

# THE GREAT TAKEOVER OF CHRISTIANITY



REVELATION 2 AND 3 are clear that the great takeover of Christianity paralleled true Christianity from its beginnings. Jesus was aware of this and taught that not all who receive him and his teaching would be a true Christian. We see this in the stories of the parable of the sower, the ten virgins, the ten talents, the parable of the wheat and tares, as well as those who call him “Lord, Lord” all warn the majority claiming the name of Christ do not belong to Christ (Matt, 13:1-23; Matt, 25:1-12, 25:14-30; Matt, 13:24-30, 36-43; Luke 6:46).

Before His death and resurrection, Jesus warned His disciples they would be hated by all nations and foretold persecution would follow...and follow it did (John 15:18-25; Matt, 24:9). For the first three hundred years, Christianity found itself in great conflict with the world. Some of the fiercest persecution came from the religious, those claiming the name of Christ, and from family and friends (Matt, 24:10, Luke 21:16; Mark 13:12). The largest and most horrific of persecution came from the Roman government. After 300 years of persecution by the Romans, peace finally came—but not without a price; that price would cost Christianity its power—its very soul.

Constantine, the Emperor of the Roman Empire, brought peace in the early 300s by making Christianity a state religion to bring unity among the various conflicting religions. Christianity then spread rapidly. Constantine became the head of the Roman Church, instead of Christ, and began to make changes. Under his leadership, and in cooperation with the Popes, the Sabbath was changed to Sunday, a regular day of worship was established, buildings of worship were erected, hierarchies were established, and images were created. All manner of rituals and customs unheard of in the first 300 years of Christianity were received wrapped in the cloak of Christianity. Many embraced this new form of Christianity for fear of returning to persecution. This new form of Christianity developed into the institution known as Catholicism. The compromise and conformity moved true Christians away from a real, living, fellowship with Christ with Him as its head to an institutional relationship governed by regulations, rituals, and traditions. From this point the great takeover of Christianity accelerated.

As this new form of Christianity moved ahead under the leadership of the Pope, coupled with the state, it did so essentially unbridled. This eventually led the new religion into horrendous and oppressive acts that would have destroyed the takeover if not for those who thought it could be reformed. Martin Luther rose up in the early 1500s as the head of the reformation and unwittingly advanced the great takeover of Christianity, moving it to its next level of deception. The result of the reformation was the removal of those works which were blatantly unscriptural, oppressive, and horrendous. However, instead of reforming the Catholic Church and taking it back to the Christianity of the first century, Luther replicated the Catholic structure. The two institutions were essentially the same: both were man created institutions lead by men through doctrine, rituals, and good works cloaked in the language of Christianity. This gave the great takeover power to embrace the majority of those inclined toward Christianity to either serve God through works in the Catholic churches or through works in the Protestant churches. Both have led people away from a real, living fellowship with Christ through the Holy Spirit. The Catholics and Protestants have become so much a part of the world's system that few today even consider that both are essentially without the Spirit of God, making those inside the denominations pagan Christians...or as Martin Luther, father of the Protestant denominations, said—"utter heathen." Here's the quote by Martin Luther:

"If we look aright at what people now do who reckon themselves as Evangelical and know how to talk much about Christ, there is nothing behind it. Most of them deceive themselves. The number of those who began with us and had pleasure in our teaching was ten times greater; now not a tenth part of them remains steadfast. They learn indeed to speak words, as a parrot repeats what people say, but their hearts do not experience them. They remain just as they are; they neither taste nor feel how true and faithful God is. They boast much of the gospel and at first seek it earnestly, yet afterwards nothing remains; for they do what they like, follow their lusts, become worse than they were before and are much more undisciplined and presumptuous...than other people, for peasants, citizens, nobles, all are more covetous and undisciplined than they were....we are almost utter heathen with the name of Christian...."<sup>1</sup>

In our twenty-first century this great takeover appears to be at its peak in preparation for the rise of the Antichrist. In the midst of this great deception, God is calling His people to return to a relationship with Him through the Holy Spirit. Jesus gave stern warnings in Matthew 25:1-30 that we must be connected to the Holy Spirit before His return. Without the Holy Spirit we cannot belong to God (Rom. 8:9). Without the Holy Spirit we will not enter God's eternal kingdom.

Blessings!  
Steve

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<sup>1</sup> E.H. Broadbent, *The Pilgrim Church* (Grand Rapids: Gospel Folio Press, 1999), 166-167.

Taken from the book, [REVELATION and the Age of the Antichrist](#) (Appendix A.  
May be downloaded as a free download when you click on the link.

Also see the link, "[The Great Takeover of Christianity.](#)"

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