

(Youth Bible School 2007) a Holy Nation

by Dean Taylor

Dean Taylor's sermon emphasizes the call for Christians to live as a holy nation, reflecting God's character amidst worldly challenges and persecution.

Duration: 1:03:39

Scripture: Exodus 20:13, 2 Kings 1:10, Luke 9:54, 1 Corinthians 12:25-26

Topics: "Bible School"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker reflects on a personal realization about the changing nature of relationships and the breaking down of walls. He draws a parallel to the Scripture in Ephesians that talks about breaking down the dividing wall between Jews and Gentiles. The speaker believes that God has already brought down these walls and scattered His people throughout the world. He encourages the audience to go out and preach the gospel, being salt and light to all people. The sermon also touches on the story of Peter and the swords, emphasizing the importance of understanding how to use the tools given to us by God. The speaker highlights a profound change in perspective, quoting Jesus' words about turning the other cheek and going the extra mile.

Transcript

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Good morning, everyone. It's a blessing to see you all again. All these faces, look of excitement and expectation.

I praise the Lord for that. Today we're going to look at, following in our passage from Peter, the phrase, a holy nation. A holy nation.

That's what the New Testament Christian church is supposed to be. A holy nation. You know, during the Reformation, lots of different people began to get the light of the Bible and the light of the Holy Spirit was coming out in different ways.

Some of those we would disagree with on where they ended up, but nevertheless, you can see the light of the Gospel coming in their life. One man, during the 1540s, his name was Francis Xavier. And Francis Xavier somehow got a burden to be a very powerful missionary in his right.

And while the things were going on in the Reformation in the Catholic Church, he was wanting to take missions into some far off areas, into the Asians, into the different areas. He was a missionary there in Indonesia. And while he was in Indonesia, he met with a Samurai warrior from Japan.

And the Samurai warrior, whose name was Angiro, was fleeing from Japan because he was being accused of a murder charge. A Samurai warrior being charged for murder. And he began to tell him his life and tell him everything that happened and apparently this Samurai warrior became a Christian, accepted the Lord.

So the story we read. And he begged Francis Xavier to bring Christianity to Japan. So he did.

And they planted a church there. And the church went on for about 50 years until a new emperor came in and was going to demand that everyone do it his way. And there was a great persecution.

As a matter of fact, there was a big scene where there was martyrdoms and there was people being butchered, people being put on the cross, crucified. It was a very horrible scene. And they had said and felt very proud that they had rooted out Christianity out of Japan.

And so they thought. But 250 years later, in 1850, when they started to bring in some areas in there from different political powers, was getting to get from American trade purposes over there. They found out that in Japan here, that there were these Christians living in catacombs, living in caves, who were continuing the Christian faith through all this time, 250 years.

Now some of it was strange. They came up with some different ideas. But nevertheless, these people were wanting to stand for Christ 250 years later.

And so when he let that out, persecution hit again. And they tried to snuff it. But from the just the national or the worldwide witness of what was going on now at this time in 1917, they actually gave them the right to exist.

And these Christians there, then these Catholic Christians there and in this place in Japan, then built this huge cathedral. I wish they didn't. But they did.

They built a huge cathedral and they finally have a right to be a Christian church there. And here they were 250 years. Hundreds of years were in in this sort of persecuted state.

And now here they were in 1917. They built this huge cathedral. A little bit later, in 1945, there was two other Christians, one a Lutheran and one a Catholic.

And they met one day to pray. And they had a Catholic priest and a Lutheran priest pray over them before they started their work that they were going to do that day. And in that day, they climbed into their B-29 Superfortress to take the atomic bomb to Nagasaki, Japan, which is where this church is in Nagasaki,

Japan.

They'd only tested this atomic bomb one time before. And it was in New Mexico. And they named that project the Trinity.

That was the name of it. As a matter of fact, rocks that are molded together from the atomic explosion there, geologists have now termed those rocks still today Trinitite. Well, you know the story.

The bomber was actually told, as you start to look over Nagasaki in your scope, the one thing you're going to notice is a cathedral. And that'll be your sign to drop the bomb. At 1102 a.m., Nagasaki Christianity, as said by Gary Knowles, was boiled, evaporated, and carbonized into a scorching radioactive fireball.

That persecuted, vibrant, surviving center of Japanese Christianity, all that they had, had become ground zero from two other Christians. What the Japanese imperial government could not do for 200 years of persecutions, American Christians did in nine seconds. Wiped them out.

I think of a quote from Tertullian from the early church. He says this, writing it around the year 150 to 200. Tertullian wrote, Is the military laurel of triumph made of leaves? You know, they would get this little leaves when they came in, the soldiers.

Is the military laurel of triumph made of leaves or of corpses? Is it adorned with ribbons or with tombs? Is it wet with ointments or with the tears of wives and mothers? It may be made of some dead Christians too. For Christ has also believed among the barbarians that they're going to kill. Our religion commands us to love our enemies and to pray for those who persecute us.

What went wrong? As we know in the Old Testament, they had a concept of the kingdom of God and they wanted a place. God made it very clear. You know, we get all this geographical explanation.

This is where my people are going to dwell. Here are my people. For those listening on tape, I've drawn a rectangle.

I've divided it in half and I'm drawing a dot on the left side. These are where my people dwell. Right here.

And I want to put my name there. And we're going to defend this spot. We're going to conquer this spot.

And this is where we will be. That I can put my name on a holy people here. Everything changed in the New Covenant.

Now what we have is that it says here and through that He wants us to be soldiers and pilgrims. Strangers. Sojourning in the land all over.

But the one thing I want you to understand right from the beginning is that it is vital to understand this that the zeal for a nation of holy people of God is still the same. The idea to just get along with everybody in the world is foreign to the teaching of our Lord. Just toleration of everything.

Everything's okay. Just be nice to everybody. In Exodus 15.3 it tells us that Jehovah is a warrior.

He's a warrior. Jesus said in Matthew 10.34 Think not that I am come to send peace on earth. I come not to send peace, but a sword.

For I am come to set a man at variance against his father and a daughter against her mother and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law and a man's foes shall be of his own household. He that loveth father and mother more than me is not worthy of me. And he that loveth son and daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

And he that taketh not his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me. I don't want you to come off pacifist after today. No.

I want you to come out, as Brother Denny said, soldiers. But I want you to understand that your weapons have changed. Your weapons have changed.

That the geographical understanding of this kingdom has changed. That your motivation, your way of going about spreading this kingdom has changed. But the zeal, the virtue as Brother Denny was talking about has not changed.

It has not changed. So this kingdom now, Jesus told us this kingdom is not of this world. It is not a geographic spot.

But please don't just spiritualize that and mean, well, it doesn't mean anything. As I said, as Ezekiel was drawn up and he could look down on the earth with spiritual eyes, I truly believe that God can see this kingdom as a holy temple. As a holy temple.

It's real, even though it's not geographic. So don't put the spiritual in just this make-believe place where you put Santa Claus or whatever. It's real.

But it's not a particular place. But my kingdom is not of this world. One of the most profound things is when Jesus stood before Pilate.

If you turn your Bibles to John chapter 18, it's a profound statement. In John chapter 18, here we have, if you think of these kingdoms in contrast, you have Jesus Christ, the Messiah, the King, standing before Pilate, the representation of the kingdom of the world. Here the two kingdoms have met.

John 18.35, beginning at 33, Then Pilate entered into the judgment hall again and called Jesus and said unto him, Art thou a king of the Jews? Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it of me? It's always interesting how Jesus was concerned. Did you get this by revelation, like he asked Peter? How did you get that information? Pilate ignored that and answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered thee unto me. What hath thou done? What has caused all this stir? Jesus answered, Listen now, My kingdom is not of this world.

If my kingdom were of this world, If my kingdom were of this world, Then would my servants fight. If my kingdom were of this world, Then would my servants fight. If my kingdom were of this world, Then would my servants fight that I should not be delivered to the Jews.

But now is my kingdom not from hence. Well, this is just all a bunch of imagination, right? Pilate asked him. Well, Pilate therefore said to him, Well, are you a king then? Well, does this really mean anything then? Okay, your kingdom is not of the world.

Does this really mean anything? Listen to the words. Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born.

And for this cause came I into the world. For this reason I was born. The King Jesus of this kingdom.

And for this I came into the world that I should bear witness unto the truth. For this I came into the world that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice.

The kingdom of God. These two kingdoms. Set up right there for our understanding and looking at that.

It's powerful. As we see that, And we look at it and we think about all those things in the New Testament, The question then just plainly comes to mind, Well, how do you get from here to here? And let me tell you this, Any kind of a teaching or an imagination that wants to look to the Old Testament And try to come up with non-resistant behavior, They're passivists. Although I do think you see light coming out of it.

You see things where God wants to prove a New Testament idea. Just like he does with many other doctrines in the Old Testament. You see seeds there.

But the Old Testament was very clearly, in general, not non-resistant. I mean, correct. Thou shalt not kill was a command dealing with justice things And it had not to do with how they were to go out with their warfares and things.

How do you get from here to here in the New Testament? I remember when I was in the army, After God had converted us, My wife and I were in a rock band in the army. And my secondary job was in armor. And God had first convicted me.

We got out of the rock band and we were there. And we were in a little valley that wasn't able to receive television for the first time in my life. So my wife and I would read the Bible.

For the first time. Thank you, Jesus. And I'll never forget the night.

I said, honey, it didn't take you long to get to Matthew 5. I'll never forget the night. We had one of those little arm pillows. And I leaned over and I said, let me read you this one.

Matthew 5. You can turn there. 38. I'll never forget this night.

Let me read you this. God's been working on us on little things. And now this one.

Listen to this. Here it is, honey. You have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth, but I say unto you, notice, it has been said this way, but now I say unto you this way.

And here is a profound thing. You can write in your margin. There is a change.

It has been said, but now I say. I just read it to my wife. I didn't go through all that.

That ye resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law, and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain.

Give to him that asketh thee, and from him that would borrow of thee, turn not thou away. You have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, notice, you've heard it said this way, but now I say unto you, love your enemies.

Love your enemies. Bless them that curse you. Do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you and persecute you, that ye may be the children of your Father, which is in heaven.

For he maketh his Son to rise on the evil and on the good, and sooneth reign on the just and the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have you? Do not even the publicans the same? Do not the other kingdoms do that? And if you salute your brethren only, what do you more than others? Do not even the publicans so? Therefore be ye perfect, even as your Father in heaven is perfect. I said, what did you make of that? She said, well, it sounds pretty plain.

I said, I know it sounds pretty plain, but we're in the army. What am I going to do with this? I had never heard of anyone who held any kind of view of non-resistance. I never heard the word Mennonite.

When I first heard the word Mennonite, I thought it was another tribe of Israel. You know, the Medianites and the Mennonites. I never heard of any of these things.

Seriously. I never heard of it. And so I thought, well, what am I going to do with this? And I don't have time to go through the whole testimony, but one thing after another led us to be conscientious objectors, and it was a long process, but God was filled our life during that time.

Luke 6.35 says, But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping in nothing again. And your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the highest. You see, there's a change.

What do you do with the Old Testament wars? They're an example to us, as Brother Denny's been telling us about, of virtue and strength. Pacifism is not what the Bible teaches, even in the New Testament, mind you. It's not.

But there's a change in how we war. Hebrews 8.6 tells about a change. Jesus did say, I didn't come to destroy the law, but He's come to fulfill something that was in the law from the very beginning.

Hebrews 8.6 says, But now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry. We have a ministry of reconciliation through Him. But how much also He is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises.

For if that first covenant had been faultless, there should no place have been sought for the second. For finding fault with Him, He said, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. The demonstration of those changes now.

Jesus gives us teaching, and then He usually gives us some demonstrations. It's an interesting thing. They're on the way to Samaria in Luke 9. You can turn there.

And way back in 2 Kings 1.10, there was an incident that happened where some people were coming against Elijah. Elijah was a prophet of God. He had godly business to take care of, and he didn't have time to mess with these people blocking him.

So what did he do? He called down fire from heaven and destroyed them. And then he got on with his business. So, these apostles are there, they're on their way to Samaria, and suddenly there's some people in the way.

So, these good apostles knew their Bible and they said, Jesus, remember what happened with Elijah. It's time. Bring the fire down.

Luke 9.54 I think this is where they got the name, Sons of Thunder. And when His disciples, James and John, saw this, they said, Lord, what wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them? Even as Elias did. But He turned and rebuked them and said, You know not what manner of spirits ye are of.

For the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them. And they went to another village. They just went around.

Demonstrating this change before He was taken to the cross there in the garden. He first told them on this next mission that in the first sending out of the apostles in those 70, He said, Don't even take a change of shoes. Don't take anything.

Just go out and preach the gospel and see what happens. The second time He understood to them that it's going to be a little longer and you need some fundamental basic things. And one of the things, if you remember, Peter said, We have two swords here.

And He said, Yeah, that's enough. And the whole thing was to give us a demonstration. And as they had these things and the basic things that you would take to be around the city in those days or in walking through the woods between villages and there's things you had to hunt, there's things you had to use as utensils or whatever.

And there they had them. But how were they going to use them is the question. And as you remember, when they came to take Jesus, Peter got kind of excited with one of those swords, didn't he? And in Matthew 26, 51, Matthew 26, 51, Then came they, Matthew 26, 51, Then came they and laid hands on Jesus and took Him.

And behold, one of them which were with Jesus stretched out his hand and drew his sword and struck the servant of the high priest and smote off his ear. Then Jesus said unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place. And he said this, For all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father and He shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels? He who lives by the sword will die by the sword. Tertullian quoted that again in the early church and he said, By this Jesus Christ has disarmed all Christians for all time. Here's the principle.

Here's the principle. Here's the scene, this change in action. Put up the sword.

Put away thy sword. Put away thy sword. These two kingdoms.

You know, as we're here, it is what I read to you about Nagasaki and all these things. When we see these two kingdoms have been confused. As Brother John D. told us yesterday, he threw in a plug for me.

This has been brought in by probably the most destruction the church of Jesus Christ and the witness of Christianity has ever seen. This mixing of the world and this particular witness of instead of being the lamb that was slain to become the slaying wolves has vexed the church of Jesus Christ for a thousand years. And this mixture here.

We were told about these two kingdoms. First Peter, we've been reading a lot of. We are told in 1 Peter 1.1, an apostle of Jesus Christ to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus.

Do you get it? To the strangers out there. To Galatians and Cappadocia. Asia and Bithynia.

Peter uses this terminology a lot in 1 Peter 1.17. And if you call on the Father who without respect of person judges according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear. Pass the time of your sojourning here. That means you're a traveler.

You're a passer througher. A sojourner. As we've read in 1 Peter 2.9, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, 2.11, abstain from fleshly lusts which war against the soul.

You know, I've been to Berlin twice. Berlin, Germany. And the first time I was there, I think it was 1987.

My wife, I sent her to basic training and she was out in basic training and I went to Berlin with my mother. And while I was there, when you go into Berlin in 1987, and the picture that I have there on your paper there, it's not me, it's a little older than us, but that's the, when you go from the western sector to the eastern sector of Berlin, there's these big warnings that you're crossing over into this communist area. And while I was there, you had to go in these dress uniform, you know, everybody had to know you were an American, very plainly.

And it's like they had all these concertina wire around Checkpoint Charlie and they had these Russian soldiers and they're there with their machine guns and it's a pretty intimidating thing. The East German guards, the Russian soldiers, and you go through all these checkpoints and you finally get to the other side. And when I was on the other side, a man, even when he was walking by, spit down at my feet.

I was there with my mother. You know, I wasn't about to do anything. And he spit down at my feet and we just went on and said, oh, what's this going to be like? And there was a very much of a tension that you are in a different land.

You're an alien here. I returned to Berlin in 1989. It was an interesting difference.

When I drove up to Checkpoint Charlie in 1989 with another couple that I was there, there was this, it was at night and there was this orange glow in the air from all of the rocks and the banging on the wall that was occurring and people were tearing the Berlin Wall down. And now those Russian guards were gone. As a matter of fact, there was holes in this wall and I'll never forget, some of them were actually looking through the hole and one grabbed my hand, one of the Russian or East German guards, I'm not sure what he was, and kissed me through the hole of that Berlin Wall.

And it was shaking and saying, Frieden! Saying, peace! And all these things. I just took it all in. And the one thing that hit me as I sat and pondered that, what changed? What changed? Last year, I could have been called on to shoot this guy.

Now I'm kissing him through a hole in a wall. What changed? Because a couple of the world's government got together and said, now this man's your friend. Now I'm kissing him through a hole in the wall instead of shooting him in the head.

What changed? And I know it's out of context, but the Scripture in Ephesians there talking about breaking down the dividing wall and bringing the two into one, talking about the Jews and the Gentiles there, but the Lord just put a message in my heart that I have already brought down those walls. I have brought them down. And that scattered throughout all these countries, scattered throughout all this world are My people.

And you are to be there, infilling and all through there, to be salt and light through all these people. You're not to take in that kingdom. And as I began to consider that, and I thought about, how do I behave? And as

God later on was showing me this idea of these two kingdoms and the idea of being in the kingdom of God and what Jesus did with the early church and as I saw that witness through the early church, I began to change me drastically.

And I started to understand this division in my mind between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of God and the kingdom of the world. There's a Scripture in 2 Timothy 2. I recommend it.

2 Timothy 2, verse 3. We're not pacifists. In 2 Timothy 2, verse 3, it says, Thou therefore endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Now, there's a good one for Brother Denny's message.

Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. That's not at ease in Zion. Endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

Now listen. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. What's he saying there? He's saying this.

Let's say right now, I'm going to muster all the troops here up and we're going to go and we're going to take Brickerville. Okay? That's where it is. We're going to take Brickerville.

And we're there. I'm going to say, Okay, troops, we're going to get together and you're going to go into Brickerville and when you're there, we're going to take it over. But if you were to get to Brickerville over there and start to get involved with this and get involved with that, it would mess up the whole campaign.

And he's saying that when you who has called you to be a soldier of Jesus Christ, and he's called you as a soldier of the Lord, don't get yourself involved in all the politics and all the things and all the things that constrain you in this world. Here's the way it was. My wife and I, we were in the army.

We were living in German. We were living in an off-base in a German apartment. We paid our utilities with German.

We many times shopped in a German grocery store. And praise God, I couldn't get American television, so if I ever did turn the bell, all I got was German. And I was surrounded there, but yet I was fully aware that I was an American.

Okay? I wore an American uniform. I paid American taxes. I sent them back to America.

I paid my American taxes. In those times, I voted in American elections. I might have known who the chancellor of Germany was at the time, but if I did, it was just by osmosis.

I didn't know. And I certainly couldn't run for local burgermeister. I couldn't.

I couldn't get involved in those things. I was clearly an American in Germany. God began to put in my heart, that's exactly what I want you here in the Kingdom of God.

Be in the Kingdom of God amongst these people. But don't let their things infiltrate you. That holiness unto the Lord.

You see why I felt the importance of putting the holiness of the Lord to this whole thing? I want a people. And here's my people. And I want soldiers.

And I want you to do it in this way. I want you to do it in this way. Now, every good soldier, every good soldier has weapons, right? We've got to have weapons.

God tells us about our weapons. Now, in the Old Testament, we hear a lot about their weapons that they used. And yes, we saw how God, even there, gave us a little light that I don't want you to trust in your chariots.

And when they did, they got in trouble. And I don't want you to trust in your shields and all this, but I want to win these fights for you. But in the New Testament, as Jesus did with so many other things, I want you to radically take this in.

And He says to us here and gives us different weapons. Turn to Ephesians 6.12. I wrote both these verses down in your little handout. Ephesians 6.12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood.

Brother Denny has a sermon I heard once on we wrestle not. That's our testimony sometimes. That's the testimony of a pacifist.

We wrestle not. It's not where Paul ends this. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood.

Is that clear enough for you? We wrestle not against flesh and blood. But we do wrestle. But against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Don't you Christians do anything? You think you can just sit and let everything go on and just take all the benefits of what we're doing for you? Oh no. As I think it was quoted early on this week, the early church knew very plainly. Tertullian, in origin particularly, wrote the emperor in his time in the early church and says, listen here, let me explain to you why you have peace.

It's because we are praying in your kingdom. He said that very boldly to the emperor. And this is it.

We have a fight against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Now, it's true. If all you're doing is living a worldly life, taking upon all the world has to offer and going through all those things, but then just saying, but I don't want to fight.

And it is a bit hypocritical. It is. But if you take what Jesus and all that He has in the kingdom of God and realize what fight you have, it's a powerful battle.

Turn to 2 Corinthians 10. It talks about our weapons again. 2 Corinthians 10, verse 3. 2 Corinthians 10, verse 3. For though we walk in the flesh, for although you're here in the flesh, you're here, we're not in some spiritual world.

It's real. You're here in the flesh. For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh.

Is that clear enough? For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh. We do not war after the flesh. We do not war after the flesh.

Although. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal. They're not made of flesh.

But mighty. Through God, through the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the

obedience of Christ and having in a readiness to revenge all disobedience when your obedience is fulfilled. Let me ask you, young men.

Do you have any captives? Where's your captives? It says here that you are here, but mighty through God through the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalts itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. Can you show me your captives? Can I go into your prisoner of war cell this morning and you can show me some of the captives that you have victory in your life over these thoughts that used to vex you, but now you have victory? Do you have captives? Ladies, do you have captives? Can you show me? Can we go there in a minute here and go into your prison cell and you say, here's my prisoners of war. This one used to get me, but now I've brought it into captivity.

That's what it says. That's our battle. The captivity.

Every thought. Every thought. We look through these things.

You know, some people bring up some different things. John the Baptist. Interesting story about John the Baptist.

I'll just throw in here real quick. John the Baptist had an interesting thing in the New Testament where we get to see that some soldiers actually went up to John the Baptist and say, okay, so what do we do? All right, you're saying repent. What do we do? All right, here's your chance.

Okay, people bring this out on both sides and it's a little funny. Here's the way I take on it. In Luke chapter 3, 14, we get the story of John the Baptist.

and the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, and what shall we do? And he said unto them, do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely and be content with your wages. Sometimes people take that and say, well, here he said, do violence to no man. I'm not convinced he's in a New Testament understanding of non-resistance here.

He's just saying be a good soldier. Well, then what do you do? Here's your chance. You have the New Testament.

Here's John the Baptist, the prophet, and he's not saying, well, get out of the army. Okay, what do we do? And here it is. Now, I just want to throw this in real quick here.

What is John the Baptist? Yeah, he was the very last prophet of the Old Covenant. The very last one. As a matter of fact, Luke 16, 16 says, the law and the prophets were unto John.

Since that time, the kingdom of God is preached and every man presseth into it. Verily, verily, I say unto you in Matthew 11, 11. Verily, verily, I say unto you, among them that are born of woman, there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist.

And I have to throw this in. It's beautiful. Notwithstanding, he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

The New Covenant. Now, how is that possible? If I can go on a side here just real quick. Wait a minute.

You're saying that John the Baptist was greater than Elijah? Yeah. Greater than Moses? That's what it says. Greater than anybody? That's what it says.

But you're saying that the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. How? By the righteousness of Jesus Christ. In the New Covenant, one drop of blood makes you more righteous in the sight of God than Abraham, Elijah, Moses, all the way to John the Baptist.

The righteousness of Jesus Christ. John the Baptist was the last of the Old Covenant. He did not have the authority to change anything.

He had the authority to preach the Old Covenant. Jesus said, I know it has been said, but now I say. I just thought I'd bring that out.

It's brought up many times. It's a beautiful idea there. So how do we respond in this kingdom of the world? When you become conscious objector, you have to go through several little tasks.

And one of those tasks was to go see a psychologist. They figure something's got to be wrong with you. And as I went to the psychologist, you have to, the things you have to do, you have to write a paper explaining all your convictions.

You have to go see a chaplain. That was interesting. You have to go see your commander.

You have to see a psychologist. And you have to stand a hearing trial where they then throw out a bunch of questions and see how you stand there. And then they send that to the Pentagon.

Somebody in the Pentagon makes that decision. So, I was there with the psychologist and I didn't think this was going to be much. And when I read about what they're supposed to do, they were just supposed to see if you're fit to stand the trial and see if you've got some mental problems.

As soon as I walked in the door, the psychologist said, you can come on in, but I don't think you really need to sit down. I said, okay. Well, why? Well, I don't think you're going to be here long enough.

Okay. She said, you see, I've got you. You've got me.

I thought, okay, this is going to be a little more tense than I thought. So, I got my chair and I kind of easily sat down. She said, yeah, I've got you.

I've got all of you conscientious objectors. You're all inconsistent. Well, what do you mean we're inconsistent? You're inconsistent.

I said, okay. So, what do you mean I'm inconsistent? I'll ask you a question. I said, okay.

Remember, I'm not too long converted. I was trembling. I would be trembling now.

But she said, let me ask you a question. You went out of the army because you don't want to support the army. Is that correct? Yes, ma'am.

That's correct. All right. I'll ask you another question.

Do you believe in paying your taxes? Yes, ma'am. I believe in paying my taxes. I got you.

So, what do you mean? You're inconsistent. You don't want to support with this, but you do want to support to that. So, I stopped for a second and thought, and I said, well, ma'am, you see, I've got to explain something to you.

I live by the standards of a book. And my book says to love your enemies and to pay your taxes. I don't have to understand that.

I'm just obeying it. She got very irate, and things went down from there, I assure you. It was interesting.

She ended up at the end saying, are you hard of hearing? I guess I was being a little too loud. I don't know. But, nevertheless, that was an experience for me.

But she hit on something interesting. She hit unwittingly on the concept of the two kingdoms. And I'll tell you this, that nonresistance without the idea of the two kingdoms is nonsense.

It's nonsense. And the idea there is, what do you do with the kingdom of the world, then? We do live in this world. Do we try to make political change and try to get a platform that brings in nonresistance and stand for all this protesting and all that? What do we do with God's working of the kingdom of this world? Well, turn your Bibles to Romans chapter 13.

Romans 13 is the test to the Christian nonresistant person if he believes in the two kingdoms or not. It's the dividing line. If you're a pacifist, you don't talk about Romans 13.

If you believe in biblical nonresistance, you have no problem with Romans chapter 13. That's it. Romans chapter 13.

It says in there some strong things. I'm going to skip through it a little bit here just for time's sake. In Romans chapter 13, the most profound things that it says there is that it talks about the emperor.

And it says that the emperor beareth the sword, and he calls him a minister of God and gives us the understanding there that he has given that sword from God to execute wrath upon those who are evildoers. And he calls him the minister of God. Alright, so what do you do with that? Let me ask you a question.

Was who Paul was talking about an American Baptist from Texas? Or Episcopalian from Texas? Or an American Baptist from Arkansas? Who was he? Nero. Caligula at least, depending on when you date the New Testament. But either way, it was a bad man who persecuted the church of God severely.

And yet, he said, he is a minister of God. Nero. Those Romans, they lived in Rome.

They knew about Nero. Paul... See, they were acting as if they didn't have to obey all the laws of the land. They were so caught up in their two kingdoms, they didn't have to do this.

And we do this sometimes in these plain worlds. I see these laws being we don't have to do this and that. And Paul is saying, now listen.

Listen now. God has established this. God has established this.

You know, in 2 Timothy 2.20, the Bible tells us, But in a great house there is not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and earth, and some to honor and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge

himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work. God's going to use you.

God's going to use everyone in this world. He's going to use you. I want to be used of God.

God's going to use you. Either a vessel of honor, or a vessel of dishonor. Now, he calls him the minister of God.

So people will argue, you can see that in history, this happened, and let's say the gospel got over here, and this happened. Can you say that God was against the putting down of Hitler, or this or that? No, I don't. I think God was behind every bit of it.

Well, what are you saying then? Because my understanding of the two kingdoms is a solid line. It's a solid line. And God will ordain order in this earth for His glory, for His purposes.

Well, give me some Scripture with that. Alright. He called him a minister of God.

What's the Greek word there for minister? Diakonos. It's the word servant. He is my servant.

He is a minister of God. Can you give me an example of that? Yeah, I can. Turn to Jeremiah 25 real quick.

In Jeremiah chapter 25, we see Israel going into wickedness. In Jeremiah chapter 25, we see Israel being judged. And God's going to use a pagan nation and a pagan king to bring judgment on Israel.

And look at His language. Jeremiah chapter 25, verse 8. Therefore, thus saith unto the Lord of hosts, because ye have not heard my words, behold, I will send and take all the families of the north, saith the Lord, and Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, my servant, and will bring them against this land and against the inhabitants thereof and against all these nations round about and will utterly destroy them and make them an astonishment and a hissing and a perpetual desolation. My servant, Nebuchadnezzar.

Well, then, okay, that's the people of God now, right? Wrong. Go down three verses. Verse 12.

And then when His purposes are done with this vessel of dishonor, and it shall come to pass when seventy years are accomplished that 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. Be careful, America. God does use different nations.

And Daniel, I wrote that Scripture there on you, he says, I'm going to say something here that all the angels and watchers can make very clear. He took Nebuchadnezzar and made him dig around in the dirt like an animal and he said, I'm going to do this so everyone in the world across the whole world can understand that I set up the kings. I set up the kingdoms of this earth and I give it, it says down there, to the basest of men.

The lowest of men. Here, be a king. Be a king.

God does it. Over and over again. In Jeremiah chapter 27, he goes on there and says, I have reign over the whole earth and I give it to anyone I want.

I give it to anyone I want. In Isaiah 44, Cyrus, the pagan king, it says that Cyrus called him, guess what? My shepherd. He used it to open up many things for the kingdom of God.

And he even called him my shepherd. My shepherd. My shepherd.

So as we look at these things, and I just covered those lightly, there's other Scriptures and I wrote some of those on your little paper there, of looking at the understanding that the heart of the king is in God's hand. He will establish these things. He will make these things very clear.

Now, I can't leave this doctrine without going to this last section of it. And let me tell you this. No doctrine of non-resistance, biblical non-resistance, You can look at it in all the ways that I've explained it, but at the very heart of it is a core that you've got to understand.

The early Anabaptists understood this. The early church understood this. And you've got to understand this.

The only way to fully understand biblical non-resistance is this. It is a theology of martyrdom. Period.

Any way to look at the doctrine of non-resistance without the theology of martyrdom is nonsense. Again, it's nonsense. What do you say? What happens if these people come over to our land? What are you going to do with another Hitler? What are you going to do with Sodom and Sam? What are you going to do if this happens and this happens and that happens? I'll tell you what I'm going to do.

I'm going to die. If need be. I'll never forget, Brother Mark, we were having some times of fasting and prayer.

We were getting tired. We were meeting three times a week. I think we were getting up at like, I don't remember, something like four in the morning there.

And we were just very tired and I was starting to wonder, well, okay, is this healthy for me? If it's God's will, it's got to be healthy. I'll never forget what Mark said. We met there one time in the morning and he said, you know what? We're all going to die probably earlier because of this.

And he meant it. And suddenly I just went, oh, good. It made sense now.

I'm not trying to figure out how to be healthy and all this. It's not good for you. Sometimes it takes... Now I want to say it with balance.

We can be good stewards and we can be healthy and those kind of things. I'm not trying to say just be something drastic, but sometimes God calls you to something and you don't need a how to wonder how you're going to spare your life. The Christian faith is a theology of martyrdom.

It's a theology of martyrdom. Listen to the words of Jesus. And we sent out the 70.

He said in Matthew 10, verse 16, Behold, I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves. Now there's a good picture. There's a strong army.

I'm going to send you out as sheep and you're going to be surrounded by wolves. In other words, they're going to tear you apart and kill you and all that kind of thing. So go.

Not very encouraging. In Romans 8, he talks about, For thy sake we are killed all the day long. We are counted as sheep for the slaughter.

You're counted as sheep for the slaughter. You see, when you start to get into discussion of this, or when you start to think about this, a lot of what ifs happen. What if someone breaks into your house? What if Hitler wasn't stopped? What if these different things would happen? We've got to do this.

We've got to do that. Over and over, the message of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God is I want to do these things among you. And this point is a radical point the church got a hold of.

And now we talked about the weapons. I'm going to give you the nuclear weapon of the church. Here it is.

This is the nuclear weapon of the Christian church. You can mark it in your Bible. It's Romans 8, verse 35.

And on to the end. The nuclear weapon of the church. Every what if, every possibility, I think is covered here.

Romans 8, verse 35. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? This isn't an empty doctrine. This is a love thing.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? Sword, Lord? Sword? As it is written, for Thy sake we are killed all the day long. We are counted as sheep for the slaughter. Counted as sheep for the slaughter.

Nay, in all these things, all what things? Well, being counted as sheep for the slaughter, swords, peril, nakedness, tribulations. Nay, in all these things, in all these things, we are more than conquerors. I'm going further.

We are more than conquerors. Nay, in all these things, we are more than conquerors. We are more than conquerors through Him that loved us.

Loved, Lord? Yes, loved us. Nay, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded.

And it's my prayer that you get persuaded this week. I love when Paul gets persuaded. And I am persuaded that neither death, kill me, nor life, living a hard life, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature that leave anything out, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

There's the atomic bomb. You can't stop. Let me tell you something.

The cross is foolishness to those that are perishing. But to us who are being saved are of God. It is the power of God.

Your whole life is a living sacrifice. You see how it all starts to come together now. You have the holiness of God.

You have what He wants, a holy people. You have that holy people that are priests that are supposed to be there. As priests, as Paul said in Romans 15-15, I'm offering them up as a liturgy unto you as a living sacrifice.

And when you're there, you're all supposed to be a holy nation scattered around here. All these different things. And here I want you to fight this battle and to win this war.

And I want my name to be glorified from the rising of the sun until it's going down. My name shall be praised. And it starts to come out.

Do you understand? And in all this, Jesus gave us the ultimate example. What's the cross? Foolishness. That doesn't work.

Yes, the cross is foolishness to those that are perishing. But over and over and over, through history we've seen over and over again, the cross. The cross.

And what that has meant. The early church was very clear on this. For 300 years, they were clear on this.

For the most part. Here's just diving into one. I don't have time to give you very many.

Episodic Traditions of Hippolytus running around the year 199 coming up to 200. They said this. It's a little standard on advice on a person joining your church to be baptized.

A soldier of the civilian authority must be taught not to kill men and to refuse to do so if he is commanded. And to refuse to take an oath. If he is unwilling to comply, he must be rejected for baptism.

A military commander or civic magistrate who wears the purple must resign or be rejected. If an applicant or a believer seeks to become a soldier, he must be rejected. For he has despised God.

Again, there's so many quotes, I don't have nearly enough time to go through the early church and talk about those things. But when we came up, and the church suddenly was given riches and abundance and a ministry from the state all of a sudden, oh, how quickly it changed. And that abomination happened.

I don't know what to completely do with this, but just turn to the Bible, to Revelation. And in Revelation, you know things get pretty bad. Obviously, they're getting pretty bad.

The Antichrist is coming against the church and all these things are happening. How are we going to know in the end times who's the people of God or not? I don't know. I don't want to take this too far.

But in Revelation 14-13, we get a little glimpse. In chapter 14, verse 12, there's an interesting quote. It's only quoted twice.

But when all the chaos and everything is round in the last days, it says this in Revelation 14-12, Here is the patience, that word is perseverance, of the saints. Here it is. How do we know? Here it is.

Here are they that keep the commandments of God and faith of Jesus. And the faith of Jesus. They keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus.

So there's two keys. The holy people, they keep the commandments of God and they have a faith in Jesus Christ. It's repeated one more time.

In Revelation 13, verse 10, in verse 9, He says He wants to make it really clear. In verse 8, He says, And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship Him, that's the beast, whose name are not written in the Book of Life, of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. If any man has an ear, let him hear.

If any man has an ear today, let him hear. Everyone listen very closely to what Jesus is saying. These are the last times when you need to distinguish between the sacred and the profane.

You need to know how to act in the world. And here it is. If anyone has an ear, let him hear.

He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity. He that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith and the faith of the saints.

Oh, and we look at those things. But in 404, the Council of Augustine present, when he could not know how to deal with these re-baptizers, the Donatists, although they weren't exactly like what we see, but, I mean, they had their faults. They did.

I don't want to paint too beautiful a picture of the Donatists, but nevertheless, he was frustrated with arguing with them. He said this in that church council in 404, It is now full time for the emperor to provide for the safety of the Catholic Church and to prevent those rash men from terrifying the people whom they cannot seduce. And from that, the just war theory had its formal debut.

One of the Donatist bishops wrote him and said, You're killing us. You're making martyrs of us. Augustine replied, I know nothing about your martyrs.

Martyrs. Martyrs to the devil. There are no martyrs out of the church.

Besides, it was their obstinacy. They killed themselves. And throughout all time, the change of what happened there.

I'm not just picking a few quotes from the early church. I want you to understand something. Even the most liberal and most warring historian will tell you very plainly, whether they think it's an odd thing or not, the early church for 300 years stood united about this point, the two kingdoms and non-resistance.

The two kingdoms and non-resistance. Everybody admits that. They might say, well, it's sort of strange that they were non-resistant.

It was non-resistant. It was strange they took the words of Jesus and just applied them to their life. That's what they did.

And every time throughout history when people have, when you've seen little pockets and groups of people that just took the word of God and see what it had to say, have walked in that. Have walked in that. I'm going to close.

I'm just going to give you just a closing here also. Remember that Schleithem Confession that I quoted to you? I just thought it was a beautiful statement, again, in 1527 when the Reformation was starting and they were trying to define this new concept that these brothers were getting. They said, there's a kingdom, but it's a kingdom of God.

And in 1527, the Schleithem Confession said this, We agreed as following concerning the sword. The sword is ordained of God outside the perfection of Christ. It punishes and puts to death the wicked and guards and protects the good.

In the law, the sword was ordained for the punishment of the wicked and for their death. And the same sword is now ordained to be used by the worldly magistrates. Do you see how clearly they understood it

very early? Now, it's to be asked by many who do not recognize this as the will of Christ for us, whether a Christian may or should employ the sword against the wicked for the defense or protection of the good and for the sake of love.

Our reply is unanimously as follows. Christ teaches and commands us to learn of Him, for He is meek and lowly in heart, and so shall we find rest of our souls. Also, Christ says that the heathenish woman who was taken in adultery, not that one should stone her according to the law of the Father, but that He told her to go and sin no more.

And we do this with our church discipline, He says. And finally, it will be asked concerning the sword, shall one be a magistrate if he should be chosen as such? The answer is following. They wished to make Christ king, but He fled and did not view it as an arrangement of His Father.

Thus shall we do as we did and follow Him. And so shall we not walk in darkness, for He Himself says, He who wishes to come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and they understood what the word cross meant, and follow Me. Also, He Himself forbids the employment of the force of the sword, saying, the worldly princes lord it over them.

But not so shall it be with you. Further, Paul says, whom God did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, etc. Also, Peter says, Christ has suffered, not ruled, and left us an example that ye should follow in His step.

Finally, it will be observed that it is not appropriate for a Christian to serve as a magistrate because of these points. The government magistrate is according to the flesh, but the Christian is according to the Spirit. Their houses and dwelling remain in this world, but the Christians are in heaven.

Their citizenship in this world, but the Christian's citizenship is in heaven. Their weapons of this conflict and war are carnal and are against the flesh only, but the Christian's weapons are spiritual against the fortification of the devil. The worldlings are armed with steel and iron, but the Christians are armed with the armor of God, with truth and righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, and the Word of God.

And brief, as in the mind of God towards us, so shall the mind of the members of the body of Christ be through Him in all things, that there be no schism in the body through which it would be destroyed. For every kingdom divided against itself will be destroyed. Now, since Christ is as it is written of Him, His members must also do the same, that His body may remain complete and united to its own advancement and upbuilding.

And in the last verse, in Revelation 11, what did it say? How did they defeat the Antichrist? By the blood of the Lamb and the Word of their testimony. And they loved not their life unto the death. Oh God, I pray You can do this in our life.

I pray You can open up our eyes to this thing. Let's pray. Dear Heavenly Father, I thank You for these words.

Please mark them in our hearts, Father. And let us have this, not just in doctrine, but in our life, in our peace with our brethren everywhere. Oh God, may You do it.

In Jesus' name.

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