

## Chapter 4

# Christianity Crumbles in the West

In spite of Bultmann and the rest resorting to endless blah blah, the twentieth century West has refused to buy the Christ of Faith. What we find flourishing over there, as we have seen, is the Jesus of Fiction. “Anyone who cares to look,” writes Koenraad Elst, “can see that Christianity [in the West] is in a steep decline. This is especially the case in Europe, where church attendance levels in many countries have fallen below 10% or even 5%. In most Christian countries, the trend is the same, even if less dramatic. Even more ominous for the survival of Christianity is the decline in the priestly vocation. Many parishes that used to have two or three parish priests now have none. So that Sunday Service has to be conducted by a visiting priest, who has an ever fuller agenda as his colleagues keep on dying, retiring or abandoning priesthood without being replaced. The average age of Catholic priests in the world is now 55. In the Netherlands it is even 62, and increasing. This is only partly due to the strenuous obligation of celibacy, for in Protestant Churches where priests do get married, and in those countries where Catholic priests ignore the celibacy rules, the decline in priestly vocation is also in evidence. The fact is that modern people just aren’t very interested anymore in practising Christianity.”<sup>1</sup>

“In an ironical reversal of roles,” reports Arthur J. Pais, “priests from India are going out to the West, not so much to spread the faith as priests from the West journeyed to the East to do, but to keep the Church’s institutions going.” He finds “5,000 foreign priests who come on a five-year contract negotiated between bishops in America and their respective countries”. Among them 500 are from India. “Another 250 [Indian] priests are either working for their master’s degree or a Ph.D. and work part-time in churches, hospitals, schools, prisons and rehabilitation centres, offering religious instructions and counselling. Several of them work as chaplains in the American armed forces.”

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<sup>1</sup> Koenraad Elst, *op cit.*, p. 1

Indian nuns too are now increasingly needed in America. “Most of the Indian nuns here belong to Mother Teresa’s convents, and they work in the slums in the Bronx and in Chicago... They are venturing into areas most Americans would rather ignore.” The author concludes, “Catholicism is still a potent force in developing countries like India while in the more consumerist West its missionary fervour has considerably dimmed. Though Indian priests and nuns may be co-opted to work in the poorer parishes of America, they seem to be doing their bit to keep the religion alive.”<sup>2</sup> I came across quite a few of these Indian priests and nuns during my travels in Europe and America in 1979 and 1989.

The situation in AD (*anno Domini*, year of the Lord) 1980 was summed up by the *World Christian Encyclopaedia* after a statistical survey. “Christianity,” it says, “has experienced *massive losses* in the Western and Communist world over the last 60 years. In Europe and North America, defections from Christianity — converts to other religions or irreligion — are now running at 1,820,500 former Christians a year. *This loss is much higher* if we consider only church numbers: 2,224,800 a year (6,000 a day). *It is even higher* if we are speaking only of church attenders: every year some 2,765,100 church attenders in Europe and North America cease to be practising Christians within the 12-month period, an average loss of 7,600 every day...*At the global level these losses from Christianity... outweigh the gains in the Third World.*”<sup>3</sup> A large number of churches all over Europe stand abandoned or uncared for. Many churches have been made into buildings for non-religious use. Many others have been sold to non-Christians who have converted them into their own places of worship.

Why has it happened? “The point simply is,” observes Koenraad Elst, “that we, European Christians of many generations, have outgrown Christianity. Most people who left the church have found that they are not missing anything, and that

<sup>2</sup> *The Sunday Observer*, New Delhi, January 16-22, 1994, p 12

<sup>3</sup> *World Christian Encyclopaedia – A Comparative Study of Churches and Religions in the World, AD 1900-2000*, edited by David B Barret, OUP, 1982, p 7. Emphasis added

beliefs which provided a framework for interpreting and shaping life, were but a bizarre and unnecessary construction after all. We know that Jesus was not God's Only-begotten Son, that he did not save humanity from eternal sin, and that our happiness in this world or the next does not depend on believing these or any other dogmas."<sup>4</sup> In fact, it is wrong to talk any more of a "Christian West", as most of us continue to do.

The fact that Christian missions are still in business in the Hindu-Buddhist world, should not lead to the inference that the controllers of the missions in the West care for saving of heathen souls. What it simply means is that powerful political interests in the West as also the Western intelligence networks find the missions handy for destabilizing the governments and disintegrating the social fabrics in the Hindu-Buddhist world. Yesterday it was the formidable military might of the West which was maintaining the crusaders for Christ. Today it is the fabulous wealth of the West which keeps the merchants of Jesus in business. The merchants have not only been able to retain the organisational weapons which they had forged in the heyday of Western imperialism, they have also kept on multiplying the weapons with the help of mammoth finance and media power which the West has placed at their disposal. Let no one make the mistake of seeing religious faith in the sprawling missions and seminaries and hierarchies in the East. Thorn trees have never been known to blossom with flowers.

### **The Scene in India**

It is, therefore, sadly surprising that the Jesus of the gospels should continue to retain his hallow in the land of the Veda-Vedanga, the Itihasa-Purana, the Dharmasastras, the Saddarsanas, the Tripitaka, the Jainagama, and the bhakti literature. Christianity is accepted as a religion not only by the westernised Hindu elite but also by Hindu saints, scholars, and political platforms. Swami Dayananda had seen through the fraud that is Jesus as soon as he read the gospels. But his example was not followed by Hindu leaders who came later. Chris-

<sup>4</sup> Koenraad Elst, *op. cit.*, pp. vii-viii.

tian missions have been criticised, but Jesus has been praised to the skies, particularly by Mahatma Gandhi. This strategy to measure the Christian missions with their own yardstick, has not worked. In fact, it has boomeranged as is evident from the freedom which Christian missions have increasingly acquired not only to aggress against but also to throw Hindu society on the defensive. They are waging a war on Hinduism with no holds barred.

“When staying in India,” says Koenraad Elst, “I find it sad and sometimes comical to see how these outdated beliefs are being foisted upon backward sections of the Indian population by fanatical missionaries. In their aggressive campaign to sell their product, the missionaries are helped a lot by sentimental expressions of admiration for Christianity on the part of leading Hindus. Many Hindus project their own religious categories on the few Jesus episodes they have heard, and they base their whole attitude to Christianity on what I know to be a selective, incoherent and unhistorical version of the available information on Jesus’s life and teaching...”<sup>5</sup>

Most Hindus know the story of Raja Nala who made it easy for Kaliyuga to enter into him and make him lose his kingdom by showing weakness for gambling. Weakness for Jesus is the same sort of vice. The moment a Hindu shows this weakness, he invites the Christian missionary apparatus and its controllers in the West — intelligence networks and foreign policy departments — to increase their stranglehold and subvert his country and culture. He also encourages mischievous Christian theologians to write the following type of books:

1. *The Unknown Christ of Hinduism* by Raimundo Panikkar, London, 1964.
2. *The Acknowledged Christ of the Indian Renaissance* by M.M. Thomas, Madras, 1976.
3. *India’s Search for the Unknown Christ* by K.V. Paul Pillai, New Delhi, 1978.
4. *The Lost Years of Christ* by Elizabeth Clare Prophet, Livingston, MT (USA), 1984.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., p. viii.

5. *Christ as Common Ground: A Study of Christianity and Hinduism* by Kathleen Healy with a Foreword by Bede Griffiths, Pittsburg, Pennsylvania (USA), 1990.

Of these, the first three are fraudulent, the fourth is based on a blatant forgery, and the fifth is a mass of meaningless verbiage. For those who seek sincerely, there is nothing unknown in Hinduism; it has never tried to hide what it stands for. In any case, it has never harboured, to use the language of the gospels, an unclean spirit like Jesus. No stalwart of the Indian Renaissance ever recognized Jesus as the Christ. Nor did Jesus, if he existed at all, ever come to India to denounce the Brahmanas, the Kshatriyas, and the caste system as is alleged in the forgery. And Healy is no more than a professional hack trying to encash the current Christian fashion for dialogue with Hinduism.

I can cite many more books and pamphlets written in the same vein and for the same purpose, namely, to prove that Hinduism remains unfulfilled without accepting Jesus Christ as its crown. The Jesus industry in India will continue to flood the market with similar spurious products till Hindus make it clear that there is nothing common between Sanatana Dharma and the sinister cult of the Only Saviour, that Hindus have nothing to learn from Christianity but a lot to teach, and that the sooner the Christians missions close their shop in this country the better for them and their masters abroad.

Koenraad Elst had tendered a very sound advice to us Hindus; “What Hindus who have been trapped in a sentimental glorification of Jesus and other prophets will have to learn, is that the essence of Hindu Dharma is not ‘tolerance’ or ‘equal respect for all religions’ but *satya*, truth. The problem with Christianity and Islam is superficially their intolerance and fanaticism. But this intolerance is a consequence of these religions’ untruthfulness. If your belief system is based on delusions, you have to pre-empt rational enquiry into it and shield it from contact with more sustainable thought systems. The fundamental problem with monotheistic religions is not that they are intolerant but that they are untrue (*Asatya or Anrita*).”<sup>6</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 134.

### **Jesus is Junk**

It is high time for Hindus to learn that Jesus Christ symbolises no spiritual power, or moral uprightness. He is no more than an artifice for legitimizing wanton imperialist aggression. The aggressors have found him to be highly profitable so far. By the same token, Hindus should know that Jesus means nothing but mischief for their country and culture. The West where he flourished for long, has discarded him as junk. There is no reason why Hindus should buy him. He is the type of junk that cannot be re-cycled. He can only poison the environment.