

Hitler's could have  
caused hitler's  
passionate hostility



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Hitler's passionate hostility towards Christianity as depicted in his table talk does not quite reflect his position as often asserted by many historical analysts. While it is true that in more than one occasion Hitler criticized certain Christian dogmas, the church and priests, it would be inadequate to overlook the fact that even God-fearing Christians do criticize each other. However, it stands out that most of what he said cannot be disputed. This talk should be viewed within the perspective of understanding Hitler's authority, psychology and leadership philosophy.

### **The understanding of Hitler's table talk**

After the Third Reich, the religious views which Hitler held previously underwent tremendous changes.

Hitler's support for Christianity was witnessed as he effortlessly worked towards making sure that unity was attained between the state and protestant church. This pursuit went on until he failed in his third attempt when he began giving his famous anti-Christian remarks. My understanding from one of the remarks he made in October 1937 is that he felt liberated from living a life full of childish imaginations and intense inner struggles with religion. In addition, judging from the tone of his speech, it is easy to conclude that he was talking about his long-held Catholic faith. From that time, it is possible to argue that although Hitler was deeply religious, whatever he was claiming depicted him as entirely anti-Christian. One of the instances that supported this argument can be seen when he mentioned that Christianity was a rebellion against nature and natural law, and also a show of human failure as well as sign of decay.

There is need to answer the following questions in order to counter the above unambiguous argument. Could Hitler have been in another religion apart from Christianity when he was making these statements? Was he not a Christian? My understanding is that Hitler was a Christian despite his strong and subjective statements against Christians. Actually, he was more religious than one would imagine and could be impossible to replace this faith. He may have meant Catholicism in his table talk against Christianity.

The concerns by priests to address the issues of state regarding economic orientation were indeed very critical and timely in the sense that the society required key changes for purpose of growth. While these concerns have gained widespread support among many historians, their execution has face myriads of obstacles that hinder positive results. Hitler's wish that the protestant church would have policies that support Nazism failed. This factor made him declare Christianity to be guilty and eventually condemned Bolshevism.

In my perspective, the principle of active corporate participation is crucial in bringing the much needed justice to all people. This principle entails involvement of all the parties in establishing the necessary corporate culture at all levels. If the church had cooperated with the demands of Hitler, his troubled views and hostility could not have been witnessed.

Hitler's thoughts and words are a reflection of what he intended to carry out. These could be easily understood in terms of totalitarian leadership which he greatly valued. Critics of his talks sadly regret that his utterances marked the definite end of liberalism and emergence of political totalitarianism. Besides,

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leaders of the classic era manipulated their followers since they expected their subjects to exhibit emotions in a given manner and change them regularly when demanded. On the same note, Hitler's perspective on Christianity may not have been driven by totalitarianism.

Even though totalitarianism was the model of leadership held by Hitler, the table talk did not bring out his stand since much of what he said were not accomplished. Another factor that could have caused Hitler's passionate hostility towards Catholicism was the Roman Catholic's extremely dictatorial structure of leadership. Its leadership generated a sense of oppression while claiming to give hope to the communities that existed during that time.

My understanding is that the Roman Catholic monarchies and authorities during Hitler's time took captive of the social, economic, and political outlook of the state with the aim of extending the long term expansion. For instance, they demanded absolute obedience at all levels; took over power to organize agriculture, and further empowered other authorities in their management. Through these actions, the Catholic Church was negating the same teachings that were being advanced to the community. The above practices by Catholics caused Hitler's anticlericalism to be expressed in both his private and public speeches. One such speech took place in January 1939 when he called for a clear separation between the state and the church.

He wanted his territory to be like America and France. He also reassured German priests of protection but promised destruction to priests who posed as political threats to Germany. My comprehension of his threat to the clergy as well as the church is specific and does not extend to the whole religion. In

fact, priests who avoided outright enthusiasm on matters regarding the state and instead preached political quietism were reciprocated and received Hitler's affections. The involvement of priests in the affairs of the state provided important insights on some of the reasons that made Hitler to be ruthless in his table talk against Christians. It further created the understanding that an illustrious reason forms the basis that defines a move whereby a leader comes out strongly and declares war or conflict with an aim of destroying his or her enemies completely. As proven from his table talk, leaders who fail to establish institutional capacities and unity, but rely on personal ambitions risk destabilizing their leadership. Scholars who disagree with Hitler regard his table talk as an evidence of distraction which depicts a leader who has deviated strongly from the voice of reason to the verge of destroying his subjects.

Even with the authenticity found in the table talk, there is proven evidence of self-contradiction by Hitler as it has been clearly documented in the book. However, Hitler was seen on most instances to be consistent as he did not demote Jesus and was extremely negative in his assessment of paganism. His consistency was witnessed when he was chatting with his audience at Obersalzberg, in Berlin Headquarters and in public places. Nevertheless, one would not overlook Nazi's hostility towards Christians as posited in some secondary literature. Hitler's table talk revealed some of the occasions when he was talking from a bitter point of view. One of his reflections was that Christianity was at the brink of taking over the position of Germans in the country. This compelled him to set up laws which he used to incite and poison the minds of Germans against Christians.

In spite of his negative attitude and indifference towards Christianity, his regard for Jesus as a strong leader who fought against Jewish capitalism is reflected in his talk. This could probably explain his actions against the Jews. Hitler considered the presence of the Jews in Germany as a major problem.

As manifested in his table talk, he wanted to see the complete extinction of Christians and the Jews from Germany. He longed to see them suffer as their land and belonging were taken away. In addition, his hope was to see Christians subjected to policies set by Nazis even as they became entirely dependent on his authority. In my view, Hitler made his created scenario appear real. The notion created by Hitler on how Christians were being manipulated to defy him and other existing authorities could only be understood as part of his efforts to show the world that Germany was back and could not be dictated upon like it happened on previous occasions.

He also talked about creating laws which were supported by his people, a move which in my opinion reflected the thin difference between him and the people. To sum up, it is evident that Hitler's table talk with its contradictions cannot be disputed. However, his position against Christianity and specifically Catholicism was consistent as his anticlericalism was evident both in his private and public speeches. This was a problem that was caused by several factors such as rejection by the Protestant Church to have its policies support Nazism.

His war-time feelings against Christianity did not actually mirror Hitler as an individual who hated religion since he was also a Christian.