

WORLD
CHRISTIAN TRENDS
AD 30-AD 2200

Interpreting the annual Christian megacensus

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The demographics of Christian martyrdom, AD 33-AD 2001

AN OVERVIEW OF MARTYRDOM

This section of the survey presents the evidence for the startling conclusion that, over the 20 centuries of the Christian faith, some 70 million Christians have been murdered for that faith and hence are called martyrs. And this number continues to grow in the new Millennium as over 400 new martyrs are being killed every day. The whole situation is summarized on a single sheet in Global Diagram 16 (in Part 1). Part of that diagram is shown here in Graphic 4-1 to the right.

Christian vs. non-Christian martyrs

All religions have their own lists of martyrs. In their cases the term means 'members of our religion who have been killed for it'. A survey of human history reveals a large number of such martyrdom situations where hundreds, thousands, or on numerous occasions, millions of individuals have been killed because of their religion. Examples from the 20th century include the Jewish holocaust in Germany, the Muslim-Hindu wars since India's Partition in 1947, current Hindu-Sikh fighting in northern India, and the torture and murder of Confucianists under Communist Chinese rule. Throughout history, ethnic religionists have also suffered 'martyrdom' under the invasion of foreign peoples.

Martyrdom is even desired under certain circumstances. The role of Japanese kamikazes in World War II served this purpose, and certain fundamentalist Muslims deliberately fought to their deaths in the Iran/Iraq Persian Gulf War in the early 1980s.

A brief summary table of all such martyrdoms is given below in Table 4-1. The rest of this survey will then focus on Christian martyrdom.

Religion	Martyrs	Count
Islam	Muslim martyrs	80 million
Christianity	Christian martyrs	70 million
Hinduism	Hindu martyrs	20 million
Buddhism	Buddhist martyrs	10 million
Judaism	Jewish martyrs	9 million
Ethnoreligions	Ethnic martyrs	6 million
Sikhism	Sikh martyrs	2 million
Baha'i	Baha'i martyrs	1 million
Other religions	Other religious martyrs	5 million
All religions	Total religious martyrs	203 million

Origin of the word 'martyr'

The English word 'martyr' is derived from the Greek *martyrs*, which carries the meaning 'witness' in English. In New Testament usage, it meant 'a witness to the resurrection of Christ'. This witness resulted so frequently in death that by the end of the first century *martyrs* had come to mean a Christian who witnessed to Christ by his or her death. This enlarged meaning has become the accepted norm throughout church history.

Definition of terms

For the purposes of this volume's primarily quantitative analysis of martyrdom, Christian martyrs are defined as 'believers in Christ who have lost their lives prematurely, in situations of witness, as a result of human hostility.' This definition has 5 essential and indeed indispensable elements which can be stated as follows:

- 'Believers in Christ'. These individuals include the entire Christian community including professing Christians, crypto-Christians, affiliated Christians, and unaffiliated Christians. In AD 2000, some 2.0 billion individuals match this description, and since the time of Christ over 8.3 billion have believed in Christ.
- 'Lost their lives'. Our definition is restricted to Christians actually put to death, for whatever reason.

Graphic 4-1. Location of the 76 worst situations of mass martyrdom in Christian history (all with over 100,000 martyrs each).

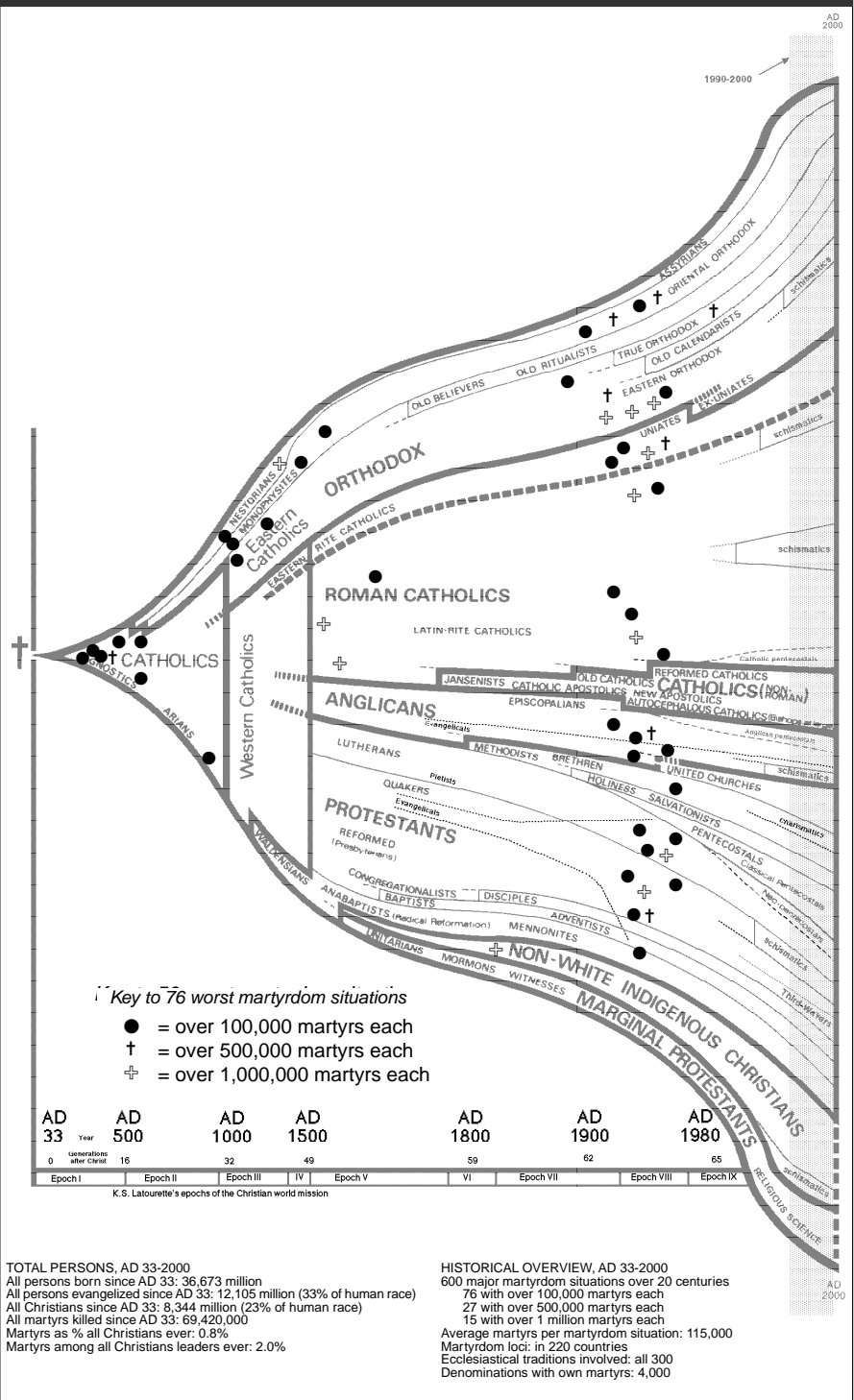


Table 4-2. Martyrdoms of The Twelve Apostles and of 12 other New Testament apostles.

The New Testament records the selection and subsequent ministries of the Twelve Apostles. Strong traditions exist that all were subsequently martyred for Christ, though the NT only records this for James son of Zebedee (Acts 12:2). The table below records what is known of the most likely fate of (a) each of the Twelve; (b) the 7 others named apostolos in the NT whose fate is partly known; and (c) the 5 others named apostolos in the NT about whose subsequent fate nothing what-ever is known.

Ref. 1	Name in Mark's Gospel 2	Other names 3	Martyred 4	How died 5	Place 6	Country 7
a. The Twelve Apostles						
1	Simon Peter	Cephas (Rock)	AD 64	Crucified	Rome	Italy
2	James son of Zebedee	Boanerges (Son of Thunder)	44	Beheaded	Jerusalem	Palestine
3	John Boanerges	The Beloved Disciple	96	Boiled in oil	Ephesus	Turkey
4	Andrew	Andrew	69	Crucified	Patras	Greece
5	Philip	-	60	Hanged	Hierapolis	Turkey
6	Bartholomew	Nathanael, son of Ptolemy	68	Crucified	Albana	Armenia
7	Matthw	Levi	70	Stabbed	Nubia	Ethiopia
8	Thomas	Didymus (Twin)	82	Speared	Mylapore	India
9	James the Less	The Younger; son of Alphaeus	54	Stoned	Jerusalem	Palestine
10	Judas Thaddeus	Lebbaeus; son of James; Addai	66	Clubbed	Ardaze	Turkey
11	Simon Zelotes	The Zealot; the Canaanean	61	Crucified	Suanir	Iran
12	Judas Iscariot	Man of Kerioth; Assassin	33	Crucified (Suicide)	Jerusalem	Palestine
b. Other NT apostles						
	Matthias	Mattaniah	64	Burned	Axum	Ethiopia
	Paul	Saul of Tarsus	64	Beheaded	Rome	Italy
	Barnabas	Joseph; Son of Consolation	61	Stoned	Salamis	Cyprus
	Mark the Evangelist	John Mark	68	Trampled	Alexandria	Egypt
	James the Just	The Brother of the Lord	62	Stoned	Jerusalem	Palestine
	Luke the Evangelist	The Good Physician	91	Hanged	Rome	Italy
	Timothy	Bishop of Ephesus	90	Beheaded	Ephesus	Turkey
c. Others of unknown fate						
These 5 are: Andronicus, Apollos, Epaphroditus, Junia, Silas (Silvanus).						

3. 'Prematurely'. This word is important. Martyrdom is a disruption—sudden, abrupt, unexpected, unwanted.

4. 'In situations of witness'. This phrase incorporates the original heart of the etymology. However, "witness" in this definition does not mean only public testimony or proclamation concerning the Risen Christ. It refers to the entire lifestyle and way of life of the Christian believer, whether or not he or she is actively proclaiming at the time of being killed. In this sense all Great Commission Christians, committed to Christ's mission as by definition they are, are 'witnesses' to the Lordship of the Risen Christ daily and continuously, whether consciously or unknowingly.

5. 'As a result of human hostility'. This last element is the crucial one. It excludes deaths through accidents, crashes, earthquakes and other 'acts of God', illnesses, or other causes of death however tragic.

An important point to note is what this definition omits. The most important item omitted is a criterion considered essential by churches in their martyrologies—'heroic sanctity', by which is meant saintly life and fearless stance. Those are certainly essential for a martyrology if it is to have compelling educational and inspirational value for church members under persecution and in particular for new converts. Heroic sanctity is however not essential to our definition because many Christians have been killed shortly after their conversion and before they had any chance to develop Christian character, holiness, or courage.

THE CHRISTIAN UNDERSTANDING OF MARTYRS

The fate of the Twelve Apostles

The New Testament records how the Risen Christ gave his disciples the Great Commission, and describes a few early cases of their obedience. But nothing is said about their ultimate fate as global missionaries. The murder of only one of the Twelve is recorded, that of James in AD 44 (Acts 12:2). But historical traditions, some strong, some weak, record that they all died as martyrs. Table 4-2 sets out this situation.

Since recording these martyrdoms was relatively unimportant in the early church, this should alert us to the proper significance to be attached to martyrdom. God evidently calls a number of his disciples to experience death as martyrs, but no additional salvation or pre-eminence in the Kingdom of God necessarily results. Their obedience however advanced the spread of the gospel across the world.

Martyrdom not exclusively an early Christian phenomenon

When most Christians hear the word 'martyr' they tend to think of the Roman persecution of early Christians. The *Ecclesia Martyrum* or Church of the Martyrs is often thought to refer only to the earliest period of church history, the 10 imperial Roman persecutions. This is not the case. Martyrdom instead is considered to be the 'common fate which the Church shares with its Lord'. Our survey of individual martyrs and of martyrdom situations reveals a startling fact: martyrdom is a consistent feature of church history and occurs in every Christian tradition and confession. This is evident in Tables 4-3 and 4-4, and is documented in detail later in Table 4-10. The rate of martyrdom across the world throughout the ages has been a remarkably constant 0.8%. One out of every 120 Christians in the past has been martyred, or in the future is likely to be so.

Martyrdom in Bible and church

The Christian view of martyr developed in the context of actual martyrdoms in the first and second centuries after Christ. Martyrdom came about because of persecution and resulted in a death that was in itself a witness for Christ. In the early church the idea developed that it was not enough to be called a Christian, one had to show some proof. That proof was normally some kind of verbal acknowledgement of identification with Christ, starting with the confession 'Jesus is Lord.' Baumeister writes: 'Dying because one is a Christian is the action par excellence in which the disciple who is called to this confirms his or her faith by following the example of Jesus' suffering and through action is able once again to become a word with power to speak to others'. Eventually confessors were distinguished from martyrs.

The first Christian document to have martyrdom as its exclusive subject was the letter written by the Christians of Smyrna describing the martyrdom of their bishop Polycarp. One key concept in this letter, important to our understanding of martyrdom, is the fact that Polycarp's death validated his discipleship—he followed his master unto death.

Justin Martyr took the subject of martyrdom further, portraying the martyr as the holder of truth, willing to die because of its value.

Table 4-3. Global overview of Christian martyrdom, AD 2000.

TOTAL PERSONS, AD 33-2000		
All persons born since AD 33: 36,673 million		
All persons evangelized since AD 33: 12,105 million (33% of human race)		
All Christians since AD 33: 8,344 million (23% of human race)		
All martyrs killed since AD 33: 69,420,000		
Martyrs as % all Christians ever: 0.8%		
Martyrs among all Christian leaders ever: 2.0%		
HISTORICAL OVERVIEW, AD 33-2000		
600 major martyrdom situations over 20 centuries		
76 with over 100,000 martyrs each		
27 with over 500,000 martyrs each		
15 with over 1 million martyrs each		
Average martyrs per martyrdom situation: 115,000		
Martyrdom loci: in 220 countries		
Ecclesiastical traditions involved: all 300		
Denominations with own martyrs: 4,000		
CONFESSION OF VICTIMS, AD 33-2000 (total martyrs of each tradition)		
Orthodox	42,798,000	
Russian Orthodox	21,626,400	
East Syrians (Nestorians)	12,379,000	
Ukrainian Orthodox	3,500,000	
Gregorians (Armenian Apostolic)	1,215,100	
Roman Catholic	12,210,000	
Catholics (before AD 1000)	855,000	
Independents	3,512,000	
Protestants	3,172,000	
Anglicans	1,046,000	
Marginal Christians	6,700	
other and background martyrs	6,675,700	
Total all martyrs	69,420,000	
PERSECUTORS AND THEIR VICTIMS, AD 33-2000		
<i>Persecutors responsible</i>		
State ruling power	55,871,000	<i>Martyrs</i>
Atheists (overlap with above)	31,689,000	
Muslims	9,121,000	
Ethnoreligionists (animists)	7,469,000	
Roman Catholics	5,171,000	
Quasi-religionists	2,712,000	
Buddhists (Mahayana)	1,651,000	
Hindus	676,000	
Zoroastrians (Parsis)	384,000	
Eastern Orthodox	222,000	
Other non-Christians	115,000	
Other Christians	146,000	
SUBTOTALS:		
Non-Christian persecutors	63,882,000	
Christian persecutors	5,538,000	
Total all martyrs	69,420,000	
SITUATION BY AD 2000 (P.A.= PER YEAR)		
Martyrs in 20th century (1900-2000):	45,400,000	
Martyrs since 1950:	13,300,000	
Average annual martyrs since 1950:	278,000 p.a.	
Recent annual martyrs:	171,000 p.a.	
Current annual martyrs:	160,000 p.a.	
Countries heavily involved in AD 2000:	50	
CONFESSION OF VICTIMS, AD 2000 (average annual martyrdom rates)		
Roman Catholics	93,000	
Protestants	30,000	
Orthodox	14,000	
Non-White indigenous Christians	10,000	
Anglicans and Old Catholics	8,000	
Marginal Protestants	5,000	
Total martyrs p.a	160,000	
LIKELIHOOD (L%) OF BEING MARTYRED (at current rates)		
<i>Full-time workers</i>		
Bishops	L%	<i>Per year</i>
Evangelists	5.0	15
Catechists	4.0	133
Foreign missionaries	3.5	175
Clergy	3.0	131
All Christian workers	2.0	303
Monks, brothers	2.0	1,700
Sisters, nuns	1.9	63
Other Christians:	1.8	300
Great Commission Christians	1.6	80,000
Christians (all kinds)	1.0	160,000

Jesus the Faithful and True Martyr
(captions for photo collage opposite)

1. **Christ popularized.** Public yearly enactment of Jesus carrying his Cross to Calvary (Mexico, and throughout Latin America).
2. **Christ historicized.** 3-dimensional tableau of Crucifixion, Einsiedeln Abbey (Switzerland).
3. **Christ three-dimensionalized.** Argentina's Roman Catholic bishops use life-size crucified Christ.
4. **Christ regnant.** 'Christ Triumphant' reigning from the Cross (Dogura, Papua).
5. **Christ sacrificed.** 'Crucifixion', Church of St Aidan, East Acton, UK (G. Sutherland).
6. **Christ accused.** Christ bearing sins of the world (John Biggs).
7. **Christ mocked.** 'Christ Crowned with Thorns' (Hieronymus Bosch, c1510).
8. **Christ exhibited.** 'Christ Exhibited' (young woman artist Helina Korn).
9. **Christ romanticized.** Altarpiece by Raphael, Italian master.
10. **Christ destroyed.** A horrific crucifixion (Graham Sutherland), Church of St. Matthew, Northampton, UK.
11. **Christ reviled.** 'Crucifixion' (Herbert Seidel), in earlier East German atheist setting.
12. **Christ uplifted.** 'Christ of Saint John of the Cross' (Salvador Dali, 1951).
13. **Christ for sale.** Sought after by buyers: 'Crucifixion' by Duccio di Buonisegna, c1300.
14. **Christ auctioned.** Christies of London auction that Duccio (shown hung on right) for highest price ever in 1976, £1,000,000.
15. **Christ authenticated.** Holy Shroud of Turin (Christ's burial cloth) exhibited in Turin Cathedral, 1978.
16. **Christ multiplied.** Hill of Crosses in Lithuania, expanded daily throughout 46-year occupation by atheist USSR.

Table 4-4. 112 methods used to kill 70 million martyrs, AD 33-2000.

This table lists the whole variety of means and methods used to kill Christian martyrs over the last 20 centuries. It then estimates the totals so killed by each means, using the following estimates of cases:

10	Over 10 million
9	From 4-10 million
8	From 2-4 million
7	From 1-2 million
6	500,000 to 1 million
5	100,000 to 500,000
4	10,000 to 100,000
3	1,000 to 10,000
2	100 to 1,000
1	Under 100

Method	Magnitude	Method	Magnitude
assassinated	3	injected	5
annihilated	7	killed by contract	3
attacked during sleep	4	killed by mob	7
bayoneted	5	killed extrajudicially	5
beaten to death	7	killed during genocide	9
beheaded	4	killed with sword	9
bled to death	6	knifed	7
boiled in oil	2	lashed to death	4
blown up	5	left to die	6
brainwashed to death	5	liquidated	7
broken on wheel	2	lowered into sewage	4
buried alive	4	lynched	6
burned at stake	4	machine-gunned	6
buried in sand	4	massacred	8
butchered	9	murdered	5
cannibalized	3	mutilated to death	4
chemically killed	7	poisoned	4
clubbed to death	5	pushed under traffic	3
crucified	4	pushed under train	3
crushed to death	3	put to death	5
cut to pieces	5	quartered	3
decapitated	4	racked to death	4
deprived of medication	6	roasted alive	4
died after beating	8	run over by tank	2
died after prison release	6	run over by vehicle	4
died in custody	5	savaged by dogs	3
died in interrogation	4	savaged by wild animals	5
died in prison	10	sawed in two	3
died in slavery	6	shedding blood	6
died of injuries	9	shot	10
died on release	7	shot by sniper	6
died under torture	6	slashed to death	7
disemboweled	3	slaughtered	7
dismembered	5	spearred to death	4
driven mad	5	stabbed to death	5
driven to suicide	3	starved to death	10
drowned	6	stoned	3
drugged to death	4	strangled	4
eaten alive	3	suffocated	4
eaten by piranhas	2	targeted in war	5
electrocuted	4	terrorized to death	6
electronically killed	2	throat slit	7
executed	4	thrown from aircraft	2
exposed to elements	6	thrown off building	3
frightened to death	3	thrown over cliff	4
frozen to death	6	thrown overboard	4
garroted	4	thrown to crocodiles	2
gassed	6	thrown to lions	3
gibbeted	4	thrown to sharks	2
guillotined	4	tied behind vehicle	3
hacked to death	5	torched	5
hanged	5	torn apart by horses	3
hanged upside down	3	tortured to death	5
hunted to death	4	trampled to death	4
immolated	2	wiped out	6
immured	4		
impaled	4	Total	70 million

Why are there martyrs?

According to Latin American radical theologian Leonardo Boff they exist for two reasons: (1) Christians prefer to sacrifice their lives rather than to be unfaithful to their convictions and, (2) those that reject proclamation persecute, torture and kill. This general presence of evil in the world, combined with Christian devotion is at the root of martyrdom.

When we examine a list of martyrs down the ages, as comprehensive as is known today, some startling findings emerge. Table 4-3 provides a global summary and overview. Table 4-5 analyses the grand total of 70 million martyrs separated out by which non-Christian authorities are responsible, and also by the Christian traditions or confessions of the victims. Surprisingly, Christians themselves have been the persecutors responsible for martyring 5,539,000 other Christians.

Another startling fact is the viciousness of killers hostile to Christians, Christianity, and Christian witness. Table 4-4 has already presented a horrifying listing of 112 ways in which killers have murdered Christians over the centuries.

Table 4-5. Persecutors and martyrs: 60 religious traditions and their related Christian martyrs, AD 33-2000.

Religionists	As persecutors	As victims		
1	Code 2	Martyrs 3		
	Code 4	Martyrs 5		
Non-Christian persecutors				
Atheists	a	31,689,000	-	-
Buddhists	B	1,651,000	-	-
Confucianists	G	3,000	-	-
Ethnoreligionists (pagans)	T	7,469,000	-	-
Hindus	H	676,000	-	-
Jews	J	60,100	-	-
Manicheans (Gnostics)	g	10,000	-	-
Muslims	M	9,121,000	-	-
Quasireligionists	Y	2,712,000	-	-
Shintoists	S	17,000	-	-
Spiritists	U	25,000	-	-
state ruling power	x	55,871,000	-	-
Zoroastrians (Parsis)	Z	384,000	-	-
other and background killers	-	6,675,700	-	-
Christian persecutors and/or victims				
African Independent pentecostals	-	0	I-3pA	6,700
Anabaptists	-	0	P-Ana	34,000
Anglicans	A	53,400	A-	1,046,000
Apostolic era (AD 30-75)	-	0	I-Aps	15,400
Arians	n	14,500	-	1,000
Armenian Apostolic (Gregorian)	-	0	O-Arm	1,215,000
Baptists	-	0	P-Bap	704,000
Belorussian Orthodox	-	0	O-Bye	670,000
Bulgarian Orthodox	-	0	O-Bul	112,000
Byzantines (before 1000)	O	222,000	O-Byz	1,527,000
Cathari/Albigensians	-	0	I-Alg	20,000
Catholics (before AD 1000)	R	57,000	R-Lat	855,000
Celts	-	0	A-Cel	53,500
Chaldean Catholics	-	0	R-Cha	450
Chinese house churches	-	0	I-3hC	700,000
Congregationalists	-	0	P-Con	2,200
Coptic Orthodox	-	0	O-Cop	1,068,000
Czech Orthodox	-	0	O-Cze	15,000
Disciples	-	0	P-Dis	4,000
Donatists	-	0	I-Don	24,000
East Syrians (Nestorians)	-	0	O-Nes	12,379,000
Eastern Orthodox (after 1000)	-	0	O-	42,773,000
Ethiopian Orthodox	-	0	O-Eth	651,000
Georgian Orthodox	-	0	O-Geo	210,000
Independent Charismatics	-	0	I-3	1,889,000
Independent Churches	I	5,000	I-	3,512,000
Jehovah's Witnesses	-	0	m-Jeh	6,700
Latter-day Saints (Mormons)	m	10	m-LdS	30
Lollards	-	0	I-LoI	100
Lutherans	-	0	P-Lut	987,000
Maronites	-	0	R-Mar	152,700
Marranos, Moriscos, Messianic, Jewish-Christian	-	0	I-Jew	21,500
Melkites	-	0	R-Mel	30
Messianic Jewish	-	0	I-3mJ	1,000,000
Montanists	-	0	I-Mon	2,000
Moravians	-	0	P-Mor	6,000
Old Believers	-	0	I-OBe	3,200
Paulicians	-	0	I-Pau	100,000
Pentecostals	-	0	P-Pen	1,021,000
Presbyterians/Reformed	-	0	P-Ref	210,000
Protestants	P	16,200	P-	3,172,000
Quakers	-	0	I-Qua	500
Quasi-Christians	I	0	I-qCh	1,000,000
Roman Catholics (after 1000)	R	5,171,000	R-	11,355,000
Russian Orthodox	-	0	O-Rus	21,626,000
Romanian Orthodox	-	0	O-Rum	16,000
Serbian Orthodox	-	0	O-Ser	350,000
Ukrainian Orthodox	-	0	O-Ukr	3,500,000
Waldensians	-	0	I-Wal	6,100
West Syrians (Jacobites)	-	0	O-Syr	351,000
other and background martyrs	-	-	-	6,675,700

The martyrdom of Jesus

Jesus was the Christian martyr par excellence. It was he who provided the example for all Christian martyrs since. It is important to understand the varying reasons for his martyrdom. From the point of view of the Pharisees he was being punished for blasphemy and contempt for the law. The Romans saw him as a subversive. His followers later understood his death as a necessary price for the salvation of the world. Thus, the reasons Christians give to explain martyrdom, even in the case of Jesus, are very complex.

The global presence of martyrs

Our survey reveals that martyrs have died in the 138 largest countries of the world. In many, the establishment of the church was the result of mass martyrdom. This was true in the early Roman empire, in Armenia, in Egypt, and in Palestine, and then subsequently in India, China, France, Japan, Britain, Viet Nam, Korea, the Americas, and Russia and the Ukraine.

The many different kinds of martyrs

Karl Rahner expounds Thomas Aquinas' dictum that 'Someone is a martyr through a death that is clearly

related to Christ if he is defending society against the attacks of its enemies who are trying to damage the Christian faith and if in this defense he suffers death'.

Edna McDonagh writes: 'Christian martyrs do not die solely even primarily for the sake of the Church community but for the kingdom which may be seeking expression and demanding recognition within the bounds of the historical Church, in causes not explicitly religious'.

Following in the footsteps of Jesus, Christians have been martyred for all kinds of reasons. Though the history of martyrdom illustrates the vast variety of reasons why Christians are martyred, Boff makes it clear that 'All those who have died, and those yet to die, for these causes, regardless of their ideological allegiance, are truly martyrs through the spilling of their blood because they perform virtuous actions in the spirit of Christ'.

Analyzing martyrdom situations

The first way in which we can begin to understand the phenomenon of multiple or mass martyrdom is to analyze their features and their overall significance. This can be done by describing each individual situation by means of coded variables; this is done in

Table 4–6. Analysis of martyrs by 11 types of Christians.

In this table a variety of Christians together with a number of well-known martyrs are classified by type. To illustrate this typology, first come 11 categories then these categories with precise definitions. Then these categories are given again below together with a small selection of some of the best-known martyrs or martyr situations (names and dates) who fit in and illustrate each category.

<p>0 = non-witnessing Christians (nominals, etc)</p> <p>Non-martyr witnesses (confessors)</p> <p>1 = Christians witnessing, but not suffering or persecuted</p> <p>2 = witnesses suffering, persecuted, or tortured but not killed</p> <p>3 = witnesses wanting or seeking martyrdom but not succeeding</p> <p>Martyrs (Involuntary or inadvertent)</p> <p>4 = died during or after imprisonment or torture for being a Christian</p> <p>5 = killed for outwardly non-religious reasons</p> <p>6 = killed for being part of a Christian body being persecuted</p> <p>7 = killed because known individually or collectively as a Christian</p> <p>Martyrs (voluntary or deliberate)</p> <p>8 = killed after deliberately provoking hostility or seeking martyrdom</p> <p>9 = killed after making a formal public witness in a hostile situation</p> <p>10 = publicly ordered to apostatize, refuses, confesses Christ, killed</p>
<p>0 = non-witnessing Christians. (This refers to latent, unaffiliated, nominal, non-practicing, non-suffering Christians).</p> <p>Non-martyr witnesses (confessors)</p> <p>1 = Christians witnessing but not suffering or persecuted. (By far the largest grouping, 83% of all active Great Commission Christians today, of whom 20% are harassed by state or society but not severely persecuted).</p> <p>2 = witnesses persecuted but not killed. (The underground church, which in 1988 numbered 16% of all Christians, including those tortured or imprisoned). A. Solzhenitsyn, R. Wurmbrandt, G. Vins.</p> <p>3 = witnesses seeking martyrdom but not succeeding. Pachomius, Anskar.</p> <p>Martyrs (involuntary or inadvertent)</p> <p>4 = died during or after imprisonment. AD 254 Origen, 1920 abp Justin of Omsk, 1929 abp Peter of Voronezh, 1938 metropolitan Anatole of Odessa.</p> <p>5 = killed for outwardly nonreligious reasons. 1966 fr C. Torres, 1968 M. L. King Jr, 1977 abp J. Luwum.</p> <p>6 = killed for being part of a persecuted body. 1915, 600,000 Armenian Apostolics.</p> <p>7 = killed because known as a Christian. 1945 D. Bonhoeffer, M. Skobtsova, 1980 abp O. Romero.</p> <p>Martyrs (voluntary or deliberate)</p> <p>8 = killed after deliberately seeking martyrdom. 628 Anastasius the Persian, 1531 Thomas Binley, c1700 brother Markel & Old Believer monks, 1795 Greek neomartyrs.</p> <p>9 = killed after formal public witness. 1941 fr M. Kolbe.</p> <p>10 = killed after being offered reprieve but refusing. 33 Jesus, 36 Stephen, 64 Paul, 156 Polycarp, 1555 abp T. Cranmer.</p>

Table 4–6. This provides a scale of varieties of martyrs, coded 0-10, is designed primarily to help classify individual martyrs. The scale provides a means of classifying and comparing the various types or degrees of martyrdom. It is descriptive, not evaluative. It describes circumstances, hence one cannot say that individuals killed in category 9 or 10 were better or more faithful witnesses than persons in category 1, or 4, etc. Neither does our definition of ‘martyr’ necessarily imply holiness of life or character, nor the ‘heroic sanctity’ that many Christian confessions require before persons can be formally recognized as saints. Category 1 gives in fact the original meaning of the New Testament Greek word *martyrs* (see Acts 1.8), but categories 0-3 are not properly called martyrs in today’s English usage.

Another scale by which a country’s experience of martyrdom can be measured is shown in Table 4–7; this can also measure a city’s experience, or an ethnic people’s experience.

Two more scales, this time describing each actual martyrdom situation, are given in Table 4–8. The whole range of situations is given values for these latter 2 variables in our major overall data compilation, Table 4–10, columns 9 and 10.

Background murders and martyrs

At this point before examining our major datatable on martyrdom, it is important to note that we observers actually see only the tip of the iceberg, while a vast number of other martyrdoms take place every day, every week, every year, without anyone else hearing about them. Part of this phenomenon is termed here background martyrdom. It is defined and described in Table 4–9, and will then be utilized throughout Table 4–10.

The impact of martyrdom on evangelization

Is there a correlation between martyrdom and evangelization? In some countries we find that martyrdom was followed by church growth. A contemporary example is the church in China. In 1949 there were only one million Christians. Forty years of anti-religious Communist rule produced some 1.2 million martyrs (see Table 4–10). The result: explosive church growth to today’s 90 million believers.

The future of martyrdom

We might be tempted to believe that mankind will gradually grow out of its violent nature and that, perhaps one hundred years in the future, will no longer be killing others, for whatever reason. However, this is not likely to be the case. The future almost certainly holds more martyrdom situations and the names of individual martyrs are likely to continue mounting

year after year at the same shocking rate of 160,000 a year or even higher.

THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF MARTYRDOM

Our major compilation of data on Christian martyrs in all countries over the 20 centuries of Christian history is contained in the World Evangelization Database. This can be directly accessed via the CD related to this survey, the *World Christian database*. In print, most of these data are contained here in several large tables: (a) Table 4–10 describing 600 major martyrdom situations in 150 countries, AD 33-2000; (b) Table 4–11 ‘Alphabetical listing of 2,500 known Christian martyrs, AD 33-2000’; (c) Table 4–12 ‘Chronological listing of 2,500 known Christian martyrs, AD 33-2000’; and (d) Table 4–13 ‘Geographical listing of 2,500 known Christian martyrs, AD 33-2000’.

The most significant and informative of these tables in this Part 4 is Table 4–10, which will now be analyzed.

The 500 major martyrdom situations in history

Table 4–10 describes the whole extent of Christian martyrdom and its martyrs—believers who have lost their lives prematurely because of their faith in Christ, in situations of witness, as a result of human hostility. The table lists a selection of the major or best-known martyr situations in the narrative of Christianity, arranged by the 10 major epochs in Christian history (in capital letters), with overall totals and analyses given at the end of each epoch. Names of a representative selection of 400 individual martyrs or groups are given throughout the table in bold type. Note these abbreviations: bp = bishop, abp = archbishop, msgr = monsignor, fr = father/priest, br = brother/monk, sr = sister/nun.

Definitions, sources, and meanings of the 11 columns and of the rows are appended in the following paragraphs. These explanations, qualifications and caveats must be carefully studied before the reader rushes into conclusions about the validity of the concept of martyrdom as presented here.

Briefly, note that column 5 = primary persecuting body, column 6 = Christian tradition of those martyred, column 7 = total martyrs as a result of that situation, 7a (on CD only) = total related Christians then, 8 = martyrdom ratio 7:7a as a percentage, 9 = magnitude of martyrs (code given in Index 1, Table 4–8), 10 = intensity of martyrdom (code given in Index 2, Table 4–8), 11 = total all Christians worldwide alive at that time, 11a = line number, for quick reference (on CD only).

For many dates, there are often many other well-

known martyrs too numerous to list in the table. Such additional names, numbering 2,500 individual martyrs, are given in Tables 4-11, 4-12, and 4-13.

It must be remembered again that although this table deals only with specifically Christian martyrdom, similar tables could be drawn up for martyrs in Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and the other great religions. All share in this greatest of deprivations of human rights.

ANALYSIS OF ALL MARTYR SITUATIONS, AD 33-2000

Each of the 11 Epochs has its martyrdom situations totaled and analyzed in the last 5 lines of each Epoch. Totals of all martyrs since AD 33 are then visible on that 5th line.

Background martyrdom

This very significant aspect is enumerated for each Epoch in its last line but two. As mentioned briefly above, the term ‘background martyrs’ refers to the continuous stream of Christians killed as isolated victims or for individual reasons, usually without any particular ecclesiastical situation, often clouded by other kinds of violence (wars, killings, murders, etc). In such cases their ecclesiastical affiliation is either unknown or irrelevant. The term ‘background killers’ refers to those responsible for these killings. For fuller definition, see Table 4–9; for numbers, see Table 4–10.

Some possible future scenarios

The rest of Table 4–10 after AD 2000 speculates on possible futures. It draws on material in Part 2 ‘CosmoChronology’. It is based (purely for purposes of illustrating our method) on one of the possible suggested scenarios, namely with the 10-year End-time arbitrarily placed just after AD 2050, with a world population then of 8 billion and a church of 3 billion. Note that each of the lines anticipates not only the church having numerous martyrs but also, especially in the End-time, the church losing vast numbers through defections, apostasies, and non-martyr deaths.

ESTABLISHING THE BOUNDARIES OF MARTYRDOM

Detailed final definitions

In the light of the detailed data in Table 4–10, a recapitulation of the whole concept of martyrdom is in order at this point.

This analysis sees the term ‘martyr’ primarily as a religious one and in particular as a Christian one. We are looking at the phenomenon from the Christian point of view, as the Christian experiences it. The primary thing is—a Christian has lost his or her life due to human hostility. Who caused it, or in what hostile circumstances, or for what motivation, are all secondary.

The analysis therefore defines a ‘martyr’ as follows.

(i) *Brief definition.* A martyr is a Christian who loses his or her life prematurely due to hostility because of his or her faith in Christ.

(ii) *Expanded definition.* A martyr is a Christian who loses his or her life prematurely in circumstances related either directly or indirectly to witness to Christ, and as a result of human hostility or violence directed at him or her (but not simply as a result of natural causes, disease, famine, accident, warfare, or so-called

Table 4–7. Incidence of martyrdom in a country, city, or ethnolinguistic people.

<p>0 = no martyrs past or present</p> <p>1 = alien martyrs only (of an outside culture)</p> <p>2 = past martyrs of this people (over 3 generations ago)</p> <p>3 = one known recent protomartyr of this culture</p> <p>4 = several known recent martyrs of this culture</p> <p>5 = numerous martyrs but sporadic, local and under 0.1% of Christians</p> <p>6 = moderate martyrdom (0.1%-0.9% of all Christians at the time)</p> <p>7 = high martyrdom (1-9%)</p> <p>8 = severe martyrdom (10-49%)</p> <p>9 = intense martyrdom (50% or over)</p> <p>10 = total martyrdom (100%; virtually every Christian wiped out)</p>

Table 4–8. Two persecution/martyrdom indexes, each of 10 levels of demographic martyrdom as experienced by the local Christian community in each of the 500 major historical martyrdom situations.

Index 1. Magnitude of each martyrdom situation.				
Size	Martyrs per situation	Situations	Total Martyrs	
10	Over 10 million martyrs	1	15,000,000	
9	From 4 million to 10 million	3	13,000,000	
8	From 2 million to 4 million	2	4,900,000	
7	From 1 million to 2 million	9	9,300,000	
6	From 500,000 to 1 million	12	7,070,000	
5	From 100,000 to 500,000	48	9,330,000	
4	From 10,000 to 100,000	133	3,513,000	
3	From 1,000 to 10,000	178	589,900	
2	From 100 to 1,000	119	40,393	
1	Under 100	79	2,237	
	Background and other martyrs	—	6,675,700	
	TOTAL	584	69,420,000	

Index 2. Intensity of each martyrdom situation.				
Intensity	Martyrs as % local	Persecution	Situations	Total Martyrs
BELOW AVERAGE				
0	Under 0.1%	Sporadic	156	599,221
1	From 0.1 to under 0.2%	Light	45	543,690
2	From 0.2 to under 0.5%	Moderate	51	608,264
3	From 0.5 to under 1%	Average	35	1,482,670
ABOVE AVERAGE				
4	From 1 to under 2%	Heavy	48	1,438,295
5	From 2 to under 5%	Severe	59	4,066,547
6	From 5 to under 10%	Appalling	51	10,603,711
7	From 10 to under 20%	Catastrophic	48	23,647,202
GENOCIDAL				
8	From 20 to under 50%	Horrifying	57	13,451,163
9	From 50 to under 90%	Terrifying	33	6,304,367
10	From 90 to under 100%	Annihilating	1	400
	Background and other martyrs	—	—	6,675,700
	TOTAL		584	69,420,000

'acts of God' such as earthquakes, floods, etc; also excluding suicide, self-immolation, and the like). (iii) *Standard short definition.* Our standardized summary definition should now be given again, as follows: *A martyr is a believer in Christ, who loses his or her life prematurely, in a situation of witness, as a result of human hostility.*

The key words to remember and insist on, when examining instances of possible martyrdom, are therefore these 5 words, which can be posed as questions:

- believer
- loses
- prematurely
- witness
- hostility

If any of these 5 key words do not apply to particular individuals or situations, then they should not be called martyrs in this precise sense.

(iv) *An even more detailed definition.* Our most complex definition sees a martyr as a Christian whose loyalty and witness to Christ (as a witness to the fact of Christ's resurrection, and also as a legal witness to, and advocate for, the claims of Christ in God's cosmic lawsuit against the world) lead directly or indirectly to a confrontation or clash with hostile opponents (either non-Christians, or Christians of another persuasion) as a result of him or her either (1) being a Christian, or (2) being part of a Christian body or community, or (3) being a Christian worker, or (4) averring the truth of Christianity, or (5) holding to some Christian tenet or principle or practice, or (6) holding to different Christian tenets to his or her opponents, or (7) speaking for Christ, or (8) refusing to deny Christ or his or her Christian convictions; which then results in violence and in him or her voluntarily or involuntarily losing his or her life prematurely (shedding his or her blood, being put to death, executed, assassinated, killed, stoned, clubbed to death, beheaded, guillotined, garroted, strangled, stabbed, eaten alive, gassed, injected, electrocuted, suffocated, boiled in oil, roasted alive, drowned, torched, burned, massacred, crucified, lynched, hanged, shot, murdered, pushed under oncoming traffic, immured, buried alive, crushed to death, poisoned, drugged to death, starved, deprived of medication, chemically or electronically killed, killed extrajudicially, died under torture, died after beatings, died in custody, died in prison, died soon after release from prison, or allowed or left to die). Any of these may take place with or without prior demand or opportunity to recant. (See alphabetical listing in Table 4–4).

Note that (6) above means that most Christians killed as alleged 'heretics' down the ages should correctly be included in enumerations of martyrs. Item (3) above also includes Christian workers killed in

the line of duty, or on active duty, or who lose their lives because they happen to be in the path of violence (this includes workers killed by robbers, soldiers, police, etc). Note also that our definition of demographic martyrdom includes and covers those children and infants who lose their lives along with adult martyrs.

Sources

Data for many of the situations listed in Table 4–10 come from detailed entries in Part 2 "CosmoChronology", which should be consulted for additional details on any particular year and its context.

Percentages

To give the reader an idea of the numerical significance of statistics of any particular martyrs or period he or she is interested in, we produce in this table various differently-defined sets of percentages: (a) for a particular occasion, number of martyrs divided by total Christians of that time and place and/or denomination; (b) martyrs divided by nation's Christian population; (c) martyrs over a long period divided by total Christians alive at some median time during this period, as percent; and (d) martyrs per year divided by total Christian deaths (from all causes) per year, as percent. Readers will find some of these clearer or more helpful than others.

DESCRIPTION OF COLUMNS IN TABLE 4-10

The meaning of columns and rows in the major table here, Table 4–10, are as follows:

1. *Year.* Date of first martyrdoms in a collective martyrdom situation, or of first or beginning of a prolonged series extending over either a few or many subsequent years. Note: 'c' = approximately.
2. *Main locus.* Place, country, or main area where situation of persecution or martyrdoms occurred. The name here is always either a country (using terminology of the time), or a continent or region, or occasionally one of the historical patriarchal metropolises (Jerusalem, Alexandria, Rome, Byzantium/Constantinople).
3. *Description of major martyrdom situation.* Details of group of martyrs concerned, or persecution, or context, or circumstances, i.e. the situation in its main particulars.
4. *Related individual martyrs.* Listed here in the table

in bold type are a small selection of those persons whose names are known and whom the churches officially, or popularly, regard as 'martyrs' properly so-called. This includes many known exceptional individuals who died voluntarily or publicly for their faith or for refusing to deny Christ. Many of these persons thus named died as bishops. They are placed at the nearest appropriate date, in most cases on lines describing situations of which their martyrdoms formed part. Their dates are given if different from the line's date. Names of additional known or well-known martyrs are then given below in the 3 full listings of all individuals in Tables 4-11, 4-12, and 4-13.

Abbreviations in this column: bp = bishop (not used here for the original Apostles, but only after AD 100), abp = archbishop, msgr = monsignor (bishop), fr = father (a priest, noted and used here only from 1693 onwards), br = brother/monk, sr = sister/nun. Note: bps, abps, frs are the plural forms including all following names to next title or colon. Other similar titles are left unabbreviated: pope, patriarch, abba, mar, rabban. The symbol & (ampersand) here and throughout denotes persons martyred together. The phrase 'et alii' (and others) denotes several or numerous additional similar martyrs at the same time and place.

SUMMARY OF TRADITIONS INVOLVED

The next 2 variables in Table 4–10 report quite different characteristics: firstly, persecutors; and secondly, the martyrs they persecute. These are set out in summary form in Table 4–5.

After these 2, there follow 4 variables reporting on the size and intensity of martyrdom in each situation.

5. *Persecutors.* Primary persecuting body, either secular or religious, or both (if 2 letters are given); i.e. the main persecutors of the martyrs described (in columns 3 and 4). There codes represent either (a) in the first half of the column, the state or ruling regime (shown by 'x', or a dot '.' meaning no state involvement); and (b) in the second half of the column, any religious body responsible or involved in killing the martyrs, which can be either non-Christian religious bodies, or Christian bodies themselves, or a dot '.' meaning no religious body is involved. In this column 5 there are always 2 code characters, side by side. As just noted, the code 'x' stands for the state

Table 4–9. Multiple varieties of background martyrdom.

Variety	Description
Accidental martyrdom	(Violence got out of control)
Anonymous martyrdom	(Nobody identifies the victims)
Bounty martyrdom	(Reward is offered and deliberate hunt ensues)
Contract martyrdom	(A price is put on a Christian's head)
Criminal martyrdom	(A killing breaks the law)
Domestic martyrdom	(Occurring during a family dispute)
Family-related martyrdom	(Such as new convert poisoned by relatives)
Indirect martyrdom	(Death comes as indirect product of hostility)
Individual martyrdom	(Killed without church involvement)
Invisible martyrdom	(Killers operate cautiously and out of sight)
Isolated martyrdom	(No apparent cause or connection)
Laundered martyrdom	(A killing has been covered up)
Marginal martyrdom	(At the edges of our definition)
Mistaken martyrdom	(Wrong target is killed)
Money-related martyrdom	(To cover embezzlement or theft)
Petty martyrdom	(Due to petty crime)
Political martyrdom	(Regime claims political justification)
Quasi-martyrdom	(Credentials as Christians appear uncertain)
Revenge martyrdom	(Settling of old scores)
Subsequent martyrdom	(Victim survives immediate attack but dies shortly after)
Trivial martyrdom	(Such as a killing during a robbery)
Unconscious martyrdom	(Nobody realizes what has happened except the victim)
Unheralded martyrdom	(Killers remain silent)
Unintended martyrdom	(Killing originally not planned)
Unknown martyrdom	(No reports ever surface)
Unorganized martyrdom	(No planning evident)

secular, or other ruling power, civil or military (i.e. state involvement, excluding any temporary or invading power); this category is widely used here in combination with another code; thus, 'xa' means that the persecutors are the civil power (x) who are also expressly atheists (a). The range is shown in Table 4-5.

6. *Tradition of martyrs*. Christian tradition, confession, or communion primarily involved as victims. The listing in Table 4-5 shows the various Christian bodies, traditions, and confessions involved, and also the various non-Christian bodies involved. The codes used are identical to codes for the 6 megablocs and 300 traditions as shown in Part 16 "GeoCodebook".

7. *Martyrs* (numerical total). Estimated number of Christian martyrs resulting from situation described in columns 1-3 of Table 4-10, defining 'martyrs' as all persons in categories 4-10 on our scale 'Analysis of martyrs by 11 types' in Table 4-6. Note that in any situation of mass deaths or killing of Christians, we do not automatically or necessarily define the entire total who have been killed as martyrs, but only that fraction whose deaths resulted from some form of Christian witness, individual or collective. Thus under '1095, Crusades', our table does not equate 'crusaders' with 'martyrs', but simply states that during the Crusades a number of zealous and overzealous Christians were in fact martyred as defined under 'Definitions' above. Likewise '1980, Latin America' does not count as martyrs all Christians who became victims of political killings, but only those whose situations involved Christian witness. Typical illustrations of the latter include the vast number of cases of an entire congregation singing hymns as soldiers lock their church's doors and proceed to burn it to the ground with no survivors.

The database here includes a further variable, 7a, available in the related CD but not in this print book.

7a. *Christians*. Local Christian population in that year and region, i.e. size of the related local Christian population to which columns 1-7 refer. Sometimes this means the total Christians in the country, of all denominations; sometimes it refers to a denominational or local grouping only. (Note: The only 3 exceptions are: AD 378 and 1648, where the figures of 120 million and 3,371 million refer to all Christians who ever lived up to that date; and AD 1697, where the figure refers to all Christians who have ever lived in Japan up to that date. They are shown in italics to indicate that they should not be included again in other totals or sub-totals).

8. *MR%*. In order to be able to assess and compare situations and their severity, we can speak of percentages. There are 5 or 6 different types we could use. Here, MR = martyrdom ratio for this incident or period, i.e. the number of those martyred as a percentage of the immediate Christian community (= columns 7 divided by 7a, times 100%)

9. *Magnitude*. The scale used here to measure magnitude of a martyrdom situation is as shown in Table 4-8, Index 1.

10. *Intensity*. The scale used here to measure intensity of a martyrdom situation is as shown in Table 4-8, Index 2.

11. *Global Christians*. This end column gives the total number of Christians of all types across the world alive at that time (expressed in millions).

11a. *Line*. In the related CD, this column gives an identification number to each line in the table, for quick reference.

ARRIVING AT GLOBAL TOTALS

World totals at the end of each Epoch

At the end of each Epoch in Table 4-10, there are 5 standardized lines referring to the world situation with world totals at that time. These are as follows:

1. *Total of martyrs listed above that line, during that Epoch.*
2. *All other martyrdom situations, known or unknown, during that Epoch.*
3. *Background martyrdom during that Epoch (individual, domestic, family, isolated; see Table 4-9).*
4. *Global total of all martyrs during that Epoch (sum of 1, 2, 3).*
5. *Global cumulative total of all martyrs since AD 33.*

Additional notes on these 5 lines are as follows.

1. *Total of martyrs above*. Column 7 here simply totals all the martyrs enumerated in this column above for that Epoch.
2. *All other martyrdom situations, known or unknown*. This second line is self-explanatory, bearing in mind that all the most widely-known names of martyrs involved in the previous lines of situations just documented are merely the tip of the iceberg. We estimate the overall numerical size

of the iceberg, however, by adding this line to cover all unknown or undocumented situations.

3. *Background martyrdom*. The term is used here to cover a whole range of very small or isolated or individual situations, which can be termed non-ecclesiastical. They cover cases where a Christian is killed as a result of human hostility but where the circumstances are nothing directly or immediately to do with organized Christianity. These are set out in Table 4-9. Our general finding is that at every Epoch background martyrdoms of these kinds take place continually. Since they are largely isolated individual cases, usually there is no ecclesiastical situation nor ecclesiastical significance—they are just victims of background violence provoked further by Christian witness.

4. *Global total of all martyrs during Epoch*. Column 7 for this row gives total martyrs during the epoch, based on (a) total of all the specifically-named and detailed martyrdom situations described above (which themselves represent only a selection of the major situations) plus (b) the line immediately above, just described, which assesses the background martyrdom situation.

5. *Global cumulative total of all martyrs since AD 33*. Column 7 for this fifth row gives the total of all martyrs since the Crucifixion in AD 33, up to the year shown.

NAMES OF INDIVIDUAL MARTYRS

The last 3 tables in this Part 4, Tables 4-11, 4-12, and 4-13, now give names of some 2,500 individual martyrs known to or recognized by one or more of the various Christian confessions and churches, or uncovered during the book's independent research over 35 years. They are here grouped firstly alphabetically, secondly chronologically, and thirdly by country. Many of those are individual or isolated martyrs whose deaths occurred outside major persecutions or similar martyrdom situations reported in Table 4-10. They are however summarized there at the end of each Epoch under the rubrics 'All other martyrdom situations, known or unknown' and 'Background martyrdom'.

Summary

This analysis has shown Christian martyrdom to be a phenomenon of enormous size and significance. Its statistics can be summarized in a single short table, and this has been done in Table 4-3 above.

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