

## How Should a Christian Relate to War?

**Isaiah 2:4: (NKJV) "He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore."**

War. It is a fact of life. According to Dr. Terry Fields, in the last 3,421 years of recorded history, there have been only 268 years without war. This should tell us something significant about the fallen nature of man. What it doesn't tell us is how we as Christians should view war. Should we support it? Should we participate in it? Should we oppose it? Just as there are many denominations of Christians, there are many differing answers to this particular question of Christian Conscience.



### Questions for Consideration:

1. Why is the Old Testament so war oriented?
2. Why is the New Testament so opposite the Old?

(Source: [www.christianarsenal.com/Apologetics/christianwar.htm](http://www.christianarsenal.com/Apologetics/christianwar.htm))

In the 13th century Thomas Aquinas<sup>1</sup> drew up the Just (justified) War Principle. He thought that although war and killing were horrible things there were times when it was reasonable to fight. These were his conditions:

1. It must be started by the proper rulers of the country. (to preserve freedom)
2. The reasons for going to war must be good (just) and have the right intention. The war must have the intention of establishing a good or correcting an evil. (to stop the spread of evil)
3. It must be as a last resort. (all alternatives have been tried; it is unavoidable)
4. No more force than necessary should be used and civilians must be protected. The just purpose must be maintained during the hostilities. (must defend and protect the innocent people)
5. It must be waged by acceptable means. (We should only use the force necessary to accomplish the goals. It would be wrong to obliterate the whole country for the evils of a few.)
6. Victory must be assured. (Fighting a war in such a manner that does not achieve its desired goals creates more problems for the innocents than it

*Hmmm...But who decides what is good or the evil that needs correcting? And who decides how much force is necessary to assure victory?*

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Aquinas was a priest, professor and philosopher who influenced centuries of religious and academic thought with his methodical way of harmonizing faith and reason. Born to nobility in southern Italy, he became attracted to life as a monk and scholar while a university student in Naples. He joined the Dominican religious order, but his family locked him in their castle tower, hoping to change his mind. A year later he escaped, studied in Cologne and Paris, was ordained a priest, and taught in universities during the Scholastic era, when the ancient logic of Aristotle was being revived despite condemnations by the Roman Catholic Church. Aquinas reconciled the two by granting reason its own integrity.



resolves. It sends a signal to others of a lawless mindset, that continuing in their ways will continue to be both possible and profitable for them.)

7. War must be aimed at a just peace. (All war must have peace as a goal.)

## 1. Why is the Old Testament so war oriented?

Let's look at the original curse put on mankind after the original sin in the Garden of Eden:

**Genesis 3:16-19:** (NRSV) *"<sup>16</sup>To the woman he said, 'I will greatly increase your pangs in childbearing; in pain you shall bring forth children, yet your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you.' <sup>17</sup>And to the man he said, 'Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten of the tree about which I commanded you, 'You shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life; <sup>18</sup>thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field. <sup>19</sup>By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken; you are dust, and to dust you shall return."*

**The elements of the Curse on man:**

- ❑ *...cursed is the ground because of you* - No longer is the ground blessed as a result of your choice
- ❑ *...in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life* - your life now has a limit
- ❑ *...thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you* - drawing the bounty of the earth is now work, it will now take effort and will not be easy
- ❑ *...By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground* - you will die!

Obviously after sin, life was going to be difficult. Mankind, because of Adam's choice, is now in the prison house of sin and death, doomed to a life of toil and difficulty. This was the result of sin - of disobeying the Creator and His guidelines.

God would now deal with his creation in the context they chose, the context of sin and death. Adam chose to obey the serpent rather than God. This is a context of imperfection, inequity, greed and humiliation. Where these things rule, the domination over and the enslavement of others can't be far behind; and where domination and enslavement rule, war is inevitable. By looking at this first initial sin - what it means and how it works, it creates a chain reaction of natural occurrences. Domination and enslavement bring things like war and difficulty.

**It didn't take long for the first dramatic effects of the enslavement to sin to result:**

**Genesis 4:1-12:** (NRSV) *<sup>1</sup>Now the man knew his wife Eve, and she conceived and bore Cain, saying, 'I have produced a man with the help of the LORD.' <sup>2</sup>Next she bore his brother Abel. Now Abel was a keeper of sheep, and Cain a tiller of the ground. <sup>3</sup>In the course of time Cain brought to the LORD an offering of the fruit of the ground, <sup>4</sup>and Abel for his part brought of the firstlings of his flock, their fat portions. And the LORD had regard for Abel and his offering, <sup>5</sup>but for Cain and his offering he had no regard. So Cain was very angry, and his countenance fell. <sup>6</sup>The LORD said to Cain, 'Why are you angry, and why has your countenance fallen? <sup>7</sup>If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin is lurking at the door; its desire is for you, but you must master it.' <sup>8</sup>Cain said to his brother Abel, 'Let us*



go out to the field." And when they were in the field, Cain rose up against his brother Abel, and killed him. <sup>9</sup>Then the LORD said to Cain, "Where is your brother Abel?" He said, "I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?" <sup>10</sup>And the LORD said, "What have you done? Listen; your brother's blood is crying out to me from the ground! <sup>11</sup>And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother's blood from your hand. <sup>12</sup>When you till the ground, it will no longer yield to you its strength; you will be a fugitive and a wanderer on the earth."

Here we have the first rivalry, the first murder, the first breeding ground for revenge and the first recorded hint of the war-like tendency that sinful man was to have. Notice how God was willing to work Cain through his anger (verses 6-7), and how Cain's choice was to follow wrath rather than right.

Who is the "founding father" of war? With this as a context, we have to ask the question - Whose world is this?

### **This text shows Satan's pride:**

Isaiah 4:13-14: (NRSV) <sup>13</sup>*"You said in your heart, 'I will ascend to heaven; I will raise my throne above the stars of God; I will sit on the mount of assembly on the heights of Zaphon; <sup>14</sup>I will ascend to the tops of the clouds, I will make myself like the Most High."*

Satan wanted what God had. These are words of war!

### **This world is indeed under the tyrannical rule of Satan:**

Matthew 4:8-11: (NRSV) <sup>8</sup>*"Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; <sup>9</sup>and he said to him, 'All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me.'"* <sup>10</sup>*Jesus said to him, 'Away with you, Satan! for it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.'"* <sup>11</sup>*Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him."*

Satan had the authority to give Jesus the kingdoms of this world. All Jesus would have to do is serve Satan.

2 Corinthians 4:3-4: (NRSV) <sup>3</sup>*"And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing. <sup>4</sup>In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God."*

The god of this world, Satan, blinded the minds of unbelievers. God permits it to temporarily be Satan's world. Remember, Adam CHOSE to follow Satan rather than God, so now we are locked in this prison house of death. God is allowing Satan to have his way, temporarily.

If we were to outline the character of Satan, here are some of his characteristics:

**Deceptive, Ruthless, Greedy, Godless, Selfish,  
Power hungry, Egotistical, Dominating**

These characteristics are the basis for our world, which is Satan's world! These characteristics work well in this world. It is run by his rules, his way. Once sin entered, the basis of operation changed. God now worked through the Law for

the Jews as his method of guidance and through the Holy Spirit for Christians as his method of guidance.

Okay, so war exists. Why then, did God go so far as to order war for Israel and in some cases order the destruction of every man woman and child of an enemy? Why did he even order the destruction of the enemy's cattle? Is this a God of love? Couldn't there have been another way?

**Deuteronomy 20:16-18:** (NKJV) <sup>16</sup>"*But of the cities of these peoples which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance, you shall let nothing that breathes remain alive,* <sup>17</sup>*but you shall utterly destroy them: the Hittite and the Amorite and the Canaanite and the Perizzite and the Hivite and the Jebusite, just as the LORD your God has commanded you,* <sup>18</sup>*lest they teach you to do according to all their abominations which they have done for their gods, and you sin against the LORD your God.*"



### Observations about God, war and the Old Testament so far:

- God allowed the general rules of the world to be sinful, under the jurisdiction of Satan.
- God introduced the Jewish Law as a first national step back to rules of God. This was a step for a nation to put God back into their lives.
- This Law was to operate in a sinful world, therefore had to address sin at every turn. It was established to be able to deal with sin.
- The "harshness" of God's judgments against enemies were to display the exceeding degradation of sin.
- This harshness seems terribly unfair *had it not been for the promise of resurrection and blessing*. This shows the ultimate mercy of God.
- God supported the wars of Israel to keep them alive and separate. Nations warred against each other-that was a fact of life.

(Source: [www.LewRockwell.com](http://www.LewRockwell.com))

### The Christian and a Biblical/Ethical Approach to War: What It Should Be and How the Church Went Wrong

God was meeting His people under their cultural conditions and circumstances. *Harem warfare*, where everything was totally destroyed and annihilated, was a prominent feature of battle during the time of the Ancient Near East. So on one level, God was simply meeting the people where they were at and operating under their conditions of warfare. Perhaps it was also a tool to get them to pay attention since that is what the people knew and responded to. Thankfully, however, this type of warfare is no longer the standard accepted practice and society has grown from its former primitive practices. But it is not altering the immutable character of God to rightly say that He was simply meeting the people where they were at under their own cultural practices.

*Hmm....are you saying that God blessed the utter and total annihilation of a people? Where is the good in that....?*

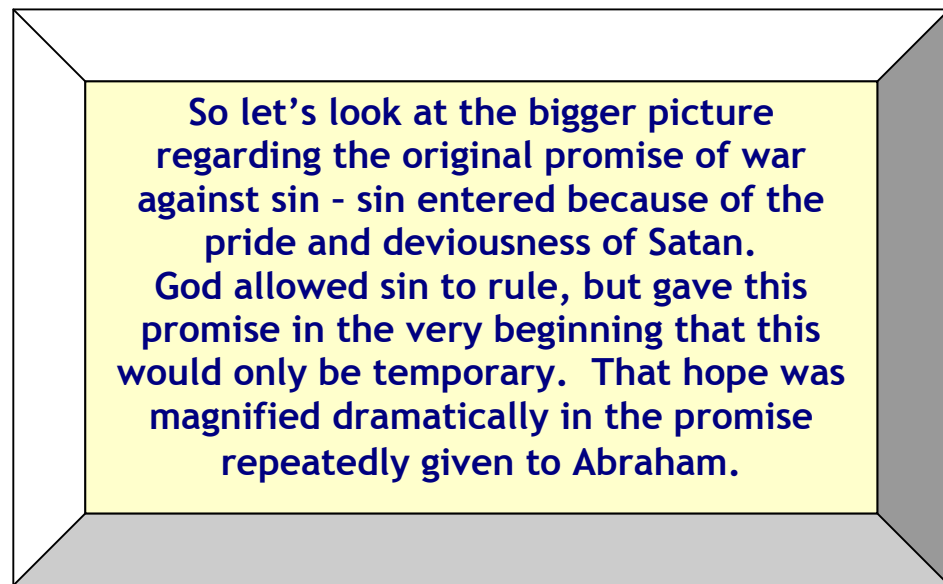
This type of warfare wasn't something that God made up for the Jewish nation to do to other people. He gave them the ability to win over their enemies by the same ways wars were generally won. He didn't add a dimension, he used what already exists.

But God had something much greater in store...

**Some of the earliest promises of God towards the redemption of all mankind:**

**Genesis 3:15:** (NKJV) *"<sup>15</sup>And I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed and her Seed; He shall bruise your head, and you shall bruise His heel."*

So when sin is committed and the sentence for this is dolled out, God says He "will put enmity between your seed and her seed." The bruising of a serpent's head is death to that serpent (Satan). There is a war going on. But the seed of the woman is going to be victorious over sin and death and Satan's rule. Even in the very beginning, there was a picture of war between Jesus and Satan, and God telling us that His way will eventually be victorious.



**Genesis 22:16-18:**(NKJV) *"<sup>16</sup>and said: "By Myself I have sworn, says the LORD, because you have done this thing, and have not withheld your son, your only son— <sup>17</sup>blessing I will bless you, and multiplying I will multiply your descendants as the stars of the heaven and as the sand which is on the seashore; and your descendants shall possess the gate of their enemies. <sup>18</sup>In your seed all the nations of the earth shall be blessed, because you have obeyed My voice."*

There is great power in these words. Because of Abraham's faithfulness, through his seed, his lineage, *all* the nations of the earth shall be blessed. This would include pagan, Muslim, Hindu, and so on. These nations are able to be blessed because of Abraham's faithfulness. This is a promise of great hope given in the middle of a sinful world that was full of war.

As a Christian looking back over the Old Testament, we can see promises for blessing and commands for death and destruction, all from the same God. How are we to harmonize these things? What are we to learn about our dealing with those who are enemies?

**Our God is a Big Picture God! Ought we not to be Big Picture People?**



**Isaiah 46:9-11: (NKJV)** *"<sup>9</sup>Remember the former things of old, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is none like Me, <sup>10</sup>declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done, saying, 'My counsel shall stand, and I will do all My pleasure,' <sup>11</sup>Calling a bird of prey from the east, the man who executes My counsel, from a far country. Indeed I have spoken it; I will also bring it to pass. I have purposed it; I will also do it."*

There is great comfort in these words. This is a story that is continually unfolding. This scripture tells us that God knows the beginning from the end, and what He has said, He will do.

### What is it He said He would do?

**Isaiah 2:2-4: (NKJV)** *"<sup>2</sup>Now it shall come to pass in the latter days that the mountain of the LORD'S house shall be established on the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow to it. <sup>3</sup>Many people shall come and say, 'Come, and let us go up to the mountain of the LORD, to the house of the God of Jacob; He will teach us His ways, and we shall walk in His paths.' For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem. <sup>4</sup>He shall judge between the nations, and rebuke many people; They shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore."*

There will come to pass later ("in the latter days") - all nations will flow to God's house. This hasn't happened yet. In His allowance of war and all the atrocities that come with it, God promised a better day and it is going to happen.

## 2. Why is the New Testament so opposite the Old?

Here are a few examples of the contrast in behavior and action from the Old Testament to the New Testament:

### Old Testament

**Deuteronomy 20:1: (NRSV)**

*"When you go out to war against your enemies, and see horses and chariots, an army larger than your own, you shall not be afraid of them; for the LORD your God is with you, who brought you up from the land of Egypt."*

### New Testament

**Mark 13:8-11: (NRSV)** *"<sup>8</sup>For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom; there will be earthquakes in various places; there will be famines. This is but the beginning of the birth pangs. <sup>9</sup>'As for yourselves, beware; for they will hand you over to councils; and you will be beaten in synagogues; and you will stand before governors and kings because of me, as a testimony to them. <sup>10</sup>And the good news must first be proclaimed to all nations. <sup>11</sup>When they bring you to trial and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say; but say whatever is given you at that time, for it is not you who speak, but the Holy Spirit."*

In the New Testament example, it is much more of a personal approach rather than a national approach. He is preparing them to fight a spiritual battle rather than a physical one.

### Old Testament

Leviticus 24:19-22: (NRSV)

*"<sup>19</sup>Anyone who maims another shall suffer the same injury in return: <sup>20</sup>fracture for fracture, eye for eye, tooth for tooth; the injury inflicted is the injury to be suffered.*

*<sup>21</sup>One who kills an animal shall make restitution for it; but one who kills a human being shall be put to death. <sup>22</sup>You shall have one law for the alien and for the citizen: for I am the LORD your God."*

There is a marked difference in behavioral expectations from the Old Testament to the New.

Jesus himself is

quoting from the Old

Testament; he is saying to rise above that and set a new standard based on spirituality and mercy instead of physical revenge and justice.

### New Testament

Matthew 5:38-45: (NRSV)

*"<sup>38</sup>You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.'*

*<sup>39</sup>But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also;*

*<sup>40</sup>and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well;*

*<sup>41</sup>and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. <sup>42</sup>Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you. <sup>43</sup>"You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.'*

*<sup>44</sup>But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, <sup>45</sup>so that you may be children of your Father in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous."*

Yet there are scriptures that seem to indicate that it is acceptable to participate:

**Notice, John does not tell the (Jewish) soldiers to leave the Military!**

Luke 3:7-14: (NRSV) *"<sup>7</sup>John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, 'You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? <sup>8</sup>Bear fruits worthy of repentance. Do not begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. <sup>9</sup>Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire." <sup>10</sup>And the crowds asked him, "What then should we do?" <sup>11</sup>In reply he said to them, "Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise." <sup>12</sup>Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, "Teacher, what should we do?" <sup>13</sup>He said to them, "Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you. <sup>14</sup>Soldiers also asked him, "And we, what should we do?" He said to them, "Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages."*

(But remember this was before Jesus' baptism.)

### Jesus here "fights" to sanctify the Temple:

**John 2:13-17: (NRSV)** <sup>13</sup>*The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup>In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. <sup>15</sup>Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and*

*Many times we think of Jesus as the ultimate pacifist, but here he drives them out of the Temple and seemingly is advocating being aggressive. What is he telling us through his actions?*

*overturned their tables. <sup>16</sup>He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!" <sup>17</sup>His disciples remembered that it was written, "Zeal for your house will consume me."*

### Jesus brings a sword!

**Mathew 10:32-38: (NRSV)** <sup>32</sup>*Everyone*

*therefore who acknowledges me before others, I also will acknowledge before my Father in heaven; <sup>33</sup>but whoever denies me before others, I also will deny before my Father in heaven. <sup>34</sup>"Do not think that I have come to bring peace to the earth; I have not come to bring peace, but a sword. <sup>35</sup>For I have come to set a man against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law; <sup>36</sup>and one's foes will be members of one's own household. <sup>37</sup>Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; <sup>38</sup>and whoever does not take up the cross and follow me is not worthy of me."*

### Paul clearly admonishes obedience to the governing powers:

**Romans 13:1-7: NRSV** <sup>1</sup>*Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God. <sup>2</sup>Therefore whoever resists authority resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. <sup>3</sup>For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Do you wish to have no fear of the authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive its approval; <sup>4</sup>for it is God's servant for your good. But if you do what is wrong, you should be afraid, for the authority does not bear the sword in vain! It is the servant of God to execute wrath on the wrongdoer. <sup>5</sup>Therefore one must be subject, not only because of wrath but also because of conscience. <sup>6</sup>For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are God's servants, busy with this very thing. <sup>7</sup>Pay to all what is due them--taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due."*

Now, do all these things mean that we ought to be good citizens and do whatever we are told? Do these things mean that we should be armed and ready for a fight?

The answer is no...and...yes! There is a PROPER CONTEXT in which we should "fight." Paul talks about following the rules within a government situation that won't terrorize good conduct. By being a good citizen when ethical behavior is favored, you are living up to your conscience.

There is a fight we are supposed to fight - but how is it defined?

### Jesus here reveals the context in which a Christian should "fight:"

**John 18:33-37: (NRSV)** <sup>33</sup>*Then Pilate entered the headquarters again, summoned Jesus, and asked him, "Are you the King of the Jews?" <sup>34</sup>Jesus answered, "Do you ask this on your own, or did others tell you about me?" <sup>35</sup>Pilate replied, "I am not a Jew, am I? Your own nation and the chief priests have handed you over to me. What have you done?" <sup>36</sup>Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews. But as it is, my kingdom is not from here." <sup>37</sup>Pilate asked him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say*





*that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I came into the world, to testify to the truth. Everyone who belongs to the truth listens to my voice."*

This helps put things into clear perspective. Jesus was on trial for his very life. Pilate has the power (with God's permission) to sentence Jesus to death or to free him. Being a king would be treason within the Roman Empire. Jesus is saying that if his kingdom were of this world, then his followers would fight to keep him from being handed over. But they aren't fighting because his kingdom is someplace else. That's the principle we have to take into account. Jesus did *not* fight against the injustices done to him.

2 Corinthians 5:19-20: (NKJV) *"<sup>19</sup>that is, that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them, and has committed to us the word of reconciliation. <sup>20</sup>Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God."*

If we are Ambassadors for Christ, we can see that we are supposed to be representing a government not of this world. Therefore our behavior should reflect a primary allegiance to the government of God through Jesus.

### **Will this thought pass the test of other scriptures?**

Ephesians 6:13: *"Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to **withstand** in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."*

Withstand: Strong's #436 anthistemi anth-is'-tay-mee:  
1) to set one's self against, to withstand, resist, oppose 2) to set against

This sure sounds pretty military - armor, withstanding, doing all to stand!  
The real question here is - what are we standing for and what are we fighting against?

### **Here are some scriptures that use that same Greek word for "withstand:"**

Matthew 5:39: *"But I say unto you, That ye **resist** <436> not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."*

James 4:7: *"Submit yourselves therefore to God. **Resist** <436> the devil, and he will flee from you."*

We are to arm ourselves for spiritual conflict, not national conflict, because we are supposed to be ambassadors for Christ.

### **So, our "standing against" is certainly regarding Satan and spiritual wickedness:**

1 Peter 2:9-11: (NKJV) *"<sup>9</sup>But you are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, His own special people, that you may proclaim the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light; <sup>10</sup>who once were not a people but are now the people of God, who had not obtained mercy but now have obtained mercy. <sup>11</sup>Beloved, I beg you as sojourners and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul."*

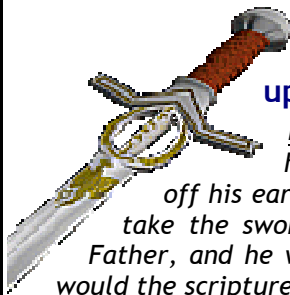
It is important to keep our spirituality intact.

**John 17:15-17:** (NRSV) *"<sup>15</sup>I am not asking you to take them out of the world, but I ask you to protect them from the evil one. <sup>16</sup>They do not belong to the world, just as I do not belong to the world. <sup>17</sup>Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth."*

### So, are we to do as Jesus did - didn't he "fight" to clear the temple?

**John 2:13-17:** (NRSV) *"<sup>13</sup>The Passover of the Jews was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem. <sup>14</sup>In the temple he found people selling cattle, sheep, and doves, and the money changers seated at their tables. <sup>15</sup>Making a whip of cords, he drove all of them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. <sup>16</sup>He told those who were selling the doves, 'Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!' <sup>17</sup>His disciples remembered that it was written, 'Zeal for your house will consume me.'"*

Note the lack of physical destruction caused by Jesus' actions - he simply stops the unfair money changers from gouging the people - he takes nothing of theirs and he allows them to recover what was upset. Jesus didn't do harm to them. His motivation was to stop the corruption, not to do damage. This is an important principle.



### Jesus chastises the use of the sword and does not even call upon angels for protection!

**Matthew 26:51-54:** (NRSV) *"<sup>51</sup>Suddenly, one of those with Jesus put his hand on his sword, drew it, and struck the slave of the high priest, cutting off his ear. <sup>52</sup>Then Jesus said to him, 'Put your sword back into its place; for all who take the sword will perish by the sword. <sup>53</sup>Do you think that I cannot appeal to my Father, and he will at once send me more than twelve legions of angels? <sup>54</sup>But how then would the scriptures be fulfilled, which say it must happen in this way?"*

In one place Jesus brings a sword and here he says to put it away. What is the difference? The sword he brought was a sword of division (**Hebrews 4:12**) - not a physical sword. He was engaging in spiritual warfare to take the world back from Satan, to release the world from the prison house of sin and death. The main battle is fought spiritually and Jesus is our Captain.

### We are to walk just as Jesus walked!

**1 John 2:2-6:** (NRSV) *"<sup>2</sup>and he is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world. <sup>3</sup>Now by this we may be sure that we know him, if we obey his commandments. <sup>4</sup>Whoever says, 'I have come to know him,' but does not obey his commandments, is a liar, and in such a person the truth does not exist; <sup>5</sup>but whoever obeys his word, truly in this person the love of God has reached perfection. By this we may be sure that we are in him: <sup>6</sup>whoever says, 'I abide in him,' ought to walk just as he walked."*

### Our weapons are not carnal!

**2 Corinthians 10:3-5:** (NRSV) *"<sup>3</sup>Indeed, we live as human beings, but we do not wage war according to human standards; <sup>4</sup>for the weapons of our warfare are not merely human, but they have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments <sup>5</sup>and every proud obstacle raised up against the knowledge of God, and we take every thought captive to obey Christ."*

### Finally, "Vengeance" is God's:

**Romans 12:14-21:** (NRSV) *"Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them. <sup>15</sup>Rejoice with those who rejoice, weep with those who weep. <sup>16</sup>Live in harmony with one another; do not be haughty, but associate with the lowly; do not claim to be wiser than you*



are. <sup>17</sup>Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. <sup>18</sup>If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. <sup>19</sup>Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." <sup>20</sup>No, "if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads." <sup>21</sup>Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good."

***So how should a Christian relate to war?  
For Jonathan and Rick and Christian Questions...  
Think about it...!***