

Preface

The purpose of this book is to convince Christians to obey Jesus' commands to live nonresistantly and love enemies. I hope to do this by demonstrating Jesus' wisdom through an examination of the reality of war in its various dimensions. I also hope to destroy the American state's salvation narrative, exposing America for what it really is—an evil principality and power that lies, deceives, and murders to acquire wealth and power. After seeing the truth, it is my prayer that at least some claiming to follow the Prince of Peace will refuse to participate in or support their government's wars, and instead follow their King in obedience, and thus glorify God.

I do not, however, want the reader to suppose that I endorse the overthrow of the government or the wholesale refusal to obey its laws, even though it is a fallen principality and power poorly performing its God-given task of protecting the innocent and punishing evil. On the contrary, Jesus and Paul command us to obey the state and pay our taxes, even as these taxes are used for evil ends. Paul and Peter teach us that God has given the state a specific task: protect the innocent and punish the evil. We honor and pray for those in power; however, we cannot obey their laws or support their actions when they violate Jesus' clear commands given to His people, specifically in this case, nonresistance and love of enemies. Warfare and soldiering are forbidden to the Christian.

The task that I have embarked upon is a negative one with a positive outcome if successful. The negative part consists of, pretty much, the entire book. The first two chapters of the book are a short defense of Christian nonresistance that I presented in my book *Church and State*. In another chapter I discuss God's use of war. After these positive chapters, I start in on the negative.

My goal in the rest of the book is to show the impact of war on civilians and soldiers, review America's war crimes, consider America's hypocrisy, and examine America's wars from several perspectives:

1) discovering the real causes of war by examining the internal discussions within the U.S. government and diplomatic exchanges leading up to the war, 2) examining how the war was fought (this will be brought out in the chapters on war crimes), and 3) the aftermath of the war. These tasks are wholly negative and depressing, but must be done to expose the evil and lies behind America's wars thereby destroying the American salvation narrative.

The reader will notice that I do not present the historical facts in a dispassionate manner. How could one given the monstrosity of the crimes? Therefore, I freely employ sarcasm and express outrage from time to time. Some parts of the book will be extremely difficult to read either because of the outrage the reader will experience after learning the truth and realizing he has been lied to, and because some of the descriptions of the war crimes are so horrifying. On several occasions I have been reduced to tears as I gathered the material and wrote about the accounts. Whatever you conclude, I suspect that if you read this book you will not look at the American government, war, and soldiering the same way.

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One might be puzzled by my claim that the American government has a salvation narrative, let alone one that must be destroyed. However, if you give it a bit of thought, you can see that America does have a salvation narrative. It goes something like this:

America is a unique nation established by God at its founding. America has been a benevolent Christian nation that has brought freedom to the world and fought victorious wars over unspeakable evil, securing the freedom of Americans and other peoples as well. For the Christian, America's military has secured our right to worship.¹ America has saved the world.

The story sounds good and is believed by many, but none of it is true. It is a devious lie.² It is this salvation story that must be destroyed.

¹Christians need no one and no government to secure their right to worship. Nothing stops us from worshiping except perhaps our cowardice and disobedience should we suffer persecution. What America has provided, until recently, is an environment that is very favorable to Christian practice. However, history is clear: American has never fought a war in which the Christian's ability to worship without persecution was at stake.

²The lie has been aggressively and successfully marketed by men employing modern propaganda and the control of the historical record. This will be made clear later on.

The true salvation story begins with Jesus and differs greatly from America's story, in fact, it is the antithesis of America's story. But before I introduce Jesus, His kingdom, His people, and His kingdom law, let me lay a bit of groundwork.

First a personal note. I grew up in a blue-collar militaristic, Protestant Evangelical home. My family sincerely believed in America's salvation story. Most still do. I went to college and obtained a bachelor's degree in physics, followed by a doctorate in physics. For a time, I was a professor, but most of my professional career I have been a scientific/engineering consultant. For a short time, a very short time, I worked for a defense contractor on military communications systems. While there I was confronted by a rigorous defense of Christian nonresistance by a book I was reading. Growing up, I understood that some Christians believed in nonresistance. I didn't believe they were crazy since it seemed that you could read Jesus that way; however, I didn't believe that you had to insist that all Christians had to be nonresistant. Thus, confronted with a robust defense of Christian nonresistance, I became troubled. Here I was, working for a military defense contractor realizing that if I was an obedient Christian I couldn't have anything to do with things military. I was 51 years of age with a really good job, realizing that I couldn't continue in this line of work.

Not long after this realization the Lord led me out from that job, and after about a 10-month desert experience, He graciously provided another. Before that provision we had gone through a whole lot of cash since it was very difficult finding another job.

My decision greatly upset my mother, father, and most of my siblings. However, my wife and two sons came right along with me. As I presented the truth of God's Word to them, they too agreed that Christians had to be nonresistant if they were to be faithful to Jesus' commands. Thus, for me, nonresistance is not merely an intellectual exercise, but has been a costly way of life. But the cost was insignificant in light of the knowledge that I am walking in obedience to my King, pleasing Him, and bringing Him glory.

Making this commitment to nonresistance has profoundly changed my life. Before I realized that Christian nonresistance must characterize a Christian life I took my Christianity very seriously and had spent considerable time in the Scriptures and knew apologetics well. I believed Jesus' commands had to be obeyed. However, after the decision there were profound internal changes, specifically greater peace and greater obedience to Jesus' commands. The Scriptures came alive in ways I had not known, and Jesus became more dear to me than ever before.

Several things convinced me that nonresistance was normative for a Christian. First was a solid presentation of nonresistance I found in John Howard Yoder's *The Politics of Jesus*. Second was the uniform witness of the early church that nonresistance was normative. Third was the destruction of the state's salvation story by my son Todd who, as we homeschooled him, became an excellent historian. As he studied history through the eyes of a young Christian, not indoctrinated into official American history, he saw that the official story was horribly flawed. In fact, it was nothing but a hagiography full of lies and misrepresentations. As he and I talked about it, and I investigated further, it became clear that the state's salvation story was utterly false. When all this became clear, I had no defense against the truth and made a commitment to live nonresistantly. It has been one of the best decisions of my life, even if it has been one of the most costly.

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The argument for Christian nonresistance can be summarized in the following way:

There is now a King, Jesus the Christ, an absolute Sovereign admitting no rivals, who reigns visibly over those who confess Him as Lord (the church) and invisibly over the entire cosmos, a cosmos that does not yet recognize the reality of His reign. King Jesus' visible reign extends over a world and a people so transformed that they constitute a new creation. His visible kingdom, instantiated in the church, is as real as the Roman Empire or the United States, even if it is not of this world. Jesus shatters the world's wisdom, structures, institutions and ways of life and ushers in His wisdom, His kingdom, and His way of life; all is centered on Him. All this He made possible by His obedience to the Father's plan, for His Father's glory, and by the Spirit, first given to Him by the Father, and Whom He now gives to those who follow Him, empowering them to live obediently to King Jesus' commands to the glory of the Father.

King Jesus redefines reality and illusion, the possible and the impossible, the realistic and the unrealistic, the responsible and the irresponsible, the idealistic and the realistic, the attainable and the unattainable, and the desirable and undesirable. He turns the world upside down. Nothing was the same after He triumphed on the cross appearing to die as, what most thought, a failed messiah, a delusional man fit only for scorn, abuse, and death.

For all those who live under His rule, every dimension of life is radically altered. The difference between the King's way of life

and that of all other kingdoms could not be more stark; His citizens unconditionally forgive, unconditionally love, sacrificially serve and care for others before seeking their own good, live in mutual submission, and refuse to resist, retaliate, coerce, or use violence, great or small. They even love enemies, praying for them, blessing them, and doing good to them. Thus, the end to which King Jesus directs His people (God's glory) and the means employed in seeking this end look nothing like the means and ends of those outside His rule. Our previous life of bondage in other kingdoms was but a rebellious, tragic, and wretched parody of true life. The life He calls us to under His rule is not an unrealizable ideal, but realizable by the transforming power of God's Spirit.

So different are King Jesus' people, their task, and the kingdom they inhabit from all other peoples, tasks and kingdoms, and so deep is the enmity of the world to King Jesus and His people, we find that no meaningful accommodation with or participation in these other kingdoms is possible. His people live in a world made new; all others live in a dying world, a world in rebellion, a world passing away, a world that all must leave if they are to escape destruction.

What lies at the foundation of Christianity is Jesus; King Jesus, Jesus' kingdom, Jesus' kingdom citizens, and Jesus' kingdom law. Jesus really is a king of a real kingdom that exists now in the world, even if it does not exist in its final glory. Jesus' kingdom, insofar as it exists, is instantiated in His people. We also know that those in the kingdoms of this world have a deep enmity towards Jesus and His people. All of the above claims are found in Scripture and were believed by the Early Church (ante-Nicene church).

When we understand the reality of Jesus' kingship, the presence of His kingdom, and that He has a body of law for those living in His kingdom, a law that commands that His people live nonresistantly, we understand that nonresistance makes perfect sense. We also understand that our citizenship really does reside in Jesus' kingdom, that we really are strangers and pilgrims, that we don't have a stake in the country in which we reside. We insist that we are Christians that happen to live in America, rather than Americans that happen to be Christians.

To help us understand this, consider a Frenchman living in Germany. The Frenchman would not involve himself in Germany's politics, military, or wars, for he is a Frenchman, not a German. Neither would he participate in German elections for the same reason. Of course, he would have opinions about what he would like to see happen, but

being a citizen of France, he would not have a stake in German government. This analogy works well for a citizen of Jesus' kingdom living in some earthly kingdom like America.

So what do Christians do? How do they relate to the kingdoms of this world? The Christian's task is to build Jesus' kingdom by walking in obedience to the Law of Christ, and engage in the ministry of reconciliation by going into all the world, making disciples, and teaching them to obey all that Jesus commanded. The kingdoms of this world are to protect the innocent and punish evil. God has given to them the sword, that is, violence, to accomplish this end. This, however, in light of Jesus' commands, is not the Christian's task, even if God sanctions it for those not part of the Body of Christ.

Jesus' kingdom law fully informs Jesus' citizens' conduct. It is a body of law He expects His citizens to obey. Jesus is not the Great Suggester. Jesus is a Christian's Master and Commander and He expects to be obeyed. Jesus and the Apostles know of no such thing as a true follower of Jesus who does not obey Jesus' commands, even His command to live nonresistantly. None of Jesus' commands are up for negotiation or reinterpretation. Their meaning is easily established, especially when we take the Scriptures as a whole.

I do not want the reader to get the idea that I believe that nonresistance is the most important of Jesus' commands, since all of His commands are important. However, in America, those who claim to follow Christ, for the most part, have no problem ignoring this one. Certainly, a conservative Christian would say that a life of moral impurity is not consistent with true Christianity, and the person living such a life is not a Christian, no matter what he claimed. The same would be true for a person living in an adulterous relationship, a person who is a thief, a person who refused to forgive, or hated someone. These things, if they characterize a person's life demonstrate that they are not really Christian. So how is it that we can so casually ignore Jesus' clear commands to live nonresistantly, and love of enemies, and still claim that we faithfully follow Jesus? In truth, we can't.

To embrace war, violence, and killing enemies is to make a mockery of Jesus and His kingdom. It is to utterly fail to understand Jesus' Gospel. The practice of authentic, meaningful Christianity becomes impossible. Oh, you'll have some version of it, but you won't have the genuine article.

Encouraging young Christians to become soldiers, celebrating America's militarism, the 4th of July and Memorial Day, and flying the American flag in our churches are blasphemous.

If the claims above are true, how is it that so many who claim to be Christians deny that Christians must live nonresistant lives and love enemies? The first, and perhaps most important reason is the Constantinian merge of Church and State in 314 A.D. Prior to this, the Early Christians uniformly affirmed nonresistance.³ After the merge they were brought into the imperial Roman Government and legitimized. Thus, a great many Christians abandoned the teachings of Jesus, the Apostles, and the Early Church and made peace with war and violence. The second reason in modern America is the torrent of pro-war, pro-military propaganda spewed out over every kind of media, and the teaching of America's salvation story at all levels of education. The primary reason, however, lies in what passes as the church that continues the error made by Constantine and those of his day. It is only a very tiny minority confessing Jesus as Lord who actually practice authentic Christianity, living nonresistant lives. Sadly, these disciples are called irresponsible, parasites, idealists, and fools by those claiming to follow the Prince of Peace.

For many who read these pages, much of this will be completely new, and will not be convinced by the claims. All of these claims need to be defended, and can be defended. To that end I wrote *Church and State*, which goes into great detail defending these claims. It is a large book and I cannot reproduce it here. I encourage the interested reader to read it as well as others. Of particular note are George Kalantzis' *Caesar and the Lamb* and Ron Sider's *The Early Church on Killing*. These two books are excellent reviews of the Early Church's views on nonresistance. Also excellent is James F. Davis' *Lex Talionis in Early Judaism and the Exhortation of Jesus in Mathew 5.38-42*.

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The present, nearly uniform, Protestant understanding of the importance of nonresistance is puzzling when considered in light of other Protestant commitments. In what follows I refer to traditional conservative positions.

The vast majority of conservative Protestants believe that nonresistance, love of enemies are not important aspects of the Christians. Most believe that extreme violence and killing may be employed for self-protection and at the command of the state. In other words, Jesus' commands in Matthew 5 and Luke 6 need not be obeyed and the

³As the Church grew soldiers in active military service became Christians. Given that there was no possibility to be released from military service for conscientious objector status, the soldier had to remain in the army. Desertion meant death. Many of these Christians were able to avoid violating Jesus' commands since this was largely during the great Pax Romana. Those that did disobey orders were executed.

witness of the ante-Nicene church (church of the first 300 years) is irrelevant. What makes this position puzzling are several considerations.

First, is picking and choosing which of Jesus' commands must be obeyed. Most consider that the commands regarding anger, adultery, lust, and oaths, must be obeyed. However, among many, little mention is given to Jesus' commands to forgive and care for the needy (Matt 25). Jesus' commands regarding nonresistance and love of enemies, are almost universally ignored, along with the universal witness of the church of the first 300 years that insisted that these commands were just as essential as Jesus' other commands.

Second is the careless way Jesus' commands to live nonresistantly and love enemies are made of no effect. Several techniques are employed to accomplish this. First a pragmatic argument is made, saying, "You can't run a nation like that." It is true that a nation cannot be run without resort to violence. Romans 13 makes it explicit that the state has been given the sword to protect the innocent and punish the evil. However, these Christians fail to understand that the New Testament and the witness of the early church teach that there is a division of labor between the followers of the Prince of Peace and all others. God's people are forbidden the sword while the sword is permitted for those who do not follow Jesus.

Ignoring these two commands is also accomplished by neglecting the 300 year witness of the early church. For most Christians it seems church history begins in the 4th century when Emperor Constantine combined church and state seducing most Christians to abandon authentic Christian teachings and way of life. What is so tragic about this, is that the early church is perfectly clear on the subject: a Christian can have nothing to do with violence and killing under any circumstances, commitments that prevent the Christian from holding public office or participating in the army. Some will point out that the early church mentions that there were Christians in the Roman army. This however does not diminish the witness of the early church since its position remains uniform and in several of the documents it is made clear that such men may not kill. It must be remembered that a Roman soldier who converted Christianity could not leave the army. Thus, the command that the soldier had to live by Jesus' imperatives even while in the army, a condition that might easily lead to his execution since he could not follow the pagan religions rituals practiced by the army, employ violence or kill.

Lastly, a vain attempt to circumvent Jesus' commands is made by reading various passages in the Gospels and Acts and applying sophomoric logic as well as taking the passages out of context.

If we take the view that all of Jesus' commands must be obeyed we have to ask ourselves what it means to ignore one or more of them. Most conservative Christians would insist that divorce or adultery were inconsistent with authentic Christianity and a church that taught that they were consistent would be no church at all, but thoroughly apostate. This would also apply to a church that taught that abortion, theft, or murder were consistent Christian behaviors. In condemning such churches, these more consistent Christians would be correct.

Given this line of argumentation, what must we conclude about the many churches who reject nonresistance and live of enemies if, in fact, Jesus' commands to live nonresistantly and love enemies mean just what they appear to mean? The evidence is clear that these commands mean what they appear to mean, and the answer to the above question is tragic in the extreme.

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A note of warning is appropriate at this point to help us all understand the importance of following Jesus' commands.

Just as the consequences of refusing to obey Jesus' other commands are dire, it is equally true that to disobey His command to live nonresistantly and love enemies has profound eternal consequences. Specifically, we live in disobedience, denying God the glory He deserves, give those outside the Body of Christ cause to blaspheme the name of God, and threaten our eternal destiny.

To help us understand the judgment that we might face if we refuse to obey Jesus, consider Jesus' parable in Matthew 12:35-48 regarding His slaves.

Jesus discusses the ultimate end of four different groups of slaves. In the parable these slaves are introduced as Jesus' slaves, that is, His followers.⁴ The first group are those slaves who knew their Master's will but lived lives of wanton disobedience. When the Master returns, these slaves are brought before him and hacked to pieces and "assigned a place with the unbelievers." The next group know their Master's will and do not do it, but they, unlike the first group, apparently do not live lives of wanton disobedience and receive a severe whipping, that is, "many stripes." Another group did not know the Master's will, and did not do it, and received few stripes. The last

⁴It was common for Jesus to call His followers slaves. See also Luke 14 and other passages.

group knew the Master's will and did it, are praised, and joyously enter into fellowship with their Master.

Those of us identifying as Christians fall into one of these four groups. One group does not make it and enters the Lake of Fire and one group is praised and welcomed by their Master. Two others are punished, one severely, but make it to the kingdom of God.

Those who carefully obey Jesus are praised. They take seriously Jesus' commands and consciously order their lives around them. Two groups do not take Jesus' commands seriously, ultimately receiving Jesus' disapproval and punishment, and yet they make it. The group that completely ignores Jesus' commands finds themselves shipwrecked.

It is fairly easy to determine if you are in the approved group. Just ask yourself if you are walking in obedience to Jesus' commands. The group that doesn't make it is also fairly easy to identify. It is a bit more difficult to determine exactly where you stand if you are in the other two groups. The question is, how close are you to the group that doesn't make it? The boundary between those sent to Hell and those who receive many stripes is a bit harder to discern. You might ask, how much do you have to get wrong? Well that would be the wrong question.

The right attitude, the attitude expressed in Scripture, is to carefully obey Jesus' commands and stay as close to Him as possible. Trying to figure out how lax you can be with respect to Jesus' commands and still make it is a sure way to end up shipwrecked. Jesus warns us that:

Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven will enter. Many will say to Me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness.'

Matt 7:21-23

Not everyone who calls Jesus Lord will enter the kingdom of heaven. Those who enter do the will of the Father—obey Jesus. Christians who decide that they do not need to obey all of Jesus' commands are like those Jesus describes in Matthew 7. These Christians look at Jesus' command to resist not the evil man and His command to love enemies and say: "Jesus can't really mean that," or "Jesus is mistaken,

sometimes we have to kill our enemies. You cant live like that.” Some reject His command to live a morally pure life, or care for the needy and forgive. Many such Christians are nice, law abiding citizens who have prayed the sinner’s prayer and call Jesus Lord. Many have done truly good deeds in Jesus’ name. “Have we not cared for the needy, have we not fought against abortion, have we not fought for social justice, have we not loved those who loved us, have we not fought for our right to worship?” To these and many others Jesus will pronounce the most devastating judgment they will ever hear. “I never knew you. I NEVER KNEW YOU. I NEVER KNEW YOU. DEPART FROM ME, YOU WHO PRACTICE LAWLESSNESS.”

Thus, the wise and prudent course is to live a life that glorifies God by living in obedience to His commands. To choose another path is to be a fool. In the case under consideration here, the Christian who affirms he can refuse to live a life of nonresistance and kill his enemies is a fool, a fool who will lose everything.

Therefore everyone who hears these words of Mine and acts on them, may be compared to a wise man who built his house on the rock. And the rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and yet it did not fall, for it had been founded on the rock. Everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not act on them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand. The rain fell, and the floods came, and the winds blew and slammed against that house; and it fell—and great was its fall.

Matt 7:24-27

Jesus’ words are harsh, but everything is at stake. Do not be a fool, do not be the slave who is hacked to pieces, or the slave who received many stripes. Rather, walk like Jesus and glorify the Father.

It is my earnest prayer that this book will help those Christians who do not believe that nonresistance is required practice to repent and change their behavior, and thereby glorify their Lord. For those who already walk that way, I hope to affirm their lives and give them a tool to strengthen their resolve and help others to walk as Jesus walked.

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