

**General Topics :: A thread about violence****A thread about violence - posted by Chad (), on: 2004/3/1 10:11**

Christ said that he had come to bring division. (Luke 12:51) He would divide the wheat from the chaff. (Matthew 3:12)
I think a major problem with preaching today is that we may tend to preach "unity." ("We are all one...") In the Bible, at least the one I read, this is not what Christ wanted. He wanted to make a distinction- His people and then the world.

In the King James Bible, I love the phrase "Peculiar People," it denotes a difference, as if the world would say "Those people are strange..."

Even in the Old Testament, Joshua says "Choose for yourselves THIS DAY whom you will serve...
... But as for me and my household, we will serve the LORD." (Joshua 24:15)

On Mt. Carmel, Elijah says this: "How long will you waver between two opinions? If the LORD is God, then follow Him, but if Baal is God, follow him." (1 Kings 18:20)

These statements were standoffish, and powerful.

Christ wanted a distinction, a division. The Body of Christ should work together as one, of course, Christ prayed that His Disciples and He be made one. (John 17:6-25)

When someone comes under the blood of Christ, they are ingrafted, by grace, into the Body.

We are not one with the world, we are strangers passing thru. (1 Peter 1:17; 1 Peter 2:11)

We are called to be gracious under persecution, and to go the extra mile, to love our enemies. (Matthew 5)
HOWEVER...

We are to stand up and stand off. There is God's way, and there is the wrong way. We cannot be at peace with the world when the world is run by Satan and Satan wars with Christ, who runs our body. We are to storm the gates of Hell with the Power of God.

War against the devil with the Gospel of Christ. (It is a sword...)

take captive for Christ those whom the devil has stolen from him.

Like 1 Samuel 30, let's infiltrate the enemy's camp and take back what it has stolen.

This is war, an eternal war, and in war, there can be no peace. :-D :-D :-)

The devil fights with hate and arrogance; we fight with unconditional love and absolute humility and servanthood.

Re: Pacifist VS. Standoff-ish, on: 2004/3/1 11:11

There is no way to peace, peace is the way.

Jake

Re: - posted by Nasher (), on: 2004/3/1 11:32

The Lord Jesus Christ came to bring peace with God, not peace with the world.

Re:, on: 2004/3/2 9:29

So "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you" is about our finding peace with God and not our neighbor?

This notion that Jesus was not interested in peace on earth goes against much of His teachings. If you ignore these teachings you end up being part of the cause of violence.

Jake

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Re: - posted by Nasher (), on: 2004/3/2 9:58

James 4:4

Adulterers and adulteresses! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Whoever therefore wants to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God.

What do you think of this, Jake?

Re:, on: 2004/3/2 11:27

This passage refers to passive acceptance of a sinful world. Jesus preached reconciliation with our enemies and being a peaceful servant of God. This included helping others overcome their sin in a sometimes confrontational manner. But the underlying motive was love for fellow humans.

Christians are on very shaky (dangerous) ground when they claim salvation from Jesus and reject His teachings of nonviolence.

Jake

Re: - posted by Agent001 (), on: 2004/3/2 12:17

I think we should clarify what we mean when we use the word "world". There are several shades of meaning to it; I think it will be helpful to keep in mind the distinctions between them.

For instance, the word takes on different meaning depending on the context, for instance, "Do not love the *world*" and "For God so love the *world*."

The former refers to the worldly system which has fallen in the hands of Satan. The latter refers to the people who live on earth. "World" can also mean the earth, the habitat of human beings and other creatures.

We are in an impasse here because we fail to make these distinctions.

Re: Allow me to clarify... - posted by Chad (), on: 2004/3/2 13:11

I do not promote violence or discord. I promote taking a solid stand for the truth. Christ was not violent, but when he had to, he got serious. He showed those who defiled the Gentile area of the Temple that He meant business.

I know now that it would have been good for me to elaborate on the statement I made about our weapons. Our weapons are meekness, gentleness, lovingkindness, forgiveness, giving, and they do well to destroy the work of the enemy.

When I said "the world" I did not mean the population, I meant the devil's handiwork.

I believe the best way to be standoff-ish is to live in absolute love. Absolute love for everyone is as radical as it gets. I am not violent. As a self-aware Christian, I know that his love flows into my actions, thoughts, and words, permeating everything I am and do.

That is how I combat this enemy.

Please know that I DESPISE violence. I grew up in violence, it tormented my spirit until Christ set me free, with... guess what... a gentle love.

Please forgive the vagueness and obvious brashness of my first post and see this as a token of what I really mean. :-) :-D

Re:, on: 2004/3/2 15:42

As usual, Agent 001 puts the hammer on the nail in detailing the various meanings of the word "world" in scriptures.

CHad, we are in agreement about violence.

Nevertheless, there are many "Christians" in this world who, reading Revelations and other biblical prophesy of the end of the world (time?), anticipate an Armagedon where much of the world is destroyed and Christians are "Raptured" just before this tribulation happens. Moreover, many of these "christians" are preparing for the end and actually facilitating the ir vision of it in the Mideast by supporting Israel in their domination of the Holy land. They support the violent acquisition of all of the Holy Land, so as to prepare the way for the return of Christ. See http://www.humanistsofutah.org/1998/FundamentalistWarAgainstHumanism_DiscGrp_2-98.html

This goes against everything Jesus stood for. It is a trap set by Beelzebul. Christians should hold any and all end of times prophecies in serious question as "no one can know the time" of Christ's return. It could be thousands of years from now. (People have been predicting and expecting the second coming since just after the crucifixion.)

We Quakers have an historical "peace testimony" which I think expresses well the values of Christ:

"We utterly deny all outward wars and strife and fightings with outward weapons, for any end or under any pretence whatsoever. And this is our testimony to the whole world. The spirit of Christ, by which we are guided, is not changeable, so as once to command us from a thing as evil and again to move unto it; and we do certainly know, and so testify to the world, that the spirit of Christ, which leads us into all Truth, will never move us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons, neither for the kingdom of Christ, nor for the kingdoms of this world."

Jake

Re: - posted by nobody, on: 2004/3/2 20:12

And then some soldiers came and they were questioning him saying, 'And what about us, what do we do?'" And some would like to have Jesus say...Get out of the military, it's wrong. He said, "Don't take money from anyone by force, don't accuse anyone falsely and be content with your wages." That is without question an implicit affirmation of being a soldier.. just be honest, don't rob people because you have the power to do it, because you carry a weapon, don't accuse people falsely because you're on the inside of law enforcement, be content with your pay. I mean, there's an affirmation of the validity of being a soldier, just be a noble one who does what is right to do.

You have the same thing in the tenth chapter of Acts where Cornelius was a Roman soldier. He was a centurion which meant he was the leader of a hundred men. It's..it's an Italian battalion which was from Rome. Cornelius was a formidable soldier. He was a devout man, verse 2. He feared God with all his household. He gave many alms to the Jewish people, prayed to God continually. And in verse 22, "Cornelius was a centurion, a righteous and God fearing man, well spoken of by the entire nation of the Jews, divinely directed by a holy angel to send for you to come to his house and hear a message from you," that's referring to Peter. Down in verse 48 he came to be baptized. Here is another implicit, really a commendation of a man who was a righteous Roman soldier.

And then if you were to go through the teaching of Jesus you would find similar kind of implicit affirmations. Remember in Matthew 21 Jesus approved about a king who waged war against wicked people, remember that story? Do you remember Jesus said, "Nobody goes to war without counting the cost," do you remember when Peter took out his sword in the garden when they came to arrest Jesus, started to cut his way through the crowd, he cut the ear off the first guy in line who ducked and lost an ear? Peter was going for his throat, you can be sure. Jesus said, "Put your sword back in its sheath." He didn't say, "What are you doing with that thing?" He said, "Just put it back where it belongs." The implicit idea is you have a right to carry it for your self-protection, don't use it like this. In fact, in John 18:36 Jesus actually said, "That it would have been proper for his disciples to defend His Kingdom with swords if it was an earthly kingdom," John 18:36. <http://www.biblebb.com/files/MAC/80-241.htm>

This article is long, but very good. Please at least skim it!

War can be a good thing today. Self-defense can be very reasonable. Christian cops are right to shoot when the time calls for it and Christian soldiers are respectable and should obey their government and work hard for their masters. We are not a bunch of hippies on dope in this world. There are evil people who are to be punished by God through the world's governments.

Re: - posted by Agent001 (), on: 2004/3/3 8:43

nobody:

A minor correction - Luke 3:14 - it was John the Baptist who said, "Don't extort money and don't accuse people falsely--be content with your pay." (However, this does not change your argument).

All:

I find two strands of thought on the use of violence in scripture.

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First, the biblical ideal is definitely non-violence and non-resistance. Anyone who takes Jesus' sermon on the mount seriously will have to acknowledge this.

Second, there is no indication that being a soldier is inherently immoral - Luke 3:14. There is also endorsement of the authority of the earthly rulers as "agents of God's wrath to bring **punishment** on the wrongdoer" who "does not bear the **sword** for nothing" - Romans 13:4. So God does allow for limited use of force in this present age for law, justice, and order.

Ultimately, your personal stand is a matter of conscience.

Re: uhh, Way off base... - posted by Chad (), on: 2004/3/3 9:26

:o When I first posted the message, I meant Spiritual Warfare. Apparently I should be more specific.

:P I've got a lot to learn about differing views and the way they are interpreted.

God bless.

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/3/3 10:00

Hi Chad

Ah, the group dynamics of emails... It is an entirely different mode of communication. In many ways it combines the worst of all worlds. The ability to react instantly, almost without thought but the permanency of something written in stone. Added to that you have instant communication with a whole world of people that you have never had a chance to make a relationship with.

If ever we need to 'bear and forbear' it is with emails. We all rattle each others chains at times without intention (and sometimes with intention. :-D Don't worry about it, we are all learning here.

Re:, on: 2004/3/3 10:25

Nobody,

Quakers have no problem with armed police. Somebody has to keep order.

Myself, I live in a somewhat dangerous urban neighborhood and keep a heavy walking stick handy to defend my house. I will break the knee caps of anyone who breaks in and threatens my household. (But would not resort to lethal violence.)

My problem is with standing armies and with the enormous amount of \$\$\$\$\$\$ spent by the US and other countries on the military. These are unnecessary for the defense of our country. The whole war on terrorism is a waste and is creating more terrorists.

To think that 911 could have been easily prevented by some forward thinking engineers, and that it is being used to justify more \$\$\$\$ for the military is sad, wasteful and dangerous. After all, for how long have people been hijacking airplanes? You would think by now that they would have figured out that no one should be able to enter the cockpit, and made it impossible.

George Washington opposed standing armies because he thought they would be used against the people. Well, in a sense they are. Against the poor, against the uninsured, against those with AIDS, against children with special needs, against the homeless. etc.

You may be interested in the prevention movement. It uses principles developed by fire fighters in the foreign and military policy arena. Originally fire fighters emphasized how quickly they could respond to an alarm. Later they figured out that preventing fires from starting in the first place was easier and more effective, so they got regulations put in place for fire retardant materials to be required in buildings, and other policies that helped prevent the fires from starting. There are equivalent approaches to foreign and military policy -- international cooperation and rule of Law, preventative diplomacy and peace operations, arms control and disarmament, human rights and good governance, sustainable development and human security -- that could greatly reduce the threat of war. But our nations continue to invest in armaments and war making. This is against God.

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Jake

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/3/3 12:55

Jake writes Quakers have no problem with armed police. Somebody has to keep order.

Myself, I live in a somewhat dangerous urban neighborhood and keep a heavy walking stick handy to defend my house. I will break the knee caps of anyone who breaks in and threatens my household. (But would not resort to lethal violence.)

Hi Jake

This one took me by surprise. I checked a couple of times to make sure you weren't quoting someone else.

This makes it sound as though you are in favour of pre-meditated, limited, pre-emptive violence. The Lord's manifesto on the mount was surely not directed to governments but to individuals. If your position is sustainable wouldn't this mean that a government should also allow pre-meditated, limited, pre-emptive violence? And isn't that what the USA would claim it is doing?

If you feel responsibility for your household should a government not feel responsibility for its citizens? You say 'someone has to keep order'. Does a bigger brother nation (super-power) have any responsibility to 'keep order'?

I know that this is a very delicate and complicated issue but would you imagine the Lord with a heavy walking stick in preparation for an attack on his household?

Here's a little bit of info that might interest you. Israel's kings were forbidden to 'multiply horses'. The horse was the equivalent of a tank, a formidable weapon of war particularly when attached to a chariot. They were allowed to have mules which were the equivalent of a 4x4 and a great agricultural tool. So God banned aggressive war preparation but then Israel was God's nation and He was honour bound to defend it as necessary.

Re: - posted by Agent001 (), on: 2004/3/4 10:29

Philologos (Ron) says:

Quote:
-----Here's a little bit of info that might interest you. Israel's kings were forbidden to 'multiply horses'. The horse was the equivalent of a tank, a formidable weapon of war particularly when attached to a chariot. They were allowed to have mules which were the equivalent of a 4x4 and a great agricultural tool. So God banned aggressive war preparation but then Israel was God's nation and He was honour bound to defend it as necessary.

I have a problem with this interpretation of Deuteronomy 17:16. The literary context does not seem to me to have any reference to war. I admit I do not know enough of its historical context to ascertain whether "horses" are symbolic of military might (I doubt it though).

I find applying Christian ethics in the political arena to be very tricky. The issues are not as clear-cut as it seems. For instance, allowing Hitler to have his way is probably not a good option (I agree with Bonhoeffer on this). On the other hand, dropping the atomic bomb to stop a war was a tough decision (as a Chinese I welcome it; but precious souls would have been lost either way).

My thinking on Christian ethics is not mature yet, but I think mere talk of principles often reduce the complexity and dilemma involved in making a moral decision.

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Re: okay...SPIRITUAL WARFARE, FOLKS!!! - posted by Chad (), on: 2004/3/4 11:51

I am kinda disturbed that this has gone as far as it has!! Spiritual Warfare!!! Go down, read the original post, pray, then respond. Good grief.

I didn't want a debate, I wanted to hopefully get someone's attention about not taking a stand.

Perhaps I should edit my title...

God bless.

Re:, on: 2004/3/4 12:02

Philologos,

Well, I guess it is premeditated to keep a stick handy. However, it is not pre-emptive. The only way I would use it is if someone had already broken into my house. In this instance, using it would prevent a greater violence from happening.

If another nation invades the U.S. (what, Mexico, Canada???) we should repel them.

When asked why they perpetrated 911, Al Qaeda mentioned the presence of U.S. troops in the 'holy land' which, for them, is Saudi Arabia. Thus our foreign military presence is a menace to our own society as it aggravates others against us.

The U.S. has no responsibility to keep order in the world. Believing we have such a responsibility and acting on it has been the cause of much hatred against us and has not made us safer or the world safer.

Pre-emptive war is a very bad policy as it encourages other countries to do the same. What would happen if all the countries of the world set out to strike down perceived (but nonexistent) threats against them?

Jake

Re: JAKE...READ MY POSTS - posted by Chad (), on: 2004/3/4 12:29

Okay, Jake, I want to be peaceful and gentle, yet this now irritates me. This post is about SPIRITUAL WARFARE!!! So, with all gentleness, I ask you, start your own thread and debate violence or whatever.

God bless...

Chad Lough

Re:, on: 2004/3/4 12:41

What is spiritual warfare? Sounds like an oxymoron -- randomly organized, larger half, genuine imitation naughahide -- if I ever heard one.

Jake

Re: FRUSTRATED SIGH... - posted by Chad (), on: 2004/3/4 12:54

:roll:

Are you serious? Or are you kidding, at any rate, here is what I mean, by my "oxymoron"

There is a battle between good and evil. And, like it or not, we are little chess pieces. Either we are on the winning side or the losing side. This battle is bigger than all of us, like it or not.

If my word isn't sufficient for a headstrong wiseman as yourself, (I'm a fool, out of my mind...) Then would the Apostle Paul suffice? Would you argue with him???

How about Ephesians 6:12: ("Our battle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.")

Let's think logically, buddy...

HEAVENLIES=SPIRIT

WAR IN HEAVENLIES...

HENCE SPIRITUAL WARFARE

Now please, without further ado, go out, buy a Bible, read up, check your facts, and think before inserting your foot in your keyboard.

In Christ...

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Chad Lough

Quote:

jake wrote:

What is spiritual warfare? Sounds like an oxymoron -- randomly organized, larger half, genuine imitation naughahide -- if I ever heard one.

Jake

Funny, ain't it? :-D

Re: AND OH, BY THE WAY - posted by Chad (), on: 2004/3/4 13:05

If what I say is naughahide, then you are telling me scripture is naughahide, which means you call GOD a liar, which means you're deceiving yourself, which means you've no concept of what you stand for.

Buddy, I'll pray for you. That's not some jab, either, I mean it. I'm concerned.

Seriously, stop trying to rely on your wisdom, because that is one of the many tools of the devil in this... Hey!! SPIRITUAL WARFARE!

So... who's side are you on?

(You=pride=devil?)

OR

(God's word=truth=God?!)

God bless.

Chad

Re: - posted by Agent001 (), on: 2004/3/4 13:24

You definitely should start a new thread or change the title. "Pacifist" is more often associated with a position or attitude towards wars on earth.

You might also want to clarify what you think is "standing on Christ's side." After all, every Christian, despite their widely different beliefs, would like to think that they are "standing on Christ's side."

Re: - posted by crsschk (), on: 2004/3/4 13:29

Gentleman please.

Trading barbs is unnecessary and unedifying.

We do have some rules around here.

(https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/newbb/viewtopic.php?topic_id7&forum12&2) Community Rules

You have to keep in mind that topics sometimes are either misunderstood or have a tendency to develop on their own as questions or comments are raised and a thread progresses.

My suggestion here would be to start a new posting with a heading referring to Spiritual Warfare or however you would like to frame it.

Also, the forum is set up with certain guidelines that are helpful as to topics.

This may be a good candidate for the "Scriptural Debates" section if you wanted to emphasize that aspect. Certainly it is not limited and could just as easily be discussed in the "lounge".

Mike

Re: spiritual warfare, on: 2004/3/4 14:59

Chad,

Didn't mean to offend. I think warfare is a poor metaphor in relation to spirituality. War is a process of killing people randomly, as well as methodically. There's lots of "collateral damage" in warfare.

Moreover there are no weapons equivalent to guns and bombs in spirituality. The two concepts just don't go together and lead the reader to strange conceptualizations (Jesus with an uzi! Mary with an atomic bomb!)

Quakers have adopted a nomenclature that avoids all references to tools of war. Thus the "target" of a project becomes the "objective", "bullet" points in writing are "dots" etc. At first this seemed strange to me. After a while I came to understand that quakers do so because we don't want to borrow anything from militant outlooks on the world. May sound namzi panzi, but it provides consistency in communications. And pacifists declaring a war on poverty, a battle for civil rights, and the fight for religious freedom puts the speaker in the realm of hyperbole with all of the politicians. It just doesn't work very well and makes the reader question the point.

Jake

PS. Anybody out there counting the times someone has written something similar to: if such and such it true, then "God is a Liar." I think it's more than a dozen since I have joined this discussion group. Is it something that is frequently employed in evangelical religious education? Recently Greg was upset about my "Love your enemies or punish them in hell" post because he feared I was treading on the edge of sacrilege. I admit I was trying to be controversial, but for a specific reason that I didn't feel would be communicated as well in a more subtle manner. (that there are contrasting points in the Bible) But this notion that we can put God to a test, that if something we believe is revealed to not be true and this makes God a liar, scares the you know what out of me. Chad, be very careful in this area. We are not to put God to the test.

Re: - posted by Agent001 (), on: 2004/3/4 15:54

Spiritual warfare is a reality and all Christians are called to participate in it, as clearly instructed by the apostle Paul (Ephesians 6).

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/3/4 16:02

Spiritual warfare is a reality and all Christians are called to participate in it, as clearly instructed by the apostle Paul (Ephesians 6).

Hi Sam

I hope you have learned to cope with my pedantry by now, but I don't think Paul 'calls us to participate in it'. I think he is telling us that we are already in it, so we had better be armed for the conflict. Carl Marx used to say that he had not declared 'class war' but only identified it; I think Paul is doing something similar.

Re: armed for the conflict, on: 2004/3/4 16:22

Philologos,

When you say we had better be "armed for the conflict" I can't help wondering if you mean from an offensive or a defensive position. AND this wondering then goes to "armed in what way?" Should I start a fast? sell all my worldly possessions and give all to the poor?

Wouldn't it be more clear in meaning if you just said we should watch and be steadfast in our faith?

Jake

Re: If I May... - posted by Chad (), on: 2004/3/5 10:08

All past comments aside, I wonder if I can respond?

We should be armed defensively and offensively. I derive this from Ephesians 6:10-18. Paul instructs us to carry a shield, a breastplate, a helmet, a belt, (all defensive) and a sword (for both defense and offense.)

Now of course these were metaphors, we can't carry around Roman battle gear to the workplace or church, or the grocery store...

But we should be armed with

- 1.) Truth (belt)
- 2.) Righteousness (breastplate)
- 3.) Readiness that comes from Peace (shoes)
- 4.) Faith (shield)
- 5.) Salvation (helmet)
- 6.) The word of God, which we should always be sharp on. (sword)

So as I said earlier, we should be armed with peace, gentleness, meekness, incorruptible pure hearts, all these things powerfully destroy the work of the enemy.

For example: If, at your workplace, there is a negative person, who has a vile attitude, then do this—respond to him/her not with criticism but with gentleness and love, and do it a second time, a third, a fourth, (IT'S RETURNING THAT SHOWS YOU CARE FOR REAL...) and watch how God will tear down that stronghold. Your lovingkindness was a weapon counteracting Satan's weapon of vileness thru him/her. You can apply this anywhere, to any situation, just apply the good that is greater than the bad you face.

I hope I was helpful.

P.S.

When we speak of spiritual warfare, there are no weapons equivalent to guns or atomic bombs. There is, however, "Collateral Damage", if you will.

If you are a literal person... here is an example.

Pornography--- it destroys millions of lives and distorts the view of a God ordained institution. It is a weapon from Satan, it does damage.

The power of God will demolish strongholds. When we tap into God's power, and actively pray and live out Christ's doctrine, we do damage to the realms of hell. (2 Corinthians 10:4+5) NO God does not distribute pistols and grenades to his children, but he gives us all kinds of cool weapons, not weapons of the world, as you think, but weapons from heaven. prayer, righteousness, love, Etc etc

Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2004/3/10 9:58

Jake wrote When you say we had better be "armed for the conflict" I can't help wondering if you mean from an offensive or a defensive position. AND this wondering then goes to "armed in what way?" Should I start a fast? sell all my worldly possessions and give all to the poor?

Wouldn't it be more clear in meaning if you just said we should watch and be steadfast in our faith?

Jake

I know you are not enamored of my beloved brother Paul, but this was a quotation from his letter to the Ephesians as Chad indicated later. I differ from Chad in this particular, I think the whole armour of God, in this passage, is defensive. I base this on the absence of the pilum; the throwing spear used by soldiers in offensive warfare, and by the fact that Paul says 'stand against the wiles of the devil' and that the thread runs on to say 'that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all to stand' All this speaks to me of vigilant defence. The Roman soldier of Ephesians 6 is on 'guard duty'.

You probably don't touch these things in your 'unprogrammed friends' groups, but there has developed a whole technology of 'spiritual warfare' in some charismatic circles. Such folk use this Ephesians passage as a proof of their position, but fail to notice that in this particular place Paul is speaking of 'vigilant defence, rather than aggressive offence'.

As I read Eph 5/6, I see that the battle is already engaged and that the battlefield is relationships; husbands and wives, children and parents, masters and servants. In the Eph 6:12 instance, Paul says (literally) 'Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against principalities etc.. (wrestling here is a noun and not a verb)

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This is why I said he is not declaring war or even encouraging it. He is not saying we must 'wrestle' as some think but is simply saying that the 'wrestling' (struggle) is already engaged and that we need to be fully equipped if we are not to be overwhelmed.

Re: PEaceful Prevention of Deadly Conflict, on: 2004/3/16 16:48

For those interested in peaceful prevention of deadly conflict, See:

http://fcnl.org/pdfs/ppdc_booklet.pdf

You can order copies through the mail, as well.

Jake