

PART ONE

JESUS THE
REVOLUTIONARY

COLIN MCCARTNEY

“Any man who afflicts the human race with ideas must be prepared to see them misunderstood, and that is what happened to Jesus.”

Henry Louis Mencken

“I’m a Muslim, but do you think Jesus would love me? I think Jesus would have a drink with me... He would be cool. He would talk to me. No Christian ever did that. They’d throw me in jail and write bad articles about me and then go to church on Sunday and say Jesus is a wonderful man and he’s coming back to save us. But they don’t understand that when he comes back, that these crazy greedy capitalistic men are gonna kill him again.”

Mike Tyson (former heavyweight champion of the world)

“Christianity alone has felt that God, to be wholly God, must be a rebel as well as a king.”

G. K. Chesterton

“If Jesus had been killed 20 years ago, Catholic school children would be wearing little electric chairs around their necks instead of crosses.”

Lenny Bruce

“If you’re going to follow Jesus, well, he got killed. That’s just part of the job description: making trouble for peace.”

Dan Berrigan (Jesuit priest, activist)

“Jesus, undeterred, went right ahead and gave his charge: God authorized and commanded me to commission you: Go out and train everyone you meet, far and near, in this way of life, marking them by baptism in the threefold name: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Then instruct them of all I have commanded you. I’ll be with you as you do this, day after day, right up to the end of the age.”

Jesus (Mt 28:18-20, *The Message*)

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THE REBEL JESUS

The streets are filled with laughter and light
And the music of the season
And the merchants' windows are all bright
With the faces of the children
And the families hurrying to their homes
As the sky darkens and freezes
Will be gathering around their hearths and tables
Giving thanks for God's graces
And the birth of the rebel Jesus

They call him by the "Prince of Peace"
And they call him by "the Saviour"
And they pray to him upon the sea
And in every bold endeavour
And they fill his churches with their pride and gold
As their faith in him increases
But they've turned the nature that I worship in
From a temple to a robber's den
In the words of the rebel Jesus

We guard our world with locks and guns
And we guard our fine possessions
And once a year when Christmas comes
We give to our relations
And perhaps we give a little to the poor
If the generosity should seize us
But if anyone of us should interfere
In the business of why there are poor
They get the same as the rebel Jesus

But pardon me if I have seemed
To take the tone of judgment
For I've no wish to come between
This day and your enjoyment
In a life of hardship and of earthly toil
There's a need for anything that frees us

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So I bid you pleasure and I bid you cheer
From a heathen and a pagan
On the side of the rebel Jesus

Words and music by Jackson Browne (Elektra Entertainment, 1997)

CHAPTER ONE

A TALE OF TWO REVOLUTIONARIES

*“All at once
The world can overwhelm me
There’s almost nothing that you could tell me
That could ease my mind
Which way will you run?
When it’s always all around you
And the feeling lost and found you again
A feeling that we have no control”*

“All at Once,” words and music by Jack Johnson
(Brushfire Records, 2008)

For centuries, humanity has longed for a time when war, hunger, sickness and oppression are abolished. But these problems persist, and with the advance of modern technology, we are given a front row seat in watching a global horror show of devastating nightmares. All of this can be overwhelming, paralyzing us from taking action in making our world a better, more just place to live in.

Yet, I still possess an audacity of hope for our world. I believe we can make a difference. I confidently embrace the challenge for change. I boldly declare

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that in a world filled with injustice, oppression and inequality, it is time for a revolution!

But who can lead such a radical transformation? Who can be a revolutionary leader that can bring about lasting change? The answer is found in a revolutionary who lived long ago. This revolutionary was far different than any other radical.

To illustrate his radical effectiveness, I will compare him with another famous rebel of times past. Though separated by time and circumstance, they had much in common. In fact, their similarities were key components that shaped their fervent message for change. In all probability, they shared the experience of great shame, growing up under the glare of suspicious eyes, having been conceived out of wedlock. They both witnessed great injustice done to their people by greedy and oppressive powers. Experiencing the pain of being a foreigner, they understood the fear of homelessness and the curse of poverty. These shared life circumstances were formative in shaping their strong revolutionary tendencies, filling them with a passion for justice accompanied with grand dreams of a better future for all humanity.

These radicals possessed brilliant minds, matched by incredible oratory skill. Driven by unwavering confidence and empowered by their strong belief in truth, they had no fear of man. This high degree of self-assurance enabled them to speak boldly, even when their words were not compliant to the power structures around them. It was these very qualities—intellectual prowess, fearless and contagious conviction of truth and magnetic temperament—that attracted people to their cause and, at the same time, eventually got them into trouble, a lot of trouble. They actively took their stand against evil and thus they became revolutionaries. The governing authorities arrested and executed them for seditious activity. Both died young, at approximately the same age, but they live on through their followers around the world.

Yet, there are two glaring differences between these two revolutionaries. Though both passionately fought for just causes, their methods were completely opposite. In fact, they were drastically contradictory. One approved of violent means to achieve his goals while the other trusted in a much different approach to bring about change.

The violence that the first revolutionary espoused caused him to become the dragon he went forth to slay. This fierce crusader killed and executed countless men in a cold-hearted, callous manner for his radical cause.

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A small snippet from his diary, written during the beginning of the uprising he helped commandeer, reveals his chillingly logical belief in violence for the cause of his revolution. He shares his thoughts on the first man he executed:

The situation was uncomfortable for the people and for Eutimio [the man who was to be executed] so I ended the problem giving him a shot with a .32 [calibre] pistol in the right side of the brain...He gasped a little while and was dead.²

History reveals to us that Eutimio Guerra was the first of many men executed by Che Guevara, the designated henchman to Fidel Castro's communist revolution. After Castro's rebel forces had won their revolution over the oppressive Cuban government, Guevara became the Chief Prosecutor in charge of the Comisión de Depuración (Cleansing Commission). He relished his role in overseeing a committee responsible to enact military justice and purify the country of enemies to the Cuban revolution. In the Fort La Cabaña, Havana, Che Guevara "took to his task with a singular determination, and the old walls of the fort rang out nightly with the fusillades of the firing squads."³

Guevara justified his essential role in overseeing these executions as an important task in assuring that his revolution succeeded in a letter to a friend: "The executions by firing squads are not only a necessity for the people of Cuba, but also an imposition by the people."⁴

The connection between violence and revolution remained with Che to the end. In 1967, while fighting for his communist revolution, Che Guevara was captured by Bolivian soldiers and executed. For years, his burial place was kept secret by the Bolivian government, in an effort to end the memory of his charismatic revolution. However, legends tend to grow in the guise of mysterious death and Che Guevara became a folk hero. His premature execution and the accompanying secrecy concerning his burial site vaulted him to the upper echelon of celebrated heroes. In 1997, his body was discovered and exhumed from Bolivia. Today his bones are enshrined in Cuba under a monument memorializing his life.

Che Guevara can no longer lead his revolution. In fact, it can be argued that his efforts failed miserably. The very thing he fought against has now taken over his legacy. Ironically, though Guevara despised capitalistic greed, his legend has become a money-making machine for rich entrepreneurs who have taken

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advantage of his legend. The famous graphic of his face is one of the world's most universally merchandized images. It is hawked everywhere and can be seen on all sorts of trinkets—key chains, posters, clocks, hats, T-shirts and even bikinis. Many people purchase these items without knowing anything about the man.

I will never forget watching a rich businessman drive past me in his Lexus, sipping an iced latte, while wearing a T-shirt with the face of Che Guevara emblazoned on the front. I could never picture this man as a subversive communist revolutionary for the poor. If only he understood what Che Guevara represented.

The disturbing irony of the Che Guevara mystique is that many of these tacky souvenir items are made in factories located in underdeveloped countries by people earning pennies for their labour. These oppressed factory workers are the very ones that Guevara fought to free from the tyranny of poverty imposed by corrupt governments and the rich upper class. The very thing he revolted against has overtaken his legacy.

Though Che Guevara left a record of violence and terror in his wake, the second revolutionary was the complete opposite. He, too, died for his cause, but he never embraced violent methods. Jesus Christ's revolution was based on spiritual weapons, as opposed to death and destruction. In comparing Che Guevara with Jesus Christ, it is clear that though their revolutions were just causes, their methodologies were polar opposite. Jesus used spiritual powers of peace in his rebellion while Che can be known as the godfather of terrorism.

Richard A. Horsely and Neil Asher Silberman describe Jesus' mission as a revolution in *The Message and the Kingdom*:

In Jesus' preaching, the coming of the kingdom of God meant a revolution in the way people behaved toward each other and their recognition that they should have no Caesars, tetrarchs, or other overlords above them except for the one God and creator of the world. In practical terms, that meant rejecting the rule of all powers and returning to the pure covenantal system under which Israelites—and indeed all peoples—would be considered to be brothers and sisters under God. In modern political terms, that might be called a revolution...The kingdom of God was indeed at hand if they believed it—not a

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dream, not a vision of heaven, not a spiritual state, but a social transformation here and now in the very fields they plowed and the very villages they lived in, if only they rejected injustice and heeded the commandments of God.⁵

In a day and age when oppressive powers ruled Jesus' world, his new kingdom message and active implementation of its new way of life meant certain conflict with the powerful rulers of his land. He was a dangerous revolutionary radical on a mission for peace and equality—a mission they did not support.

But the final glaring discrepancy between Che Guevara and Jesus Christ is this. Che Guevara lies in a tomb in Santa Clara, Cuba. His Cuban gravesite is recognized as a major historical site and a reminder that Guevara's revolution is over. However, the tomb of Jesus is empty. He is no longer there. His revolution is not over! He is still the commander and chief of his radical, subversive movement—his empty grave is proof.

The earth shattering reality is that Jesus is alive and his revolution continues.

NOTES

¹ *Chocolat*. Directed by Lasse Hallström. Toronto: Alliance Atlantis, 2000.

² Jon Lee Anderson, *Che Guevara: A Revolutionary Life* (New York: Grove Press, 1997), 237.

³ *Ibid.*, 386.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 375.

⁵ Richard A. Horsely and Neil Asher Silberman, *The Message and the Kingdom* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1997), 54-56.

CHAPTER TWO

THE REVOLUTION CONTINUES

“There was a time when the church was very powerful. It was during that period when the early Christians rejoiced when they were deemed worthy to suffer for what they believed. In those days the church was not merely a thermometer that recorded the ideas and principles of popular opinion; it was a thermostat that transformed the mores of society. Whenever the early Christians entered a town the power structure got disturbed and immediately sought to convict them for being ‘disturbers of the peace’ and ‘outside agitators.’ But they went on with the conviction that they were ‘a colony of heaven,’ and had to obey God rather than man. They were small in number but big in commitment. They were too God-intoxicated to be ‘astronomically intimidated.’ They brought an end to such ancient evils as infanticide and gladiatorial contest.”

Martin Luther King Jr.

Everything about Jesus points to a revolution.

For example, consider how his followers operated as a group. I find it inter-

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esting that even before the crucifixion of Jesus, his disciples often took on the characteristics of a revolutionary, clandestine movement. Yes, many times they appeared in public, performing kingdom works, but at other times they were not so public with their activity.

A good example of this is seen in how their last supper with Christ was secretive. They were like a rebel group, holding a covert underground meeting under the watchful eyes of the police, complete with a special signal and a secret saying to alert them to where the meeting was to take place:

As you enter the city, a man carrying a jar of water will meet you. Follow him to the house he enters, and say to the owner of the house, “The Teacher asks: Where is the guest room, where I may eat the Passover with my disciples?” He will show you a large upper room, all furnished. Make preparations there.” They left and found things just as Jesus had told them.
(Lk 22:10-13)

The difficulty facing the authorities to crack this clandestine group was so great that they resorted to bribing an insider, Judas, for information. Why such secrecy? Simple. Revolution was in the air, and often, when revolutionary plans are being made, there is a need for secret meetings.

Jesus’ revolutionary credentials are also evidenced in how he died. The Romans used crucifixion as a form of capital punishment for anyone who opposed them and who they deemed enemies of the state. This horrible method of torture was an effective, coercive instrument the Roman government used to intimidate any would-be revolutionary to submit to their authority. The fact that Jesus was crucified on this instrument of capital torture is proof alone that he was a recognizable revolutionary.

THE EARLY CHURCH: A REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

The early followers of Jesus understood that their leader was a rebel. They recognized that his resurrection from the grave meant that the revolution was to be carried on. For them, the Easter experience of the cross and the resurrection of Jesus were essential. The cross had put an end to the old world order of sin and its resulting oppression and injustice; the resurrection signalled the beginning of a new world order—the entering of the kingdom of God. The empty

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tomb was a sign of victory. Jesus had conquered the enemy of evil—the devil and all forms of sin, such as the unjust power structures of the Roman Empire. The resurrection was the fuel that empowered the early church to go out and proclaim the manifestation of Jesus’ all-encompassing reign. To the church, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ are pivotal epochs in the history of civilization. They are signs that the kingdom of God, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, is now come.

This is why the early church celebrated the Lord’s Supper in feast-like fashion. Every time they broke the bread and drank the cup they celebrated the words of Jesus: “This is my body given to you... This cup is the **new covenant in my blood**, which is poured out for you” (Lk 22:19,20, emphasis added). Christ’s death installed a new covenant, the kingdom reign of God, and his resurrection authorized the immense power of this kingdom that we are now part of. To the early believers, this was revolutionary music to their ears as they lived out the kingdom of God in the midst of the dying empire of the world.

They also paid the price of revolutionary martyrdom.

The apostles were also radicals, executed as revolutionaries by the ruling powers of their day. Some were crucified or put to the sword. Others were torn apart by animals, boiled alive or speared to death. Their deaths should not surprise us, as revolutionaries are often executed by the powers that be to squelch opposition. The deaths of the apostles demonstrate that they continued the Jesus revolution so effectively that they were killed for the cause. But the revolution continued in the lives of the early believers who came to know Christ through the ministry of the apostles.

JESUS’ RADICAL WORDS OF REVOLUTION

The apostles had effectively passed on the radical words of Jesus, in obedience to their mandate:

All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age. (Mt 28:18-20)

Most people overlook the revolutionary ramifications of Jesus’ words here.

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When Jesus said “All **authority** in heaven and on earth has been given to me,” he laid claim over every physical and spiritual kingdom, king and person. By making such a statement, Jesus declared himself lord of all and polarized himself and his movement against any world or religious power that stood in opposition to his will. This is a true revolutionary statement if ever there was one. It is a loud declaration, proclaiming that Jesus trumps all things. His reign now has universal ramifications. Humanity has only two options: join the Jesus movement or stand in opposition of Christ. The early Christians understood this truth and, with the confidence of the resurrection of Christ fresh in their minds, were able to declare, even in the face of death, “Jesus is Lord!”

Jesus then includes his followers to join his revolution by commissioning his band of ragtag rebels to “go and make disciples of all nations.” Jesus does not hold his authority solely for himself; he commissions his followers to challenge all people to give a 100 percent commitment to the cause of Christ through baptism, a true sign of ultimate submission. This seriousness of the act of baptism and its symbolic tie with the kingdom reign of Jesus holds great significance.

The truth behind this radical sacrament took on special meaning to me while I was studying in Bible college. I had become close friends with an African student who had come over from his country as a new Christian. One day we were talking about his life back in Africa and he told me that his father was a king of a tribe in his home country. As a son of the king my friend had a rosy future ahead of him with all sorts of wonderful benefits befitting royalty—money, honour and even many wives. He told me that on the day he became a Christian his family was disappointed in him. His father was a Muslim and wanted his son to pursue the Qur’an and he tried to persuade his son to recant his decision to follow Jesus. It didn’t work. The harder he pressured his son to deny Jesus the stronger his son’s faith in Christ became. Yet the father still loved his son very much, and the many wonderful privileges of being the son of the king were still available to my friend. However, everything changed the day my friend was baptized. When his father heard of his son’s baptism he immediately disowned him from the family. The son was driven out of the village and all his royal rights were taken away. His family actually held a funeral ceremony declaring him dead.

There was my friend—all alone, living in Canada, with no family ties. All he had left was Jesus. But, according to my friend, Jesus is all he needed.

When my friend finished his story, I was stunned. How could a loving

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father do such a thing? As a father of two beautiful children, I could never imagine cutting them off from me, no matter what they did. I couldn't help but ask what changed his father's heart from being the warm loving dad that accepted his son as a Christian to the cold-hearted father that formally declared his son dead. My friend replied:

The answer is easy. I was baptized. When I was baptized things changed forever. You see, everyone in my village knew Christians. They are no problem to my people. My tribe accepts them. But when a Christian gets real serious about Jesus he gets baptized, and things change. He is immediately viewed as being a radical. My people know that when one is baptized he turns his back on everything but Jesus. Baptized people are dangerous to the ways of our culture. They see things in a different light and live by a different set of rules, and this always leads to conflict.

A few weeks after our conversation, an announcement was made at our school asking us to report any strange looking people loitering around on campus. Word had leaked out that my friend had a bounty placed on his head by his father. Now he was living under a death threat.

This is the seriousness of his faith, and it demonstrates the significance of baptism.

The early church lived under similar conditions. Jesus commanded that his followers be baptized because they were joining a revolutionary movement that demanded a whole-hearted surrender to the cause of Christ. These early Christians understood that their allegiance was with the kingdom of God over and above the Roman Empire, and they lived accordingly. Baptism was a visible, public sign that showed that they were dead to the old world system, with Caesar as ruler, and made alive to a new world order, the kingdom of God, with Jesus as their supreme ruler. By declaring "Jesus is Lord," they renounced "Caesar is Lord" and paid the price for such insubordination.

These baptized radicals were to "obey everything I have commanded you." These commands of Jesus were not just something to learn about, they were to be lived out. Obedience was more than head knowledge—it implied action. Thus, the early Christians attempted to live out the actions of Christ as recorded in the Gospels.

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Clearly, it was effective. Church historians report that before the reign of the emperor Constantine, Christians were persecuted for their uncompromising commitment to the movement that Jesus initiated.

With the instalment of the “kingdom of God” reign of Jesus there was now an inevitable kingdom conflict occurring between the Roman establishment and the Jesus movement. These baptized and trained Jesus followers were now thrust into an insurrectionary role against the societal norms of Roman culture. The early Christians faced opposition because their revolutionary actions flew in the face of Roman cultural norms.

These Christians were a different breed. They refused to participate in the slave trade. They took their stance against the cultic practices established by empire religion. They actively cared for the marginalized in their society, abandoned by the Roman government as a parasitic drain on their populace. In a divided society, torn apart by classism, sexism and racism, the early Christians modelled the kingdom of God by treating everyone as equal and sharing with one another whenever one was in need. So great was their love for each other that outsiders derisively labelled them as the third race.¹ The first race was the Romans, who perceived themselves as the superior civilization. The second race was the Jews, whose strong cultural and religious customs isolated them from other nationalities. The third race, then, was this strange group of Christians who openly embraced both Jew and Gentile, rich and poor, male and female, accepting one another as brothers and sisters in Christ Jesus. They were thought unpatriotic to Rome because they refused military service and refused to bow down to the emperor. They recognized Christ as their leader, and their revolutionary actions were part and parcel of their declaration of allegiance to Christ’s kingdom.

Their subversive actions cost them dearly. Many lost jobs; others were severely mistreated and disowned by their families, while many more were martyred by the Roman emperor. Yet, even in the midst of great persecution, the Jesus movement grew by leaps and bounds. Tertullian wrote: “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.”

THE END OF THE REVOLUTION?

However, all of this changed with the emperor Constantine, who legalized Christianity and made it into an acceptable religion. One of the stories behind Constantine’s change of heart is based on a miraculous victory that his forces

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had over an enemy with a vast advantage over his Roman legion. In jubilation of his miraculous victory, Constantine inquired about a strange vision he had of a cross at the beginning of the battle. He asked his military advisors if they knew what this symbol meant and was informed that the cross was the sign of the Christian god. He attributed his military victory to this Christian god, and to honour him, Constantine legalized Christianity.² He zealously baptized his armies into the church, put the sign of the cross on military weapons and handed over the pagan temples and priests to the Christians.

It was Constantine's acceptance of Christianity as a state religion that drained much of the revolutionary energy out of the Jesus movement. The legalization of Christianity gave the church power, and the once-radical movement transformed from a revolution into a religion. Christendom was birthed, and true Christianity was profoundly negatively impacted by its new partnership with political power.³

Seemingly overnight, the early church traded in its radical subversive movement for a state religion, with temples, priests and rituals. The bold message about the coming of the kingdom of God was compromised for acceptance by the kingdom of the world. Just like Satan's temptation of Christ in the desert, the church was offered "the kingdoms of the world and their splendour" (Mt 4:8). Jesus never fell for Satan's tricks, but the church wasn't as wise.

They fell hook, line and sinker for the temptation of power. Little did the early church know how their partnership with Constantine would weaken their prophetic voice and hinder their radical movement of the bringing in of the kingdom of God.

WARNINGS FROM A REVOLUTIONARY

In the Book of Revelation, John, the exiled revolutionary, writes to the persecuted church to encourage them not to compromise in following Jesus. As a prisoner guilty of treason, John had to use codes to get his message across to his readers so that the Roman guards who monitored his letters would allow them to pass through the strict criteria they used to filter out any material that they deemed anti-establishment. So in his letter, John used many descriptive images to point out the evils of Rome, without being too obvious.

Unfortunately, too many preachers today tend to forget this. Instead of using the Book of Revelation as a reliable tool in examining our present-day issues of political injustice, economic inequality, consumerist greed,

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increased militarism and environmental disasters, these “prophetic” preachers use them to point to future events. By focusing only on the “end times” they avoid dealing with the contemporary issues that the Book of Revelation addresses.

The context of John’s revelation is extreme persecution. He shares how the kingdom of God and the kingdom of this world are in deep conflict with one another. John describes the kingdom of the world (in the context of the Roman Empire) as being under satanic influences. The kingdom of the world is referred to as Babylon, one of the most evil empires in the history of the Old Testament, which he describes as being a great whore who sacrifices people and births great injustices in order to feed her rich appetite for material comforts and gain.

When you understand the context of John’s writing, you cannot help but realize that what he is saying about Babylon authoritatively applies to our present-day situation. Babylon, the kingdom of the world, is still active in producing enormous bloodshed for monetary gain and temporal luxuries. This great whore seduces us with her surgically enhanced body while whispering to us with her collagen lips how wonderful we will feel if we only lay down in her arms and commit to her ways. Our capitalistic religion worships her by preaching the importance of money and possessions as things to be pursued, as ultimate priority, which is contrary to the teachings of Jesus, who told us that to love God and to love people must be our main concern (Lk 10:27). Babylon is destroying people’s lives and decimating our environment. And many people get into bed with this great whore.

THE RISE OF CHRISTENDOM, THE DEMISE OF JESUS’ REVOLUTION

John warned against the intoxicating powers of the great whore. Yet, the early church was still enticed to join the empire under the rule of Constantine. The pagan priests, who once led people in the worship of idols, were now commissioned by Constantine to be Christian priests, and they transformed their pagan temples into places of Christian worship. These priests also changed their pagan rituals into Christian rites. They blessed the armies of Rome and supported the policies of the emperor. And the radical subversive power of the Jesus revolution was quickly immobilized.

Priestly hierarchies came into being, and soon they incorporated Greco-

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Roman philosophy and ritual into the Jesus movement. Dependence on Jesus and the power of the Holy Spirit were replaced by blind trust in religious leaders, rituals and temples.

At one time, the Christians openly declared that they didn't need Rome's priests, temples and rituals. For these early radicals, Jesus was their high priest and the only priest they needed. Their temples were located any place they gathered and their rituals were simple—prayer, reading of the word, baptism and the Lord's Supper. But now the radical foundation of a movement based on declaring "Jesus is Lord" slowly crumbled into a state of co-dependency on the various competing lords of a growing religious establishment with paid priests, elaborate rites and ornate temples.

Though this happened centuries ago, the influence of Christendom lives on today, as Babylon continues to influence the church. Like the early Christians that embraced compromise with Rome, many of us have also chosen to endorse the empire of health and wealth, commercialism and consumerism. The religion of Babylonian Christianity is proven alive and well when presidents and dictators, armies and corporations, Hollywood and media moguls are blessed and endorsed by Christians who have sacrificed their prophetic voice for power and influence. Today we also have ornate temples where specialized religious rituals take place that can only be performed by ordained professional priests and ministers. What happened to the Jesus revolution?

In light of how far we have diverged from the revolutionary movement Jesus initiated, one can argue that, like Che Guevara's legacy, the legacy of Jesus was a failure. There have been crusades, wars and torture conducted in the name of Christ. People still hate in the name of Jesus. Christian religion and division are still strong. The very thing that Jesus despised has been done in his name. The influence of Constantine lives on!

IT IS TIME FOR A JESUS REVOLUTION

But one must keep in mind the fact that most legacies apply to dead people. Jesus is alive! The grave is still empty! Jesus is still on the throne and active in building his revolution. Thank God that Jesus is still at work. His uprising still beckons and he wants you to join his movement. It is time for a renewed revolution of people who are willing to stand up and shout out to a world that despises the things of God that Jesus is Lord! It is time once again for a Jesus revolution.

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NOTES

¹ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2007), 48.

² There are other theories for why Constantine legalized Christianity. One is that he was desperately seeking a way to unite his divided empire to divert political destruction. This theory claims that Constantine made up his vision as a way to unite his empire under one common world religion. This would fit in well with John's revelation from the Book of Revelation.

³ Alan Hirsch, *The Forgotten Ways: Reactivating the Missional Church* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2007), 60, quotes Rodney Stark: "Far too long, historians have accepted the claim that the conversion of the Emperor Constantine (ca. 285-337) caused the triumph of Christianity. To the contrary, he destroyed its most attractive and dynamic aspects, turning a high-intensity, grassroots movement into an arrogant institution controlled by an elite."