

# WAR: Just What is Our Problem?

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[ 0 : 00 ] We have two passages that we'll be looking at this morning. In the front of the Bible, I would like you to turn to Genesis chapter 6.

And in Genesis chapter 6, we'll be looking at verses 9 through 13. These are the records of the generations of Noah.

Noah was a righteous man, blameless in his time. Noah walked with God. Noah became the father of three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Now the earth was corrupt in the sight of God, and the earth was filled with violence. God looked on the earth, and behold, it was corrupt.

For all flesh had corrupted their way upon the earth. Then God said to Noah, The end of all flesh has come before me, for the earth is filled with violence because of them.

[ 1 : 25 ] And behold, I am about to destroy them with the earth. Then I would like you to turn to the New Testament, back about three quarters the way to the book of James.

James. James. James. James. And then James will be taking a look at chapter 3 of James, verses 13 through 4.2.

James. James. James. James. James. James. James. Who among you is wise and understanding?

Let him show by his good behavior his deeds in the gentleness of wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your heart, do not be arrogant, and so lie against the truth.

This wisdom is not that which comes down from above, but is earthly, natural, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every evil thing.

[ 2 : 54 ] But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, reasonable, full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy.

And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace. What is the source of quarrels and conflicts among you?

Is not the source of your pleasures that wage war in your members? You lust and do not have, so you commit murder.

You are envious and cannot obtain, so you fight and quarrel. You do not have because you do not ask.

In Flanders Field, the poppies grow between the crosses, row on row, that mark our place. And in the sky, the larks, still bravely singing, fly scarce heard amid the guns below.

[ 4 : 14 ] We are the dead. Short days ago we lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow, loved and were loved.

And now we lie in Flanders Fields. Take up our quarrel with the foe. To you, from failing hands, we throw the torch.

Be yours to hold it high. If you break faith with us who die, we shall not sleep, though poppies grow in Flanders Fields.

Classic immortal kind of poem written by John McRae, who was a Canadian doctor and a teacher. He wrote it in 1915.

And it was after visiting Flanders Fields where so many who had died in World War I were buried. It was located there in Belgium.

[ 5 : 09 ] The Great War, as it was then called, was touted to be the War to End All Wars. Today, November 11, 2018 marks the 100th anniversary of Armistice Day that brought World War I to a close.

It was called the Great War for good reason. Participants and combatants were represented from 18 to 20 countries and numbered 70 million military personnel, 60 million of whom were Europeans.

9 million combatants died, as well as 7 million civilians. World War I lasted from July 1914 to November 1918.

The U.S. did not enter the war until 1917, but still, in that short time, logged 117,000 killed, 204,000 wounded.

Twelve nations were represented from the Allied powers. France, Britain, Russia, the United States, Romania, Japan, Serbia, Belgium, Greece, Portugal, Montenegro, and Canada.

[ 6 : 40 ] The central Axis powers were three in number, Austria-Hungary, the Ottoman Empire, which constitutes the majority of Islam, and Bulgaria.

If you're interested in more details, they are available in abundance online. So, war. What's the problem?

Here's the problem. Here's the problem. Wars and lesser conflicts are caused by the innate self-centeredness of humans.

Each person contributes to the nation in which they live. Wars, great and small, are merely the collective extension of individuals.

All conflicts, whether personal as in a marriage or national as in wars, are the product of offenses committed by one party upon another that are not peacefully resolved.

[ 7 : 40 ] Conflict is the result. The larger scale conflict we call war. War is mankind's international expression of insanity.

When nations go to war, there are, in reality, no winners. Those designated as winners are those who lost the least in blood and treasure.

But all participants lost far too much. War remains that costly dynamic to be avoided whenever possible.

But, what is the alternative to war? Capitulation, in the name of peace, requires the surrender of self-determination for the nation and its citizens.

And if there is anything America has been very high on since 1776, it is the ability to establish our own determination, self-determination.

[ 8 : 56 ] Negative human vices of greed, pride, lust for conquering and control, often in the name of self-preservation, motivate nations to war.

And men not succumb to these vices are always in danger of doing so. The only cure, the only remedy, the only panacea for human physical conflict is spiritual.

It is not political. And it is not military. Although these are the two instruments that fallen man has traditionally relied upon.

The application of politics, and if that doesn't work, then the application of the military. It is, I suspect, too much to expect fallen man to even want to resort to things spiritual.

But therein is the solution, and that is what so often eludes him. Only in examining the spiritual causes and remedies can a true peace be achieved and sustained.

[ 10 : 07 ] So how do we promulgate this remedy? It is only by the preaching of the gospel, because it alone can enter the human heart and create the satisfying remedy.

And we still do not know how God does that. We still really have no idea how, when believing upon the Lord Jesus Christ as one's personal Savior from sin, how it is that He is able to take that commitment and that confession, and use that as the basis for forgiving us of all our sin, and making us complete in Christ.

And the Spirit of God, at that point of salvation, mysteriously enters the very being of the individual, making that profession. And He makes a radical change in the spirit of that individual.

More often than not, the one who is recipient of that has no idea what is actually happening to him. But God is doing a supernatural work in the heart and spirit of that individual.

And it results in that person being a new creation in Christ, whereby old things have passed away, and behold, all things have become new.

[ 11 : 32 ] There was a time when this message, this panacea, this remedy, was much more commonly accepted in this country than what it is today. And it all has to do with what was established by our founding fathers and continued by them.

But shortly after World War II, when we returned to peacetime prosperity in the 1950s, late 40s, something happened.

We dropped the ball. I don't know if it was because we were so relieved that the war was over, and that peacetime activities could be resumed again.

And whereas there was a time where we were doing without what we regarded as many of the necessities and all of the luxuries of life, we were so grateful for those things to return, that we just kind of fattened up in our ego, our national ego.

Perhaps we began congratulating ourselves too much for having been the savior of the planet. At any rate, we began to let things slip.

[12:52] And we are today paying a price. Just out of curiosity, I looked up in two minutes with the Bible, daily devotional by Mr. Stamm.

And just out of curiosity, I turned to the devotional that was provided by Mr. Stamm. My birthday, July 6th.

Just out of curiosity, I'll see what he wrote for July 6th. It's entitled Precious Heritage. The book *We Americans*, published by the National Geographic Society in 1976, depicts a family of eight, eight early settlers, four of whom are holding Bibles in their hands.

The caption opens with the words, Book of Books, the Bible was the end and means of the education of early Americans.

This is confirmed by the Encyclopedia Britannica, which declares that the New England primer for 150 years, widely used as a textbook, was largely composed of scriptural and doctrinal material.

[14:17] Catechisms were taught in the public schools, and prayer was offered twice a day. This does not mean that all our revolutionary forefathers were saved or regenerated by personal faith in Christ.

But the evidence is abundant that they were, as a whole, God-fearing men, and this was bound to have a significant effect on their thinking and their conduct.

And indeed, there were among them many who were born-again believers. Revolutionary times conjure up in our minds such pictures as Washington praying earnestly at Valley Forge, the members of Congress kneeling together in prayer for divine guidance, and the precepts of Scripture being pressed home again and again by those high in government while the citizens in general trembled at God's Word.

It goes without saying that our nation plays a strategic role in the affairs of the world. Our influence is great. However, America will not again exert the right kind of influence in the world until the Church of Jesus Christ recovers from her spiritual illness and our national leaders and the populace once more become at least God-fearing.

The fear of God does not in itself save from sin's penalty, but it is the first step towards salvation. Moreover, God's Word declares, You know as well as I that this nation has undergone a tremendous metamorphosis and not in what we consider to be the right direction.

[16:21] There has been a declension in the morality and the values and the activities of the American population in a way that is undeniable.

All you need to do is look at the uniform crime statistics reports and you get the sad news there. How that our prisons are swelling and bursting in population and the drug scene that is taking place and the crisis on our southern border and all of these things, we might actually expect to be predictable from a nation that no longer subscribes to a real connection with the God of heaven. Granted, there are among us numbers of believers who still hold to those same biblical standards, but by and large, the nation as a whole has generally left its biblical moorings.

They were there in the beginning, but over time they eroded. And do you know, that is the natural way for things to go. We do not improve ourselves naturally.

We improve ourselves intentionally. It takes effort to do so. First of all, situation has to be accurately diagnosed.

[17:45] We are all aware that when you go to a doctor with an ache or a pain, he's going to ask you all kinds of questions about symptoms and where does it hurt and when the disc began and all the rest of it.

And all he's trying to do is arrive at an accurate diagnosis of your problem because treatment cannot be prescribed until you have a diagnosis.

So diagnosis becomes everything. I remember one time in talking to a physician regarding a complexity of a case that he was treating. There was a member here in our congregation. And I said, this thing gets so difficult, I sometimes think that about 90% of medicine is diagnosis.

And he said, no, you're wrong. It's about 98% is diagnosis. Because very often the treatment is rather simple when once we know what it is that we're treating.

America suffers from an undiagnosed moral and spiritual illness. Now, we who are believers ought to already have that diagnosis in mind.

[ 18 : 50 ] We ought to know what is the problem. The problem is humanity. The problem is the same as it was in the passage that Gary read earlier, going all the way back to Genesis chapter 6.

And the problem is continuing. That means the diagnosis is we are a spiritually, morally fallen nation.

And the only way that we can deliver ourselves from that is to present ourselves before the God of heaven as a nation. While this seems like a real stretch for it to occur in our lifetime, God is not limited.

And we would just encourage you as believers to continue praying for this nation, continue praying for our leaders in authority, continue taking our case and our needs before the Lord.

We have a small group that meets here every Wednesday. Usually there's maybe 12 to 15 of us, something like that. These people come together simply out of concern for the direction of our nation and for the future of it.

[ 19 : 59 ] And we enjoy a marvelous time of fellowship and a time of prayer and discussion and camaraderie. And each of us is glad for that occasion to be there.

So we want you to know that you are welcome to join us. Ordinarily we meet at 7 o'clock in the evening, but this particular Wednesday we're going to have something special and we're going to be meeting at 6 o'clock.

So if you are available and interested in the welfare of this nation and the possibilities that exist for it, if we were able to see this nation really turn back to God seriously, you'd be welcome to join us. We do know that groups like ours are meeting all across the country, and they started well before this last general election, not just the special election. And they began praying, and we have been a part of that nationwide effort.

It's very loosely organized. In fact, there's no organization. We just hear reports of believers banding together all over the country, and they're all beseeching the Lord for the same thing, for the rightness of this nation.

[ 21 : 07 ] So with all of this in mind and with the incredible message that we have to deliver that is life-changing, that is sin-forgiving, that promises eternal life, we have no cause and no reason to relax, to be discouraged, to be depressed.

We have a gospel that is sufficient to the task, but it is dependent upon us propagating it.

You're invited to do so in any and every way you can. Would you pray with me, please? Father, we are truly grateful that even in the midst of waywardness such as we experience as a nation, there is a remedy that has already been proven and has already been demonstrated numerous places in Scripture.

And we would like to be a people who are added to that historical event of a nation turned around. We saw it with the preaching of one man who was not even willing to deliver the message, but he did so out of obedience to you, and Nineveh was spared.

Would it please you to spare this nation for the same reasons? We are a people who are repentant, acknowledging our sin, and embracing the only remedy that has been provided for it.

[ 22 : 48 ] This is our prayer. However, and whatever we can do as individuals or as a congregation to contribute to that great and mighty cause, we want to be available and at your disposal.

Thank you for making the offer, for extending it to us and to others throughout this great nation. May we take it seriously, buy into it with everything we have.

In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, amen. All right. You guys are here. May we take it seriously. Could you thank God rigidly for doing what he is that, in the day we ask you okay? In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, amen.

Freedom. Thank you, ■■■ng, Jim. It is great. It has moved on the road that we are here with now. But, of course, as a man will tell at Δ Olney, but are you not cyn EP or that even trucking in my movimento station, where you have come from correctly? And in this case, it was perfect for Christianity.

Nothing. Do the word now is... And it ■■ issy. I am very cautious who didn't believe howsheet did any remind you. And there are you?