



Politicized Christendom

Preface

Some historical background may reflect parallels between the first and second coming of Christ, and in turn, may give us some insight into the times in which we live:

When Jesus came the first time, a great majority of those who identified as *“the people of God”* had a perspective which was more political than spiritual. I believe that when Jesus comes again, it will be to a people whose majority has a perspective which again has become more political than spiritual.

There were religious groups in Jesus' day which I believe correspond to religious groups in the Christendom today. We can draw some parallels, which are not perfect in comparison but have essential commonalities. The quintessential aspect of the comparisons is that these groups consist of **people who seek a kingdom without the Cross of Christ.**

It is interesting to note that there was a 400-year period in between the Old and the New Testaments. It is known as the *Inter-Testamental Period*. It is also known as the *400 Silent Years*. There was so little true spirituality that God had nothing to say to His people. I believe these 400 years of spiritual darkness for “*the people of God*” under the rule of various worldly powers corresponds to the 400 years of physical bondage of “*the people of God*” in Egypt. I also personally believe that it corresponds to what Jesus called "the times of the gentiles" (Luke 21:24) - I believe the Greek word, *ethnos*¹, is better translated here as "nations", as it is most often translated throughout the New Testament. In other words - "the times of the nations", that is, the times in which “*the people of God*” live in this world under the rule of the nations' governments. In any case, it was during these spiritually dark times that these various religious groups emerged.

In the first century, there were Jewish sects which all

¹ Strong's # G1484

were waiting and looking for a Messiah, but each rejected Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ, because He was a Crucified Christ. In this history, I believe there are lessons to be learned for Christians today.

The Herodians

The sons of Herod ruled Palestine under the license of Rome. Because they wanted to maintain their position of rule, they would politically align themselves with the Roman government. But they also looked for the day when the national kingdom of Israel would be restored free of Roman domination and would be ruled by one of the sons of Herod. This can be compared to any religiously based movement with a political agenda, of which there have been many. But “*Christian Nationalism*” would serve as a good example. The Herodian perspective seemed to be focused on a messiah who would be one of the sons of Herod. Far from accepting a Crucified Christ, we know from the second chapter of Matthew's gospel that Herod himself tried to crucify Christ when He came. Why? Herod reveled in his position of power and would eliminate any

possible competition threatening to win the hearts of the people. This served to belie the reality that his faith took a second place to his politic.

The Sadducees

Since the Sadducees were the high priests and temple leaders, they aligned themselves politically with the secular government and culture because it allowed them to carry on their occupations in the temple. Their interests being more political than spiritual, the Sadducees did not believe in the spirit world or an afterlife, and therefore, their religion was very much oriented to this life in the world. Today we would identify this perspective as *“humanistic”*, *“progressive”*, and *“social justice”* oriented.

The Zealots

The Zealot perspective evolved from a zeal for the Law of God to a zeal in the form of a radical, political activism. Essentially, they were a *“national resistance”* movement plotting the violent overthrow of the Roman

government in order to establish a Jewish state. The out workings of "*liberation theology*" in various nations are examples in modern history of this perspective.

The Pharisees

I took the Pharisees out of alphabetical order and saved them for last, because they most represent the majority of "*Evangelical Christians*" today. The name "*Pharisee*" means "those who are separated". They considered themselves to be "*separated*", and therefore holy, because of their observance of legalistic rituals. They believed that their style of holiness would quicken the coming of a messiah, who would overthrow the Gentiles, re-gather and restore Israel, and rebuild the temple and the re-institute the sacrifices in Jerusalem where He will set up the throne of His kingdom. The nations will bring their taxes to Jerusalem and will be converted to temple worship. It was an earthly kingdom the Pharisees expected, not the Kingdom of Heaven. Today we call this "*Zionism*". And these tendencies can be clearly seen in Christian Nationalism movements.

As I said, each of these first century Jewish sects were waiting and looking for the Messiah, but each rejected Jesus as the Christ, because He was a Crucified Christ. We must see the kingdom through the Cross.²



“Politicized Christendom” is an excerpt from *“Seeing the Kingdom Through the Cross”*. You can find the eBook [HERE](#).



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“Explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words.”

1 Corinthians 2:13

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² Suggested Reading: [“Seeing the Kingdom Through the Cross”](#), [“Who is this King of Glory?”](#), [“The Way of the Cross”](#), [“The Cross & The Powers of Darkness”](#), [“The Weakness of God”](#).

Bill & Frances Furioso
~ At Christ's Table ~



Bill Furioso and his wife, Frances, have been married for more than 40 years, and have two children, four grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

Bill and Frances served as missionaries in South Africa for thirteen years making disciples, establishing churches, and training church leaders. Over a span of 40 years, they also traveled extensively in an itinerant Bible teaching ministry which took them to hundreds of gatherings on four continents ministering in churches, conferences, spiritual formation seminars, and home gatherings. They have shepherded several churches, disciplined many to Christ, and mentored church leaders in the USA and abroad.

Being an avid student by nature, Bill has done both formal and informal study in various fields including Education, Music, Philosophy and Theology. As a writer, he has authored many publications which are distributed worldwide. Because of Bill's disabilities resulting from a spinal cord injury, he can no longer travel, so their ministries of writing, recording, distributing, mentoring, and correspondence are now shared primarily via the Internet... www.AtChristsTable.org

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“Explaining spiritual realities with Spirit-taught words.” 1 Corinthians 2:13

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