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## *War, Violence and The Christian, Pt 3*

### **Selected Passages**

**Keywords:** War, Violence, End Times, Israel, Prophecy, Sin

**PowerPoint Presentation included:** none

**SermonAudio Blurb:** In light of the massive amount of violence occurring in Israel and the Gaza Strip, we take time to consider the source and causes of war and how does a Christian begin to approach a very complicated subject. Many opinions flow on this subject but not a lot of biblical thinking. We seek to begin to remedy this.

#### **I. Introduction.**

- A. Our world is at war.
  - B. We can go on and on, but this is enough to remind you that war exists. Violence and bloodshed and great evil continues to be a part of the human experience.
    - 1. We saw so far that the root of this whole mess is sin. And we ought not downplay the power and corrupting influence of sin.
    - 2. A subset of sin is selfishness in all of its various ways of expressing itself. We want something or we have something some other nation wants and we go to war.
  - C. But I left you last sermon with a things to ponder:
    - 1. War exists because sin exists.
    - 2. War exists because nations and people seek to satisfy sinful desires.
- But-**
- 3. Does that make any and all war inherently evil?
  - 4. Hear that question carefully (repeat it).
  - 5. Let me rephrase it, “All violence is the result of sin, but does that make all violence sinful?” And it is here that things become a bit sticky for many and differing minds begin to debate.
- D. Keeping all of this in mind, what are some possible initial conclusions might a Christian begin to develop regarding war?

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- E. Today I want to begin to lay down some biblical principles about war that will then help us understand how various groups and nations approach the idea of going to war.
- F. I want to show you four key principles about the nature of war to help us begin to think more deeply and more biblically about this difficult subject.

## **II. How Christians approach the issue of war.**

- A. First, there is the necessity to understand that war is a fact of life.
  - 1. The first known battle we have recorded in the bible is Genesis 14:1ff.
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  - 2. In the Old Testament there is no overt statement against war in general and this is noteworthy. Wars, battles, skirmishes and the like were simply part of the human existence. This is why we must remember the issue is really all about sin.
  - 3. Mark 13:7-10.
    - a. The temptation when seeing violence and wars is to think that things are spiraling out of control—as if you were ever really in control.
    - b. Note the wording: (7) “must take place.” (8) “will . . . will . . . will.”
    - c. These are not minor squabbles. Entire empires shall rise up against other empires.
    - d. But in vs 9-10 Jesus shifts from global politics and tensions to the individual believer.
    - e. Three observations from this passage:
      - (1) First, the warning, be on your guard, keep watching. This is a command and it is to be your habit.

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(2) Second, note the certainty of persecution. “They will” . . . “you will . . . you will.”

(3) Third, note the term “must” in vs 10. This against speaks of certainty and necessity.

4. Transition: We live in a world dominated by sin. The fruit of sin is death. Also sin is the tool through which Satan seeks to bring harm to us. And the fruit of all of this is war. So what is to be expected in a war?

B. Second, war is violent by nature and is destructive to land and people.

1. This seems to be self-evident but today the common idea is a limited war that targets only military positions and is disconnected from day-to-day reality.

2. Part of this is because for quite a long time the Western world has operated under a philosophy of war called the “Just War Theory.”

3. Rush Limbaugh summed up war in a very simple way by saying, “The purpose of armies is to kill people and break things.”

4. Destruction, domination, and occupation are major goals in all war and this is seldom done in a gentle manner.

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5. This is all rather self-evident but some how it fails to actual mean something until you experience it firsthand.

a. In Joshua 11.

b. In Joshua 6 we have the famous battle of Jericho.

C. Third, war and enmities can exist for generations.

1. In Exodus 17:8 we find the Amalekites coming out to fight Israel.

2. Numbers 20:14, 18-21.

3. So, we see wars do not occur simply because of a current event. Rather it can sit and simmer for a very long time. But God does not forget the evil done to His Name or His people and in the 5<sup>th</sup> century a people known as the Nabateans destroyed the nation.

D. Fourth, many times the ones who actually start wars are not the ones harmed by it.

1. In Exodus 12 (turn) we read of the killing of every single first-born in every single household.

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2. Later in the story we see the Israelites are to plunder the Egyptians.
3. Then in chapter 14 we have God hardening the heart of the Pharaoh so that he will attack the Israelites again.
  - a. Note what is said in vss 2-4, 8.
    - b. And in this action of hardening hundreds of men went to their death and into eternal judgment. But they were not the ones causing this whole thing, yet they died because of it. Before man, they might be seen as innocent, but before God no man can stand without Christ as his Savior and Mediator.
4. Now look at how Moses described God in 15:3—warrior. YHWH is the God of war. In vs 6 He shatters the enemy.
5. So we see in this that war is something that is now part of the human experience and that God does not stand in disapproval of it in every situation; rather, He participates and even stirs up war.

### **III. Conclusion.**

- A. So four basic observations about war as described in the bible.
  1. Inevitable.
  2. Violent and destructive.
  3. Long lasting.
  4. Harms non-combatants.
- B. Let me leave us today with a reminder that war and violence is part of the very fabric of this age we live in.
  1. Sin brought it into existence and only one who can conquer sin will ultimately resolve it.

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2. Regardless how you understand the book of Revelation, one thing is very plain in it. War is part of this fallen world and it is pushed and prodded along through Satan and his fellow demons.
3. Only through a holy war, which we are in even now, will this be ultimately abolished.
  - a. We battle not against flesh and blood but against the spiritual forces of darkness. Our weapons ultimately are not physical but spiritual as we put on the armor of God and resist lies and tear down every stronghold by taking our hearts captive to the Word of God.
  - b. But we battle this because the power of sin is broken through Christ. And the presence of sin will be abolished for evermore in what the bible describes as the final war, where sin, death and Satan are cast away and all things become new.
  - c. We live in this age and we long and wait for the next. How we conduct ourselves now is the challenge. And it requires we think deep and on multiple levels.
4. So as Christians let us be peace-makers. But also let us understand how peace is made and how it is kept. For in this age, violence is often the means to bring peace.

## **Benediction**

**Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing the good news of Jesus Christ, so that you will abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen**