

Jehovah Is a Warrior

by Dean Taylor

God uses both His chosen people and ungodly nations to accomplish His will, but does not bless their behavior, and we should relate to the world as sojourners and pilgrims, not connected to the nations we live in.

Duration: 51:11

Scripture: Exodus 15:3, Matthew 5:38-39, Matthew 10:34-39, Romans 13:1-7, James 1:17

Topics: "Gods Character", "Just War"

Description

This sermon delves into the paradox of understanding God's character and methods between the Old and New Testaments, emphasizing the shift in approach from the Old Testament's portrayal of God as a warrior to Jesus' teachings on non-resistance and love for enemies. It explores the concept of just war theory and the absence of explicit teachings on it in the Bible until later centuries, highlighting the need for Christians to align their beliefs with the unchanging character of God. The speaker challenges the audience to embrace the radical teachings of Jesus, acknowledging the shift in missions, methods, and weapons used by believers while maintaining the consistency of God's attributes.

Transcript

You know, I'm trying to make this, I was given the assignment we're trying to make a DVD teaching, teaching DVD, and so I'm covering a little bit more things, more quotes and things that I usually would if I was just to preach a message on non-resistance. So to try to get your gear, your mind in the gear of a teaching mode, and think of it more of a classroom, and if I tend to preach a little here and there, well, then, you know, that's just kind of goes with it. But the idea is that I'm covering a lot of material, and today, particularly in this session, I'm going to be covering a lot of things, and because, and as also when I've tried to put all this into four different, four different sessions, you know, I kept thinking, oh, there's so much more I want to talk about, and there's still some things we're going to talk about tomorrow, and some of the question and answers, and talk about, for instance, our involvement with politics, different things in history, and different questions that come up, have already come up like that, and we'll be able to talk about some of those specific things.

But, as I go through a lot of these things, I'm thinking of some of the things that, in my own personal journey, my wife's journey, are things that we really had to struggle with, and talk, find our way through, and so see those things that I'm bringing out today, and in particular today, I'm going to be talking about the Old Testament, or particularly during this session, I'm going to be talking about the Old Testament,

and the name of this session is Yahweh is a Warrior, and so let's get into it here. So, as we talk about the Old Testament, in this message, I'm going to be mainly detailing these things of the Old Testament, and what I hope to do is to clear the smoke screen that often people have, Protestant churches, evangelical churches, just modern American churches have, over the Old Testament. There's a lot of things that are being said, and justified, a lot of unbiblical behavior being justified using the Old Testament, and the advocates of just war theory, and things like that, or what they claim that are in the Old Testament, my desire is to try to get through some of those things.

So, I want to cover two main things about the Old Testament today. The first thing that I want to show, that I want to show in both, that in both the Old, and the New Testament, this concept, this is an important concept, and understanding the two kingdoms, understanding the kings in the Old Testament, understanding wars, and these different things. This, the, one of the things that I want to show in this session, is that in both the Old and New Testament, that in addition to using, God using His chosen people, God also uses ungodly, wicked, and idolatrous nations, and kings to accomplish His will.

So, some of the questions that will come up in you, if you discuss things, well, don't you think America was used for this, or America was used for that? Well, yes, I do think America was used for, for defending against many things, but I want to look at this principle. It's a very important biblical principle for understanding the Old Testament, and so I'm going to spend some time on it, because I don't you to miss it. The next thing is, the Bible reveals that God actually uses these kings, and these nations, to govern the earth, and to accomplish His will.

However, God also demonstrates, as we look at this principle, that just because He uses these ungodly kings and nations, He may use our country, He may use different countries and nations, it doesn't mean that He blesses these kings, or these nations, or that He's pleased with their behavior. In the second, I want to clear away the smokescreen surrounding the Old Testament wars. I want to look, honestly, at the wars in the Old Testament for what they really are, and doing so, I hope to disarm the arrogance of the so-called Christian leaders that attempt to justify their wars using these Old Testament stories.

This is happening today, and as the environment of war is just now getting, you're going to start getting even more roared up again, you're going to start hearing this rhetoric in the news, and from so-called Christian leaders in the media. During this section, I want to emphasize the unchanging character of God, and how this element is consistent throughout the Old and New Testament scriptures. So, how do we relate to this world, is a question that we need to ask.

And again, in a bit of review, we are sojourners and pilgrims. Again, I bring out this passage by Peter, and if you call on the Father, who without respect to persons, judges according to every man's work, pass this time of your sojourning here in fear. And so again, going through the scriptures, the Bible is giving us a type of people that are to be sojourners, not connected to the nations we live, living here, not our own little society, our own little nation.

We're supposed to be in the world, but not of the world, and not of the world to such an extent that we're considered strangers, and pilgrims, and and those that should be the way that we're considered. And one of the things that I think brings us perfectly into harmony, of understanding our place with our different laws, and different ways, in with coming into the nations of this world, is found in Romans chapter 12, and Romans chapter 13. In Romans chapter 12, we almost have a little bit of a summary of the Sermon on the Mount.

A summary of how we come to this new kingdom, this new life, this new born-again life, and how we're to express this born-again life in today's day and age. And in Romans chapter 12, verse 1, it's particularly good, and don't miss this. Here it says in Romans chapter 12, verse 1, I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable service.

And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. It's interesting, that word world there, is talking about in this world, again, this eon, this, this, it's more than just a globe type of thing that's in view here. It's a whole way of life.

It's a whole eon. It's a whole, the nations of how they think, and are, and their whole system of being. He says, do not be conformed to this conformed way of the world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

Interestingly enough, that word conformed is a word in Greek that means to be pressed on by outward things. It's the word used, like if you were to have a press, and you were to put your image of that on that press, it's to be conformed. Don't let this world conform you, but be transformed, and that's the Greek word that we get our word metamorphosis, to be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

You know, there's a Martin Luther King, Jr. when he gave a discussion when he's, when he was in jail, and he was writing a letter rebuking the church in this time, that he condemned the church, and he said that the church had no longer, the church is no longer acting like it should be acting. It's turned into a social club, he said in the 1960s. And he said that the church is called to be a thermostat, not a thermometer.

You get the difference of what he meant. Thermometer just measures the temperature of whatever it's around us. If it's 72 degrees outside, and you have a thermometer, it's 72 degrees on the thermometer.

But a thermostat sets the temperature. And Martin Luther King, Jr. is arguing in that letter that we are supposed to be setting the temperature of our society, not just copying what our society is. So it's this kind of concept that we are not to be conformed, and get our shape from being pressed from the outside, but be transformed by the way of God, and being this new humanity in Christ Jesus.

And it goes on in Romans chapter 12, a little bit down in verse 17. He's repeating the Jesus teachings, which Paul did frequently. And he said, repay no one evil for evil.

Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men. Beloved, do not avenge yourself, but rather give place to wrath.

For it is written, vengeance is mine. I will repay, saith the Lord. He didn't just say that God was just going to forget about all these things, and it's all going to be just fine in the end.

He's saying that God would revenge these things, and the vengeance is to God. But we are calling is to not to avenge ourselves, but leave that place for God. Therefore, if your enemy is hungry, feed him.

If he is thirsty, give him a drink. For in doing so, you will heap coals of fire on his head, quoting from the Proverbs there. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

It's interesting, I work in a hospital setting, and I was talking with one of the persons there who had a trip to go to to see the Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lama, for those who don't understand, it's a person who claims to

be the reincarnated Buddha of today. And he went and paid some money to go see the Dalai Lama, and he was there seeing the Dalai Lama.

He said, I'm gonna ask the Dalai Lama a question. I don't know how many thousands he had. He had a picture in his office of him and the Dalai Lama.

You know, it's kind of weird. But he was asked a question, if you had the chance to kill Hitler, would you do it? He asked the Dalai Lama, and the Dalai Lama said, well, I think you could balance out the karma. Karma means if you do enough bad, bad things will happen, good, good things will happen.

It's a pagan idea. That since Hitler had so much bad karma, that if you shot him, even though that's bad karma, it'd make up for good karma, and it would end up being a good thing. And he asked me, because he knew I had this non-resistant teachings, what do you think about that? I said, I think it's false.

I said, the difference with Jesus is he didn't try to retaliate or try to balance off some kind of karma. The difference is that he took that pain, that suffering, and that evil upon himself on the cross. And that concept is do not overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

And that's the difference, one of the many differences, between Jesus and the Dalai Lama. But, so I think it's a profound thing. But okay, so if this is gonna be the way it is, so again, with all these things that we get through the New Testament writers, if we're given our own laws to rule and guide our lives, if we have our own king that demand absolute loyalty, I told you this earlier, if we are to refuse to obey laws that contradict the laws of God, if we are commanded to love, feed, warm, and care, even the very enemies of our own nations, if we are charged with the impractical marching orders that command us to go into battle defenseless, as lambs before wolves, or sheep before the slaughter, if we are told that our weapons are not to be made of earthly things, if we are instructed that that we do not war in the flesh, if in contrast to the Old Testament marching orders, to destroy men's lives, we now instead have a new order to save them, if we are told that dying is actually gain for us, and the cross our example, if we are told that our kingdom is not of this world, if in the end, we are told that we defeat even the Antichrist, but not with bombs and chemical warfare, but by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of our testimony, and we love not our life until the end, if those are to be what New Testament Christianity should look like, well then, as falling through Romans chapter 12, how are we to respond to the nations where we live? That's where comes into play Romans chapter 13.

Now if you get into a discussion with an evangelical, Baptist, Protestant, or something of that kind, about non-resistance, any self-respecting evangelical is going to take you to Romans chapter 13, and for good reasons, because it's very strong, and if you look at some of the Anabaptist arguments that they got into in the martyr's mirror, the different chronicles, this was one of the things that the the early evangelicals and Protestants that that martyred the the Anabaptists early on, would challenge them with, is Romans chapter 13. So I want to look at it very carefully. So let's go to Romans chapter 13, and look at the scripture, because it's very strong, and we need to understand what's being said here, so that we can apply this, and understand our two kingdoms, and understand the Old Testament, and how God uses the nations of the earth.

It's a very important biblical principle, that you can't miss. All right, Romans chapter 13 puts it very plainly, right after he said all that in Romans chapter 12, now he says this, Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers, for there is no power but of God. The powers that be are ordained of God.

Whoever therefore resists the power, resists the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation. For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same.

That's strong language used against our Anabaptist forefathers in court trials. And then he goes on, For he, we're talking about the rulers, is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do which is evil, be afraid, for he beareth not the sword in vain.

For he is the minister of God, a revenger, to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. Wherefore you must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also conscience sake. For this cause pay ye tribute also, for they are, again, God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

Rendered therefore to all their dues, tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, and honor and to honor. And he finishes this section. So, wow, I mean that's some strong language.

But the the most incredible thing is if you ponder this passage, is understanding who specifically, when this letter was written, who specifically was Paul talking about? Who? Who was he talking about? He was talking about Nero. One of the most wicked people on the face of the earth. The early church all thought he was the Antichrist and this was a fulfillment of the prophecy.

And yet he was saying that Nero, these emperors, he's writing to a letter in Rome, is the minister of God. Paul, what are you saying? And in this we have to understand this biblical principle. And this, when you get this, it's going to make the two kingdoms come alive to you.

And here's the principle. The principle is this, that God uses ungodly nations to accomplish his will. He's done this in the New Testament, he does it today, and he's done it into the Old Testament.

So let's open up the Old Testament now and let's look into some of the ways that he did this. The first one that I would like to look at is that particular word, minister. The word minister is the word there in Greek, diakonos.

It's where we get our word for deacon. It means to be a servant. And the word minister, so we have an equivalent many times throughout the Old Testament.

I'm going to give you, I'm going to labor this point a bit, because it's such a contested point. My concern is to show you that this is the way God has always shown that he uses ungodly nations to his purpose. Okay, so let's look at this.

When God wanted to bring judgment against his own people, against Judah, and wanted to rebuke them, it's his own people, Judah. He uses this very language, speaking of Nebuchadnezzar, it's found in Jeremiah chapter 25, verse 9. Important verse. I would put these scriptures that I am giving you in your margin in Romans chapter 13, if I were you, so that you would have these and you can study through them.

In Jeremiah chapter 25, verse 9, God is speaking. He said, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadnezzar the king of Babylon, watch, my servant, and will bring them against this land, and against the inhabitants thereof, and against all the nations round about, and will utterly destroy them, this is his own people, and make them an astonishment, and a hissing, and a perpetual desolation. The question that I asked then is, is God pleased with that? And in four verses down,

he's explaining the verse that in when 70 years are accomplished, I will take this nation, and I will take Nebuchadnezzar, and I will make him an astonishment, and a hissing, and judge him for his pride, and thinking that he was doing these things.

And that's the principle that we get from that. So, if God uses someone to accomplish his will, does that mean he's pleased with him? Four verses down, and it shall come to pass when 70 years are accomplished, I will punish the king of Babylon, and that nation, saith the Lord, for their iniquity, and the land of the Chaldeans, and will make it a perpetual desolation. So, the principle that I was trying to show is that he uses Nebuchadnezzar, accomplishes his will for him, calls him my servant, and then judges him afterwards because of his idolatry.

A principle of God. All right, let's look at another one, an even more interesting one found in Isaiah, where God causes an ungodly nation the rod of his anger. Here in Isaiah chapter 10, verse 5. Listen to this.

This one's really good. It said, O Assyrian, the rod of mine anger. So, he's calling this pagan kingdom, the rod of my anger, and the staff in their hand is mine indignation.

He's using this army of the Syrians. I will send him against an hypocritical nation, and against the people of my wrath will I give him a charge to take the spoil, and to take the prey, and to tread them down like the mire of the streets. This is God bringing judgment upon his own people, and we need to pay attention as America, as we look at how God, other principles that God does that.

But, listen to this. Watch what's going on in the mind of the Assyrians, though, as God is using him. How be it, he meaneth not so.

In other words, he didn't know what he's doing. Neither does his heart think so, but it's in his heart to destroy and cut off nations, not a few. So, he's saying I'm gonna use the Assyrians.

I'm gonna use them to judge my own people, but guess what? They don't even know what they're doing. They just think they're attacking countries, and I'm using that zeal for my own purpose. That's a principle in the Old Testament that we need to get a hold of.

Again, as God used someone, does that mean he is pleased with them? He goes on, just like he did in Jeremiah, Isaiah 10, verse 12. Wherefore, it shall come to pass that when the Lord has performed his whole work upon Mount Zion and on Jerusalem, I will punish the fruit of the stout heart of the king of Assyria, and the glory of his high looks. For he hath by the strength, for he saith, by the strength of my hands have I done it, and by my wisdom.

For I am prudent, and I have removed the bounds of the people, and have robbed their treasures, and I put down the inhabitants like a valiant man. So, he says that because of their pride, because of those types of things, he's gonna set and judge them even though he uses them. Okay, I'm belaboring the point, but you've got to get this biblical principle.

Cyrus, he calls my shepherd and my anointed. Cyrus was strategically used, if you remember King Cyrus, of capturing of Babylon by damming up the Euphrates River, and the vocabulary that God uses to describe Cyrus, a pagan king, which is even famous today, even by secular standards, and this is what God said of Cyrus. Quote, who says of Cyrus, he is my shepherd, and he shall perform all my pleasure, saying to Jerusalem, you shall be built, and to the temple your fountains shall be laid.

He allowed the people to go back and rebuild the temple. Thus saith the Lord to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I have held, to subdue nations before him, and loose the armor of kings, to open before him the double doors, so that the gates will not, so the gates will not be shut. And so this principle to Cyrus, who he calls his anointed, this is the same word we get Messiah from, to Cyrus, whose right hand he has held, to accomplish God's will.

He goes on, and it says it almost in a poetry way, thus saith the Lord, your Redeemer, and he who has formed you from the womb, get this, I am the Lord who makes all things, who stretches out the heavens all alone, who spreads abroad the earth by myself, who frustrates the signs of the babblers, and drives diviners mad, who turns wise men backwards, and makes their knowledge foolishness, who confirms the word of his servant, and performs the counsel of his messengers, who says to Jerusalem, you shall be inhabited, to the cities of Judah, you shall be built, and I will raise up her waste places, and he, and who says to the deep, be dry, and I will dry up your rivers, who says of Cyrus, he is my shepherd, and he shall perform all my pleasure, saying to Jerusalem, you shall be built, and to the temple, your foundation shall be laid, he is my shepherd. It's an incredible concept, and perform all his pleasure. So in this, we've looked at this a little bit early on, so who does God choose to rule the nations of the earth? God has his will on this earth, and what does it say again? When Daniel, when Daniel prophesied, this matter is by the decree of the watchers, and the demand by the word of the Holy One, the angels and the Holy One himself, to the intent, he wants us to understand this, that the living may know, and he wants you to understand, that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and gives it to whomsoever he wills, and sets up over it, sets up over it, the basest of men, the basest of men.

Again, Hosea puts it in that, that rebuking way, I'll repeat this scripture, O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself, America, thou hast destroyed thyself, but in me is thine help, he's saying, I will be thy king, where is any other that may save thee in all thy cities, and thy judges of whom thou says, give me a king and prince, I gave thee a king in my anger, and took him away in my wrath, and that's the principle of God showing us how he deals with these Old Testament kings, and how he uses them. That ultimate example of God using somebody, but not being pleased even though with them, even though he uses them, is that example of Jesus before Pilate. I mean, it's quite a scene.

Pilate is gallantly, you know, there proclaiming Jesus before, and he says, behold the man, and as he, as he talks there, you know, he's, he's trying to talk to him, and trying to talk to Jesus, and he says to Jesus, why aren't you, why aren't you talking to me? Do you realize that I have the authority to either let you go, or the authority to let you stay? Have you ever pondered on that passage? Pilate's there before Jesus, and he said, listen, I have the authority to either let you go, or to let you stay, and what's shocking to me is that Jesus didn't say, no you don't. He agreed with him in a way, but understood that this authority was given to him from his father, and says this, you could have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above. It's like he's acknowledging that he has that authority, but yet it was given to him from, from God.

That means that Pilate had that authority to be the one responsible for killing Jesus, so just because God uses someone to accomplish his will, it does not mean that God is pleased with them. There's the ultimate example, and that's the biblical principle you're going to have to understand as we look at the Old Testament, and look at how God uses nations. So someone asked today, well, well, Dean, okay, can't you look at this time in history and clearly see that this nation stopped this, and this nation did that? I'll say, yes, I, of course I understand that, but I serve a God who has always revealed to us in his scripture that he uses nations in this way, and he always has shown throughout all the scriptures that his desire is to have a

covenant people that lives out the way of God in the midst of this people, and in particular, in his fulfillment, the Messiah came, Jesus Christ, who gave us this kingdom and wants us to establish and to be that kingdom on this earth.

That's the way it is. Now, so being honest with the Old Testament, okay, when I started looking at all this stuff on, on the Old Testament and all these things on non-resistance, and I'd read the conservative books, and I was trying to understand, there's a picture of me, I was like 21 or something, and I was trying, it was me, Tonya took this picture of me trying to dig through these different books, trying to understand the Old Testament, I began to gather up books by the peace activists, and, and I said, okay, so I must be a pacifist, that's what I meant, I'm a pacifist then, and I read the liberal books, and most of the liberal books I started to try to understand, and when I start to read them about the peace activists and the, and the pacifists and stuff, I was torn, because on the one hand, I love their defense of non-resistance, and really, they're some of the very best writers, and they have some great stories, but, however, I found the liberal pacifists mixing up the two kingdoms, just like the conservative evangelicals did. To me, the idea such as voting in a pacifist president, or some other political agenda, to me, seems like nonsense, it's, it's ridiculous, it didn't make sense.

Furthermore, I felt that most of the liberal writers were just simply ignoring the Old Testament, trying to turn the scriptures into some sort of universalism or something, and it, I tried reading the Bible with these glasses, I did, and, and I found some non-resistant actions, you know, you have, like, Abraham, you know, moving his wells and not fighting, I had, you know, Jehoshaphat claiming he didn't have to fight this battle, and you find those little nuggets of non-resistance, but in general, I did not find what they were trying to claim the Old Testament was, and I, even, for instance, they would say, you know, it says, thou shalt not kill in the Old Testament, well, yeah, but the same command that says, thou shalt not kill, also says, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, so

I didn't, as much as I tried, it was the, the pacifist liberal books that were, usually are out there about non-resistance, brought some confusion to me as I was trying to figure these things out, so I did not find the Old Testament a pacifist God at all, so as I read through the scriptures, quite the contrary, I found that the scripture says that God, it portrays God as a warrior, it says in Exodus 15, 3, the Lord, this is where we get the Jehovah, Yahweh, is a man of war, the Lord is his name, and this concept of God, these passages, they challenged me, and I needed to look at those things, so as I looked at those scriptures, and I looked at those, it, it, it shook me up, but I had to understand it, and I had to accept those scriptures if I was going to understand the God of the

scriptures in totality, so then I looked at some of the conservative arguments, when I looked at the conservative arguments of the conservative evangelicals, it made a mess of the two kingdoms, I found that conservative writers were just about ignoring the teachings of Jesus, to do with it, you had to like put it off into some millennium, or put it off in some sort of, in heaven or something, and the teachings of Jesus became nonsense, this is what we talked about in our testimony, we'd go through the scriptures, and okay, you're looking at the Bible, and it scared us that when you looked at the Bible, and you said, okay, if I'm going to take the words of Jesus, I'm going to take the Sermon on the Mount, let's say, or all the teachings of Jesus, and I'm going to create, for us, a church

that goes out of the way, that everything Jesus said to do, we're going to do just the opposite, this would be a good assignment for you Bible students that are here, okay, so, so if everything, imagine a church that everything Jesus said, you would do just the opposite, so if you had a teaching on divorce from Mary,

you'd have like, I don't know, remarriage counseling in churches, if you had something on, on lawsuits, you'd have, I don't know, Christian lawsuit lawyers, if you had storing up on, laying up, laying up on earth, you'd have financial groups of, and so these different things, you have non-resistance, you'd have Christians' armies, and so all these things, if you went everything that Jesus said, and said, okay, I'm going to create a church completely opposite, I thought, wow,

you kind of end up with the modern American church, and that kind of scared me, we talked about that on their introduction, okay, but when I started to look at the Old Testament, and through the conservatives, I said, okay, they are saying some things about the Old Testament that I need to deal with, about the nature of God, and the whole thing, you know, how you view God changes everything in your life, everything, and so it's very important that your understanding of God is biblical-based, don't flex God to fit your standard, change your standards to fit God of the Bible, and so I said, okay, so I looked at the Old Testament, and as a generalization, this is a generalization, a conservative evangelicals argued that they are the only one that can honestly claim the Old Testament, okay,

they say that the pacifists, who they call people like us, I don't agree with that term, you know, but they cannot claim the Old Testament and still maintain a consistency with the character of God and the Old Testament scriptures.

If you were to say to a self-respecting conservative evangelical that the Bible teaches non-resistance, they'd just laugh at you and say, well, didn't you ever read the Old Testament, and so that's the argument, and so, okay, this line of thinking, followed by some books and preachers that support Christians in warfare, use these generalizations of what they're saying the Old Testament is to their advantage. They do so, here's the catch, they do so by saying that God has given us a set of principles in the Bible, a set of principles that allow us to discern when the war is okay, and they call this the just war theory, they kind of generalize the whole Old Testament, we say this is what was there, and this is an attractive idea.

When I started even studying for the debate that I did in Boston, this was a common thing, they kind of tried to pretend like there was some sort of unchanging just war concept through the Bible and through the ages, and it's attractive idea, the thought of having that kind of consistency right up into the New Testament era, but it's just not what you find. The problem is when you go to the Bible in an attempt to find these principles, is you soon discover that they do not exist as the conservatives are saying they do, they do not exist as just war theorists say that they do, they're just not there. What you discover is that the nature of war in the Old Testament is categorically different than what they are calling just war in any time of human history, just about any time.

The only ones that I think can really be fair with an Old Testament understanding of warfare is those who went off into the Crusades, and those who massacred the Indians in America, and these types of things, they did this with the wicked arrogance that they were saying that they were hearing directly from God, and we all see how many times now is our evangelism thwarted by people bringing up these black spots in our Christian history because of these types of things, and we've got to understand why this is unbiblical and why it destroys even our evangelism today. The only ones that can really be fair, the only one that you can even hint to the passages in just war is Deuteronomy 20 when he talks about, and if you keep reading there, it's not something you're going to want to read when you're trying to evangelize college people on campuses somewhere. The whole idea is a categorically different understanding.

There is no just war in there, and here's, for instance, here is what was the speech. This is literally from the speech that was taken right before the first crusade. They recorded it.

Here is exactly what the Pope was saying when he initiated the very first crusade. He said, and I quote, on this account I, or rather the Lord, beseeched you as Christ's heralds to publish this everywhere and to persuade all people of whatever rank, foot soldiers and knights, poor and rich, to carry aid promptly to those Christians and to destroy that vile race from the lands of our friends. I say this to those who are present.

It is meant also for those who are absent. Moreover, Christ commands it. All who die by the way, whether by land or by sea or in battle against the pagans, shall have immediate remission of sins.

This I grant them through the power of God with which I am invested. It's said here that after they did that, the knights that were up front and the people, the warriors that are up there, began to chant in sort of like a charismatic fervor, it is the will of God, it is the will of God, it is the will of God, and they were chanting. That's an etching from the the actual event, and they went out and started this first crusade, a mark on the Christian church today.

But they were claiming God was speaking to them. History has proven they were emphatically wrong. So wrong that we still suffer from that wrong.

So what is it that we look at when we understand this concept of the war? And that is this, there is no just war theology in the Old Testament, none in the New Testament, none in the early Christian church, nothing of any kind of theory of what you're going to hear today, what you're going to hear when we try to, America tries to start this war with something else, nothing. Do you get this just war theory until the 400s? You got people from who history historians call Saint Ambrose and Saint Augustine, do you get this? I've got a clip here from the debate that I did in Boston, and it was interesting because it's sort of a smokescreen, and when I called their bluff, he tried to make the argument back to the concept of a just war being God commanding, but I tried to correct it and show that it was different than the Old Testament than in the New Testament. Listen to this quote from the debate that I did in Boston to the two theologians that are arguing for a consistency through the Bible of just war theory.

Here's the clip from the debate. There is no just war teaching in the Old Testament, is there? Implicitly, wars that are commanded by God are just, wars that are forbidden by God are unjust. There is no explicit statement about what universal rational criteria justify or disjustify a war.

It's a huge difference between God deciding to put his wrath upon this earth or to spread his kingdom and to call that a just war. There is no word of just war theology in the Old Testament. There's certainly an implicit theology there because God is just, and God commands some wars, therefore some wars must be just.

But that's, yeah, you're evading the question now because you've made a distinction between holy war, that's when God commands a war, that's holy war, and just war, that it's not because God commands it, but because you have these principles that you sit down and look at. Now, well, no, no, no, no, I disagree. If by holy war you mean simply a war commanded by God, right, then you're saying that a thing is good only because God commands it rather than that God commands it because it's good, and that makes God arbitrary.

Is those Old Testament wars more of God's wrath and judgment on the earth, or is it this just war that we're hearing here portrayed? They've got to coincide. God is just. Or is there a development in terms of salvation history from a theocracy, from a theocratic dealing with the covenant people to all people? A consistency.

All right, so there's no just war teaching in the Old Testament. You've got holy war. There's holy war.

There's no just war teaching in the New Testament, is there? Implicitly, I think there is. Sure, sure. There's no just war teaching in the first 300 years of the church, is there? There's some.

That's a four thousand year gap in your just war theory. That's a bit of an oversimplification. Okay, who teaches just war in the early church? For Christians.

I mean, the discussion is for Christians. Yeah, who teaches? Well, it existed. There are pre-Christian expressions of it, but it's developed and refined primarily within the Christian moral tradition.

And it's first Ambrose and Augustine who, and they're not even, they are systematic, but it begins, and it's germinal, and when you piece together, when you read, when you read Augustine's letters, as well as the city of God, and then several... I think he's asking, though, about the early church for the first 300 years. Is there a person you can... Anti-Nicene. Anti-Nicene.

So, in other words, all that I could get the theologians to say for the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the first 300 years of the church, is that just war is perhaps implied. Now, for at least 1,500 years since Constantine, Christians have been going out to battle in the name of God. We've been dropping bombs on people.

We've been going out and doing different things in the name of God, all for a theology that is, and I quote, implied. You know, I guess you could try to make that argument if we didn't have the last 2,000 years of history, but I think it's fair to say today in the 21st century, we've given it a try. We've given it a try, and if there's anything history has taught us, is that war begets more war, and as we will see, God, as we've already proved, God will use these nations to govern these wars, to control these tyrants and things, but Christ has made it for us to present a way that will be as an ambassador of what's in heaven.

Real quick, I can't, I know this is a bit academic, but I can't help but show you this next real quick quote. It was another one that really stumped the theologians during the debate. It was one that David brought out.

This is from the Council of Nicaea, which if you're into history, if you're not, just, you can let it roll over you, but this, in a Catholic theology, that type of thing, would be considered an ecumenical council. It is a council that, if you're a Catholic, you have to believe as dogma. It's an ecumenical council, and even Constantine, who was presiding at this, it's the year 325, and even when all this was finally coming together, they still had this canon, this law, in the Council of Nicaea, and this is what it states.

Get a hold of this. Canon 12 of the Council of Nicaea, and for those who were called by grace and at first zealously threw away their military uniforms, but then later returned like dogs to their own vomit, so that some regained their military positions through bribes and gifts, let these spend three years as hearers and ten years as prostrators. In other words, they need to be on the floor, on the ground, ten years repenting before they have communion again, and three years just even able to hear the gospel preached, but in all such cases, it is necessary to carefully examine their intentions of their repentance.

If they give evidence of their conversions by their actions, and not just mere pretense, with fear, tears, perseverance, and good works, then they may properly join the assembly in prayer once they have fulfilled their appointed time as hearers. Beyond that, the bishop may make an even more lenient decision concerning them, but those who take the matter with indifference, or who think the prescribed form of entering the church is sufficient for their readmission, must fulfill the whole time. So, it's incredible.

I mean, again, it's already far from early Christianity, but you see, even in the year 325, when they're finally bringing church and state together, they're still making laws that is wrong for Christians to participate in the military, and this is an ecumenical council. It's amazing. All right, so here's the paradox, then, as I found myself in my journey.

All right, the paradox is, okay, Jesus, remember, I'm convinced that I am not going to change the image of God to fit my agenda. I want to change my agenda to fit who God is. So, Jesus, it says in the New Testament, is the expressed image of God.

Why then didn't he teach the same thing in the New Testament as in the Old? If God in the Old Testament said, an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth, it's a law, then how could Jesus now say, you have heard that it has been said, an eye for an eye and a tooth for tooth, but I say unto you, that you resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other. How could I reconcile the differences? Even the life differences. You see, for instance, like in Luke chapter 9, where the, where Jesus was heading with his disciples up, and they, people were trying to resist him, and they go on to say, when Jesus' disciples, James and John, saw this, that they said, Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them, like Elias did? But he turned and rebuked them and said, you know not what manner of spirit you are of, but the Son of Man has not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them, and they went to another village.

The other story, when Jesus is being attacked in the, in the garden, and remember the story where, where Peter hacks off Malchus' ear, and Jesus heals it, and he looks back to Peter and rebukes him, and says, put away your sword, and he says the statement, which we hear again in Revelation, you'll hear later in the next session, he who lives by the sword dies by the sword. It's interesting, Tertullian picks up this passage, and he gives us a, he gives us his early Christian perspective on this. It's an interesting quote from the early church, Tertullian writing around the year 260 or 270, he said, how will a Christian man participate in war? How is it possible? In fact, how will he serve even in peace without a sword? For the Lord has taken the sword away.

It is also true that soldiers came to John the Baptist and received the instruction for their conduct. It is true also that the centurion believed. Nevertheless, the Lord afterwards, in disarming Peter, disarmed every soldier.

That's the kind of the way the early Christians saw it. That's the way they saw it. But James tells us, in James chapter 117, every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variable, no variableness, nor shadow of turning.

In other words, it is impossible for God to change. God doesn't change. One of the early Christian heretics, Marcion, said, well there was a God of the Old Testament, a God of the New Testament.

That's the way he dealt with it. No, he was wrong. God is unchangeable.

There is no shadow of change in him. And so we have to be honest with that. We have to be that Yahweh is a warrior.

It says in Exodus 15 3, the Lord is a man of war. The Lord is his name. So, I know it has been said, but now I say, what we get is a change.

Yes, we absolutely, obviously get a change, both in the character of the way Jesus behaved, his commissions to his disciples, and his commands. We get a change, but a change not in character, not in attribute, but in mission, in method, and the weapons used. You know, as I was in the military, if you were to have an order that you were going to go do this sort of way to attack this country, and then later the orders change, and you were not to do that, but to do something else, and you said, no, I'm still going to do that.

Guess what? You're in trouble. The orders change, the mission change, and you must respond to the commander. And so, what we see is that God, in his character, God is still just as zealous, just as wanting his kingdom to be established, but the methods of how he wants us to express this on this earth, how he wants now the church to glorify his name, has emphatically and categorically changed through the teachings of Jesus Christ, and we must be honest with that.

So, we have a change in methods, missions, and the weapons that are used. We do not, and cannot, have a change in the attribute or the character of God. Jesus himself put it this way in Matthew 10, 34, think not that I have come to send peace on the earth, I come to bring peace, but a sword.

I'm grieved that many times people who advocate non-resistance, they end up in sort of this sort of universalism camp, this sort of everything's okay, we're all turning to this sort of happy liberalism, and that type of thing, but it's not right. Jesus said, think not that I come to send peace on the earth, I come not to send peace, but a sword. For I come to set a man at variance against his father, and the daughter against his mother, and the daughter-in-law against his mother-in-law, and a man's foes shall be they of his own household.

He that loves father and mother more than me is not worthy of me, and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me, and he that taketh not his cross and follows me is not worthy of me. So, what is consistent? What is the consistent? It is that we serve a holy and just God, and again, I'm grieved that many people have now tried to turn this into this, there's no hell, there's no judgment, God would never harm anybody, it makes nonsense of the Old Testament, it makes nonsense of the teachings of Jesus concerning hell, it makes nonsense of what he says in Revelation, and it's a satanic attack for us to try to make light of sin. We serve a holy and just God, that's what the Bible says, and God is just as zealous today as he was in the old times, but the way that he has now commanded us to go forward is different.

Behold, I send you forth as sheeps in the midst of wolves, and this concept armed with something called eternal life. If you really believe that you will never die, if we can get a hold of that as a church, then what boldness we have that we can go forward into the worst places and the most terrible extreme circumstances, believing that we are going out as sheep for the slaughter, but we will never die. It's an incredible thing, and that's the calling that Jesus has given to us.

So, I hope that as we look to this teaching of the Old Testament, that we're honest with the Old Testament, that we don't try to turn God into our agenda, but we change our agenda to meet God. As we look at those

things, I hope that we can see that God has always used ungodly nations to accomplish his will, and he will today. He may use America.

Does that mean then America, God is blessed with it? Be careful. It also shows that as the principles of looking at the Old Testament, if there's anyone that's going to be consistent with the entire scriptures from the Old Testament and the New Testament, I believe are those who believe Jesus' words literally, because God is an unchangeable God, and he is just as zealous, and I don't turn one of those hard scenes away from the Old Testament. I believe every one of them, and I believe God is still a holy God, but now he has given us a challenge to the church to go forward with this unstoppable promise of eternal life and giving out his kingdom as sheep for the slaughter, and that's the principle that we see.

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