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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare [are] not fleshly but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ. And they will be ready to punish all disobedience, when your obedience is fulfilled.

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The Religious Wars of the 21st Century

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The phrase “collapse of a civilization” is a common figure of speech that misleads many into thinking that civilizations collapse in much the same way that buildings collapse during controlled demolitions, or like the twin towers of the World Trade Center collapsed on September 11, 2001. The whole affair, they think, is dramatic, obvious, and over in a relatively short period of time; and when it is done, nothing is left but dust and rubble. The metaphor of civilizational collapse is misleading, and some people, under its influence, deny that the West is in collapse. But civilizations do not come crashing down in a matter of months or even years; and it is foolish to expect them to do so.

The West has been in collapse for more than a century. The Biblical theology that created Western civilization five hundred years ago has all but disappeared in the West. The rejection of Christianity in North America and Europe, and the rise of several false religions – including Arminianism, Romanism, Pentecostalism, atheism, and mysticism – have led to the collapse of the West. That collapse is marked by, or, more accurately, is the dissolution of the Biblical family (husband, wife, and children); the economic and political regimentation of the individual and business enterprises; government ownership and control of most educational institutions; the growth of crime; the waning of civility; the acceptance of public profanity, obscenity, and homosexuality; and the resurgence of brutality. To oppose some of this civilizational collapse, the Religious Right in America has embraced both Romanism and Judaism as saviors of the West, foolishly ignorant of the fact that they, as forms of unbelief, are destroyers of the West and causes of the collapse. What we call Western civilization arose because of the widespread preaching and believing of the Gospel of justification by faith alone. Theologies that deny this doctrine are fatal to both souls and societies.

One result of the growing rejection of Christian theology in the West during the late eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries was that the twentieth century was the bloodiest century in recorded history. Perhaps only Noah’s century, which was so wicked that men provoked God to destroy all human life on the planet, save eight souls, was worse. *Genesis* 6:11 and 13 tell us that “The Earth also was

corrupt before God, and the Earth was filled with violence.... ‘The end of all flesh has come before me, for the Earth is filled with violence through them [men]; and behold, I will destroy them with the Earth.’” In the twentieth century hundreds of millions of deaths were caused by the actions of rulers making war on other nations and on their own people. The names of the dictators – Vladimir Lenin, Joseph Stalin, Adolf Hitler, Benito Mussolini, Mao Tse-Tung, Nikita Khrushchev, Ho Chi Minh, Fidel Castro, Pol Pot, to name a few of the infamous – are inseparable from the history of the twentieth century.

In addition to mass murder by government, in which perhaps 200 to 300 million people perished in the twentieth century, crime and legalized murder in the form of abortion took hundreds of millions more lives. As horrific as the twentieth century was, however, it now appears that the twenty-first century will be even bloodier. To understand why, we need to review a little history.

The Separation of State and Church

The nineteenth century was one of the most peaceful centuries in recorded history, despite the bloody stupidity of the War of the Rebellion. It was peaceful primarily for two reasons: The fundamental reason was the widespread preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ – which had been suppressed by force in Europe for a thousand years, which began again in the sixteenth century with the Christian Reformation, and which initially resulted in dissension and war as unbelieving clerics and rulers sought to uphold their long and time-honored tradition of torture and murder – the widespread preaching of the Gospel had the long-term effect of reducing the amount of violence in the nations to which it came and by which it was received. Under this preaching, the basic theoretical error of the notion of Christendom – the pagan notion that a civilized state requires a legally enforced uniformity of religion – was gradually replaced by the Biblical view that God made state and church to be separate institutions, that each had its own proper sphere, and that force was not to be used in either the propagation or suppression of

the Gospel, or any other philosophy. The separation of state and church is now under attack from the Religious Right, which has adopted the Romanist / Reconstructionist notion that force ought to be used to advance the "Kingdom."

Capitalism

The second major institutional cause for the reduction of violence in the nineteenth century (after the institutional separation of state and church), also resulting from the widespread preaching and believing of the Gospel, was the emergence of laissez-faire capitalism, which is the economic system of Christianity. As the power of governments in the West was reduced close to their proper role as guardians of innocent life and private property, as Paul commands in *Romans* 13; as men tended to their own business as commanded by God (*1 Thessalonians* 4:11), and as the economic cooperation required and engendered by capitalism spread further, even across political borders, violence subsided. It was Christian theology, with its respect for the individual and his property, that brought forth the only moral system of economics, laissez-faire capitalism. Today, capitalism is despised, especially by those who profess to be Christians. They think that some sort of welfare state (now called compassionate conservatism), or backwoods, Luddite agrarianism, or socialism, is the Christian system of economics and government.

The Nineteenth Century

During the nineteenth century, Christianity began to disappear. The Gospel preached by the Reformers and their children in the sixteenth through eighteenth centuries was replaced by several counterfeits: By the mid-nineteenth century, the largest denomination in the United States was the Arminian Methodist Church. By the beginning of the twentieth century, it was the Romanist Church. (In 1789 there were perhaps 15,000 Catholics in the United States. By 2006, there were about 65 million. This enormous growth was due largely to immigration and reproduction, not conversion.) Roman Catholicism, after suffering a mortal wound by the Reformation in the sixteenth century, made a resurgence in the nineteenth century led by Thomas Aquinas, whom Pope Leo XIII named the official philosopher of the Roman Church-State. One result of Leo's 1879 decree was the appearance of Neo-Thomism in the twentieth century as obedient Catholics carried out the pope's command.

Theological Liberalism first ruined the churches and universities of Germany in the nineteenth century, and then spread around the globe in the twentieth. Cults of all sorts sprang up in the nineteenth century – Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormonism, Christian Science, Pentecostalism, Theosophy, and more. The rejection of Christianity led to the eruption of false religions as men suppressed the truth by imagining gods and goddesses.

As the Gospel disappeared, the power of rulers grew. Totalitarianism was the dominant political feature of the

twentieth century; even the United States, the supposed bastion of capitalism, assumed many of the characteristics of fascist and socialist states. Those industries that the government did not own outright, as in the Communist variety of socialism, it regulated and controlled, as in the fascist variety of socialism. The dominant political ideologies of the twentieth century were Antichristian: Communism, Socialism, Liberalism, and Nazism. Their chief difference was the color of their shirts. They resembled some religions, and Nazism in particular attracted many religious totalitarians, but all were based primarily on the assumption that the God of the Bible, and the Bible itself, were mythology.

During the nineteenth century irrationalism prevailed in philosophy, and it quickly spread to theology. Soren Kierkegaard, Karl Marx, Charles Darwin, and Friedrich Nietzsche were quickly followed by William James, Sigmund Freud, John Dewey, and B. F. Skinner, and a host of academic fools who denied not simply the God of the Bible, but the idea of truth itself. According to twentieth-century philosophy and theology, man is an animal; emotions are fundamental, deeper than thought; thought is merely rationalization; and truth, as one Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court (Oliver Wendell Holmes) said, was the opinion of the group that could lick all others. The stage was now set for the bloody wars, genocides, and revolutions of the twentieth century.

The Twentieth Century

If the twenty-first century were going to be an improvement over the twentieth century, there would have had to have been some dramatic improvement in the philosophy, theology, and political thought of the twentieth century. (Not only do ideas have consequences, but only ideas have consequences: Human actions are not independent of ideas but the results of ideas.) But there was none. The dominant schools of both philosophy and theology in the twentieth century were not Christian; they were not even rational in a loose sense. The great worldwide Christian revival heralded by people like Philip Jenkins and Gary North is a mirage; their statements tell us more about their counterfeit Christianity than about the state of the religious world. Their religious hallucinations are based on their Romanism and Postmillennialism. (Postmillennialism is one of the factors contributing to the revival of Romanism in the twentieth century: Postmillennial eschatology requires visible, photographable, ecclesiastical progress throughout church history, and it cannot accommodate more than a thousand years of regress during the Middle Ages. Therefore, Posties tend to become historical revisionists whitewashing the barbarity and idolatry of the Middle Ages. Posties regard the Roman Catholic Church-State as a true church of Christ; they admire its use of force and wealth in achieving its goals "in time and on Earth" (to use a favorite Postie phrase), and they seek to imitate Rome's manipulation of civil rulers through bribery, promises, and intimidation. For these reasons and others,

Posties are open to Rome's heretical beliefs and practices. It is no accident that the language of Chapter 26 of the *Westminster Confession of Faith* was changed under the influence of Postmillennialism to omit the Assembly's identification of the pope as Antichrist: "There is no other head of the Church but the Lord Jesus Christ: nor can the Pope of Rome in any sense be head thereof; **but is that Antichrist, that man of sin and son of perdition, that exalteth himself in the Church against Christ, and all that is called God.**" It is no accident that most if not all the heretics on the doctrines of justification in Presbyterian churches are Reconstructionist Postmillennialists.

The mass movements of the twentieth century were continuations and expressions of the irrationalism of the nineteenth century. Existentialism was the child of Kierkegaard and Nietzsche; Positivism was the child of Auguste Comte; theological Liberalism and Neo-orthodoxy were the children of Kierkegaard and Friedrich Schleiermacher; Charisma, which now boasts more than 600 million adherents worldwide, was the spawn of Liberalism, experientialism, and medieval mysticism. All the major theological and philosophical movements of the twentieth century have this in common: A profound hostility to reason, rationality, intelligence, understanding, and the Word; and an equally profound affinity for emotion, irrationality, instinct, mystery, experience, and the deed.

The early twentieth century in the West was characterized by boundless optimism; capitalism and technology were creating a new and better world: Everything from electric lights to refrigeration to powered flight promised many more good things to come. In theology Postmillennialism was the dominant eschatological school, and the Kingdom of God was just around the corner. Then in 1914 the Great War began, and the foolish romantic optimism of the early twentieth century turned to despair. War spawned dictators and dictators started more wars. All the technological progress provided by capitalism could not compensate for the moral and theological regress produced by non-Christian philosophy and theology. Even worse, in the hands of the non-Christian and Antichristian governments of the twentieth century, the technological prowess of capitalism became the means for killing people more efficiently than they had ever been killed before.

The Twenty-first Century

The result of two centuries of irrationalism is that at the beginning of the twenty-first century, we are faced, not with a hopeful prospect, but with an even more dismal prospect than our great grandfathers faced a hundred years ago. The last hundred years has seen the resurgence of medieval Romanism and the emergence of Romanist zealot organizations such as Opus Dei. Medieval Romanism is not just confined to the Roman Catholic Church-State and its thousands of educational institutions, but has gained many adherents among nominal Protestants as well: The prolific authors Norman Geisler and R. C. Sproul, and many lesser known Protestant theologians and philosophers as well, are

disciples of the official philosopher of the Roman Church-State, Thomas Aquinas. Their influence has misled most Protestants away from a Biblical and Reformed view of philosophy and apologetics and into a compromise with Rome. Medieval Islam, now usually called "fundamentalist Islam," and medieval Judaism, with the establishment of the modern State of Israel in 1948, are on the rise as well. All three religions – Romanism, Islam, and Judaism – are false, militant, and violent. Devout members of each group hate, oppose, and plot against members of the other two. But today the date is 2006, not 1006, and the true believers of each of these medieval religions have access to nuclear, biological, chemical, and electromagnetic weapons.

Barring dramatic divine intervention, such as a new Reformation, or the second coming of Christ, the wars of the twenty-first century will be religious wars. They will be worse than the secular wars of the twentieth century. The three principal protagonists will be the three medieval religions that have warred with each other for centuries. Already the battles have begun.

It is important to realize that the Christian has no dog in this fight. Neither Romanism nor Judaism nor Islam is Christianity, yet many who profess to be Christians support either Judaism or Romanism. The so-called Christian Right in the United States, influenced by Romanism, Dispensationalism, and Reconstructionism, has been a supporter of Israel, Judaism, and Rome for decades. The principal figures in the American conservative movement have been Romanist, though their source of funds has largely been Protestant. The principal figures of the so-called Neo-conservatives (Neo-cons) are Jews. The U. S. government, in violation of the U. S. Constitution, has taken tens, if not hundreds, of billions of dollars from American taxpayers and given them to the government of Israel over the past 50 years. We have fought wars and spent billions trying to prop up various Roman Catholic dictatorships. (More recently, the U. S. Government has started sending money taken by force from the American people to Arab and Muslim nations as well.) The conservative movement in the United States has abandoned the American (and Biblical) foreign policy of strategic independence pursued by our government since 1776 for a policy of global interventionism that has angered many foreign nations and peoples, most recently the Muslims.

Because Christianity is neither Romanism nor Judaism nor Islam, there is no need for the United States, a historically, if not currently, Christian nation, to be involved in the religious wars of the twenty-first century. But because of the influence of American citizens (and non-citizens) who are Jews, Catholics, and Dispensational Evangelicals, we are already involved. In fact, because of our foreign policy of interventionism developed in the twentieth century, and because of our more recent policy of pre-emptive war, the United States has become the primary target of militant Muslims worldwide. And not of

Muslims only. Agents of both Israel and Rome are active in the United States, both gathering intelligence and influencing policy. The U. S. government is manipulated by foreign interests. Both Israel and the Vatican see the United States as their proxy in this religious war.

In my book, *Ecclesiastical Megalomania: The Economic and Political Thought of the Roman Catholic Church*, I document the Roman Church-State's theory and practice of violence for the past 1,500 years. Thomas Aquinas, the "Angelic Doctor" and official philosopher of the Roman Church-State and unofficial philosopher of many nominally Protestant teachers, was a totalitarian, just like his mentor, the pagan Greek philosopher Aristotle. A. P. D'Entreves, one of the foremost historians of political theory in the twentieth century, wrote of Thomas: "It is hardly possible for the modern man to accept the system which St. Thomas founded...without renouncing the notion of civil and religious liberty which we have some right to consider the most precious conquest of the West." The "Angelic Doctor" defended imprisonment, torture, murder, and banishment as proper policies in defense of Christendom. In its willingness to use force, Romanism is no different from the other major world religions of Islam and Judaism.

Despite what some misinformed people might think, this desire to use force for religious purposes did not end with the Middle Ages. Hilaire Belloc, a twentieth-century English Catholic fondly quoted by semi-educated Protestants, defended the "right" of society to make "Catholic ideas, education, manners and all the rest of it, the rule of a Catholic state" and to struggle "long and hard to prevent the break up of Catholic society and to save the unity of its civilization." "Any established society, good or evil," Belloc bloviated, "possesses rights." That being the case, we ought not to blame pagan Rome for persecuting Christians, for pagan Rome was merely trying to "save the unity of its civilization." Catholic school textbooks teach that "Catholics must make all possible efforts to bring about the rejection of this religious indifference of the state and the instauration, as soon as possible, of the wished for union and concord of state and Church." That is, Catholics have the religious duty to undermine the American system of freedom of religion.

Because this false thinking is so widely accepted, there is, humanly speaking, no hope for peace or freedom in the twenty-first century, but rather the spectre of global religious war. The theology of the Prince of Peace, who is the author of liberty, has been rejected even by most of those who call themselves Christians. If the Lord Jesus Christ does not return from Heaven soon – and not 10,000 years from now as the Postmillennialists say he will – devoutly religious, Antichristian men will kill hundreds of millions of souls in the bloody wars of the twenty-first century. The Protestant Reformation is indeed over; the respite of peace, freedom, and prosperity it afforded the West from the long history of human brutality is drawing to a close; and the world is about to enter a new Dark Age of slavery, brutality, and war. Only the second coming of Christ or an extraordinary work of the

Holy Spirit can prevent religious totalitarians from imposing their will on billions of people.

The Christian Hope

Christianity, that is, the propositions in the Bible and their logical implications, alone offers hope, and the Christian alone has hope, for Christianity is not of this world, and the Christian is – by election, new birth and divine adoption – a pilgrim, not a citizen of this world. "These all [Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah] died in faith, not having received the promises, but, having seen them afar off, were assured of them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the Earth. For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland.... But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he has prepared a city for them" (*Hebrews* 11). "For our citizenship is in Heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ" (*Philippians* 3:20). Christ said, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would fight, so that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now my kingdom is not from here." It follows from this statement that those who fight to establish some earthly religious kingdom are not of Christ's kingdom. The servants of Muhammad fight, just as Muhammad did, because his kingdom is of this world. The servants of the papacy fight, just as the popes do, for their kingdom is of this world. The servants (not children) of Abraham fight, just as the Maccabees fought, for their kingdom is of this world. But the Holy Spirit, writing through Paul, said, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal [that is physical, visible, tangible, photographable] but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds, casting down arguments and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God, bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." Because his citizenship is in Heaven, the Christian need not fear him who can kill the body, for he fears Him who can and will preserve his soul and give him a magnificent body suitable for the world to come. The Christian knows that when the last person chosen for salvation repents (2 *Peter* 3:9-10), God will end human history, judge all men, separate the sheep from the goats and wolves, and call his friends to eternal life with him. War will be no more; the Prince of Peace will rule; and the saints will grow in the grace and knowledge and freedom of the Lord Jesus Christ forever and ever, world without end.

This essay is from Dr. Robbins' forthcoming book, *Freedom and Capitalism: Essays on Christian Politics and Economics*. This 650-page book is scheduled for release in October 2006 for \$24.95. For customers willing to pay in advance and wait for the book, pre-publication copies are available for \$15 (cash or check only) postpaid to a U. S. address.