

Cultural Confrontations: A Christian Perspective

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On the evening of June 17, 2015, Dylann Roof walked into the Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church of Charleston, South Carolina. As the Bible study came to an end and the people were preparing to leave, Roof produced a handgun and opened fire. Eight people died at the church, one died after being taken to the hospital. Roof allowed one woman to escape to explain to authorities what transpired. One child survived the rampage after her grandmother instructed her to play dead. One survivor quoted Roof as exclaiming, “I have to do it. You rape our women and you are taking over the country, and you have to go.”¹ Though Roof was unknown to the Southern Poverty Law Center, which tracks hate crimes across the US, his Facebook profile page suggests he was a “disaffected white supremacist.”² Charleston Mayor Joseph P. Riley Jr. called the attack “Pure, pure concentrated evil.”³

There are three aspects of Roof’s crime (and other such atrocities) that cry out for explanation: the seeming objective morality that prescribes against such acts, the concept of human races, or, more broadly, the actual existence of *classes*, and lastly, the presumed intelligibility of historical eventuation, including cultural confrontations. Non-Christian attempts to explain these three areas of thought, particularly those from the secularist camp, are hopelessly insufficient.

¹Jeffrey Collins and Russ Bynum, Associated Press, *The Winnipeg Sun*, June 19, 2015, pp.10-11.

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Jessica Glenza, *The Guardian*, June 18, 2015, online at <http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/jun/18/dylann-roof-south-carolina-charleston-shooting-suspect> [Accessed June 22, 2015].

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Collins and Bynum, p. 10.

Most accounts reckon Roof's crime as an expression of his racism, which is usually defined as "Prejudice, discrimination, or antagonism directed against someone of a different race based on the belief that one's own race is superior."⁴ In the western world, the insistence upon political correctness in the public square has created a kind of hypersensitivity to anything that smacks of racism; it is assumed that racism is a very real phenomena that humans are morally obligated to stand against. The problem for non-Christian worldviews is accounting for this seeming *objective* moral standard. Given secularist metaphysical commitments, Roof's crime (and other such atrocities) must be seen as ultimately *morally neutral*. Secularist Massimo Pigliucci explains:

There is no such a thing as objective morality. . . . Morality in human cultures has evolved and is still evolving, and what is moral for you might not be moral for the guy next door and certainly is not moral for the guy across the ocean . . . what we call homicide or rape or, in fact, even infanticide is very, very common among different types of animals. Lions, for example, commit infanticide on a regular basis because they want to make sure that the little offspring that is being raised by the lioness is their own and not someone else's. Now, are these kinds of acts to be condoned? I don't even know what that means because the lion doesn't understand what morality is . . . there is no higher power or no higher reason to tell us that this is right or this is wrong. Unfortunately, we are on our own.⁵

Virtually all secularist accounts of origins entail some version of the evolution story. On this view, the fittest species survive while the less fit are eventually driven to extinction. Charles Darwin, arguably the greatest propagandist of this story, stated that it is, "from the war of nature, from famine and death, the most exalted object which we are capable of conceiving, namely, the production of the higher animals, directly follows."⁶ For

⁴<http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/racism> [Accessed June 23, 2015].

⁵Massimo Pigliucci in debate with William Lane Craig, *Does God Exist?* University of Georgia, Athens, Georgia, 1998, Available online at http://www.reasonablefaith.org/does-god-exist-the-craig-pigliucci-debate#section_2 [Accessed June 27, 2015].

⁶Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of Species by Means of Natural Selection*, (London: John Murray, 1859; reprint Mineola, NY: Dover Publications, 2006), p. 307.

Darwin, white Europeans represented the most evolved of the races, and as such, they would one day eradicate the lesser-evolved inferior races. These lesser-evolved races included the African and the Australian aborigine. Darwin stated:

At some future period, not very distant as measured by centuries, the civilized races of man will almost certainly exterminate, and replace, the savage races throughout the world. At the same time the anthropomorphous apes will no doubt be exterminated. The break between man and his nearest allies will then be wider, for it will intervene between man in a more civilized state, as we may hope, even than the Caucasian, and some ape as low as a baboon, instead of as now between the negro or Australian and the gorilla.⁷

Thomas Henry Huxley, one of Darwin's most ardent defenders, was even less ambiguous. He stated categorically that "no rational man, cognizant of the facts, believes that the average negro is the equal, still less the superior, of the white man."⁸ Gould noted that though biological arguments for racism were common before 1850, "they increased by orders of magnitude following the acceptance of evolutionary theory."⁹

In the absence of objective moral values and duties, commitment to the evolution story can be used to justify not just racism, but *any* attitude or action. Reflecting on the moral implications of Darwinism, W. H. Murdy noted that,

Unbridled self-indulgence on the part of one generation without regard to the future ones is the modus operandi of biological evolution and may be regarded as rational behavior. Evolution is a hard, inescapable mistress. There is just no room for good sportsmanship. Too many organisms are born, so, quite simply, a lot of them are going to have to die.¹⁰

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Darwin, *The Descent of Man*, 2nd ed., (London: John Murray, 1887), p. 156.

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Thomas H. Huxley, *Lay Sermons, Addresses and Reviews*, Appleton, New York, USA, 1871, p. 20. Quoted by Henry Morris, *The Long War Against God*, (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Book House, Michigan, 1990), p. 60.

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Steven Jay Gould, *Ontogeny and Phylogeny* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1977), pp. 127-128, 1977.

Murdy went on to explain that, “The *only* thing that does matter is, whether you leave more children than the next person leaves.”¹¹ Richard Dawkins agrees, insisting that human beings “are machines for propagating DNA, and the propagation of DNA is a self-sustaining process. It is every living object’s *sole* reason for living.”¹² Clark and Bales observed that in the 20th Century, this kind of thinking “helped to further brutalize mankind through providing scientific sanction for bloodthirsty and selfish desires.”¹³ One of the most obvious (and chilling) examples of this is the Nazi Holocaust. Though Hitler could not rightly be called an atheist,¹⁴ he was undoubtedly Darwinian in his overall approach to biological and social development. Brookes noted that, “a direct line runs from Darwin, through the father of the eugenics movement—Darwin’s cousin, Francis Galton—to the extermination camps of Nazi Europe.”¹⁵ Arthur Keith noted that in his day, “[Hitler] has consistently sought to make the practice of Germany conform to the theory of evolution.” Assuming the evolution story true, mankind’s existence is an upward struggle “in which millions are trampled to death, that thousands may mount on

¹⁰W. H. Murdy, “Anthropocentrism: A Modern Version,” *Science*, March 28, 1975, p. 1169.

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Ibid, (emphasis added).

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Richard Dawkins, (1991). “The Ultraviolet Garden”, Royal Institute Christmas Lecture, No. 4., as quoted by Ian Barbour, *When Science Meets Religion* (Harper Collins, 2000), p. 155 (emphasis added).

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Robert T. Clark and James D. Bales, *Why Scientists Accept Evolution* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books House, 1966), p. 64.

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Alan Bullock, *Hitler: A Study in Tyranny* (New York, NY: Konecky and Konecky, 1962), p. 390.

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“Martin Brookes, “Ripe old age,” Review of “Of Flies, Mice and Men,” by Francois Jacob, Harvard University Press, 1999. *New Scientist*, Vol. 161, No. 2171, 30 January 1999, p.41.

their bodies.”¹⁶ Given a secularist metaphysic, there simply is no rational or moral foundation for any principled objection to Nazism’s “final solution.”

The problem of course is that in ordinary moral experience people do not usually view torture, rape, and genocide as morally neutral, much less morally commendable behaviour. Most see such actions as morally wrong. As Peter Cave observed, “Whatever skeptical arguments may be brought against our belief that killing the innocent is morally wrong, we are more certain that the killing is morally wrong than the argument is sound. Torturing an innocent child for the sheer fun of it is morally wrong, full stop.”¹⁷ Louise Antony noted that, “any argument for moral skepticism is going to depend upon premises which are less obvious than the reality of objective moral values themselves.”¹⁸ One of modern philosophy’s major projects is to understand and account for the actual existence of objective moral values and duties.¹⁹ The problem is that there is no rational bridge between what is the case and what ought to be the case. Scientific investigation may prove beyond reasonable doubt that Roof killed nine people. However, no amount of scientific investigation can bring down the conclusion that he was wrong in doing so. Without a competent moral authority qualitatively greater than humankind prescribing against racism and murder, any complaints made by humans themselves are subject to the

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Clara Lucas Balfour (1808-1878), quoted in *Asimov’s Book of Science and Nature Quotations*, (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1990), p. 88.

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Peter Cave, *Humanism* (Oxford: OneWorld, 2009), p. 146.

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Louise Antony, in debate with William Lane Craig at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Is God Necessary for Morality? Video online at <http://www.reasonablefaith.org/media/craig-vs-antony-university-of-massachusetts> [Accessed June 23, 2015].

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Shelly Kagen, *The Limits of Morality* (Oxford: Clarendon: 1989), p. 13.

playground bully's retort, "Sez who?" After exploring this issue in some detail, Arthur Allen Leff concluded that, "only if ethics is something unspeakable by us, could law be unnatural, and therefore unchallengeable."²⁰ Only a competent authority qualitatively greater than humankind can provide the necessarily metaphysical resources to account for objective moral values and duties. As long as the existence of such an authority is denied, there is no way to sensibly adjudicate between conflicting moral opinions. Without a competent authority above humankind to issue moral imperatives, all principled complaint against racist attitudes and actions is impossible.

The concept of racism itself is problematic given a secularist view of the world. Racism entails that there exists, truthfully and objectively, a particular *class* of beings called *human*, and that within this class there exists subclasses called *races*. The entire scheme entails not only that unity and diversity actually exist, but that classes, which are abstract, conceptual entities, also exist. One of philosophy's most persistent unsolved problems is how to bring unity and diversity together into a consistent, well-integrated worldview.²¹ The *monist* focuses on what things have in common and concludes that the universe is a single, unified being undergoing change and development. For the monist, individuality is illusory, meaning there is no objectively correct place to draw *any* distinctions between *anything*. If this view were true, any claimed distinctions would be merely conventional and could, with equal validity, be denied. Obviously rational

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Arthur Allen Leff, "Unspeakable Ethics, Unnatural Law", *Duke Law Journal* 1979, no. 6, p. 1249.

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Christopher Kirwan, *The Oxford Companion to Philosophy, New Edition*, Ed. Ted Honderich, s.v. "one-over-many problem" (New York, NY: Oxford University Press 2005).

argumentation and moral evaluation would be impossible in such world. The *atomist* on the other hand focuses on distinctions rather than similarities. For him, material particular things make up all of reality; diversity and discreteness are ultimate. If this view were true, *sameness* would be merely conventional and one could, with equal validity, either affirm or deny any supposed instance of it. As with monism, atomism leads to a situation in which rational argumentation and moral evaluation are impossible. Unless and until the “one over many problem” is solved, one is left without the requisite metaphysical resources to account for truthful predication, which involves correctly drawn distinctions and properly recognized similarities. Similarly, unless the borders and contents of classes are established by a mind qualitatively greater than finite human minds, there are no grounds for claiming that *any* classes actually exist. Without such a qualitatively superior mind providing an objective interpretation of things, there is no way to justify one’s belief that the class *humankind* actually exists, let alone the supposedly different *races* of humans. Obviously, if humans and races don’t actually exist, then neither does racism. The problem for the secularist is that in ordinary human experience people are aware that sameness, diversity, and classes are not illusory but real, even if it is sometimes difficult for a finite mind to draw the right distinctions in just the right places.

Unlike other species that occupy this planet, human beings alone are capable of reason and reflection. Importantly, they compulsively frame almost everything they encounter with the question “why?” This seeking to understand the reasons for things flows out of a faith commitment to *the principle of sufficient reason* (PSF), which states that *whatever exists has a reason for its existence*. This faith commitment, however, does not comport with a secularist view of the universe. For the secularist, the universe is

ultimately random, accidental, and meaningless. Nevertheless, he continues to ask why things are the way they are, despite the fact that such a question is intelligible only if one believes that there is a plan and a purpose behind it all.

Christianity alone can explain not only the *presumed* intelligibility, but the *actual* intelligibility of the universe as well. On the Christian worldview, humans are committed to the PSR because God has created them with innate knowledge of himself as the creator and rational law-giver who oversees whatever comes to pass. Anthropologists who seek reasons for specific cultural confrontations are doing so because they have faith in God as the creator of a world capable of being understood. This they (and all men) do, whether they outwardly profess this faith or not. According to the Bible, God has made his existence known to all people. God's revelation of himself is impressed immediately upon all human hearts and consciences, as well as being mediated through the created order things. God's existence is so obvious that those who deny and suppress its truth are without excuse (Romans 1:18-20). Thus, Christian theism alone not only provides rational justification for assuming the PSF, but it also accounts for why all people, even professing unbelievers, continue to assume it as well.

Similarly, Christian theism alone provides the necessary metaphysical resources to solve the "one over many problem" and to account for truthful predication. God sovereignly upholds and sustains the entire created order and he interprets all things as they relate to his plan. In doing so, he establishes the borders and contents of classes *objectively*. To predicate correctly, therefore, is to think God's thoughts after him. God also acts as the needed competent authority whose moral commands obligate humankind to think and act in particular ways. God's moral commands, it must be noted, are not

arbitrary nor are they reflections of a moral standard apart from God to which he has to appeal. Rather, God's commands are reflections and expressions of this own holy, just, and loving character; God's character is the very locus and paradigm of objective morality. Only Christian theism therefore can provide an appropriate foundation for insisting that the acts of Adolf Hitler and Dylann Roof are not morally neutral but are in fact moral abominations. It is ironic that today's secular humanists, which reject Christian theism outright and in the strongest terms, can at once affirm unwavering commitment to the evolution story²² whilst insisting that racism is morally wrong.²³ Given the secularist's metaphysical commitments, any claim he wishes to make, including his claim that racism is wrong, has about as much objective meaning as the sound of the wind blowing through the trees.²⁴ If the Christian God did not exist, chance would be ultimate, nothing could be known with certainty, and any and all propositions could be affirmed or denied with equal validity. Thus, Christian theism alone provides the metaphysical resources to account for broad tracts of human experience whilst solving enigmas that have perplexed philosophers for millennia.

Since complaints against racist attitudes and actions are only intelligible within a Christian worldview, it makes sense therefore to interpret all cultural confrontations (and,

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A. C. Grayling, *The God Argument: The Case Against Religion and for Humanism* (New York, NY: Bloomsbury, 2003), p. 116.

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“Just as humanists work to ensure that laws aren't made that discriminate against the LGBTQ community on religious grounds, so must we work to ensure that laws are made to ensure equal treatment for racial minorities.” Roy Speckhardt, Executive Director, American Humanist Association, “When Challenging Racism, Humanists Need to Step Up”, *Huff Post*, Posted February 3, 2015, available at http://www.huffingtonpost.com/roy-speckhardt/when-challenging-racism-h_b_6548574.html [Accessed June 30, 2015].

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C. S. Lewis, *They Asked for a Paper* (London, 1962), pp. 164-165.

in fact, all human experience) in accordance with God's revealed word, the Bible. This was the ambitious project of St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430), arguably the greatest and most influential systematic theologian in church history.²⁵ Augustine lived at a time when the Roman Empire was for the most part at least nominally Christian. After the Visigoths sacked the city of Rome in 410, many claimed that the empire was being punished for abandoning her native gods. Augustine's response was his monumental, 22-volume work *The City of God*. Although Augustine examines a wide variety of topics, most often in brilliant and detailed fashion, his emphasis is on the two societies of rational beings that inhabit the created order. For Augustine, all rational creatures are either citizens of the city of men and of fallen angels (demons) or they are members of the City of God, the latter being comprised of believing men and loyal angels. Whatever other distinctions may exist between God's rational creatures, be they physical or cultural, they are of significantly lesser importance than their cosmic citizenship. For Augustine, understanding cultural confrontations meant understanding the origin, nature, and destiny of the two cities and the ongoing conflict between them.

He explains that the rebellion of certain angelic beings at the dawn of history marked the beginning of the city of men and demons. The first man, Adam, also rebelled against God, and his sin ought to have consigned all of humanity to citizenship in the wicked city programmed for destruction. Nevertheless, says Augustine, God's grace intervened. From before the foundation of the world God has chosen whom he would redeem and make citizens of his City. Augustine is clear that physical and cultural

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Richard O. McBrien, *Lives of the Saints: from Mary and St. Francis of Assisi to John XXIII and Mother Teresa* (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 2001), p. 349.

distinctions are of little importance; God has chosen, by grace alone, to make citizens of his City from virtually every people group. He states:

While this Heavenly City is on pilgrimage in this world, she calls out citizens from all nations and so collects a society of aliens speaking all languages. She takes no account of any difference in customs, laws and institutions, by which earthly peace is achieved and preserved – not that she annuls or abolishes any of those, rather she maintains them and follows them (for whatever divergences there are among the diverse nations, those institutions have one single aim – earthly peace), provided that no hindrance is presented thereby to the religion which teaches that the one supreme and true God is to be worshipped.²⁶

From a Christian perspective, there is no such thing as racism for the simple reason there are no such things as human *races*. The Bible recognizes only one race—the human race. The great apostle Paul reminded the Corinthian believers that everything they have, both individually and collectively, they received from God. This includes their very identities. Paul asked, “For who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?” (1Corinthians 4:7).²⁷ During his magnificent address to the philosophers of Athens, Paul was even more emphatic:

God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; Neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring (Acts 17:24-28).

²⁶Augustine, *Concerning the City of God against the Pagans*, translation by Henry Bettenson (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 2003), p. 878.

²⁷All Scripture from the *King James Version* of the Bible.

Paul minces no words. God is the very atmosphere in which human lives may exist and flourish. God is responsible for all that unifies humanity into a single race as well as that which makes individual humans unique. Importantly, because there is unanimity of the human race under the first man, Adam, all human beings are eligible for salvation by placing their faith in the Jesus Christ, “the last Adam” (1 Corinthians 15:45). The Scriptures are absolutely clear on this. Jesus Christ is “the Lamb of God, *which taketh away the sin of the world* (John 1:29, emphasis added). The apostle John declared to his fellow believers that, “[Christ] is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world” (1 John 2:2). Paul explained that Christ “died for all” (1 Corinthians 5:15), as “a ransom for all” (1 Timothy 2:6), and that “[God] is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe” (1 Timothy 4:10). The Bible is clear that God shows no favouritism (Acts 10:34; Romans 2:11, Ephesians 6:9, 1 Peter 1:17), and that in heaven the redeemed of the Lord will sing “a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation; And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth” (Revelation 5:9-10). Even people groups traditionally identified as being aligned against the Lord and his people will be converted and reconciled to God (Isaiah 19:19-25), though the finished work of Christ to be sure (Colossians 1:20). Until the final judgement at the return of Christ and the consummation of all things, the two cities exist, intertwined, on planet earth. Sometimes, notes Augustine, it is difficult if not impossible for human eyes to distinguish which people belong to which city. Even the visible church is a mixture of the two kinds of citizens. Often, however, the lines *are* sharply visible, as

when Cain slew his brother, or when the Jewish religious authorities engineered the judicial murder of Jesus. For Augustine, the great antagonism that exists between the two cities was a major point. Since the dawn of human history the city of men and demons has been at work persecuting the citizens of the City of God.

What Augustine saw as the heritage of the church, namely, continued, aggressive opposition by the forces of darkness, was not a figment of his imagination. Rather, he drew upon recent Christian memory and, most importantly, the Scriptures themselves, which, notes Glenn Penner, are replete with references to the persecution of God's people. Penner has shown from the Scriptures that true discipleship under the Lordship of Christ actually *entails* suffering persecution for righteousness' sake.²⁸ However, because the biblical passages on persecution cannot be readily applied where little or no persecution presently exists, the tendency has been for Bible teachers to spiritualize and misapply these passages. Penner laments the fact that, "the Western hegemony on theological and biblical studies and published literature has only magnified and propagated this unintended misunderstanding or neglect of the scriptural link between persecution and discipleship."²⁹ He insists that,

The Bible (especially the New Testament) was written by persecuted believers to persecuted believers. This context cannot be ignored without it having profoundly negative implications for how we read and apply the Bible and how we follow Christ individually and corporately. A cross-centered gospel requires cross-carrying messengers.³⁰

²⁸Glenn M. Penner, *In the Shadow of the Cross: a biblical theology of persecution & discipleship* (Bartlesville, OK: Living Sacrifice Books, 2004), p. 8.

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Ibid.

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Ibid, p. 9.

Ever since Cain tried to silence the prophetic voice of his brother by murdering him (Genesis 4:8; Luke 11:46-51), the forces of darkness have been at work persecuting God's loyal followers. The Old Testament describes numerous faithful saints who endured persecution ranging from false accusations and discouragement to imprisonment and execution. Among these include Job, Isaiah,³¹ Jeremiah, Micaiah, Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. Additionally, the Psalms are replete with references to persecution. Psalms 22, 31, 34, 35, 41-44, 69, 91, 116, and 118 make it abundantly clear that persecution normally attends faithful devotion to God. Additionally, the Lord Jesus and his apostles endured, and gave a good deal of instruction on, suffering for one's faith in God. The Lord Jesus reminded his disciples,

If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you. Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also (John 15:18-20).

Stephen was stoned to death (Acts 7:59-60), James the brother of John was killed by the sword under orders from Herod (Acts 12:1-2). The spokesmen for the apostles, the great apostle Peter, bravely faced his execution in Rome,³² fulfilling the Lord's prediction (John 21:18-19). The apostle Paul endured decades of hardship and persecution (2 Corinthians 11:22-33) that eventually lead to a final imprisonment and execution (2 Timothy 4:6-8). None of this was surprising to Paul. He had followed the Master's instruction to count the cost of being his disciple (Luke 14:26-33), and understood,

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According to Jewish tradition, see John MacArthur, *The MacArthur Study Bible* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Bibles, 1997), p. 952.

³²Eusebius, *Ecclesiastical History*, translation by Paul Maier, (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 1999), p. 93.

particularly through witnessing the martyrdom of Stephen (Acts 7:58, 22:20) that it is through much tribulation that one enters into the kingdom of God (Act 14:22).

In the Olivet Discourse, the Lord's most detailed exposition on the end times, Jesus warned his disciples that they would be hated by all nations. This hatred, he said, would lead to affliction and even death. (Mathew 24:9). In seeming fulfillment of Christ's end-time prophecy, persecution against Christians has exploded in recent times. In 2003, an estimated 166,000 Christians were put to death because of their identification with, and witness for, Jesus Christ.³³ According to Doug J. McKenzie, chief executive officer of Voice of the Martyrs Canada, during the 2013-2014 periods,

there have been dramatic...almost incomprehensible changes in the level of persecution levied against the Christian body. . . .While religious persecution clearly impacts other faith groups besides the Christian church, available research supports the claim that religious persecution in certain parts of the world today is growing rapidly; and that in such regions, it is predominately against Christians.³⁴

As Christians wait for their Lord from heaven, they ought to be boldly but lovingly preaching and defending the gospel (2 Corinthians 5:20-21; 1 Peter 3:15). By interpreting all events according to God's word, Christians alone can bring sense to an otherwise senseless world. Seen in this light, Roof's appalling actions were not ultimately racially motivated. Rather, what he did was launch another attack from the city of demons and men upon the City of God. For those who lament (or perhaps rejoice) over the fact that it

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David B. Barret and Todd M. Johnson, "Annual Statistical Table on Global Mission: 2001," *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, Vol. 27, No. 1, January 2003:22, Cited in Penner, p. 17.

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Doug J. McKenzie, "A Vision, and a Mission Fulfilled," *Voice of the Martyrs Canada Annual Report, 2015* (Streetsville, ON: Voice of the Martyrs, 2015), p. 2.

seems, at times, as though the City of God is destined for defeat, the Lord Jesus offers his illuminating word:

When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; . . . Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels (Mat 25:31-34, 41).

For the Christian reflecting upon the precious promises of Christ whilst living in a world where evil is called good and good is called evil (Isaiah 5:20), there can be no more apt prayer than that of the beloved apostle John: “Even so, come, Lord Jesus” (Revelation 22:20).

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