


In God’s Name? Witch-Hunts, Crusades, and Inquisitions: A Church Historical Apologetic


Hundreds of thousands of witches burned at the stake? Crusaders wading ankle-deep through streets of blood? Torture, dread, and death in the wake of the Inquisition? Popular accounts provide us with a shocking picture of Christianity’s history, and the argument from past failures is a favorite one employed by critics. In this session, we will have a closer look at three specific atrocities typically blamed on the church: 1) Witch-hunts; 2) the Crusades; and 3) the Inquisition. Subjecting these phenomena and the way in which they are usually presented to sober scrutiny, we will not only discover how much truth there actually is to some prevalent charges levelled against the historical impact of the Christian faith, but also learn more about God’s transformative power throughout history by transforming... us.

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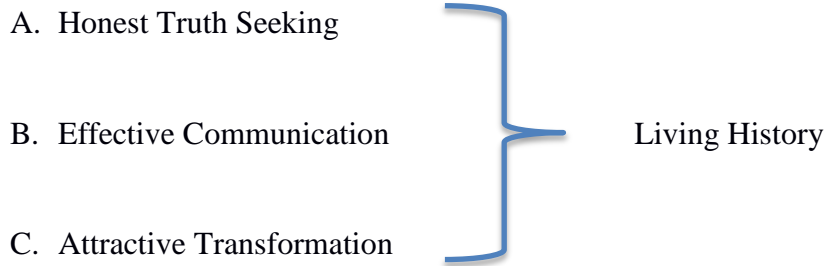
I. The “That”: Myths & Facts

- A. The Crusades
 - B. The Inquisition
 - C. The Witch-Hunts
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- Discovering History

II. The “Why”: Christianity’s Transformative Trail Throughout History

- A. Transforming the Intellect
 - B. Transforming the Emotions
 - C. Transforming the Will
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- Making History

III. The “How”: A Game Plan for Applying Historical Truth



Going Deeper (Suggested Readings):

General:

* David Bentley Hart, *The Story of Christianity: An Illustrated History of 2000 Years of the Christian Faith* (London: Quercus, 2007).

Part I—The Crusades:

* Rodney Stark, *God’s Battalions: The Case for the Crusades* (New York, NY: HarperOne, 2009).

* Thomas F. Madden, “Rivers of Blood: An Analysis of One Aspect of the Crusader Conquest of Jerusalem,” *Revista Chilena de Estudios Medievales* 1 (2012): 25-37. [Available online.]

Part I—The Inquisition:

* Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision, Fourth Edition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014).

Part I—The Witch-Hunts:

* Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition*, Chapter 11.

Part II—Christianity’s Transformative Trail:

* Rodney Stark, *The Rise of Christianity* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996).

Part III—The Game Plan:

* Gregory Koukl, *Tactics: A Game Plan for Discussing Your Christian Convictions* (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2009).

“German Treat”: Two excellent German sources analyzing all three phenomena:

* Arnold Angenendt, *Toleranz und Gewalt. Das Christentum zwischen Bibel und Schwert* (Münster: Aschendorff, 2007).

* Lutz E. von Padberg, *In Gottes Namen? Von Kreuzzügen, Inquisition und gerechten Kriegen. Die 10 häufigsten Vorwürfe gegen das Christentum* (Giessen: Brunnen, 2010).