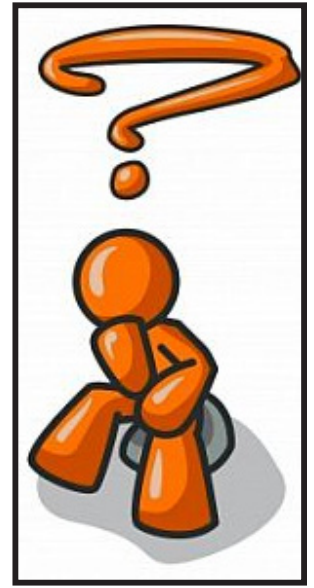


What About...Christian Crusades and Islamic Jihad?

By DR. DAVID A. DEWITT



Let's compare the Christian Crusades to Islamic Jihad:

1. The Christian Crusades went on for about 200 years (1099-1291). They began. They ended. Islamic Jihad has gone on for nearly 1,400 years (Mohammed died in 632). They began with Mohammed and have never ended.
2. The Christian Crusades were designed to free people. The purpose of Islamic Jihad is to convert, kill, or enslave people.
3. Islamic Jihad battles are a result of Muslims following the Koran and the example of Mohammed. The Crusades were a result of the church ignoring the New Testament and ignoring the example of Jesus.
4. All wars include atrocities, but the atrocities of the Crusades were not a directive from the church. Islamic Jihad atrocities come from Islam itself.
5. Militant Christianity is exceptional and rare. Most of it is isolated to the Roman Catholic dominance over the Middle Ages. But for 2000 years, Christians have gone to other countries to spread the Gospel and establish hospitals, orphanages, children's homes, distribution, and education centers. Jihad conquests have been a regular part of Islam all through their history. How many Muslim hospitals and orphanages do you know of?

But There Are Three Serious Problems with the Christian Crusades

1. **The Crusades were part of the mistaken idea that there should be no separation between church and state.**

This says the government should be Christian, and Christianity included governing. In the East, the emperor and the Orthodox patriarch functioned as God's two vicars on earth. In the West, the Catholic pope and the emperor saw no separation between church and state. The security involved in ridding the southern European states of Islamic Jihad, and the religious significance of doing so, blurred the purpose of Christianity. This meant Christianity was blamed for the Crusades.

2. **The Crusades were inspired by the mistaken idea that the church is God's replacement for Israel.**

Much of the early church was anti-Semitic, so they allegorized the biblical prophecies of a future kingdom for Israel into blessings for the church. By the 400s, the church had created the idea that Jesus would come back when Christians made the world into God's kingdom. That idea gave justification for chasing the Muslim infidels out of the "Holy Land."

3. **The Christian Crusades were a product of the church ignoring the teaching of Christ and the apostles.**

Neither Jesus nor the apostles ever suggested Christians go to war against flesh and blood. God empowered government, not the church, to be an avenger who brings wrath on the one who practices evil (Romans 13:4; 1 Peter 2:13).

- Matthew 5:39 and 44, *But I say to you, do not resist an evil person; but whoever slaps you on your right cheek, turn the other to him also...But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you*
- Luke 6:27, *But I say to you who hear, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you.*
- John 18:36, *My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting.*
- Ephesians 6:12, *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against....spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.*