

The Truman Doctrine

by David McWilliams

Named after our 33rd president and Missouri native, Harry S. Truman, the purpose of the Truman Doctrine was to counter Soviet expansion during the Cold War. It became the foundation of American foreign policy and led to the formation of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1949. NATO is a military alliance that continues to play an important role in world affairs today, including the Russia-Ukraine war.

The Truman Doctrine arose from a speech delivered by President Truman before a joint session of Congress on March 12, 1947. In the speech he put forth the doctrine by stating, "I believe it must be the policy of the United States to support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or by outside pressures."

President Truman was well read in the Bible. Whether or not he had the Scriptures in mind when crafting his now famous speech is hard to say. Regardless, there are parallels that can be drawn between the Truman Doctrine and the doctrine of Christ.

To begin, Christians are a **free people**, having been freed from sin. **Romans 6:6-7** states, "*knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin.*"

Even though we have been cleared of our sins, we must resist forces that are attempting to **subjugate** us, trying to once again make us slaves of sin. "*Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts*" (**Romans 6:11-12**).

Some of the forces that are trying to subjugate us come from **outside pressures**. In the **Parable of the Sower**, Jesus discussed some of those outside pressures, such as tribulation, persecution, the cares of this world, the deceitfulness of riches, and the pleasures of this life (**Matthew 13:18-23, Mark 4:13-20, Luke 8:11-15**).

On the other hand, some of the forces that the Christian must resist come from within, the **armed minorities** of our own desires. "*But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death*" (**James 1:14-15**).

The good news is that Christians have abundant **support** as they resist these forces and pressures. We have our fellow brothers and sisters to support us. "*Brethren, if a man is overtaken in any trespass, you who are spiritual restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness, considering yourself lest you also be tempted. Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ*" (**Galatians 6:1-2**). Most importantly, Jesus Himself offers aid and support to His brethren. **Hebrews 2:17-18** states, "*... in all things He had to be made like His brethren, that He might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make propitiation for the sins of the people. For in that He Himself has suffered, being tempted, He is able to aid those who are tempted.*"

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