/273-luther-1543>

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- Sixth, **I advise that usury be prohibited to them, and that all cash and treasure of silver and gold be taken from them and put aside for safekeeping.** The reason for such a measure is that, as said above, they have no other means of earning a livelihood than usury, and by it they have stolen and robbed from us all they possess. Such money should now be used in no other way than the following: Whenever a Jew is sincerely converted, he should be handed one hundred, two hundred, or three hundred florins, as personal circumstances may suggest. With this he could set himself up in some occupation for the support of his poor wife and children, and the maintenance of the old or feeble. For such evil gains are cursed if they are not put to use with God's blessing in a good and worthy cause
- But when they boast that Moses allowed or commanded them to exact usury from strangers, citing Deuteronomy 23:20 apart from this they cannot adduce as much as a letter in their support we must tell them that
- there are **two classes of Jews or Israelites.** The first comprises those whom Moses, in compliance with God's command, led from Egypt into the land of Canaan. To them he issued his law, which they were to keep in that country and not beyond it, and then only until the advent of the Messiah.
- The **other Jews are those of the emperor and not of Moses. These date back to the time of Pilate, the procurator of the land of Judah.** For when the latter asked them before the judgment seat, "Then what shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?" they all said, "Crucify him, crucify him!" He said to them, "Shall I crucify your King?" They shouted in reply, "**We have no king but Caesar!**" [Matt. 27:22; John 19:15]. God had not commanded of them such submission to the emperor; they gave it voluntarily...

<http://www.ccrj.us/dialogika-resources/primary-texts-from-the-history-of-the-relationship/273-luther-1543>

John Calvin

- *A Response To Questions and Objections of a Certain Jew*
- *Their [the Jews] rotten and unbending stiffneckedness deserves that they be oppressed unendingly and without measure or end and that they die in their misery without the pity of anyone.*
- Excerpt from "Ad Quaelstiones et Objecta Juaei Cuiusdam Responsio," by John Calvin; The Jew in Christian Theology, Gerhard Falk, McFarland and Company, Inc., Jefferson, NC and London, 1931.

The Christian Church has a long history of Anti-Semitism. See "**Anti-Semitism of the 'Church Fathers'**" **Yasha.net.**
<http://www.yashanet.com/library/fathers.htm>

Summary

- Nineteen hundred years of Christian writings, practices of exclusion and discrimination and murder, along with Luther's book, opened doors for the later Nazi party.
- Luther's work and Christian history was used to legitimate their policies.
- They tapped into a recent term for hatred of the Jews, **anti-Semitism** ...



<http://www.worldfuturefund.org/Reports/Luther.html>

Anti-Semitism

Shoshana Koff. Christianity's Role in the Holocaust. Guided History. <http://blogs.bu.edu/guidedhistory/jews-in-russia-and-eastern-europe/shoshana-koff/>

- Anti-Semitism as a term to describe hatred of Jews was not used until the **second half of the nineteenth century**, but a bias against Jews had existed for thousands of years. This resentment of the Jews as a people can be traced back to theological roots as well as practical concerns in early Europe. The most significant and accepted origin of anti-Judaism is the death of Jesus. **Jews were branded as the murderers of Christ** and Jesus' followers developed a deep hatred of them. This undertone to Christianity endured over time and became an inherent facet of the religion.
- Later, when Jews attempted to assimilate into European societies, they faced strong discrimination and resistance. Other citizens viewed them as economic competition.
- In addition, negative stereotypes evolved about the Jews in relation to their association with moneylending. Christian anti-Jewish ideals influenced Hitler during the Holocaust and helped him rally the citizenry against the Jews.



Christian Anti-Semitism

- The document **Dabru Emet** was issued by over 220 rabbis and intellectuals from all branches of Judaism in 2000 as a statement about Jewish-Christian relations. This document states,
- **"Nazism was not a Christian phenomenon. Without the long history of Christian anti-Judaism and Christian violence against Jews, Nazi ideology could not have taken hold nor could it have been carried out. Too many Christians participated in, or were sympathetic to, Nazi atrocities against Jews. Other Christians did not protest sufficiently against these atrocities. But Nazism itself was not an inevitable outcome of Christianity."**
- According to American historian Lucy Dawidowicz, antisemitism has a long history within Christianity. The line of "antisemitic descent" from **Luther**, the author of **On the Jews and Their Lies**, to Hitler is "easy to draw." In her *The War Against the Jews, 1933-1945*, she contends that Luther and Hitler were obsessed by the "demonologized universe" inhabited by Jews. Dawidowicz writes that **the similarities between Luther's anti-Jewish writings and modern antisemitism are no coincidence, because they derived from a common history of Judenhass**, which can be traced to Haman's advice to Ahasuerus. Although modern German antisemitism also has its roots in German nationalism and the liberal revolution of 1848, **Christian antisemitism she writes is a foundation that was laid by the Roman Catholic Church and "upon which Luther built."**[3]

Nazi antisemitism Wiki source

- On April 26, 1933 Hitler declared during a meeting with Roman Catholic Bishop Wilhelm Berning (de) of Osnabrück:
- **"I have been attacked because of my handling of the Jewish question. The Catholic Church considered the Jews pestilent for fifteen hundred years, put them in ghettos, etc., because it recognized the Jews for what they were. In the epoch of liberalism the danger was no longer recognized. I am moving back toward the time in which a fifteen-hundred-year-long tradition was implemented. I do not set race over religion, but I recognize the representatives of this race as pestilent for the state and for the Church, and perhaps I am thereby doing Christianity a great service by pushing them out of schools and public functions."**
- The transcript of this discussion contains no response by Bishop Berning. Martin Rhonheimer does not consider this unusual since, in his opinion, for a Catholic Bishop in 1933 there was nothing particularly objectionable "in this historically correct reminder".[30]
- The Nazis used **Martin Luther's book, On the Jews and Their Lies** (1543), to claim a moral righteousness for their ideology. Luther even went so far as to advocate the murder of those Jews who refused to convert to Christianity, writing that "we are at fault in not slaying them".[31]
- Archbishop Robert Runcie has asserted that: "Without centuries of Christian antisemitism, Hitler's passionate hatred would never have been so fervently echoed...because for centuries Christians have held Jews collectively responsible for the death of Jesus. On Good Friday Jews, have in times past, cowered behind locked doors with fear of a Christian mob seeking 'revenge' for deicide. Without the poisoning of Christian minds through the centuries, the Holocaust is unthinkable."[1]:21 The dissident Catholic priest **Hans Küng** has written that **"Nazi anti-Judaism was the work of godless, anti-Christian criminals. But it would not have been possible without the almost two thousand years' pre-history of 'Christian' anti-Judaism..."**[2]:169

Hitler's "Positive Christianity"

- **Positive Christianity** (German: *Positives Christentum*) was a movement within Nazi Germany which **mixed ideas of racial purity and Nazi ideology with elements of Christianity**. Hitler used the term in Article 24^[1] of the 1920 Nazi Party Platform, stating: "**the Party represents the standpoint of Positive Christianity**".
- Non-denominational, the term could be variously interpreted. Positive Christianity allayed fears among Germany's Christian majority as expressed through their hostility towards the established churches of large sections of the Nazi movement.^[2]
- In 1937, Hans Kerrl, the Nazi Minister for Church Affairs, explained that "Positive Christianity" was not "dependent upon the Apostle's Creed", nor was it dependent on "faith in Christ as the son of God", upon which Christianity relied, rather, it was represented by the Nazi Party:
- "The Fuehrer is the herald of a new revelation", he said.^[3] To accord with Nazi antisemitism, Positive Christianity advocates also sought to deny the Semitic origins of Christ and the Bible. In such elements Positive Christianity separated itself from Nicene Christianity and is considered apostate by all of the historical Trinitarian Christian churches, whether Catholic, Orthodox or Protestant.

Positive Christianity

- Hitler was supportive of Christianity in public, but he was hostile to it in private. Hitler identified himself as a Christian in an April 12, 1922 speech.^[4] Hitler also identified himself as a Christian in *Mein Kampf*. However, historians, including Ian Kershaw and Laurence Rees, characterize his acceptance of the term "Positive Christianity" and his involvement in religious policy as being driven by opportunism, and by a pragmatic recognition of the political importance of the Christian Churches in Germany.^[2] Nevertheless, efforts by the regime to impose a Nazified "positive Christianity" on a state controlled Protestant Reich Church essentially failed, and it resulted in the formation of the dissident Confessing Church which saw great danger to Germany from the "new religion".^[5] The Catholic Church also denounced the creed's pagan myth of "blood and soil" in the 1937 papal encyclical *Mit brennender Sorge*.
- The official Nazi ideologist Alfred Rosenberg played an important role in the development of "positive Christianity", which he conceived in discord with both Rome and the Protestant church, whom he called "negative Christianity".^[6] Richard Steigmann-Gall queries whether this made Rosenberg a genuine anti-Christian.^[7] Rosenberg conceived of Positive Christianity as a transitional faith and amid the failure of the regime's efforts to control Protestantism through the agency of the pro-Nazi "German Christians",
- Rosenberg, along with fellow radicals Robert Ley and Baldur von Schirach backed the neo-pagan "German Faith Movement", which more completely rejected Judeo-Christian conceptions of God.^[8] During the war, Rosenberg drafted a plan for the future of religion in Germany which would see the "expulsion of the foreign Christian religions" and replacement of the Bible with *Mein Kampf* and the cross with the swastika in Nazified churches.^[9]

C N Trueman "The Church in Nazi Germany"
 historylearningsite.co.uk. The History Learning Site, 9 Mar 2015. 16 Aug 2016.
<http://www.historylearningsite.co.uk/nazi-germany/the-church-in-nazi-germany/>

The Church in Nazi Germany



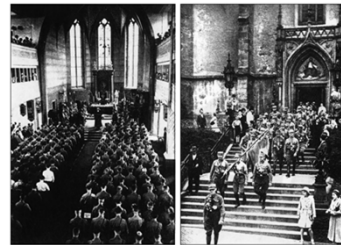
Nazi photos showing Christian influence
 compiled by Jim Walker
 created: 20 May 1998
 additions: 02 July 2008
<https://www.nobeliefs.com/nazis.htm>

- The Church in Nazi Germany was subjected to as much pressure as any other organisation in Germany. **Any perceived threat to Hitler could not be tolerated** – and the churches of Germany potentially presented the Nazis with numerous threats.
- In 1933, the Catholic Church had viewed the Nazis as a barrier to the spread of communism from Russia. In this year, Hitler and the **Catholic Church signed an agreement that he would not interfere with the Catholic Church while the Church would not comment on politics.**
- However, **this only lasted until 1937, when Hitler started a concerted attack on the Catholic Church arresting priests etc.** In 1937, the pope, Pius XI, issued his “Mit brennender Sorge” statement (“With burning anxiety”) over what was going on in Germany. However, there was never a total clampdown on the Catholic Church in Germany. It was a world-wide movement with much international support.

NAZIS AND GERMAN PROTESTANTS



Nazi photos showing Christian influence
 compiled by Jim Walker
 created: 20 May 1998
 additions: 02 July 2008
<https://www.nobeliefs.com/nazis.htm>



- The **Protestant Church** was really a collection of a number of churches – hence they were easier to deal with. The Protestants themselves were split.
- The “**German Christians**” were lead by **Ludwig Muller** [photo on left] who believed that any member of the church who had Jewish ancestry should be sacked from the church. Muller supported Hitler and in 1933 he was given the title of “**Reich Bishop**”.

NAZIS AND GERMAN PROTESTANTS

First they came for the Socialists, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Socialist.

Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Trade Unionist.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—
Because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.

Martin Niemoller



Wiki photo

- Those who **opposed** the views of Muller were called the **“Confessing Church”**. This was led by **Martin Niemoller**. He was famous in Germany as he had been a World War One U-boat captain. Therefore, he was potentially an embarrassing foe to the Nazis. Regardless of this, he was not safe from the Gestapo who arrested him for opposing Hitler. Niemoller was **sent to a concentration camp for 7 years where he was kept in solitary confinement**. **Many other Confessional Church members suffered the same fate.**

Baptist World Congress Berlin, August 1934

- Two days before it began, German President Paul von Hindenburg died and Hitler -- formerly the chancellor -- became Germany's absolute dictator. In an attempt to demonstrate an acceptance of Christianity before the world, the backdrop of the BWA speakers' platform included a giant swastika flag, a cross and portraits of famous Baptists.
- **Speakers who appeared in front of the swastika** included **Southern Baptist George W. Truett**, who was **elected BWA president at the meeting**.
- During the Congress, **Bishop Müller** of the state church told a BWA delegation that **his objective was to secure preaching of the Gospel in Germany, that he regarded Baptists as brothers and that they would not be incorporated into the national church**.
- **The BWA responded with a resolution of appreciation.**
- Baptists "went along with the times," Wardin, the author of many books on Baptists and other Protestants in Eastern Europe, said. **"And in a totalitarian regime, it's easier to go along with the times."**



Fraternal relations between Baptists and Nazis extended beyond the BWA meeting. Although German Baptists suffered persecution for 100 years before Hitler's rise, **Nazis used the police to protect Baptists from harassment and granted them favorable locations for ministry**. Baptist evangelistic work expanded under the Nazi government, and when the **Gestapo forced Pentecostal and Plymouth Brethren denominations to disband, some of their congregations joined the German Baptist Union**, swelling its membership.

When Germany invaded Poland and Russia, German-speaking Baptists were allowed to form associations there under the purview of the German Baptist Union.

In isolated instances German Baptists opposed Nazi policies, as in 1934 when the editor of a popular Baptist publication urged disobedience of an order that boys not discuss religion in the Hitler Youth.

But the 1937 report of the German Baptist Union's secretary generally summed up the sentiments of German Baptists: **"The relations with the government offices, especially to the Church Ministry and to the Secret Police were uninterruptedly friendly."**

Baptists 'tumbled' by failure to oppose Nazis
by David Rosch, posted Thursday, September 18, 2014 (3 years ago) Baptist Press.
<http://www.baptists.net/43382/baptists-humbled-by-failure-to-oppose-nazis>

Roman Catholic Reaction

**1958!!
1965?!**
Why so Long?

- In the Roman Catholic realm, one of the most concrete early actions was Pope John XXIII's in **1958** removing the phrase "**the perfidious Jews**" from the **Good Friday liturgy**. It was also this beloved pope who convened the Second Vatican Council, which in its final session in **1965** approved the famous *Nostra Aetate* declaration. Its central assertions about the Jews read as follows:
- *"Even though the Jewish authorities and those who followed their lead pressed for the death of Christ (see Jn 19:6), neither all Jews indiscriminately at that time, nor Jews today, can be charged with the crimes committed during his passion. It is true that the church is the new people of God, yet the Jews should not be spoken of as rejected or accursed as if this followed from holy scripture.... Remembering, then, its common heritage with the Jews and moved not by any political consideration, but solely by the **religious motivation of Christian charity**, it deplores all hatreds, persecutions, displays of antisemitism directed against the Jews at any time or from any source."*

Presbyterian Reaction

1987, 1994
**Why so
Long?**

- "the **Presbyterian Church (USA)** issued the same year [**1987**] explicitly **renounced the idea that Christians have replaced Jews as "the people of God."** The **Evangelical Lutheran Church** in America directed itself particularly to the baleful heritage of Martin Luther, and in its **1994** "Declaration to the Jewish Community" the ELCA decisively **repudiated Luther's anti-Jewish views**. Speaking of Luther's anti-Jewish treatises, the statement declares:
- *"We reject this violent invective, and yet more do we express our deep and abiding sorrow over its tragic effects on subsequent generations.... We recognize in anti-Semitism a contradiction and an affront to the Gospel, a violation of our hope and calling, and we pledge this church to oppose the deadly working of such bigotry, both within our own circles and in the society around us."*

Jews and Christians: The Unfolding Interfaith Relationship. United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.
<https://www.ushmm.org/research/the-center-for-advanced-holocaust-studies/programs-ethics-religion-the-holocaust/articles-and-resources/jews-and-christians-the-unfolding-interfaith-relationship#>

Presbyterian Reaction

- The Jewish world has been shaken by the decision of the Presbyterian Church (USA) to **divest from three companies that it claims “further the Israeli occupation of Palestine.”**
- The denomination has placed itself squarely on the side of the divestment movement that seeks to hold Israel solely to blame for the plight of the Palestinian people. It did so, furthermore, over the opposition of many Presbyterian pastors and lay leaders....
- Regrettably, the church — which often has been a partner of the Jewish community on critical social justice issues — has been on a 10-year road to this moment. At the Presbyterians’ 2004 General Assembly, the church’s Mission Responsibility Through Investment committee called for a “phased, selective divestment in multinational corporations operating in Israel.” Since then, within the church, Israel has often been **compared to South Africa’s nefarious apartheid regime.**

“The Presbyterians’ Judaism problem.” *Zionism Unsettled.*

by Gary M. Bretton-Granatoor, JTA | PUBLISHED Jun 27, 2014 | Opinion

Summary

- When the Nazis came to power, the church reacted abysmally. The Roman Catholics made a deal. The German church allied itself with the Nazis. The Baptists were favored by and supported Nazi policies.
- Only the German “Confessing Church” resisted, at the cost of many of their lives.
- The Catholic church was first to address its complicity -- in 1958 and 1965 -- the Presbyterians followed in 1987, and the Lutherans finally officially condemned Luther’s anti-Semitism in 1994.
- Presbyterians have worked alongside Jewish colleagues for various causes, but recently the church’s position on Zionism have caused rifts between the communities.
- All-in-all, the doors to persecution and intolerance have been left open too long, and **set the stage for broader discriminations, persecutions, and abuses.**

The New Face of Bigotry: Richard Spencer and the Alt-Right

(wiki source)

- **Richard Bertrand Spencer** (born May 11, 1978) is an American white supremacist.^[1] He is president of the National Policy Institute, a white supremacist think tank, as well as Washington Summit Publishers.
- Spencer has stated that he rejects the label *white supremacist* and considers himself a member of the **identitarian movement**.^{[2][3][4]}
- He has **advocated for a white homeland for a "dispossessed white race" and called for "peaceful ethnic cleansing" to halt the "deconstruction" of European culture.**^[5]
- **Spencer and others have said that he created the term "alt-right",^[6] which he considers a movement about white identity.**^{[7][8][9]}



So what, exactly, is the "alt-right"?

- The views of the alt-right are widely seen as **anti-Semitic and white supremacist**.
- It is **mostly an online movement** that uses websites, chat boards, social media and memes to spread its message. (Remember the Star of David image that Trump received criticism for retweeting? That reportedly first appeared on an alt-right message board.)
- Most of its members are young white men who see themselves first and foremost as champions of their own demographic. However, apart from their allegiance to their "tribe," as they call it, their greatest points of unity lie in what they are **against: multiculturalism, immigration, feminism and, above all, political correctness.**
- "They see political correctness really as the greatest threat to their liberty," Nicole Hemmer, University of Virginia professor and author of a forthcoming book *Messengers of the Right*, explained on *Morning Edition*.
- **"So, they believe saying racist or anti-Semitic things — it's is not an act of hate, but an act of freedom,"** she said.
- For that reason, as well as for fun and notoriety, alt-righters like to troll, prank and provoke.

"Breitbart News' Chairman Hired To Salvage Ailing Trump Campaign" Aug. 18, 2016

"What You Need To Know About The Alt-Right Movement." Morning Edition. NPR 6:20 August 26, 2016:04 AM ET <https://www.npr.org/2016/08/26/491452721/the-history-of-the-alt-right>



Richard Spencer Interview with Kamau Bell (CNN)

- Bell: How do you “execute” this new America?
- Spencer: “Donald Trump has already set the new tone.”
- *[Spencer believes the “wall” is a good start...]*
- Spencer: **“Those people who immigrated here, they did so precisely because it is a white country. ... It has a higher standard of living ... so why would they want to change it? You don’t want to turn it into Mexico, they left Mexico...”**
- Bell: “A lot of people come here for opportunity; they don’t say whiteportunity ... Then they add to the country by what they do, the businesses they found, the people they hire, by the culture they bring, by the food... Doesn’t that all add to American story?”
- *[Conversation goes to food ... and Spencer simply says, “Now that we have the recipes.” Wish Bell had pushed the question beyond the cliché of food...]*
- *To the issue of the “ethnstate”*
- Spencer: **“The notion of reviving the Roman Empire, yeah, that is a big dream. And I think we should dream big.”**
- Bell: I just think the cake on America is kinda baked at this point, you know?”
- Spencer: History is never over. We can change history. It [garbled] on us and what we are willing to do. It’s not something that will happen through Trump, not something that will happen in the foreseeable future.”

“Richard Spencer Interview CNN With Kamau Bell (4/30/17)”
149,332 views <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n2-xrz2w7F1&feature=youtu.be>

The last moments in the interview, when Bell’s suggestion that he visit the “party” after the convention is rejected, were chilling. What is happening in those closing moments is truly not laughable. “Party” seems to take on a double meaning in context.

Spencer had ended on dreaming about resurrecting the Roman Empire, an absurd idea, if for no other reason than the fact that it was Northern Europeans -- white Germanic peoples -- who destroyed the Roman Empire. They also make no sense because the US was never a part of the empire. **If we ask in what context they do make sense (a fundamental rhetorical principle), then clearly he is referencing the so-called “Third Reich” (THE Roman Empire is number one, the “Holy Roman” Empire number two, and Hitler’s “Third Empire,” number three). He is speaking in a very ominous code here, asking others to “dream big” of a fourth reich.** No wonder Bell was not invited to the “party.”

Charlottesville



<http://fortune.com/2017/08/14/tiki-torch-maker-denounces-white-supremacist-nazi-rally/>

- Richard Spencer, referring to the Nazi Alt-Right march in Charlottesville: **“I love the torches. It’s spectacular; it’s theatrical and mystical and magical and religious, even.”**
- Journalist Graham Wood summarizing Richard Spencer: **“he longed for something as robust and binding as Christianity had once been in the West, before churches surrendered their power to folk-singing liberals and televangelists.”**

Disaffected Young Men

- Richard J. Evans' description of young men in 1920s Germany, as Jim Friedrich noted this week:
- In examining the rise of Nazism in the 1920s, [Evans] saw desperate and resentful young men being attracted to extremism and violence “irrespective of ideology.” They weren’t looking for ideas, but meaning... a pick-me-up to restore a sense of personal significance.
- ***“Violence was like a drug for such men... Often, they had only the haziest notion of what they were fighting for.” ... Hostility to the enemy de jour — Communists, Jews, whomever — was the core of their commitment. As one young Stormtrooper later reflected on the bonding effect of collective violence, it was all “too wonderful and perhaps too hard to write about.”***

<http://ludingtoncitizen.ning.com/forum/topics/creepy-pro-obama-video-starring-a-bunch-of-kids>

McLaren, Brian. The 'Alt-Right' Has Created Alt-Christianity. *Time*. August 25, 2017. <http://time.com/4915161/charlottesville-alt-right-alt-christianity/>

White Supremacist Crimes

- Brian McLaren, *Time Magazine*: “I suppose that’s part of the shock of Charlottesville: while Islamophobic Americans were developing conspiracy theories about Sharia law coming in from the outside, **our own brand of violent extremism was brewing in our basements.**”
- [Former White Nationalist Christian] Piccolini warns, “What people need to understand is that since Sept. 11, **more Americans have been killed on U.S. soil by white supremacists than by any other foreign or domestic group combined by a factor of two.** Yet we don’t really talk about that, **nor do we even call these instances,** of the shooting at Charleston, S.C., or what happened at Oak Creek, Wis., at the Sikh temple or even what happened in Charlottesville this weekend — as **terrorism.**”

For more information, see Ben Mathis-Lilley. “The Long List of Killings Committed by White Extremists Since the Oklahoma City Bombing.” “37 deadly attacks since Oklahoma City—comprising a total of 77 victims—carried out or believed to have been carried out by white extremists. *The Slatest: Your News Companion*. Aug. 14 2017 3:15 PM

Alt-Right and Neo-Nazis

- White nationalism isn't simply an extremist political ideology. It is an **alt-religious movement** that provides its adherents with its own twisted version of what all religions supply to adherents: **identity**, a personal sense of who I am; **community**, a social sense of where I belong; and **purpose**, a spiritual sense of why my life matters. **If faith communities don't provide these healthy, life-giving human needs, then death-dealing alt-religions will fill the gap.**
- So as traditional Christian institutions shrink, stagnate and struggle, Spencer and his white-supremacist allies, **feeling supported by Donald Trump, are creating a violent alt-Christianity, as their counterparts in the Middle East have created an alt-Islam.** They are supplying their followers with alt-liturgies, alt-mysticism, and alt-magic and are willing to smash, burn, destroy and kill for it, as they idolize their vision of "America" as a white "ethno-state," an absolutized, divinized race and nation.
- In Charlottesville, I saw Nazi flags on American soil and alt religious fervor in the faces of American Nazis and white nationalists. The message I will bring to faith leaders around our nation is both urgent and clear: Aristotle was right. Nature indeed abhors a vacuum.



If we don't provide emerging generations with genuine identity, community and purpose through robust and vibrant spiritual communities, somebody else will do so. If good religion slumbers and stagnates, bad religion is the alternative.

McLaren, Brian. The 'Alt-Right' Has Created Alt-Christianity. Time. August 25, 2017. <http://time.com/4915161/charlottesville-alt-right-alt-christianity/>

Really?

- "Trump and **Alt-Right is NOT Racist**" Sean Hannity [Fox News] Defends the President & His Statement
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-xWazlRI0gA>
- Contrast: Eliot Nelson. "The 'Alt-Right' Is A Hate Movement, And It's Scarier Than You Think." *Huffington Post*. **POLITICS** 11/21/2016 03:19 pm ET Updated Nov 22, 2016
- https://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/alt-right-hate-richard-spencer_us_5833242fe4b058ce7aac26fe



Conclusions

- Anti-Semitism is a template for all discrimination; tolerance of it keeps open the doors to other types of hatred and discrimination.
- The church itself, both Catholics and Protestants, have historically colluded in anti-Semitism, thereby providing false legitimacy to recent hate groups.
- Our own government has been implicated in ties to the Alt-Right, and refuses to acknowledge that White Supremacists are more of a threat to national security than Islamic terrorists, not only because of their proximity and clear and present danger to much of the US population, but also because the spread and general acceptance of their beliefs may actually inspire more acts of Islamic terrorism in the US.
- Our government and our news media must realize that when it uses language and tactics similar to the Alt-Right, it is in collusion with them and intentionally or inadvertently extending their reach.

**“Trump's Retweets of British Hate Group's Anti-Muslim Videos Causing Membership to Soar.”
Splinter.
Katherine Krueger
12/01/2017**

Where are the Principles?

- As with the issues of slavery and war, Christians must be **guided by principles**, not specific passages.
- In this case, however, one is confronted with the absurdity that the Christian church has condemned the Jewish people while at the same time lauding their relationship to God and referencing their scriptures.
- The church seems to have forgotten that Jesus was a Jew, that his ministry was to the Jews. A whole people has been condemned for simply not accepting a variant version of their own religion!

Do not take revenge on others or continue to hate them, but love your neighbors as you love yourself. I am the Lord.
(Leviticus 19:18)

My children, our love should not be just words and talk; it must be true love, which shows itself in action. (1 John 3:18)

To conclude: you must all have the same attitude and the same feelings; love one another, and be kind and humble with one another. **Do not pay back evil with evil or cursing with cursing; instead, pay back with a blessing, because a blessing is what God promised to give you when he called you.** (1 Peter 3:8-9)

Will we miss it this time too?

**Time to Reflect,
Time to React,
Time to Stand Up**

- As they should have in the 1920s, Christians should recognize the ways in which their faith has been co-opted by those who seek to discriminate and harm others.
- They should help people find *identity, community, and purpose* in healthy *communities of love and respect*.
- It is time now to act.

We do not want this to be the next version of Niemoller's sermon:

First they came for the Muslims, and I did not speak out—

Because I was not a Muslim.

Then they came for the Immigrants, and I did not speak out—

Because I was not an Immigrant.

Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out—

Because I was not a Jew.

Then they came for me—and there was no one left to speak for me.

Martin Niemoller

Matthew 22: 37-40 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.