

The history of christianity



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Essay: The history of Christianity According to the scholar John Dominic Crossan, Jesus who is often called Jesus of Nazareth by the lakeside is the honorable divine savior of this world full of barbarian civilization, social violence and injustice and the historical Jesus is not complete the same Jesus Christ depicted in the Bible. The historical Jesus was born around 4 BCE in a tiny village about four miles in the natal background of violent Roman domination when men, women, and children who did not hide successfully would have been, respectively, killed, raped, and enslaved, which has a great influence on the life and thought of Jesus. Though the stories of Jesus differ quite clearly in the details but they also agree on certain more fundamental aspects, for example, Jesus is always depicted as a young prodigy since he is in his tenth. When Jesus was thirty years old, he was baptized by John and after that he started his journey to public ministry.

Jesus won over many Jews and many of the Greeks. Three years later, Jesus was arrested in the darkness with the help of Judas and later was crucified by the Roman aristocrat Pontius Pilate. In the opinion of John Dominic Crossan: Jesus™s Kingdom of God is different from John, Jesus is a healer, and Jesus is a nonviolent revolutionary. Firstly, John Dominic Crossan believes that Jesus™s Kingdom of God is different from John™s Kingdom of God despite the fact that Jesus is baptized by John. On one hand, John™s theory was close to the Deuteronomic theology and he has faith in the theology of God™s imminence.

However, Jesus has changed from accepting John™s theology of God™s imminence to accepting a theology of God™s presence. Jesus insisted that the Kingdom of God was already here below upon this earth to be

consummated in the future and it was a present-already and not just an imminent future reality, which means that if mankind want to see the presence of the Kingdom of God, they just need to see how they themselves live. On the other hand, the author believes that John had a monopoly, but Jesus had a franchise. To make a comparison, John was the Baptist or the Baptizer who was the only and the unique John. To stop his movement, Antipas had only to execute John since it depended all on John™s life.

Jesus is quite different. Jesus was promulgating not just a vision or a theory but praxis and a communal program, and that this program was not just for him himself but for others as well so it would not be ended by the death of Jesus on the following four aspects: firstly, Jesus does not settle down at Nazareth or Capernaum and instruct his companions to bring people to him as monopolist of the Kingdom; Secondly, he tells others to do exactly what he himself is doing; Thirdly, he does not tell them to heal in his name or even to pray to God before they heal” nor does he himself pray before he heals. For the second trait, John Dominic Crossan believes that Jesus is a healer. Jesus had a program like this: heal the sick, eat with those you heal, and announce the Kingdom™s presence in that mutuality. The logic of Jesus™s Kingdom program is a mutuality of healing (the basic spiritual power) and eating (the basic physical power) shared freely and openly which helped build a share-community from the bottom up as a positive alternative to Antipas™s Roman greed-community established from the top down, The author says that this approach is actually quite extraordinary and can only be explained by the Kingdom™s presence and our participation in it. Since curing is not available, but healing is still possible; and healing as a spiritual

power is much more difficult than basic physical power, Jesus devoted to the healing of human spiritual power by public ministry even at the risk of losing his own life when he criticized the new king Tiberius for the crime of adultery since Tiberius wanted to marry the wife of his brother. Thus, Jesus is the spiritual healer of the mankind.

Last but not least, John Dominic Crossan mentioned in the quite beginning that Jesus is a nonviolent revolutionary. In the first two chapters, the author pointed out the injustice of civilization™s normalcy of this world represented by Rome and the justice of God™s radicalism. In this world, social power is a combination of four types of power including military power, economic power, political power and ideological power. Thus the Kingdom of Rome is represented by Pilate™s violence. However, Jesus is nonviolent.

Just as the author interpreted Jesus™s intention, my companions will not attack you even to save me from death. Your Roman Empire is based on the injustice of violence, but my divine kingdom is based on the justice of nonviolence. As the author enumerated in the end of the third chapter, the death of Jesus is a kind of sacrifice since he died because of human sins. Even at the cost of losing his life, Jesus has adopted nonviolent way and accepted his destiny calmly.

So nonviolence was regarded by the author John Dominic Crossan as one of the most important traits of Jesus as proved in the book God and Empire. ?-Z?