

Reverend Robert Sibley



John Wesley White in a recent book called "Thinking the Un-thinkable" talking of the Gulf War, called it "one of the biggest and most successful trade shows

in human history".

Armistice Day continues to point our generation to the high cost of war. Many lament and criticise war, yet few really think through their belief on it. We fill our minds with violence, then marvel at someone acting out what is within. The bible tells us in James 4:1 "What causes wars and what causes fighting among you? It is not your passions that are at war in your members?" The real cause of war is not the external triggers, but the basic sinful nature of mankind.

Is it contradictory to go to war and yet say you serve and love the Prince of Peace, Jesus Christ? Should we all be pacifist or is there such a thing as a just war, How many times over can a person be killed?

Does the escalation in arms stockpiling provide a legitimate, justifiable deterrent, thus securing peace? What type of war would you support? Many of the ethical questions surrounding war are real issues a large percentage of our world are regularly struggling with and will be of serious consequence to all of us.

The bible does give a unified and sure direction for our decisions. First we must distinguish between its teachings on private and public duties. Never does the bible advocate taking the law into our own hands. One may choose for himself to turn the other cheek as Jesus said Matthew 5:38-48, but he must not call such action godly or love if it requires him to forsake his responsibilities to stand for justice and protect those he is accountable

for. 1 Timothy 5:8. In fact, just war participated in (and sometimes led) by men of faith is spoken of in very positive terms in Hebrews 11:32-34. The author, extolling the virtues of faith concludes by saying, "What more shall I say? For time would fail me concludes by saying, "What more shall I say? For time would fail me to tell of Gideon, Barak, Sampson.... David, Samuel and the prophets who through faith subdued kingdom's, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the

mouths of lions, quenched the violence of fire, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, became valiant in battle, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." Notice in v. 35-39 the torture and imprisonment they endured, yet would not betray or seek easy deliverance. Why? The Bible says their faith made them strong.

The Revelation 19:11 the Prince Himself is described as coming back to this earth on a white horse. "And he who sat on him was called faithful and true and in righteousness he judges and makes war."

So then, what about Christ's admonition to love one's enemies and do good to them? One needs to read Romans 12&13 as a whole to see the boundaries set on the type and extent of war.

In summary notice some principles; it must be a righteous reason and purpose that is the result of the last resort. Secondly, to must be controlled or proportionate and discriminate. Thirdly,

it must be predictable, that is a good prospect for victory. Luke 14:31-32. It is to be limited to the punishment of evil to shed innocent blood (Proverbs 6:16-17) and therefore we must be concerned today about the capability of nuclear warfare and continue to advocate the pin point accuracy techniques of placing these bombs so that innocent blood is shed.

It seems to me that the nuclear race could provide not only the obvious deterrent, but less ultimate destruction of innocent lives when the principles of God's Word are followed. We are called to be peacemakers. We thank those who have provided our present freedom to live and develop righteousness. Our personal conduct and beliefs are vital to the outcome of future generations.

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