

Pastor-teacher Don Hargrove
Faith Bible Church
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<http://fbcweb.org/doctrines.html>

JEWISH APOLOGETICS (37)
ANSWERING JEWISH OBJECTION #28
(DDR #656)

Objection #28: Without the long, ugly history of Christian anti-Semitism, the Holocaust would never have occurred.

Michael Brown's short response:

Maybe so. Many so-called "Christians" and "Christian" leaders helped pave the way for the demonic and destructive atmosphere of the Holocaust, although it is important to remember that no church leader in history ever advocated exterminating Jews, that no church leader in history ever attempted to wipe out the Jewish people, that the church's historic anti-Judaism bore no resemblance to Hitler's racial anti-Semitism, and that the Holocaust itself was anti-Christian in every sense of the word. Still, there is blood on the hands of all anti-Semitic leaders who claimed to be Christians, and to this day, sincere Christians around the world agonize over the things that were done to the Jewish people by Nazis, communists, and other Jew-haters. As Jews, however, we have a different kind of soul-searching to do, since we must ask ourselves why such calamities overtook us if we were in good standing with God as a people. Why, in fact, was there a Holocaust? This is the real question that needs to be answered.¹

Anytime you deal with the subject of the Holocaust when interacting with a Jew, it is very important to be very sensitive to the issue. This is no place for flippancy when dealing with divine judgment. Furthermore, there is no point in trying to deny anti-Semitism in Christian history. If it is going to be part of the discussion, you are on a much higher moral ground by bringing it up yourself, owning up to it, and then proceeding to provide certain qualifications (e.g. that anti-Semitism is not consistent with New Testament Christianity and that the

¹Michael L. Brown, *Answering Jewish Objections to Jesus: General and Historical Objections*, 1ST ed. (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books, 2000), see 176-77 for his full response to this objection. In this work, Brown lists the objection and then gives a short response that is followed by a more developed response. This DDR series, for the most part, tracks the objection and his *short* response, after which you will find my comments. I highly recommend his book if you are interested in his longer responses (there is far too much material to include in the DDRs).

“Christians” who were guilty of atrocities of the Holocaust were out of touch with the true nature of Christianity). It is also noteworthy that many Messianic Jews in Europe were slaughtered by the Nazis during the Holocaust. The fact that they believed in Jesus and attended church did not change their lot one bit. As Brown notes, “This reminds us that the Holocaust was in no sense of the word ‘Christian.’ You could just as well say that Joseph Stalin was a God-fearing Jew as you could say that anything about the Holocaust was Christian.” Note how Brown in his short answer is able to turn the question back to where it should be: “Why, in fact, was there a Holocaust.” It does seem a bit incoherent for the Jews to suffer so much if they were indeed faithfully following God by rejecting Jesus as the Messiah—as many believe.

Many Jews have lost their faith over the atrocities of their people in the Holocaust. What is interesting is that oftentimes the Jews who did *not* personally go through these sufferings lost their faith while those who actually endured the horrors “found” their faith. It really is all about volition. It is not about the circumstances of life. It is about what we do with them. There is no reason for any believer to live *under* the circumstances of life. Because of the power of Jesus Christ, His provisions of Bible doctrine, and the empowering of God the Holy Spirit, every believer can live *above* the circumstances of life. This can only be learned by doctrine in the environment of fellowship with Jesus Christ. When your circumstances are the dynamics of fellowship with God, you will always thrive regardless of the outside pressures around you.

Philippians 4:11-13 Not that I speak from want; for I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am. ¹² I know how to get along with humble means, and I also know how to live in prosperity; in any and every circumstance I have learned the secret of being filled and going hungry, both of having abundance and suffering need. ¹³ I can do all things through Him who strengthens me.

Doctrine matters!

Pastor Don