

*“The message which Bakunin tried to preach was that only the workers could free the workers; in other words, he desired to stimulate the self-activity of the working-class. He was never tired of quoting the celebrated slogan of the First International: “The emancipation of the toilers must be the work of the toilers themselves,” and he expressly excluded from the concept of ‘toilers’ those ex-workers who, having gained the leadership of a working-class movement, endeavour to make themselves masters of it and lead it where they are determined that it shall go. To Bakunin that was not emancipation, it was merely a change of masters. But he wanted the triumph of humanity – a full human development of all in conditions of liberty and equality.”*

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# Bakunin

## The Paris Commune and the Idea of the State

and The Life of Mikhail Bakunin:  
A short biographical sketch



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truth and progress, is the church. And how could it be otherwise? Is it not to the church that the care of perverting the younger generations, above all the women, falls? Is it not the church which, through its dogmas and lies, its stupidity and shame, tends to destroy logical reasoning and science? Does the church not attack the dignity of man, in perverting in him the notion of rights and justice? Does it not give back as a corpse that which is living, does it not lose freedom, is it not the church which preaches slavery of the masses in perpetuity for the benefit of tyrants and exploiters? Is it not the church, this implacable church, which tends to perpetuate the reign of darkness, ignorance, poverty and crime?

And if the progress of our century is not a deceptive dream, it must get rid of the church.

**Michael Bakunin, June 1871**

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