

# Does persecution *always* bring growth?

Global persecutions suggest otherwise!

Ronald R. Boyd-MacMillan<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

While Christians have long had a theology of church growth resulting from persecution, this article develops a modest “theology of extinction” to go alongside. Five global persecutions are identified – Roman, Islamic, Mongol, Christian and Atheistic – where the persecution lasted for more than one generation, covers the known world, and leaves a permanent change. The first of these, Emperor Decius’s strategy to create apostates rather than martyrs, is examined with a call to preserve a greater awareness of how persecution can really damage the church.

**Keywords** persecution, Roman, revival, killing, global, Decius, penance, disunity, apostate, martyr.

## 1. Introduction

In teaching courses on the topic of what has become known as “persecution preparedness” since the late 1990s, I have become concerned that some influential leaders in the persecuted church were too quick to equate persecution with growth. There may be a link in some instances, but some people were happily elevating it to the status of a cause-and-effect connection. This error might not be so serious were it merely theoretical in nature, but it was having a negative pastoral impact. Where church leaders assumed that a rise in persecution would bring revival, they became depressed if it did not ensue, or they worried that they were actually being scourged by God. Their disappointment was taking away their joy and their resilience.

I first encountered this viewpoint when I lived in Hong Kong in the 1980s and 1990s. I would regularly visit a house church leader across the border in Guangzhou named Samuel Lamb. He had a three-story house devoid of domestic furniture and chock full of old wooden pews. He could cram nearly 1,200 people, mostly young adults, into his services. Lamb, uniquely among house church leaders, courted publicity as a protective strategy. He made sure to have Billy Graham speak there

<sup>1</sup> Ronald R. Boyd-MacMillan has for 40 years travelled, taught and learned from persecuted communities around the world. He is Visiting Professor of Practical Theology with Persecution Studies, Lahore College of Theology, Pakistan; and Adjunct Professor, School of Intercultural Studies, Fuller Theological Seminary, Pasadena, CA. This essay uses American English. Article received 1 September 2020; accepted 16 July 2021. Email: rbmwafts@gmail.com.

during his much heralded visit to China in 1988, even though his congregation had no legal status.<sup>2</sup>

To every visitor, Samuel Lamb would unfailingly trot out his consistent mantra: "Persecution promotes growth." Then he would tell us that he was praying for his Western visitors that they would "have more persecution in order to have more growth." Many pastors who visited him returned hanging their heads. One said to me, "How do we generate more persecution in the United States so our churches stop emptying out?" and added, more poignantly, "God must have given up on us."

Lamb was dead right about the Chinese church in the last 50 years. In 1949, the Chinese church numbered maybe a couple of million people; now the number is estimated by Professor Fenggang Yang, of the Center on Religion and Chinese Society at Purdue University, at between 96 and 115 million. The bulk of that growth occurred in the 1980s, following the terrible persecution by the Cultural Revolution from 1966 to 1976. Persecution promotes growth? Certainly in this case!

But Lamb was dead wrong if one looked back not 50 years, but 1,500 years in China. Four times Christianity came to China and initially took hold, but then was persecuted severely and stopped in its tracks. The Christian gospel first reached China thanks to Nestorian Christians in 635, but the Christians were persecuted to the point of extermination by a Buddhist emperor after 845. Christianity came again in the 13th century, this time in the form of a Franciscan mission led by John of Montecorvino, who arrived in Beijing in 1294. The missionaries managed to baptize 6,000 believers in Beijing. Again, persecution arose and left little trace.

Famously in the 17th century, a Jesuit mission was spearheaded by Matteo Ricci, who entered Beijing in 1602 and made great inroads, especially among the elite. But then a new emperor opposed them, and they were finished.

The fourth great wave came in the 19th century. Protestant missionary expansion sent literally hundreds of missionaries into China's interior, spearheaded by Hudson Taylor. They made a great impact, building hospitals and schools as well as churches. After a hundred years of missionary endeavor, at the outbreak of the Second World War, it was estimated there were maybe a million Protestants and slightly more Catholics. But Pearl Buck cruelly quipped that their efforts had made as little difference to Chinese culture as "a finger drawn through water." She was no dispassionate observer. The daughter of Presbyterian missionaries to China, winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature for her portrayal of Chinese peasant life in *The Good Earth*, she struggled to see good in any missionary effort. At any rate, whatever the impact, persecution in the 1950s under Mao's Communist party ripped much of this growth away.

<sup>2</sup> Sources on the life and ministry of Samuel Lamb are minimal, but there exists a useful if rather hagiographic biography by Ken Anderson, *Bold as a Lamb: Pastor Samuel Lamb and the Underground Church of China* (1991).

If Samuel Lamb had known the history of persecution in his own country, he would not have recited his mantra quite so confidently. One must not blame him. Part of the problem of being a persecuted Christian (especially in the pre-Internet era) is the lack of access to historical and theological resources that we in other countries take for granted.

## 2. How churches die

Persecution promotes growth? Only sometimes. The idea has a great historical lineage. Tertullian, the early church father is famous for having said, “The blood of the martyrs is seed,” which has been more generously translated to “The blood of the martyrs is the seed of the church.” We know what he means. We know the worth of a martyr like nothing else in showing the world the sheer value and weight of knowing Christ. But the blood of martyrs was not the seed of the church in Tertullian’s own city of Carthage! And later, the Islamic persecution from 650 AD banished Christianity *permanently* in large swathes of North Africa.

So we must ask ourselves: in what circumstances does persecution tend to kill or damage the church as opposed to reviving it?

Philip Jenkins, in *The Lost History of Christianity*, posed this challenge: “Besides the missionary theology cultivated by many churches, we also need a theology of extinction.” (Jenkins 2008:249) The church today pours a lot of energy into examining how churches grow, but perhaps more energy should be expended in looking at how churches die.

This was why I added a section to my primary course on persecution preparedness.<sup>3</sup> The new section looks at the grand sweep of the history of Christianity and examines the great global persecutions, considering how they impacted the church. It shows that, in certain circumstances, persecution can kill the church rather than reviving it. Again, my purpose was practical. Leaders in persecuted settings needed to know what and who - is ranged against them; how important it is not to underrate those powerful forces, and how to dig in for the long haul. They needed to be aware that sometimes the persecutors seem to triumph over the church.

## 3. Five great waves of church persecution

There have been five great global persecutions of the church. Each one left the church dramatically weaker and different than before. For my purposes, global persecution has three characteristics:

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<sup>3</sup> This course, known as “An Answer for My Enemies: Persecution, The Big Picture,” has been taught around the world and extensively within vulnerable communities. It provides a biblical, historical and contemporary perspective, discusses ways to influence situations of persecution, and ends with an exercise sustaining spirituality while under persecution. It was taught in an upgraded form as “Persecution, Mission and Christian Spirituality” at Fuller Theological Seminary in fall 2019, with Paul Jensen and me as co-instructors.

- It is not confined to a single country but covers the known world at the time.
- It lasts for more than a single generation.
- It radically alters the religious landscape for many years afterwards.

The first was the Roman persecution of 250 to 313 AD, which began under the emperor Decius. It sought to create apostates rather than martyrs, and thus to sow *disunity* in the underground church. Though it did not hammer the church numerically, the process of re-instating apostates divided Christianity into East and West, and it resulted in the creation of a system of penance that dominated the spirituality of the church until the Reformation, and not for the better.

Second, the Islamic persecution of 635 to 1000 persecuted Christians through *taxation*, so that over time they would tire of their second-class status and economic inferiority and eventually convert. This tactic reduced Christians to a minority in the Middle East, their traditional heartland. Their minority status has continued ever since.

Next, the Mongol persecution, of 1295-1453 (when the Mongols became Muslim) was characterized by *violence* and essentially eliminated Christianity in Asia, rendering the faith Europe-centered for the next 500 years.

From 1517 to 1648, in the aftermath of the Reformation, groups of Christians persecuted other Christians in Europe and America. These clashes were characterized by deadly disagreements over the meaning of *ritual*. These inter-faith battles resulted in the Enlightenment and in modern notions of toleration and pluralism, but also more negatively in the prevailing Western cultural idea that religion merely causes conflict. Our inability to handle our internal disagreements sowed the seeds of secular intolerance.

Finally, the atheistic persecutions from 1917 to the present spawned communist regimes and tactically sought to negate the influence of religion by controlling *education*. This has massively reduced the impact of Christianity in these societies, even though some churches, such as the Catholic Church in Poland, emerged with great credit as a focus of opposition to the communist regime.

In examining these five great global persecutions, I see two common factors that are uppermost in fatally weakening if not destroying Christianity altogether.

One is the *time element*. Christianity (and any other religion for that matter) seems to have little defense against persecution when it lasts for multiple generations. The second is the *totality element*, as the persecutor manages to create a whole culture inhospitable to the daily exercise of the Christian faith. When a society is set up to exclude or marginalize Christians, then over time it becomes too hard to keep swimming against the tide. Islamic societies are brilliant at this. They have managed to make the Christians of the Middle East feel as if they are not indigenous at all but second-class interlopers, even though their presence and culture predate the Islamic one.

When these two elements coincide, it becomes nearly impossible for Christianity to keep transmitting its faith and successfully indigenize, because the society is set up to repel the exercise of Christian witness. As Christians are forced to fight every day to be distinctive, over time weariness sets in, until eventually walking away from the Christian faith becomes the easiest thing in the world to do.<sup>4</sup>

Notice that this dynamic is not only about violence. Scott Sunquist, formerly dean of Fuller Seminary's School of Intercultural Studies, indicated (personal interview, August 2018) that persecution often revives the church when it is severe but intermittent or of short duration. Violence, if quite short-lived, can revive the church. But if persecution casts a long-term blanket over the daily exercise of the faith, then the witness of the Christian church can be smothered permanently.

The best way to be resilient over time in the face of persecution is to build a culture (or a subculture) that never lets Christians as a community forget Jesus Christ on a daily basis. Otherwise, the faith becomes privatized and weak.

#### **4. Latourette's advances and recessions**

After identifying these five global persecutions, I looked for another framework that marked the impact of each of them in some way. I found one helpful schema in the writing of Kenneth Scott Latourette, who posited in his multi-volume *History of the Expansion of Christianity* that the history of mission had three advances and three recessions, with each recession significantly attributable to persecution (Latourette 1945a).

In Latourette's schema, the years 33 to 500 AD were a time of Christian expansion. Christianity became the unchallenged religion of the Middle East and extended into Europe. From 500 to 950, the first great recession occurred, due mainly to the rise of Islam and the church in the Middle East and Africa becoming a minority. His second period of advance ran from 950 to 1350, covering the period when Christianity became the main religion in Europe, followed by another great recession from 1350 to 1500 as the Mongols swept across Asia and wiped out Christianity there.

Latourette's third advance period, from 1500 to 1750, covers the years when the great European civilizations of Spain, Portugal, and subsequently the Netherlands and Great Britain – all maritime powers with navies able to break the Islamic land

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<sup>4</sup> This understanding owes much to the social theory of conversion used by Rodney Stark in *The Triumph of Christianity: How the Jesus Movement Became the World's Largest Religion* (Stark 2011). Stark stated in an earlier book, *The Rise of Christianity: How the Obscure, Marginal Jesus Movement Became the Dominant Religious Force in the Western World in a Few Centuries* that conversion occurs among people "whose interpersonal attachments to members overbalanced their attachments to non-members" (1997:6).

blockade – sailed to North and South America, Africa and the Far East. The Catholic states of Spain and Portugal were not bashful in imposing Christianity on conquered populations. The concept of modern mission arose but was followed by the third great recession during 1750-1815, due to the European Enlightenment. Although I cannot fully develop the argument here, persecution was central to this recession because Enlightenment principles were an important response to the wars of religion that convulsed the European continent. As Christian states, whether Catholic or Protestant, persecuted Christians from minority churches, Christian thinkers such as John Locke concluded that religion could no longer be trusted to bring coherence to societies, and that states had to become more secular and base their governing principles on reason rather than revelation. For Latourette, this was a smaller recession than the previous too, but still an important one because people significantly lost their faith in religion as the glue of society. This has become a permanent result in the West.

The last period in Latourette's schema, from 1815 to 1950, was one of great advance due to the Protestant missionary expansion across the globe. Latourette retired in 1953, but had he continued to write he would surely have recorded further advance, perhaps the most remarkable of all, as the African Christian population grew from about 40 million to over 500 million today and as the church expanded in China.

Latourette's arrangements do not address the impact of the atheistic persecution. Since he finished his *magnum opus* in 1953, and the Roman persecution is (appropriately) not rated because of its smaller numerical impact. But his scheme certainly confirms that times of great persecution are not generally times of church growth.

I will now look more closely at one of the global persecutions Latourette does not mention, so as to show in greater detail how persecution can result in near-permanent harm to the church.

## 5. The impact of the Roman persecution

The Roman persecution essentially had two waves, the first under Decius and Valerian (250-260). Things weren't easy after that, but persecution did abate somewhat until another intensification under Diocletian and his son Galerius from 303 to 311. Thus the overall period of persecution spanned two generations.

This was the first empire-wide persecution of the church. If we wanted to make a list of history's most effective persecutors, he was emperor for only two years, yet according to W. H. C. Frend, the great scholar on the persecution of the early church, no one came closer to wiping out Christianity than Decius (Frend 1965). Why was he so significant? Let us profile his method to find out.

First, his *ambition*. Decius was the first person to persecute Christians on an imperial scale, across the whole Roman Empire. Until 250 AD, they were perse-

cuted only locally, usually as scapegoats for a local event such as the fire in Rome under Nero. That crazy emperor's response probably killed the apostle Paul, and possibly Peter. But Christians could flee Rome and go somewhere like Antioch to avoid trouble. No one tried to neutralize Christianity across the known world until Decius. He was the first man to see Christianity as a threat to the empire and mobilized the entire bureaucracy from Rome to Carthage to Constantinople to deal with it. All great social engineers who seek to manipulate religion across cultures and mountain ranges bob on the wake of Decius.

Second, his strategy was *perfectly cloaked*. All he said in 250 AD was "Look! We've got to stick together! The Goths are massing to the north, the Persians to the east. Let's unite and fight! Everybody should make a sacrifice to the Roman gods to bring victory. Everyone must obtain a certificate from a magistrate confirming that they've done so. Failure to do so brings death!" It was a master trap because Decius knew that Christians couldn't do this. His inside intelligence about the community was superb! He knew that Christians were completely different from all the Roman religions because they claimed a monopoly on the truth, were aggressively evangelistic, and were uncooperative in worshipping the national cult. They couldn't take an oath that required them to swear that there were other gods on par with theirs. Decius found a clever way to persecute Christians under the guise of a pro-religious campaign. All he was doing was asking people to go to the temple and call on all the gods to help. Christians would look unpatriotic if they didn't make these sacrifices.

Third was Decius' careful *conscriptio of historical forces*. A smart persecutor works with history, not against it. Decius' timing was brilliant because 246 AD was declared the millennium of Roman religion. This gave him a perfect opportunity to revive the cult and sideline anyone who could not follow it fully. It also had the effect of ensuring that there would be little cultural sympathy for the Christians. People would say to them, "Why can't you sacrifice to our gods? Don't you want the empire to be strong?" Decius created a cultural prejudice against Christians on top of the state pressure against them. He thus conscripted the culture in his war against religion alongside the state apparatus.

Fourth was his counter-intuitive tactic – create apostates, not martyrs. As the campaign started, magistrates came to Decius saying, "Some of the Christians want to obtain certificates by bribery – they want to buy the certificates without sacrificing, or they might even be concocting forged certificates. What should we do with them?" One would have expected Decius to say, "Kill them! How dare they try to circumvent my will!" But instead he replied, "No, that's absolutely fine. Let them bribe! Let them produce forged documents!" Why was this a masterstroke? Because by making it possible for Christians to compromise their faith, he was sowing disunity in their ranks. He knew that martyrs cause people to rally around their faith. Martyrs show that

Christ is worth dying for. But apostates divide the community. Decius was particularly pleased when bishops took this way out, because it threw the Christians into turmoil. Robert Louis Wilken wrote, "The aim was not execution, but to weaken and thin out the Christian community." (2012:69) Sadly, the vast majority of Christians recanted.

This widespread apostasy divided the community into the righteous and the unrighteous, the uncompromised and the compromised. As a result, a whole new set of questions become vigorously debated in the church: "Should we take communion with those who are compromised? Are they still Christians? Is it really that necessary to die for Christ?" In addition to the pressure from the state and the culture, Decius created pressure from within. The consternation he sowed within the Christian community functioned like a cancer, depriving Christians of the very unity they needed to stand firm while deep underground.

Of course, Decius was extremely ruthless in the prosecution of this assault. Many were indeed martyred. He knew his strategy depended on consistently killing those who refused to make the sacrifices. Otherwise, people would think it wasn't a matter of life and death. He was deadly serious, and some historians think that Decius was winning. He might have wiped out the Christians had he not died two years into his campaign. But in those years, he certainly neutralized Christianity as a force. Frend concludes that "the Decian persecution was the gravest setback the Church ever suffered." (1965:571)

Wilken describes the split that began to appear in the church:

Persecution had divided the community between those who had stood firm and those who had, in Cyprian's words (he was the bishop of Carthage), broken their oath to Christ by offering sacrifice! Idolatry, venerating false gods, transgressed Christianity's most fundamental belief in one God. Dubbed the "lapsed" because they had either sacrificed or obtained certificates (by whatever means) stating that they had sacrificed, by Church law they were excluded from participation in the Eucharist. The other group was made up of those who had courageously confessed their faith, been imprisoned, flogged, twisted on the rack, starved in dark damp dungeons, and in some cases, executed. Their steadfastness not only brought honour, it conveyed on them unique spiritual prerogatives, and there was the rub. (Wilken 2012:69)

Christianity was unsure of what to do with these two groups, Those who had stood firm and were killed were perhaps overly venerated, but for others a whole system of how to bring people back to faith was constructed, and it became the basis for the medieval system of penance.

I would argue that this penitential system was one of the most permanent damages caused by the persecution. In terms of numbers, Decius probably didn't reduce Christianity by much, at least not when compared to other global persecutions. At



the end of the first century there were fewer than 10,000 Christians out of an estimated 60 million people in the Roman Empire, or about 0.02 percent. By the year 200, the number of Christians was around 200,000; by the year 250, when Decius launched his campaign – and this may have been why he did it – the number had probably risen to more than a million, or 2 percent of the population (Stark 1996). Rodney Stark calculated that by the year 300, Christians made up 10 percent of the population of the Roman Empire, or approximately six million people.

To finish the historical element of this story, the Decian persecution was continued by Valerian but ended in 260 by his son Gallienus, who actually published an edict giving Christians the right to property, although he did not confer official status on Christianity. Then the emperor Diocletian launched an even more ruthless persecution. A gifted administrator, he ruled from 284 to 305, dividing the empire into four parts in order to run it better. For the first 20 years of his reign, he was relatively tolerant. But over time he began to regard himself as a god – always bad news for Christianity which requires exclusive worship of God. Galerius, his son, was even more aware of the danger posed by Christianity to the state.

Four edicts were promulgated in 303 that revived the Decian persecution strategy and even went beyond it. The four edicts required all Christian churches to be destroyed, all copies of the Bible to be burned, all Christians to be barred from public office and civil rights, and all people to make a sacrifice to the Roman gods under penalty of death. Again, this was a plan to stamp Christianity out completely, with an even more determined element of violence in it. Frend put the number of martyrdoms in this period at three to five thousand (1965).

Although this was the worst persecution the early church faced in its first four centuries, it was ameliorated by the fact that in the northern part of the empire, where Constantius (the father of Constantine) was regent, these edicts were significantly ignored, as this dynasty was becoming favorably disposed to the Christian faith. The persecution ended in 311 when the ailing Galerius issued a proclamation. He claimed that the aim of the persecution had been to try to return Christians to the “institutions of the ancients,” but this rank paganism was exposed as outdated and backward. Citizens who were Christians could espouse their faith openly, those in jail were released, and all confiscated property was restored. From this reversal, it was only a short step for Constantine, the first Roman emperor who was a Christian, to issue the so-called Edict of Milan in 313, granting Christianity legal status for the first time.

## **6. Four shifts as a result of the persecutions**

We have noted that the twin empire-wide Roman persecutions did not appear to have a profoundly deleterious effect on Christian growth, but four massive shifts occurred that changed the contours of Christianity.

First, the greatest damage was the creation of permanent disunity. As Frend put it, “The ultimate legacy of the persecutions was the lasting division of Christendom into its eastern and western parts.” (1965) This largely had to do with the attitude taken toward the Emperor as Christianity became a tolerated and indeed promoted religion. In the East, the Emperor was “accepted as the earthly manifestation of that Divine Reason which guided, instructed, chastened but would finally save the human race.” (Frend 1965:569) This affirmation would result, quite frankly, in the church becoming far too close to the state and thus an instrument of persecuting those who disagreed with it. We can trace this pattern right up to present-day Russia, as the Russian Orthodox Church leverages its cozy relationship with Vladimir Putin to disadvantage Protestants of all hues. In the West, the relationship with the state was never so cozy, especially since Augustine’s great classic *City of God* took a quite negative view of its existence.

The second great result, as discussed above, was the penitential system introduced to deal with those who had backslidden or apostatized – which was the vast majority of Christians who survived the persecution (MacCulloch 2010:173). This system increased over time and became an ever more elaborate scheme of how to get back into the good graces of God, dominating the spirituality of Christianity for the next thousand years. This taper would ultimately flare up to produce the Reformation itself in protest against a penance system that had overreached, as Martin Luther decried the crass sale of so-called indulgences to speed the soul through purgatory.

The third result was not as negative: the birth of monasteries. The persecutions created an age of martyrs, who were venerated as the ideal saints. Afterwards, when it was not possible to die for Christ due to persecution, the next best way to emulate heroic faith was to become a monk. Frend captures the link:

In popular estimate the age of martyrs became the heroic age, venerated in legend, unrepeatable in fact. As Mennas, Pantaleon, George, Mercurious, and a host of other sufferers were relegated to the tapestries and liturgical homilies of the Coptic Church, their place was taken by the monks. The point is made very clearly in the seventh-century romance entitled *Barlaam and Joasaph*. “Monasticism,” we are told, “arose from men’s desire to become martyrs in will, that they might not miss the glory of them who were made perfect by blood.” The monk, like the martyr, was the “athlete” and “soldier of Christ.” Each fought the demons in his own way, the martyr as a witness to Christ, the ascetic in his struggle to maintain his spiritual ascent to Christ. (Frend 1965:547-548)

The desert became the new arena of battle, and literally thousands headed into the deserts of Syria and Egypt, many to perform staggering feats of self-abnegation. This focus on the individual hermit ascending to Christ would correct itself after Basil of

Caesarea challenged the monks to be more missional. As Scott Sunquist notes, “Under the guidance of Basil, monasticism began to be transformed from spiritual renewal and a school of personal holiness with limited missional concern to a missional community designed for holiness and service to the other.” (Sunquist 2013:32) It is hard to overstate the importance of this change. Indeed, Sunquist tells us that from the fourth to the fifteenth century, the monasteries continued the church’s mission, even though they were located at the margins of the church. Their influence became even more important as the church itself became distracted by wealth and power.

The final consequence of the Roman persecution is a long history of copycats. Today, persecutors still use the Decian option. They say to themselves, “Okay, how do we neutralize an underground church? We don’t know where they are. We can’t go in and just kill them all, it’s not possible.” Instead, they apply a variation of the tactic of creating apostates.

A recent example was provided by a house church pastor in Iran, now living in the West. A few years ago, he was arrested and taken to prison. He braced himself for torture, but he was not touched at all! In fact, the authorities kept him in a clean and comfortable cell. He wasn’t placed in with mentally ill people. He was given tea and good food and, perplexingly, left entirely alone. After three days they came to him and said, “Well, you’re free to go!”

The pastor hurried back to his church and told them, “They just let me go. They didn’t do anything.” They looked at him and said, “We don’t believe you! Why don’t you tell us the truth?” Some assumed he had been raped by police and was too ashamed to admit it. Others theorized that he had broken down under torture and divulged their names and addresses. Only a few believed him. He lost his ministry in the church, which divided into three groups because they couldn’t be sure whether their pastor was telling the truth or was in complete denial.

That is the Decian option at work: create apostates, not martyrs. It is alive and well in the church today. Sow a virus into the church so that it compromises its own unity and sets Christian against Christian.

When persecution is sustained over generations and comes to define a culture, it can destroy the church, remove it from an entire region, or at least damage it permanently. A fuller proof of this contention would require thorough examination of additional persecutions. I acknowledge that in the short term, persecution may well revive the church. But when the time element and the totality element are both present, persecution is likely to cripple or even kill the church.

Still, we are all subject to the law of undulation despite our best efforts, and we must be careful not to make a mystery into a formula. I will give the last word to the great historian cited earlier, Kenneth Scott Latourette, speaking here from a Christian faith perspective:

In this world the Church's complete triumph is never assured. In some areas grave reverses will be met. In all areas the Church will be confronted by foes. There is that in human nature which will always be antagonized by Jesus. Yet in human nature there is always that which responds to Him. Men everywhere and of every race are both repelled and attracted. Always there will be some who will seek to crucify Jesus. But always, where He is seen, He will win followers. In these followers He will be reincarnated, even though never perfectly. Here and there the crucifiers will kill off His followers. Somewhere, however, followers will survive. From these survivors Jesus will again be carried to the lands from which he has been driven. (Latourette 1945b:134)

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