

Religion and the causes of terrorism

[Society](#), [Terrorism](#)



Today in America when we think of terrorism we think of the Muslim religion and how Osama Bin Laden uses those teachings as support for recruiting and inspiring his terrorist group. But we seem to overlook the fact that many religions, even Christianity, are at the root of terrorism. Activists such as Eric Robert Rudolph use Christianity to support their anti-abortion idealism while ironically killing the doctors who perform the operations. We must also not forget the very religious Israeli-Palestinian conflict in the Middle East.

Extremists use religion as a means to justify their political and non-religious causes while some religious teachings, because of its prospects of rewards and various interpretations of text, encourages others to perform violent acts, therefore making religion a primary cause of terrorism worldwide.

Leaders of many terrorist organizations often have an anterior motive such as political issues and use their religion to support their cause and recruit followers.

An Al-Qa'ida spokesperson interviewed about September 11 said, " What happened to America is something natural, an expected event for a country that uses terror, arrogant policy, and suppression against the nations and the peoples, and imposes a single method, thought, and way of life... " This was one of his strong points on why Al-Qa'ida has a Jihad against the United States. Although within his reasons for hating the United States there was no mention of religious suppression or anything to do with religion.

But later on in the interview when he was asked about how the Islamic religion related to the Jihad he said, " Allah said, 'He who attacked you, attack him as he attacked you,' and also, 'The reward of evil is a similar evil,'

and also, 'When you are punished, punish as you have been punished. "' This is a perfect example of how leader's of extremist groups use the words from religious teachings to backup and support their violent acts. In an interview with Osama Bin Laden in 1998 about why he has targeted the United States, he ironically said: Through history, American has not been known to differentiate between the military and the civilians or between men and women or adults and children. Those who threw atomic bombs and used the weapons of mass destruction against Nagasaki and Hiroshima were the Americans.

Can the bombs differentiate between military and women and infants and children? " Again there is no mention of America attacking the Muslim religion; in fact there was no mention of religion at all in his interview until he was asked how he viewed himself. He said, " I am one of the servants of Allah and I obey his orders. We can see my Osama Bin Laden's quotes that his reason for attacking the United States is to get revenge because of all of the attacks we have carried out around the world. There is no mention of religion until asked how he justifies his revenge. We can conclude from this that is reasons for attacking America are political while he uses religious seasonings to support his beliefs. Now that we have seen how the leader's of terrorist organizations wrongly use religion to support their political goals we need to understand why they receive so many followers.

The Islamic religion does not give the common person the hope of a great afterlife but only with one exception: " As for those who are slain in the cause of God, He will not allow their works to perish. ... He will admit them to

the Paradise He has made known to them. " (47: 4-6). This is how terrorist organizations can recruit so many true religious followers who are actually willing to die for what they think are religious reasons. This is where interpretation can be widely varied.

The Christian religion uses a similar but more clear message; if you were persecuted and died because you were a Christian then you are almost guaranteed to go to heaven. While the Qur'an is not as specific and can be taken as the Al-Qa'ida group states it should be taken; die, and kill others, for your religion. " The believers who stay at home--apart from those that suffer a grave impediment--are not the equals of those who fight for the cause of God with their goods and their persons. God has given those that fight with their goods and their persons a higher rank than those who stay at home ... (4: 95, 96) The Islamic religion is not the only religion that has seen its share of terrorism; Christianity has its extremists too. On January 16, 1997, Eric Robert Rudolph planted two bombs that exploded in an office building with an abortion clinic in an Atlanta suburb. This was an act of terrorism but the media never called it that. He was a Christian extremist using violence to intimidate the abortion doctors. People seem to overlook the fact that these are acts of terrorism as well.

In this case Eric Robert Rudolph was using the Christian religion to justify his violence against the abortion doctors. His beliefs were that God did not want doctors to perform abortions because it is killing the unborn; ironically he is killing the doctors that are performing these operations. Eric Robert Rudolph terrorist group, The Christian Identity movement, is run very much like

another, more widely known, terrorist group; Al-Qa'ida. Their beliefs are basically the same; kill anyone that doesn't agree with you in the name of your religion.

Eric Robert Rudolph uses his terrorist organization to support his political stands and uses the Christian religion to gain followers in the fight for his cause. Followers are lead to believe that this is a fight for their religion and they will be rewarded by God because they are fighting for him. The reason why religions can be so controlling over their followers is because they teach them not to question the beliefs of the religion, not to question the preacher and just to obey and accept the rules set forth " by God".

The followers believe that this is what God wanted; basically not allowing them to think for themselves because whatever God said is true. " Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so. " All religions are based on the conformity of their followers to the values and beliefs of the religion, and it many cases causing some followers to become extremists. Religion is the primary cause of terrorism because of its power to control the individual who is following the religion.

The ability to control what people think, believe and act is what many religions have over their followers. Many of these followers take their beliefs too far and start acting out in the only way they know how to get attention, terrorism. The leaders of these terrorist organizations now can control their followers just as religion can control their followers. The leaders now have the ability to control that organization in a way that fits their beliefs, not necessarily those of the religion that is was founded on.