Differences in What Christians Teach on Rulers and Violence - Video

July 24, 2026

Recap of Intro to the Analytical Study of Early Church History
Pre-Nicene Christians had a consensus of at least 4 authors taught and none denied on over 1,237 teachings
All but 7 were taught by at least one writer between 325-431 A.D. too.
All Christian churches today, would agree on all of these except for about 44.
At least one church today would agree with every teaching except six.
See www.biblequery.org; under "Church History".
Details: www.biblequery.org/History/ChurchHistory/WhatEarlyChristiansTaughtOnDoctrine.html www.biblequery.org/History/ChurchHistory/WhatEarlyChristiansTaughtOnExperienceAndPractice.html.

Legend
White background – A consensus of 4 or more writers taught prior to 325 A.D. and none denied. There are over 1,237 teachings; a few are shown here.
Pale yellow – No consensus
Bright yellow – Nobody taught this before 325 A.D.

RULERS AND VIOLENCE
-Ru1. Must not be violent towards non-believers (1-0)
-Ru2. Destroy Jewish synagogues and forbid bad worship (0)
-Ru3. Pope/patriarch officially blessed invading army (0)
-Ru4. Destroy a town if the Pope commands it (0)
-Ru5. Kill Jewish people for being Jewish (0)
-Ru6. No taxes or obeying excommunicated rulers (0)
-Ru7. Catholic Crusades against others (0)
-Ru8. Torture and kill heretics of other non-believers (0) (Catholicism)
-Ru9. Catholic Inquisitions were good (0)
-Ru10. Pope party to killing another Roman Pope (0) (Catholicism)
-Ru11. Kill black cate that are evil (0)

-Ru1. Don't be violent towards non-believers (1-0)

God does not say this in His word, the Bible.

Letter to Diognetus (c.130-200 A.D.) ch.7 p.27 (implied) "and as seeking to persuade, not to compel us; for violence has no place in the character of God."

From the Council of Nicea I until the Council of Ephesus I (325-431 A.D.)

X Formicus Maternus (348 A.D.) was the first church writer to supported persecution. He said that God rewards those who persecute pagans. See below in *On the Error of Profane Religions*

Formicus Maternus (348 A.D.) "Happy you whom God has made partners in executing His purpose and His will. For your hands the benevolent Godhead of Christ has reserved the extermination of idolatry and the overthrow of pagan temples…. Rejoice in the destruction of paganism, exult all the more vehemently, exult confidently.." *On the Error of Profane Religions* ch.20.7 p.90

X Formicus Maternus (348 A.D.) "…and while in some regions the dying limbs of idolatry still palpitate, yet we have arrived at the stage where all lands may be purged and this pestilential evil drastically amputated." *On the Error of Profane Religions* ch.20.6 p.89

X Formicus Maternus (348 A.D.) "Since that day whoever has followed the teachings of this serpent, with the serpent must die." *On the Error of Profane Religions* ch.26.3 p.103

X Formicus Maternus (348 A.D.) "Take away, yes, calmly take away, Most Holy Emperors, the adornments of the temples. Let the fire of the mint or the blaze of the smelters melt them down, and confiscate all the votive offerings to your own use and ownership." *On the Error of Profane Religions* ch.28.6 p.110

X Formicus Maternus (348 A.D.) "But on you also, Most Holy Emperors, devolves the imperative necessity to castigate and punish this evil, and the law of the Supreme Deity enjoins on you that your severity should be visited in every way on the crime of idolatry. . Then he quotes Deuteronomy 13:6-10. *On the Error of Profane Religions* ch.29.1 p.115

X Formicus Maternus (348 A.D.) "He bids spare neither son nor brother, and thrusts the avenging sword through the body of a beloved wife. A friend too He persecutes with lofty severity, and the whole populace takes up arms to rend the bodies of sacrilegious men." *On the Error of Profane Religions* ch.29.2 p.115

X Formicus Maternus (348 A.D.) "Even for whose cities, if they are caught in this crime, destruction is decreed;" *On the Error of Profane Religions* ch.29.2 p.116

X Formicus Maternus (348 A.D.) "To you, Most Holy Emperors, the Supreme Deity promises the rewards of His mercy and decrees a multiplication on the greatest scale. Therefore do what He bids; fulfil what He commands." *On the Error of Profane Religions* ch.29.3 p.116

Athanasius of Alexandria (358 A.D.) "It is the true part of godliness not to compel but to persuade." *History of the Arians* ch.67 p.295

Athanasius of Alexandria (357-373 A.D.) (implied) "For if it be a bad thing to flee, it is much worse to persecute; for the one party hides himself to escape death, the other persecutes with a desire to kill;" *In Defense of His Flight* (357-373 A.D.) ch.8 p.257.

X Hypatia's death by a Christian mob in Alexandria (415 A.D.) *Socrates' Ecclesiastical History* book 7 ch.15 p.160

John Chrysostom (died 407 A.D.) (partial, Christians should not be violent towards non-believers.) "For Christians above all men are not permitted forcibly to correct the failings of those who sin. Secular judges indeed, when they have captured malefactors under the law, show their authority to be great, and prevent them even against their will from following their own devices: but in our case

the wrong-doer must be made better, not by force, but by persuasion." *Treatise on the Priesthood* ch.3 p.41

X (partial) John Chrysostom (died 407 A.D.) "And should you hear any one in the public thoroughfare, or in the midst of the forum, blaspheming God; go up to him and rebuke him; and should it be necessary to inflict blows, spare not to do so. Smite him on the face; strike his mouth; sanctify your hand with the blow, and if any should accuse you, and drag you to the place of justice, follow them there; and when the judge on the bench calls you to account, say boldly that the man blasphemed the King of angels! For if it be necessary to punish those who blaspheme an earthly king, much more so those who insult God." *On the Statues* book 1 ch.32 p.343

Augustine of Hippo (417 A.D.) wrote to Boniface, a Roman military official in Africa. "How then are kings to serve the Lord with fear, except by preventing and chastising with religious severity all those acts which are done in opposition to the commandments of the Lord? For a man serves God in one way in that he is man, in another way in that he is also king. In that he is man, he serves Him by living faithfully; but in that he is also king, he serves Him by enforcing with suitable rigor such laws as ordain what is righteous, and punish what is the reverse." *Letters of Augustine* Letter 185 ch.5 (Correction of the Donatists)

Augustine of Hippo (417 A.D.) "It is indeed better (as no one ever could deny) that men should be led to worship God by teaching, than that they should be driven to it by fear of punishment or pain; but it does not follow that because the former course produces the better men, therefore those who do not yield to it should be neglected. For many have found advantage (as we have proved, and are daily proving by actual experiment), in being first compelled by fear or pain, so that they might afterwards be influenced by teaching, or might follow out in act what they had already learned in word." *Letters of Augustine* Letter 185 ch.6. See https://wirelesshogan.blogspot.com/2017/07/where-augustine-goes-off-rails.html for more info of Augustine.

On the other hand, Augustine never advocated for the Church or any Catholic inquisition to torture or kill people, only the state.

<u>After the Council of Ephesus I (325-431 A.D.)</u>

Thomas Aquinas (1265-1274 A.D.) "I answer that, With regard to heretics two points must be observed: one, on their own side; the other, on the side of the Church. On their own side there is the sin, whereby they deserve not only to be separated from the Church by excommunication, but also to be severed from the world by death. For it is a much graver matter to corrupt the faith which quickens the soul, than to forge money, which supports temporal life. Wherefore if forgers of money and other evil-doers are forthwith condemned to death by the secular authority, much more reason is there for heretics, as soon as they are convicted of heresy, to be not only excommunicated but even put to death. On the part of the Church, however, there is mercy which looks to the conversion of the wanderer, wherefore she condemns not at once, but "after the first and second admonition," as the Apostle directs: after that, if he is yet stubborn, the Church no longer hoping for his conversion, looks to the salvation of others, by excommunicating him and separating him from the Church, and furthermore delivers him to the secular tribunal to be exterminated thereby from the world by death. For Jerome commenting on Galatians 5:9, "A little leaven," says: "Cut off the decayed flesh, expel the mangy sheep from the fold, lest the whole house, the whole paste, the whole body, the whole flock, burn, perish, rot, die. Arius was but one spark in Alexandria, but as that spark was not at once put out, the whole earth was laid waste by its flame." *Summa Theologica* question 11 on Heresy Article 3. Quote from https://www.newadvent.org/summa/3011.htm#article3

X Pope Nicolas V (June 18, 1452) "invade, search out, capture, vanquish, and subdue all Saracens and pagans whatsoever, and other enemies of Christ wheresoever placed, and the kingdoms, dukedoms, principalities, dominions, possessions, and all movable and immovable goods whatsoever held and

possessed by them and to reduce their persons to perpetual slavery, and to apply and appropriate to himself and his successors the kingdoms, dukedoms, counties, principalities, dominions, possessions, and goods, and to convert them to his and their use and profit." Papal Bull ***Dum Diversas***, a papal bull issued to King Alfonso IV of Portugal authorizing conquering pagans.. This has bene called "the Doctrine of Discovery"

The Papal bull Dum Diversas was formally repudiated by the Catholic Church in the 1530's according to NPR.

Today

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (1994) says that faith must be free. Christ never coerced anyone and and should not convert by force. Part 1 section 3 160 p.44

An Evangelical Declaration Against Torture was published May 1, 2007 by the National Association of Evangelicals.

-Ru2. Destroy synagogues and forbid bad worship (0)

God does not say this in His word, the Bible.

No writers prior to Nicea I (325 A.D.).

From the Council of Nicea I until the Council of Ephesus I (325-431 A.D.)

The **Emperor Constantine** (326 A.D.) closed all pagan temples. Some were re-purposed as churches. The Emperor Constantine (326 A.D.) confiscated all heretics houses of prayer and turned them over to the Catholic Church. Eusebius of Caesarea's *Life of Constantine* book 3 ch.65-66 p.539-540.

Ambrose of Milan (370-390 A.D.) (Implied) After a bishop burned down a Jewish synagogue, the Emperor Theodosius ordered it to be rebuilt at the bishop's own expense. Ambrose writes the emperor a letter cautioning him against both Theodosius and the bishop sinning against God by doing so. He mentions that the Jews burned down many church basilicas in Gaza, Ascalon [Ashkelon], Berytus, and other places in the time of the Emperor Julian [the Apostate]. He also mentions the bishop that had a Valentinian temple burned down. *Selections from the Letters of Ambrose* Letter 40 *NPNF2* vol.10 p.440-444

Bishop Abdas (c.420 A.D.) burned down a Zoroastrian Temple in Persia, touching off a great Christian persecution in Persia.

Paul IV (1555-1559) Made Jews in Rome wear distinctive clothing and live in a ghetto. Set up the Roman inquisition.

(partial, one synagogue per area) This papal bull was issued July 12, 1555

1. . . . in all future times in this city [Rome], as in all other cities, holdings, and territories belonging to the Roman Church, all Jews are to live solely in one and the same location, or if that is not possible, in two or three or as many as are necessary, which are to be contiguous and separated completely from the dwellings of Christians. . . . And they are to have only one entry, and so too one exit.

2. . . . [the Jews] may have only one synagogue in its customary location, and they may construct no new synagogue. Nor may they possess any real property. Accordingly, they must demolish and destroy all their [other] synagogues except for this one alone. The real property which they now possess, they must sell to Christians within a period of time. . . .

3. And so that they be identified everywhere as Jews, men and women are respectively required and bound to wear in full view a hat or some obvious marking, both to be blue in color, in such a way that they may not be concealed or hidden. . . .
5. Nor may they themselves or anyone in their employ labor in public on Sundays or other feast days declared by the Church. . . .
7. Nor may they be so presumptuous as to entertain or dine with Christians or to develop close relations and friendships with them.
9. Additionally, these Jews may carry on no business as purveyors of grain, barley, or other items necessary for human sustenance, but must be limited [in this sphere] to dealing only in second-hand clothing.
From Manfred R. Lehmann's website (http://www.manfredlehmann.com/news/news_detail.cgi/23/0)

Martin Luther (1543) wrote *On the Jews and Their Lies*. In it, among other things, Luther advocated burning down Jewish synagogues.

-Ru3. Pope/patriarch officially blessed invading army (0)

God does not say this in His word, the Bible.

No writers prior to Nicea I (325 A.D.).

The Pope blessed Mussolini's troops.
The Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church baptized (by sprinkling) the tanks used to invade Ukraine.

-Ru4. Destroy a town if the Pope commands it (0)

God does not say this in His word, the Bible.

No writers prior to Nicea I (325 A.D.).

Pope Boniface VIII (1297-1298) ordered the sack of the Italian town of Palestrina, a home of the Colonnae family in 1297-1298.
Sixtus IV (1471-1484) had the Venetians attack the city of Ferrara, for a nephew.
Urban XIII (1623-1644) was the last pope to expand the papal states through military action.

-Ru5. Kill Jewish people for being Jewish (0)

God does not say this in His word, the Bible.

No writers prior to Nicea I (325 A.D.).

While Roman Catholics, Greek Orthodox, and Lutherans had discriminatory laws against Jews, none of them said to kill Jews, with two notable exceptions.
The Spanish Inquisition (1478-1834) tortured and killed Jews, Muslims, Protestants, and even many Catholics.
Martin Luther (1543) was rather tolerant towards Jews until August, 1536. In 1543 he wrote *On the Jews and Their Lies*. In the last chapter he writes "we are at fault for not slaying them." Perhaps this

was hyperbole, as Luther never had any Jews killed. However, four centuries later Nazis displayed Luther's work at the Nuremberg rallies. Many Lutheran churches today have said that they can't just ignore Luther's words here, they have to acknowledge that Luther was very wrong here.

-Ru6. No taxes or obeying excommunicated rulers (0)

X Matthew 12:17; Luke 20:25 Give unto Caesar what is Caesar's and to God what is God's.
X God does not say this in His word, the Bible. In fact, in opposition to this, Romans 13:1-7 says, "Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which is from God. The authorities that exist have been appointed by God. Consequently, whoever resists authority is opposing what God has set in place, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Do you want to be unafraid of the one in authority? Then do what is right, and you will have his approval. For he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not carry the sword in vain. He is God's servant, an agent of retribution to the wrongdoer. Therefore it is necessary to submit to authority, not only to avoid punishment, but also as a matter of conscience. This is also why you pay taxes. For the authorities are God's servants, who devote themselves to their work. Pay everyone what you owe him: taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due." The authorities were evil rulers, and pagans, yet it was understood they were to pay taxes to them anyway.

No writers prior to Nicea I (325 A.D.).

The **Roman Catholic Church** "relieved a king's subjects from obeying him" if he was excommunicated.
Dominion Theology, started by Ralph FitzRalph, said all authority comes from God, and thus there is no need to obey or pay taxes to rulers who reject God's authority.
John Wycliffe believed in Dominion Theology

-Ru7. Catholic Crusades against others (0)

God does not say this in His word, the Bible.

No writers prior to Nicea I (325 A.D.).

Roman Catholic crusade against the Waldenses starting in 1100 A.D..
1487-1545 Pope Innocent VIII orders a crusade to exterminate the Waldenses.

While Roman Catholic Crusaders sacked Constantinople, it was against the Pope's wishes and the pope excommunicated those who participated.

-Ru8. Torture and kill heretics or other non-believers (0) (Roman Catholicism)

God does not say this in His word, the Bible.

X Tertullian (200-220 A.D.) thought that Christians should not be soldiers. "Shall it be held lawful to make an occupation of the sword, when the Lord proclaims that he who uses the sword shall perish by the sword? And shall the son of peace take part in the battle when it does not become him even

to sue at law? And shall he apply the chain, and the prison, and the torture, and the punishment, who is not the avenger even of his own wrongs?" *The Chaplet* ch.11 p.99

X Tertullian (200-220) in answering whether a Christian can take a position as an administrator in a secular government says, "neither sitting in judgment on any one's life or character, for you might bear with his judging about *money*; neither condemning nor fore-condemning; binding no one, imprisoning or torturing no one-if it is credible that all this is possible." *On Idolatry* ch.17

From the Council of Nicea I until the Council of Ephesus I (325-431 A.D.)

X Ambrose of Milan (370-390 A.D.) was against the beheading of the heretic Priscillian in 385 A.D.

John Chrysostom (died 407 A.D.) (partial) "And should you hear any one in the public thoroughfare, or in the midst of the forum, blaspheming God; go up to him and rebuke him; and should it be necessary to inflict blows, spare not to do so. Smite him on the face; strike his mouth; sanctify your hand with the blow, and if any should accuse you, and drag you to the place of justice, follow them there; and when the judge on the bench calls you to account, say boldly that the man blasphemed the King of angels! For if it be necessary to punish those who blaspheme an earthly king, much more so those who insult God." *On the Statues* book 1 ch.32 p.343

X Augustine of Hippo (409 A.D.) did not want the government to torture people to find out who burned a Christian church. "While the smoke was ascending from the ruins of our church consumed by fire, were we likely to joke on the subject? Although, indeed, none in your city appeared in my opinion innocent, but those who were absent, or were sufferers, or were destitute both of strength and of authority to prevent the tumult, I nevertheless distinguished in my reply those whose guilt was greater from those who were less to blame, and stated that there was a difference between the cases of those who were moved by fear of offending powerful enemies of the Church. and of those who desired these outrages to be committed; also between those who committed them and those who instigated others to their commission; resolving, however, not to institute inquiry in regard to the instigators, because these, perhaps, could not be ascertained without recourse to the use of tortures, from which we shrink with abhorrence, as utterly inconsistent with our aims." *Letters of Augustine* letter 103 ch.17 p.433

Augustine of Hippo (413-426 A.D.) (partial) early in his career justifies torture by the state (not the church) by human judges because of imperfect knowledge. He says it was lamentable (but unavoidable) that due to the lack of knowledge of a human judge he has to torture an innocent person to get the truth of something. *City of God* book 19 ch.6 p.404

Augustine of Hippo (417 A.D.) While Augustine was against Priscillian's execution by beheading in 385 A.D., Augustine later justified (non-fatal) torture against Donatists. Augustine wrote to Boniface, a Roman military official in Africa. "How then are kings to serve the Lord with fear, except by preventing and chastising with religious severity all those acts which are done in opposition to the commandments of the Lord? For a man serves God in one way in that he is man, in another way in that he is also king. In that he is man, he serves Him by living faithfully; but in that he is also king, he serves Him by enforcing with suitable rigor such laws as ordain what is righteous, and punish what is the reverse." *Letters of Augustine* Letter 185 ch.5 (Correction of the Donatists)

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https://wirelesshogan.blogspot.com/2017/07/where-augustine-goes-off-rails.html for more info of Augustine.

Augustine of Hippo (380-420 A.D.) in preaching on Luke 14:16-23 says that the view of "Let us come in [to the church], they say, or our own good will. This is not the Lord's word, 'Compel them,' saith he, 'to come in.' Let compulsion be found outside, the will will arise within."

Augustine of Hippo (408 A.D.) speaks that Donatist heretics should be compelled. (He did not specify whether the church or the state should do the compelling.) Letter 93 chapter 19 p.389, chapter 26 p.391-392. See also Letter 173 (416 A.D.) ch.10 p.546-547 and Letter 208 (423 A.D.)

On the other hand, Augustine never advocated for the Church or any Catholic inquisition to torture or kill people, only the state should torture.

Nevertheless, Augustine's writings were heavily quoted in the Middle Ages and Reformation to justify both torture and execution of heretics. See Punishment and Reconciliation: Augustine by Peter Iver Kaufman (https://scholarship.richmond.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1259&context=jepson-faculty-publications) for more info.

From the Start of Muslim Conquests to the Fourth Lateran Council (634-1215 A.D.)

1100-1208 **Roman Catholics** exterminated the Albigenses/Cathars (similar to Manichees)

From the Fourth Lateran Council on (1215 A.D.)

Emperor Frederick II (1224) orders that heretics were to be killed or have their tongues cut out. In 1230 he decrees death by fire.

Leo X (1513-21) said burning heretics was a divine appointment.

1487-1545 **Pope Innocent VIII** orders a crusade to exterminate the Waldenses.

Pope Eugenius III "We utterly forbid that for any reason whatsoever a truce should be made with these tribes, either for the sake of money, or for the sake of tribute, until such time as, by God's help, they shall be either converted or wiped out." (quoted in Phillips, 89)". https://www.ancient.eu/Northern_Crusades/

Gregory IX (1127-1241) *Excommunicamus et anathametisamus* says to burn heretics.

Gregory IX (1227-1241) crusade against the Holy Roman Empire. Started the Inquisition in Languedoc, France. Endorsed the Crusades in northeastern Europe. In 1239 ordered raiding all synagogues to confiscate all Jewish Talmuds.

The Roman Catholic church (Oct. 1, 1567) executed Florentine Roman cleric Pietro Carnesecchi for Protestant-leaning beliefs.

Pius IX (1846-78) decreed papal infallibility, condemned all Bible societies, and proclaimed the right to suppress heresy by force.

See also *Torture and Corporal Punishment as a Problem in Catholic Theology* http://www.rtforum.org/lt/lt119.html

-Ru9. Catholic inquisitions were good (0)

God does not say this in His word, the Bible.

No writers prior to Nicea I (325 A.D.).

Dictatus Papae (probably 1075 A.D.), Pope Gregory VII said, "The Roman Church was founded by God alone; the Roman pope alone can with right be called universal; he alone may use the imperial insignia; his feet only shall be kissed by all princes; he alone may depose the emperors; he himself

may be judged by no one; the Roman Church has never erred, nor will it err in all eternity." (*Austin's Topical History of Christianity* p.165.) With that over-confident attitude, here is what they did with the Inquisition.

Pope Lucius III in 1184 first started the inquisition though in a regular disorganized way.

The inquisition was made more standardized under **Pope Gregory IX** sometime between 1227 and 1233. "Gregory IX included in his register in 1224 constitution of Frederick II, which permitted the burning at the stake of heretics." *The Inquisition : Hammer of Heresy* p.33

Pope Gregory IX issued the Papal bull ***Ille humani generis*** *The Inquisition : Hammer of Heresy* p.35-36: (Oct. 11, 1231) "When you arrive in a town, you will summon the prelates, clergy and people, and you will preach a solemn sermon: then you will assume several discreet persons as assistants and begin your enquiry into beliefs of heretics and suspects with diligent care (they will already have been denounced). Those who, after examination, are recognized as guilty or suspected of heresy must promise to obey the orders of the Church absolutely; if they do not, you should proceed against them, following the statutes that we have recently promulgated against the heretics."

The inquisition stated under Pope Gregory IX sometime between 1227 and 1233. "Gregory IX included in his register in 1224 constitution of Frederick II, which permitted the burning at the stake of heretics." *The Inquisition : Hammer of Heresy* p.33

1229 Council of Toulouse. Hunt heretics. Non-clergy forbidden to read any non-Latin Bible, except a psalter or breviary

In February 1231, Pope Gregory IX issued the constitution **Excommunicamus** against both heretics and even those who merely do not denounce the heretics they might know to the authorities. It included life imprisonment for unrepentant heretics, the right to appeal was denied, and their homes were destroyed.

May 13, 1239, 183 Cathar heretics were burned at the stake. Alberic des Trois-Fontaines described it as "a holocaust, very great and pleasing to God."(p.37)

Pope Innocent IV May 28, 1252, Bull ***Cum Adversus Haereticam*** authorized torture to obtain confessions, death penalty at the stake and a police force for the Office of Faith (i.e. the Inquisition)

"As the Holy Roman Emperor Frederick has pass certain laws against the heretical evil, by which laws the spread of this plague might be hindered, and as we desire that these laws be observed for the strengthening of the faith and the salvation of the faithful, so we order the beloved sons who are in authority to incorporate these laws, whose exact wording is attached, into their statues, and to proceed against the heretics with great zeal. Therefore we order you [the inquisitors], when these authorities fulfill our orders carelessly, to force them to compliance by means of excommunication and interdiction ... We utterly curse those who have fallen from the Catholic faith, we pursue them with punishment, we rob them of their fortunes, deny them succession and revoke any and all their rights."

Innocent IV May 15, 1252 in his bull *Ad extirpanda*, called for the use of torture and its canonical regulation in the fight against "heretics" in northern Italy. This policy expanded to include all of Italy in 1256 and was confirmed in the following years by Popes Alexander IV and Clemens IV. In 1261 Urban IV allowed inquisitors, under whose direction delinquents expired from this rather more robust manner of opinion research, to mutually absolve one another. It was after all not permitted to torture to death a person being questioned. In such a case the inquisitor would face excommunication, from which he could be immediately freed, however, by a priest of the Inquisition uttering the formula: Ego te absolvo.

Pope Alexander IV (1256) gave inquisitors the right to mutually absolve one another and grant dispensation to each other for torture. (p.62)

Pope Innocent VIII Dec. 5, 1484 ***Summus desideramaus affectibus***: "[m]any persons of both sexes, unmindful of their own salvation and straying from the Catholic Faith, have abandoned themselves to devils, incubi and succubi, and by their incantations, spells, conjurations, and other accursed

charms and crafts, enormities and horrid offences, have slain infants yet in the mother's womb, as also the offspring of cattle, have blasted the produce of the earth, the grapes of the vine, the fruits of the trees, nay, men and women, beasts of burthen, herd-beasts, as well as animals of other kinds, vineyards, orchards, meadows, pasture-land, corn, wheat, and all other cereals; these wretches furthermore afflict and torment men and women, beasts of burthen, herd-beasts, as well as animals of other kinds, with terrible and piteous pains and sore diseases, both internal and external; they hinder men from performing the sexual act and women from conceiving, ...they blasphemously renounce that Faith which is theirs by the Sacrament of Baptism, and at the instigation of the Enemy of Mankind they do not shrink from committing and perpetrating the foulest abominations and filthiest excesses to the deadly peril of their own souls, (...) the abominations and enormities in question remain unpunished not without open danger to the souls of many and peril of eternal damnation."

(https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Summis_desiderantes_affectibus)

Pope Innocent VIII Dec. 5, 1484 ***Summis desiderantes affectibus*** Bullarium Romanum (Taurinensis editio): "We therefore, desiring, as is our duty, to remove all impediments by which in any way the said inquisitors are hindered in the exercise of their office, and to prevent the taint of heretical pravity and of other like evils from spreading their infection to the ruin of others who are innocent, the zeal of religion especially impelling us, in order that the provinces, cities, dioceses, territories, and places aforesaid in the said parts of upper Germany may not be deprived of the office of inquisition which is their due, do hereby decree, by virtue of our apostolic authority, that it shall be permitted to the said inquisitors in these regions to exercise their office of inquisition and to proceed to the correction, imprisonment, and punishment of the aforesaid persons for their said offences and crimes, in all respects and altogether precisely as if the provinces, cities, territories, places, persons, and offences aforesaid were expressly named in the said letter. " Source: https://en.wikisource.org/wiki/Summis_desiderantes

Pope Sixtus IV (1478) started the Spanish Inquisition with the papal bull *Exigit sinceras devotionis affectus* at the request of Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain to root out Jews who had only pretended to convert to Christianity. Sixtus IV was apparently reluctant to issue the bull, but Ferdinand threatened to withdraw support of his crusade against the Turks if he did not. As an aside the Sisten Chapel was built under Pope Sixtus IV, and Christopher Columbus sailed under Ferdinand and Isabella.

The Spanish Inquisition (1478-1834) tortured and killed Jews, Muslims, Protestants, & even many Catholics

Leo X (1513-1521) granted indulgences to donors to rebuild St. Peter's Basilica. Excommunicated Martin Luther. Expanded the Spanish Inquisition into Portugal

Pope Paul III (July 21, 1542) refounded the Roman Inquisition with papal bull ***Licet ab init***.

Paul IV (1555-1559) Made Jews in Rome wear distinctive clothing and live in a ghetto. Set up the Roman inquisition.

"Where there are many women there are many witches" ***Malleus Maleficarum*** (Hammer of Witches) is a long and very ugly witch-hunting handbook first published in 1486, AND USED FOR CENTURIES. It was an extremely popular book, and only became less influential in the eighteenth century. You can see the text in English here: https://dn710003.ca.archive.org/0/items/Witcha/The%20Hammer%20of%20Witches.pdf. It was NOT issued by a pope or church council, but it was very common in use in Europe for hunting witches. Popes and church councils said NOTHING against its use. It was issued right after the papal bull by Pope Innocent VIII is 1484: *summis desiderantes.*

X ***An Evangelical Declaration Against Torture*** was published May 1, 2007 by the National Association of Evangelicals.

Luke 14:23 Augustine said some to Christ guided by love, but others corrected by fear. He said this in the context of persecuting Donatists.

-Ru10. Pope party to killing another Pope (0)

God does not say this in His word, the Bible.

No writers prior to Nicea I (325 A.D.).

Pope Formosus's (891-896) (partial) body was exhumed, and he put on trial at the Cadaver's Synod (*Synodus Horrenda*) in 898 A.D. and convicted as a heretic by Pope Stephen VI (VII) (896-897). Four fingers of Pope Formosus' hand were cut off.
However, people were angered that in 897 Pope Stephen VII was deposed and imprisoned, and then strangled to death, and when Stephen's former supporters elected a new pope, Cardinal Sergius, Sergius was chased out of Rome, and Romanus became pope instead. In the next twelve months there were four other popes. After this Cardinal Sergius returned with an army, Pope Leo V was killed (in 903), and Sergius became Pope Sergius III (904-911). (WRB p.102)
Pope Sergius III (904-911) murdered Pope Leo V and Cardinal Christopher. Marozia was his mistress. He allegedly fathers Pope John XI. Sergius III had the corpse of Pope Formosus exhumed again, and he cut off his head as well as three more fingers.

-Ru11. Kill black cats that are evil (0)

No writers prior to Nicea I (325 A.D.).

First some background on Pope Gregory IX.
Gregory IX (1127-1241) wrote *Excommunicamus et anathametisamus* says to burn heretics.
Gregory IX (1227-1241) launched a crusade against the Holy Roman Empire. Started the Inquisition in Languedoc, France. Endorsed the Crusades in northeastern Europe. In 1239 ordered raiding all synagogues to confiscate all Jewish Talmuds.

Pope Gregory IX, the pope who really organized the inquisition, in June 1233 wrote the papal bull *Vox in Rama*.
A copy is Basel - Universitätsbibliothek Basel Cod. B X 14, fol. Xv-XIIIv. It was first published in 1748 by Philippe Labbé in his *Sanctorum conciliorum et decretorum collection nova*. The text of the bull can also be found, along with other such documents from the time can also be in Joannes Dominicus Mansi, *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima Collectio* novissima edition, Tomus vicesimus quintus (Venetiis 1782) pp. 324-25
https://www.quora.com/Is-the-Vox-in-Rama-authentic-What-effects-did-it-have#:~:text=Upvote

The historical context is that some German people, under torture said there were occult practices of witches involving an idol and black cats. So Pope Gregory IX issued a papal bull in 1233, Fox in Rama, forbidding secular rulers for hindering inquisitors from doing their work of hunting and torturing heretics. The black cats involved in this should be killed. But this was interpreted as "open season" on all cats. There were later festivals in Europe where people gather to watch cats be burned to

death. The popes and church councils did not explicitly say to kill all cats. However, they never said anything against this either.

Pre-Nicene Differences on Rulers and Violence Grid – May 2026

		Legend for Cells
-Ru1. Don't be violent towards non-believers (1-0)	-Ru7. Catholic Crusades against others	**W** = wrote explicitly on this
-Ru2. Destroy synagogues and forbid bad worship	-Ru8. Torture and kill heretics or other non-believers	I = Implied
-Ru3. Pope/patriarch officially blessed invading army	-Ru9. Catholic inquisitions were good	m = Mixed or Inconsistent
-Ru4. Destroy a town I the Pope commands it	-Ru10. Pope party to killing another pope	P = partial
-Ru5. Kill Jewish people for being Jewish	-Ru11. Kill black cats that are evil	- = no reference found
-Ru6. No taxes or obeying excommunicated rulers		**X** = Disagree

Rows: white=Christian writer, orange=schism, pink=strange writer

Christian writer	Pages	Date A.D.	Ru 1	Ru 2	Ru 3	Ru 4	Ru 5	Ru 6	Ru 7	Ru 8	Ru 9	Ru 10	Ru 11	
Clement of Rome (wrote *1 Clement*)	**16.25**	96/98	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Papias of Hierapolis, disciple of John	**2**	95-110	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
"Presbyters" (Papias?)	**0.5**	-95-117	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Ignatius disciple of John (shortest version)	**13**	c.100-117	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Didache (=*Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*)	**4.75**	c.60-120	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Apology of Aristides (Greek version)	**4**	125-161	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Quadratus of Athens fragment (apologist)	**.125**	126	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Epistle of Barnabas	**12.5**	c.70-130	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2 Clement (anonymous writer)	**5.75**	120-140	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Polycarp *to the Philippians*	**3.5**	100-155	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Mathetes to Diognetus – teaching a disciple	**5.25**	c.130-200	**W**	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Apostolic fathers totals: all symbols except P	**67.5**	-155	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Shepherd of Hermas (= *Hermas*, = *The Pastor*)	**46.5**	c.115-155	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Justin Martyr, philosopher, apologist	**116.5**	c.138-165	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Evarestus *Martyrdom of Polycarp*	**5**	c.169	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Tatian's *Diatessaron*	**86**	c.172	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Christians of Vienna and Lugdunum (Lyons)	**6.5**	177	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Athenagoras (apologist)	**33.5**	177	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Melito/Meleto of Sardis (Quartodecimian)	**11**	170-177	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Hegesippus (chronicler)	**2.5**	170-180	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Theophilus of Antioch (*to Autolycus*)	**32**	168-181/188	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Irenaeus of Lyons, disciple of Polycarp	**284.75**	182-188	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Passion of the Scillitan Martyrs -died 180 A.D.	**0.75**	180-202	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Caius and the Muratorian Canon (Latin)	**3**	190-217	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Passion of Perpetua and Felicitas	**7**	c.201/205	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Serapion of Antioch -against Marcion, Montanists	**1.333**	191/200-210	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
The Octavius of Minucius Felix	**25**	210 A.D.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Clement of Alexandria	**389**	193-202	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Tertullian	**891**	198-220	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	

Hippolytus, pupil of Irenaeus (undisputed)	**218**	222-235/236	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Theodotus the probable Montanist	**7.75**	ca.240	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Instructions of Commodianus	**16**	ca.240	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Julius Africanus (undisputed writings)	**9**	232-245	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Martyrdom of the Holy Martyrs	**1.5**	< 250	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Origen (heterodox teacher)	**1005.15**	225-253/254	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Novatian (his schism lasted over 200 years)	**38.5**	250/254-257	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Treatise Against Novatian	**6.5**	254-256	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Treatise on Rebaptism	**11**	c.250-258	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Cyprian of Carthage (against Novatian)	**250.5**	c.246-258	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Roman church leaders (letters 2,29,30)	**1+4.75**	250-251	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Lucian et al. (letters 16, *21*)	**.875**	250-251	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Moyses, et al. to Cyprian (letter 25)	**2.5**	250	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Maximus, et al. to Cyprian (letter 49)	**0.25**	c.246-256	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Firmilian of Caesarea to Cyprian (letter74)	**7.25**	256	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Seventh Council of Carthage (85 bishops)	**7.25**	258	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Pontius' *The Life and Passion of Cyprian*	**7.5**	258	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Theognostus of Alexandria (Origenist)	**0.5**	260	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Gregory Thaumaturgus (undisputed works)	**28.5**	240-265	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Dionysius of Alexandria (Origenist)	**39.5**	246-265	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Malchion *(Against Paul of Samosata)*	**0.25**	270	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Pierius of Alexandria (fragment)	**0.5**	275	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Adamantius *Dialog on the True Faith in God*	**42**	c.300	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Arnobius Against the Heathen (undisputed)	**126.5**	297-303	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Victorinus of Petau, Austria –commentator	**18.5**	-304	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Pamphilus disciple of Pierius (Origenist)	**2.75**	309	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Creed of Lucian of Antioch	**0.3**	c.300-311	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Peter of Alexandria (undisputed)	**8.5**	306-311	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Hesychius [Egypt],Pachomius,Phileas,Theodorus	**1**	-311	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Methodius (corrected Origen's followers)	**79.5**	270-311/312	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Council of Arles I, France. 26-44 bishops.	**0.333**	Aug. 314	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Council of Neocaesarea (Basil and c.19 others).	**1.333**	c.315	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Martyrdom of Habib the Deacon by Theophilus	**5.5**	event c.315	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Athanasius *Against the Heathen* & *Incarnation*	**56**	318	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Lactantius, tutor of Constantine's son	**305.5**	303-325	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Alexander of Alexandria-Origenist, undisputed	**11.5**	313-326	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
Eusebius of Caesarea	**1055.4**	318-325	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
25 others that do not have references.	**49.11**	170-325	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	
92 Christian writer totals: all symbols except P's + Eusebius of Caesarea prior to 325 A.D.	**4425+ 1055.4**	up to 325:	1-0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Christian writer	Pages	Date A.D.	Ru 1	Ru 2	Ru 3	Ru 4	Ru 5	Ru 6	Ru 7	Ru 8	Ru 9	Ru 10	Ru 11		