

Kurt W. Jefferson

**CHRISTIANITY'S IMPACT  
ON WORLD POLITICS**

Not by Might, Nor by Power



PETER LANG

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## CHAPTER ONE

# Introduction

### *The Resurrection of Christianity as an International Political Force*

Psalm 86:9—*All nations whom thou hast made shall come and worship before thee,  
O Lord; and shall glorify thy name.*

The terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon awakened America and the world to a new era of insecurity and uncertainty. With the deaths of perhaps as many as 3,900 people in the single worst terrorist attack in the world's history, and the single worst attack on American soil in United States history, Americans cried for revenge and justice. Despite the range of emotions that many throughout the world felt on that terrible day (September 11, 2001), one certain conclusion from the attacks was that God was still relevant to Christians in their time of calamity. Immediately, in the evening hours of September 11, millions of Americans attended prayer services in their home churches. In cities, towns, villages, and rural areas, the churches were packed to the brim. Most commentators said that nothing had been seen like it since World War II. Somehow, out of America's painful tragedy, unity and patriotism began to emerge as the nation turned to the Lord during the great time of national suffering.

Columnist Peggy Noonan said that God had produced a miracle in a time of national devastation as people sang Irving Berlin's famous, "God Bless America," President George W. Bush spoke of prayer from the heart, and Americans of all Christian denominations, and faiths came together to respond to the tragedy with the hope that God would lead them to a better day.

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Scriptures found throughout this book are from the Holy Bible, King James Version, the Thompson Chain-Reference Bible, 5th ed. (Indianapolis, IN: Kirkbride, 1988).

Noonan also said, "In 1964, *Time* magazine famously headlined 'God is Dead' . . . I hope now . . . they do a cover that says 'God is Back.'"<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, it took a national tragedy to get Americans and others around the world focused on the Lord, but we now know that the Lord has not forsaken His people. He is still relevant today for all the peoples of the world, and He is affecting politics and society in many unforeseen ways. This book will attempt to explain how God is affecting politics around the world today.

Since the days of the apostles, the growth of Christianity has continued unabated in most parts of the world. Contrary to some scholarly assessments, Christianity has continued to grow, especially evangelical forms of the great monotheistic religion.<sup>2</sup> According to journalist Kim A. Lawton, evangelical Christianity has developed into a worldwide phenomenon since the 1960s. Originally concentrated in the West, today the surge of the Holy Spirit has engulfed non-Western areas, and 70% of the world's 400 million evangelicals are found in "Africa, Asia, Oceania, and Latin America."<sup>3</sup> As a result, Christianity's impact on politics in both Western and non-Western countries continues to be pronounced. From the politics of the "Religious Right," or, to use the former director of the Christian Coalition Ralph Reed's term, "Religious Conservatives," in the United States to Christians fighting for their very lives in war-torn Sudan in Africa, Christianity is leaving an indelible mark on the surface of global politics today. Some pundits and scholars believed that with the end of communism in Europe after 1989 that history was more or less over due to the seeming demise of one of the world's great ideologies: Marxism-Leninism.<sup>4</sup> However, with the end of the bipolar world order and the advent of a multipolar one, the ethnic and spiritual challenges that lay in the wake of international change after the collapse of the communist bloc continue to manifest. The rise of evangelical Christian leaders in secular politics in Africa (see chapter 3 below), the attempts at a profound and historic peace between Palestinian Arabs and Israelis in Israel (see chapter 2 below), and the role of Christianity as a new system of belief for those who formerly adhered to the atheistic and purposely secular visions of Marx and Lenin in Russia and the lands of the former Soviet Union (see chapter 5 below) all display the rather salient role religion, and namely Christianity, plays in world affairs. This book attempts to review the important political developments around the world and explain where Christianity has affected politics and society.

Unlike most academically related books or popular trade books on international politics, this book explains political history and contemporary events through a Christian lens. It attempts to be objective and nondenominational in its focus. It combines an evangelical Christian perspective to international politics and events with an *empirical* examination of how Christianity affects politics in various countries around the world. Hence, it is not a work of prophecy or biblical hermeneutics. The author uses numerous case studies in which Christianity

(leaders, principles and movements/political parties) plays a major role in specific countries from Namibia to Armenia and from Russia to the U.S. The intention of the author is to inspire the reader and to generate reflection in various settings, from the classroom to the pulpit, on the major thesis of the book: that Christianity is on the move and affecting world politics in ways that most Americans (and Westerners) have not realized. The Lord is truly pouring out His Spirit on all flesh at the dawn of the twenty-first century, and governments and leaders are profoundly affected by the Christian message (see Joel 2:28).

The role of religion in politics in general, let alone Christianity, is vastly misunderstood by most students of politics today. Moreover, the average person does not usually comprehend Christianity's impact on world politics. Academicians are not immune to this general trend as well. Many academics have "written off" the importance of religion, and Christianity, in various conflicts and sociopolitical contexts around the world. As political scientist Barry Rubin has noted, "Religion as the prime communal identity has, until recently, been too often neglected."<sup>5</sup> The underestimation of religion's importance has led to analytical discrepancies among scholars. For example, in Sudan, the civil war between Muslims controlling the Khartoum government in the north and Christians and animists in the south is usually reported as "racial, regional, or colonial" and, hence, a misunderstanding of the real reasons for the conflict—which are religious—occurs (see chapters 3 and 6 below).<sup>6</sup>

Though religion as a variable in international politics is at times overemphasized (as in the case of the "troubles" in Northern Ireland) the rise of Islamic fundamentalism, the rise of evangelical Christianity, and the virulent anti-Christian rhetoric of some states suggests that educated people ought to have a better awareness of the new role that religion, and especially Christianity, plays in world affairs today.

According to political scientist Ronald Inglehart, an interesting phenomenon has developed in Western societies. That phenomenon is known as "cognitive mobilization." Cognitive mobilization occurs when the aggregate educational levels of individuals (nonpolitical elites) increases and these individuals, in turn, see an increase in their access to and participation in the political system.<sup>7</sup> Hence, the electorate in countries like the U.S. and even developing democracies in underdeveloped states may see a greater increase in political participation as educational levels and access grow. This has been clearly borne out in the case of the rise in the role of religious conservatives in American politics. Evangelicals are not only a growing segment of American society, but an increasingly educated group as well. This book attempts to provide both a popular and academic synthesis of the political developments that are being affected by the rise in Christian identification and the increased importance of Christianity around the world. Hence, this book is for laypeople, students, teachers, preachers, theologians, scholars, politicians, college students, and the general public.

In the following pages I will examine and explain an amazing, real-life story. That story is one of the pervasiveness of Christianity and its impact on political change and development in numerous contexts around the globe. In describing his epic, yet folksy “On-the-Road” interviews, the late CBS newsman Charles Kuralt said that his stories “covered the news that did not receive front-page headlines,” but they (his accounts of life in America) told more about America and what was occurring in it.<sup>8</sup> This book does much the same thing on the world stage.

You may not hear much about the information in this book as it is presented in the secular press, which is dominated by financial news, news about the president of the U.S., and so on. However, the empirical data is real, and it depicts the role of God and religion in political affairs as is occurring today. Some may be surprised, but the Lord is on the march in affecting politics in the new millennium. Below you will become familiar with the following areas: (a) the Middle East; (b) Africa; (c) the United States; (d) countries of the former Soviet Union, and (e) the persecution of Christians around the world. In the first context, we look at the historical and biblical roots of today's vacillating peace process in Israel. In the next four contexts, we look at how Christianity affects various nations' political institutions, political discourse, and leaders. In the fifth section (chapter 6) we look at Christians who are dying and being persecuted today for the cause of Christ in communist China, Indonesia, India, Pakistan, and Sudan. As a result, the book traces the force of Christianity and the sweeping effects it had on the world in the latter part of the twentieth century and its impact in the new millennium.

### **Christianity: Its Rise and Politicization**

Christendom as an historical movement began on the day of Pentecost nearly 2,000 years ago. Pentecost, the time-honored Jewish feast of the harvest, was an annual religious holiday. It was a celebratory period of thanksgiving to Jehovah for His mercy and provisions during the annual agricultural yield. It so happened during this religious season and on the very day of Pentecost that the Lord sent His Spirit to dwell in the hearts of the men gathered in the upper room in Jerusalem. As theologian Harvey Cox has described:

The Holy Spirit filled them, tongues “as of fire” crowned their heads, and to their amazement each began to understand what the other was saying even though they came from “every nation under heaven” and spoke many different languages. It seemed that the ancient curse of Babel—the confounding of languages—had been reversed and that God was creating a new inclusive human community in which “Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia” could all live together.<sup>9</sup>

With this gathering of followers of a young carpenter from Nazareth, a man named Jesus, God's promise that His Spirit would come following the death and resurrection of His Son (Jehovah Himself in flesh, i.e. Jesus) was manifested (see John 15:26). Moreover, the ancient Hebrew prophet Joel's prophetic statement had come to the fore: that God would pour out His Spirit on all people in the last days (see Joel 2:28). Thus, the Apostle Peter's command was made on that very day to "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost," and the Apostolic era had begun (Acts 2:38).

The advent of Christianity and its transformation through the years is important to review not only for religious or doctrinal purposes, but for political purposes as well. The unification of lands controlled by Rome under the Christian banner in A.D. 325 at the Council of Nicea proved to be more political than religious. However, the resulting religious settlement would have disastrous political effects. Though Constantine, the Roman emperor, called the meeting of Christian bishops at Nicea (not far from the Roman Empire's capital at Byzantium, by A.D. 330, Constantinople, and modern-day Istanbul, Turkey), the eventual rift within Christendom, fully manifested by A.D. 754<sup>10</sup> between the Western Roman church and the Eastern Orthodox church, helped fashion a long division in politics and society that is still felt today. This historical fissure is seen in today's rancorous politics in the former Yugoslavia among Catholic Croats and Orthodox Serbs or the problematic relationship between the Russian Orthodox Church and evangelical missionaries from the United States (see chapter 5 below).

Christianity has continued to be a powerful political force throughout history. As has been verified empirically, at its beginning, Christianity as a social and religious movement was quite small (see chapter 3 for details). As it grew, it became powerful as it was politicized by nations in Europe during the Middle Ages. From the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries, Christianity began its epic confrontation with the world's third great monotheistic religion, Islam. Islam had grown from its humble origins on the Arabian peninsula: From its founder Muhammad, who was born around A.D. 570 into a family of Arabs who eventually become the Hashemite kings of Jordan and Iraq in the twentieth century, the great religion had grown into a major political force in world politics. Muslims believe that Muhammad was a direct descendent of Ishmael, the firstborn of Abraham, the father of the faithful (see chapter 2 below). This is argued in an eighth century book, the *Sira*,<sup>11</sup> however, according to historian John B. Christopher, "Modern scholars reject the genealogy of Muhammad and many other details of the *Sira* as extravagant embellishments in the story-telling tradition of Arabic literature, but they accept its broad outlines as sound in the main."<sup>12</sup> According to Islamic tradition, Muhammad received his revelation from Allah

("God" in Arabic) around A.D. 610. At the very time of Muhammad's life in what is now Saudi Arabia, the Sasanid dynasty from Persia (modern-day Iran) and Christendom's Byzantine empire (Eastern Orthodox kingdom) were warring in the Middle East. The Sasanids resurrected the ancient Iranian religion, Zoroastrianism. This religion evolved from the ideas of a sixth century B.C. Iranian holy man and indigenous prophet, Zarathustra (or the Greek equivalent, Zoroaster). Zoroaster, like many non-Christian spiritual men, sought to get Iranians to lessen their pantheistic tendencies and emphasize one of their gods more than others. That deity was Ahura Mazda. Eventually, by the fourth century B.C., Iranians had embraced Zoroastrianism and maintained a general pantheistic way by placing Ahura Mazda above the religion's lesser gods. Minor gods were seen as manifestations of Ahura Mazda. Though the religious elements were somewhat different, the Persian-Christian conflict would replicate itself as wars of religion between Arab Muslims and European Christians by the eleventh century A.D. in the form of the Crusades.

The Crusades began in 1096, when in the aftermath of Pope Urban II's endorsement at the Council of Clermont in France, thousands of men from the areas that comprise the modern-day countries of France, Germany, and Italy gathered to represent Western and Eastern Christendom in their quest to take Jerusalem from the Muslims. Jerusalem had been controlled by non-Christians since the 600s. The Eastern emperor, Alexis I, felt vulnerable given his exposure to advancing Muslim armies; so the Western crusaders were sent to Constantinople to protect the eastern half of Christendom's outer flank. By 1099, Christendom's crusaders had smashed the Islamic Seljuq Turks and taken Jerusalem. Three other Crusades occurred; but, in the long run, Muslim control of the Holy Lands returned. By 1187, the king of Egypt and Syria, Saladin, had retaken Jerusalem, and despite a brief Christian interregnum in the thirteenth century, Muslims controlled the Holy Lands until the nineteenth century. If the Middle Ages were the pinnacle of religious, and specifically Christian, zeal in Europe, the Reformation period was a pronounced addendum to that period. Moving away from collective Christian action against religious and political threats to physical security, the focus shifted more to the individual liberties and rights context within Christianity itself. As was argued by many great political thinkers in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, including President Woodrow Wilson (see below), America's first Ph.D. in political science from Johns Hopkins University in 1886, the Reformation brought religious liberty to Christendom and, in turn, allowed various political systems to progress with the manifestation of democratic tendencies in various contexts including the English Civil War (1642–1647) where the Puritan Roundheads, led by Oliver Cromwell, sought to empower the English citizenry vis-à-vis the monarchy. The development of dem-



ocratic tendencies, which include manifestations of political and religious liberty, equality for individuals, and the toleration of various denominational differences within Protestantism are the Cromwellian period's greatest legacy to the Anglo-Saxon democratic heritage. Cromwell's austere and, at times, brutal (when dealing with Catholics in Ireland) legacy caused historians and political scientists to rethink politically driven conquests made in the Name of the Almighty. However, to minimize the political and spiritual nexus between ideals and ends in this case is problematic given Cromwell's ultimate positive impact on government in England and future Anglo-Saxon democracies, such as the U.S. For this reason, his statue proudly stands outside the House of Commons in London today as a symbol of the people's challenge to invidious political absolutism. Robert S. Paul argues that the English civil war's political and social impulses eventually rose to the fore again and successfully led to the democratic revolution in the American colonies a generation later. "Puritanism provided not only the common biblical basis for the 'free church' ideal in both countries, but perhaps more significantly it lies at the root of the Anglo-Saxon political democracies," Paul states.<sup>13</sup> It is through the views on spiritual freedom of individuals like Martin Luther that much of the impetus for democracy, as we know it in the capitalist West today, were sprung.

The manifestation of opposing views to Rome came to the fore in the writings and teachings of many individuals during the Reformation period. The Roman Catholic cleric Martin Luther is credited with beginning the landmark split between Catholicism and Protestantism with his eloquent defense of individual liberty and freedom of conscience at the Diet of Worms in April 1521. However, most of his ideas replicated similar themes of earlier martyrs for the cause of Christ. These include the fifteenth century Czech professor and cleric Jan Hus, who argued against the legitimacy of sacraments that had been performed by immoral priests, and Englishman John Wycliffe, who had questioned the Catholic priesthood's zealous attempt to keep the masses from reading the Bible for themselves in their own languages instead of Latin.<sup>14</sup> In general, Luther had exposed a radical side to his beliefs that threatened the established church-state order of the day. He had openly questioned the legitimacy of a church that would allow "indulgences"<sup>15</sup> to be sold for absolution of sins, when according to the Bible this practice was not only unscriptural but forbidden (see I Peter 5:2 and Mark 2:10). After nailing the 95 theses on indulgences to the church door at Wittenberg on October 31, 1517, he became a national hero among the duchies and provinces of the Germanic areas of the former Holy Roman Empire. After a papal bull of excommunication was issued following the Diet of Worms, Luther was forced into internal exile, hiding in various locales. The verdict at Worms also called for Luther's execution as a heretic. Habsburg emperor, Charles V, was

disgusted with the fact that one lonely monk had had the audacity to challenge 1,000 years of Church tradition. Eventually, as a source of controversy, Luther authored numerous books and tracts while in exile in Wartburg cathedral, his "Patmos," as it were. Among these writings was his magisterial translation of the New Testament into German.

By 1522, various German princes began seizing church property, and hence, legal and political authority, in the name of spiritual (Lutheran) freedom. These events led to the Peasants' Revolt. The rebellion spread across southern Germany. Ambivalent about the peasants' animosity toward the Catholic princes, Luther said nothing at first. He then supported the peasants in a tract aimed at getting princes to recognize the peasants' claims. However, Luther was opposed to the armed violence associated with the peasant struggle. In 1523, he authored a tract, *Against the Robbing and Murderous Peasant Gangs*, in which he called for the extermination of rebellious and bellicose peasants. He was unwilling to sanction thuggery, anarchy, and brutality in the name of spiritual freedom. As a result, Luther felt reform in Christendom should occur incrementally and hierarchically rather than by revolutionary means. He had failed to envision how radical his ideas really were and to what extent they would take root and then manifest themselves in Germany on the whole. By 1525, the rebellion was stanchd. However, the Peasants' Revolt left an uneasy feeling among Germans and affected the Reformation period from that point on. The eventual settlement of the Church-state rift in Germany manifested in the Peace of Augsburg of 1555. Through this peace a tenuous truce allowed Catholics and Lutherans in Germany to coexist for an additional 63 years until 1618 when the Thirty Years War broke out. Again, a battle for the souls of Europeans between Catholicism and the so-called heretical views of Protestants, who followed the likes of Luther, Hus, and John Calvin, occurred.

The quest for spiritual freedom led to a new political order and, in an ironic way increased the politicization of religious and territorial politics under princes and kings, who used their newfound Protestant allegiance as a source of power in the face of the established Catholic force, the Spanish Habsburg dynasty. The Reformation period gave the impetus to much of the intellectual and political power behind the Enlightenment of the seventeenth century and the revolutionary democratic developments in Europe and the United States. The radical breaks with tradition, monarchy, and the status quo all helped change the political order of the day as seen in England in 1688, America in 1776, and France in 1789. Although the latter marked a pronounced break with the established (Roman Catholic) church and the social and moral dictates of Christianity in general, the American Revolution blended spirituality and secular enlightenment thinking (the latter mainly due to Thomas Jefferson's agnostic/deist preconceptions), and the roots of American democracy were sown.

## Democracy and Christianity

The forces of Christianity have marched throughout history at times in line with democracy and at times at odds with the great ideology of the modern era. Historical expressions of institutionalized religion did not use democracy as a tool of religious or secular governance. Moses's actions at the base of Mount Sinai after finding the Israelites involved in various abominations were not only undemocratic; they were not predicated on a democratic system of justice. Moses's system of justice was purposely God-given, or what modern scholars of jurisprudence would refer to as emanating from "divine law"—law derived from the Will of the Lord and applied in a temporal setting. Moreover, the divine law with which Moses was charged with enforcing was codified in the newly pronounced Decalogue (or Ten Commandments) which God had revealed to him during his forty days on the mount. Of course, he smashed the tablets of the Decalogue at the base of Mount Sinai after seeing the pagan developments that had evolved in the Israelite camp during his absence. As a result of his people's waywardness in his absence, Moses applied a swift retaliation and retribution to those who violated God's commands. In doing so he ordered the Levites to execute around 3,000 disobedient souls and he made the people drink liquefied gold as a reminder of their sin before God (see Exodus 32). These actions caused the famous fifteenth century Florentine political philosopher, Niccolo Machiavelli, to state that Moses was the penultimate "prince" (i.e. leader in the modern political sense of the term) because of Moses's vision in realizing that his people would have difficulty conforming to the new political order that God was establishing for them in the postbondage era away from Egypt. Machiavelli believed that humans were inherently opposed to new political orders because they would not "believe in anything new until they have had actual experience of it."<sup>16</sup> Political scientist Aaron Wildavsky argues that Moses was a great leader because he could change as a leader to adapt to different and complex situations. He also believes Moses provides the supreme example for leaders in modern democracies because he led by example. Further, Wildavsky believes Moses's leadership was one of history's best because he prepared the Israelites to govern themselves without him.<sup>17</sup>

Interestingly, it was Moses, who has been referred to as the "Law Giver," who borrowed from Hammurabi's earlier model in handing down the Decalogue, which provides a basis for the legal systems found in Western democracies today. The Decalogue provided a basis for the standardized code of morality and ethics found in societies predicated on the Judeo-Christian promise. That promise encapsulates the hope that men and women would love the Lord their Creator with all their hearts, soul, and strength and apply the legal and social truths of the Decalogue in their affairs with fellow humans. It is interesting to note that in a 1997 survey of 200 Anglican vicars (ministers of the Church of England) nearly two-

thirds in the sample of clergy *could not* name most of the Ten Commandments. When asked why he could not name them one vicar said, "They are very negative."<sup>18</sup>

Hammurabi, the ancient Amorite king of Babylon, was responsible around 1792–1750 B.C. for creating a legal code for the governance of his kingdom and the semitic peoples of ancient Mesopotamia. It is widely believed that Hammurabi was a contemporary of Abraham and it is possible that the two knew each other. Hammurabi's law delineated the nature of the social, class-based order in the Old Babylonian empire, and it had a pronounced set of punishments for those who violated its principles. Justice was to be meted out by the king, whose authority was given to him by the gods he followed. Hammurabi's code is often seen as the intellectual and historical forerunner to the Mosaic code and to the interpretation of God's Will by Moses for the nation of Israel.

Although not democratic, the Mosaic law has been described as the precursor of today's democratic legal heritage in the West. According to Gutenberg Award-winner and Bible scholar Henry H. Halley, "much of the Law is pre-Mosaic, in the same sense that much of the Lord's Prayer is pre-Christian. No originality in the narrow sense of the word is claimed for either." However, as a forerunner for modern day democracies and the manifestation of justice and due process, Moses's code, Halley contends: (a) is "more humane" in its punishments (b) does not have the pagan qualities of its forerunners (c) provides a divine model for a proper theocracy (both literally and figuratively), and (d) "sets a higher value on human life and relates all to God, the love of God, and love for one's neighbor."<sup>19</sup> Hence, the Decalogue provides us with the historic underpinning for the West's time-honored commitments to democracy and justice in the legal realms of society. In the March 1997 debate in the U.S. House of Representatives on whether the Decalogue should be allowed in public buildings (see more on this issue in chapter 4), Representative Donald Manzullo (R-IL) said; "The reason for the picture of Moses in the Chamber of the House of Representatives is to give credence to the people speaking here that all of the laws that we enact have as their moral basis the Ten Commandments. In the Supreme Court itself, there are two versions of the Ten Commandments up on the walls."<sup>20</sup>

The importance of the Ten Commandments as a legitimizer of democracy had not changed from the time God gave them to Moses around 1450 B.C.<sup>21</sup> until March 1997.

As a form of politics, democracy is an ancient form of political expression and institutionalization. The Greeks brought the world democracy in the fifth century B.C. with the creation of the *demos*. The Greek legislature represented its citizens with male property owners who were allowed to vote on matters of importance to the *polis*, the Greek city-state. Women and slaves were not allowed to participate, but a general majoritarian philosophy inspired the *demos*, and it was this rule by

the “masses” that inspired the great political thinker, Plato, to castigate this system of government and politics in both of his famous Socratic-style works, the *Republic* and the *Statesman*.<sup>22</sup> In these dialogues he states that democracy, as propounded in his general “theory of political decay,” was the second *worst* form of government just ahead of the worst form of government, tyranny. Unfortunately for Plato, his ideas have been misconstrued and misunderstood as seen in the thought-provoking book, *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (1945) by Sir Karl R. Popper, the Viennese-born philosopher.<sup>23</sup> Popper argues that the world can thank Plato for providing the intellectual blueprint for Adolph Hitler’s Nazism and his concomitant heinous regime.

However, a clearer reading of Plato allows students of politics to realize that: (a) Plato’s critique of democracy is more about the threats of extremism and the excesses of “mob mentality” in a political system, and (b) his views are as much about ordering one’s life to bring about what his student Aristotle called “the mean.” Finding the mean in one’s life could bring about *eudaimonia* (the Greek word for “happiness” or the human good). Hence, the commitment to a balanced soul and, hence, an even-keeled life can be found in Plato’s views. Some have argued that the Apostle Paul (as Saul of Tarsus) had read Plato’s writings and that they most likely affected his views on life apart from the Holy-Ghost-inspired scriptures that he penned. Paul’s call for moderation and temperance in the post-Crucifixion society were examples of a kind of Platonist or Aristotelian caution against extremes, especially when it came to governing the affairs of mankind. Although democracy to Plato was a pejorative phenomenon, the extent to which democracy is applied to various societies and governments varies historically. From the parliamentary democracy of states like the United Kingdom to limited democracy in developing states, the concept has been applied in varying ways throughout history. The Bible, in both Old and New Testaments, tells of various degrees of democracy that people today may not view as democratic given their experience with modern democracy.

In the Old Testament, God led the people through His prophets until they clamored for a political ruler. As seen in I Samuel, the Lord appeased His people by anointing Saul as King of Israel.<sup>24</sup> Although this was not a democratic gesture, nor was democracy part of the political equation in Israel at the time, God chose to give the people what they wanted in order to evince the problems inherent in worldly wisdom and populist conceptions of governing without the divine direction of the Lord. Hence, democracy, although a great and time-honored method of government, came from the Lord’s giving of a king to Israel. As a result, man from that time on got more political and social autonomy as the torch was passed from the Old Covenant to the new dispensation found in His New Covenant with the coming of the Messiah, Jesus Christ. Does this mean that increased rule by individuals in both nondemocratic environments, like ancient Israel, or modern democracies

is inherently flawed and anti-God? By no means. The Lord has poured His mercy out on His creation and the keepers of His creation, the peoples of the world, in this latter dispensation of grace. As a result, the modern-day conception of democracy has helped provide a justification for spiritual and political liberty in many parts of the world. After all, though God foreordained Saul as king of Israel, He chose to place him among a group of Israelites at Mizpeh from shoulder to shoulder in order to underscore His commitment to fairness and to evince Saul's greatness (literally—because he was taller than his fellow Israelites—and in a normative sense as well due to his sagacity and wisdom) vis-à-vis his fellow tribesmen (see I Samuel 10:23). In a sense, this should be interpreted as a quasi-democratic gesture by the Lord. Democracy is also seen in the New Testament when the church faithful selected seven leaders within Christ's first century Church at the behest of the apostles (see Acts 6). The contradictions of the Platonic conception of democracy and the views of many of America's great leaders on democracy are reconciled in the difficult bridge between democratic theory and practice. Thomas Jefferson, the third president of the United States, was well-known as a champion of minimalist government, laissez-faire economics, and the application of individual liberties. In practice, however, he was not as absolute about these principles, given his expansion of the U.S. government with Louisiana Purchase, his military intervention in the Mediterranean to extirpate the threat of the Barbary pirates, and his ownership of numerous slaves. Woodrow Wilson, one of our most erudite presidents, was known for his championing of Christian ideals and virtues as a form of political reform. The son of a Presbyterian minister, Wilson began his professional life as a college professor. Moving to Princeton University in September 1890, he had led a distinguished life in academe during his long tenure as a political scientist. Married with three daughters, Wilson gave stirring lectures to his classes at Bryn Mawr College (Pennsylvania women's college), Wesleyan College (now Wesleyan University), and Princeton. At Princeton, he often lectured to 400 undergraduates in his introductory political science courses. One of his students recalled a lecture that left a strong impression in his mind and heart:

I still recall the vividness with which [Dr. Wilson] described the scene in Greyfriars churchyard, when on a grim, forbidding Sunday morning in February 1638, under the shadow of Edinburgh Castle, the stern and determined citizens of Scotland signed their names to the Covenant on a flat tombstone just outside the door. Years afterward, with his description of this event still in my mind, I took my daughter to Greyfriars churchyard, just to let her see where the event occurred. To Wilson it was one of the outstanding events in the long struggle for liberty. It was here that freedom of conscience took its root . . .<sup>25</sup>

It is not by accident that Wilson used this particular political event with Christian overtones to underscore his belief in the Christian roots of democracy in the

modern era. Although democracy was not necessarily a Christian concept or found as an integral component of the scriptures, the moral and intellectual force of scripture infused a lifeblood into democracy that Wilson believed in; and he believed dearly in the nexus of the two. Wilson was not an adherent of the social gospel movement of his day, like the venerable Democratic congressman from Nebraska (and Wilson's first secretary of state), William Jennings Bryan, but he was a died-in-the-wool Protestant with a Calvinist predisposition. He was not ultra-devout, but he believed in the power of the Word and the importance of relying on Christ's words as a source of hope and strength. As Wilson's biographer, historian Arthur S. Link, has noted, Wilson felt the Bible was "the people's book of revelation" and Link quotes Wilson in a speech given in 1911 in Denver, Colorado that would make the future president sound like an Israelite prophet of old:

And the man whose faith is rooted in the Bible knows that reform cannot be stayed, that the finger of God that moves upon the face of the nations is against every man that plots the nation's downfall or the people's deceit; that these men are simply groping and staggering in their ignorance to a fearful day of judgment and that whether one generation witnesses it or not, the glad day of revelation and of freedom will come in which men will sing by the host of the coming of the Lord in His Glory.<sup>26</sup>

Wilson himself is a contradictory figure in the annals of American history. Although held in high regard by most academicians as a virtuous and idealistic figure, his unwillingness to compromise with a Republican congress after 1916 doomed his administration, and his failed attempt to ratify the Versailles peace treaty, and hence guarantee America's entry into his League of Nations, shows that his lack of pragmatism in the governance of international affairs was less than diplomatic or democratic. As a result, his health failed and he left office after two terms a defeated president.<sup>27</sup>

Wilson's views reinforce the importance of the nexus between democracy and Christianity. Christianity provides an impetus to democracy and the historical forces of liberty, and the liberating tendencies of scripture have breathed an historic lifeblood into nations that have sought to throw off the shackles of political and spiritual repression. Today, this is nowhere more evident than in Africa. As will be seen in chapter 3 below, a land rife with postcolonial authoritarianism, Africa is now burgeoning with democratization and pluralist change. It may not be by coincidence that the rise of evangelical Christianity on the vast plains of that great continent is generally synchronized with the rise of democracy from South Africa to Malawi and from Zambia to Namibia. Moreover, the defense of the democratic ideal politically and the Western culture that helped nourish it and give it life has become a renewed source of debate in the wake of the Cold War.



### The West Versus the Rest?

Political scientist Samuel P. Huntington provoked serious reflection and political and scholarly debate in 1993 with his article in *Foreign Affairs*, "The Clash of Civilizations?"<sup>28</sup> By 1996, Huntington's argument that the West must defend itself, its institutions and, above all, democracy, against the growing tide of Islamic fundamentalism and Chinese power, was expanded in book form. With his many critics, Huntington breaks his general thesis into one "theme" with five parts. He believes that in the wake of the post-Cold War order a new multipolar order has evolved and that "culture and cultural identities" will now shape "the patterns of cohesion, disintegration, and conflict in the post-Cold War world." From this thesis come five ancillary suppositions. First, that a multipolar, or "multicivilizational" (or one based on many cultures), world order has evolved for the first time ever and that it will continue to challenge the post-World War II Western assumptions of the world's political and social development. Second, the world's balance of power is shifting, with the West's influence declining and Asian cultures ascending. Though Islamic cultures are growing as well, they are not in a position to dominate politically, but because of the militant aspects of some forms of Islam and the rapid pace of their growth, a major influence will continue to be felt in world affairs due to radical Islam's role in various parts of the world. Third, a world order based on at least nine distinct cultures (or as he misapplies the term, "civilizations") is occurring. Fourth, the West's tendency to influence other cultures is causing a profound "clash" with other cultures, namely, Islam and Chinese cultures. Fifth, the West's survival is based on "Americans reaffirming their Western identity" to keep challenges from non-Western cultures from enervating the West's culture, institutions, and worldviews.<sup>29</sup>

Huntington's interesting and cogent thesis is not without its problems. His first assumption is problematic historically given the multipolar great power order that controlled the fate of the world from Europe between 1815–1914. Another problem with his theory is the role of Russia. Although he acknowledges Russia's place as part of the Eastern Orthodox civilization, he also recognizes its role as part of the West at times during its existence. Viewing Russia as a Western nation is dubious given her historic championing, in the modern era, of the Eastern Orthodox cause within Christendom and, hence, the East's political position vis-à-vis the West. For example, Russia fought the Crimean War with England from 1853–1855 over the Holy Lands for control of the region by their respective cultures (East versus West), and because of England's break with Rome in 1509, a war fought 340+ years later was not as much about the religious superiority of Western Christendom over Eastern Christendom, as it was about the politically "progressive" West over the "backwards" East. Analytically, viewing Russia as one of these two civilizations can be problematic depending on the contexts and issues under investigation.



A third problem with his theory includes his use of the term “civilization.” It seems problematic to use this term as a label for groups of peoples. The term civilization implies a longitudinal component that is misused in his analysis. The term “cultures” seems more logical since we are talking about characteristics of peoples and their sociological milieus rather than geopolitical domains and historic timeframes alone.

A fourth problem relates to Huntington’s skepticism over the role of Christianity as a force in the conflict between the West and its two major challengers: Sinic (Chinese) and Islamic cultures. This is problematic given the continued increase in both Christianity and Islam (see chapter 3). Like other scholars in political science today, he argues that Islam will supplant Christianity as the dominant religion in the not-too-distant future. The empirical evidence is available to challenge this claim. Moreover, to discount Christianity as a major influence in the so-called “clash of civilizations” is problematic given the increased persecution of Christians around the world (and most intensely in both Sinic and Islamic cultural contexts) and the *documented* great evangelical revival occurring around the world in places like Africa, where by A.D. 2000 the continent was projected to be 50% Christian (see chapter 3 below). Moreover, the important geosocial and geopolitical role that Christianity plays in unifying groups of peoples from various cultures today cannot be overlooked. Despite the divisions within Christendom along denominational lines today, much unification has occurred over cultural, social, and political issues, as seen in the U.S. within the Religious Right, and in Africa, where Christians have mobilized to affect political change in such countries as Namibia and Mozambique.

On the other hand, in fairness to Huntington, his thesis is quite fascinating from an historical and cultural perspective. It is analytically profound in its willingness to explain the post–Cold War milieu. His arguments are tenable in their emphasis on the rift between Islam and the West, and it seems as though this is manifested in the increased suppression of Christianity in Islamic areas (see the section on Sudanese politics in chapter 3 below and chapter 6 below). What’s more, the September 11, 2001, terrorist attack on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon by radical Islamic terrorists, which cost several thousand innocent lives in New York and Washington, clearly evinces the salience of Huntington’s thesis. Other scholars attribute the chaotic world order to the outbreak of nationalism and ethnic fury that followed the collapse of communist regimes in central Europe. According to former U.S. Senator and political scientist Daniel Patrick Moynihan, after 1991, ethnic tribalism and savagery returned to the European continent, making political development and change difficult at best in the blood-soaked regions of the former Yugoslavia, to name one example.<sup>30</sup>

Political scientist Vojislav Stanovcic of the University of Belgrade, has stated that into the twenty-first century at least 5,000 nation-states could evolve due to

the national self-determination of peoples occurring in various countries today.<sup>31</sup> The tragedy of the idea of the national self-determination of peoples is that it has provoked numerous ethnic and regional conflicts since 1989. Unfortunately for numerous ethnic minorities, groups, tribes, and so on in developing parts of the world from Europe to Africa to Asia, wars and conflict abound and the rate of centrifugal change in some areas (such as the former Soviet Union) has oftentimes been bloody and unnerving to the seemingly satiated Western societies. Renewed and expanded warfare around the world from Georgia in the former Soviet Union (see chapter 5) to Sierra Leone in Africa continues to manifest the great political, social, and economic discord afoot in the world today. As a result, the move of Christianity and the Lord's Spirit has coincided with the great and tumultuous volcanic geopolitical and military activity that have served to rend the world into a broken and somewhat disjointed post-Cold War order.

### **The Cry for Peace and Safety: Disorder at the Dawn of the New Millennium**

“For when they shall say, Peace and safety; then sudden destruction cometh upon them as travail upon a woman with child; and they shall not escape.” (I Thess. 5: 3). From 3600 B.C. to A.D. 1960, the globe had only 292 years of universal peace. The remaining 5,268 years saw 14,513 armed conflicts taking 1.24 billion lives.<sup>32</sup> World War I killed 8 million soldiers and 1 million civilians while World War II killed 17 million soldiers and 35 million civilians.<sup>33</sup> As has been documented, the twentieth century was mankind's most violent. Since A.D. 1100, 148 million people have died as a direct result of warfare around the world. Of that number, 75% died in the twentieth century,<sup>34</sup> thus making it the most bloody.

The paradox of war and death in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries has been studied and the empirical data suggest the following: According to political scientist Quincy Wright, from between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries up to the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the frequency of war declined.<sup>35</sup> However, he argues that the intensity of war increased due to technology, wider swaths of land involved in war, and so on. Political scientist Hans J. Morgenthau affirms the latter corollary to Wright's study by empirically providing the four major additions to warfare in the age of increased technology and the advent of atomic warfare since August 1945. According to Morgenthau, the “four major innovations in the technique of warfare” include (a) the use of the submarine (b) the use of the tank (c) tactical and strategic use of air forces in concert with ground and naval forces, and (d) the possession and potential use of nuclear weapons.<sup>36</sup> Hence, the potential for great destructiveness was applied by the end of the Second World War. The world had reached a plateau where less conventional weaponry and

forces buildup was needed to engage in more costly warfare, both in terms of human and economic damage. As a result, fewer wars were fought, but greater costs, both in terms of manpower and financial losses, occurred when nations did engage in warfare due to the increased applications of new technologies.

Despite the rise in the importance of nonconventional weapons (e.g. nuclear weapons) and the seeming erosion of importance in conventional weapons, the post–Cold War era has not seen the end of the potential destruction of conventional weapons. Hence, II Thessalonians 5:3 is a salient biblical passage for today’s world as, paradoxically, “disarmament is arming the world.” According to Michael Renner, “More than 500 million military-style hand-held weapons provide massive firepower for criminals, vigilantes, people trying to defend themselves, private armies and other civilians who might be less heavily armed without military disarmament.” Seventy percent of war casualties between 1945 and 1990 and 90% from 1990–1997 were civilians. Since 1988, the number of soldiers in the armies has shrunk by 20%. Police and private security forces have grown, however. In the U.S., South Africa, and Australia the total number of those found in private security and police forces outnumber those in national armies. In the late twentieth century, over \$50 billion was spent on private security in the U.S. each year. This outstripped the total amount of money spent on the combined budgets of all police forces in the U.S. and every army around the world with the exception of the U.S. army. Linked to the decentralization of weaponry around the world is the proliferation of land mines in global affairs. Some 120 million mines are now found in 71 countries.<sup>37</sup> These findings suggest a supply and demand problem in weaponry that adds a new and highly volatile variable into the evolving post–Cold War global milieu. The world has continued to become scarier in terms of conflicts after the Cold War.

In 2000, according to a study done by the National Defense Council Foundation, the number of countries where conflicts were occurring grew from 65 to 68. That was almost twice the number of conflicts worldwide seen in 1989, the year the Berlin Wall collapsed; however, the number was not as high as the 71 conflicts in 1995. The Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict found that between 1989–1997 more than four million people died in “violent conflicts.” The commission also found that “one in every 200 people in the world is a refugee or is displaced, usually by local conflict.”<sup>38</sup> Terrorism continued to take its toll on the world at the end of the twentieth century and dawning of the twenty-first century as more people died due to senseless acts of terror. In 1998, a record 741 were killed and 5,952 injured in global terrorist acts according to the U.S. state department. In the same year, there were 273 terrorist attacks, down from 304 in 1997. In 1998, 40% of the attacks (111) were focused on U.S. targets.<sup>39</sup>

With warfare escalating in the post–Cold War world, the study of the reasons for war has at times been misconceived. It is often misleadingly argued in college

classrooms and other forums including churches across America, that religion is the chief cause of wars. Although religion, as seen above in the various holy wars of the Middle Ages, has been a cause of wars, it is not *the* major cause of a majority of wars. According to political scientist Herbert K. Tillema, a majority of the wars in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries were caused by "border disputes." Tillema studied wars in the Cold War period and found that between September 2, 1945 and December 31, 1988 that 269 international armed conflicts occurred. Some of these were "major wars, small wars and armed engagements short of war."<sup>40</sup> Tillema looked at the multifarious causes of war, which included civil strife and external forces aiding insurgents against established governments (e.g., the U.S. aid to the UNITA rebels who challenged the Marxist government in Angola in the 1980s). Assessing the causes of war is difficult because states may enter conflicts for different reasons and the lines of warfare may get blurred. Classic examples of trying to gauge the various reasons for conflict include the first recent Chechen war in Russia (1994–1996) and the prolonged struggle between republicans and loyalists in Ulster. Both are seen by analysts as domestic and international conflicts simultaneously. Reasons for these wars may be multifaceted, including political, economic, and religious justifications by various parties to the conflicts. Tillema's study ends almost exactly at the beginning of the post-Cold War era (1989–1991). With the literal collapse of the Berlin Wall on November 9, 1989, the succeeding wave of democratic change in central and eastern Europe infused new energy into those peoples in areas historically controlled by Roman Catholicism (central Europe) and the Eastern Orthodox Church (eastern Europe/the Soviet region).

The violent clashes among peoples in the former Yugoslavia suggest that some aspects of Christianity play a role in that troubled part of the world. However, religious identification is oftentimes equated with national (or racial) identification among the Catholic Croats, Orthodox Serbs, and Bosnian Muslims. According to Huntington, the clash of what he calls civilizations was accentuated by increased amounts of warfare perpetrated by Islamic states. His research suggests that between 1992 and 1994 Muslims were involved in more conflicts around the world than any other group of peoples or civilizations.<sup>41</sup> According to one study, Muslims were involved in nine out of twelve intercivilizational conflicts with non-Muslims. Another study found that in 1993–1994 Muslims were involved in twenty-six of fifty ethnic conflicts around the world. Finally, in 1993, the *New York Times* found Muslims fighting with other Muslims and non-Muslims in forty-eight locales where fifty-nine ethnic conflicts were underway.<sup>42</sup> These data cause Huntington to argue that Islamic societies are among the most violent on the globe, with Muslims engaged in two-thirds to three-fourths of the intercivilizational wars in the early to mid-1990s. Moreover, he argues that Islamic states are the most "militarized" with a higher soldier-to-citizen ratio than other countries, including what

he calls “Christian countries”—that is, primarily Western nations.<sup>43</sup> Although many Muslim states, such as Iran, have posed a serious threat to U.S. security since the rise of Islamic fundamentalism in the late 1970s, the diverse nature of Islam and its various manifestations politically and socially serve to lessen its perceived “monolithic” character (see chapter 6). Huntington’s thesis about Western and Islamic civilizations clashing over ideological principles seems logical. However, minimizing the role of Christianity in its evangelical forms in that clash is problematic given the proselytizing qualities of the latter, which conflicts with militant forms of the former. This is where the real clash of civilizations is occurring. The lack of analysis on how Christianity, as a spiritual force politically, and its links to Western democracy as a kind of supra-ideology conflicts with Islam is painfully manifest in most discourse in American and Western academe and government. Huntington avoids serious discussion of evangelical Christianity in the clash of various cultures (as opposed to Christianity in general). As in Islam, a serious *intra*-civilizational clash is occurring, at least politically and socially (not necessarily militarily) in some Western nations, like the U.S., and in Latin America. Hence, both Western and Latin American cultures (or as Huntington calls them, “civilizations”) have been affected by the fissure between evangelical Christianity (primarily dominated by Protestants, but not without some evangelical Catholic influence, too) and mainline Christianity (such as the older, established Protestant denominations). He does, however, acknowledge the “resurgence of religion in America” in the 1990s as a by-product of the growing trend toward clashing civilizations based on cultures rather than the standard political ideologies of the post-WWII bipolar world order.<sup>44</sup> It is with this in mind that the manifestations of Christianity as a resurgent force in world politics comes to the fore. Huntington identifies the numerous problems that have evolved in the post-Cold War era. They include: (a) increased ethnic conflict and “ethnic cleansing;” (b) new patterns of conflict and alliance between nation-states; (c) the end of law and order; (d) the rise and increase in intensity of fundamentalism in various religions around the world; (e) recrudescence of neo-fascist and neo-communist movements; (f) increased problems for the U.S. and the United Nations in dealing with regional and localized conflicts; (g) increased tension between Russia and the U.S. in the post-Soviet era; and (h) the rise of a bellicose and aggressive China in world politics.<sup>45</sup> These all contribute to the uncertainty of our age and to the newly enhanced role of Christianity on the world stage. The post-Cold War era has seen tensions and existential anxieties in Western and non-Western states rise to the point where people began to look to various nonmaterialist solutions for answers. Of course, the 1990s brought an increase in political and ethnic trouble in the international global milieu, as seen above, but it also brought an internecine cultural struggle over values, religion, and politics to the domestic environments of Western and non-Western states alike. Nowhere was this more evident than the

U.S., where the forces of evangelical Christianity took on the secular domestic environment and their contest was manifested politically in many different arenas from the Supreme Court in Washington, D.C. to the school boards of America (see chapters 4 and 7 below). However, at the commencement of the new millennium, the empirical evidence suggests that Christianity as a force in secular politics around the world has made a pronounced mark on governments the world over.

### **Conclusion: The Resurgence of Christianity in World Politics**

As warfare has raged in various parts of the world since 1989, the concomitant increase in the participation of Christians in politics around the world occurred as well. Jesus said in Matthew 24:6, "And ye shall hear of wars and rumors of wars." The increase in post-Cold War bloodshed has also seen the rise in Christianity as manifested both politically and socially. As indicated in the pages below, Christianity's newfound importance in politics as seen in America and other parts of the world continues to underscore the ongoing role of Christian churches in helping to solve social and political problems. From evangelical Christians actively participating in leading governments in America (see chapter 4 below) to peoples beating literally their swords into plowshares in Mozambique (see chapter 3 below), the Holy Ghost is affecting politics in new and important ways. Moreover, the debate that has empowered Christians to get involved in discussions related to health and society in Western and non-Western states alike, which includes issues such as abstinence, elementary and secondary education, and prayer in schools evinces the importance of Christianity in the political lives of peoples around the globe. Finally, as a powerful ideological force, Christianity has affected the development of the world's great political ideologies. Although the term "ideology" is a concept defined as a coherent and systematic set of beliefs that one has about politics, Christianity, to some political scientists, can be conceptualized as an ideology in its own right. It seems the term is too broad and diffuse in its meanings to be seen as an overt political ideology, but rather as a belief system (or *weltanschauung*) that affects or tinges one's ideology (or expressed political beliefs). Given this assumption, Christianity has imbued both left and right on the old-fashioned partisan political scale and now transcends the old political divisions in Western industrialized societies and nonindustrialized, developing societies as well. Given its pronounced impact, as the pages below suggest, the manifestations of Christianity in the politics and institutions of the world are occurring at such a great pace that few analysts, academic and otherwise, have identified the significance of Christianity and how it affects the globe's politics today. As the Lord's Spirit moves, the monumental transformation of international politics and the

growth of Christian involvement in politics seems minute given the lack of coverage in the secular press and academic literature. Yet, as the secular press seems to give less attention to Christianity and its role in world affairs, Christians are playing a greater role in politics around the world. This book will attempt to evince empirically the scope and magnitude of Christianity's impact on the world stage. As a result, in His unique way, the Lord has told the post-Cold War generation that He controls the world's changing political milieu. Again, He is saying, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit!" (Zech. 4:6).