

Niebuhr, Reinhold

(1892--1971), American theologian who opposed the Nazis during the Holocaust. Niebuhr was a pastor in Detroit and a professor at Union Theological Seminary in New York. In both these posts, Niebuhr used the moral and ethical wisdom of the Hebrew biblical prophets in his teachings. He often spoke at colleges and universities, and was a leader in the World Student Christian Federation. As a theologian, Niebuhr revitalized the idea that the Bible is the basis of Christian theology.

During the Holocaust, Niebuhr wrote and spoke expansively about the issue of the German church's conflict with the Nazis. He condemned the Nazi persecution of Jews, denounced antisemitism, and called for the church to drop its attitude about being right in its beliefs and all others, including Jews, being wrong. In addition, Niebuhr was the first distinguished Christian theologian to reject those Christian missionaries who tried to convert Jews.

In 1943 Niebuhr wrote a series of articles in *The Nation* calling for the establishment of a Jewish state in the British Mandate of Palestine after the war's end. He actualized his support of this goal by taking a leading role in the American Christian Palestine Committee.