

Christ's teaching was loving and touched the hearts of his hearers. It was simple. He had formed no church, he had instituted no priesthood but his own, he was charitable, forgiving, international and interracial.

But how short was the life of this simple Gospel. Taken over by an Emperor of Rome, as a religious and governmental asset, few centuries passed until the tyranny of the church began its oppression. The greatest sinner was the Roman church altho the Eastern or Greek church was not without its faults.

Love vanished and was replaced by power, fear and cruelty. Sects like the Waldensians and Albigenses were persecuted, altho they led more exemplary lives than their adversaries.

Later with the advent of the Reformation, the church of England, the Lutheran and Presbyterian churches all joined in persecuting Puritans, Baptists and dissenters of all kinds. In fact the Baptists and Methodists, which came later, are about the only churches of their time that did not persecute those who differed with them.

It is odd that thru a thousand years of the partial domination of the Papacy by external or political control, we find that in the eleventh century, the Papacy or church then committed itself to the work of reform--to establish the freedom of the church from outside or political control. In this it was unsuccessful for many centuries and it has never ceased to exercise political control. Q.V.--S.A. Countries

It is interesting to note that not until the sixteenth century was nearing its close, that the celibacy of the priests was really demanded by the Pope.

If we have given the matter any thought whatever, we have wondered how it was possible for Martin Luther, 1483-1546 to have successfully led Germany in a break from Rome, which brought about the era of Protestantism.