

Anabaptism 101: Triumph Of The Lamb

Summary of Anabaptism 101

- The Beginning of a Movement
- Radical Discipleship
- The Word Made Flesh
- Church as Kingdom Community
- The Politics of Jesus
 - Anti-imperialist & subversive nature of the gospel
 - The two kingdoms
 - Jesus' teaching on non-resistance/non-violence

Common Objections

- “Jesus said he came to bring a sword.”
Matthew 10:34
- “Jesus told his disciples to buy swords.”
Luke 22:35-38
- “Jesus whipped people in the Temple.”
John 2:13-17
- “Jesus said to give to Caesar...”
Mark 12:17
- “Jesus commended the Roman Centurian.”
Luke 7:1-10

Common Objections, cont.

- “Jesus' command to 'love enemies' is only about personal relationships.”
Matthew 5:44
- Not so common objection: “Where in 'love your enemies' does it say not to kill them?”
Matthew 5:38-48
- “Yes, but what about the Old Testament—the *whole* counsel of God?”
John 5:39; Matthew 5:17; Proverbs 25:21,22

What about the Christ of Revelation? Is Jesus portrayed as a violent conquering Messiah that will slay his enemies with a sword upon his return to establish his eternal Kingdom?

“In Revelation, Jesus is a pride-fighter with a tattoo down His leg, a sword in His hand and the commitment to make someone bleed. That is the guy I can worship. I cannot worship the hippie, diaper, halo Christ because I cannot worship a guy I can beat up.”

popular evangelical pastor, 2007.

Understanding Revelation

ΑΠΟΚΑΛΥΨΙΣ (apocalypse) or Revelation—unveiling or disclosure of things to come; behind the curtain of human perception.

The book of Revelation is concerned with the trials and suffering of the church leading up to the *parousia* (coming) of Christ, and the establishment of the Kingdom of God. It is hope for those who overcome the world by following the Lamb that was slain.

Apocalyptic Literature: a genre of prophetic writing that employs symbols and images to convey a powerful message of the future triumph of good over evil. It is coded language to be understood by its intended audience. It is to be read as such, not as literal renderings.

“It doesn't mean what it says... it means what it means.”

Bruce Metzger, Greek NT scholar

“I turned around to see the voice that was speaking to me. And when I turned I saw seven golden lampstands, and among the lampstands was someone like a son of man, dressed in a robe reaching down to his feet and with a golden sash around his chest. The hair on his head was white like wool, as white as snow, and his eyes were like blazing fire. His feet were like bronze glowing in a furnace, and his voice was like the sound of rushing waters. In his right hand he held seven stars, and **coming out of his mouth was a sharp, double-edged sword.** His face was like the sun shining in all its brilliance.” Rev 1:12-16 NIV

“Then I saw a Lamb, looking as if it had been slain, standing at the center of the throne, encircled by the four living creatures and the elders. The Lamb had seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent out into all the earth. He went and took the scroll from the right hand of him who sat on the throne.”

“Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain, to receive power and wealth and wisdom and strength and honor and glory and praise!”

Rev 5:6-7, 12 NIV

Then I heard a loud voice in heaven say:

“Now have come the salvation and the power
and the kingdom of our God,
and the authority of his Messiah.

For the accuser of our brothers and sisters,
who accuses them before our God day and night,
has been hurled down.

**They triumphed over him
by the blood of the Lamb
and by the word of their testimony;**
they did not love their lives so much
as to shrink from death.”

Rev 12:10-11 NIV

“I saw heaven standing open and there before me was a white horse, whose rider is called Faithful and True. **With justice he judges and wages war.** His eyes are like blazing fire, and on his head are many crowns. He has a name written on him that no one knows but he himself. **He is dressed in a robe dipped in blood,** and his name is the Word of God. The armies of heaven were following him, riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean. **Coming out of his mouth is a sharp sword** with which to strike down the nations. “He will rule them with an iron scepter.” He treads the winepress of the fury of the wrath of God Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has this name written: KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS.”

Rev 19:11-16 NIV

“When he opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of those who had been slain because of the word of God and the testimony they had maintained. They called out in a loud voice, “How long, Sovereign Lord, holy and true, until you judge the inhabitants of the earth and **avenge** our blood?” Then each of them was given a white robe, and they were told to wait a little longer, until the full number of their fellow servants, their brothers and sisters, were killed just as they had been.”

Rev 6:9-11 NIV

“We thus do not adequately understand what the church was praising in the work of Christ, and what Paul was asking his readers to be guided by, if we think of the cross as a peculiarly efficacious technique (probably effective only in certain circumstances) for getting one's way. The key to the ultimate relevance and to the triumph of the good is not any calculation at all, paradoxical or otherwise, of efficacy, but rather simple obedience. Obedience means not keeping verbally enshrined rules but reflecting the character of the love of God. The cross is not a recipe for resurrection. Suffering is not a tool to make people come around, nor a good in itself. But the kind of faithfulness that is willing to accept evident defeat rather than complicity with evil is, by virtue of its conformity with what happens to God when he works among us, aligned with the ultimate triumph of the Lamb.”

John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (pgs.237-238)

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