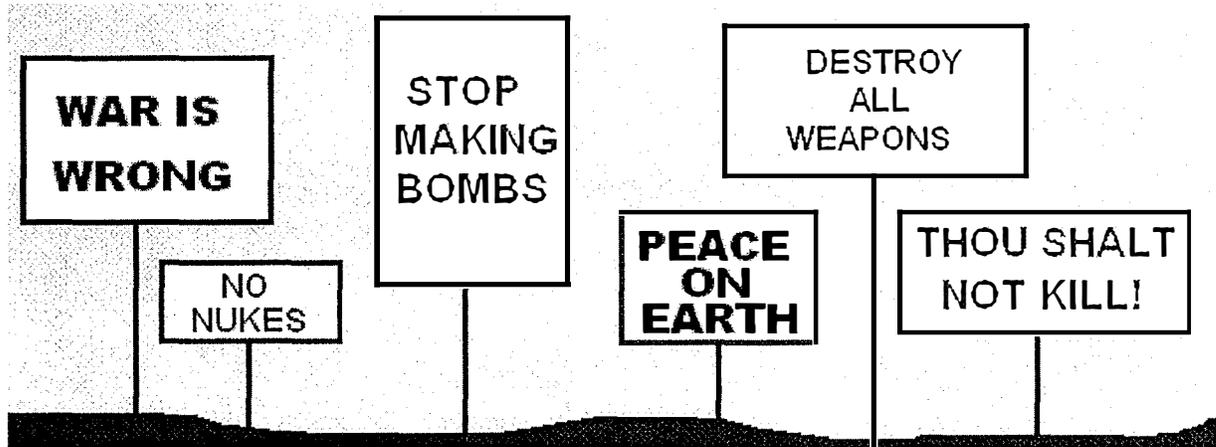


CHAPTER 4

True Peace And False Peace

Today there are many people who are crying out for peace. They would like to see an end to war and an end to fighting. Their signs include slogans like these:



War is not a very pleasant subject. Most people do not like to think about soldiers dying on battlefields or bombs being dropped on cities that are filled with men, women and children. Most people long for the day when there will be no more war and when there will be truly "peace on earth."

The Bible tells us that someday the Lord Jesus Christ will be KING and He will rule this world from the city of Jerusalem (see Isaiah 2:1-5). He will be called "the PRINCE OF PEACE" (Isaiah 9:6). When Jesus is KING OF THE EARTH will there be any war (Micah 4:3)? _____ Jesus Christ will make "wars to _____ unto the end of the earth" (Psalm 46:9).

Yes, peace will come to planet earth. But is Jesus Christ ruling on earth today from Jerusalem? _____ Do we have peace on earth today or do we have war on earth today (see Matthew 24:6-7)? _____ Today the PRINCE OF THIS WORLD is the devil (John 16:11) and we know that he is **not** the PRINCE OF PEACE! The Bible tells us that there will be peace on earth, **but not yet!** There can be no true and lasting peace without the PRINCE OF PEACE!

War Is Sometimes Necessary in a Sinful World

A policeman does not enjoy using his gun to shoot a person, but is it sometimes necessary for him to do this? _____ When might it be necessary for him to do this? If a criminal were to try to harm innocent people, should the policeman try to stop him in some way? _____

If a man were to break into your house and try to kill your mother, should your father try to stop him? _____ Should your father kill this man if that is the only way to stop him? _____

Hopefully most of us will never have to kill anyone, but sometimes killing is necessary, and sometimes killing is the right thing to do. Remember, there is a difference between MURDER

and KILLING. **Murder** is the wicked killing of another person--the kind of killing that is not done accidentally but is carefully planned and deliberately carried out. **Killing** is a more general word which simply means "to put to death." All murder is killing but not all killing is murder. The word "KILL" in Exodus 20:13 should really be translated "MURDER." See Matthew 19:18: "THOU SHALT DO NO M_____."

David killed Goliath (1 Samuel chapter 17). Was God angry with David or pleased with David for doing this? _____ David did the right thing. Remember, God was the One who strengthened David and gave him the skill and ability to slay this giant!

Just as a father needs to protect his family and just as a policeman needs to protect the people on the streets, so also soldiers protect those who live in a country. A soldier's job is not an easy job but it is an important job and we need to pray for the soldiers who serve our country.

Weakness Leads to War Strength Leads to Peace

Most people do not want to fight unless they think they can win. Only a fool would go into a battle that he knows he will lose. Would you be a fool if you tried to box against the heavyweight champion of the world? Goliath was a CHAMPION (see 1 Samuel 17:4), and he was so BIG and so TALL and so STRONG that no one wanted to fight him! The men of Israel thought that Goliath would win and that they would surely lose so they did not dare to fight. Why did David fight the giant? Did David think that Goliath would win? Did David believe that his God was greater and stronger than mighty Goliath?

In Luke 11:21 Jesus spoke about a man who had many valuable things in his palace. He had things that thieves and robbers would love to steal and carry away. Why were people afraid to come into the palace and take what belonged to this man?

If a man is strong and armed with weapons, then you better think twice before trying to rob him! This man could live in peace because he was so strong that most people did not dare to break into his palace.

But one day a stronger man came along (read Luke 11:22). What happened to the man who lived in the palace? Was he attacked? _____ Did he win or lose? _____ This stronger man had even more weapons and even more fighting power and he was able to win the fight and take over the palace. The same thing is true for countries. If a country is strong, then most of the other countries will not dare to attack it.

How does a country keep from being attacked (circle the correct answer)?

- a. Lay down all weapons and refuse to use them.
- b. Say to the other countries, "Let's be at peace. We will never fight, even if you attack us!"
- c. Be so strong that none of the other countries dare attack you.
- d. Destroy all weapons and tell all the soldiers to find another job.

Sometimes it is necessary to be strong and tough! Sometimes it is a matter of life and death. If you are up against a rhinoceros in an open field with no place to run and no tree to climb, do not stand there and wave a white flag and talk words of peace. This mighty animal is about to charge at you! It is your gun or rifle against his powerful horn above his nose. The stronger will win!

The Lord Jesus spoke about going to war in Luke 14:31-32. A king is trying to decide whether he should make war against another king. So he sits down and carefully thinks about it: "Am I really able to win this war? Do I have enough soldiers? Is my army strong enough to defeat the enemy?" If he decides that the other king's army is too great and too strong, what will he do? Will he fight or will he surrender (Luke 14:32)? _____

The conquering and invading country can say to the weak country: **"You can either fight and be destroyed or you can surrender. Which choice do you want to make?"**

People do not like to fight against a strong army. The enemy will be afraid to attack if they know the opposing army has greater power than their own. Joshua had an army that had the power and might of God behind it. God gave Joshua and the Israelites many great victories. Joshua's enemies soon learned that it was foolish to try to fight against Joshua. Was there peace in the land (see Joshua 14:15)? _____ David had a mighty army and God made David's soldiers winners on the fields of battle. Was there peace in the land (2 Samuel 7:1)? _____ **Peace comes when the army is so strong that the enemy is afraid to fight!**

Should We Disarm?

To "DISARM" means to give up or remove weapons. When policemen capture a bank robber, one of the first things they do is DISARM him. They take away all his weapons so that he can no longer fight them or attack them.

Should a country disarm? Should a country get rid of all its weapons? Should a country let itself become so weak that it is unable to defend itself against its enemies?

It would be wonderful if all the nations of the world would destroy all their weapons and decide to live in peace. But we do not live in this kind of a world. We live in a sinful world described by James in James 4:1-2. We live in a world where people want to have what is not theirs and they are willing to fight and kill to get it.

Suppose the nations of the world were to meet together and decide to disarm and destroy all weapons. But two of the nations just pretend to do this. Instead of destroying their weapons they secretly begin making even more. Soon all the nations of the world will be weak and these two will be strong. These two nations can then attack and conquer any country they wish. No one would be strong enough to stop them. Disarming will not lead to peace unless every country does it.

It would be nice if we could live in a world where there is no stealing. But is this the kind of a world we live in? _____ Suppose the President of the United States were to make this announcement on television and radio:

Fellow Americans, from now on we are all going to live in peace with each other. Let's all leave the doors to our houses unlocked and let's leave the doors

to our cars unlocked. Let's all decide to love each other and never steal what is not ours.

If people really started leaving their houses and cars unlocked, do you think other people would take advantage of this? Fifty people in your neighborhood might try to be honest and try to follow the President's advice, but all you need is one crook to ruin it for everyone!

REMEMBER, WE ARE NOT IN HEAVEN YET! There is enough stealing that goes on even when people lock their doors! Just think how much stealing there would be if people made it easy for thieves to break in and steal! Should a country make it easy for another country to invade and to conquer?

It Pays To Be Prepared

In Nehemiah chapter 4 the children of Israel were building the wall around the city of Jerusalem. Why did they need a wall? Was it for decoration? Was it to keep young children from wandering away? No, **the wall was for protection and for defense.** The Jews knew that they were surrounded by enemies and they wanted to build a wall to protect their city.

Their enemies did not want them to succeed in building this wall. Was the enemy planning to come and attack (Nehemiah 4:11)? _____ Did the Jews believe they should be ARMED or did they believe they should be DISARMED (Neh. 4:13)?

_____ What weapons did they have (Neh. 4:13)?

_____ Were they PREPARED to fight?

_____ As it turned out the Jews did not even need to fight (see Neh. 4:15). The enemy knew that they were PREPARED and ready to fight and so they did not dare to attack them! The Jews then went back to work building the wall. Were they still ready to fight (Neh. 4:16-18,21)?

A country will not usually attack another country that is PREPARED and READY TO FIGHT. At the beginning of the second World War the Japanese surprised the United States and attacked Pearl Harbor. The United States was not prepared for this sneak attack. Often those countries that are really ready to fight do not need to fight! If the enemy thinks that you are weak or unprepared, it likely will attack. The Japanese later learned that the United States was actually a very strong country [with the ability to make powerful atomic bombs], and they probably would have been much better off if they had never attacked Pearl Harbor.

Nuclear War

Today soldiers do not use spears, swords and bows. Today we have the most powerful and the most destructive weapons ever known to man. Nuclear weapons are the most powerful and deadly weapons of all. A nuclear bomb dropped over a city would cause great loss of life and great destruction of property. And the radioactive fallout from the bomb could cause further loss of life to surrounding regions.

There is much talk today about NUCLEAR WAR. Many people are afraid of what might happen if men were to use nuclear weapons. Many fear that a nuclear war would begin and that missiles carrying bombs (perhaps launched by submarines) would be sent all over the world and that there would be no survivors. Is this possible? Could mankind be completely destroyed by a

nuclear war? Is this how the world is going to come to an end?

The world that God has made is not going to be destroyed by nuclear weapons. It is theoretically possible, but it is not Biblically possible. What does the Bible teach about this? Why does the Bible teach that mankind cannot destroy itself?

Suppose everyone were to die in a nuclear war. If this were to happen, then would there be anyone left on earth when Christ returns? _____ Christ would have to return to an empty earth because everyone would have died in the war. But this is not what the Bible teaches. The Bible makes it clear that when Christ returns there will still be many people alive on the earth (see Psalm 2:2 and Revelation 19:11-19). Mankind will not be totally destroyed by war. This is not God's plan. The Bible teaches that there will be people on earth.

There are people today who are afraid that the entire human race will be destroyed by nuclear war. If they knew and believed their Bible, they would realize that this could never happen because the Bible teaches that people will be living on the earth when Christ returns. A long time ago a similar situation took place. In the days of Esther there were people who were afraid that the entire Jewish race would be destroyed. And they had good reason for thinking this would happen (see Esther 3:13). But if the people had believed their Bibles, they would have known that this was impossible. God had promised that the nation Israel would never cease from being a nation (Jeremiah 31:35-37; 33:24-26). If the Jewish race had been destroyed then God would have been a liar!

The same thing is true today. According to what God has told us in His Word, the human race cannot be destroyed by nuclear war. There are people living on earth today. There will be people living on earth during the tribulation period (a seven year period prior to the Lord's coming to earth). There will be people living on earth during the thousand year reign of Christ. The Bible never envisions a time when the entire human race will be destroyed.

This does not mean that nuclear weapons will never be used. Such weapons of mass destruction have **already** been used! The United States used atomic weapons to bring World War Two to **an end**. Many people died because of the atomic bomb that was dropped, but many more people were saved because this terrible war came to a swift end because of these bombings. These bombs were dropped on Japan. Whether more atomic or nuclear bombs will be used in the future, God only knows.

The Coming Holocaust

The word "HOLOCAUST" means a thorough (complete) destruction. It refers especially to destruction by fire (to be burnt whole, to be completely burned up). Many people are afraid of a nuclear holocaust. They fear that someday nuclear weapons will be used and mankind will be completely destroyed by the nuclear fire and fallout.

There is a time of great destruction coming upon planet earth and millions of people will die, but this destruction will not be caused by man. This will not be a destruction caused by the Russians, by Iraq, by China, or by any other country. This will not be a destruction caused by certain countries having a nuclear war. This destruction will be caused by GOD HIMSELF! God is going to send great judgments and plagues upon the earth during the Tribulation Period (we will study the Tribulation Period in **Chapter 7**). This will be a DIVINE HOLOCAUST (caused by God) as a result of man's sinfulness. The entire unsaved population of the world will be

removed from the earth by the time God is finished with His work of judgment.

The book of Revelation tells us about these judgments and plagues that will come upon the earth in the future. For example, in Revelation 6:8 we are told that the F_____ part of the earth will be killed. This is one fourth of the world's population! In Revelation 9:15 we learn that the T_____ part of men will be killed. This is mass destruction! You can read about more of these plagues in Revelation chapters 8 and 9. When the Lord Jesus Christ returns at the end of the Tribulation there will be another great destruction and slaughter of the enemies of God (see Revelation 14:14-20; 19:11-20).

In the days of Moses God sent some terrible plagues and judgments on the land of Egypt. You can read about these in the early chapters of the book of Exodus. In the future God will send plagues and judgments not just on the land of Egypt, but on the entire world. Those who are caught up into heaven (see **Chapter 3**) will be kept from this terrible time of trouble that will come upon all those who remain on the earth (Revelation 3:10). What happened to the land of Egypt long ago is a miniature picture of what will happen to the entire world in the Tribulation Period. God's holocaust is coming!

Man should not be feared. Russia or China or some other country should not be feared. The Bible indicates in Ezekiel chapters 38-39 that God will take care of that great power from the north (RUSSIA and its allies). Satan is not the one we should fear. The One that we should really fear is GOD HIMSELF (see Matthew 10:28). If we really want to have PEACE, then we need to make sure we have PEACE WITH _____ (Romans 5:1).

The most terrible war of all is when a person is at war with God in his heart. The worst and most destructive kind of fighting is when a person fights against God in his heart. The Bible clearly teaches that an unsaved person is an ENEMY of God (Romans 5:10). The Lord Jesus died on the cross so that this war could be over (Romans 5:6-10). Those who believe on Christ and those who have received Christ as their Saviour have peace with God (Romans 5:1). Those who reject Christ and refuse to trust Him are still at war with God. If they refuse God's mercy, then there is nothing left but God's judgment and wrath (John 3:36 and 2 Thess. 1:8-9). Have you surrendered your life to the living God or are you still fighting against Him?

False Peace

Today there may not be peace in the world, but Christ has made it possible for us to have peace in our hearts (John 14:27). The Bible teaches that before Christ comes to the earth there will be a false "PEACE MOVEMENT." There will be people saying "P_____ and SAFETY" (1 Thess. 5:3) when there is no real peace and no real safety at all! Long ago people cried "PEACE, PEACE," but was there really peace (Jeremiah 6:14; 8:11)? _____ Don't be fooled by this false peace movement.

Many people want peace on earth, but remember this: **only God can bring real peace to Planet Earth!** And only God can bring real peace to the human heart. Even in the middle of this sin-troubled world, God says that the believer can have PEACE (John 16:33). **Wherever Christ rules there is peace.** If I let Christ rule in my heart then I can have peace in my heart. Someday Christ will rule on this earth and at that time there will be PEACE ON EARTH (see Isaiah 9:6-7 and Luke 2:14)!

Be Ready For Attack

These are days when we need strong soldiers for Christ. The enemy would love to attack us. Satan would love to find us weak and unprepared for his attacks. Is the devil roaming the earth looking for those that he may attack (1 Peter 5:8)? _____ Does God want us strong or weak (Ephesians 6:10)? _____ Does God want us to disarm or does God want us to be armed (Ephesians 6:11-17)? _____ Does God want us to be ready to stand against the enemy? _____ Who is the real enemy (Ephesians 6:12)? _____
 _____ When believers stand strong in the power of God, what does the enemy do (James 4:7)?

God has never lost a battle! Those who stand with Him stand in complete victory! He has even promised to do the fighting (Exodus 14:14; Nehemiah 4:20)! God is more powerful than any nuclear weapon. **If God be for us, who can be against us?** See Romans 8:31.

"War is an ugly thing, but not the ugliest of things.

The decayed and degraded state of moral and patriotic feeling which thinks that nothing is worth war is much worse.

The person who has nothing for which he is willing to fight, nothing which is more important than his own personal safety, is a miserable creature and has no chance of being free unless made and kept so by the exertions of better men than himself."

John Stuart Mill - from On Liberty circa 1859

All murder is killing but not all killing is murder.

Murder involves killing unlawfully with premeditated malice. It involves a deliberate, planned, pre-mediated attack against a fellow human being for the purpose of taking his life for reasons that are purely sinful.

There is also the kind of killing that is unintentional, such as when a person causes the death of a person by accident. God made full provision for this kind of killing by setting up cities of refuge in the land of Israel (see Numbers 35:1-34 and Deuteronomy 19:1-10). Accidental killing is rightly classified as killing but it is not murder. The Bible makes a clear distinction between someone who kills a person accidentally without ever having hated the person (Deut. 19:4), and someone who murders a person by lying in wait for him (Deut. 19:11). The latter is an example of a carefully planned and premeditated murder motivated by hatred.

Human life is precious and to be highly valued, for man is made in the image of God (Gen. 9:6). We live in a society which gives little respect to human life, as demonstrated by rampant abortion rate and the frightful and widespread allowance of euthanasia, etc. While the taking of a human life is never to be taken lightly, nevertheless the consistent teaching of the Scripture is that there are times when the taking of human life is justified. Woe to that society that fails to punish evildoers with a punishment that fits the crime (Romans 13:1-5). Woe to that nation that fails to defend itself and its borders against terrorist groups and tyrannical nations who are bent upon destroying the very fabric of our society. When the Japanese invaded Pearl Harbor the great majority of Americans recognized that a war response was needed, necessary, just and right.

Warfare, as terrible as it is, is sometimes necessary in this sinful world, and the reader should be reminded that the greatest battlefield slaughter of all time will take place in the future at Christ's second coming. This great and final battle will be led by the King of Kings and Lord of Lords Himself (see Revelation 19:11-19).

REGARDLESS OF THE OUTSIDE

