

SHOULD A CHRISTIAN FIGHT?

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by
Lester Leroy Neff

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Should a Christian Fight?

Chapter I Does War Bring Peace?

“Mankind must put an end to war — or war will put an end to mankind.”

This shocking statement was made recently in an address to the United Nations assembly by President Kennedy.

This entire world is fast plunging to destruction at the hand of man in world suicide or cosmocide. This present age is so perilous that President Kennedy continued, “Today, every inhabitant of this planet must contemplate the day when this planet may no longer be habitable.”

How can man end the terrible increase in war and mass destruction? The international peace parleys have not brought peace. And wars certainly have not brought peace.

We are living in times of “maximum danger.” We will continue under that maximum world danger for years to come. The world is no longer a safe place in which to live. Into such a world we have been born. We cannot evade the facts. We cannot and must not deny or minimize the danger. We can only face the situation squarely and overcome it.

The mounting tensions of continuing wars and rumors of wars are going to cause more and more of our young men to be drafted into military service.

Under these serious conditions, what should a young man do? Will entering into military service help bring peace? Will it help bring the Kingdom of God to this earth? Should the Christian take part in men’s efforts to try to bring this world peace? What did Jesus Christ instruct His followers to do?

These are vital questions which every Christian should face squarely and answer honestly in these perilous times.

Utter Destruction Ahead!

To find the answer to these intriguing and most important questions, let us first take a quick look into today’s confused and chaotic world.

General MacArthur spoke these words before the assembled Congress of the United States: “Men since the beginning of time have sought Peace Military alliances,

balances of power, Leagues of Nations; all in turn have FAILED, leaving the only path to be by the way of the crucible of war. The utter destructiveness of war now blocks this alternative. WE HAVE HAD OUR LAST CHANCE. If we will not devise some greater and more equitable system, our Armageddon will be at the door”

General MacArthur had seen firsthand the utter destructiveness of war. Few people in these United States have seen firsthand the terribleness of this scourge of the human race.

Since these words of General MacArthur were spoken, we are further from world peace, closer to world war, and threatened with *human annihilation*. The United Nations does not have the answer that will bring us peace. They *will never learn* the way to peace

Why is there no Peace?

General MacArthur had part of the answer to world peace when he stated that the basic problem is the “improvement of human character.”

But, has human character improved even perceptibly since he gave that very famous speech? NO!

On the contrary! Anyone who reads a local newspaper, or listens to newscasts on radio or television, knows that in the past decade mankind in general has grown *immeasurably worse*. Crimes in the United States have almost doubled. Divorce and broken homes have increased by leaps and bounds.

Almost everyone wants peace, but who knows the way to peace? The diplomats do not know! The rulers of the world powers do not know!

Peace, Peace, and there is no Peace!

And yet, men almost everywhere are seeking peace. War affects almost everything we say, plan, and do. President Eisenhower said in his State of the Union Message, January 7, 1960:

“With both sides of this divided world in possession of unbelievably destructive

weapons, mankind approaches a state where mutual annihilation becomes a possibility. No other fact of today's world equals this in importance — it colors everything we say, plan and do We face what could be a turning point in history, and we must act decisively" (*Los Angeles Times*, January 8, 1960).

The seriousness of this time is also reflected by a statement from an address by former Secretary of State, Dean Acheson, in an address delivered at Goucher College, Baltimore, Maryland:

"I assure you that I know nothing which is classified, but I know enough of what is going on to assure you that, in 15 years from today, this world is going to be too dangerous to live in We must adjust our minds to the firm belief that, whatever our predilections, whatever our hopes and dreams are, that we really get it into our heads that the first duty of a society is to survive. That is its first duty. It isn't to make the world safe for democracy, or bring about the Kingdom of Heaven on earth. It's to survive. That's the number one necessity."

These men have evaluated the seriousness of our time. They see that *these days of trouble are not comforting*.

With many kinds of weapons that can destroy all of life from off this planet staring us in the face, we can only agree that we face *maximum danger*. Survival of the human race is in serious jeopardy. But what is the way out?

War Has Not Brought Peace!

Is it more war?

Men have been hoping for millenniums that the next war would be the war that would end all wars. *None has brought peace*. If they had, there would be no more wars.

If the reason for war is to bring peace, 6000 years of history prove that war will not bring peace.

World War I was proclaimed by many to be the war to end all wars. It was only a prelude to more than 25 more wars, plus other minor hot and cold wars.

NEW YORK, November 22, 1958 (AP) —“ ‘This,’ they said as they fought the Kaiser, ‘is the war to end all wars.’ It turned out to be the worst forecast of the 20th Century. Since that great conflict, the ‘war to end all wars’ (was) only a prelude to 25 since 1918” (*The San Diego Union*, November 23,

1958).

That statement does not include all the wars and armed conflicts since the Suez crisis of 1956.

What is the Price of War?

What has war cost mankind? The price is staggering to the imagination. Here is a little idea of some of the terrific costs of war.

“It is estimated that in the 800 years from the beginning of the Twelfth to the end of the Nineteenth Century, 14 million casualties were produced by war. In the first half of the present century better equipment made it possible to push the figure to 75 million. In other words, in the past 50 years, war killed four and a half times as many people as were killed in the previous 800 years. War is a mighty stable industry, too. History records that man has devoted a major part of his time to mass murder. From 1400 B.C. to 1958 A.D. — a period of 3,358 years — there were only 250 years in which war was totally absent. A chart recently released by the Secretary of the Army shows that there have been 18 limited wars since the end of World War II in 1945.

“In the past 300 years, there have been 145 major treaties — none of which managed to stop wars for more than a couple years. Applying the statistical yardstick to these facts, the figures show that the productivity of war increased 800% in the past 50 years” (*The Carpenter*, June, 1959).

The number of people killed in these wars would make up a country half again as populous as Great Britain. If we were able to tell the actual cost of these wars and the physical destruction they brought, the amounts would be staggering beyond imagination. The human woe and suffering, the families torn apart or killed would be impossible to tell. But this report is minimized by another source of casualties from war.

GENEVA, October 24, 1959 — “A Swiss who tries to follow these things has calculated that in the past 5,559 years there have been 14,513 wars in which 3,640,000,000 people have died” (*Pittsburgh Sun Telegram*, October, 1959).

Another source gives further details on the number of years in which there have been wars.

“For the last 5,000 years in recorded history, there were only 300 years without

wars, and for two reasons: (1) Peoples were too tired from the last war, (2) Peoples needed time to prepare for the next war” (*Iszabad Magyarsag*, an Hungarian-American newspaper, May 8, 1960).

We Are Paying the Price!

These articles should give us a better perspective of the price of war. But the complete price has not been paid yet. The expense of war goes on and on. Today we are still paying taxes on past wars. The present arms race is casting many billions of dollars and is only a down payment on future wars. These arms will not prevent war. War comes closer day by day in spite of these vain efforts.

“Americans, it turns out, are footing the lion’s share of the bill for defense of the Western world, both in dollars and in percentage of income

“Allies of the United States in Europe, freed from the need to spend so great a portion of their incomes on defense, now spend much more on ‘welfare’.

“Americans spend more of their private and public outlays on defense than do any of their European Allies — at least twice as much as most of them” (*U.S. News and World Report*, June 22, 1959).

This same article goes on to show that the United States is spending 45.5 billion dollars a year on defense spending.

Another article, this time from the *Los Angeles Times*, December 27, 1959, states that the United States “has spent more than one-half trillion dollars for peace on earth and it still eludes us.” Another article states that if the present arms race continues, the nations of the world will spend at least two trillion dollars for defense in the next ten years.

All the tremendous cost in past wars — all this cost going on right now — and the people of the world do not yet know the way to peace.

This present mad scramble to survive is not the way to survival or peace. It will only lead to *all-out nuclear war*. All the nations’ leaders and most of the people of the world really realize that such a war is coming.

Any thinking person knew that World War II was coming. It was inevitable. World War III is just as inevitable. The reason is that there is no basic change for the better in man. Man is getting worse instead of better and better.

The thought of such war has frightened some people greatly. Others refuse to think about it because of the terribleness of war. People are hoping and praying that it won’t come. But it will come!

Total Annihilation Coming?

When such a war comes there will be extremely heavy casualties. Some have estimated that one-third of the people of the United States would die if we were attacked. Others have estimated even more deaths would result.

WASHINGTON, June 18, 1961 (UPI) — “Civil Defense Director, Frank B. Ellis said Sunday that ‘some hundred million people’ in the United States would be killed or injured by nuclear fallout if the country is attacked by intercontinental ballistic missiles. Ellis said this figure is in addition to the millions who would be killed by fire and blasts caused by the nuclear explosion itself.”

Norman Cousins, editor of the *Saturday Review*, was quoted in the *East Liverpool Ohio Review*:

“A war that would incinerate a billion human beings and deform the rest is now a possibility. I do not know of a single scientist who does not believe that already we have in the United States, Russia, and England the nuclear weapons with which to make the whole earth uninhabitable. In one nuclear bomb already tested, Cousins continued, there is the power of a thousand airplanes with block-busters sent on bombing raids each night for 14 years. Against such a war there is no defense, except peace” (January 29, 1959).

The threat of world suicide (cosmocide) is so real that scientists are now proposing a *new science* to keep society from committing suicide. We might ask here, Who has made these terrifying weapons — *society*, or the *scientists*?

DENVER (UPI) — “A committee of scientists proposed yesterday that a new science be created to keep society from committing suicide with nuclear weapons. The committee, of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, made the recommendation in a report to the Association’s 128th meeting. The report said science had achieved such control over human environment that civilization could kill itself off — even in non-nuclear fields — anytime it wanted to” (*Pasadena Independent*, December 27, 1961).

With such frightening possibilities staring us in the face, just what should a Christian do? Should he be involved in such a conflict or not? The answer to this question may well determine his chance of surviving, and of finally establishing world peace afterward.

Other authorities have also envisioned grave consequences of coming conflicts.

“Unless humanity gets on the ball and does something about the ticking nuclear time bomb, we’ll either become cave dwellers or subjects of nostalgic memoranda set down by a few surviving historians” (*The Evening News*, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, October 21, 1960).

President Kennedy has recently pledged every effort “to prevent the world from being blown up.” He is in a position to know the seriousness of present conditions.

It is a well-known fact that it is now possible to annihilate all life on this earth by *several means*, including nuclear destruction, chemical warfare, and biological warfare. In nuclear war alone, there are enough weapons now on hand to destroy life many times over. It seems that *one time is quite sufficient*.

What is the Solution?

The way to banish war is partially found in a statement by David Lawrence in his editorial of May 2, 1958, in the *U.S. News and World Report*:

“The ANSWER does not lie merely in abolishing deadly weapons. It is to be found in abolishing the hates, the covetousness, and the insatiable greed of factions and groups within nations”

The basic reason for war is greed and covetousness, just as Mr. Lawrence says. What is the proof? The divinely inspired Word of God also states very plainly and candidly this very fact. God knows the wickedness and deceitfulness in the heart of man (**Jeremiah 17:9-10**). He knows the basic reason for all this nonsense of man fighting against man. Man destroying and pillaging, causing untold misery and suffering.

“From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts,” **James 4:1-3**.

That is the reason why man has only had

250 years of peace since history has been recorded.

General MacArthur stated that the solution to the problem lay in the “improvement of human character.” By what means and by whom can human character be improved? Can it be done by the religions of the world? Can it be done by modern Christianity?

History gives the answer!

The religions of *this world* have failed to change mankind to righteousness in the past five thousand years. These religions have rejected the true ways of God. They have not lived by God’s just and good laws which do change character (**Romans 7:12; Psalm 19:7**). Some have called themselves Christian while refusing to obey Christ.

Religion has Caused War — Not Prevented it!

Instead of preventing war, the religions and religious peoples of the world have frequently been the *cause* and *instigators* of war. There have been many “holy” wars fought over this earth’s surface. History has proved that the *religions of this world* cannot bring about a change in man, or a solution to our mounting increase of wars and rumors of wars.

The character of man must be changed before we can have peace, but who is going to bring it about? Will it be the Catholic Church? Will it be the Protestant Churches? Will it be any of the world’s religions?

“Although many religious systems accept the same basis for their creeds, their differences as to interpretation have caused the most vicious and antagonistic conflicts — conflicts that have led to murder and massacres, and to the bloodiest wars man has ever suffered upon this earth” (Joseph Lewis, noted atheist, in *The Age of Reason Magazine*, December 1959).

This same point is brought out from another reliable source. This is from the *Encyclopedia Americana*, Volume 23, pages 346-347, 1941 Edition.

“. . . In the past it (religion) has certainly been the direct or indirect cause of war — there has been no century without its authorized representatives or interpreters inciting the nations to conflict for its greater glory and power.

“Religions of old failed admittedly to appreciate their opponent’s point of view. When arguments failed, the invariable

recourse was to arms

“On the whole . . . when religion dominated the state, the religions in the customary ecclesiastical meaning of the term were too absorbed by worldly ambitions under specious masks of humility and piety to realize the divine possibilities at the root of their creeds Not only the historic creeds, but smaller religionists who forgot to exercise toward others the toleration they demanded for themselves, made religion so empty and delusive a phrase that a Madame Roland might well have exclaimed: ‘Religion, what crimes are committed in thy name’.”

From history, it is evident that the religions and churches of the world have not known the way to peace. The reason is that the churches do not know what causes war and do not know, or do not care to know, how to avoid it. They have not understood fully or practiced the true teachings of the Bible which show the way to peace. If they had, they would not have become involved in these so-called “holy” wars.

Peace Will Come

Until man is forced by the Creator, God Almighty, to change his ways or perish, we will continue to have wars. Only when Jesus Christ comes back to this earth to rule it with a “rod of iron,” will we have peace.

We cannot have peace by movement or wars of men. Man cannot and will not bring peace. Only God can and will bring us peace. *There is no other way.*

“He (Christ) will decide disputes of many races, and arbitrate between strong foreign powers, till swords are beaten into plough-

shares, spears into pruninghooks; no nation draws sword against another, no longer shall men learn to fight” (**Micah 4:3**, Moffatt Translation).

It will take world government *by God* to bring this about. World government is the only solution, and that government personally ruled over by Jesus Christ. He will return to this earth and rule it in peace and equity, after forcibly putting down the rebellion of most of mankind.

War and fighting among nations is not the solution to this world’s ills. War is utter folly and will not and cannot bring peace. A Christian is not helping to bring peace by entering into military service. He is only bringing more destruction and pain and sorrow on others who have as much right to life and peace as he has.

What can the Christian youth of today do when he is called to war. He cannot, in good conscience, believe that this is the way to peace since history has proved otherwise.

Just what are the Bible instructions for these men? To find the answers to these and many other important questions, we will read what the teachings of Christ are. We will also search through the past 2,000 years of history to see just what the teachings have been in the Christian world concerning a Christian’s participation in warfare.

Did the disciples of Jesus, through the centuries, follow His teaching? We will find that some of the churches have followed His teaching to the present time. Others started out with that same teaching and gradually changed it until today a Babylon of confusion exists.

Chapter II

The Tragic Results of War

War has been one of the greatest scourges of mankind. Almost everyone hates war, but almost no one has been able to avoid its terrible effects.

How terrible is war? Does anyone really know? Can anyone put into words the untold suffering and misery that it brings to so many millions of people?

The terrible toll of war is not just in the casualty lists. It causes a tremendous increase in unhappiness, in broken homes, in mental suffering and juvenile delinquency. These are

the things that are often overlooked when the cost of war is calculated. In this chapter we are going to learn more about these horrible consequences.

History proves that wars have not brought peace. Therefore, it is utterly stupid to think that anything we might do toward man’s effort in war will help mankind in any way. Our participation in war will not bring the peace we want. It will only bring more suffering and misery.

Firestorms Nullify Effect of Shelters

Many people today are preparing for the next war by constructing a place of protection. It is useless to fight in the war, but, is it useless to build a place of protection? In the event of nuclear attack would “fallout” shelters give real protection?

During World War II, the City of Hamburg, Germany, was well prepared for attack. It had adequate shelters. When the attacks came against this “prepared” city, the results were terrible beyond imagination. The destruction that resulted is the subject of a book, *The Night Hamburg Died*, by Martin Caidin. Because of the intensive bombing, the temperature at ground level was estimated to have reached 1400 degrees. Human bodies exploded into puffs of flame. The tremendous heat generated by the fires consumed the atmosphere near the ground. And this was not nuclear war, which is far more devastating.

To replace the oxygen and the atmosphere of the burning city, the air for miles around was sucked into the city.

The result of this intense conflagration was a FIRE STORM. Few realize the terrible effects of such a storm. Flames shot up as high as 15,000 feet and the smoke rose to 40,000 feet. The tremendous heat generated winds of greater than hurricane force, estimated at 150 miles per hour.

What protection did the people of Hamburg have in their “bombproof” shelters? Almost none! Those who did not die quickly from the direct flames, died from heat, suffocation, and the *lack of oxygen*. From atomic weapons which are far more destructive there will be no Place to hide.

War is terrible beyond description, and each new major war seems to get worse.

God is our only sure Protection. Only He can offer real safety (Luke 21:36).

War Effects on Home and Family Life

The terrible results of war are not just limited to the effects on the battle field. The home is also affected. The home is the foundation of all decent society. If the homes of a nation are in trouble, the nation is in the same condition. When a member of the family is forced to go off to war, the whole family suffers. Or, when both parents work to help in the war effort, the family routine is changed. The family is no longer able to work together as a team and children are not

properly supervised, trained or disciplined. Little children are permitted to run wild and to get in all kinds of mischief.

God has set unchangeable physical laws in motion concerning the home. When these laws which draw the family together are violated, trouble and unhappiness are the penalty.

In order for the home to be happy, these natural laws must be obeyed. Since war causes these laws to be broken, homes become divided, wives or husbands become enamored with other people of the opposite sex. Little children no longer have the protection, interest, and personal care of their parents. The parents become less and less interested in the home and in their own children. The children are left alone too much and begin to get into mischief. Delinquency results.

As a result of the last great war, delinquency has multiplied over and over. Young people have become more cruel and sadistic, and commit many savage acts unheard of before. They do not have a sense of right values or consideration for their elders or of other human beings. Because of promiscuity, by parents and young people alike, venereal disease has become a national problem.

Mental turmoil and tension increase by leaps and bounds. Sickness, as a result of this mental unhappiness, increases. The result is that we are not able to build hospitals fast enough and half of our hospital beds are occupied by mental patients.

As a result of this wrong way of life we had the largest number of broken homes and divorces that ever happened in this country right after World War II. It is beyond our comprehension to realize this terrible toll in our home life as a direct result of that one war.

After the home is broken up, many little children are left without mother or father to guide them in the right way. The parents remarry and there is such a mixed-up mess that many children hardly know who their real parents are. The remarried parents are now living in adultery, committing one of the ten cardinal sins. This is a terrible sin which leads to continuing trouble and unhappiness in the home. Little children who grow up in such a terrible environment do not know what a good home environment is. They do not learn the true values of marriage and faithfulness to a mate. Since they have no other personal example, they often follow in the footsteps of their parents into second and third marriages.

This brings added unhappiness to their own lives. The young man in service knows that he may not live through the war. As a result he is usually not restrained and promiscuity is commonplace. The tendency is to satisfy the senses today, and not care about what will happen tomorrow. A serviceman is usually trying to be a real “he-man.” He wants to copy other men in their rebellion and promiscuity to prove his manliness. Instead of proving manliness he proves that violation of God’s righteous ways only end in sorrow and trouble.

As a result of all these unusual circumstances, the home and its protective environment are gone — there is no restraint — promiscuity is rampant — premature marriages are frequent. Untold suffering, personal anguish, and trouble are reaped for many years to come as a result of the breakup of the family home environment. All this results from war.

From this we should begin to see that the original penalty of war is not the only one.

When will our nation ever wake up to the terrible price that we are now paying for our past wars? When will we ever learn the facts regarding our suffering as a result of these wars?

War Effect on National Economy

Because of the tremendous cost of war and the preparations for war, the whole national economy suffers. There is a temporary upsurge in employment, and the people as a whole have more income, but the false economy that this creates is not good.

Someone must pay for this great expense. Taxes are increased, there are drives for war bonds, but the nation goes further and further into debt. The present generation is not going to pay the money for all the expenses. This generation is trying to lay this great burden of expense on future generations. The problem is that this attitude of leaving our obligations for future generations is going to backfire and cause this generation to pay, not in money, but in lives, epidemics and slavery.

As a result of the wars and the cost of government, the indebtedness is so tremendous that we are hardly able to comprehend it. The national debt at present is about 290 billion dollars. The combined public and private debt is now a staggering 882 billion dollars. This means that each man, woman, and child owes about \$4,000 in public debt.

These astronomical figures are hard to comprehend. Since a billion dollars is usually the basis mentioned, we ought to put it in terms that can be understood. One billion dollars would take a stack of ten dollar bills 5 1/2 miles high.

Most of this cost in public debt is a direct result of war, and secondarily by indirect war cost, and thirdly, the burgeoning cost of government.

We are paying heavily for past wars right now. Even the interest on the staggering debt is almost beyond comprehension. Because of all these costs of war and national government, 35% of our total annual income goes for taxes.

The Cost of War

World War I cost the world about 338 billion dollars in direct and indirect costs. This does not include 37 billion dollars from property losses. There was also an estimated 45 billion dollar loss in production. This makes a grand total of almost one-half trillion dollars to fight just one war.

Compare this expense with the more costly World War II.

The direct and indirect costs have been calculated at a little more than ONE TRILLION dollars! In addition there were property losses of about 231 billion dollars.

How much money is one trillion dollars? Let us put it in terms we can more easily understand.

Each family in the United States could have a home worth twenty-five thousand dollars — paid for — no mortgage or other encumbrance — for the price of World War II alone. Think of everyone living in such a luxurious home. Forty-seven million homes paid for by the price of JUST ONE WAR!

That should give a little better idea of what it costs to fight just *one war*. It should show how man is cheating himself out of such blessings, just *because he is not able to overcome his own lusts*, (**James 4:1-3**).

This tremendous cost of trying to bring peace to the world is now 120 billion dollars per year, and experts predict that this figure is destined to double within a few years. The United States is bearing the “lions share” of this tremendous expense. The fiscal 1963 budget for the United States is almost 53 billion dollars. Compare this with the total national income of 1960 which was 417 billion dollars.

War Brings Millions of Deaths

Consider another cost of war — the terrible death toll. Deaths in war are not caused by weapons alone. Many others have died as a direct result of war by accompanying epidemics and disease.

In World War I about 10 million people were killed or died as a result of the war either directly or indirectly. TEN MILLION PEOPLE DIED FOR ONE WAR!

The wars of the preceding years only killed half as many people.

In World War II there were about 17 million battle deaths alone. In addition about another 1½ million died from air raids, many other civilians died from direct war action, and there were millions of injuries which did not lead to death.

These figures which have been taken from the *Encyclopedia Americana*, and the *World Almanac*, do not include other casualties such as injuries, servicemen lost or disappeared, nor does it include the many millions of people such as Jews who were exterminated in Germany and other countries.

These figures only concern the last two wars. The “peaceful” United States has fought no less than 101 wars from the start of the Revolutionary war in 1775, to World War II (*MacArthur on War*, edited by Frank C. Waldrop, page 416, Appendix C).

It is good for us to occasionally remember the terrible atrocities committed as a result of these and other wars. Remember the six million Jews who were killed in Germany during World War II?

How some of them died was brought out in the famed Adolf Eichmann trial. Here are some comments resulting from this trial.

NAZI P.O.W. CAMPS: EVERY ATROCITY IMAGINABLE

JERUSALEM, April 28, 1961 (AP) — “A survivor of a Nazi extermination camp testified today she saw Jews soaked in kerosene and set afire as they prayed, small children shot down because they wept, women tied in packs and marched for miles in subzero temperatures. . . . She told, too, of a child in a plaster cast shot on a forced march. ‘Children who cried were killed,’ she added. She described a forced march in which women were tied together in huge bundles with ropes. ‘We were beaten continually and many went out of their minds,’” (*The San Diego Union*, April 29, 1961).

“One woman, who was carrying a child, spat in the face of a guard and they took the infant and smashed his brains out on a tree and threw him into the fire. Then they hung the woman up by her legs” (UPI Release, May 2, 1961).

Untold millions of other atrocities have also been committed during war. They were not all on the side of the enemy. Most libraries contain many volumes about such atrocities in the time of war.

It is not the purpose of this thesis to present these atrocities in detail, but just to remind the reader of this terrible cost that is paid during war by unsuspecting and innocent people.

The Effect on Character of Servicemen

Being thrust into war from civilian life, a serviceman must be taught to hate the enemy. Otherwise he will not be an effective soldier. This does something to the mind of man that is harmful, and is not easily erased. Human life becomes cheap, especially when it involves someone you don’t know. A combat soldier learns to live with violence and death. He does not easily forget his wrong actions that were contrary to God’s spiritual laws. When you break the spiritual laws of God, they break you. There is a penalty in human misery and woe of these broken laws. The retributions of these broken laws are still being paid by the untold suffering in personalities, in broken homes, in financial ruin, in poor health, and in every other form of conceivable trouble that has been a direct result of the participation in armed conflict.

In addition to these losses in war there are also untold damages to property, crops, fruit-bearing trees and vines. It often takes years to return the land to full production after the ravages of war.

The tremendous toll of all the wars of man have been estimated at 3 1/2 billion deaths. That is more people than exist on earth today. Thank God this terrible carnage will end when Christ returns and puts an end to it.

From every point of view the wars of man are wrong, but man has not yet found the way to avoid them and bring peace. Wars have not brought peace. The reason peace does not come is that all mankind has rejected the plain simple way of the Bible to peace.

Is War Still a Tragic Necessity?

Many theologians still consider war a “tragic necessity,” as the following article clearly states.

“The great majority of Christians throughout history have held that war is an evil which may be justified, under certain conditions, as a tragic necessity. This doctrine was based on the assumption that wars could be limited in scope, and that they might have good results — such as the defense of freedom and justice — which would outweigh the carnage and suffering. The advent of nuclear weapons has compelled Christian theologians to make their own agonizing reappraisal of the ancient rationale for a ‘just war’. Most of them have concluded that all-out nuclear war would entail horrors of such incalculable magnitude, and offer so little hope of any ‘good’ outcome, that it cannot possibly be squared with the teachings of Christ. But at this point the theologians divide into two groups. One group believes that while it would be immoral to use nuclear weapons, it is permissible — in fact, necessary — to stockpile them, as a deterrent against their use by another power. Theologians who hold this view are constantly urging greater efforts by the United States to negotiate a workable agreement with Russia for mutual disarmament. But in the absence of such an agreement, they say, this country has no choice but to maintain enough nuclear power to dissuade the Communists from acts of aggression.

“There is wide public support for this

position, and the Christians who expound it are in no danger of being pilloried as dangerous radicals. The other viewpoint is far less popular. Indeed, it may impress many Americans as being almost as IMPRACTICAL as advising men to love their enemies, or to turn the other cheek when struck. Because it conflicts so sharply with prevailing national attitudes, this second viewpoint rarely gets an attentive public hearing” (UPI Release, March 17, 1961).

Is war really a tragic necessity, or isn’t there some better way for man to live and to settle his problems? If there is no better way to live, certainly we all have nothing to look forward to.

We have seen how war has taken a terrific toll of unhappiness in the home. We have seen how the divorces and unhappy marriages have sky-rocketed. We have seen how juvenile delinquency has jumped tremendously. Sadistic and brutal crimes of children are increasing alarmingly; this was almost unheard of before World War II. The casualty tolls of the wars have been almost incomprehensible, and the property losses are staggering. Unhappiness, sickness, mental turmoil, and disease have increased. *There must be some better way!*

There is a better way and Jesus Christ can tell us. We need to know His answer to find peace. Only He can show us the real way to peace. In the next chapter we will begin to see some of His teachings on the subject of war and the only way to peace. We can learn these ways to peace today.

Chapter III Early Christian Teaching

Modern Christianity is a puzzle to many people. It does not really make sense.

Why?

Here is one outstanding reason.

A person reading the teachings of Jesus cannot reconcile His teachings regarding love and kindness to neighbor with the violent and bloody wars in which many millions of “Christians” have participated. No wonder there is confusion and uncertainty regarding Christianity today!

The pagans and heathens have looked at “Christianity” and have evaluated it as an hypocritical religion. It teaches love and

kindness, justice and mercy, but completely fails to practice these virtues in such areas as war, big business, and brutal sports such as boxing and wrestling.

Because of the conflicts between the teaching and the actual practice of Christians, even many of the educated of our day have questioned Christianity and have accused it of failing. This is shown in an unusual article appearing in the *Austin American*, December 28, 1960.

Christianity has failed, and the world stands on the brink of another Dark Age because of it, one of the world’s great

scholars said. Dr. Frederick Eby, 86, professor emeritus of history and philosophy of education at the University of Texas, said, "The world is in the most unfortunate, tragic situation at this time since the beginning of the Middle Ages, and all of humanity is involved. The ideas and principles on which civilization is based are evidently inadequate to solve today's problems. Official Christianity has been weighed in the balance, and after 2 000 years it has been found wanting.

"The trouble," Dr Eby says, "stems from the fact that the New Testament has been misinterpreted — first from the standpoint of Greek philosophy, then from the standpoint of the Roman governmental system, or imperialism. The result was the revulsion against all former systems of thought during the Middle Ages, and the reversion to 'narrow asceticism.' Scholasticism began an endeavor to recondition Western European civilization, and the Protestant Reformation resulted.

"It ended in a tie-up between the state and church, and with the state dominant, led to attempts at world domination by the Spanish, French, Dutch and British," Dr. Eby said. "All of them were more interested in exploiting the wealth of foreign, backward, peoples than in training them for democracy and for a realistic Christianity. As a result, Christianity is looked on as the white man's religion, and it has no appeal for heathen minds. It is irrevocably tied up for them with the development of modern science and the horrifying discovery and use of today's instruments of war" (*Austin American*, December 28, 1960).

What answer can we give the primitive and heathen people of the world in view of such plain facts? What can we tell the agnostic, the atheist and the scholar? Has Christianity really failed?

Or, has Christianity, as seen by the world, *departed* from the "faith which was once delivered unto the saints," **Jude 3**?

Even a casual look at today's scene shows an entirely different Christianity in many, if not most, respects, from the Christianity of New Testament times. This is especially so in regard to the Christian teachings regarding war and violence.

In this present chapter a contrast of the teachings and practices of early Christians and present Christians will become very clear.

We will see plainly that early Christianity started off in a far different manner than it is being practiced in most professing Christian

communities today.

First, the plain, simple, and to-the-point teachings of Christ will be surveyed. After we learn briefly what His teachings are, we will see whether or not His disciples continued that same teaching. We will also see if the New Testament Church continued to practice those same teachings.

The period of history covered in this chapter will only cover the beginning of Christ's ministry in A.D. 27, to the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

Christ's Teachings

Most Christian sects believe in the summation of all Christ's teachings as summarized in the "sermon on the mount." These are among the first teachings of Christ.

"Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth," **Matthew 5:5**.

A person who is meek is one who is "humbly patient or submissive, as under provocation from others" (*American College Dictionary*). Such a person will not be provoked to anger, but will be patient and submissive.

"Blessed are the peacemakers . . ." **Matthew 5:9**.

Peace is exactly the opposite of violence and war. Anyone involved in violence and destruction cannot be under God's divine blessings. *The sword of war does not bring peace!*

The Christian cannot expect to live under peaceful circumstances at all times. He is going to be involved in circumstances which are not at all peaceable, even though he himself may be at *peace* with man and God. He need not have anger or malice toward those who are angry at him.

Christ showed that the true Christian is one who will be persecuted (**Matthew 5:10-12**) for the sake of righteousness (right living according to God's laws, **Psalms 119:172**), but he will not become angry and take up arms against other individuals or other nations who may be angry with him or his country. Instead he will take it patiently and not strike back. By taking this persecution patiently, he will receive his great reward.

The Christian is instructed "resist not evil," **verse 39**. How can anyone justify resisting evil in war or at any other time in view of this plain statement? Instead of resisting others, Jesus instructed that we are to turn the other cheek.

Love Your Enemies

Christ taught that we are not to hate our enemies (**verse 44**). How can one kill in war and not hate?

Certain philosophers and religionists take the view that it is possible to kill and not hate. *How silly!* Any good soldier will tell you that you *have to hate* in order to be a *good* soldier. Hate is taught to soldiers so that they will be effective. How can any carnal human say that they can kill others in *love*? To make such a statement is to distort and pervert all scripture concerning real Christian *love*. It is exactly opposite from a good dictionary definition of love.

Instead of hating and killing our enemies, Christ *commanded* His followers:

“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you,” **Matthew 5:44**.

Christ sent His followers out as sheep among wolves, **Matthew 10:16**. Sheep have no protection against wolves — they are defenseless.

Let’s compare that with a Christian. The Christian has no natural or physical defense against those that persecute and hate him. If he used weapons to protect himself he would have protection.

If a Christian engaged in war against an enemy force and had atomic and hydrogen weapons at his disposal, would he be a sheep among wolves?

Even though a true Christian is defenseless by himself, he does have God’s divine protection, **I Peter 3:12-14**.

Should We Fight or Flee?

Instead of Christ’s disciples fighting against those who persecuted them, they were instructed to flee.

“But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another . . .” **Matthew 10:23**.

Later on, the disciples did follow this instruction. There is an example where Christ actually fled during severe persecution to save His life. He had just begun His ministry, and was in the Synagogue at Nazareth. He told the congregation that the scripture of Isaiah concerning Him was being fulfilled. He had come to preach the Gospel to the poor and to set the captives at liberty. The people were incensed and angered at His statements. They

wanted to kill Him by throwing Him headlong over a cliff. *It was not yet His time to die*. His ministry and the training of His disciples was yet ahead.

If it were proper for a Christian to fight, here was His opportunity. But He did not fight. Instead, He just slipped through their midst and fled, **Luke 4:30**. Later on, after His ministry was finished and it was His time to be crucified, He again was threatened by violence. Just what did He do? He did not fight, nor even revile those who persecuted Him. He accepted His punishment in meekness, as a “lamb led to the slaughter.”

These scriptures, and examples of Christ, ought to teach us that there is a time to flee, and there is also a time to stand — and even be put to death if necessary. But there is no time to fight back and hurt others as these and many scores of other scriptures show plainly.

Many people will fight back in time of crisis or peril *out of fear*. Christ instructed us *not to fear others*, **Matthew 10:28**. We are to have real peace that comes *only* from God. Such peace does not come from fighting or hating others.

“Peace I leave with you, My peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not Your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid,” **John 14:27**.

Instead of trying to save our lives by fighting we must be willing to give them up for the sake of Christ. If we try to save our lives by fighting we will lose them!

“Whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for My sake shall find it,” **Matthew 16:25**.

Will You Perish by the Sword?

The second great commandment for all mankind is to “love thy neighbor as thyself,” **Matthew 22:39**. Only a twisted and perverted mind could imagine that to kill in violence and war is to “love thy neighbor.” And yet, history has shown that many wicked men and bigoted rulers have thought that they were doing God a service by killing and destroying those that opposed them or their own peculiar religious beliefs.

On the night before Christ’s crucifixion, Peter cut off the ear of the high priest’s servant. Jesus immediately healed the man and told Peter to put the sword away.

“Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword,”

Matthew 26:52.

The symbol “sword” of that day would obviously include any modern military weapon. If we want to continue to live the life of a Christian we had better not take up the sword, or we may *perish* quickly by the sword!

Christ came to save and heal. He did not come to destroy and to kill. He expects His disciples to follow His example.

On one occasion, Christ instructed His disciples not to hate or kill. They wanted to kill some of the people who would not accept or receive Him by calling down fire from heaven. Here is Christ’s own answer to them.

“For the Son of man is not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them,” **Luke 9:56.**

We are instructed to follow Christ. He set us an example to follow by trying to save life instead of destroying life.

Would You Give Your Life?

Instead of killing, Christ laid down His life willingly for the world. Because He willingly gave His life for others, God gave Him eternal life, **John 10:17.**

He showed that this present age is not the time for His servants to fight, **John 18:36.** Christ’s Kingdom is not of this *time* or *this society*. If it was, then His servants would fight here and now. After being made immortal and a part of the very family of God, after the Kingdom of God comes to this earth, His immortal, spirit-born servants, will fight with Christ against all the wicked. All rebellion will be put down and the world will finally have real peace.

That time is not here now. Christ has not yet returned. He has not yet set up His Kingdom on earth. When He does, the whole world will know about it. Armies from all nations of the earth will gather together at Jerusalem to fight against Him and His saints.

Jesus knew that there would be ever-increasing wars as we near the end. He knew that Christians would not always be able to avoid being subject to the terrible things that war bring. He constantly warned of these terrible times to come. But He nowhere instructed His followers to arm or defend themselves. In **Matthew 24**, He prophesied concerning the wars of our time.

He did not say that we should become involved in these wars, or that we should be angered or upset by them. He said just the

opposite. Notice:

“And ye shall hear of wars and rumours of wars: see that ye be not troubled: for all these things must come to pass, but the end is not yet,” **Matthew 24:6.**

We should not become fearful or upset and try to save our own lives. Our lives are completely in God’s hands. Instead of afflicting and killing others, **Matthew 24:9**, Jesus said that the true Christian would be *afflicted* by persecution and wars.

In fact those that would forget these strong admonitions of Christ and start injuring and killing others would be in turn killed, **Matthew 24:49-51.**

Did the Apostles and early new Church follow these plain and clear instructions of Jesus? To find out we must examine their own teachings on this same subject.

Did James Follow Christ?

The Apostle James who wrote the Epistle of James, was a brother of Christ. What did he teach on this subject?

He wrote that “the fruit of righteousness (obeying God’s commandments, **Psalm 119:172**), is sown in peace [not war] of them that MAKE PEACE,” **James 3:18.** You do not make *peace* by making *war*!

This same apostle wrote in explicit terms the *true* cause of war (**James 4:1-3**). This text was quoted in Chapter I. He showed that the root cause of war is lust and greed. Lust and greed are sin as defined by the Ten Commandments, and the violation of this law is sin, **I John 3:4.** The Christian is to quit sinning, **Romans 6:12.**

In this place James rebukes the twelve tribes of Israel (compare **James 1:1** with **4:1**) for participating in war. He tells them how to keep from having war. It is too bad that the modern Israelitish countries do not heed his instruction. If they did, the world would be a much better place in which to live.

Did Peter Follow Christ?

Certain churches believe that Peter was given the keys of rulership over the Church. Did he follow Christ in teaching that we are not to participate in these worldly wars?

“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us leaving us an example, that ye should follow His steps,” **I Peter 2:21.**

This specific example given by Peter

shows that we should suffer for the cause of Christ, *not cause suffering*. Peter followed Christ's example. After his conversion, he did not take up arms against others. He learned his lesson on the Mount of Olives the night before Christ's crucifixion.

Peter taught that we are to have compassion for others — to be courteous — to have pity on others, **I Peter 3:8**. In the verses following this text, Peter taught that we are not to render evil for evil, nor railing for railing. On the contrary, we are to bless those who do evil to us or who rail against us. God has His eyes on the righteous and will take care of them when they follow this instruction, **I Peter 3:12**. Peter did follow Christ, He taught that we were not to kill or harm others, just as Christ, his Master did.

Did John Follow Christ?

Did the Apostle John follow Christ in this teaching?

He taught that if a man says that he loves God and hates his brother he is a LIAR! (**I John 4:20**). A person who is even angry with another has already committed murder in his heart, **Matthew 5:22**. You cannot kill — ever — in war, unless you hate or develop a sense of *hatred* toward the enemy.

John also taught that those who are begotten of God overcome the world. But how do we overcome the world? By war? No, by *faith*, **I John 5:4**.

The whole theme of John's writings is *love*, both to God and neighbor. All of his writings were contrary to hate, violence, and warfare.

Did Paul Preach a NEW Gospel?

Did Paul follow Christ in this teaching against war and violence, or did he in his "Pauline theology" teach a different doctrine than Christ and the other Apostles? Paul wrote:

"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ," **I Corinthians 11:1**.

This scripture shows plainly that Paul followed or "imitated" (Revised Standard Version) Christ. He also taught the same identical Gospel that Christ did, contrary to many of the modern Biblical scholars. Let's examine his writings to really prove that he *did* follow Christ.

He preached a gospel of peace, **Romans 10:15**, and told us to "live in peace," **II Cor-**

inthians 13:11. We are told to follow this peace with all men, **Hebrews 12:14**. We cannot follow peace with all men if we are fighting them in warfare!

Paul taught that we were not to take vengeance on others. That is God's prerogative, not ours.

"Recompense to no man evil for evil If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst give him to drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good," **Romans 12:17-21**.

This scripture is so plain and clear that there is no need for explanation. Any *honest* person can see by this *one* scripture that it is wrong for a Christian to go to war and fight against others.

A reading of the "love" chapter of the Bible, **I Corinthians, chapter thirteen**, ought to show that it would be impossible for a person with real Christian love to fight in carnal wars. The Apostle Paul is consistent with the teachings of Christ, isn't he? But only a few of his many teachings are mentioned here which deal with this subject.

Paul stated that Christ lived within the Christian, **Galatians 2:20**. It is only logical then that the Christian who alone has Christ living within him, would do just as Christ did and that would not include taking up arms against others. Christ is the *same* yesterday, today, and forever, **Hebrews 13:8**, therefore, He would not cause violence in carnal warfare now in the lives of all *true* Christians.

War is a Work of the Flesh

Those traits that Paul enumerated as being of the works of the flesh included hatred, wrath, strife, seditions, and murders. In making war with the nations of this world, a person would be committing all of these wrong "works." The Apostle to the Gentiles states, **Galatians 5:20-21**, that the people who do these things would never inherit the Kingdom of God.

On the other hand, the Apostle continues in this same passage to show that the Christian who has Christ living within him will have the "fruits of the spirit." These include love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness,

and meekness. Such traits are diametrically opposed to any participation in warfare with carnal physical nations.

A person who is really seeking to do the will of God can easily see from the writings of this Apostle that he did not in one instance condone fighting or warfare or being involved in this world's quarrels or fights. In fact Paul showed clearly that even though others would spitefully use us, or who would cause trouble and all manner of evil to come upon us, we should not return evil to *any man*, **I Thessalonians 5:15**. That would certainly include an opposing soldier in another army.

Ambassadors for Christ

Paul showed why we cannot become members of any military organization because we are citizens of a heavenly kingdom (incorrectly translated *conversation*, from the Greek word *politeia*) and as such we cannot become a member in the armed forces of an opposing kingdom, **Philippians 3:20**. The kingdoms of this world are *against* the rule and government of Almighty God. We are Ambassadors for Christ, **II Corinthians 5:20**, and as such, we cannot fight for a foreign government anymore than the United States Ambassador to Russia can fight for the Communists. But we must show proper respect and honor toward our country as **Romans 13** clearly shows. We can salute our flag, since it is a symbol of the nation, and is due proper respect. It is not idolatry to show respect to government, or the symbols of government. Later chapters will explain these things more completely, and show how we must be in obedience to authority.

The individual who is following Christ with his whole heart will find from the writings of this Apostle another reason why it is impossible to serve in the military forces of this world. *A Christian is already a soldier!* A Christian is already in a war for another government and kingdom. But it is not a physical war! Anyone should know that it is illegal, unlawful, and possibly punishable by death for a person to be a member of *two different armed forces* of different nations.

Our Warfare is Spiritual

Paul brings this out in several scriptures. He showed that we are now in a *spiritual warfare*. We are not fighting in the same way as those of this world and its governments.

We do not use physical weapons, but our weapons are all spiritual, **Ephesians 6:11-18**. We are not in a warfare with the people of this world, but with Satan and his legions of unclean spirits. We are also at war against entanglements and weaknesses of the flesh.

He instructed the young evangelist Timothy to "war a good warfare," **I Timothy 1:18** and to endure hardness or trials as a good soldier, **II Timothy 2:3-4**. He also said in this same place that we are soldiers of Jesus Christ and such a person cannot become entangled by affairs of this life. Verse twenty-four states that such a person should not strive but be "gentle unto all men." The Apostle was also engaged in this same warfare and he "fought a good fight," **II Timothy 4:7**.

We cannot serve two masters — we cannot serve in two armed forces — else we will hate the one and love the other, **Matthew 6:24**.

Our principal weapon is God's Word — it is not the physical weapon used by this world, **Hebrews 4:12**. We need not use physical weapons if God is on our side since He has all power and authority, and can, and will, act on our behalf to protect and guide us. He is a consuming fire which will devour all *adversaries*, **Hebrews 12:29**.

With these few quotations from the writings of the Apostle Paul it becomes plain that he followed Christ. He did not preach some new doctrine which "permitted" Christians to take up arms in defense or in offense. When we really come to understand the whole Bible on this subject, we will find that *all Scripture* is actually in harmony on this subject.

Since the Apostle is now obviously proven to have forbidden participation in physical warfare, let us see if the New Testament Church followed his instruction, the instruction of Jesus Christ, and the original twelve apostles.

Christian Church Founded Amidst War and Tumult

Flavius Josephus, who lived during this same period of time, gave us great detail regarding the conditions in Palestine during this same period. The last section of his historical book concerns the *Wars of the Jews*. In one translation of his work there are about 150 pages of text concerning this period of time which concern the seditions, uprisings, wars and rumors of wars. This period with

which we are concerned, from the time of Christ to A.D. 70 when Jerusalem was destroyed, was one of almost continual war and tumult.

It was under such conditions that God sent Jesus Christ to this earth. It was during this time that God started His Church at Jerusalem. With wars and rumors of wars going on all around them, just what did the Christians do? If it were proper to participate in war, here certainly was an opportune time to do it. Palestine was under the heavy Roman dictatorship. Injustices were rampant.

Here surely was the time to overthrow the tyrannical, dictatorial government which suppressed Christianity.

Many people in this time did continually try to throw off the Roman yoke. There was a group of people called the *Zealots* who bitterly, and sometimes violently opposed this rule. Jesus probably would have received much favor from some of His countrymen if He had joined them as their leader to bring freedom.

If He had done this, many would have accepted Him then as the Messiah, since many of the people were looking for the Messiah who would free them from Roman rule. But Jesus had nothing to do with violent or forceful overthrow of government.

Anyone who would like to read more about these perilous times can find ample information by reading the pertinent sections in Josephus.

Jesus did not take part in trying to eject the "foreign invader." Neither He nor any of His followers did any of these things! He and His disciples very carefully stayed completely away from participation in military service and from politics of any kind. Jesus let Caesar run his own government. He let Caesar fight his own wars, and He let the Jews carry on their own uprisings without His assistance.

After the Church was founded on Pentecost, 31 A.D., the Christians were right in the middle of these wars and all kinds of trouble. But there is not one shred of evidence in the whole of the book of Acts or the whole New Testament that the Christians had anything to do with any of these activities. The reason is that they really followed Christ! They obeyed Him rather than man, **Acts 5:29**.

"And ye shall be hated of all men for My name's sake: but he that endureth to the end shall be saved. But when they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another: for verily I say unto you, Ye shall not have gone over the

cities of Israel, till the Son of Man be come," **Matthew 10:22-23**.

The Church was hardly founded before the prophesied persecution came. About three and one-half years after the Church was founded, severe persecution began.

The first record we have of Christians following this instruction is found in the book of Acts.

"And at that time there was a great persecution against the Church which was at Jerusalem; and they were all scattered abroad throughout the regions of Judea and Samaria except the Apostles," **Acts 8:1**.

If there ever was a time, here was a time to "defend the faith." Here was a time to defend the sanctity and privacy of the home, or to stand up and fight, but God's people left the *vengeance* to God and *they fled* to other places as Christ instructed.

This prophecy is dual and also refers to our time today. The time is soon coming when another persecution will come against God's true Church. In that time many of God's people will again have to flee for their lives. Those who disobey will probably be tortured and killed.

What About Cornelius?

Some may quickly bring up the point of the soldier Cornelius. The scriptures tell of his conversion in Acts 10. What about Cornelius? He was in the Roman army of occupation. He was a devout man, and to him and his house the Holy Spirit was first given among the Gentiles. Peter did not tell him to sever connections with the military. He did not tell him that in order to be converted he must be discharged! These are arguments that many people bring up. There is only one error in such arguments. The scriptures do not record the details of *all the instruction* that Peter gave Cornelius. Since Peter was obedient to the scriptures, he would give the same instruction to this soldier that John the Baptist did, **Luke 3:14**. He would give him the same instructions that Paul gave regarding people in such slavery, **I Corinthians 7:21-23**. In a later chapter, we will explain these particular scriptures fully.

In examining the New Testament scriptures, it is found that they are silent about any Christian participation in war. The reason is that they did not participate in the wars that were going on. They had not departed from the faith! They followed Christ and did not

harm or kill other human beings.

Flee for Your Lives

The Christians knew very well from Christ's Olivet prophecy that during their time there would be wars and rumors of wars, but they also knew that they were *not to participate in them*. They knew that things were going to degenerate to the point that they would finally have to flee for their very lives. Jesus prophesied that when they saw Jerusalem surrounded by armies, they were not to fight for their lives or freedom. They were not to participate in the war in any way. Instead they were to flee to the mountains for safety. Instead of defending home, honor or country, *they were to flee*.

Today we are sometimes asked just what we would do in case of invasion by foreign enemies of our beloved country. In the first place, if all of the people of our country were obeying and trusting in God, it would never happen. Since they are not obeying God, we know from prophecy that we will be invaded, and our country will go into terrible slavery. When that time comes, God has promised that those of His Church who have been watching and praying diligently, will be able to escape. God will provide a way of escape for His people.

The world might not consider this the honorable way to face the enemy — but it is the way that God will provide — it is the way He has instructed His people to follow when His remnant Church goes to a place of refuge, **Revelation 12:14**.

At the time immediately before the final siege of Jerusalem, the New Testament Church followed the instructions Christ gave them. They did not participate in the war, they *fled* for their lives. Here are the instructions Jesus gave about this flight:

“And when ye shall see Jerusalem compassed with armies, then know that the desolation thereof is nigh. Then let them which are in Judea flee to the mountains; and let them which are in the midst of it depart out; and let

not them that are in the countries enter thereinto,” **Luke 21:20-21**.

Here is exactly what they did do according to Eusebius, a famous church writer of the fourth century:

“On the other hand, the people of the Church in Jerusalem were commanded by an oracle given by revelation before the war to those in the city who were worthy of it to depart and dwell in one of the cities of Perea which they called Pella. To it those who believed on Christ migrated from Jerusalem, that when holy men had altogether deserted the royal capital of the Jews and the whole land of Judea, the judgment of God might at last overtake them for all the ir crimes against Christ and His apostles, and all that generation of the wicked be utterly blotted out from among men” (*Ecclesiastical History*, Book III, Vol. 4).

We have now seen many scriptures and facts to prove beyond a shadow of a doubt that Jesus taught us not to take part in the military services or to harm others.

The original Apostles in their writings continued in the faith and gave this same teaching. Paul, the Apostle to the Gentiles, continued to preach in strong and unwavering letters this same truth. The Christian Church, even during the time of severe persecution, and of wars and rumors of wars, did “keep the faith” and did not permit such perilous times to cause them to disobey God and participate in these bloody uprisings and wars. They fled in the time of persecution, and when the final destruction came on Jerusalem they had already fled for their lives according to the instructions of their Master.

They kept the faith! They did not waver! But, did succeeding generations of the Church follow this same shining example? The Bible and secular history has the answer. It is amazing and surprising when the story is fully told. The next chapter will unfold a new era in the Church. Startling changes came about. Just what were those changes and how do they affect us today? We shall see!

Chapter IV

Did The Early Church Fight?

Most churches and their leaders take for granted that good Christians should fight for their country during the time of war.

Here is an example of this common and

almost universal teaching today.

“A soldier may kill in time of war, but for him to kill in the spirit of hatred is not the proper Christian attitude, a Roman Catholic

priest said last night. Francis J. Connell, C.S.S.R., a former dean of Catholic University in Washington D.C., said Catholics may not justifiably become pacifists or conscientious objectors” *Bergen Record*, Baltimore, April 17, 1961).

This clergyman states that it is *wrong* for a Christian *not to* engage in war. A Christian must not become a pacifist or conscientious objector!

This article continues: “He said that war is not intrinsically evil, according to Catholic doctrine, but for a nation to embark on a course of war certain conditions must be met.”

What are the conditions that must be met before a nation may embark on a course of war?

“The first condition, he said, requires that there be sufficient reason for a country to engage in war.”

What are the reasons that a nation may use to justify entering into a war?

“Connell said the only just war is one of defense and that there is never sufficient moral reason for aggression. Other conditions demand that those who declare war must be morally certain they are right and that the results expected overbalance the evil caused by the conflict. ‘Before a nation enters a war it must have exhausted all avenues leading to a possible peaceful solution,’ he said. A soldier, he said, also must comply with a condition — that he does not bear hatred for the enemy in his heart. ‘No man may take another’s life without authorization from God,’ Connell said, ‘and every government receives its authority from him’.”

This is representative of the teachings of most churches today, as will be *proved* in a later chapter.

Did the Church start this way? Has this always been the teaching of the Church? In this chapter we will begin to see the historical record of what Church leaders taught during the first few centuries.

In the last chapter we saw time after time how Jesus Christ and the original true Apostles taught exactly opposite to the clergyman just quoted. The Apostles practiced the very same things that Christ practiced. The Church followed His personal instructions, to escape to safety prior to the siege and destruction of A.D. 70.

How Can Man Kill in Love?

Pastor Connell stated that a soldier must not kill in hatred. Even though a soldier does not kill in hate, how can he kill in love? Jesus said: “Love your enemies,” **Matthew 5:44**. How can a physical human being KILL another human being *in love*? To love is to *give* of the self, in service and in devotion to others.

Killing is not *giving*, it is *taking*. It is not showing love to neighbor. If this is an expression of love, then the soldier ought to let the enemy kill him instead of killing the enemy.

This same source states that it is wrong to become a pacifist, or a conscientious objector. Is it wrong to be peaceful? (That is what pacifism means). Paul said, “Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another,” **Romans 14:19**. This man says that it is wrong to have a conscience which will not permit you to kill other human beings in mortal combat.

Are these teachings the same as those of Jesus Christ as recorded in the Sermon on the Mount, and throughout *your* New Testament? Pastor Connell states that *defensive* war is permissible. Did Jesus and the true Apostles defend themselves? Did they teach anyone, or any country, to defend itself? Did they teach Christians to take vengeance on invaders? Did they say that we are to take vengeance, or instead, that God would take vengeance for us, **Romans 12:19**?

In essence, this teacher says (like most of the teachers and religious leaders of our day), that we as individuals or as nations (which are made up of many individuals) may decide for ourselves, within our own conscience, *what is right and what is wrong*. But God says our natural hearts — our consciences — will deceive us and lead us to eternal death (**Jeremiah 17:9** and **Proverbs 14:12, 16:25**).

The teaching of man is that nations have been given the authorization from God to wage war. They, in turn, have authority from God to *force* a citizen to take up arms against a citizen of another country. The citizen is then required to kill other human beings.

Has Almighty God given nations authority to cause Christians in one country to slay Christians in another country? Christian

against Christian, brother against brother, race against race? This is confusion. It is Babylon. IT IS WRONG! It did not come from the Bible. It did not come from the teachings of Jesus Christ. It did not even come from the original leaders of the Catholic Church, as this chapter *will prove* unmistakably.

What has led to this “about face” from the *simple and plain teaching of Christ*? What did happen, when did it happen, and who was involved in it?

The last chapter closed with events leading up to, and including the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70. But, the Bible was not completely written in A.D. 70. Some books were not finished until about A.D. 96. In order to continue the *historical* account we must first look in the Bible, to the scriptures which were written after A.D. 70.

History Continues in the Bible

The Book of Revelation was inspired by Jesus Christ. It is *His* Revelation, His revealing, **Revelation 1:1**. It tells us some of the things that were taking place then, and those things which were going to happen very quickly.

Did Jesus Christ preach the same message through John in this book as He did before?

The things prophesied to “shortly come to pass” begin in chapters two and three. Here is an account of the seven eras of God’s Church. The first era was the Ephesian era. This era was one which would require much *patience* because of the terrible times of deception and trial.

The period of God’s Church known as Smyrna was one of extreme tribulation. It was one in which true Christians would be imprisoned, and in which many would die. They were exhorted to be faithful even unto death, **verse 10**. Here is an example of where God’s people were persecuted to death. *They did not love their lives, even unto death*. They did not take up arms — arms were taken up against them — *they were slaughtered for the sake of the Gospel of Jesus Christ*. They did not believe in participating in war and fighting, even to save their own lives.

Christ knew that there would be an increasing number of wars, the climax would come at the close of this age, with world wars, **Revelation 6:4**. These many martyred Christians of all times are symbolically *seen* under the altar, **Revelation 6:9**.

Conditions were prophesied to become so

bad that God’s Church would have to flee into an almost uninhabited wilderness or desert, **Revelation 12:13-17**.

These scriptures, inspired by the living Christ and written by John ought to show that true Christians were not to fight in the many wars of the past 2,000 years.

A false church system is described in **Revelation 17 and 18**. It is pictured as one which is *drunk* on the blood of the saints, **Revelation 17:6**. Here is a false church which takes advantage of, and kills those who will obey God. For these crimes against God’s people, *in the name of religion*, God will bring judgment and vengeance on this *counterfeit* and deceitful system, **Revelation 18:20-24**.

All these scriptures in Revelation are plain in showing that Christians would be taken advantage of in every possible way. They would be like Christ, as lambs led to the slaughter, and as sheep in the midst of wolves. Not having natural or physical protection, they can only rely on God for His help and ultimate escape from evil men who desire to kill and exterminate them any way possible.

The teachings in the Book of **Revelation** are not contrary to other teachings of Jesus Christ. He did not speak differently in the Book of Revelation in 96 A.D., than 65 years earlier when He was in the flesh.

Secular History Shows Changes

When did the “about-face” in teaching occur? We have now seen that it did not occur prior to A.D. 96. And yet, there was a *great change* about this time. Two historical writers have particularly noted a remarkable, unmistakable, and definite change.

“For fifty years after St. Paul’s life a curtain hangs over the Church, through which we strive vainly to look; and when at last it rises, about 120 A.D., with the writings of the earliest church fathers, we find a church in many aspects very different from that in the days of St. Peter and St. Paul” *The Story of the Christian Church*, (Hurlbut, page 41).

This same period is called by some scholars the “Age of Shadows.” Others have aptly called it the “Lost Century.”

The famed historian Edward Gibbon referred to this same period in his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*. “The scanty and suspicious materials of ecclesiastical history seldom enable us to dispel the dark cloud that

hangs over the first age of the Church” (chapter XV).

When this cloud over the first age of the Church is removed, what will we find being taught in regard to Christian participation in warfare? Will it be drastically changed as other doctrines were, or will it continue the same as under the teachings of Jesus Christ and the apostles?

Warfare Teaching Didn't Change

To find the answer we must examine certain writings of the *church leaders* of the period. The writings concerning our subject are summed up in the following surprising quotation from *The Christian and Military Service* by Herman Will, Jr. “It is a known fact that for two centuries and more after Christ, Christians almost invariably refused to serve in the armed forces.”

Justin Martyr is known as one of the first and most important church leaders and writers. He is acknowledged as one of the “church fathers” by Catholic and Protestant alike. This famous man lived in the period of 100 to 167 A.D. He has been termed “one of the ablest men of his time” (*Halley's Bible Handbook*, page 674). He died a martyr at Rome. This church leader left considerable writings which have been preserved. Here is his personal comment about Christians and warfare.

“And we who formerly used to murder do not only refrain from making war upon our enemies, but also, that we may not lie nor deceive our examiners, willingly die confessing Christ” (From *Apology I*, page 39).

He spoke for those of his religion, who in his day did not participate in warfare of any kind. Instead of persecuting those of contrary religious or political belief, these people were the persecuted. They would not take part in war and even in the case of “examination” (torture) they would not lie, nor would they cause harm to come to others.

Here is just one source of proof that shows the people who professed Christ in his day were still following the teachings given by Christ and continued by the Apostles. There is no great change here from the beliefs and practices of the Church of God during the time of the Apostles. The great change in belief regarding participating in war had not yet come.

The second writer of this era whom we wish to examine is **Irenaeus**, who lived from

130 to 200. He was a teacher of the Church in the school of Asia Minor. He traveled widely, wrote several books, and later became bishop of Lyons, in Gaul (now France). Here are his comments about Christians, taken from the books *Irenaeus Against Heresies*, Book IV, Chapter XXXIV, section 4.

“These (Christians) did form the swords and war lances into ploughshares, and changed them into pruning hooks for reaping the corn, (that is), into instruments used for peaceful purposes, and that they are now unaccustomed to fighting, but when smitten, offer also the other cheek.”

Tertullian was another prominent leader who lived in this time. He was one of the two most noted men of the famed church school at Carthage in North Africa. As a result he did much to shape theological thought in Europe. He is called the “Father of Latin Christianity,” and lived from about 160 to 220. He was very explicit in his teachings and writings on this subject.

“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?” (From *De Corona*, Chapter XI).

He uses a similar statement in another book to show that the common teaching prohibited Christians from taking part in war.

“But how will a Christian man war, nay, how will he serve even in peace, without a sword, which the Lord has taken away?” (From *De Idolatria*, Chapter XIX).

The statement of Jesus in **Matthew 26:52** was well understood by these men who *knew* that warfare and fighting was strictly and completely forbidden by the *plain words* of Christ and the Apostles.

Here is an even more remarkable excerpt from his teachings. Certainly this shocking teaching would be completely unacceptable in most churches today

“If we are enjoined, then, to love our enemies, as I have remarked above, whom have we to hate? If injured, we are forbidden to retaliate, lest we become as bad ourselves: who can suffer injury at our hands . . . For what wars should we not be fit, not eager, even with unequal forces, we who so willingly yield ourselves to the sword, if in

our religion it were not counted better to be slain than to slay? Without arms even, and raising no insurrectionary banner . . .” (From *Apology*, Chapter XXXVII).

Multitudes of Christians Would Not Fight

Some may suppose that these teachings were limited to just a few Christian converts, or to a small portion of those who considered themselves to be Christians. Were these teachings of the *most prominent* Church leaders *generally accepted* and *practiced* by the Church people in this time? There is no need to be in doubt. To make it very clear how widespread this teaching was and how it was then accepted by the *whole Church* it is necessary to continue from the text last quoted.

“For if such multitudes of men were to break away from you (Caesar), and betake themselves to some remote corner of the world, why, the very loss of so many citizens, whatever sort they were, would cover the empire with shame; nay in the very forsaking, vengeance would be inflicted . . . you would have more enemies than citizens remaining. For it is the immense number of Christians which makes your enemies so few — almost all the inhabitants of your various cities being followers of Christ” (From *Apology*, Chapter XXXVII).

The Church accepted and practiced these teachings in such great numbers that if they would leave the Roman Empire, Caesar would have few enemies left. The Christians were not his enemies. They did not take up arms against him or with him. He would have everything to gain and nothing to lose to keep this vast number of people from leaving the empire, even though they would not fight or support him in his wars.

How different are the beliefs and practices today! Most who now profess the name of Christ almost totally accept the teachings that a Christian should fight for his country. The great majority of people in the churches today will fight. In the beginning ages of the Church, the people would not fight. *They knew it was wrong.*

These teachings were not done in a corner. Everyone embracing the faith knew about it. We have already seen the proof in history. Any good public library has these very same comments in the many volumes of the Ante-Nicene Fathers, from which they have been taken.

Another very famous scholar and church leader of this period was **Origen**. Here is a summary from *Halley's Bible Handbook* about this man, found on page 675.

“ORIGEN. 185-254. The most learned man of the ancient Church. A great traveler; and a voluminous writer, employing at times as many as twenty copyists. Two-thirds of the New Testament is quoted in his writings. He lived in Alexandria, where his father Leonidas, suffered martyrdom; later, in Palestine, where he died as a result of imprisonment and torture under Decius”

Here is what he wrote and taught concerning the question of a Christian fighting. Notice the kind of *fighting* he did.

“And none fight better for the king than we do. We do not indeed fight under him, although he requires it; but we fight on his behalf, forming a special army — an army of piety — by offering our Prayers to God” (*Contra Celsum*, Chapter VIII, page 73).

In another place he discusses the same subject in this work as follows:

“We are come, agreeably to the counsels of Jesus to ‘cut down our hostile and insolent wordy swords into plowshares, and to convert into pruninghooks the spears formerly employed in war.’ For we no longer take up ‘sword against nation,’ nor do we ‘learn war anymore,’ having become children of Peace, for the sake of Jesus, who is our leader, instead of those whom our fathers followed among whom we were ‘strangers to the covenant’;” (*Contra Celsum*, Chapter V, page 33).

Cyprian was another very famous Church leader of this same period and time. He was the other leader of the famous school at Carthage, North Africa, who was mentioned earlier in connection with Tertullian. He was a bishop at this Church school, and has been referred to as “one of the great writers and Church leaders of the period” (*Story of the Christian Church*, Hurlbut, page 56). He was martyred in 257 by the Roman Emperor Valerian. Here are his comments about warfare:

“The whole world is wet with mutual blood; and murder, which in the case of an individual is admitted to be a crime, is called a virtue when it is committed wholesale. Impunity is claimed for the wicked deeds, not on the plea that they are guiltless, but because the cruelty is perpetrated on a grand scale” (*Epistles*, Chapter I, page 6).

The last writer to be mentioned from this

period is **Lactantius**. He lived until the time of Constantine. His writings show very plainly that Churches were still teaching that Christians were not to fight, at least until the time of Constantine.

“But we on the contrary do not require that anyone should be compelled, whether he is willing or unwilling, to worship our God, who is the God of all men; nor are we angry if anyone does not worship Him. For we trust in the majesty of Him who has power to avenge contempt shown towards Himself as, also He has power to avenge the calamities and injuries inflicted on His servants, and therefore, when we suffer such impious things, we do not resist even in word; but we remit vengeance to God” (*The Divine Institutes*, Book V, Chapter 21).

This same author covers the subject of military service and killing more specifically in the following excerpt from *The Divine Institutes*, Book VI, Chapter 20.

“For when God forbids us to kill, he not only prohibits us from open violence, which is not even allowed by the public laws, but he warns us against the commission of those things which are esteemed lawful among men. Thus it will be neither lawful for a just man to

engage in warfare”

These statements of principal writers and Church leaders of the time ought to prove without any further doubt what the Churches as a whole practiced at that time in regard to fighting.

The belief of the Church during this time was so ingrained that: “Maximilian and a number of others in the second century actually suffered martyrdom for refusing, on gospel principles to bear arms” (*Inconsistent with the Religion of Jesus Christ*, by David Low Dodge, page 117).

This same work also states, “Clarkson, who also examined the fathers, declares that ‘every Christian writer of the second century who notices the subject makes it unlawful for Christians to bear arms’,” (page 117).

How different this is from the teachings of the present generation of the churches! Both Protestant and Catholics trace their churches through these very men and these are the written teachings of that time.

Obviously, a startling transformation has been made since that time. The next chapter will show how that remarkable change came, and *who caused it*.

Chapter V The Church Reverses Its Teaching

“What would happen if everyone believed like you and would not fight?” Have you ever heard this question? To many people today it is almost incredible that some Christians will not fight in war.

In the last chapter, we saw writings of the *leading* Churchmen in the first few centuries. They wrote that many thousands, and possibly even millions of people in the early Church would not fight. As a result, many people in the Catholic religion were asked, “Why won’t you fight?” The historians, as well as the church writers, have noted this fact.

“This indolent, or even criminal disregard to the public welfare (of not fighting for the empire) exposed them (the Christians) to the contempt and reproaches of the Pagans, who very frequently asked, what must be the fate of the empire attacked on every side by the barbarians, if all mankind should adopt the pusillanimous sentiments of the new sect?” (*Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, Edward Gibbon, Chapter XV, Volume I, page 416).

It is now definite that early Christians would not fight in war, but wouldn’t they at least defend themselves from being killed by others? Wouldn’t they fight in self-defense?

“Their simplicity was offended by the use of oaths, by the pomp of magistracy, and by the active contention of public life; nor could their humane ignorance be convinced that it was lawful on any occasion to shed blood of our fellow creatures either by the sword of justice or by that of war, even though their criminal or hostile attempts should threaten the peace and safety of the whole community. . . . But while they inculcated the maxims of passive obedience, they refused to take any active part in the civil administration or the military defense of the empire” (*ibid.*).

With such a start, it is strange that the common teaching in religion today is exactly opposite to the practice of the early Church. When did the remarkable change take place? In the last chapter we found that the change had not been made by the time of Constantine.

Compromise with Sin Begins

The general teaching of the Church was against any participation in warfare. *However*, even though this was the accepted teaching, there were a few in the latter part of the second century who were beginning to waver from this truth. Signs of compromise by a few were becoming increasingly evident. A few did not follow the original Church teaching.

One of the scholars who is a recognized authority on this subject states that there is no record of a Christian enlisting in the army after his conversion until the reign of Marcus Aurelius (*The Early Christian and War*, by C. J. Cadoux, page 276). Marcus Aurelius was a Roman Emperor who reigned from 161 to 180 A.D. Some began to compromise with the teaching of the Church by this time. This was about one hundred years after the fall of Jerusalem. Several new generations had been born by this time.

From the time of Marcus Aurelius there was a gradual change of practice by a few of the people. However, there was no general teaching by the clergy permitting Christians to enter into the army or to fight in war. The recognized leaders of the Church along with the overwhelming majority of the people continued in their refusal to take up arms. At this time the Church was being subjected to violence and persecution instead of being violent and persecuting others. It was not until about a century and a half later that the way was paved for a *change* in the thinking of the clergy. To give a little background on the reason for this change, it is necessary to give a few details of what was happening in civil and religious affairs.

The Cross Became Symbol of War

In 305 A.D. the Roman emperor Diocletian abdicated his throne. There were four contenders for the throne, Maxentius and Constantine being the two leading ones. Before this time there had been persecution against the Church. But, Constantine was friendly towards the Christians. His principal rival represented an element which persecuted them.

About this time Constantine claimed to have seen a heavenly vision of the cross bearing a motto, "By this sign thou shalt conquer." He adopted this as the new standard for his army. Before this time, the cross had become a symbol of peace and reverence in

the Catholic Church. Now the symbol became one of war. As a result many people have questioned Constantine's claim of this "heavenly vision."

"And so for the first time the meek and peaceful Jesus became a God of battle, and the cross, the holy sign of Christian redemption, a banner of bloody strife. This irreconcilable incongruity between the symbol of universal peace and the horrors of war, in my judgment, is conclusive against the miraculous or supernatural character of the transaction" (*The History of Christianity*, H. H. Millman, page 288).

Constantine had been a man of war and bloodshed. His toleration of the Christian religion at this period in his life did not change him from a pagan to a Christian. He gave many concessions to the Catholic Church, forced the people to obey this church, but still continued in some of his pagan ways. This patron of the church did not even submit to the rite of baptism until several years after, when he was near death.

The remarkable change of Constantine, concerning the church became apparent in the Edict of Milan in 313 A.D. This edict returned to the church their confiscated lands and properties. Now the developing Catholic hierarchy was greatly in the debt of this emperor, and he became a great influence in the thinking and practice of this professing Christian church.

Constantine accepted the Catholic religion but found that there were many differing doctrines and sects within the church. He wanted to unify the church, to get the clergy to agree on the various doctrines so that there might be one church and not many churches. Prior to this time there had been many, many sects and divisions.

Constantine Brought Unity

Today there is a growing trend toward unity. But before Constantine there was no binding force to hold the various sects together. Constantine was the needed factor to bind these sects together. It was his desire for the clergy to get together and decide the theological issues. Whatever the clergy decided would be forced on the whole church. Those who would not obey would be called heretics or "anathema from Christ" and excommunicated. This meant almost certain death if the person did not flee for his life.

To unify the church, a series of church

councils were held. The first general council of the Western church was the Council of Arles in 314 A.D. It was summoned by Constantine and was attended by thirty-three bishops. Clergymen of lesser rank were not permitted to participate; however, they and the whole church were bound by the decisions rendered.

Ordination of the clergy was one of the principal subjects discussed and decided on in this council. However, other decisions were also made and bound on the church.

New Laws Come Into Vogue

Up to this time, the teaching of the church was against participation in war. Now *something new* happened. This council decided that: "They who throw away their weapons in time of peace shall be excommunicated" (Canon III).

What is meant by this particular canon law now bound on the whole Catholic Church?

Prior to this time there were many severe persecutions against those who espoused the cause of Christianity. All this was now changing. Constantine accepted Christianity as the state religion. There was now *peace* between the empire and the church.

Paul taught that true Christians were to try and gain their freedom from slavery if at all possible (**I Corinthians 7:21**). Now that Christianity was the accepted religion, many pagans in the armies would try and get their release from military service (a type of slavery) as a result of the new religion and its teachings.

Something must be done to stop this trend, which from a physical point of view might leave the whole empire defenseless against foreign invaders. Military strength must be kept, even though peace between the church and the state had been attained and even though the empire was not involved in any major wars.

To stop a mass exodus from the army, it was necessary for the church to publish this canon law. New Catholic Christians in military service were now prohibited from throwing away their arms now that peace between church and state had been attained.

There have been various interpretations of this canon of the council, however, this is the generally accepted one. Here is one authority, translated from the German to further prove this very point:

"Aubespine . . . reasoned, many Christians under the heathen Kaisers had doubts about military service and refused to render military service, or even deserted it, therefore our Synod spoke out, because of Constantine's intervention to change the duty of the Christian towards military service, to be sure for this reason: because the Church now has peace under a prince who is sympathetic to Christians one is not permitted to evade military service under such a prince" (*Conciliengeschichte*, by Hefele, page 206).

Here is the first official council of the Catholic Church. Already they have begun to compromise with the New Testament Biblical teachings. The practice of the church for almost three hundred years is now being changed. The result of this terrible compromise will be the subject of later chapters.

In spite of this instruction, some apparently did leave the army in their first love and zeal of the religion. Instead of following the instructions and remaining in the army, they left. Later that same zeal waned and they reconsidered. In fact, many even paid considerable sums to be accepted back into military service. The next council, the Council of Nicaea, had this to say about such a change. "As many as were called by grace, and displayed the first zeal, having cast aside their military girdles, but afterwards returned, like dogs to their own vomit, (so that some spent money and by means of gifts regained their military stations): let these, after they have passed the space of three years as hearers, be for ten years prostrators" (Canon XII).

By the time of Constantine, many men in the church were either in service or entering into military service. There was no longer a prohibition against killing in war. The attitude of the church was in a process of great change.

The church now had peace with the state, but the church was making compromises which would later lead to much war and bloodshed.

Eusebius Eulogizes Constantine the Warrior

At this period of time the principal church writer and historian was Eusebius. This man is well-known for his ecclesiastical and historical writings. Because of his influence on the church, he is named among the

principal church fathers.

As we have seen repeatedly, the church writers previously deplored any fighting or war making.

The remarkable change of attitude regarding war is also noted in the writings of Eusebius. He wrote about the great military conquests of the emperor in most complimentary terms. Previously it had been wrong in every sense of the word to fight. Now it became an act of benevolence and holiness to subjugate nations and people by the terrible scourge of war.

“And instructing his army in the mild and sober precepts of godliness, he carried his arms as far as the Britons and the Western Ocean. He subdued likewise all Scythia; though situated in the remotest North, and divided into numberless diverse and barbarous tribes. He even pushed his conquests to the Blemmyans and Ethiopians, on the very confines of the South; nor did he think the acquisition of the Eastern nations unworthy of his care. In short, diffusing the effulgence of his holy light to the ends of the whole world, even to the most distant Indians, the nations dwelling on the extreme circumference of the inhabited earth, he received the submission of all the rulers, governors, and satraps of barbarous nations who cheerfully welcomed and saluted him, sending embassies and presents, and setting the highest value on his acquaintance and friendship; insomuch that they honored him with pictures and statues in their respective countries, and Constantine alone of all emperors was acknowledged and celebrated by all. Notwithstanding, even among these distant nations, he proclaimed the name of his God in his royal edicts with all boldness” (*Life of Constantine*, Eusebius, Chapter VIII).

Who was the God of Constantine? Was He the Prince of Peace, Jesus, or the god of war?

It Became Praiseworthy to Fight

The change in attitude and teaching is evident in the writings of other church leaders and teachers of this time. One such man was Athanasius, Bishop of Alexandria, Egypt. This clergyman lived from about 296 to 373 A.D. He attended the great Nicaean Council of 325. He was rather outspoken in his beliefs and was not accepted by the majority. As a result he was banished several times, but he was accepted back during his last years as a

bishop of the church. This man had a great deal of influence over the thinking of the church for the following centuries. As a result he is sometimes called the father of orthodoxy. He was a man who had great influence in establishing within the church what was later taught as orthodoxy or the correct doctrines of the church. He taught that it was lawful and praiseworthy to kill one's adversary in war (*The Early Church and the World*, C. J. Cadoux, page 589).

New Testament Theology Harmonized With War

Augustine was another church leader of this period. He also had great influence on the church. It has been said that he, more than any other leader of the church, molded the doctrines of the church during the time of the Middle Ages. This man lived from about 354 to 430 A.D. and was Bishop of Hippo, North Africa. Some of the church historians have considered him to be the greatest expositor of the church since the Apostle Paul.

He “was one of the first Christian theologians to try and harmonize war with the New Testament” (*The New Testament Basis of Pacifism*, G. H. C. MacGregor, page 115).

Among the many works of Augustine is a very long and detailed work called “The City of God.” In this work he endeavored to describe the desire to make the empire into a church-state system comparable to the Kingdom of God on earth. In his long comments on many subjects a few show his belief and teachings regarding fighting in war.

“For even when we wage a lust war, our adversaries must be sinning; and every victory, even though gained by wicked men, is a result of the first judgment of God, who humbles the vanquished either for the sake of removing or of punishing for their sins” (Book XIX, Chapter 15).

He believed that Christians could fight just or righteous wars. It would be the enemy who sinned. This very idea that Christians could wage a just war led to many of the wars and persecutions to follow.

In another place in this same work he showed why people wage war. Notice the exact opposite reason to the Bible reason for war, as given in **James 4:1-4**.

“For everyone seeks peace by waging war” (Chapter 12).

What folly! Man has always sought peace by the means of war. Here the church is

teaching this same falsehood that war is the way to bring peace. Just as the Bible says, men do not know the way of peace, **Romans 3:17**.

Instead of realizing the Bible teaching of what causes war, this theologian continues to explain his idea of what forces men to be involved in war.

“For it is the wrongdoing of the opposing party which compels the wise man to wage just wars” (**Chapter 7**).

It is the “wrongdoing of the opposing party,” not lust and greed and vanity that causes war. This is the same excuse that has justified about every war that man has fought — and still there is no peace!

Killing in Defense is Justified

Another leader and writer of this time was Basil, Archbishop of Caesarea. He lived from about 330 to 379. He gave certain rules concerning homicide.

“He that kills another with a sword, or hurls an axe at his own wife and kills her is guilty of willful murder; not he . . . who kills a man in his own defense, when he only designed to hurt him” (Canon VIII, *The First Canonical Epistle of Basil*).

A century earlier the church writers stated that it was wrong to kill under any conditions. Now it is all right to kill in defense as well as in war.

“Our fathers did not think that killing in war was murder; yet I think it advisable for such as have been guilty of it to forbear communion three years” (Canon XII, *loc. cit.*).

The Whole Roman Army Becomes “Christian”

This new trend continued to the point where in the year 416 A.D., non-Christians were forbidden to serve in the army (Cadoux, p. 589). A few decades had now brought an about face to where the whole Roman army consisted of “Christians.”

Church Now Committed to Sanction War

The unusual situation of the church at this point is aptly described by the historian Cadoux.

“The consequence was that, when the events of the years following 313 A.D. suddenly called upon the Church to come

down definitely on one side of the fence or the other, she found that a free decision was no longer open to her. Her joy at the deliverance Constantinus had wrought for her was so great that it put her off her guard. . . . Official Christianity was now committed to the sanction of war — so far as the practical conduct of Christian men as citizens was concerned — whenever the State chose to wage it. Further than that the decision not only settled the practical question for the moment and doomed the dissentient voices — many as they still were — to ultimate silence, but it tied up the freedom of Christian thought, and made any unfettered discussion of the problem on its merits next to impossible for centuries to come. (From *The Early Church and the World*, C. J. Cadoux, page 592).

What has been the attitude of the Catholic Church regarding war since that time? In general, it has continued down to the present day with the same belief. Certain men of the clergy have spoken out against war from time to time. But, the overwhelming majority have either been silent or taught that war and Christian involvement is necessary.

Rather than continue an exhaustive study of teachings of this world church regarding killing and warfare, it should suffice to say that the Catholic Church does sanction warfare by sovereign states. It does teach that under certain conditions war is just and right. It does teach that a Christian should fight in war for his country. A clear example of this kind of teaching was given at the beginning of the last chapter.

The teaching of the church regarding homicide, or the killing of another human being in defense, is the same now as when taught by Basil, Archbishop of Caesarea in the fourth century.

“For the protection of one’s own or another’s life, limb, chastity, or valuables of some moment, it is agreed on all sides that it is lawful for anyone to repel violence with violence, even to the point of taking away the life of the unjust assailant, provided always that in so doing the limits of a blameless defense be not exceeded” (*Catholic Encyclopedia*, article on “Homicide”).

According to this teaching, Peter would have been justified in killing the high priest’s servant, **Matthew 26:51-52**. But Jesus Christ taught differently. The Catholic Church has not perpetuated the teachings of Christ against Christians fighting and killing. It did not

contend for the *true faith which was once delivered to the saints*, **Jude 3**. It compromised with Christ's teachings and even its own teachings by its founding fathers of the first three centuries. The result of this terrible

compromise has brought untold suffering on millions of people. As a result — God prophesies a soon-coming day of reckoning — a day of retribution and severe punishment.

Chapter VI **Protestants Do Not Have the Answer**

We have seen from historical records the history of Catholic teaching regarding participation in war and fighting. What has been the Protestant teaching and practice?

Most Protestant sects do not teach against fighting. The usual practice is for a young man in a Protestant church to fight for his country in time of national emergency.

However, there have been a few denominations who have taught that it is wrong to fight and participate in war.

Was Protestantism always divided on this subject? What was the view of the original theologians of the Protestant Reformation? Did they hold to the teachings of a few sects today, who will not participate in war, or did they teach that it was a Christian's duty to fight? Where did the various teachings start, and who are the ones who have held differing beliefs? It is time to learn the answer to these and other intriguing questions concerning various Protestant sects.

Luther's Teaching

The most famous man of the Protestant reformers was Martin Luther. In spiritual matters he taught that the Christian must be subject only to Christ. However, he taught that in physical matters concerning the state, *the Christian must be subject to the state*.

The reasoning behind this is that God has ordained all human government, and therefore man must be subject to that government.

Luther apparently wished to avoid the issue of fighting but it was necessary that he face the issue and state his belief. Here is his statement:

"The hand which bears such a sword (the sword of government) is as such no longer man's hand but God's; and not man it is, but God, who hangs, breaks on the wheel, beheads, strangles and wages war. . . . It is not I that smites, thrusts and kills, but God and my Prince, whose servants are my hand and life." (*Ob Kriegsleute*, page 626, as

quoted in *The New Testament Basis of Pacifism*, Macgregor, page 130).

From this one statement, it is apparent that Luther did not depart from the teaching of the Catholic Church on this point. The Protestant Reformation did not get back to the same teachings of Christ, the Apostles, or the Church of the first few centuries.

If God bears the sword of war for each government, as Luther reasons, then God fights against Himself in every war. This is the faulty reasoning of man contrary to God's revelation, the Bible!

Protestant Church Teaching

This basis of belief is commonly practiced or accepted by most Protestant Churches today. Very few if any churches who have held this belief have ever changed to the opposite view. However, there have been some sects and divisions of the Protestant Church who have been founded with the belief that fighting is wrong.

Principal among those who have started with nonviolent teachings are those of the "historic peace churches." These churches have always taught that war was wrong and that the Christian should have no participation in war. Or they have taught that if a Christian is engaged in war, it must be in a noncombatant capacity.

A noncombatant is a person in military service who does not carry any weapons. Such men usually work in special assignments such as the medical corps, or other positions not requiring the carrying of weapons. Of the churches of this group, the Society of Friends, often called Quakers, are most widely known. This society (it has never legally called itself a church) arose as a result of the teachings of George Fox in the middle of the 17th Century. This was a whole century after the time of Luther and the Reformation.

The Friends had considerable persecution in England, so many of them migrated to

America. In Massachusetts they had about as much persecution from the Puritans as they had previously experienced in England from the Anglicans. So, they moved to other areas such as Rhode Island and Pennsylvania. William Penn was one of the leaders of this organization. Here they finally found freedom from religious persecution.

Here is a portion of the statement on warfare by George Fox, the founder of the society, in a declaration made in 1660.

“We utterly deny all outward wars and strife, and fightings with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretence whatever; this is our testimony to the whole world. The Spirit of Christ . . . which leads us into all truth, will never move us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons, neither for the Kingdom of Christ, or for the kingdoms of this world. . . . Therefore we cannot learn war anymore.” (*Statements of Religious Bodies, Compiled by the National Service Board for Religious Objectors*, edited by C. Leroy Doty, page 27).

A second organization that has historically spoken against participation in war is the Mennonite and Brethren in Christ Churches. Here is a portion of their statement:

“We cannot compromise with war in any form. . . . We cannot have any part in financing war operations or preparations through war bonds. We cannot knowingly participate in the manufacture of munitions, weapons, and instruments of war or destruction. We cannot take part in scientific, educational, or cultural programs designed to contribute to war, or in any propaganda or activity that tends to promote ill-will or hatred among men or nations.”

From these statements it is clear that these organizations have stated their beliefs and intentions clearly. There are other religious sects that have also published statements of belief on warfare.

The Jehovah’s Witnesses are known to many people as conscientious objectors to war. However, their approach to this subject is slightly different from some of the other organizations. They believe themselves to be a society of ministers who are already in an army (spiritual) and therefore cannot participate in the military activities of the nations of this world. Here are portions of a statement prepared by the general counsel for the Jehovah’s Witnesses,

“Jehovah’s Witnesses are conscientiously opposed to war as prosecuted by nations and

to the participation in such war in any form. Jehovah’s witnesses are a society of ministers. . . . We are Christian soldiers, and as such we are in an army.” (*Ibid*, page 31).

The Church of the Brethren is another church which has taken a stand against military service.

Here is a portion of their official statement concerning war.

“All war is sin. We, therefore cannot encourage, engage in or willingly profit from armed conflict at home or abroad. We cannot, in the event of a war, accept military service or support the military machine in any capacity.” (*Ibid*, page 11).

These are just a few of the various sects who have taught against participation in the wars between nations. There are fifty-seven churches recorded in the work just quoted who have made statements concerning this subject. Some of these church statements teach that it is the Christian duty to fight in war, however most of them state that it is wrong.

Let Your Conscience be Your Guide

The majority of Protestant churches are “on the fence.” They permit their members to be pacifists, conscientious objectors of various sorts, *or to participate in war according to their own conscience.*

Even in those churches which teach against war and fighting there is a great variation in the belief and activity of the membership. Even in some sects that teach against fighting, the member may enter military service in a combatant or non-combatant capacity if “his conscience” so permits. Some do not follow the teaching of their church in regard to fighting. In some of these denominations one man may refuse “for conscience sake” to register with selective service. Another may register but refuse any kind of military service for “conscience sake.” Another may accept noncombatant service.

From these comments it becomes apparent that there is a great deal of *confusion* among the sects on this subject. Any observant person, especially during the time of war, such as World War II, will notice that the overwhelming majority of the Protestant Churches either permit their members to go to war, or *actively teach that they should* as a patriotic duty. Thus we have two extremes. One church teaches that the member must fight for his country. Another church teaches

that it is wrong under any circumstances to have anything to do with the military, or for that matter to even assist in a civilian capacity in the war effort. Between these extremes is every shade of difference in belief.

Here are churches which purport to be the Churches of Jesus Christ. Christ was not divided! Yet these churches are! This is BABYLON or *confusion*.

Conscience is not Enough

The basis of teaching for many of these churches is a matter of conscience. "Do what your conscience tells you." From this has come the common term "conscientious objectors." In other words, people who object to war for *conscience* sake. Others do not object to war for conscience sake. *Most* of the churches will not take a stand on this issue because their congregations would not permit it.

In following the *conscience*, a person does what seems right in his own mind. That is the way most religions follow today. In the final analysis each man is usually permitted to make up his own mind as to what is right or wrong. Whether or not he should fight or not fight. This way of life is mentioned several times in the Bible.

In the **Book of Judges**, almost continual wars and violence are described. There were famines, times of slavery, and times of temporary deliverance. What brought all this trouble and hardship to Israel? The reason is given at the very end of the book. "In those days there was no king in Israel: every man did that which was right in his own eyes," **Judges 21:25**.

The nation of Israel followed their *conscience*. Disaster and suffering resulted! Today the story is the same. We are in a time of war and rumor of war. Why? *Because people are still doing what seems right to them instead of what saith the Lord!*

Most of these churches are not teaching, "thus saith the Lord," concerning war and violence. They say: "Do what seems right to you (your conscience), God will understand." This same way is also mentioned in Proverbs. "There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death," **Proverbs 14:12, 16:25**. Here again is the *way of conscience*.

Why is it that the way of conscience is wrong? "The heart (mind, or conscience) is deceitful above all things, and desperately

wicked: who can know it?" **Jeremiah 17:9**.

From these scriptures it is plain why *we cannot use our conscience as our guide*. Something more sure and certain is needed. We must know *God's ways* and *His laws*, not our own ways!

"Christian" fights "Christian"

By following conscience, we may end up fighting against men of our own faith and doctrine. That is exactly what has happened in most of the wars of the last millennium and a half. Catholic fighting Catholic. Lutheran fighting Lutheran. Methodist fighting Methodist. Almost all major denominations have been fighting each other in the wars of men. Witness both world wars, and witness the Civil War in the United States where even "Christian" brother fought against "Christian" brother.

This is not of God! This is of Satan the Devil. Satan is trying to completely destroy the works and creation of God. One way he is attempting to do this, is to get the churches to teach that it is right to fight. Then, when war is stirred up, many people who have been taught this way of *conscience*, will fight and kill each other. Satan is trying to bring a complete end to all mankind and influence man to destroy himself in world cosmocide with the awesome and fearful atomic weapons now stockpiled. God will restrain man from such a terrible end and thwart Satan's plan, **Matthew 24:22**.

What we and all mankind need to learn is that there is a God in heaven who has set certain physical and spiritual laws in motion. It is these laws, *as revealed in Holy Scripture*, that are to regulate our behavior, *not our conscience*. Our conscience is only a reflection of our training, our environment, and what we have learned through the five physical senses. *This is not enough*. We need to have better facts and information on which to base our actions.

Bible has Only Sure Answer

We must go to the Bible to find God's Divine revelation for man. Throughout its pages we will find the right way to live. We will not find it by following our conscience. We need to be steadfast in our belief, based on the sure foundation of Jesus Christ and His teachings throughout the Bible. We must not do, as most of the religions of today, and

teach that we should fight. We should not sit on the fence as many other churches are doing today. We must make plain simple clear statements that fighting and warring between nations is sin! From such sin *we must turn away*.

We have seen a few of the teachings and statements from Catholic and Protestant sources and how they have changed through the years. Now, *what saith the Lord?* In

chapter two we read from a historical point of view what Jesus and the Apostles taught concerning fighting. Now we must examine again more closely some of these same teachings from a *doctrinal* point of view. First we need to examine carefully the teachings of the New Testament. Instead of following conscience, let us follow Christ. The next chapter will give His inspired teachings and those of the Apostles.

Chapter VII New Testament Teaches Against Fighting

Theologians have frequently used **Romans 13** to justify their teaching of “Christian” participation in warfare.

The theological argument about this text concerns the command to be subject to the *higher powers*. If the higher governmental powers require us to fight, then we must fight. Such reasoning means that if these powers require us to kill, to extort, rob, or maim, then we must obey. If we take this false reasoning even further we could add that no matter what law or violation of scripture is required of the soldier by these “higher powers,” it must be done. This is obviously not what Paul meant by this chapter.

Just what does God teach in this chapter?

Through the Apostle Paul, God instructs that we are to be *subject* to these higher powers since they are ordained or ordered by God, **verse 1**. Obviously he is referring to the higher governmental powers over the citizens of a country. This point in the text is understood correctly by almost everyone.

Notice that this text does not say that a Christian must *obey* the higher powers when such obedience is contrary to God’s instruction in the scriptures. In **Acts 5:29**, we read: “But Peter and the Apostles answered, We must obey God rather than men.”

We should first of all *obey* God in all things as defined in scripture. Then we should be subject to the law and to these powers. To be subject does not mean the same as *obeying!* Where there is a conflict, we should obey God first, and then be subject to whatever penalty is imposed.

We should show proper deference and respect to these rulers who have been put over us. Here is how **Revelation 13:7** is translated in the Revised Standard Version.

“Pay all of them their dues, taxes to whom

taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due.”

Carrying the sword to maintain peace and order in the community is confined to the higher power, **verse 4**, and *not to the Christian*. No mention is made here of a Christian being obligated to take the sword or to go into military service!

Paul makes it clear that our subjection to such powers, does not include killing others. Instead of killing in war, we should *love one another* (**verse 8**).

Thou Shalt Not Kill

The next verse includes the commandment: “Thou shalt not kill.” This should make it obvious that if the state or the higher powers require the Christian to fight and kill, he cannot. To further emphasize *how* we should be in subjection to the higher powers, he continues:

“Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law” (**verse 10** RSV).

From these comments it is *plain* that God nowhere in this scripture tells the Christian that he must take up the sword if required to do so by the higher powers. The truth is plain if you read the whole chapter, and do not put your own interpretation on one or two verses.

The Christian is further instructed on this same point to be subject to the powers that be, and to be ready for every good *work*, **Titus 3:1**. He should be gentle, meek; not fighting or brawling, **verse 2**. We should be subject to, or submit to the authority, yet obey only in those things *not in conflict* with the laws of God. We must be willing to submit to punishment when we cannot obey man’s

God-defying laws, and we must take it patiently.

The Cause of War

History is a *chronicle of wars*. It has been said that every nation is either preparing for war, in war, or recovering from a war.

Man has not yet learned that wars *have never solved his quarrels or problems!* Wars only bring misery, pain, death, and destruction. They cause, and are caused by, hate and evil, wrath and envyings. These are works of the flesh, **Galatians 5:17-21**. Exactly opposite to these works of the flesh is the life of a Christian who has God's Holy Spirit!

In spite of all the wars of mankind, NONE HAVE BROUGHT LASTING PEACE. If any war did bring peace, then there would never have been another war.

What is the real *cause* of war? Politicians and students of international relations have a multitude of ideas, but most are wrong. God knows, and His Word gives the root cause *plainly and clearly*. "From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your own lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not," **James 4:1-2**.

Here is the reason why all mankind continually suffers the terrible scourge of war. Man is not satisfied with what he has. He craves for more! He lusts after what his neighbor has, is not content with what he has produced, and with what God has given him. This violates God's command "Thou shalt not covet."

We are not to take part in the *lusts* of wicked rulers and the *wars* they cause, even though the nation in which we live as pilgrims and ambassadors is the one attacked and on the defensive. "Dearly Beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul," **I Peter 2:11**. Lust is an exact opposite of Christian love.

Christians are not *of this world*. They are sojourners. They are ambassadors of Christ. They are "called-out ones."

If we as Christians participate in the wars of *this world*, we are participating in the politics of this *worldly system!* We are commanded TO COME OUT OF this system, Babylon the Great, **Revelation 18:4**. We are

living contrary to God's *government* when we take part in war. We are forbidden to become a *part of the world*, to engage in its conflicts, its goals — contrary to God's realm, **James 4:4; I John 2:15**.

Ambassadors for Christ

Paul stated in **II Corinthians 5:20** that we are ambassadors for Christ. We are God's representatives here on the earth. As ambassadors of a heavenly kingdom, we cannot enter the wars of earthly kingdoms. Ambassadors dwelling in foreign countries are not permitted to enter the armies or politics of that country. In the same way, a Christian, as an ambassador of the Kingdom of Heaven, or the World Tomorrow, cannot take part in such activities!

As ambassadors and representatives of God, *our spiritual citizenship* is in heaven. We await a heavenly kingdom. The inheritance of this kingdom will be brought by Christ when He comes.

"For our conversation [better translated from the Greek as CITIZENSHIP] is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ," **Philippians 3:20**.

A private citizen of the United States cannot take part in the wars between other nations or his citizenship may be revoked. Before an alien can become a naturalized citizen of the United States, he is required to sign a statement that he will never fight against this country, nor will he ever enter the Armed Forces of another government. If he violates this agreement, he automatically *loses his citizenship!*

A private citizen of the United States travels to another country by permission of the State Department, and carries with him a passport. He is strictly forbidden to take part in warring activities of other governments. In the same way, the Christian is forbidden by his Government, the Kingdom of God, to participate in the wars of the nations of this world.

A soldier of an earthly nation who enlists and fights for another country may be shot for treason by his own country. He would be violating *his allegiance to his own nation*. As Christians, we are *soldiers* for a *heavenly kingdom*, **II Timothy 2:3-4**, and therefore should not under any circumstances fight for a worldly kingdom!

You may be asked: "But ought not you to

help defend this country when it is attacked — when it is the lust of an aggressor nation which caused it?” The answer is that a true Christian cannot. If a United States citizen, or a British subject, is residing temporarily in Russia, and China should attack Russia, he could lose his citizenship if he joined the Russian army. The Christian *will* lose his citizenship in God’s Kingdom if he enters the armed forces of *any* nation of this world, unless he repents of that action.

We need to decide here and now *where we want* our citizenship. Do we want to inherit an incorruptible kingdom which will not fade away, **I Peter 1:4**? Or, do we want to inherit one of the kingdoms of *this world* which will very soon pass away. If we want to be a citizen of this world, instead of the Kingdom of God, then we might as well fight for this world and its nations.

If we want to continue as citizens of the Kingdom of God, we should fight the “good fight of faith,” which is a *spiritual*, not a *physical* fight.

Since we are *now* ambassadors for the Kingdom of God, we relinquish the right to take part in the politics or the government of this world. If you have further questions on this subject, see “How Would Jesus Vote for President?” by Herbert W. Armstrong in *The Plain Truth*, November 1960.

The TRUE Christian Warfare

Christians are not to participate in the wars of this world, and yet a Christian must fight.

But what kind of a warfare is this? The Apostle Paul explains: “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh,” **II Corinthians 10:3**. In other words we do not make war like the nations and people of this world. “The weapons of our warfare are not carnal [physical] but mighty through God . . . Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ” (**verses 4 and 5**). In the Christian warfare, even every wrong thought must be brought into captivity and subjection. We must control our thoughts in obedience to Christ. We must rule our thoughts, not let our thoughts or our desires and carnal nature rule us.

A Christian is a soldier of Jesus Christ, but He does not become entangled with the affairs of this life. “Thou therefore endure

hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier,” **II Timothy 2:3-4**. A Christian cannot be a good soldier of Jesus Christ and still be a soldier in the wars of this world.

This spiritual warfare is explained in detail by the Apostle Paul in **Ephesians 6:11-18**. We must put on the whole armor of God. That armor is not physical, consisting of the military weapons of man, but consists of spiritual weapons. Instead of guns, bullets, bombs, and machines, the Christian’s weapons are truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, the Spirit and Word of God, and in addition, praying always.

The warfare of a Christian is not against the people of this world (flesh and blood, **verse 12**), but it is against the wicked spirits who influence nations and people in positions of power.

Our war is also against the “self,” bringing it under subjection, in obedience to God’s ways. We cannot continue in lawlessness and disobedience to God, **Romans 7:23**.

Even the Apostle Paul was in this fight to bring his body, that is, his carnal physical desires, under subjection. He did not want to become a castaway, after having preached righteousness to others, **I Corinthians 9:26-27**.

A Christian cannot participate in this spiritual warfare as a citizen of a heavenly kingdom, and at the same time participate in a physical war with one of the nations of this earth. He cannot serve two masters, because he will love one and hate the other, **Matthew 6:24**.

Taught to Hate

A Christian must have real *spiritual love*. This is an exact opposite of what is needed for a good soldier of this world. As a matter of fact, military men know that *hatred* is necessary to make a good soldier. How can a man kill, cause violence, and fight under such extreme conditions as in warfare, unless he hates those he is fighting against?

Especially during the time of war, soldiers on both sides are taught to hate each other. There is always a great deal of propaganda given to the people, and especially to the servicemen in each country, which is calculated to produce hate. Officials of the military services educate their men toward

this goal. This is exactly contrary to the teaching of Jesus Christ, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself," **Mark 12:31**. It is impossible to love your neighbor, whether national or international, and at the same time hate or kill them.

The Apostle Peter stated: "Finally, be ye all of one mind, having *compassion* one of another, love as brethren, be pitiful, be courteous: not rendering evil for evil or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing you are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing," **I Peter 3:8-9**. A person participating in warfare is not following these commands that God inspired through the Apostle Peter.

Christ said: "Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you," **Matthew 5:43-44**.

The spirit of military service is one of murder and not love.

From such scriptures as this and **Matthew 10**, it is apparent that some true Christians will not escape the violence and persecution of unrighteous men. We should take these trials patiently. We must realize that a Christian may be subjected to violence, but should not cause it.

A Christian should look forward to the *JOY* that is set before him in God's soon-coming Kingdom. Violence or severe trials may then seem so insignificant by comparison, that they can be endured.

Vengeance Belongs to God

The Bible states that sin is the transgression of God's law, **I John 3:4**, and a Christian should quit sinning. One point of God's law states "Thou shalt not kill," **James 2:8-11**. The correct meaning of this word "kill" is murder. In other words, the Christian is to do no murder. That includes *murder* in war!

Instead of harming others, it is better for us to be defrauded or harmed, **I Corinthians 6:1-7**.

Before learning that God condemns our committing violence, the Apostle Peter resorted to physical violence trying to protect Jesus. He cut off the ear of the High Priest's servant. Afterward we read: "Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his

place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword," **Matthew 26:52**. There should be no doubt from this text. Unless you want to perish by the sword (including war) do not take up the sword!

Christians are forbidden to take vengeance on others. God is our Avenger. He will avenge His own elect, **Luke 18:7**. That prohibits our participation in the vengeful wars of man. "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome with evil, but overcome evil with good," **Romans 12:19-21**. It is not for us to take things in our own hands. God will take care of our problems for us. He *will* fight our battles for us. We should show kindness and good to those who hate us.

Why Did Peter Take a Sword?

Some ask, "Why did Christ instruct His disciples to buy swords if He did not believe in warfare?"

Just before His crucifixion, Christ instructed His disciples to take swords with them, **Luke 22:36-38**.

What was the reason Jesus Christ instructed His disciples to take a sword? Was He going to use force to protect Himself? Does this particular scripture contradict all of the other scriptures that we have already seen, which show that God forbids us to fight?

Christ answers the question for us in **Luke 22:37**. "For, I tell you, that which was written must be completed in Me: 'That He was also ranked among the outlaws;' for indeed, what has been written about Me will have fulfillment" (Fenton Translation).

The **ONLY** reason Christ instructed His disciples to take swords was that this **SCRIPTURE** might be fulfilled — that the Jews might have the excuse to reckon Jesus as an outlaw. Christ was not here sanctioning the use of such weapons to injure others. In fact, when Peter did use the sword, Christ immediately rebuked him for it and healed the man who had been injured, **verse 51**.

Christ did not want those swords to take life, "For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them," **Luke 9:56**.

Did Christ Whip the Money-Changers?

Another question that is frequently asked is this: "Didn't Christ whip the money-changers out of the temple?"

Nowhere in the scriptures does it say that Jesus whipped anyone! When He drove the money-changers out of the temple He did not so much as lay hands on anyone, or do any physical violence in any manner whatsoever. The common idea that He lashed and whipped them is *completely false*.

Read the account in your own Bible, **Matthew 21:12-13**. The scripture states that He "cast out all them that sold and bought in the temple, and overthrew the tables of the money-changers." It does not say He whipped or beat them! It does not say *how* He put them out. He simply overturned their tables, not laying a hand on them, and then *commanded* them to leave, and they left because of the authority with which He spoke. In the language of the Bible, that is **CASTING** them out. He cast them out by an authoritative command of His voice.

This same event is also recorded in **Mark 11:15-17**. In this place the Fenton Translation makes it more clear **HOW** He cast them out. It says, "Then Jesus . . . SENT OUT of the temple all the buyers and sellers." And in **Mark 11:15**, "Jesus . . . began to EXPEL the buyers and sellers."

When a child is expelled from school we do not assume he was beaten, whipped, and physically driven out of the building. Jesus explained the temple was God's house, a house of prayer. The Bible teaches that the elders are to rule the house of God, so far as order, reverence, etc., are concerned. What He did was scriptural in putting out those who were profaning the temple.

It was to drive the sheep and the oxen out of the temple, **John 2:15**, that Jesus made a scourge of small cords.

Can a Christian Use Force?

This brings up a question that is very often asked of those who will not fight in war. That is, do you believe in the use of force?

Just what is the Bible answer to this question? For that matter, just what is meant by the question? It takes force to do almost anything. It takes force to arise from bed, to walk, to write a letter, or even to eat.

The question usually is meant to determine how far a person would go in the

use of force to *restrain* another from doing harm.

In the previous scriptures we saw where Christ used force to drive the animals out of the temple. Probably the money-changers thought He was going to use the same force on them; however, He did not use force against them.

On one occasion, as noted in Chapter 2 of this article, Jesus did not use force and avoided being killed by escaping from those who were trying to harm Him. **Revelation 12** shows that the Church of God had to flee during the Middle Ages to escape persecution and almost certain death. Some in the Church will again have to flee before Christ's returns, to a place of refuge, or be killed.

From these examples it is plain that the best thing to do is to flee from such a situation if possible; however, there may be times when this will not be possible.

In order to save a loved one, it is sometimes necessary to give, or at least offer our own lives instead. Christ gave His life for the Church, who is His affianced bride. A true Christian should be willing to do the same for his wife or a spiritual brother, if that is necessary.

"Hereby perceive we the love of God, because He laid down His life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren," **I John 3:16**.

This does not mean that we should meddle in the affairs of others or their fights. The Bible principle is to avoid such entanglements.

"He who meddles in a quarrel not his own is like one who takes a passing dog by the ears," **Proverbs 26:17**.

This ought to warn us against being entangled in wars between the nations of this world, since the quarrels between nations are not our quarrels. If we enter into them, we will suffer the consequences

A physical attack against one of God's true children is a rare thing, however it has happened, and will increasingly happen during the time of trouble ahead. It is the hypothetical case, or the situation that seldom happens that is presented to a Christian trying to take his stand against war. He is questioned about the extreme case so that it can be determined how far he will use force, and still be within the teachings of his religion.

Let us then use the extreme example of physical attack on a Christian. What should

the Christian do? Should he do nothing? Should he take the punishment and possible death without doing anything?

The first thing a Christian should do is to *pray*! The Bible instructs us to pray for our persecutors, **Matthew 5:44**. In that prayer, which would be a very urgent one, we should ask God for His protection, help, and guidance, as well as to influence the attacker to leave. It is not necessary to kneel to pray in case of such an emergency. Our daily prayers should be before God while kneeling; however, we should be so close to God at all times, that we are in contact with him, even at a fraction of a second's notice.

We should also try to *reason* with such a person to keep him from doing such a terrible wrong.

Let us assume that it is now impossible to flee, and that the Christian and his wife are being attacked in their own home. One of the two should try and flee to get help, or to notify the police, since that is the purpose of the higher powers as we already saw in **Romans 13:4**.

If the attacker is trying to harm the wife, the man should try and come between them to save her, so she can flee.

Christians must be willing literally to turn the other cheek in a time like this, and should not render evil for evil, **I Thessalonians 5:15**.

But out of *love* it is *not wrong* to use temporary restraining force to hold such a person (if you are able to do so) until help from the police comes. This force should in no way harm the individual. It should in no way be from a motive of hate or anger, but in love, doing unto him, as you would want done to you if you were so insane and about to commit murder or severe injury to someone. This use of force might be termed *restraining force*, and not malicious force that would harm, injure, or hurt the other person. If it would be impossible to restrain such a person a Christian can only submit himself to injury and hurt, and even possible death. Realize though, God is our Father and He is not willing for us to have to suffer such things unless necessary for His sake, for the sake of the Gospel of Christ, or for our own necessary lessons.

Essentially then, our use of restraining force would only be used in an unusual and extreme case, and then only out of love to restrain the person from injuring or taking life.

What About Servicemen?

So far most of our scriptures have referred to a person not in military service. Many people in military service have come to a knowledge of God's truths and are perplexed by this question. They do not know what to do. They want to obey God in all things, and it is only a matter of learning what God commands them to do.

In the time of John the Baptist, soldiers came to him and asked him what to do. "And the soldiers likewise demanded of Him, saying, what shall we do? And He said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages," **Luke 3:14**. A person who is in the military service, and then becomes a true Christian, is not to harm or do violence to anyone. The meaning of the original Greek word here translated "violence" means "to intimidate." That would include violence or any action where advantage is taken over any other person. A Christian should not continue, *under any circumstances*, to have an active part in killing or harming others.

He should serve his superiors to the very best of his ability according to the instruction in **Ephesians 6:5-8** and **Titus 2:9-14**. Neither should he disobey God's commandments in any way. If his superiors demand that he disobey God, he must obey God and submit to whatever penalty is imposed.

Other examples of soldiers are those of Cornelius found in **Acts 10**, and the centurion who met Christ (recorded in **Matthew 8**). Did God expect these men to continue on in their military careers?

Since the Bible does not give us everything about one subject in one place, we must look elsewhere in the Bible to find out what a person should do in such circumstances. This is very plainly explained by the Apostle Paul to the Corinthians. "Were you a slave when called? Never mind. But if you can gain your freedom, avail yourself of the opportunity," **I Corinthians 7:21**, RSV.

A man in military service is in the same status as a *slave*. He is not free to decide his life entirely for himself. He has sold himself as a slave to the military for the term of his enlistment. A serviceman is governed by different laws than civilians, has few rights, and comes entirely under the jurisdiction of military authorities. He is the *slave* of the military. He cannot remove himself from under that authority, unless the military

authorities release him. Until his enlistment expires, and he is discharged, he is not a *free man*.

Since we have this instruction by the Apostle Paul, a serviceman who comes to the knowledge of the truth should try to gain his freedom.

If a person is a *free man*, in the sense that he is not in military service, he is forbidden to become a *slave* of the military by entering service. "You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men," **verse 23**. This one verse alone, coupled with the fact that a soldier is not a free man, *prohibits a Christian from entering into military service in any capacity, combatant or noncombatant!*

Is Noncombatant Service Wrong?

Some ask if it is right for a Christian to enter a war-making organization in a noncombatant capacity. A noncombatant status is that of a serviceman who will not engage in the actual shooting or killing. Such a person may be in the medical corps and may help the wounded, but he does not carry or use weapons. Or, he may work behind the lines in support work.

Men drafted to this particular capacity are selected from the group who are classified I-A-O by the United States Selective Service System.

Some people reason that such a position is not wrong since it does not require active participation in killing others.

The Bible states that if a person brings a different doctrine than the true doctrine of Christ we should not receive him into our house. Nor should we bid him "Godspeed." Otherwise, we become a partaker of his evil deeds, **II John 10-11**. A person who participates in a military organization, or who produces weapons for the military, becomes a partaker of the evil deeds of men and machines that take life.

Paul told Timothy that he should not be a partaker of other men's sins, but should keep himself *pure*, **I Timothy 5:22**. A person in service cannot keep himself pure, since he is a member of a killing organization. Participation either in a *combatant* or a *noncombatant* status is equally wrong in God's sight. You make yourself the *slave* of the military, which you are forbidden to do, **I Corinthians 7:23**.

If a Christian is forced into military conscription, he cannot serve. He must obey God rather than man, and accept whatever

penalty or imprisonment man might impose.

The Church Statement about Military Service

It has become necessary for the Church of God to have an official stand in the matter of military service. Article X, Section 2, of the Constitution and By-Laws of the Radio Church of God states: "It is the conviction and firm belief of this Church and its membership that Christian disciples of Christ are forbidden by Him and the commandments of God to kill, or in any manner directly or indirectly to take human life; by whatsoever means; we believe that bearing arms is directly contrary to this fundamental doctrine of our belief; we therefore conscientiously refuse to bear arms *or to come under the military authority*." That is the true Bible teaching, and the teaching of God's Church.

We as individuals are responsible to God for obeying what God commands. You should be totally sincere about your belief, know what you do believe, and be able to back up your belief with proof from your own life, *and the scriptures*.

What Can You Do?

If a person is already in military service, he may not know what to do in order to receive a discharge. Such an individual needs specialized help and instruction from counselors who are skilled in such advice. There are various organizations that give this kind of counsel, particularly the historic peace churches and various societies or organizations formed for the purpose of helping such men.

The Radio Church of God has counselors to help men who are sincere in their belief, and who are determined to obey God in this and all things. If you are in such a situation do not act hastily or unwisely without proper counsel.

It has been learned from practical experience that men who have taken a strong and persistent stand and who have purposed to obey God, have usually been able to receive discharges in due time from military service.

There are also provisions in Selective Service laws concerning men who are termed by the world *conscientious objectors*, or *pacifists*. The law recognizes such beliefs, but each registrant must prove satisfactorily to the

Selective Service officials that he is sincere in his belief, and that he is in actuality a conscientious objector and not just a “draft dodger.”

For such men, who are “conscientious objectors,” the United States government has a special work program. A man who is eligible for service, and who is a conscientious objector, is assigned to special civilian work for a 24-month period. This work is for an approved agency or nonprofit organization. Such a firm is primarily engaged either in a charitable activity, conducted for the benefit of the general public, or in carrying out a program for the improvement of the public health or welfare.

Even though it is sometimes difficult to find suitable employment with such an organization, it is possible for a Christian to serve conscientiously under this program. A person in military service, a young man under selective service, or a young man approaching the age of registering for selective service should seek counsel. There are many

important things that are not included in this work that such a person needs to know.

These things involve military and selective service law and procedure. They also involve other points of Bible doctrine not included in this work.

Prompt action is needed by such young men before they find themselves in very unfavorable situations from which they are unable to extricate themselves. Most of the problems are caused by men who have not had the proper knowledge soon enough, or they have not acted on that knowledge, or they were not sincere and steadfast in their belief.

We have now seen many of the teachings in the New Testament on the subject of fighting. The Old Testament also has a lot to say on this important subject. The next chapter will give the surprising answers to many questions you may have concerning the teachings and practices of the nation of Israel before Christ came to this earth to bring the true Gospel.

Chapter VIII Mankind is Learning War

To further their own desires and ideas regarding war, many so-called “New Testament Churches” go to the Old Testament to *excuse* their beliefs or activities in war. In other Bible questions, they *discard* the Old Testament entirely. When it suits their own purpose, they wrest and twist the Old Testament scriptures to justify their own actions.

They have gone to such extremes that one modern clergyman has stated, “I believe the only people that should go out and do the fighting are Christians.”

This belief is not based on the Holy Word of God! God has not taught His Church to participate in the wars and politics of man. *God’s Church is different.* God’s Church is composed of the “called out ones.” They are not a part of this world, but of the Kingdom of God — the World Tomorrow.

What Would Happen if No One Would Fight?

When one of God’s servants obeys God and will not fight, he may be asked: “If everyone believed like you do wouldn’t we be

overrun by our enemies? We could not defend ourselves; our land would be overrun and we would be slaves.”

Is this your question when you learn the Bible teaching about warfare and fighting? If so, it must be answered. Surprisingly enough the plain and simple answer is found in the *Old Testament*.

In this chapter we will see God’s answer to this and many other perplexing questions.

Does such a question show faith and trust in the Creator God who made all things and who sustains them? God knows the needs of his servants even before they ask of Him! **Matthew 6:8.** God *intervenes* for His *true servants* when they call on Him!

What would happen if all the people in our land did turn to God and would trust him completely and explicitly?

“If ye walk in my statutes, and keep my commandments and do them...I will give PEACE in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid,” **Leviticus 26:3, 6.** *That is the answer.* God would give us peace! We would not fear other nations, *they would fear us instead!* How great is the God that a *real* Christian trusts? If all people who

call themselves Christian would trust in that same God, they would not need to go out and fight to attempt to bring peace.

On some occasions the nation of Israel did temporarily obey and trust God. Look at the miraculous results. God even sent hornets to drive out the enemies, **Joshua 24:12**. Hornets may not seem like much of a weapon, but when God used them against the enemy there was *no defense!*

When the children of Israel went over the Jordan River and marched around Jericho for seven days, God caused the walls to fall down miraculously. The enemy was destroyed. In the time of Gideon, God used a very simple thing to route the enemy. Three hundred men with pitchers, lamps, and trumpets caused the horde of the Midianites to be put to flight. And not only that, but the enemy was so much in fear and confusion that every man's sword was against his fellow, **Judges 7:22**.

If a whole nation refuses to obey and trust God, there is only one other thing to do — *trust in armaments*. Since the nations today do not trust and obey God, the only protection they have is their military weapons. The problem is that this way to *preserve the peace* does not lead to peace. It is necessary to ever increase the number of weapons. An arms race continually increases the burden of cost on a government. Rumors of war, fear, and distrust increase, and finally the weapons are used in a terrible, destructive war.

There were many other examples of divine intervention by God for His people when they obeyed and trusted in Him. The same would be so today. If our nation really repented and obeyed God, we would have real peace and all the other countries would fear to attack us.

Warfare in the Old Testament

Many today cannot understand why men in Old Testament times, such as David, did fight in war. Nor can they understand why ancient Israel fought. Have you wondered about this?

Surprising as it may be, *the answer* is found in the New Testament. Jesus said, "If my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight," **John 18:36**. For many centuries God did establish a *kingdom* on this earth, a kingdom which was entirely physical. That kingdom, the Kingdom of Israel, was originally ruled by God, by His laws, and by His rulers.

But the nation Israel was one of the kingdoms of *this world*. Its people had no *spiritual* citizenship in the heavenly Kingdom. They were not ambassadors of Christ. Jesus said that if His Kingdom were of *this world*, then His servants would fight. Israel was a kingdom of *this world*. It did fight.

God did not offer them salvation! He only gave them physical, temporal promises. They were carnal people without the indwelling presence of God's Holy Spirit. They were concerned with the letter, and not the Spirit and intent of God's law. Since they were not offered salvation at that time, and did not have God's Holy Spirit, they had not been begotten by God's Spirit as heirs of the Kingdom of God.

Since the Canaanites were so terribly wicked, God commanded His servants, His *earthly* Kingdom, to exterminate them. God had been patient in times past, because their iniquity was not yet "full," **Genesis 15:16**. The Canaanites were committing the most evil deeds that man could imagine, even sacrificing their own children, by burning them in the fire to gods of wood and stone. They practiced every conceivable perverted act. God waited until *all physical hope* for them was lost, before commanding that they should be slain.

As the Creator and Giver of life, God has the authority to take away life. But God has not given man that authority. Formerly God had done this by use of supernatural force on nature.

He took away the life of all men except Noah and his family, in a worldwide flood. Later, it became necessary for God to exterminate the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah because of their extreme wickedness, **Genesis 19**. God destroyed by supernaturally intervening in the course of nature. God did not work through a kingdom of this earth at that time, nor was any kingdom on this earth *His Kingdom*.

Later, God established the nation of Israel. God then used the physical nation to carry out such punishment. They acted in that official capacity *as does an executioner of the State today, who may have the responsibility of executing the death penalty*.

God has the right to choose, in any way He pleases, how He deals with man. He can decide who should die and when, if that becomes necessary. God says, "See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no God with Me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I

heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of My hand," **Deuteronomy 32:39**.

After Israel rebelled and would no longer listen to God, His prophets, or His teachers, God rejected them. They are not carrying out His work today.

Since that time, God doesn't have any of the kingdoms of this world as His own Kingdom. Today He may use various nations to indirectly accomplish His will, but they are of this world and of this time, and not of the *world tomorrow*.

Today God is dealing with mankind through His Church. Notice **I Peter 2:9**, "But ye [Christians] are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of Him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light."

God is using His Church to preach the good news (gospel) of the soon-coming Kingdom of God to the whole world as a witness. When that work is completed, the end of this age will come, Jesus Christ will return as King of Kings over the earth, and a new age of peace will dawn.

God Has Final Authority to Decide About War

Only God, as Creator and Giver of life, has all authority to destroy or command nations to be slain. Since God is Creator of all things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, these things were created for His own purpose. "Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure [purpose] they are and were created," **Revelation 4:11**. Since God has made all things, including all mankind, all governments and authorities, He is also Supreme Ruler. He is over and above all, **Ephesians 4:6**. He is the Lord — meaning Ruler or Master — of heaven and earth, **Matthew 11:25**. Since God is Ruler and Master of heaven and earth, He also has the right and power to make laws. God has made all spiritual and natural physical laws.

In addition to ruling over all, God is also the judge of all, **Hebrews 12:23**. It is God who will judge all mankind. He will pass final sentence, depending on whether a person's deeds are good or evil.

"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God, and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the

Book of Life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works," **Revelation 20:12**.

God alone is able to destroy both the soul (life) and the body (flesh) of man in the final Gehenna fire, or lake of fire, **Matthew 10:28**. The wicked will be utterly destroyed in that fire, **Malachi 4:1-3**.

Since God alone has such *supreme authority*, only He can tell man what to do about warfare. Only He can say whether man should or should not make war.

Only God can judge when a nation must be destroyed or punished. When a nation itself decides to make war against another, whether it be an aggressor or a nation attacked, that nation takes upon itself this prerogative of God. Unless God *personally* commands a war, in which a nation of this *world* acts as an OFFICIAL EXECUTIONER, as He did to ancient Israel, any man who takes up arms against his neighbor takes the authority of God upon himself. *This is in direct disobedience to God!* Any person who takes part in such a war is in defiance of God and His laws and is guilty before Him!

He has also revealed to man, through His Word — *The Holy Bible* — those laws by which man should live. He has not given man the authority to establish laws contrary to His.

Lessons Are Being Written

God is letting man go his own way for a period of six thousand years. When it is over, God will intervene in the affairs of man. Until that time, God is letting mankind *write important lessons* in suffering and misery. But man has not yet *learned* the lessons that he has been writing in human misery and woe.

God is permitting man to try every form of government to see what is best. All of them have brought wrong results. They have only brought all kinds of trouble when developed to their full course. God is permitting man to try every possible way to bring peace. They have all failed. He has permitted man to try any and every thing to bring happiness. Happiness has eluded man. In the time to come, God will rule man. There will be no more governments of men. Everyone will be under the government or Kingdom of God. Men will then be living according to God's ways. Happiness will result.

But for now, God is permitting *man to go his own way*. *The result is that all generations have had war!*

“Now these are the nations which the Lord left, to prove Israel by them, even as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan; Only that the generations of the children of Israel might know, to teach them war, at the least such as before knew nothing thereof,” **Judges 3:1-2**.

Here It is in a “Nutshell”

The whole question about warfare is explained clearly by one verse in your Bible that we have already noticed. This verse explains why ancient Israel *did* make war with other nations. It explains why the Christian cannot participate in the wars of this world now. It also explains why Jesus Christ, at His return (with the holy angels, and with

those saints who are then made immortal), *will make war*. That scripture is found in **John 18:36**. “Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world [this order or age]: if My kingdom were of this world [age], then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My kingdom not from hence (this time).” Ancient Israel was a kingdom of this world. *It did fight!* Christians are ambassadors of the soon-coming Kingdom of God. Therefore, we as the servants of Christ, do not fight for one nation against the people of another nation of this world. When Jesus Christ does return, Christians will then be immortal, spirit beings, and will assist Jesus Christ in BRINGING PEACE TO THIS EARTH.

Chapter IX Sins of “Modern” Babylon Exposed

The *consequences* of the great compromise of the fourth century, which was discussed earlier, have been untold human suffering and woe!

History has recorded the *results* of this mistake. The facts are terrible and hard to imagine. Those facts are going to be given in this chapter.

God’s instructions about fighting are clear and plain. The early Catholic Church of the first few centuries had accepted this teaching. As a result many were persecuted and martyred. Under Constantine’s protection, the church no longer was persecuted. Then the church rejected Christ’s teachings against fighting which they had previously followed, and taught the doctrines of men instead.

In rejecting the commandments of Christ, the Church was now teaching the commandments of men, just as the Jews did during the time of Christ, **Matthew 15:9**.

The Persecuted Now Persecute

Almost immediately the Catholic Church began to *persecute*, where before she had *been persecuted*. Now the church was in the good favor of the state and in control of all religion. Any unbeliever, heretic (real or assumed), any person not willing to submit to the authority of the church was *persecuted*.

This persecution was first promoted by Constantine, but later, directly by the church.

Here is the official statement of the Emperor to put down the “heretics.”

“Victor Constantinus, Maximus Augustus, to the heretics:

“. . .To speak of your criminality as it deserves demands more time and leisure than I can give. . . . Why not at once strike, as it were, at the root of so great a mischief?” — he means the TRUTH OF GOD — “BY A PUBLIC MANIFESTATION OF DISPLEASURE? Forasmuch, then, as it is no longer possible to bear with your pernicious errors, we give warning by this present statute that none of you henceforth presume to assemble yourselves together. We have directed, accordingly, that you be deprived of all the houses in which you are accustomed to hold your assemblies: and (we) forbid the holding of your superstitious and senseless meetings, not in public merely, BUT IN ANY PRIVATE HOUSE OR PLACE WHATSOEVER. . . . Take the far better course of entering the Catholic Church. . . . We have commanded . . . that you be positively deprived of every gathering point for your superstitious meetings, I mean all the houses of prayer . . . and that these be made over without delay to the Catholic Church; that any other places be confiscated to the public service, AND NO FACILITY WHATSOEVER BE LEFT FOR ANY FUTURE GATHERING, in order that from this day forward none of your unlawful assemblies may presume to appear in any

public or private place. Let this edict be made public” (from Eusebius’ *Life of Constantine*, book 3).

By this edict, any dissenter who might protest on any point of doctrine, was under extreme peril of his life. This included any person who would not accept Catholic doctrine.

True Church Must Flee

As a result of Constantine’s decree, the true Church now entered a time of *ten years* severe persecution, **Revelation 2:10**, as well as the period of 1260 years, **Revelation 12:6**. For this time of over a millennium, the true Church had to flee from the organized religious society of the Roman Church or be in extreme peril of life.

The true Church had been prophesied to be a *little flock*, **Luke 12:32**. It was to be persecuted, **Luke 21:12**.

This could not refer to the great number who now embraced the Catholic religion and who now became the *persecutors* instead of the *persecuted*. This amazing fact is little known or recognized by the world today. The world has seen the huge churches of the past two thousand years, and has little cared or noticed God’s true Church. The world has thought the Catholic and Protestants were the Churches of God. God’s Church has always been comparatively small.

Because of the compromise with Constantine, and the power now given to this Church, terrible crimes were committed in the name of the religion. These crimes which lasted many centuries were done in the name of “Christ.”

Gibbon records that *capital punishment* (death) was pronounced against people who even possessed unacceptable religious writings. And, “the sword of the magistrate, and even of the tyrant was unsheathed, to enforce the reasons of the theologian.”

Inquisitions Result of Compromise

To further show how this persecution effectively dealt with the dissenter, and in many cases even with Catholics, we must note certain facts relating to the *inquisitions*. The word *inquisition* is “the name given to the ecclesiastical (church) jurisdiction dealing both in the Middle Ages and in modern times with the detection and punishment of *heretics* and all persons guilty of any offense against Catholic orthodoxy (from the *Encyclopaedia*

Britannica, article “Inquisition,” eleventh edition). An heretic by this statement would be anyone who would not believe or go along with Catholic teachings.

At first the inquisition included the punishment and death of those with “outward manifestations of heresy.” In later centuries it included those who were deemed guilty of having “crimes of conscience.” At first there were only a few occasions when a person was judged to have outward evidence of heresy. Later, in the Middle Ages a person could be suspected of having inward heresy (in the mind), while not obviously violating the laws of the Catholic Church.

Even Catholics Killed by Catholics

Because of this, even many Catholics, as well as Protestants were later subjected to these inquisitions.

This, in a limited sense, was indicated by the prophecy of **Revelation 2:23**: “And I will kill her children with death.” Within a period of fifty-two years after Constantine, there were no less than sixty-eight laws recorded against heretics. At first the penalty was only scourging, fines or exile. Later, the penalty was perpetual imprisonment, cutting out the tongue, death by *strangling* or *burning* at the stake!

In 1034 certain of the *Cathari*, also known as the *Albigensians*, were given a choice between the “adoration of the cross and death” (*Encyclopaedia Britannica*, article “Inquisition”). About this time **Peter de Bruis** was burned to death because of the charge that he was a *leader in heresy*. Later, as the inquisition developed and expanded, the Pope appointed commissioners to stamp out “heresy.” These commissioners traveled from place to place.

“On arriving in a district they addressed its inhabitants, called upon them to confess, if they were heretics, or to denounce those whom they knew to be heretics: a ‘time of grace’ was opened, during which those who freely confessed were dispensed from all penalties, or only given a secret and very light penance, while those whose heresy had been openly manifested were exempted from the penalties of death and perpetual imprisonment. But this time could not exceed one month. After that began the inquisition. As soon as their mission was at an end and heresy was considered stamped out, the inquisitors left the country” (*ibid.*, page 589).

During such an inquisition those accused of heresy were either put to death, given long terms of imprisonment, perpetual imprisonment, or some other “appropriate” sentence.

Torture Instituted

Later on the countries were divided into various districts and the local monastery had charge of the inquisitions. The procedures and trials of the inquisitions were conducted in *utmost secrecy*. The accused was considered guilty unless proved otherwise. He could have no legal representation. His accusers were not named, nor did they appear in the inquiry against him. He could have no witnesses for his defense. *Torture* of all kinds came in vogue to force the accused to confess his guilt of heresy.

“The Church was originally opposed to torture, and canon law did not admit confessions extorted by that means; but by the bull *Ad extirpanda* (1252) Innocent IV, approved its use for the discovery of heresy and Urban IV confirmed this usage . . .” (*Ibid.*, page 590).

Later, even the *torture of witnesses* was used to extract the “truth.” There was *never* a case of acquittal, according to this article!

After the inquisition, the accused was turned over to the civil authorities to carry out the sentence, and then *the property of the accused was divided between the church and the state*.

The period of most active persecution under the inquisitions occurred after the twelfth century. During these terrible inquisitions some whole villages were wiped out in an effort to stamp out such people as the Albigensians and Waldenses. Vast multitudes of people were killed in France, Spain, Italy, Germany and the Netherlands. Other areas escaped with fewer deaths.

Millions Perish by Inquisitions

During the period between 1540 and 1570 alone, at least 900,000 people were put to death by these terrible persecutions. In all, *several million* people were put to death by these inquisitions. Is it any wonder that those of God’s Church had to flee for their lives during this terrible time of trouble?

These crimes against humanity were done “in the name of Christ.” Christ did not authorize them! The blood of the righteous

cry out and *God will avenge HIS ELECT!*

Much cruelty resulted from that compromise of the fourth century! What would the founding fathers such as Tertulian, Justin Martyr, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Cyprian, Lactantius and others, who were totally opposed to violence and bloodshed, think of the church that they helped to found? What would they think of these crimes of their church against humanity?

Just as Jesus prophesied, “They shall put you out of the synagogues [churches]: yea, the time cometh, that whosoever killeth you will think that he doeth God service,” **John 16:2**.

The Crusades

The next major series of events that show the result of the compromise is that of the *Crusades*. The Crusades are considered by most religious people to have been good, and according to God’s will. In fact some world famous evangelists have taken this name and applied it to their evangelistic endeavors.

The Crusades were seven in number, and were supposedly instituted to wrest the control of the Holy Land from the Mohammedans. They all occurred within a period of about 300 years ending just prior to the fourteenth century. They cost a tremendous amount of money and many lives were lost. In the end these Crusades came to naught.

The Crusaders practiced what they thought was the true Christian religion, and engaged in war, *contrary to Christ’s teaching*. They were trying to take away the land of Palestine from the Mohammedans.

During the Fourth Crusade the Crusaders were turned from their goal of capturing Jerusalem, so they attacked Constantinople instead. They captured and plundered the city and set up their own rule which lasted about fifty years. Hurlbut, in the *Story of the Christian Church*, records:

“The kings and princes who led the movement were perpetually quarreling, each chieftain caring more for his own interests than for the common cause; all jealous of one another, and fearful of a success which might promote the influence or fame of a rival” (page 132).

After the seven Crusades were over there were minor Crusades and almost any war, even those against the “heretics” were called Crusades.

Tremendous Cost of Vatican's Wars

The expense of carrying on these land war activities was tremendous. The church had come a long way from the time when its teachers taught that it was wrong to kill in any way. It was considered wrong to even speak anything against a person that might cause him to die. It was a long way from the teaching of Tertulian who wrote in the third century: "How will a Christian man war, nay, how will he serve even in peace without a sword, which the Lord has taken away?" (*De Idolatria* XIX).

Now the church had taken the sword and it was very costly. It was bringing misery and wretchedness on untold multitudes of people. This cost increased to the point that during the fourteenth century the majority of the tremendous income of the Vatican was used for war purposes.

"A parallel reorganization and departmentalization of the papal financial administration led to a new efficiency in the levy and collection of papal taxes, fees, etc., which bore hard on the clergy, and drained large sums from the national states, stirring public opinion still further, especially in England. Significant items of the budget of John XXII: war, 63.7%; upkeep and entertainment, 12.7%; alms, 7.16%; 0.4% stables; 0.33% art; library, 0.17%" (*Encyclopedia of World History*, William L. Langer, page 286).

The figures speak for themselves. The Church was using much of its wealth as a tool for the "god of war" instead of the *God of peace*. What would the humble Carpenter of Nazareth think of such an organization which took His name, claimed to be His representative, and yet spent such vast sums of money to wage war, killing and injuring multitudes of people?

Protestant Persecutions

Persecutions and fighting were not committed by the Catholics alone. At first the Protestants were *persecuted*, but some of them soon turned to *persecute* also. They followed the same path that the mother church had followed centuries earlier.

Here is a brief summary of Protestant persecutions.

"Calvin consented to the death of Servetus. In Holland Calvinists executed an Arminian. In Germany Lutherans put to death a few Anabaptists. In England Protestant

Edward VI executed two Roman Catholics in six years (Romanist Mary in the five following years burned 282 Protestants). Elizabeth executed, in 45 years, 187 Romanists, most of them for treason, not heresy. In Massachusetts, 1659, three Quakers were hanged by Puritans, and, in 1692, 20 were executed for witchcraft." (*Pocket Bible Handbook*, H. H. Halley, page 793.)

Even though the Protestant persecutions have not been nearly as severe or as extensive as the Catholics, nevertheless, the Protestants are also guilty before God because of this sin against humanity and God.

There was also war and enmity between the Protestants and the Catholics for many years. To justify their own actions, the Protestants blame these wars on the Catholics, who started them. The Protestants did not rely on God to fight their battles for them. They fought their own battles instead of letting God fight them, and much bloodshed resulted.

In subsequent years, we have had many wars between various Western nations. In almost all of these wars the major denominations had members on both sides of the battle lines. Men of one denomination fought against *and killed* men of their own faith. In many of these wars, religious as well as political issues were involved. What terrible times of trouble have been brought on mankind in the name of religion!

When all of these terrible atrocities are examined in the light of Bible prophecy it becomes more plain that these were not the *Churches of God*.

Will Inquisitions Come Again?

There are going to be more trying times ahead for God's people, and for the whole world. Jesus prophesied that some of his saints would be beaten and scourged in the churches, **Matthew 10:17**. God's people would be hailed before the courts, the rulers, and people in high places for a witness before them.

People will again be brought before such higher powers as we near the end and climax of this age. May God's people stand firm in these trying times and not give up the faith of Jesus!

Bible prophecies show that the end-time descendants of the twelve tribes of Israel will be in a condition of captivity just before Jesus Christ returns back to earth.

There will be a terrible time of trouble such as never was before in the history of man. For three and a half years some of God's servants who do not escape to a place of refuge, will be given over once again to persecution and martyrdom, **Revelation 6:9-11**.

Babylon Will Pay for Her Crimes

God labels the false religious system as *BABYLON!* It is *confusion* — that is just what the word “Babylon” means. There is a confusion of beliefs and practices.

The prophecies concerning this church system are explained very clearly in the **17th** and **18th chapters** of **Revelation**. In these chapters we find that the people of the earth have become spiritually drunk (they cannot see things clearly) because of *her false teachings*, **Revelation 17:2**. This great church is called by the prophetic scriptures an immoral woman or whore. The civil governments of the world are referred to in the masculine gender. This false woman church system has had illicit relations with these civil rulers and states.

This woman is not alone in her sins as she has daughters, **verse 5**, who protested against her and came out of her, and yet they have the same sins.

There have been a few ministers from time to time who have seen the evils and complete idiocy of war. Especially in the time of peace these men have spoken out against war. One example of this was Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick who spoke before the League of Nations prior to World War II. He chose as a subject for his address, Christ's statement: “All they that take the sword shall perish by the sword.” Here is a part of his address:

“We cannot reconcile Jesus Christ and war — that is the essence of the matter. That is the challenge which today should stir the conscience of Christendom. War is the most colossal and ruinous social sin that afflicts mankind; it is utterly and irremediably unchristian; in its total method and effect it means everything that Jesus did not mean and it means nothing that he did mean; it is a more blatant denial of every Christian doctrine about God and man than all the theoretical atheists on earth ever could devise. It would be worthwhile, would it not, to see the Christian Church claim as her own this greatest moral issue of our time, to see her lift

once more as in our fathers' days, a clear standard against the paganism of this present world and, refusing to hold her conscience at the beck and call of belligerent states, put the kingdom of God above nationalism and call the world to peace? That would not be the denial of patriotism but its apotheosis.”

This famous theologian, as well as others, recognized that war is *totally contrary* to Christ's teachings. The above statement clearly shows that there are those who *do understand* the utter and total PAGANISM of war.

When war comes, these few voices are usually stilled or go unheeded. It becomes expedient and easier to go with the crowd, to become engulfed in the tide of public opinion against an opposing nation and to participate in warfare against other human beings.

In addition to killing in war, this religious system has also killed the saints down through the ages. Because of her *temporary* victory over the saints she is drunken with self-satisfaction and power, **Revelation 17:6**.

Because of her sins and her iniquity she is going to receive double payment in retribution for her gross sins against God's Church and against humanity. She has burned and killed the saints, so she too will be burned with fire, **verse 16**.

She has dealt in all kinds of merchandise including the slaves of men, **Chapter 18:13**, and has even sold the dead bodies of men.

“And in her was found the blood of prophets, and of saints, and of all that were slain upon the earth,” **Revelation 18:24**.

With her great power and influence *she could have taught the world peace* and right ways instead of the perverse ways of the old Babylonian mysteries.

In the Old Testament we also find other prophecies referring to this same false church system. Here again she is pictured as ruling over the nations of the world. She is an anti-type of the ancient Babylon, since she is following the same false system and *has the same sins!* In **Jeremiah, chapters fifty and fifty-one**, this same church system is described. She is told of her terrible sins and the punishment that will result because of her sins.

She is accused of destroying God's heritage. As a result, she will be recompensed according to her own sins. Her men of war, her soldiers, **verse 30**, will not be so strong and fearless when they face the destruction of the Almighty God. The sword will come upon

these mighty men and princes, **verse 35-38**.

Jesus said they who take the sword *will perish with the sword*. These religious people who have taken the sword, and who will yet take the sword against God's people, are going to perish by the terrible sword of war. None will be able to help them in that day.

Her mighty men will not fight then, **Jeremiah 51:30**. God is bringing judgment

on her *graven images*, in all her churches, **verse 47**. Men will no longer bow down to the images of modern Babylon.

God will not only bring this retribution upon her but also on her daughters who have come out of her, **Revelation 2:23**. Then all of the Churches (the true Churches) will know that truly God does give unto everyone *according to his works*.

Chapter X Here is How Christ Will Bring Peace

Man has failed to find the way to peace. History has proved this in the chronicles of the wars of man.

Except for God's intervention, peace is further away from man today than it was almost 6,000 years ago when man was put on the earth.

Will man ever find peace? Is man always doomed to live under the threat of war? Is he doomed to live in times of increasing violence?

Man has sought peace in every conceivable way possible except the right way — the only way. He has tried every form of government, every kind of political ideology, every imaginable philosophy. He has tried all kinds of laws, pacts, leagues and the uniting of nations which have all failed to bring lasting peace. All kinds of education, every aspect of science or new knowledge, has not shown him the way to this much needed peace. Even the religions of the world have not brought peace, but rather have caused more wars as previous chapters proved. All of the factors just mentioned have not brought peace, they have all increased the number and severity of wars.

This world is getting to be a very unsafe place in which to live. In most cities of the United States it is now hazardous for a person, *either man or woman*, to walk the streets alone at night.

In the few short years since World War II, crime in the United States has doubled, and *there is no end of crime in sight!*

Man is running headlong away from peace as fast as he can. While still hoping that peace will miraculously come, he goes his own way in defiance of God and His laws.

The only way for mankind to find peace is for the nations to turn to God with all their hearts and obey him. Man is unwilling to do

this, therefore the only way that peace can come is for God to intervene directly in the affairs of man.

Man's disregard for God and His laws will lead to a prophesied time of trouble such as has never been on this earth before. During this time the population of this earth may be reduced by *nine tenths*. A terrible blood bath is coming! Thank God there is a way of protection for His own people!

God Will Prevent Mankind's Destruction

Except for God's intervention, man would completely *destroy himself*, **Matthew 24:22**. What will happen concerning warfare and fighting when God does put a stop to man's self-destruction?

Will the meek and peaceful Christ find the earth in peace at His return? No!

Will He permit the nations to spit upon Him and crucify Him again?

NO!

This Is How Christ Will Bring Peace

When He returns to this earth, how can He bring the world peace? If He sent prophets or ministers, would the people heed them, repent and become peaceable? No! That is just what Christ has been doing for almost 6,000 years and the world has not heeded. Instead, the world persecuted them and killed many of them. Could Christ bring peace by supernatural signs, disasters, floods, or earthquakes? He has already used these same signs to warn and instruct man, and man has not repented, **Revelation 9:20-21**.

Christ will do the only thing that will bring peace. There is no other way.

That way is to crush the nations, and then rule them with a "rod of iron." Fighting is

wrong for us today and yet Christ will have to fight with the nations, to force them to repent of their ways. He will purge out the rebellious, *in order* to bring peace.

Is it “morally” wrong for Christ to fight and kill these unrighteous people? Christ has *created* all things, including life. Therefore He has the inherent right to take life away from rebellious people.

Christ will return as the conquering King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He will then wreak vengeance on the wicked, and against any who will not obey Him and His holy law.

When the kingdoms of this world become the kingdoms of our Lord and His Christ, **Revelation 11:15**, the earth will still be engaged in the terrible bloodbath of war. The nations have been angry with each other and with God. His divine intervention in nature will by this time have brought terrible havoc and fear on the disobedient! Yet most will still not repent and change.

The nations have been angry. At that time Christ will be angry with the nations, **Revelation 11:18** — for their sins and their crimes against each other and against the saints. He will destroy those wicked men who are at that time seeking to destroy the earth, thus the designs of Satan against God’s creation will come to naught.

All nations of the world will have armies assembled at the place known as Armageddon, **Revelation 16:16**. With them will be the ruler of the Beast Power and the religious leader, the false prophet. All of these armies will make war against Christ, **Revelation 17:14**.

God is not fighting against the nations of the world today, but He will then, in the day of the Lord. “Then shall the Lord go forth, and fight against those nations, as when He fought in the day of battle,” **Zechariah 14:3**.

God will not wage war unrighteously but He will make war in righteousness, bringing retribution and vengeance on those that *fully deserve* such severe punishment.

“And I saw heaven opened, and behold a white horse; and He that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He doth judge and make war,” **Revelation 19:11**. God is waiting now. The sins of man have not yet come to “the full.”

At that time the Kingdom of God will be here on this earth. Then Jesus’ Kingdom will be a Kingdom of *this world*. Then He and His servants *will* supernaturally intervene to put an end to war, **John 18:36**. At that time, true

Christians will be changed from mortal to immortal beings. They will no longer be flesh and blood. They will be God’s very sons. They will be like Him for they shall see him as He is, **I John 3:2**. Though Christians do not participate in wars between nations now, they will participate with Christ in *stamping out war* at that time.

“Let the saints be joyful in glory: let them sing aloud upon their beds. Let the high places of God be in their mouth, and a two-edged sword in their hand; to execute vengeance upon the heathen, and punishments upon the people; to bind their kings with chains, and their nobles with fetters of iron; to execute upon them the judgment written: this honor have all His saints. Praise ye the Lord,” **Psalms 149:5-9**.

When He wages war against all of these nations, He will not use bows and arrows and He will not use atomic and hydrogen weapons. He will use His *supernatural power* in ways that will make the puny weapons of men appear ridiculous!

In His fury He will then go to various nations and tread down the wicked into a “winepress.” Those who will not submit to His rule will be no more, **Isaiah 63; Revelation 14:20**.

His indignation will be against the nations, **Isaiah 34**, and He will utterly destroy their armies.

“For it is the day of the Lord’s vengeance, and the year of recompences for the controversy of Zion,” **Isaiah 34:8**.

As a result of this DIVINE WAR all rebellion and disobedience will be put down. But, rebellion will soon rise again. **Ezekiel** prophesies (**Chapters 38 and 39**) that the North and east Asian nations will come against Christ at Jerusalem. Christ will again supernaturally fight against them and *destroy them utterly*.

“I will summon every kind of terror against Gog says the Lord God; every man’s sword will be against his brother. With pestilence and bloodshed I will enter into judgment with him; and I will rain upon him and his hordes and the many peoples that are with him, torrential rains and hailstones, fire and brimstone. So I will show My greatness and My holiness and make Myself known in the eyes of many nations. Then they will know that I am the Lord,” **Ezekiel 38:21-23, R.S.V.**

This is the way that peace will then come to this war-torn world. “And He shall judge

among many people, and rebuke strong nations afar off; and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks: nation shall not lift up a sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more," **Micah 4:3**.

No longer will it be necessary for the world to spend billions on arms and armies. It will no longer cost mankind multiple billions to try and bring peace that NEVER COMES!

All of this tremendous expenditure will then go for peaceful production. Then, all

mankind can enjoy the fruit of their labors. They will begin to learn God's way of life. This will lead to peace, happiness, and joy. All people will know God's ways and will follow them.

"Of the increase of His [Christ's] government and PEACE there shall be no end, and upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this," **Isaiah 9:7**. Ω

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