

Love and Nonresistance

by John D. Martin

The sermon explores the Anabaptist principles of love and non-resistance, urging Christians to uphold peace and reject violence in all forms.

Duration: 1:03:01

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Luke 22:35-36, Romans 8:35-37

Topics: "Non Violent Resistance", "Christian Pacifism"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker discusses the difference between the Old and New Testaments regarding the topic of non-violence. He shares a story about an old colonel in the Austrian army who was confident in winning a battle, but was warned by a prisoner that the town they were attacking had an invincible leader. The colonel later encounters an old man who welcomes him instead of resisting, revealing that the town had no soldiers. The speaker then transitions to discussing the Anabaptist theology of love and non-resistance, urging the audience to understand and defend this belief. The sermon emphasizes the importance of understanding and articulating the gospel's teachings on non-violence.

Transcript

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I think you were experiencing a little bit of overload there at the end. I could see you were looking a little jaded. Alright.

I want to look now at another subject, and I promise you I will conclude at about 12 o'clock, maybe five after. I'm not going to keep you as long this time. And I'll just quit.

I'll quit wherever I get to. Alright. I'm going to speak about the Anabaptist theology of love and non-resistance.

I'd like to speak about that. And I know I'm preaching to the choir, which means that you all believe in it. But the problem is, could you defend it? Could you explain it to somebody else in a convincing way why you believe that? And so I hope today maybe we can analyze a little more carefully what the gospel has to say about this subject and be a little bit more able to have stronger convictions and a more articulate approach to the whole thing.

Now, I'm going to start off with the story that Dean Taylor gave at Bible School at Charity. How many of you were there? So, one or two of you heard this story. But it's such a good story, I thought it'd be a good way to start off this session.

Let's bow our heads for prayer first. Father, we thank You that Jesus came and won a great victory without lifting a sword. Oh, Father, we believe that His spiritual weapons have been given to us, and they're just as powerful today, and that love is more powerful than hate, and it wins a greater victory.

Father, we just looked at our Anabaptist forefathers who won a great victory for humankind without lifting a sword. But it was at the stake, and it was by drowning and by the sword that they met their death. But, Lord, this had a tremendous influence.

And I pray, Father, as their descendants help us to be as faithful in this aspect of our belief, and our discipleship is what they were. So just be with us now. Open our hearts and our minds, and just fill us with Your understanding.

In Jesus' name, amen. Sixty-two years ago, on August the 9th, 1945, the second of two atomic bombs ever used as instruments of war was dropped on Nagasaki, Japan. The crew that dropped this bomb was an all-Christian bomb crew who were only doing their job.

Three days earlier, the first bomb had been dropped on Hiroshima, and now their B-29 Superfortress had taken off from Tinian Island with the prayers and blessings of a Lutheran and Catholic chaplain. The plane was headed for Kokura. Three weeks earlier, the only field test of nuclear weapons had been performed in New Mexico.

But as they headed toward Kokura, it clouded up, and they were not able to see their target, so they headed for Nagasaki. Now, you have to understand something about Nagasaki. It's famous in the history of Japanese Christianity.

I must tell you, though, that it was Roman Catholic Christianity, but it was the only major Christian witness in Nagasaki, or in Japan, as far as that goes. Nagasaki had the largest Christian church, St. Mary's Cathedral. It had the largest concentration of baptized Christians in Japan.

It had been established by the famous Jesuit missionary, Francis Xavier. And this church had been brutally persecuted, almost out of existence, and the Christians had gone into the caves and lived in such seclusion that for many years, the Japanese authorities didn't even know they existed. And then the explorers started to come from the west, and these Christians thought it was safe now to come out of hiding because there were other people there who would perhaps make some plea for their safety.

And so they came out of hiding, and again, they were mercilessly persecuted. But this time, the west forced Japan to give them freedom. And so they built their cathedral, St. Mary's Cathedral in Nagasaki, Japan.

Well, the bomb was targeted for that cathedral. And so this B-29 Superfortress came into Nagasaki, targeted the cathedral, and dropped its bomb. At 1102 a.m., Nagasaki Christianity was boiled, evaporated, and carbonized in a scorching radioactive fireball.

The persecuted, surviving, vibrant center of Japanese Christianity was obliterated. It had become ground zero. What the Japanese imperial government could not do in over 200 years of persecution, American Christians managed to accomplish in nine seconds.

The entire worshiping community of Nagasaki ceased to exist. Now, how did it happen that Christians annihilated Christians? Well, after A.D. 300, a central principle of the gospel was lost. Let's read that, Matthew chapter 5. Familiar passage.

Ye have heard that it hath been said, an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth. But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil. But whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.

And if any man, I want you to notice, it says, whosoever, if any man, I mean this is all inclusive, shall sue thee at the law to take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also. And whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, notice it said whosoever. It didn't say do it to these people, but not to these people.

Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain. Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow thee, turn thou not away. Ye have heard that it hath been said, thou shalt love thy neighbor, and hate thine enemy.

And by the way, that's what the Old Testament said. We'll be looking at that in just a moment. But I say unto you, 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. I mean this is a central mark of His children. Because He maketh His Son to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth His reign on the just and on the unjust.

For if you love them which love you, what reward have you? And if you turn to the book of Luke, it says, what... I can't get the word. Turn to the book of Luke 6. What thank have ye? And if you look there, it's the word grace. If you love... Luke 6 verse 32, now that you're turning to it, let's look at it.

For if you love them which love you, what thank have ye? For sinners also love those that love them. In other words, what He's saying is, what Christianity have you? If you love somebody who loves you, well, you don't need any grace to do that at all. Alright? And if you salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? Or what grace have you? Do not even the publican so.

Be ye therefore perfect. And it's interesting that if you go to the book of Luke, back there in Luke 6, if you're still there, instead of perfect here, it says, be ye merciful. So that's what it means to be perfect in this context.

That when you have an enemy or someone that you could use force against, you'd be merciful. Then in that situation, you will be like your father, you will be perfect. That's what you're supposed to be in these kinds of situations.

Be ye therefore perfect or merciful, as it says in Luke, even as your father which is in heaven is perfect or merciful. Now that's pretty straightforward. But we'll see what people have done with it.

This was completely lost in that theological manipulating that I told you started after the early church. And people like Augustine finally came up with a just war theory, which among other things says you should love your enemy while you're killing him. Now I don't know if anybody ever did that, but that's what Augustine said.

But anyway, in 174, we have the first example of a soldier joining the Christian church. Now they don't like you to say that when you talk to them. They don't like that historical reference.

Your people who studied this, they know that's true. That the church was universally non-resistant until 174. And then it took quite a few years before all the churches finally sort of gave in and it was totally lost.

People like Tertullian fought this tooth and nail. And we'll talk about that a little bit later. But anyway, you're on good historical ground with the church whenever you take a non-resistant position.

This is not just an Anabaptist thing. In fact, it was interesting to me to visit Eastern Europe in 1997 and discover that the Baptist churches or the evangelical churches of Eastern Europe were basically non-resistant. How many of you were aware of the fact that the underground church in Russia was non-resistant? A few of you knew that.

I've talked to them. Well, I said, yeah, of course. In fact, before they let me preach in that little Baptist church over near the border of Poland and Russia, they interrogated me pretty thoroughly in what I believed.

They asked me what I believed about women's role in the church, what I believed about the charismatic movement, what I believed about non-resistance. And they would not have let me preach if I had not answered those questions the way they wanted me to answer them. And one of the questions was what I believed about the gospel of peace.

So we're not the only ones that have believed this. It has come down from the early church where it has not been compromised. And I consider this the most drastic and disastrous compromise the church ever made.

Can you imagine what could have happened to the church if it had maintained its testimony of peace? I told you that the early Christians claimed credit for the Pax Romana. Now, I'm aware that a lot of you, when I said that, don't know what I was talking about. Pax Romana means the Roman peace.

For 200 years, Rome was at peace. There were no wars. The Christians claimed credit for that.

If you go back and read their writings, they claim it was because God sent the Prince of Peace that he set up a peaceable kingdom, and that peaceable kingdom, the power and influence of that kingdom was keeping the world at peace. And then it was lost about the time that the Christians surrendered this tremendous concept. Without a surrender on this issue, there would have been no Inquisition in the name

of Christ.

There would have been no Crusades in the name of Christ. There would have been no enslavement of the American blacks in the name of Christ. There would have been no mistreatment of the American Indian in the name of Christ.

There would have been no conquistadors in Latin America brutalizing the people of Latin America in the name of Christ. These things all happened under the name of Christianity. And our Muslim friends, if we can call them friends, our Muslim people have never forgotten these atrocities committed by Christians.

Can you imagine what influence the church could have had if its testimony in all ages and places would have been, when these people come on the scene, they will do violence to no man. They are people who live in peace. They will be taken advantage of, but they will never take advantage of anybody else.

Can you imagine what might have happened to the Christian church if that had been the testimony uncompromised? This is a very serious subject. This is a very serious subject. This is the most horrendous compromise the church has ever made.

And I thank the Lord. I tell people, I'm an Anabaptist. Yes, we Anabaptists have done a lot of crazy things.

We haven't treated each other very well. We've split into all kinds of splits and splinters. And there are many things about our history and our practice, or the way, experience, that's the word, in our experience that I regret.

But there is one thing. Your forefathers never killed anybody. I think that's pretty significant.

And I tell my Reformed friends, we're not talking about what side of the head you part your hair on, or whether you wear suspenders or a belt. We're talking about whether you kill people or not. I want to look at this under three points.

The testimony of the Gospel, the testimony of history, and the testimony of experience. And we'll go for 45 minutes and see how far we get. Jesus' teaching in the Sermon on the Mount is very clear.

We read it. But some people say, and this is what you're going to get, He was only talking about personal enemies. He was not talking about nations at warfare.

How many have ever been up against that one? Alright, we have an answer. And they'll say, besides, in the Bible, God commanded people to kill people. They appeal to the Old Testament.

The verses they use from the New Testament are very few and their interpretations of those verses are very questionable. We'll look at them. Now, the problem with these people is they fail to acknowledge, as you, I'm sure, have already heard, they fail to acknowledge a difference between the Old Testament and the New Testament, but I want to point out specifically what it is they fail to recognize.

Leviticus 19, verse 18, you might want to write this down, has that famous Old Testament reference, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. And so people say, well, see, that was in the Old Testament too. And so what it simply means is that in a personal way, you should be kind to all your personal enemies.

But now when a nation's at war, we're talking about something altogether different. Well, I want you to listen to what Leviticus 19, 18 really does say. Thou shalt not avenge nor bear any grudge against the

children of thy people.

Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. So who was your neighbor according to the Old Testament? Your people. Everybody else was fair game.

That's why the man said to Jesus, who is my neighbor? The Old Testament, it says, your neighbor is only your own people. It specifically says, I said the Old Testament said, thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy. I'm going to give it to you.

The Old Testament said, don't you seek the peace of Ammon, or Edom, or their posterity forever. You are to hold the line against those people. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself, but it only includes the Israelites.

Outside of that, God can say, hey, don't you ever take those people into the congregation. Don't you ever forgive their sins. Don't you ever, you know, go out there and get rid of those people.

Those people now need to be punished. You go out and punish. But in your own context, you're to love your neighbors yourself.

What they don't realize is there is no such limitation in the New Testament. That was true in the Old Testament. What they're saying about the New Testament, that was true in the Old Testament.

But we don't find anything like that in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, Elijah called down fire from heaven. In the New Testament, somebody tried to do that.

And what did Jesus say? I did not come to destroy. I came to save life. We're not going to do what Elijah did in the Old Testament.

We're living in a different era. Jesus rebuked His disciples and said, Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of. For the Son of Man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them.

Listen to the New Testament injunctions in contrast to the Old Testament. Now, the thing you need to say to your Calvinist or your Protestant or your evangelical friends is, yes, there was specifically said in the Old Testament that loving your neighbor was a very personal thing and everybody else was in a different category. But you will not find a verse in the New Testament that says that.

In fact, you find the exact opposite. Romans 12, verses 18-21 says, Live peaceably with all men. Avenge not yourself.

Vengeance is mine. I will repay, saith the Lord. If thine enemy thirsts, give him drink.

If he hungers, give him food. He calls a fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Now, I'd like for you to try that on the battlefield where you deliberately try to starve the enemy. Destroy their supply lines. Make sure they don't get any water.

Make sure they don't get any food. It says all men. You don't find that in the Old Testament.

Love thy neighbor. Apply it to all men. In the New Testament, I want you to notice how it always says everyone.

All men. It's everybody. And there's no verse anywhere that says that this doesn't mean a certain group of people at a certain place and time.

There's nothing like this in the New Testament. 1 Timothy 2.1 You are to make supplication and prayer and intercession for all men. For kings.

What about that king we're fighting against? There's no exception here. For kings and all that are in authority. Hebrews 12.14 Fall at peace with all men.

2 Timothy 2.24 Be gentle unto all men. Titus 3.2 Speak evil of no man. Be gentle, showing all meekness to all men.

Now I don't know. Maybe you can bayonet somebody gently. Maybe there is a way to do that.

I don't know. But you're to be gentle with all men. Galatians 5.22 Your gentleness is a fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Philippians 4.5 Let your moderation, which means gentleness, be known to all men. Let it be known that Christians are gentle people everywhere where people have heard the Gospel. 1 Corinthians 3.16 Ye are the temple of God.

There was a man one time that wanted to build a temple, and the Lord said, you're not qualified because you have blood on your hands. We are the temple of God. Why would God not allow David to build a temple because he was a bloody man and use bloody people in the New Covenant to build his temple? Doesn't make a whole lot of sense to me.

Alright. To Pilate, Jesus said, My kingdom is not of this world. 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.

In other words, what he's saying is, my kingdom does not have its origins in this world or derive any of its support from this world or any earthly forces. In fact, one time, Satan said, the kingdoms of this world have been given to me, and Jesus never disputed that statement. And John says, the whole world lies in the lap of wickedness.

I said we are people that believe in two kingdoms, and we get it straight here from the teachings of Christ. Some people say, well, the reason Jesus didn't do any violence is because he came here to die, to be killed and taken advantage of instead of defending himself. Well, he came to die, but the reason he did no violence is because, as he clearly said, that is not the nature and the character of his kingdom.

The Bible teaches that there are vessels in this world to honor and dishonor. Just like you have in your house. You have a garbage bucket under the sink, and you have China somewhere in a cabinet, and, you know, the one is a vessel to honor, and the other one is a vessel to dishonor.

And God needs both of them in his house, too. He needs people to do his dirty work, like Nebuchadnezzar did, and like the kings of Assyria did, and other people in the Old Testament he used to punish other people. There are his vessels unto dishonor, but he has vessels unto honor.

And he's calling us to be vessels unto honor, but it's like the old bishop used to say in the church I went to. He would point his bony finger to the young fellows in the back who were being a little unruly, and he would say, young men, whether you choose to follow Christ or not, God will use you. You can decide

which kind of vessel you want to be, but you will be used in his kingdom.

And so God does do that. Well, let's turn to Romans 13. This is one of the passages they use.

And I'm not going to say a whole lot about this passage except to point out something about the pronouns. Verse 19 says, Dearly beloved, thou venge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath, for it is written, Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord. Now, I want you to notice the pronouns.

Therefore, if thine enemy hunger... How could we translate thine in our language? If your enemy hungers, give him drink. I'm sorry. Feed him.

If he thirsts, give him drink. For in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

What's the pronoun? It's you. I want you to notice in chapter 13, would you look at verses 4-6. For he is the minister of God.

What has happened? The personal pronoun has changed from the second person to the third person. Romans 12 is for you. Romans 13 is about him.

Somebody different. It's not talking about the same group of people. Alright? And so, very clearly here, the Lord is talking about somebody that's not part of His people.

He's talking about how you're to relate to Him out there. Okay? Well, they say He says that this person's a minister of God. That means He's one of God's servants.

Well, bless you. God said that Nebuchadnezzar was His servant. Jeremiah 25, verse 8. He says that Cyrus, the king of Persia, was His servant.

Sorry about that. Maybe he was a serpent. Isaiah 44, verse 28.

And Daniel makes the tremendous, incredible claim that the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men and giveth it to whomsoever He will and setteth up over it the basest of men. So, the fact that He said these people are His servants doesn't prove anything about their standing with Him as far as their Christian faith is concerned. It simply means they're people He uses in His kingdom that has vessels unto honor and vessels unto dishonor.

They're all servants. You're all servants. You can either serve Him in love voluntarily, or you can end up doing His dirty work and at the end find out you were the big loser.

But one way or the other, you will fulfill His purpose because it says He uses the wrath of men to praise Him and then the remainder of wrath He restrains. There's nothing out of His control. I told you this morning.

He's sovereign. He can give every one of you a decision and still have the whole thing in total control and you'll find out in the end you weren't running the show. That He ran the whole show.

And used your evil deeds to advance His purposes. That's what the Bible clearly teaches. Besides, in Romans chapter 13 it says our obedience to the authorities is to be based on conscience.

Now, conscience is a very sensitive thing that we have to put some effort forth and some care has to be exercised to keep it keen and sensitive. It cannot be abused and brutalized and still work in a trustworthy way. What happens during war to the conscience? Do you know that every person on this earth has a built-in resistance to killing? The figures are amazing.

I'll give them to you. In the Civil War, people who've gone back to study our Civil War down there in the States say that the potential on that battlefield with the number of weapons they had and the number of people they had, the potential was to kill 500 to 1,000 people per minute in each of the battles. Would you like to guess how many average were actually killed when they figured out the total number of minutes of the war and the total number of the people killed? Would you like to know what the average was? One or two? After the Battle of Gettysburg, they retrieved the muskets.

27,000 of them. 90% of them were still loaded. More than half of them had multiple charges.

One musket had 23 charges. This guy just kept standing there loading. He couldn't bring himself to pick it up and fire it.

So he was busy. Most of them could not bring themselves to pull the trigger. And people who were witnesses of the battle said many of the people who did pull the trigger shot over the heads of the others.

The United States in World War II found out that the percentage of killing was only 15 to 20%. They just could not bring themselves to fire. Oh, what they said happened during the Civil War, people who were there, said what often happened is people would load muskets and pass them to the few who would shoot.

They would not shoot. Men were willing to die to sacrifice their own lives for their nation. But they were not willing to kill.

And so after World War II, which had tremendous losses partly because of this, they decided that in the next war they would have to condition these men so that this rate could be improved. In the Korean War, they managed to get the percentage up to 55%. But we still have half the people, half of the men who would not shoot to kill.

In the Vietnam War, they raised the figure finally to 90%. But the question is, how did they do it? They did it by brutalization, classical conditioning, operant conditioning, and role modeling in the boot camps. And when those men left those boot camps, they were filled with hate and bitterness and brutal intentions.

But what had happened to their conscience? What had happened to their conscience? Listen, I've heard many people say, he decided to go to the army because he couldn't go along with his dad. Well, they'll teach him. Hey, don't you ever say that.

He will not be the same when he comes home. When he gets through that boot camp, his conscience will be brutalized and maimed, probably for the rest of his life. The boot camps are filled with physical and emotional abuse, desensitization, and depersonalization.

The enemy is not a person, he's just a thing. The conscience to be reliable cannot be treated that way. Christians will not survive that kind of training and that kind of war experience and still be able to be sensitive to the ethic of Jesus and relate even properly to government once they get home.

What was Jesus' own example? Jesus' own example was He refused to get involved in writing in justice, even in His own time. You remember that a man came to Him one time and said, my brother will not divide the inheritance with me. Make him divide the inheritance with me.

Well, Jesus could have gone and given His brother a lecture. He could have done a little bit, at least to bring some justice into the situation, but He absolutely refused. He said, who made me a divider over you? The ground of a certain rich man brought forth, oh dear, then we get that parable.

He used it as an opportunity to teach a lesson that you don't think about yourself, you think about others, and you think about God. When Pilate mixed the Galileans' blood with their sacrifices, that was brought to Him. And instead of condemning Pilate's action or making any comment on it whatsoever, doing anything about it, He used it as a lesson.

Repent or you shall all likewise perish. Isaiah 53 says Jesus divided the spoil with the strong. Also, He was fighting a battle.

You divide the spoil after the battle is over and you have won. The spoil that He divides with the strong is the language is the typical spoil that gets divided with all the people who served under Him for winning this great battle. How did He win it? Isaiah 53 By fighting? By dying.

You call that reverse fighting. They fight, you die. You don't fight, they live.

And yet, He won a great victory by this method. Some people say this method will not work. I just told you this morning that our Anabaptists won a great victory for all of western civilization and they never drew a sword.

They died. By the hundreds and by the thousands. We don't ask what reason tells us in this.

We trust and obey. Alright? But non-resistance is not pacifism. Pacifism says we don't fight.

We fight. We are formidable warriors, brother. 2 Timothy 2.3 says endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

But 2 Corinthians tells us what that means. For though we walk after the flesh listen to this, we do not war after the flesh. For we have better weapons.

The weapons of our warfare are not carnal but they are mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. That's military language brothers and sisters. Or brothers, sorry there are no sisters here.

We are serving a different commander who has different rules of battle, different goals in conflict and different accomplishments. And we follow him and he's a good leader. And there's going to be a great victory.

But the heart of non-resistance is a theology of martyrdom. Reverse fighting if you please. Matthew 10.16 says behold I send you forth as sheep in the midst of wolves.

And you heard what the Anabaptist forefathers said about this. Romans 8.36 For thy sake we are killed all the day long. 1 Peter 2.21 For even here unto where ye called because Christ also suffered for us that we

should also follow in his steps.

But this will be stoutly opposed by the popular Christian for the preaching of the cross, which this is what this is, is to them that perish foolishness. But unto us which are saved it is the power of God. And Revelation 12.11 says they overcame him by the blood of the lamb and by the word of their testimony.

We'll look at that a little bit later. The stealth bomber of the Christian church is Romans 8 verses 38 35 to 39. Let's just read this.

I mean I didn't want you to get the impression that we're the schtilla in Demlanda. We're just little cats for milquetoast walking around that aren't involved and engaged in any kind of conflict. We are in a tremendous battle.

But we don't ever pick up the weapons of the flesh. We use better weapons and win a greater victory. Romans 8 verse 35.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation or distress or persecution or famine or nakedness or peril or sword? As it is written, for thy sake we're killed all the day long we're counted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, all these things were more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I'm persuaded 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 shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

You can't beat. They'll die, but you can't conquer this. You just can't conquer it.

Alright? The just war people, the people who believe there's such a thing as a just war. There's a bad nation this Christian nation should go and punish this nation. They have very little New Testament support.

They have to go to the Old Testament. In fact, that's the problem with their whole theology. They have a flat Bible and the Old Testament is right along with the New Testament.

They ignore vast passages of the New Testament or explain them away with questionable theology. Turn to Luke 7 verses 1-10. Here's one of them.

Now when he had ended all his sayings in the audience of the people he entered into Capernaum and a certain centurion servant that word is slave by the way. I want you to just remember that. This centurion had a slave who was dear unto him and he was sick and ready to die.

When he heard of Jesus he sent unto him elders of the Jews and so on he goes down through and Jesus said this was a man of great faith and so on. And people say he didn't tell him to quit being a centurion. That is an argument from silence.

I do know that he had a slave. You can use the same justification for slavery from this passage and they did. During the early days of the 1800's many preachers used this passage.

This man had a slave and Jesus did not tell him to get rid of his slave. So therefore we can all own slaves. Now the fact of the matter is Jesus didn't always say everything that needed to be said to people.

He often planted seeds and expected them to grow. He said to the rich young ruler go sell everything you had. Come follow me.

And the guy walked away and Jesus said nothing more to him. We don't know what happened to him either. In fact there is a legend I like this one but you can't prove it from scripture that that guy was Barnabas.

I like to think that's true. It took a long time but it bore fruit finally. People don't understand and we use that same method.

We plant seeds. We don't say you got to do this and this and this. We don't say that.

Sometimes Jesus did that. Sometimes he didn't. Sometimes he addressed one issue and not some others.

He was planting seeds and Jesus knew that the seed of the word of God as he was giving it was powerful and would do its work in the lives of people. So to argue from silence and say well he didn't tell him that. Well you don't know what happened.

You don't know what happened to this centurion. That's an argument from silence. You can prove anything from the Bible that way.

You can prove polygamy. You can prove it's slavery. You can prove all kinds of stuff from an argument of silence and people have done it.

The issue is there are two covenants. You can't pick and choose. You can't go back to the Old Testament and say we don't want the sacrifices.

We want this. We want this but not this and this but not this. Paul says if you are going to obey the law of the Old Testament, if you break one part of it, you are guilty and you are condemned because you haven't kept the whole thing.

You're either in the Old Covenant or the New. You're not halfway in between. Some of the New, some of the Old.

Pick and choose. Do whatever you want to with the Bible. You're either in the Old Covenant or you're in the New and the New says be gentle unto all men, love all men, be kind to all men, forgive all men, give good to evil to all men, treat all men well.

That's what the New Testament teaches. And we're either in the New Testament or we're in the Old. And these New Testament passages that they use are all like this.

They're arguments from silence. In vain would boasting reason find, the hymn in our hymnal says, in vain would boasting reason find its path to happiness in God. Her weak directions leave the mind bewildered in a doubtful road.

And that certainly is a picture of evangelicalism on this subject. They misconstrue passages like well, what about John the Baptist? He told the soldiers that they were to be content with their wages and do violence to no man, but he didn't tell them to be soldiers. Well, John the Baptist was still in the Old Testament.

He was the last Old Testament prophet. He was not a New Testament prophet. Alright? Jesus said the least in the kingdom of God is greater than this guy.

He was the greatest prophet of the Old Testament, but the least person in the kingdom of God has it over that. It's far superior to John. Luke 16 16 says the law and the prophets were until John.

Clearly it puts him in the Old Testament. Since that time, the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presses into it. Well, what about the two swords? I'm picking pretty much all of the passages they go to.

And I think you're beginning to see how little you can make of these passages. Would you turn to Luke 22? Boy, they like this one. They like this one.

Verse 35. And he said unto them, when I sent you without purse and script and shoes, lacked you anything, and they said nothing. Then he said unto them, but now that he that hath a purse let him take it, and likewise his script, and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, buy one.

And I say unto you that... I'm sorry. Let's just stop right there. Two swords.

They were supposed to take two swords. Now, what would you do with two swords against the whole Roman army? I honestly think he was speaking figuratively here. He was saying, back then you took no provisions.

If you're going to go out now and enlarge your missions, you're going to have to take... you're going to have to be well supplied. And you're going to have to have a defense, and you're going to have to have resources. I think he was speaking spiritually.

I think he was speaking of spiritual resources. And they misunderstood him. They misunderstood him.

And so what he said... They said, well, let's continue reading. For I say unto you that this that is written must yet be accomplished. And he was reckoned among the transgressors and for the things concerning me have an end.

Then they said, Lord, here are two swords. And he said, that's enough of that. You people missed the point.

You've missed the point. Well, we get to Luke 22 49, and let's look what it says. When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword? And before he could even give them an answer, Peter, we know who it was, cut off the servant of the high priest's ear.

Now let's turn quickly to Matthew 26, 52. We'll pick up the story where we left it. In Luke, in verse 52, it says, Then said Jesus unto him, Peter, put up again thy sword into his place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.

Now that's how the two swords got used, or one of the two at least. And so, to me, it's pretty obvious what happened here. Jesus told them that now in going in larger missions, they're going to have to make sure they have sufficient spiritual resources.

They misunderstood. They thought he was talking literally about swords. They said, we have two swords here.

And he said, well, that's enough of that. And then when they finally got into the situation and one of those swords was used, Jesus used it for an object lesson to teach all of us what he thinks about the sword. And Tertullian said, when Jesus disarmed Peter, he disarmed the entire Christian church throughout all ages.

Cornelius was a centurion. Here again, we have an argument from silence. But the passage is not about the use of the sword.

The question on this passage is about whether Gentiles get received into the fellowship. It wasn't a situation where Jesus now was going to teach what this issue was all about. And there again, he was planting seeds.

And I'm sorry, Peter was planting seeds. Well, let's turn to Revelation, verses 14 to 22. This is a serious issue that Christians are going to have to face at the very end of time.

We're talking about the testimony of Scripture. We're still in that first point. Would you turn to Revelation 14, verse 12? It says, here is the patience of the saints.

Here are they that keep the commandments of God and the faith of Jesus. Now, a parallel reference is chapter 13, verse 10. Chapter 13, verse 10.

This is in the battle with the Antichrist. 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 of the saints. They don't kill with the sword. You know what's going to happen? The people who have not gotten this issue right are going to be on the side of the Antichrist that kills with the sword.

Do you want to be on the side of the Antichrist? Or do you want to be one that belongs to the patience of the saints that refuse to use the sword? I think that's pretty serious. There are a lot of so-called Christians that are going to end up on the side of the Antichrist because they don't have this issue right. How did they defeat the Antichrist here? It says in Revelation 12, 11.

We'll see how they defeated him. Would you look in verse 11? The same passage. And I beheld another... Wait a minute.

Revelation 12. I'm on the wrong passage. They overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death.

Do you see that? They were willing to die. They overcame the Antichrist by the word of their testimony and a willingness to die, not to kill. What is the testimony of history? We've looked at the testimony of Scripture, and I think we pretty well have dealt with the passages they use.

I just don't see in the New Testament that you're supposed to love these people, but not these people. I don't see that in the New Testament. In the Old Testament we have it.

You're to love your own people, love your neighbors yourself, but Ammon and Edom and all these people, you're supposed to never forgive them. What is the testimony of history? The testimony of history was there was no soldier in the army until A.D. 174. The church had been non-resistant, as I've been telling you, for 200 years.

And I usually send people who want to argue this point, I usually send them scurrying back to study the history. But what they say is this. Some people that I've talked to know the history.

They know this is true. And they say, well, the reason they weren't a part of the army was because the soldiers in the army were really constantly having to worship Caesar in the army, more so than in civilian society. And so the reason why Christians did not join the army was because when they got in the army they were face to face with emperor worship, and so they avoided the army.

It wasn't because they didn't believe in killing. That's what they'll tell you. It's obvious to me that when they tell you that, they have not read what those early Christians said.

That's not what they said. Tertullian, I'm going to read you what they said. And they don't say, well, of course they didn't want to worship the emperor, but they don't say that was their reason for not joining the army.

We willingly yield ourselves to the sword. So in what wars would we not be both fit and eager to participate, even against unequal forces if in our religion it were not counted better to be slain than to slay? Now inquiry is to be made about the point of whether a believer may enter into military service. The question is also asked whether those in the military may be admitted into the faith.

Even the rank and file of any inferior grade who are not required to take part in sacrifices. See, he speaks to that. Suppose you're in some part of the military where you don't have to take part in sacrifices.

Wait a minute here. Where are we? Or capital punishments. A man cannot give his allegiance to two masters, God and Caesar.

How will a Christian man participate in war? 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 the soldiers came to John the Baptist and received the instruction for their conduct. It is true that a centurion believed.

Nevertheless, the Lord afterward in disarming Peter disarmed every soldier. I already quoted that to you. And the Schleitheim Confession of Faith makes it very clear, of course, where our people stood on the issue.

What is the testimony of experience? That's the testimony of history. They very clearly, you can go back and read those early church writings and they don't say anything about the fact that they didn't want to participate in emperor worship. They didn't want to do that, but that wasn't the reason why they didn't join the army.

They didn't believe in killing. It's very clear. What is the testimony of experience? Here are some questions that you get asked.

What if someone attacks your family? Well, that's very interesting. That sounds to me like one of these personal situations that they say you're supposed to be non-resistant in. Doesn't that sound like a personal situation? That's not on the battlefield.

But Jesus said that you're to love Him to such an extent that you hate family. That doesn't mean we should hate in the sense that we talk about hate, but it means that if we have to let family be second place, so be it. Oh, you must not love your family.

I guess God doesn't love all those martyrs that are being put there. He's their father. Why doesn't He come to their defense? Why does He let them die? We use other weapons.

The story is told. It's a true story. These people actually visited us.

The story is in David Brousseau's book, *The Kingdom that Turned the World Upside Down*, and you might recognize it. We actually met these people. They came to visit us.

DCO and Olivia. He was in Argentina. I don't know what Olivia was, but they served the Lord in Christian work for many years.

One time they were in this country, in Atlanta, Georgia, and they were in a motel, and there was a couple of thugs loose in the city that had killed a couple of people, and the warning had gone out that people were supposed to lock their doors and be careful not to let these people into their house or protect themselves from it. But DCO and Olivia were visitors to the city. They had not heard the warning.

They were in a motel room, and they had left their door open, slightly ajar, because they were expecting visitors at any time, and they wanted them just to be able to walk in and not have to knock on the door, and in walked these two thugs. And they ordered them both to the floor. DCO immediately got on the floor.

He didn't know that what they were doing was ordering people to the floor, and then they were shooting them in the back of the head, and that's what would have happened to him. But Olivia refused. She was sitting on a stairway, and she just got up when they started ordering her to the floor, and started to walk toward them, singing, Jesus loves me, this I know, for the Bible tells me so.

And they kept ordering her to get down, and she refused. And she kept singing until she was nose-to-nose with them, and both of them turned and ran out the door. Now, I'm not saying that will always happen, but we use different weapons.

Most people say they would pray if somebody came in to their house like that. I've never had anybody think of the fact that perhaps song would be a tremendous resource. The joy of the Lord is your strength.

We fight with different weapons. And that's a beautiful story. What do you do if someone attacks your family? Use those different weapons, but then be willing to die.

The Scripture is clear. That's the position we take. Besides, are just wars really just? Are they really? Is it the great Christian United States living by Christian principles that goes to fight the wicked people who live by unchristian principles? Is that what it is? Really? Well, let me tell you something.

In the Second World War, the Allies accidentally created a firestorm at Hamburg. How many of you know what a firestorm is in war? Just a couple of you. A firestorm, what they had done was they had bombed Hamburg, and they dropped so many bombs that finally the center of the city was totally on fire.

It was a raging inferno, and it caused winds of gale force to come rushing into the fire, and those winds were so strong they swept all the people and all the loose stuff into that inferno, and everybody was burnt. Now, the Allies didn't know how to create a firestorm. They didn't even know there was such a thing until they did that accidentally at Hamburg.

Well, you say it was an accident, but it was not an accident when they did it at Dresden. How many have ever been to Dresden? The whole city was obliterated. They deliberately dropped bombs upon bombs upon bombs upon bombs on the center of Dresden to create a firestorm.

You call that a just war? Innocent people, people in hospitals, sick people, children, swept into an inferno just to intimidate the enemy. Civilians. In fact, at the beginning of the war, I'm saying, are these just wars? In 1939, after the bombing of civilians, up until that time, civilians were always protected.

The best armies could protect them, but Germany, of course, had no such scruples, and they began to bomb cities and kill civilians, and Franklin Roosevelt was outraged, and the United States could not believe it. Franklin Roosevelt, in 1939, when this began to happen, gave this announcement over his radio program. The ruthless bombings from the air of civilians and unfortified centers of the population have profoundly shocked the conscience of humanity.

I am therefore addressing this urgent appeal to every government engaged in hostilities, publicly to affirm its determination that its armed forces shall, under no circumstances, undertake the bombardment from the air of civilian populations of unfortified cities. That was the beginning of World War II. Winston Churchill, in responding to the same thing, said this, His Majesty's government has made it clear that it is no part of their policy to bomb non-military objectives, no matter what the policy of the German government may be.

In spite of the wanton and repeated attacks of the German Air Force on undefended towns in Poland, Norway, France, Holland, and Belgium, His Majesty's government steadily adheres to this policy. We do not bomb civilians. But later, in 1940, when the Allies got desperate, they began raids on German industrial cities, and obliteration bombing began to terrorize the German people and to reduce their will to resist.

In 1943, the U.S. joined this obliteration bombing, and I've already described to you the firestorm that came later. The death of civilians in the kind of warfare we fight today, at least, is inevitable. The pilot who flies the bomber is told to bomb a bridge.

That bridge may have a man on it, but the bridge has to go. Often these pilots are not given the reasons why they're to do what they're doing. A man might have been told to fly and bomb Hamburg or Dresden, and he did not know that he was helping to create a firestorm.

The war contaminates the just nation, if there is such a thing. And we see that in the end, the just nation became as hardened and as brutal as the unjust nation. The ideologies of the Nazis were finally adopted by the Allies.

The very thing that they had set out to destroy, they themselves got involved in, and the Bible says, if you try to save your life, what will happen? And that's what happened. War has a built-in punishment for the person who fights. Is modern warfare like the Old Testament? I told you to quit.

It's time to quit. Let me just say this. Is modern warfare like the Old Testament wars? No.

In the Old Testament wars, God said, you go do this. Now, who does He say that to today? They knew exactly who they were to fight, and you'd have never figured it out if you had to reason it out, because God told Nebuchadnezzar one time, He said, well, now since you have carried out My will in punishing Assyria, I'm going to give you Egypt for your reward. So, Nebuchadnezzar marches to Egypt and attacks Egypt, and you'd look on and say, well, that was a non-provoked attack.

Why is He attacking Egypt? Egypt didn't do anything to Him, but God told Him to attack Egypt. That was to be His reward for punishing Assyria. You'd have never been able to figure out from the Old Testament

accounts who was supposed to attack who, and whose side God was on sometimes.

In fact, that was Habakkuk's whole problem. God, why in the world are you using Assyria? Assyria is more wicked than we are. God says, well, wait a minute.

I'm done with Assyria, using Him. Then Babylon will punish. I'll use them to punish each other.

You just trust Me. There's nothing like that in this era. How would you ever know who the just states? Oh, well, the United States maybe had a little bit of higher moral ground than Nazi Germany did, but I don't think anybody got any direct word from God.

In fact, I think you'll find that Nazi Germany would have said they got a direct word from God, and so did the United States, that they were supposed to fight each other. In the Old Testament, you didn't have the immorality and war, rape, and all that stuff that goes on in modern warfare. There is no comparison between the Old and the New Testament on this subject, and I want to conclude if you'll just give me another four minutes.

I'm going to read you a story, and then you can all go to lunch. An illustration of how this reverse fighting works is revealed in a true story told by an old colonel in the Austrian Army. I was commanded, said the old colonel, to march against a little town in the T-Row and to lay siege to it.

We'd been meeting stubborn resistance in that part of the country, but we felt sure we should win because all the advantages were on our side. My confidence, however, was arrested by a remark from a prisoner we had taken. You will never take that town.

They have an invincible leader. What does the fellow mean? I inquired of one of my staff, and who is this leader of whom he speaks? No one seemed able to answer my question, and so in case there should be some truth to the report, I redoubled, I doubled my preparations. As we descended through the pass in the Alps, I saw with surprise that the cattle was still grazing in the valley, and that women and children, yes, even men, were out working in their fields.

Either they're not expecting us, or this is a trap to catch us, I thought to myself. As we drew nearer the town, we passed people on the road. They smiled and greeted us with a friendly word, and then went on their way.

Finally, we reached the town and clattered up the cobbled, paved streets. Colors flying, horns sounding, and challenged arms and readiness. Women came to the windows or doorways with little babies in their arms.

Some of them looked startled and held their babies close, and then went quietly on with their household tasks without panic or confusion. It was impossible to keep strict discipline, and I began to feel rather foolish. My servants answered the questions of the children.

I saw one old warrior throw a kiss to a little golden-haired lass. Just the size of my Lisa, he muttered. Still no sign of ambush.

We rode straight to the open square and faced the town hall. Here, if any place, we could expect resistance. Just as I had reached the hall, and my guard was drawn up at attention, an old white-haired man, who by his insignia, I surmised to be the mayor, stepped forth, fallen by ten men in simple, peasant

costume.

They were all dignified and unabashed by the armed force before them, and the most terrible soldiers of the great and mighty army of Austria. The man walked down the steps straight to my horse's side, and with a hand outstretched, cried, Welcome, brother! One of my aides made a gesture as if to strike him down with his sword, but I knew by the face of that old mayor that this wasn't a trick. Where are your soldiers? I demanded.

Soldiers? Why, don't you know we have none? He replied in bewilderment, as if I had said, Where are your dwarfs? or Where are your giants? or Well, we have come to take this town. Well, no one's going to stop you. Are there none here to fight? At this question, the old man's face lit up with a rare smile that I will never forget.

Often afterward, when I was engaged in bloody warfare, I would suddenly see that man's smile, and somehow I came to hate my business. His words were simply, No, there is no one here to fight. We have chosen Christ for our leader, and he taught men another way.

There seemed nothing to do for us but to ride away, leaving the town unmolested. It was impossible to take. If I had ordered my soldiers, I know they would not have obeyed me.

Even military discipline has its limits. Could I command the grisly soldier to shoot the child who reminded him of his Lisa? I reported to headquarters that the town had offered unassailable resistance. Although this admission injured my reputation, I was right.

We had literally been conquered by these simple folk who followed their invincible leader, Jesus Christ. Shall we bow our heads for prayer? Father, we thank you so much that we have you as our leader, and Lord, we don't understand everything you told us about this warfare we're involved in, but we understand clearly it does not mean using carnal weapons. We thank you for the assurance from your word that this is a warfare in which we are stronger, and that love is stronger than hate, and peace is stronger than violence, and your way is stronger than the way of the world.

Oh God, I pray help us never to surrender this most precious truth of the gospel, but may we go forth to do exploits and to divide the spoil with the strong, or to be part of the people that you divide the spoil with as we fight. Lord, help us not to be pacifists. Help us to be active.

Help us to use the sword of your word, but help us to live at peace with all men, and to be gentle and kind, and to be known as followers of an invincible leader.

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