

Missio Dei Fellowship exists to glorify God by delighting in Him and making Him known through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Biblical Principles of War, Pt 4 **Selected Passages**

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PowerPoint Presentation included: none

SermonAudio Blurb: Though there are many opinions and approaches to war and violence within the Church-at-large, the opinions do not necessarily reflect all the subtle aspects that come with war. The same is true of Christians and internal conflicts that involve police action. The result too often is a conviction that is not based as much on the bible as the passing, ever-changing cultural climate of the time. Nations obviously exist. Police obviously need to exist. Evil cannot be ignored. And war and violence are part of life. So how does a Christian begin to approach dealing with these realities? Having surveyed the broad causes of war and violence and the common positions Christians take, in this related series we consider the many principles in the bible that relate to war, violence and even law enforcement.

I. Introduction.

- A. We start a new, related series on war and violence and how a Christian ought to view these realities.
- B. So four principles about war and violence for you to consider.
 - 1. #1 War is used by God for His purposes.
 - 2. #2 The Divine purposes in any war are manifold and mysterious.
 - 3. #3 Violence and War are not the way to build a nation.
 - 4. #4 Deadly force is specifically ordained by God.
 - 5. #5 War and violence are never glorified in the bible.
 - 6. # 6 The bible does not reject the role of soldier or police.
 - 7. #7 The New Testament does not speak directly to war.
 - 8. #8 The Christian, in living out his faith, is to take on a meek stance toward the world.
 - 9. #9 The basic posture, opposed to a Christian's posture, for all of humanity is war and violence.
 - 10. #10 If you are a defeated nation then you should seek to be a faithful citizen in the new nation.

II. Biblical Principles of War.

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- A. #11 War and oppression is a means for God to judge people and nations.
1. Many of you have heard or read the quote by John Calvin, “When God wants to judge a nation, He gives them wicked rulers.” He didn’t say this, but it is a good summary of what he did say.
 2. The bible is replete with examples of God using wicked rulers to discipline, judge and punish people and nations.
 3. Judges 3:1-2
 4. Judges 6:1, Israel did evil so YHWH gave them into the hands of Midian for seven years.
 5. Isaiah 10:5.
 6. Isaiah 13:5 and that nation is vs 1, Babylon.
 7. However, we need to be careful in assuming we understand why some nation rises up to prominence or why a war breaks out. Though God used these nations to punish and test Israel, many other nations were also attacked and destroyed and yet not for the same reasons. Without the knowledge of special revelation we can guess but never know for certainty.
- B. #12 God will punish those who war in an unrighteous manner.
1. Habakkuk 2:6-17.
 2. Isaiah 46:1 - 47:4.
 3. In the midst of great turmoil and evil we must remember that God is above it all and shall judge it all. On this side of eternity we spend a lot of time puzzled over details of which we are not privy. We have a lot of “why” and “when” as we see so much that is messed up. But God is still Lord of all and He is seated above it all and is the Judge who judges impartially.
- C. #13 Booty made up of people and property is a fruit of victory in war.
1. Numbers 31:7-12.
 2. This is speaking to Israel and is brutal in its application. But this is the point I am making in each of these sermons. War is brutal. There is no way to fight a kind and gentle war. Domination and victory is not subtle.
 3. Each nation will make its rules and standards. The opposing side does the same. It is hard for me to state that one style and standard is the only one

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because we have the Old Testament and how God directed Israel to battle in a variety of ways.

4. I would argue that this taking of booty applies internal in a nation as it does external. I see little problem if a nation seeks to harm another nation, that in the ensuing war, that if the attacking nation loses that they also lose their sovereignty and the rights to their resources.
- D. #14 The bible actually gives us rules that God ordained as the norm for Israel to go to battle.
1. Deuteronomy 20 gives them.
 - a. Vss 1-4, entrust yourself to YHWH and not man.
 - b. Vss 5-8, war is not for those who are just getting established in life.
 - c. Vs 9, war is not for those who are afraid.
 - d. Vss 10-11, offer enemy opportunity to surrender and make peace, but on your terms.
 - e. Vss 12-15, men normally are the target of the battle while women and children represent potential booty.
 - f. Vss 16-18, utter destruction is allowed in unique situations. It is important to note the “so that/in order that” in vs 18.
 - g. Vss 19-20, try to preserve the land and resources. Those are rewards for victory in battle.
 2. One other point about this passage is that the army comprised of citizen soldiers rather than a separate, professional class of warrior. I believe there is a purpose in this by arming the citizenry as well as the citizens being invested in the war.
- E. #15 The believer must always put his trust in God and not military might.
1. Psalm 20:6-9.
 2. Isaiah 31:1-9.
 3. This is not a statement of passivity where you wait for God to somehow do something. That is like the man on the roof of his house in a great flood. Prays for God to save him and a rescue boat comes and he rejects it. Then a helicopter seeks to pull him to safety and he rejects it. Then he complains that God has not yet saved him.

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4. “The horse is prepared for the day of battle, But victory belongs to the YHWH” (Proverbs 21:31). You prepare but never do you trust in those things.
 5. Psalm 33:16-22 is our answer.
- F. #16 In the end, when you are unsure what is the right response ask yourself how best can you honor God and secondarily, honor your conscience.
1. This is simple and yet so important. We face hard decisions constantly and it is easy to forget these two questions.
 2. These two are actually tightly connected but honoring God is the key. You do this one of two ways:
 - a. You are faithful to order your life around the Word of God because of your new life in Christ and through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.
 - b. And when you are unsure or things are not clear then from whatever amount of knowledge you have of God’s Word, you obey your conscience.
 3. “*Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*” (1 Corinthians 10:31)
 - a. This command is set in the context of eating or not eating meat offered to idols.
 - b. The reality is that meat is just meat. Idols are nothing for “*the earth is the Lord’s, and all it contains*” (1 Corinthians 10:26).
 4. Romans 14.
 - a. The measure of maturing faith often determines what and how you do things (2).
 - b. Judging another in matters of conscience is wrong (3).
 - c. Vs 6 shows the idea of seeking to honor the Lord but it does not always look the same for each.
 - d. Vs 12 we will all give an account to the Lord, including in issues of conscience.
 - e. Vss 22-23 make is clear that conviction and conscience are treasures to protect, even as they also change and grow as you learn more of God’s Word.

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5. Respect a man who arms his house for war and prepares to fight as long as he is doing it to honor God.
6. Respect a man who refuse to fight as long as he is doing it to honor God.
7. And finally, accept the consequences regardless without grumbling.

III. Conclusion.

- A. War is our constant companion in this age.
 1. While one area of this globe rests in peace, another is raging with intrigue and another is actively fighting.
 2. Give it a little time and those people will be in some level of peace and it will be us who are involved in war and violence.
- B. War and violence are constant reminders of what I started out with teaching today. The futility of this age.
 1. Sadly in America things are so comfortable and there are so many options and possibilities open to us that we keep buying the lie that we can finally have peace and fulfillment here and now.
 2. But it only takes a little bit of scratching and digging for you to break through to what is real. Spend some time in a police car or an ambulance. Walk the halls of a hospital for a few days talking to nurses and visitors. Visit a morgue and see and learn.
 3. Ever since Adam sinned and brought sin and death into this realm we have been at war with our Creator and Sustainer. All other battles are merely overflow from that great war in our souls.
- C. And it is here that Jesus Christ comes into focus. He is our Warrior. He shall triumph over all enemies and for all eternity.
 1. He is the One who brings reconciliation for the sinner with God.
 2. He is the One who brings peace to those who have no peace.
 3. He is the One who draws us near to God through His death and resurrection.
 4. He is the One who humbles the proud heart.
 5. He is the One who delivers a person out from under sin and death.
 6. And He is the One who, at the end of the final war, that great war, shall take sin, Satan and death and cast them away forever.

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7. So do not gaze upon the might of any nation with envy. Be, instead, a wise man or woman and trust in Christ alone, through faith alone to be your refuge and very present help in time of trouble.

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