

## From the-Gospel.org

### A Christian's Response to the CNN Poll on Torture

Seeing a CNN poll that claimed that churchgoers are more likely to support torture than non-attendees are compels me to speak out.

#### CNN Poll and aftermath

WASHINGTON (CNN, April 30th 2009) — The more often Americans go to church, the more likely they are to support the torture of suspected terrorists, according to a new analysis.

More than half of people who attend services at least once a week — 54 percent — said the use of torture against suspected terrorists is “often” or “sometimes” justified. Only 42 percent of people who “seldom or never” go to services agreed, according to the analysis released Wednesday by the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life.

White evangelical Protestants were the religious group most likely to say torture is often or sometimes justified — more than 6 in 10 supported it. People unaffiliated with any religious organization were least likely to back it. Only 4 in 10 of them did.

The analysis is based on a Pew Research Center survey of 742 American adults conducted April 14-21. It did not include analysis of groups other than white evangelicals, white non-Hispanic Catholics, white mainline Protestants, and the religiously unaffiliated, because the sample size was too small.

While the pole was too small to have any real accuracy and the CNN bias may have played a role in these results, the fact remains that many Christians do support torturing suspected terrorists to extract information.

In 2009 you could [Google “Christians and torture”](#) and see the backlash. Here are two quotes off the net:

“Actually, if you believe the Bible is the literal word of God, it makes sense that you'd be for torture. Indeed, hell is the ultimate example of torture.”

AND

“When you add in the 17% who say that it is rarely justified, you get to a stunning 79% of evangelicals who would gladly put you on the rack and tear your limbs out.”

Of course, these statements are not true, yet it will make the job a lot harder for any brother or sister who tries to witness to this peer group. Jesus said the world would hate us for righteousness sake. However torturing people is not righteous.

*Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. - Matthew 5:10*

Not every Christian supports torture and many have spoken out against it. For example, the Rutherford Institute posted this article at their website:

WASHINGTON, DC -- The Rutherford Institute, along with other non-governmental organizations, has filed a friend of the court brief in the U.S. Supreme Court urging the Court to accept review of a case in which 17 Chinese Muslims, known as Uighurs, seek release from Guantanamo now that they have been recognized not to be enemy combatants.

[...]

"The courts, the United States military, and the former administration under President Bush have long recognized that these men are not 'enemy combatants,' and do not pose a threat to the United States," said John W. Whitehead, president of The Rutherford Institute. "When our government lacks a legal basis to detain people and there is no evidence that they pose a threat to the United States, they should be released promptly.

Unfortunately, the world tries to ignore exemplary Christian behavior and instead parading the examples of bad behavior to embarrass us. They would rather remind us of the Spanish Inquisition than reflect on the life of Mother Teresa.

Before we continue, we should define what it means to torture suspected terrorists to extract a confession.

### **The definition of torture**

tor·ture (tôrchr) n. *The American Heritage® Dictionary of the English Language*

1.
  - a. Infliction of severe physical pain as a means of punishment or coercion.
  - b. An instrument or a method for inflicting such pain.
2. Excruciating physical or mental pain; agony: the torture of waiting in suspense.
3. Something causing severe pain or anguish.

tr.v. tor·tured, tor·tur·ing, tor·tures

1. To subject (a person or an animal) to torture.
2. To bring great physical or mental pain upon (another). See Synonyms at afflict.
3. To twist or turn abnormally; distort: torture a rule to make it fit a case.

Torture *Collins Essential English Dictionary*

[-turing, -tured]

Verb

1. to cause (someone) extreme physical pain, esp. to extract information, etc.: suspects were regularly tortured and murdered by the secret police
2. to cause (someone) mental anguish

Noun

1. physical or mental anguish
2. the practice of torturing a person
3. something which causes great mental distress: she was going through the torture of a collapsing marriage [Latin torquere to twist]

In defending the treatment of suspected terrorists, some conservatives have made comments like the following:

"Some of these terrorists who are not recognized as soldiers don't deserve to be treated as soldiers." Jim Phillips of the Heritage Foundation (Wikipedia)

This is true if they are not soldiers they do not deserve to be treated as soldiers. It is also true that if they are human beings, we as Christians have a duty to treat them humanly.

Those who play down the pain, that the detainees being tortured suffer, are ignorant or dishonest. Terrorists are often willing to die for what they believe in. The pain would have to be excruciating in order for interrogators to get any kind of confession, or betrayal of their comrades, out of such men.

According to a contributor at Wikipedia, by 2008 there had been at least four suicides and hundreds of suicide attempts in Guantánamo that are in public knowledge. Probably many other suicides attempts remain classified information.

## **Different interrogation techniques**

Sleep deprivation, forced drugging and waterboarding. All of these tortures will leave permanent scars on the soul. Some accounts have detainees literally pulling out their own hair.

The attacking of the detainee's religious beliefs by defacing of their Koran, forbidding prayer and the services of prostitutes, has been reported to happen to detainees at Guantanamo bay.

*Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets. - Matthew 7:12*

Other reported abuses include:

Their tormentors chaining captives hand and foot in a fetal position to the floor for 18 hours or more, thereby forcing them to urinate and defecate on themselves.

Subjecting Detainees to extremes of temperatures, barefoot with the air conditioning had brought the temperature close to freezing or the air conditioning being turned off in an unventilated room, making the temperature over degrees 100F.

There are different opinions on how effective these torture techniques are in extracting confessions. When the individual cracks, he may tell you what he thinks you want to hear; he is not interested in telling the truth, he is only saying what he believes is necessary to end his suffering. A more effective way to gather information may be to release suspect (for which there is no proof of wrongdoing) and then track them. With a legal search warrant his phones could be tapped, his mail and email read. With a little follow-up, you may be able to gather more information and more reliable information than you do by torturing a suspect who is out of circulation with his coconspirators.

## **Bill of rights**

In 1776, our forefathers fought against King George because of the abuses of his government. In rebelling against George, they gave some reasons for separating from his country.

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.

That to secure these rights, Governments are instituted among Men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, That whenever any Form of Government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the Right of the People to alter or to abolish it, and to institute new Government, laying its foundation on such principles and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their Safety and Happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that Governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shewn, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same Object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute Despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such Government, and to provide new Guards for their future security. (Wikipedia)

In creating the United States of America our founding fathers gave us a Bill of Rights in order to prevent these same evils from reoccurring. Some of the behaviors condemned by our Bill of Rights include:

### **First Amendment**

*Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.*

Though I do not personally have any use for Islam, Muslims must have the same right to exercise their religion as Christians want to exercise theirs. When a person is detained, it is wrong to ridicule and attack their religious beliefs.

### **Fourth Amendment**

*The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no Warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by Oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.*

Many suspects have been arrested and held without probable cause. Instead, the suspects were turned over by bounty hunters who sold them for a reward.

### **Fifth Amendment**

*No person shall be held to answer for any capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a Grand Jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the Militia, when in actual service in time of War or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.*

Torturing a suspect to get a confession is in complete defiance of our American system of belief.

### **Sixth Amendment**

*In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the State and district where in the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the Assistance of Counsel for his defense.*

The following quote comes from a contributor at Wikipedia.

An Associated Press report claims that some detainees were turned over to the U.S. by Afghan tribesmen in return for cash bounties

Of those 435, 110 have been labeled as ready for release. Of the other 325, only about 70 will face trial by military commissions, criminal courts run by the US armed forces. That leaves about 250 who may be held indefinitely. (Wikipedia)

It is wrong to hold suspects for an indefinite time, without a trial, without an attorney, without having a process to obtain witnesses in his favor. We have forgotten what made this country great.

### **Eighth Amendment**

*Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.*

More than half the Bill of rights deals with, and condemns, the behavior of our government. In the early 1990s, federal prosecutors started using RICO, a law to fight racketeering, against proliferators. At that time, the liberal media ignored these abuses. Later RICO was used against environmental demonstrators; their silence came back to bite them. If we do not make the federal government obey the law because these suspects are our enemies, be assured this too will come back to bite us.

### **International law**

Not only have we ignored our own laws, we are also violating international treaties. The Bush administration claims that detainees are not entitled to any protection from the Geneva Conventions, rather George W Bush issued an executive order that said the US military could indefinitely detain any suspect who they believed was involved in any international terrorism.

We may escape the Nuremburg trials but someday we will stand before the judgment seat of God, that trial nobody will escape.

*And unto the angel of the church in Sardis write; These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars; I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead. - Revelation 3:1*

## **Jesus on torture**

Jesus said:

*But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; - Matthew 5:44*

Can we say to Jesus on Judgment day we loved our enemies and blessed them that cursed us? What if he asks us how we treated them who hated us, what will we say?

*And because iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold. But he that shall endure unto the end, the same shall be saved.*  
- Matthew 24:12-13

When Jesus talked about iniquity abounding, terrorism would have fit into his discussion. Now it is essential that we do not let the terrorists make us stop loving.

*But I say unto you which hear, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you, - Luke 6:27*

And again he says:

*But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest: for he is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil. - Luke 6:35*

If you hate terrorism, then the terrorists are your enemies. The command is to love them, not torture them.

*A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another. - John 13:34-35*

When the atheists are blogging all over the internet that Christians love to torture their enemies, you must shine through as a person who loves his enemies. By your love shall men know you are his disciple.

### **Do we trust in God?**

Many have argued that it was essential to torture these terrorist suspects in order to get information that may prevent future attacks. To the Christians St. John said:

*There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love.*

*We love him, because he first loved us.*

*If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar: for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? - 1 John 4:18-20*

If we really believe that God is in control, we do not have to fear. When we are not afraid, we can make rational decisions on how to please him. Not trying to preserve ourselves. If God be for us, our enemies cannot prevail. Will God protect us if we behave like all the despots in history before us?

*And I say unto you my friends, Be not afraid of them that kill the body, and after that have no more that they can do. But I will forewarn you whom ye*

*shall fear: Fear him, which after he hath killed hath power to cast into hell; yea, I say unto you, Fear him. Luke 12:4*

AND

*Are not five sparrows sold for two farthings, and not one of them is forgotten before God. But even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. Fear not therefore: ye are of more value than many sparrows. - Luke 12:6*

AND

*For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. - Luke 9:24*

Let us resolve to trust God that we may be obedient to him.

## **Why do some Christians support the torture of suspected terrorists?**

Many conservative Christians support torture simply as a reaction to the liberals who oppose it. Many Christians were supportive of George when he came into office. Since then they have tried to justify his interrogation techniques in order to continue and be supportive. In this way, most of the conservative talk show and radio personalities have indorsed or belittled torture. If all the conservatives are for it and all the liberals are against it, it has to be good, right?

### **We cannot serve two masters**

*No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. - Matthew 6:24*

Let us face the facts; there will be times when we have to choose between following men, even if they are conservative and following Jesus. Let us choose wisely.

## **Christian torture and the past**

Since the time of Christ even until today, Christians have suffered torture. It is time for us to learn our history. Nero burned Christians at the stake. From then until the present Christians have been tortured at the hands of our enemies. <sup>1</sup>In the late 1500s, William Tyndale was strangled and then burned at the stake for his translation of the Bible into English.

Interestingly William Tyndale suffered this abuse at the hands of the church. So who was on God's side Tyndale or the church? Christians endure torture for the sake of Jesus. A



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I can be reached for questions and comments at [jeff@th](mailto:jeff@th)

Christian does not torture others. This is how you can tell the difference thorough history. If they both professed Christianity, the one being tortured was the disciple of Jesus Christ, the one doing the torturing was not.

*They shall put you out of the synagogues: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service. And these things will they do unto you, because they have not known the Father, nor me. But these things have I told you, that when the time shall come, ye may remember that I told you of them. - John 16:2-4a*

## **USA torture and the past**

Interestingly this is not the first time the United States government has been involved in torturing people. The CIA hired Dr. Ewen Cameron to do secret experiments involving torture in the 1950s.

### **Dr. Cameron**

Cameron became the second President of the World Psychiatric Association, as well as president of the American and Canadian psychiatric associations. As such Cameron was one of the most revered and rewarded psychiatrists on the international scene. He was also a member of the Nuremberg medical tribunal a decade earlier, where he accused German medics of things he himself did between the years of 1934 to 1960 or later, though his scientific work during World War II for the OSS has never been a secret.

He used shock, drugs, sleep deprivation and some bizarre forms of conditioning, and what he called de-patterning treatment to eradicate memories and even identities of his patients, usually those of women, thought they were receiving treatment not realizing they were guinea pigs until it was too late.

Cameron subjected patients to twice-daily doses of six electroshocks, one after another, to maintain the individual in one prolonged stupor. Typically thirty to forty or more shocks were given in this blockbuster manner during his experiments on more than fifty patients in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

The result of this devastating treatment was a severe delirium; patients would lose their sense of identity and sometimes become delusional. Robbed of virtually all memory, the patients became completely focused on present sensations and feelings. With much or even all of their lifetime memory bank obliterated, six months would be taken to reprogram them with new memories of themselves and a more docile personality.

Around the time of [Leonard] Frank's disclosures about Cameron's treatments, Cameron's work suddenly became a major scandal [The History of Shock Treatment (1978), shock survivor Leonard Frank was one of Cameron's victims]. The outcry wasn't directed at the extreme treatments themselves, which were similar to numerous other regressive shock techniques, variations of which still

are practiced in the United States (see below). What made Cameron suddenly newsworthy was the disclosure in newspaper reports and books that he had been secretly financed in part by CIA funds. (Toxic Psychiatry, Peter R. Breggin, 1991)

There is [plenty of documentation](#) on the internet of different governments supporting the likes of Dr Cameron torturing their victims. What is unique about the present situation in Guantanamo Bay is that those who are professing Christianity appear to be the ones supporting it.

### **USA concentration camps**

Nor is Guantanamo Bay detention camp, the United States' first concentration camp. While we speak evil of the Nazi concentration camps (and we should), many people have forgotten that during World War II the United States had its own concentration camps. While Germans interned Jews, [we interned the Japanese](#) for the crime of being Japanese.

Americans justified their concentration camps in WWII for the same reason that we are justifying our detaining and torturing suspects today. Guantanamo Bay however will look even more shameful to historians because of the torture involved.

## **Christian torture and the future**

Daniel predicts that a world leader will come at the end of the age who will torture Christians. If he has Islamic ties, will the world, remembering our behavior, turn their heads the other way?

*And such as do wickedly against the covenant shall he corrupt by flatteries: but the people that do know their God shall be strong, and do exploits. And they that understand among the people shall instruct many: yet they shall fall by the sword, and by flame, by captivity, and by spoil, many days. Now when they shall fall, they shall be helped with a little help: but many shall cleave to them with flatteries. And some of them of understanding shall fall, to try them, and to purge, and to make them white, even to the time of the end: because it is yet for a time appointed. - Daniel 11:32-35*

Recently some at the Department of Homeland Security have declared that [right wing pro-lifers fit the terrorist profiles](#).. If those who believe in the sanctity of human life can be called terrorists, they can lose all their rights under the constitution. Our enemies will be able to torture us to find out who our friends are. Be sure that when they do, they will remind us that torture we also supported torturing people.

*At the age of 19, Murat Kurnaz vanished into America's shadow prison system in the war on terror. He was from Germany, traveling in Pakistan, and was picked up three months after 9/11. But there seemed to be ample evidence that Kurnaz was an innocent man with no connection to terrorism. The FBI thought so, U.S. intelligence thought so, and German*

*intelligence agreed. But once he was picked up, Kurnaz found himself in a prison system that required no evidence and answered to no one. (CBS)*

If this could happen to Murat Kurnaz, why couldn't it happen to any one of us? Some count on a [pretribulation rapture](#) to escape. From Jesus time to the present the pretribulation rapture has not delivered any of the faithful from great tribulation.

## **In closing - write your congressman**

If you supported the torture of these suspected terrorists in the past, ask God to forgive you. It is not too late to actively-renounce cruel and inhuman treatment of others who God made in his own image. Write letters to the editor; tell them you are a Christian and that you oppose torture.

[Write your Congressman](#), weather he is democrat or republican, tell him that you are a Christian and you oppose torture and all inhuman treatment of people, no matter if they are American citizens or not, no matter if they are war criminals or not.

Today you are reading this, later we will be eating, listening to our favorite Christian music, enjoying a pleasant evening with our families and finally tucking our children into bed.

Today there are Christians and others who are suffering agonizing torture at the hands of fellow human beings. These victims need our prayers and our outcry of condemnation against their tormentors for this behavior.

Written by Jeff Barnes

### **Resources:**

<http://www.naturalnews.com/019189.html> is a website that records unethical human medical experimentation in the United States.

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[1] Read Fox's Book of Martyrs for a history of the saints (Free Bible software. Including Fox's Book of Martyrs is available at <http://www.e-sword.net> ).

The Voice Of the Martyrs ( <http://www.persecution.com> ) has information on the persecution of the church throughout the world today.

