

And we call ourselves Christians?

On February 9th, 1555, at about eight o'clock, John Hooper, a Protestant clergyman, was led forth and many thousands of people were collected, being market day. He smilingly beheld the stake and preparation made for him.

Command was given that the fire should be kindled. But because there were not more green fagots than two horses could carry, it kindled not speedily, and was a pretty while before it took the reeds upon the fagots. At length it burned about him, but the wind having full strength at the place, and it be a lowering cold morning, it blew the flames from him, so that he was in a manner little touched by the fire.

A few dry fagots were brought, and a new fire kindled with fagots (for there were no more reeds), and those burned at his lower parts, but had small power above because of the wind, saving that it burnt his hair and scorched his skin a little. In the time of which fire, even as at the first flames, he prayed, saying mildly, and not very loud, but as one without pain, "O Jesus, Son of David, have mercy upon me, and receive my soul!" After the second fire was spent, he wiped both his eyes with his hands, and beholding the people he said with an indifferent loud voice, "For God's love, good people, let me have more fire." And all this while his lower parts did burn: but the fagots were so few, that the flames only singed his upper parts.

The third fire was kindled which was more extreme than the other two. In this fire he prayed with a loud voice, "Lord Jesus, have mercy upon me! Lord Jesus receive my spirit!" And these were the last words he was heard to utter. But when he was black in the mouth, and his tongue so swollen that he could not speak, yet his lips went until they were shrunk to the gums: and he knocked his breast with his hands until one of his arms fell off, and then still knocked with the other, while the fat, water, and blood dropped out at his fingers ends, until by renewing the fire, his strength was gone, and his hand clave fast to the chain upon his breast. Then immediately bowing forward, he yielded up his spirit. (Fox's Book of Martyrs)

The established Church martyred millions of evangelical Christians during the Middle Ages, but of course that wasn't bad enough to be classed as "the great tribulation."

Today, in South Sudan, armed Muslim jihadists attack the little Christian villages. They go into each hut, taking what they will, killing whom they wish. If they find a woman with a baby on her breast, they hack off the woman's breasts. The woman sits there bleeding, unable to feed crying child - soon to die of starvation. Their cattle have already been stolen, you see, so they have no cattle left to milk. There are no Supermarkets where they can go to buy milk, nor money with which to buy it if there were. In the last five years, about 2,000,000 South Sudanese Christians have been murdered by Jihadists, many by crucifixion - it is hard to get accurate figures from the remote areas.

Hundreds of thousands more have been martyred in other 3rd world countries, but that's not bad enough to be classed as "the great tribulation," is it?

Between 1939 and 1945 about 2,000,000 Christians and 6,000,000 Jews were murdered by the Nazis. A total of over 50,000,000 people were killed during WW2.

I suppose that wasn't "the great tribulation" either?

In the old USSR, up to 8,000,000 Christians were murdered by the communists in their labor camps on the Gulag Archipelago.

Not that one either?

In the killing fields of Cambodia, the Communists killed over 1,500,000 Christians in atrocities unimaginable, making mountains of their skulls - those grizzly piles still remain.

Or that atrocity?

If you are found to be a Christian by the religious police in Saudi Arabia, they behead you. In China, untold hundreds of thousands have died for the sake of Jesus. In fact, worldwide, about 30,000 Christians are being killed every week because they won't deny Jesus as Lord.

And you think because God has spared the church in this country that "the great tribulation" is in the future? Have you ever seen someone tortured? Heard their screams? Seen a Christian die? We know an evangelist in Nigeria, Mustafa Ali, who has seen both many times. The Muslims killed over 5000 people in his little town and burned their churches. The Jihadists tried to kill Mustafa too, but the Lord hid him. I haven't heard from him for three years now so I guess they finally got him. Don't you realize that it's just the mercy of God that great tribulation hasn't come here yet? I weep over the American church's ignorance and arrogance.

But of course, none of the above is bad enough to be formally classed as "the great tribulation." (sigh) Your view might change if it is you, your wife or your child who had to give his life for the Lord, but I doubt it. We'll close our eyes and keep on singing, "Happy, happy, happy, when THE tribulation comes we'll all be raptured out" . . . God help us!