



Enemies of the Cross

The Battle between the City of God and the City of Man

The cross has been intimately connected with the Christian faith since the crucifixion of Jesus Christ nearly 2,000 years ago. To be worthy of His promises, one had to pick up his or her cross daily and carry it in imitation of Christ. The cross also came with the warning that those who followed in His steps to Calvary would invariably suffer the slings and arrows of persecution from a world that hated, not only the message, but also its messengers.

A Dark Message

Many years after the crucifixion, St. Paul warned the Philippians about the *enemies of the cross of Christ, whose end is destruction, whose god is their appetite, and whose glory is in their shame*. St. Paul's warning had a dark side. It was not only for the Philippians, but also for all who would follow in their path because the enemies of the cross would not rest until the names of *Jesus* and his followers were swept from the face of the earth.

From Nero through Niccolo Machiavelli to Saul Alinsky, the enemies of the cross have been legion. Without any pretense to understand Christ's teaching, they have singularly chosen to hate, persecute, torture and murder those who followed Christ. From the Romans' slaughter of thousands of Christians in the amphitheatres and circuses through the crusades in the Holy Land to the divisive wars of medieval Europe, the anti-clerical massacres of the French Revolution and the Marxist democides of the 20th century, the cross has extracted a vast toll in blood and suffering from its followers.

The persecutions have not stopped in the 21st century. While millions still shed their blood for the faith in the Third World of Asia, the Middle East and Africa, the enemies of the cross have adopted a new *modus operandi* for the Western world. This has not been the scourge of traditional martyrdom but more the *dry martyrdom* of apathy, distraction and spiritual malaise. In Europe and the Americas, it is not the individual Christian whose life is at risk, but the faith itself. The

faith has lost its energy in Europe. In North America it struggles with division while in Latin America a more dynamic-appearing Protestant evangelicalism threatens its vitality.

Modern persecutions have been a *war of ideas*. Millions of Christians have been attracted to competing ideas that have been working for centuries to undermine the Christian faith. The intellectual and spiritual enemies of the cross have seduced millions of faithful in some ways that are far more pernicious than the sanguinary wars of old. In falling for worldly allurements they have forgotten St. Paul's reminder to Philippians that Christians are *citizens of Heaven*, not of this world.

An Urban Conflict

No one realized this spiritual dichotomy more than St. Augustine, the 5th-century bishop of Hippo in present-day Algeria. In allegorizing man's divided spirit, Augustine contrasted his rival homes as a continuous battle between the *City of God* and the *City of Man*. Since Christianity presented a radically different set of ideas about the nature of the world and the way men ought to live, dual citizenship was not an option for the followers of Christ.

Augustine wrote *The City of God* when the Greco-Roman worldview was disintegrating and Rome was teetering on collapse. Augustine clearly recognized the substantial contrast between the nature of the world and how the citizens of Heaven should live in it. He believed that citizens of Heaven had to forsake an attachment to earthly pleasure so they could dedicate themselves to the eternal truths of the Christian faith. By contrast, the *City of Man* consisted of people who had immersed themselves in the ephemeral cares and pleasures of the world.

While man's earthly city was filled with sinners who committed an unspeakable variety of sins against God and man, such as murders, cruelties, calumnies, sodomies and lusts, Augustine knew men had to live in

this world. He recognized that Christians could not reject their city entirely, but *must bend it to fit a Christian pattern* and in doing so, lift its inhabitants to the teachings of Christ. Those who chose to wallow in their earthly pleasures were unfortunately doomed to hell.

The Divine Spectator

Because the Catholic Church dominated European culture, religion and even power politics since the 5th century, by the 14th century it was universally accepted that God was at the center of the universe and mankind orbited around Him and his providential wisdom. This all changed with the emergence of a cultural shift, prompted by the Renaissance during the first half of the 2nd millennium.

With the Renaissance came the *rebirth* of pagan cultural influence, the rise of scientific investigation and the consequence that God was no longer at the center of man's daily universe. These cultural changes transformed God from the Prime Mover to little more than a disinterested spectator. With mankind filling the void, human salvation rapidly took a back seat to social and economic well-being. While the Renaissance broadened the cultural refinements of human society, it fell to the Enlightenment to directly challenge the Church's theological and philosophical teachings.

During the 17th century, Dutch philosopher Baruch Spinoza promoted his belief that nothing is inherently good or evil, while 18th-century philosopher David Hume, sometimes called *the father of moral relativism*, concluded that moral judgments consisted of primarily personal values as opposed to objective standards. Hume's thinking obviated the need for any objective moral standard or commandment. This provided the philosophical underpinnings for the German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, who a century later reduced Hume's relativism to the simple statement, *you have your way, I have my way ... the right way, it does not exist.*

According to writer Sam Gregg, by the 21st century enlightened thinking had banished *the truth as the reference point against which all of us must test our ideas and beliefs.* This thinking essentially reduces everyone to modern-day Pontius Pilates, who *wash their hands in the face of obvious injustices, such as the murderous waste of the culture of death in the City of Man.*

The Theology of Man

Since the Enlightenment had resurrected mankind from his fallen state, his autonomous feelings and desires emerged as the measure of the universe. Idolatry replaced theology. *Secular theologians* now studied humanity and not God. Practicing Christians

were marginalized to little more than disturbing reminders of the Christian past. Consequently the enemies of the cross resolved to liberate humanity from the *oppressive teachings* of the Church, especially in Catholic France.

French coffeehouses, salons and universities quickly became the laboratory for a *theology of man.* Their enlightened humanism formulated its own gospels and apostles. They replaced Matthew, Mark, Luke and John with Diderot, Rousseau, D'Holbach and Voltaire.

Their writings stressed the need to transform a society founded on church and crown to one founded on humanity. These *philosophes* laid the foundation for the nihilists, communists and existentialists who would carry their banners against the cross for centuries to come. Fueled by a raging atheism and an uninhibited anti-clericalism, they unleashed the furies of retaliation that shredded every moral and dogmatic fiber in the whole cloth of France's Catholic faith.

According to Ann Coulter's 2011 book, *Demonic*, all the bloody totalitarian dictatorships of the 20th century have drawn inspiration from Rousseau and the French Revolution. All the *great liberal "reformers" of the 20th century, from Lenin to Hugo Chavez, got their playbook from Robespierre, whom Coulter considered probably the worst and most radical of the French revolutionaries.* It was these *enemies of the cross* who married *virtue to terror* while desecrating the sanctuaries of Christ and murdering His French disciples.

Darwin's Missing Link

In deifying *Reason*, the *philosophes* had virtually eliminated almost all the vestiges of God except one. Christianity's opponents could never successfully contradict God as *Creator of the universe.* It was English naturalist Charles Darwin who inadvertently provided that *missing link* for *the enemies of the cross.* Darwin was a non-conformist with a strong belief in the tenets of a natural religion. When he embarked for his 1831 voyage on the *HMS Beagle* for the Galapagos Islands, a small archipelago of islands belonging to Ecuador in the eastern Pacific Ocean, Darwin was searching for *centres of creation* to explain natural distribution.

By the time he returned to England in 1836 he had already begun to doubt that species were fixed. His skepticism led him to speculate about the natural selection of species and its impact on traditional religion. He concluded that a just God could not make such a world where one species fed off the other. This led to a personal struggle with religion and his eventual agnosticism that he took to his grave in 1882.

While his 1859 book, *On the Origin of Species*, did not directly rule out God as an overseer of creation, an idea duly recognized by both Popes John Paul and Benedict, by the 20th century Darwinian evolution acted as an acid that ate away at the traditional Biblical interpretation of creation, especially in the United States, as illustrated by the so-called *Scopes Monkey Trial* in 1925.

It was not surprising that the enemies of the cross within the scientific community would be quick to adopt evolutionary biology as gospel truth. They accepted evolution because it virtually eliminated God from any serious discussion about the origins of life, even though as a theory, it dealt more with metaphysics than science. One serious unintended consequence was that man's status declined to the level of the animal kingdom.

The Communist Renaissance

German sociologist Karl Marx applied material evolution to the study of economics. Marx stressed the evolution of society from one of capitalistic repression to a utopia where all men would be free and equal. As an atheist, Marx believed that there was no room for crosses in Communism's earthly paradise. To him religion served as *the opium of the people* that the ruling classes used to distract the working classes from their sordid living conditions.

As a socioeconomic system, Marxism became the prototype for the revolutions in Russia, China and later Cuba. In these countries God's followers were imprisoned, persecuted or killed. While each Communist regime had differing characteristics, they all had one thing in common. Wherever Communism was adopted, poverty, starvation and political tyranny marked its rule. Ironically, Marxism has enjoyed a much greater social currency as a cultural weapon than an economic one.

The architect of the Communist renaissance was Antonio Gramsci. Born in the Sardinian village of Ales in 1891, Gramsci arguably became history's most successful innovator of Marxism. A founder of the Italian Communist Party in 1921, Gramsci was forced to flee to Russia when Benito Mussolini came to power in 1922. After Lenin's death two years later, Russia became unhealthy for Gramsci, so he returned to Italy where Mussolini promptly put him in jail.

The Gramsci Protocol

Gramsci spent the remaining years of his life expounding on his Communist philosophy. During his Russian experience he had observed that as an economic system Marxism would never work. Gramsci was astutely aware that the civilized world had been inexorably indoctrinated with Christianity for almost

2,000 years. As a result it loomed as an impenetrable barrier to Communist control of the West.

Gramsci reasoned that the only way to topple the West was by what he called a *long march through the culture*. Religion, along with marriage and patriarchy, became Gramsci's cultural targets. If women could be persuaded to leave their traditional roles as wives and transmitters of culture, then Marxism could deal the Christian cultural order a fatal blow.

Gramsci wisely discarded Communism's class warfare dogma in favor of a bona fide *cultural war*. Communism would prove victorious through a *quiet war of the spirit* that would destroy the West from within, making a hell on earth for the Pauline *citizens of Heaven*.

It was a core group of intellectuals from the Frankfurt School in Germany who institutionalized the *Gramsci Protocol*. Together with their acolytes in America, like Herbert Marcuse and his protégé Betty Friedan, they forged an ideological solidarity with diverse racial, ethnic, feminist, gay, and environmental groups to create a united front that continues to press for the destructive transformation of the traditional Judeo-Christian culture of the West through their promotion of adultery, fornication, pornography, abortion and now *gay marriage*.

The goal of all of these unsavory behaviors has been to irreparably weaken Christian marriage through the feminist and homosexual movements. The last three popes have recognized *gay marriage* as a threat to Western civilization. In his 2005 book, *Memory and Identity*, John Paul II called it *a part of a new ideology of evil*.

A Mad Socrates

With Gramsci's emphasis on Communist solidarity with oppressed groups, it was not surprising that politicians would dream of applying his *cultural politics* to the nations of the world. The term *citizen of the world* dates back to *Diogenes the Cynic*, a 4th-century B.C. philosopher whom Plato described as *a Socrates gone mad*. While advocates of world citizenship had been historically disparaged as romantic utopians, or loons until after World War II, the idea became a staple in a host of U.N. documents, including the opening words of its charter: *We the peoples of the United Nations*.

A number of American presidents, such as Woodrow Wilson, Bill Clinton, Barack Obama and perhaps even George H. W. Bush, have considered themselves *world citizens*. To make this a reality, the left has concrete

plans to unify the globe under a new *grand design* called *Agenda 21*. Supported by the likes of billionaire atheist George Soros, Agenda 21 has been on the left's drawing board since the Rio Earth Summit in 1992. It is a comprehensive plan that seeks nothing less than the total control of the world's resources, economies and populations.

To accomplish their plan, the left hides Agenda 21 behind a popular ecological mask and innocuous terms such as *sustainable development*, which is *Greenspeak* for population control, abortion and assisted suicide. If enacted, Agenda 21 will invariably restrict America's population and economic growth through government-controlled health care and the redistribution of its citizens' wealth. Already 528 American cities have joined ICLEI, the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives.

Glenn Beck's 2012 dystopian novel, *Agenda 21*, paints a vivid picture of the world's future that is *more frightening than anything Orwell could have envisioned*. Unfortunately most members of the media elite have failed to grasp not only President Obama's furtive meaning in his promises of *change and transformation* but, more importantly, the stark reality that false idealism quickly converts into the gulag, death camp or killing field. *Citizens of Heaven* can only hope, work and pray that Emperor Constantine's cruciform banner *in hoc signo vinces* will eventually triumph.

~

William A. Borst, Ph.D. can be contacted at BBPROF@sbcglobal.net.

The Mindszenty Report is published monthly by the
Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation
7800 Bonhomme Ave.
St. Louis, MO 63105
Phone 314-727-6279 Fax 314-727-5897

Subscription rate: \$20.00/year, \$36.00/two years.
Outside the U.S.A. \$28.00

The Mindszenty Report is not copyrighted, and
subscribers are invited to have it printed in
their local newspapers.

Contributions to the Cardinal Mindszenty Foundation
are tax deductible as allowed by law.

Eleanor Schlafly, *Publisher*
William A. Borst, Ph.D., *Feature Editor*
e-mail: info@mindszenty.org
web site: www.mindszenty.org
orders.inquires@mindszenty.org

Father's Day, June 16

FATHER CARD—Due to many requests, we are happy to offer you our Father Card.



The Importance of a Father

St. Joseph was strong in the face of adversity and poverty of his time.

He is a model of the virtues of prudence, humility, strength and fortitude. Even though Joseph is "silent" in Scripture, his actions speak to us more clearly than recorded words. Just as Joseph resigned his own will to the will of God, so a good father walks the path as God sets it out for him. The greatest gift any father can give to his children is lifelong fidelity to his Marriage Covenant. Children learn about love through a father's affection, prayer, honor, self-control, forgiveness and integrity.

St. Joseph showed Jesus all the natural love, all the affectionate solicitude that a father's heart can know. —Pope John Paul II

The full message shown above is in color on a cream 5 1/2" x 3 1/2" card. Order these cards to insert with notes, letters, payments, and to give out at church, school and family gatherings.

20 cards	\$4.00	100 cards	\$10.00
50 cards	\$6.00	500 cards	\$39.00
		1,000 cards	\$75.00

Mindszenty Report Reprints

DEATH BY GOVERNMENT: CHINA AND ITS GREAT LEAP FORWARD, 1958-62. A shocking account of brutality, terror and mass murder by governments, focusing on China under Chairman Mao. As flowery names were given to Communism's deadly reforms, the Chinese people were stripped of their traditions, family structure and livelihoods. More than 40 million Chinese starved to death because of collectivist policies. Ask for 4/13

THE LONG BLUE LINE: THE POLITICS OF ABORTION AND THE KOMEN FOUNDATION. An eye-opening history of Planned Parenthood and its radical founder, Margaret Sanger, who declared charity for the poor to be "a moral evil" and embraced eugenics and racism in attempt to create "a race of thoroughbreds." The report traces the links between Planned Parenthood and abortion, breast cancer and the Susan G. Komen Foundation. Ask for 3/13

THE LAST MAN STANDING: VLADIMIR PUTIN, RUSSIA AND ITS WHITE REVOLUTION. A penetrating look at Russian Premier Vladimir Putin, his communist and KGB background, and his personal life; with social upheaval and a stagnant economy challenging Putin's authoritarian regime, he proclaims the rise of a new Russia with imperial overtones. Ask for 2/13

1 copy	\$.75	100 copies	\$23.00
20 copies	\$7.00	500 copies	\$110.00
50 copies	\$12.00	1000 copies	\$210.00