

Resident aliens

Religion



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Resident Aliens Since time immemorial, there have been numerous pro and con arguments on Christianity. Notably, the arguments arise from philosophers, scientists, and psychologists against the staunch Christians. The Christians base their argument on the Christian Bible while the critics of Christianity base their arguments on personal experiences, other literature, scientific innovations, and psychology. This paper will compare the Hauerwas and Willimon text with Paul's " Letter to the Romans." It will also analyze Matthew's description of Jesus life according to the " Gospel of Matthew" in the context of convincing others to accept the claims of Christianity. In doing this, the paper will depend on the " Gospel of Matthew," Paul's " Letter to the Romans" in the Christian Bible, and the book, Resident Aliens by Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon. Generally, a resident alien refers to a person residing permanently in a foreign country without the required citizenship. In this context, we analyze Christian religion in America or any other country. The book Resident Aliens: Life in the Christian Colony by Stanley Hauerwas and William Willimon analyzes the nature of the church and its association with the surrounding culture. The book is against Christianity and claims that churches and Christians should give up on reforming the secular culture and concentrate on developing Christianity and the entire society (Hauerwas & Willimon 52-60). Indeed, the book disputes the notion that any country could be a Christian nation and asserts that Christians should consider themselves as " residents aliens" in a foreign land. On the other hand, the " Gospel of Matthew" analyzes the position of the early Christian churches within Israel and draws their association with Judaism (Koester, 1). Most importantly, Mathew depicts Jesus who is from Israel convincing the Jews to abhor Christianity. Additionally, Paul's " Letter to the Romans" exposes the

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Christian doctrine to all humanities. In the exposition of the Christian doctrine to all humanities, Paul's " Letter to the Romans," has an assumption that the Gospel manifests the power of God for salvation to the Jews, Greek, and everyone who has faith (Ross 1). There is also an assumption that the Jews stumbled when they substituted salvation with Jewish law. He however assumes that the Jews will finally believe in Christianity and enjoy God's promises. There is an assumption that baptism leads us to faith in Jesus and derives salvation (Ross 1). Additionally, there is an assumption that Paul's ministry at Antioch led to the emergence of " Christians" and that the church was not a unified body and lacked a central governing authority. Indeed, it assumes that spiritual authority on local preachers who lived far apart and missionaries like Paul governed the church. More so, Paul's " Letter to the Romans" assumes that faith in Jesus Christ is the only means by which people can attain salvation and that Jesus will make a triumphant return to Earth and save those who are faithful to Christianity (Ross 1). On the other hand, there are assumptions in the book, Resident Aliens. The book assumes that the church is simply a gathering of strangers who seek help from the church to satisfy their personal desires. Indeed, it assumes that salvation is an adventure since the disciples simply followed Jesus (Hauerwas & Willimon 49). It also assumes that the mandate of a Christian is to live according to the love of Jesus Christ rather than trying to convince others to adopt the Christian ethics. The book assumes that the church should help cultivate and grow disciples instead of trying to redefine the ethics of non-Christians (Hauerwas & Willimon 69). Additionally, just like Paul, the book assumes that the church has ignored the teachings of Jesus and constantly seeks to make the Christian beliefs acceptable to the world instead of practicing them

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(Hauerwas & Willimon 51). Another assumption in the book, *Resident Aliens* is that Christian ethics cannot accommodate ethical principles manifested in non-Christian traditions (Hauerwas & Willimon 69). It also assumes the church to be a colony with one culture and that baptism makes us citizens of another culture thus making us resident aliens. Ultimately, the book assumes that each Christian has unique values and ideologies from the Christian faith. Matthew's description of Jesus' life manifests the continuing need to convince the "other" to accept the claims of Christianity. Indeed, it portrays Jesus as the Messiah, the King of the Jews, from David lineage (Koester 1) and thus Jews should accept his teachings. Matthew equally manifests the legitimacy of Christianity according to the Israel's teaching of the law. Indeed, in the "Gospel of Matthew," Jesus says that he has come to fulfill the law and not to dissolve it and that he will not ignore any part of the law (Koester 1). As such, the Jews should accept the claims of Christianity because they relate to the Israel's teaching of the law. Additionally, Matthew depicts the gospel as belonging to all including the gentiles (Koester, 1). Moreover, Matthew's regulations on how to discipline members within the community if they get out of hand uphold Israel's teaching of the law and hence the need to continue convincing others to accept the claims of Christianity. Notably, Matthew uses many symbols from Jewish tradition, which portray a picture of Jesus. These include going up the mountain to teach, the killing of the babies, the five different sermons, and the death of Jesus (Koester, 1), which resembles that of some of the prophets. Ultimately, Matthew seeks to convince the Jews that Jesus Christ was actually their long-awaited Messiah. This description of Jesus' life manifests the continuing need to convince the "other" to accept the claims of Christianity. Works Cited Hauerwas, Stanley., <https://assignbuster.com/resident-aliens/>

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