

Was Jesus a Zealot Sympathizer?

«Theological Reflections»

2014. Vol. #15. Pp. 100-109.

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Vyacheslav GERASIMCHUK, *OTS, Odessa, Ukraine*

INTRODUCTION



Vyacheslav Gerasimchuk, 39 years old, is an instructor of Old Testament at Odessa Theological Seminary. He has studied at Odessa Theological Seminary, Evangelical Theological Faculty (Leuven, Belgium), and Trinity College (Bristol, England). Currently, the focus of his theological work is on the presence of Yahweh. He is married and has two children.

He began asking His disciples saying, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” And they said, “Some say John the Baptist; and others, Elijah; but still others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets” (Matt. 16:13-14). Later on in history, the list of people’s opinions on the question would be expanded and include such epithets given to Jesus as a wise man (Josephus),^[1] a sorcerer (Talmud),^[2] the originator of a “mischievous superstition” (Tacitus),^[3] etc. It is interesting and at the same time regrettable that the most extravagant and controversial pictures of Jesus have been produced by Christianity, not by outsiders. These pictures are uncommonly diverse: there was Jesus the teacher of secret knowledge (Gnosticism), Jesus the created son of God (Arius), Jesus the fully divine, but not fully human person (Appolinarius) or only seeming to be human (Docetism) etc. These are the portraits that were drawn during the first five centuries of Christianity.

Yet, these monotonous images of Jesus cannot be compared with the wealth of colorful graphic portraits of Jesus that have been painted for the last two centuries. As a

^[1] Actually, *Testimonium Flavianum* 3.3, the most celebrated passage in Josephus which speaks about Jesus, contains the following statement: “Now there was about this time Jesus, a wise man, if it be lawful to call him a man; for he was a doer of wonderful works, a teacher of such men as receive the truth with pleasure. He drew over to him both many of the Jews and many of the Gentiles. He was [the] Christ.” Many scholars, however, question the authenticity of the phrase “He was the Christ.” *Jesus under Fire*, ed. Michael Wilkins (Grand Rapids: Zondervan Publishing House, 1995), 212-213.

^[2] Sanhedrin 43,1; 107,2.

^[3] Tacitus, *Annals*, Book XV,44.

result, many people have come to know, to their surprise, that Jesus has lived many “lives.” He is said to have been a perfect man and a sage, a teacher of morality and a social reformer, a Pharisee and a Cynic, an apocalyptic mystic, and a magician. But there is one “life” which is totally different from the others—the life of Jesus the revolutionary or sympathizer of the first century movement of armed resistance to Rome called the Zealots. The most surprising thing about this theory is that its begetters seem to have effectively *won over* some Biblical and historical data to their side in order to support their hypothesis.^[4]

A SUMMARY OF JESUS THE ZEALOT SYMPATHIZER THEORY

The idea that Jesus was mixed up with the revolutionary movement is not new. As far back as the eighteenth century, Herman Reimarus already argued that the purpose of Jesus’ mission was “activating everywhere in Judaea those Jews who were groaning under the Roman yoke and had long before prepared for a hope of deliverance.”^[5] Although variations of this approach to the goal of Jesus’ ministry were proposed from time to time, it was only in 1967 that, due to the publication of Samuel George Frederick Brandon’s book, *Jesus and the Zealots*, the theory of Jesus the Zealot Sympathizer created a furore.^[6] The impact made by the book was so great that some Christian and non-Christian political activists were filled with enthusiasm and were even ready to use violence in the struggle against injustice and political oppression.^[7]

In his book, Brandon suggested a radically different explanation of the mission of Jesus than those which were commonly proposed in the 60s. The way Brandon came to his conclusions has to do with *reading between the lines* of the Gospels as well as with a critical reinterpretation of the historical information about the movement of “freedom fighters.” According to his theory, the “real” Jesus, unlike the Jesus of the Gospels whose image had been considerably distorted by the Evangelists, is not a “pacifist,” but rather a propagandist of the revolutionary ideas of the Zealots who did not disdain violence in their attempts to achieve political freedom. Jesus’ work was linked with the Zealots, and he himself agreed with their principles. Even if Jesus was not a Zealot, it is difficult to see any essential differences between the purposes of Jesus and those of the Zealots.^[8]

^[4] As a general rule, history is always forced to hasten to the rescue of a theory if it lacks trustworthiness.

^[5] Herman S. Reimarus, *The Goal of Jesus and His Disciples* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1970), 87.

^[6] S.G.F. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967). One of the few scholars who, like Brandon, took up the view that Jesus was close to the Zealots was Robert Eisler.

^[7] Graham Stanton, *Gospel Truth? New Light on Jesus and the Gospels* (Valley Forge: Trinity Press, 1995), 175. For instance, some black theologians believe that Jesus was politically and even violently in conflict with the status quo of the

first century. H. Wayne House cites Cleage Shrine “[Jesus] was not the traditional “lamb of God” taking away the sins of the world and promising Eternal Life to those following in His footsteps. Instead, He was a “revolutionary black leader,” a member of the Zealots...[who] sought to free Israel’s black Jews from oppression and bondage, dying, not for the eternal salvation of the individual, but for the rebirth of the lost Black Nation.” H. Wayne House, “An Investigation of Black Liberation Theology,” *Bibliotheca Sacra* 139 (1982) 554:165. See also Frederick Sontag, “Political Violence And Liberation Theology,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 33 (1990) 1:85-94.

What are the grounds for these statements? First of all, it is argued that, because Jesus grew up in Galilee, he must have been informed of the revolt of 6 C.E., the uprising, which was stirred up by Judas the Galilean and his followers prompted by a zeal for their nation and a great passion for freedom. Though the rebellion was suppressed, stories about the heroism of the martyred patriots were afloat, and had probably reached and captivated Jesus' imagination.^[9] These early reminiscences must have played a considerable part in shaping the ideology of the *movement* of Jesus.

Therefore as soon as Jesus came to ministry, his unambiguous predilections started to become apparent.^[10] Jesus selected Simon the *kananaïos*, a representative of the Zealot resistance party for an apostle (Mark 3:18).^[11] Jesus protested against the paying of tribute, saying, "Render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's" (Mark 13:17). If one scrutinises this pronouncement in light of one of the principles of the Zealots, that the land and its wealth belong to God and must not be rendered to a foreign ruler, he can see that its *real* meaning is as follows: Caesar could have what belongs to him, but certainly not the Holy Land and its fortune. In fact, this view seems to find confirmation in the accusation laid at Jesus by the Jewish authorities: "We found this man misleading our nation and forbidding to pay taxes to Caesar" (Luke. 22:50).

Faint notes of Jesus' supposed Zealotism can also be seen in such pronouncements as, "...the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and violent men take it by force (βιασταὶ ἀρπάζουσιν αὐτήν)" (Matt. 11:12), and, "But now, let him who has a purse take it along, likewise also a bag, and let him who has no sword sell his robe and by one" (Luke 22:36). All the way through his ministry Jesus incessantly denounced Pharisees and Sadducees, but never the Zealots. Is that not an indirect corroboration of Jesus' favourable attitude to the Zealot movement?

The attempt to convert the idea of the "taking of the kingdom by force" into a fact is said to have been made during Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and the "cleansing of

^[8] Veselin Kesich, *The Gospel Image of Christ* (Crestwood: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 1992), 178-179.

^[9] J.P.M. Sweet, "The Zealots and Jesus" in *Jesus and the Politics of His Day* ed. Ernst Bammel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 5.

^[10] In Brandon's theory priority is given to the Gospel of Mark mainly because its *tendentious apologetic* was largely followed by the other Gospels. Brandon assumes that Mark portrayed Jesus in such a *disguised* manner in order to suit the sentiments and interests of the Gentile-Christian audience in Rome. Irving M. Zeitlin, *Jesus and the Judaism of His Time* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), 131, 139.

^[11] Brandon suggests that the reason for Mark's use of the Aramaic term "kananaïos," which is usually translated as *zealot*, without its Greek translation (*zelotes*) is that the Evangelist did not

want to disclose the fact that one of the disciples of Jesus was a Zealot, a member of the Jewish resistance movement against Rome. This suggestion led Brandon to surmise that "the Zealots were "in the news" at the time, which, in turn, suggests a date for Mark's Gospel of about 70 C.E., the close of the Jewish revolt that shook the foundations of the Roman Empire." It has been suggested by several scholars that Jesus had more than one Zealot in the group of disciples. There are four more disciples who are put in the category of the "freedom fighters": Judas Iscariot (lat. *sicarius*, "assassin"), Peter (Bar-Jonah = Heb. (Accad.) *barjona*, "terrorist"), and the sons of Zebedee. Irving M. Zeitlin, *Jesus and the Judaism of His Time* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), 131, 142-143. S.G.F. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967), 243.

the temple.” The proponents of Brandon’s theory claim that actually the last week Jesus’ life was full of revolutionary activity. Thus, by his entry into Jerusalem—a demonstration of political Messianism—Jesus tried to bring his far-reaching aims home to the people. Jesus’ ambitions were even more loudly announced in his *mopping-up* of the temple – the den of the spiritual and political elite, which cooperated with ungodly heathen Rome. Jesus “puts away his meekness, grasps violence and disorder as one who is already assuming secular might, turns over the tables of the money changers, takes a whip and drives out the buyers and sellers and the dove traders from the forecourt of the temple”.^[12]

No wonder the actions and words of Jesus alarmed the priests and the Pharisees. They appear to have been fearful of any further activities of the *movement*, which could shake their well-being and the political status quo. As a matter of fact, they had started to show their anxiety even before Jesus entered into Jerusalem. “If we let Him *go on* [NASB’s italics] like this, all men will believe in Him, and the Romans will come and take away both our place and our nation” (John 11:48). In order to prevent the spread of Jesus’ ideas in Jerusalem, and to put down the sparks of the rebellion, the leaders of the nation intended to get rid of him. But he also did not want to put off the realization of his plans. Evan Powell tells a story of the last several days of Jesus’ life in the following way:

“The cumulative evidence suggests that Jesus and his disciples were planning to stage a dramatic public event which was intended to ignite a revolt during the festival. Jesus and his band were in hiding. He had already telegraphed his intentions with the triumphal entry. The authorities were highly motivated to arrest him before the festival began. Due to a tip from one of his own followers, they were able to locate and arrest Jesus just twenty-four hours prior to the Passover. As the soldiers arrived, his disciples fled^[13]; Jesus was apprehended, he was quickly condemned and crucified as a warning to all that those who would conspire to revolt would not be tolerated.”^[14]

Jesus’ crucifixion between two Zealots, who had probably taken part in the insurrection that coincided with Jesus’ activities in the city, is brought up as just another argument for the theory of Jesus the Zealot Sympathizer.

^[12] Herman S. Reimarus, *The Goal of Jesus and His Disciples* (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1970), 92. See also S.G.F. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967), 335-340. Hence, the accusation in Mark 14:58, “We heard Him say, ‘I will destroy this temple made with hands, and in three days I will build another made without hands’”, is to be considered in the context of the *attack* on the temple, as an anticipation of the actions of the Zealots in 66 C.E. “There can be little doubt, Brandon argues, that Jesus shared the outrage of the Zealots towards the sacrifices offered daily for the well-being of the emperor – sacrifices

which the lower priests, influenced by Zealotism, brought to an end in 66.” Irving M. Zeitlin, *Jesus and the Judaism of His Time* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), 136; S.G.F. Brandon, *Jesus and the Zealots* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1967), 335.

^[13] At least one of the disciples was armed when Jesus was arrested, but it was beyond the powers of the disciples to manage a Roman cohort (John 18:10, 12).

^[14] Evan Powell, *The Unfinished Gospel. Notes on the Quest for the Historical Jesus*. (Westlake Village: Symposium Books, 1994), 309.

THE ZEALOT MOVEMENT IN THE TIME OF JESUS?

Before we discuss the issue of any *real* presence of the Zealot traces in the words and the actions of Jesus, we should touch upon some major landmarks of the history of the resistance movement in Palestine in the period between 6/7-44 C.E., that is mostly in the time of Jesus' life. To begin with, it has to be noted that though it is usual for many to designate the participants of the different extremist (revolutionary) parties and movements, which were active in the afore-named (and later) period of time, by the common name *Zealots*, the term itself "referred at one point only to one trend in the activist liberation movement."^[15] Keeping this very essential remark in mind, we shall begin our exposition of the question under consideration.

The main and the most original source of information about the movements are the writings of the Palestinian historian Flavius Josephus (also known by his Jewish name, Joseph ben Mattathias).^[16] He states that in the very beginning of the first century, the idea of resistance first started to take root in the nation under the influence of the "fourth philosophy" (the first three were the Pharisees, Sadducees and Essenes), the school of thought established by Judas the Galilean and Saddok the Pharisee. The event, which provoked Judas to start his revolutionary campaign, was the census of Quirinius (6/7 C.E.), assessment of how much revenue could be extracted from the people.^[17] In his first work, *The Jewish War*, Josephus writes: "A Galilean named Judas was urging his countrymen to resistance, reproaching them if they submitted to paying taxes to the Romans and tolerated human masters after serving God alone" (*Jewish War*, 2.118).^[18] Practically speaking, these *irritants*, i.e. paying taxes and having someone (emperor) besides God as master, formed the kernel of the ideology of Judas' movement. Judas and his followers understood the tribute as tantamount to slavery; this idea, in turn, was rooted in their peculiar understanding of the First Commandment, which reads, "I am the Lord your God,... you shall have no other gods before me" (Ex. 20:23).^[19]

The primary goal of the Fourth Philosophy was the achievement of political freedom. In spite of the reactionary character of their views, the followers of Judas held to Pharisaic principles. The thirst for freedom, according to Josephus, was the (only) feature that distinguished them from the Pharisees. Josephus notes that they had such a passion for liberty that was "almost unconquerable, since they are convinced that God alone is their leader and master. They think little of submitting to death in unusual forms and permitting vengeance to fall on kinsmen and friends if only they may avoid calling any man, "master" (*Jewish Antiquities*, 18:23).^[20]

Richard Horsley suggests that the belief in "synergism" with God was one of the principles which the Fourth Philosophy shared with the Pharisees. "That is, although

^[15] *A History of the Jewish People*, ed. H.H Ben-Sasson (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), 274.

^[16] *Ibid.*, 292.

^[17] Richard A. Horsley, John S. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets and Messiahs* (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1985), 190.

^[18] *Ibid.*, 191.

^[19] Judas and his companions were aware of the fact that the Roman emperor (Augustus), like the Hellenistic emperors before him, was understood as divine; that must have promoted their consolidation in the struggle for having only one Lord.

^[20] Irving M. Zeitlin, *Jesus and the Judaism of His Time* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), 29.

all things are ultimately in the control of, or due to, the providential guidance of God, humans are responsible for acting according to the will of God, and God accomplishes his purpose through people.”^[21] Horsley believes that the “unconquerable passion for freedom” would appear to be informed by a certain eschatological orientation, namely that in “carrying out God’s eschatological will they [Judas and the company] would be helping to bring about the Kingdom of God.”^[22] But this suggestion is based mainly on the way one would interpret the Hellenistic phrasing of Josephus.

Now there are different opinions as to the nature of the revolutionary activity of Judas and his followers. Such scholars as Brandon, Eisler, Cullmann, and Geza Vermes argue that Judas advocated violent rebellion and led an armed revolt against Rome in 6 C.E. Horsley and Hanson adhere to the opinion that Judas and his Fourth Philosophy, with their great passion for freedom, sowed the seeds of later troubles without using weapons. However, these scholars agree that the members of the *Philosophy* “did organize themselves in some way and advocated resistance to Roman taxation... but there is little hint of the particular form that their organization or resistance may have taken – beyond the vague “unrest” or “noisy stir” [Josephus’ expressions] they apparently caused in Judean society in 6 C.E.”^[23] I am prone to think that Judas and his companions did use arms in their struggle for freedom in general and the abolition of the taxation in particular, but their movement was too spontaneous and unorganized to be called a revolutionary organization.

It is interesting that Josephus did not write anything about any possible display of revolutionary activity on the part of the people during the adult life and ministry of Jesus. David Rhoads, who discusses this issue in his book *Israel in Revolution: 6-74 C.E.*, writes: “In contrast to his repeated references to brigandage and to revolutionaries in his narrative of the later period, the absence of evidence for conspiratorial revolutionary activity in Josephus’ account of the period from 6 [?] to 44 C.E. is striking.”^[24] We do not have to suppose that Israel reconciled itself to the situation of servile submission to Rome. There certainly were demonstrations of protest and antagonism, but the resistance itself was not as fierce as in the later periods. If it had not been so, Josephus would have recorded such disturbances as he wrote about the “unrest” in the other periods of time.

But in the time of Jesus Israel seems to have been making good use of diplomatic ways of dealing with the hated Rome. Also, many Jews relied on God’s apocalyptic deliverance of the nation and judgment of their oppressors. They desperately waited for God’s intervention, judgment, and restoration. And only in the early 60s did they

^[21] Richard A. Horsley, John S. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets and Messiahs* (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1985), 193. The saying “God helps those who help themselves” could properly characterize the principle of “synergism” in Judas’ interpretation.

^[22] *Ibid.*, 194.

^[23] *Ibid.*, 199.

^[24] David M. Rhoads, *Israel in Revolution: 6-74 C.E.* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1976), 64. Rhoads lists several reasons of the *lull*: 1) The

memory of the War of Varus in 4 B.C.E. and the failure of Judas’ revolt in 6 C.E. must have discouraged revolutionary activity; 2) The emperors Augustus (27 B.C.E. -14 C.E.) and Tiberius (14-37 C.E.) were favorable toward Jews; 3) The procurators in Judaea from 6 to 44 C.E. were not particularly biased in favor of the Hellenistic element of the population in Palestine; 4) The high priests were almost all from the family of Ananus, a ruling house which provided stable leadership. *Ibid.*, 66.

begin to exert firm armed pressure on the Romans to gain independence. It is exactly at this time, as N.T. Wright notes, that the “Zealots”^[25] emerged as a clear-cut group.^[26] Thus, it is misleading to consider the Zealots as “a long-standing revolutionary organization founded by Judas that advocated and practiced violent revolution with increasing success until the massive revolt of 66-70”.^[27] So, we are to give a negative answer to the question whether there were Zealots in the time of Jesus. However, it should not be denied, as I have said above, that there were individuals and groups who were involved in some sort of subversive activities; they all were *zealous*, but not “Zealots” in the sense of belonging to the Zealot movement.

The obvious question that comes to mind in the context of this discussion is: What about Simon the Zealot who was among the chosen apostles of Jesus? Answering this question, I need to say that the term “Zealot” in the allusion to Simon the Zealot in the Synoptic Gospels does not necessarily imply the political interpretation; it may as well indicate “the prized quality of ruthless zeal in the service to the Lord,” someone who is an “eager or enthusiastic adherent.” One could have been enthusiastic about many things in those days, but it was most likely the realm of religion where Simon’s zeal was focused. In the Pauline epistles, the word “Zealot” still does not seem to have possessed any political connotation. Paul says he had shown *zelos* (“περισσοτέρως ζηλωτής”, Gal. 1:13; cf. Acts 21:20; 22:3), by which he meant only that he was devoted to the spiritual traditions of his ancestors.^[28] Even if we admit that Simon was a Zealot (freedom fighter) who came to Jesus as a companion in arms, it would be difficult for us to explain how he managed to put up with Matthew, the tax-gatherer. In fact, Jesus’ welcome to the tax collectors and sinners, who to the Fourth Philosophy (and Zealots) were even more abhorrent than the Romans, attests that Jesus was not really in line with any revolutionary party of his day.^[29]

CONCLUSION: WAS JESUS A ZEALOT SYMPATHIZER?

The main argument against the theory of Jesus the revolutionary is the cumulative force of Jesus’ personality, which is revealed in the story of His life. The teaching and actions of Jesus were diametrically opposite to the revolutionary spirit of the resistance movements. The aims of such movements would have seemed to Jesus not only

^[25] Irving Zeitlin points out that the adherents of the movement were called *kannaim* (“Zealots”) by their own people and *sicarii* by the Romans and their collaborators. Irving M. Zeitlin, *Jesus and the Judaism of His Time* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1988), 33. The Jewish historian Menahem Stern sees the Zealots and Sicarii as two distinct groups with the following features: 1) The Zealots never attached themselves to one particular family and never proclaimed any of their leaders king; 2) the Sicarii had their original base in Galilee, while the Zealots were concentrated in Jerusalem; 3) the Galilean Sicarii were fighting for a social revolution, while the Jerusalem Zealots placed less stress on the social aspect. *A History of the*

Jewish People, ed. H.H Ben-Sasson (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1976), 275.

^[26] N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 157.

^[27] Richard A. Horsley, John S. Hanson, *Bandits, Prophets and Messiahs* (Minneapolis: Winston Press, 1985), 197.

^[28] Michael Grant, *Jesus* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1977), 132.

^[29] There are some “hard sayings” of Jesus, some of which have been quoted above, that seem to show the “rough” side of Jesus. There has always been a hot dispute as to what Jesus meant by the sayings, and no consensus is ever likely to be reached.

unimportant and insignificant, as Michael Grant suggests,^[30] but also contrary to his proclamation of love, which had been the tenor of Jesus' ministry. Thus, his saying "Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matt. 5:44; cf. 5:39-42), which in Jesus' time could not have been said without reference to the Romans, would not find much support in any "freedom fighting" group. In fact, Jesus called the people to be motivated by love and mercy in their treatment of others. "Thus: the potential accuser must be faced and reconciled (Matt. 5:25-26); the soldier who commandeers the services of a Galilean villager must not be resisted or resented, but must be met with astonishing generosity (5:41); enemies of the state are not enemies in the eyes of YHWH, and if Israel is really to imitate her heavenly father she must learn to love them and pray for them (5:44f.). Love and mercy, as practical codes of living, are to characterize Israel as the true people of the Creator God."^[31]

"Jesus' program for remaking the world"^[32] was totally different from all other programs, including the most extremist ones, which had been proposed in his time. It was truly *revolutionary*, since it had Jesus as its centre and love, not violence or a rebellious spirit, as the motivating power. In his book *The Jesus Myth*, Andrew Greeley, in my view rightly, says that the program of Jesus for mankind is that: 1) Man must first accept *His* kingdom^[33], and 2) man must act according to the norms of justice and love.^[34] "What Jesus is saying, rather, is that unless men are prepared to commit themselves to the vision of God's love for us that he has come to preach then they will not be able to love one another. One generation's revolutionaries can turn into the next generation's oppressors."^[35] The history of humankind has more than once proved the truth of this last statement of Greeley's. It is hard to believe that Jesus, being very well aware of this *pitfall*, propagandized any ideas of revolution.^[36] Sontag

^[30] *Ibid.*, 133.

^[31] N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 290.

^[32] Andrew M. Greeley, *The Jesus Myth* (London: Search Press, 1972), 206.

^[33] In this respect, I would like to quote Doron Mendels, whose position concerning the issue of (the political idea of) the kingdom in the teaching of Jesus is quite sensible. He writes that Jesus spoke "*against* (Mendels' italics) the political idea of the kingdom of the son of David. Without going into the problem of whether Jesus thought that the *basileia* (kingdom) would be established in the future or was already there at his present time [I think *both* aspects of kingdom are present in Jesus' teaching], one thing is certain, that Jesus thought neither of the heavenly kingdom nor of himself in terms of a king with an army, servants, conquests, and territory." Doron Mendels, «Jesus and the Politics of His Day,» in James H. Charlesworth and Walter P. Weaver, eds., *Images of Jesus Today* (Valley Forge: Trinity Press International, 1994), 106-107.

^[34] *Ibid.* It should be observed, though, that these two points do not exhaust the whole teaching of

Jesus. Besides, in order to be ready to enter into the Kingdom of God, a man must not only agree with the principles of the Kingdom, but must also accept Jesus (by faith) as his King to let the Kingdom indwell in his heart. I think this internal acceptance of the King of the Kingdom is predominant over any social or political reforms that the subjects of the King might bring into the world. But it is not to say that the Kingdom amounts to nothing more than man's internal transformation; naturally, "the sons of the Kingdom" are impelled not to leave the world unchanged.

^[35] *Ibid.*

^[36] There is another issue that we have not discussed in this short article and that is the question of the temptations that Jesus faced. There is little doubt that Jesus, having been "tempted in all things" (Heb 4:15), also experienced the temptations of power. As Garlington notes, "it is reasonable to infer—given both the place of the temptations, that is, the desert with all its messianic overtones, and the framework of the Gospel narratives generally—that there was a politico-militaristic dimension to the choices placed before the

raises a question of the revolution “with a human face” and answers the question in the following way: “Can violent revolution be advocated without a basis in hatred? If not, this is a block for most Christians. The forgiving of our enemies is difficult for a revolutionary program, and certainly it eliminates violence as an acceptable path. Jesus turns to the poor and to the rich. He shows no class distinctions in spite of his compassion for those who suffer.”^[37]

To sum it up, it should be stressed once more that the teaching and the life of Jesus, as they are presented in the Gospels, place him above all militaristic and revolutionary ideologies. His goals and norms are not of this world (Cullmann).^[38] As Jesus said to Pilate, “My kingdom is not of this world. If My kingdom were of this world, then My servants would be fighting that I might not be delivered up to the Jews; but as it is, My kingdom is not of this realm” (John 18:36).

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^[37] Frederick Sontag, “Political Violence And Liberation Theology,” *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 33 (1990) 1:92.

^[38] Oscar Cullmann, *The Christology of the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1963), 220-221.

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