
Put Up Thy Sword

by Merie Weiss

Isaiah 2:2-5

And it shall come to pass in the last days that the mountain of the Lord's house shall be established in the top of the mountains and shall be exalted above the hills; And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us His ways and we will walk in His paths: for out of Zion will go forth the law, and the word of the law from Jerusalem.

And he shall judge among the nations and shall rebuke many people; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; and nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore. O house of Jacob, come ye, and let us walk in the light of the Lord.

Preface

Can A Christian Kill?

Can a Christian kill? This is a timely question, but many have failed to answer it. Some have been misled and others have had their fears allayed by inconclusive teaching upon this matter, and others have, without proper examination of the scriptures accepted false, as well as unsound, instruction. How about you? Have you informed yourself upon this question by searching the scriptures for the Bible answer?

We can no longer overlook the terrible consequences of making a mistake about it. The world is filled with battles raging; the stench of human bodies; and the battlefields are wet with the "blood of suffering humanity; yet we sit complacently by while: dangerous teaching is being disseminated amongst the members of the church upon this subject. It is so vital to our soul's welfare that to make a mistake about it could send us to hell.

Some are of the opinion that God's word is vague and ambiguous upon this question, but quite the contrary it is as clearly defined as perhaps that of baptism. Too many Christians are swayed by popular opinion and emotion rather than by sound and scriptural reasoning. It is just as essential that we teach the truth upon this subject as to find the Bible answer to the premillennial doctrine or any other kind of false teaching. We withdraw and avoid all those who publicly advocate and teach this pernicious tenet; yet it is no more important to our eternal welfare than to know whether or not a Christian has authority from God to kill fellowman.

One of the unscriptural dissertations upon this subject is a booklet entitled, "Christians in Uniform", written by a preacher of the Church of Christ. It disseminates the doctrine that Christians can and must in time of war participate in physical combat. The author is careful to avoid saying outright that a Christian can kill, but despite his evasiveness and the subtlety of the

presentation of his material, he unmistakably teaches that Christians can and must serve their country in time of war by engaging in armed conflict.

For the sake of truth, and to try and offset any harm that might be engendered by this teaching, we will endeavour to answer the illustrations and suggestive thoughts contained in that booklet. In writing this booklet, I want to say I am prompted solely by a sincere and earnest desire to teach God's word to the best of my ability; and to try and forever to stem the tide of unbelief and unscriptural teaching upon this subject so widely accepted by the Church of Christ.

In order to rationalize the subject under consideration so that there will be no misunderstanding about the point at issue, I would like to state that this discourse evolves around one point and one only. The proposition is -can a Christian kill? If Christ's teachings allow a Christian to engage in warfare and to kill his fellowman we want to confirm or refute such dictum by the word of God.

My observation has been that this subject is usually complicated by bringing in irrelevant matters which have no bearing upon the primary point under consideration. Whether a Christian can work in an airplane factory; buy war bonds; work for the government; hold public office; vote or serve in the armed forces is extraneous. These are usually brought into a discussion of this kind and only serve to confuse the issue rather than clarify it. They do not prove nor disprove the central or cardinal thought, viz; can a Christian kill? If we answer this question scripturally the others will take care of themselves.

The author of "*Christians in Uniform*" makes two vital errors and both of these become the springboard from which he jumps to almost all of his unsound conclusions. The author aptly states it when he says, "if the conclusion is wrong...we can know our premise is wrong." On this point he is right -it is axiomatic. Nevertheless, it is the fatal blunder which he makes in reaching his unscriptural finale -his major premise is false and of course it naturally follows his conclusions are unsound and unscriptural. ❧

His first mistake is his inability to fit love into his dissertation. Love cannot be left out of a discussion of this kind. But it is easy to understand why it was not included. There is not any place for love on a battlefield. In expounding upon the merits of war one would be forced to leave out love. Skilled as he is in the use of sophistry it was a bit difficult for him to reconcile the commands, “to love thy neighbor as thyself,” and “love your enemies,” and at one and the same time suggest that a Christian must be willing to kill his fellowman at the commands of men who are not Christians.

As a result of leaving the vital ingredient of love out of a Christian’s life the author was unable to properly evaluate his subject. It is true it had no place in his booklet but it does have a place in the Christian’s life. To ignore it is to get a distorted picture of the whole question. As a consequence his final conclusions because of improper induction and reasoning are un- sound.

Without love as the compelling force behind our deeds, the Christian becomes as sounding brass and tinkling cymbal- just a noise. 1st Corinthians 13:1. Although love must be the primary motive behind our every action one would indeed have to stretch the imagination to try and conceive of love being the force which propels and impels us to kill another. A Christian cannot leave love out of his life while he takes time out to disembowel his “enemy” or blow him to bits with a hand grenade. It would be fatal to his hope of heaven, for without love we are nothing and certainly not a fit subject for the heavenly home. God is love and to discard love on the battlefield is to discard God.

Furthermore, we break God’s commandments if we kill. The Bible teaches, “Do good unto all men -especially unto the household of faith.” Again He commands us to, “Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good unto them that hate you and pray for them which despitefully use and persecute you, that you may be children of your Father which is in heaven.” We as Christians trust in God for our safety, not in weapons of warfare. We are told to do good unto mankind -we cannot obey these words and kill our “enemies”. And it would be useless to pray for those whom we have killed. To violate these commandments is to defy the very core of Christianity.

The author in trying to escape from the dilemma into which this commandment forced him tries to solve it by asking us to “modify” it. To ‘modify’ means to change or alter. And well may he ask this for this verse alone is at variance with every thought, statement and suggestion, or inference in his booklet. To modify or alter its meaning in any respect is to resist its full import- its great spiritual significance. To accept it as it is to be like our Father in Heaven. The true meaning is entirely lost on those who want to modify and escape its literal force.

Christians cannot kill their “enemies”. Christ’s teachings go further than that. We not only cannot kill those who hate us and threaten us but we must love and do good unto them. We cannot circumscribe the meaning of this verse without doing violence to it. We cannot restrict or limit it, but we must accept it as it is, but like Balaam’s ass, stopped by the sword of the angel, he was unable to pass it by. And so he was forced to ask that we “modify” or alter its meaning.

We must love our enemies. We may restrict the implications of the word clove' as contained in this verse but we still have the word clove' and it is the antithesis of hate. The principle embodied in this verse of scripture transcends the carnal and the earthly, and ascends to the sublime and the divine. Perhaps, this is why some of the brethren have trouble with it. Its spiritual application is beyond their spiritual understanding. It is God-like in its scope. But there are those who would limit its force and bring it down to their carnal understanding. But to give it the spiritual purport that Christ intended it must be allowed to express its full and unrestrained meaning. When it is so applied and accepted we reach towards the God-like perfection which He demands of His children.

Love is expressed indeed by those who "do good unto all men" and who "love their enemies". It would be impossible for a Christian who is filled with Christ's spirit, with compassion and with love, to kill anyone for any reason whatsoever. Christians "walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit." "For the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." Therefore, those who advocate and promulgate the paradoxical teaching that a Christian (whose every action should be prompted by love) can hate and kill, walk after the flesh and not after the Spirit.

We are forbidden to hate. There are those who say that a Christian does not have to hate the "enemy" whom he seeks to slay. This would mean that the New Testament teaches that God has forbidden us to hate but has licensed us to kill. Such reasoning would lead us to believe that it is a sin to hate but an act of love to kill. Such inconsistency would not be tolerated by those who seek for truth. When we find inconsistency we find contradiction and error. Truth is always consistent.

The apostles came proclaiming the gospel of peace. 1st Tim. 2:2 and James 3:17. It would be incongruous and stupid to suppose that the apostles, who went throughout the world teaching the sublime and divine love of God and Christ, could at one and the same time advocate that men should maim and kill each other. Such an irrational and inconsistent gospel would have defeated the purpose of God in the beginning and would do so today. Peace and love are incompatible with war and killing. "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law." None of this kind of fruit is found on the battlefield nor in the hearts of those who want to kill and destroy.

"For the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives but to save them." -Luke 9:26. Christ left all Christians with the responsibility to teach and promulgate the gospel that the souls of men might be saved. To kill our fellowman is to deprive them from ever hearing the gospel. So killing and destroying man defeats the great purpose of God for the salvation of the world. No Christian -if he values his soul, can be a party to anything that works against the sublime design of God which is to save the world through the preaching of the gospel.

The type of reasoning which is reflected in the teaching of those who advocate that Christians should serve their countries in time of war as soldiers, is a result of fear and lack of faith in God. "Fear them not which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear Him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell." Unfortunately too many Christians do not have faith enough to believe this verse of scripture. They do fear those who can kill the body and fear leads them to teach and advocate that those whom they fear should be killed. This

assumption leads them further away from truth into error and they advise and counsel Christians to help in the task of ridding the world of those whom they consider undesirable and dangerous.

Christians should be concerned about the condition of their souls. This is a healthy fear, and will keep them striving to keep the law and trusting in God for safety. Fear of dangerous and violent men will cause those who are weak in faith to put their trust in the “arm of flesh”; and in bombs and guns for safety instead of the Almighty God. Prov. 21: 31 exemplifies this -it reads, “The horse is prepared against the day of battle, but safety is of the Lord.”

To further bear this thought out, we read in Isa. 31: I, “Woe to the rebellious children saith the Lord, that take counsel, but not of me; and that cover with a covering, but not of my spirit, that they might add sin to sin: They walk to go down into Egypt, and have not asked of my mouth; to strengthen themselves in the strength of the Pharaoh and to trust in the shadow of Egypt.” God again reminds the Israelites that their faith is not in the strength of the governments of the world, in the chariots of Egypt, or their horses, or their weapons; but they are to put their trust and hope as well as faith in Him, for both safety and security.

This warning is applicable today. Christians do not need bombs, ships nor the weapons of men to protect and succour them, but they need a deep, abiding faith in God. Helping the world to slaughter mankind will not insure their lives nor protect them from harm. Only God can do this. Their strength, their safety, and their hope of life eternal is in the mighty arm of the Lord. To kill and destroy means eternal death to all who are engaged in it.

A Christian shouldn't fear death. The worst that can happen is that their lives might be taken and if they are prepared to meet their Maker, there should be no fear of that. To fear man, or bombs, or instruments of destruction is to lack faith in God. “Fear God and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man”. Keeping the commandments of God - keeping oneself pure; and working for the conversion of those about us will keep us in harmony with our Lord and take away the fear of death, or what man can do to us.

As mentioned in the beginning, the author made two mistakes. First, he left love out of his dissertation, and without an understanding upon this theme it would be impossible to properly evaluate the question of whether or not a Christian can engage in physical combat. We have found in the foregoing pages that love is the pivotal point, the spearhead, the very core of our Christian lives. Without it we are nothing. Love worketh no ill to his neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.” To do ill to our neighbor is to break the law of God. Our neighbor is anyone whom we can help or teach the gospel. To kill our neighbor would be showing ill will and a lack of love -therefore, we do not fulfil the law and so would be condemned. To kill is one of the most savage and brutal acts known to man. We couldn't love our neighbor and kill him. If we slay him, we not only take his life but deprive him of an opportunity of hearing the gospel: and therefore become responsible for sending his soul to hell.

Chapter 2 *Civil Government Is Not Sanctioned Nor Approved By God*
—He Allows It

The author's second error is that he assumes the position that the governments of the world are approved and authorized by God; therefore, they have the lawful right to use arms to enforce their decrees and their laws. There is not one verse of scripture in the New Testament which would uphold the erroneous teaching of many -that God authorizes and/or approves of men killing each other for any reason whatsoever. We will prove by God's word that his major premise is wrong and consequently his whole argument falls to pieces.

However, even though his position is not as clearly define as stated, yet we are left with the unmistakable Impression that the governments of the world are approved and sanctioned by God and given the lawful authority to kill. That the nations of the world do war and kill is most evident, but that God ordained or authorized them to do so is contrary to the teaching of Christ. And again that if a Christian is called into military service in time of war he must and should engage in physical combat if necessary. This is the author's position I'm sure although his views are not expressed as positively and explicitly as I have rendered them but have been shrouded in carefully worded questions and scrupulously evasive answers.

For God to approve and sanction world governments would mean that He approves and condones that which belongs to the devil. The author implies that the earthly governments are not under the power and authority of the devil when he says, 'even if the devil implied that the earthly governments are under his power that does not prove it to be so.' Christ is King of Kings and reigns over His Church. The governments of this world are ruled by men and women who are not Christians; therefore they are under the devil's rule.

Because the devil told Christ that the kingdoms of the world belonged to him did not make it so. However, we do not go to the devil to ascertain whether or not the governments of the world are in his domain and under his authority. We might say here that it could not have been a temptation to Christ, when the devil said he would turn the world over to Him, unless he had the power to do so. There could have been no temptation unless Satan actually owned them. The devil is the "prince of this world."

But be that as it may, the governments of the world belong to him. There are only two kingdoms on this earth -one is the kingdom of Christ, the church, and the other is the kingdom of the devil (the world), and under his dominion. Only those who obey and follow God's law are under His authority and jurisdiction.

The Bible plainly teaches us who rules the world. 2nd Cor 4.4 reads, "in whom the god of this world, hath blinded the minds of them which believe not..." The world has its 'prince' and its 'spirit', Eph. 2-2. I John 5:19 says, "The whole world lieth in wickedness." This, of course, would include the governments of the world.

Again I John says, "All that is in the world is of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the vain glory of life." The governments of the world are in the world, not in the kingdom of Christ -that is plain and I John tells us they are of the lust of the flesh. This proves that the devil

owns and controls the earthly governments. The devil's domain is the world and the rules by his authority and governments rule in his domain -Rev. 13.

The earthly governments are composed of unsaved and unregenerate men and women. They are of the world and subjects of the devil and under his authority. God does not approve and sanction disobedient and unsaved men. He has no law for them -they are out of His jurisdiction and authority; for all those not in the kingdom of Christ, the church, are in the kingdom of the devil, the world. God tolerates -and He allows the world to have its own laws and their authority -but that is a far cry from saying He sanctions and approves of it. For to say that would be tantamount to saying God approves of sin and sanctions the actions -and the laws of those who are under the dominion of and subject to the authority of the devil.

However, to further enlighten us on the position of the worldly governments we will go back to the beginning when the first manmade government was set up. The first earthly kingdom mentioned in the Bible is that of Nimrod and was called Babel. Babel was built by man without sanction and approval of God and in rebellion to His law and government. Gen. 10:9 and 10 and Gen. 11:1 to 10 tells us that man defied God's law, usurped His authority and deigned to make his own laws. And world power - rule, and authority has been in rebellion against God's authority and law ever since.

We look in vain for any record where God ever authorized the world to set up its own government or where He has ever given them any law. Nor do we find anywhere in the Bible where God deigned to confer or authorize them in any way to carry the sword -to kill, or to make their own laws. This is only further proof that Christians could not fight and kill for any government -they belong to the devil.

However, we do find that while God's power is supreme in the world and He could overrule and do away with the confiscated power of the world, yet He tolerates and allows this rebellious power to exist, and when He wills He uses it to carry out His plans, according to His divine purpose. The author makes the mistake of assuming because God allows this power and rule in the world that He approves of it. God uses it to carry out His will -Rom.13.

In the same manner in which God tolerates and allows man's government and power to stand, so does He allow the great and powerful religious orders to function in defiance of His will. He does not destroy their rebellious and devilish power, but allows it to continue along with the rebellious power and authority of the worldly governments. Neither one of them are in the kingdom of Christ- therefore not under the authority and approval of God. The world is unrighteous -God is righteous -God could not approve and sanction that which is unrighteous and subject to Satan's authority. This is the reason God commanded Christians to preach the gospel to the world that they by obedience to it might be saved.

Romans 13: 1 to 8 tells us that God recognizes this rebellious power in the world, but that all power is of God. Meaning of course, that God's power is supreme and that He has the power to do away with all other power; and that if it stands it is because He allows and tolerates it. He commands His children to obey this power- although it does not rule by His law nor is it subject unto His will.

These verses explain to Christians their attitude towards this power and rule which is not of God. They are to obey it as long as it does not conflict with God's law. Christians are not to rebel against it, because God allows it, and He will use it and does use it for the good of His people as well as to minister punishment to all evildoers. This foreign power and rule God uses as His agent to suit His purpose, both for good and to wreak His vengeance upon those who do evil. Rom. 13: I to 8

We are all aware that God's power supersedes the devil's. It has been demonstrated time and again in God's word that when God so wills He has overruled the machinations of the devil and used Satan's agents to carry out His will. Christ overcame death, demonstrating that the power of God was greater than that of the devil. Christ also exercised His power over demons and devils by casting them out of people. But it would be unreasonable to suppose that God approves of these things simply because He allows them to stand.

However, because God uses the swords of the nations to execute His wrath; and utilizes the confiscated authority and power of the devil to bring good to His people, it does not change the basic fact that the worldly governments are subjects of the devil and a part of his domain. That God can and does overrule the power and the designs of the devil to carry out His own purpose and to execute His plans is evident from the scriptures. This rebellious power in the world God uses as His agent and minister to circumvent the wicked and nefarious designs of the devil. But this is a far cry from approving of the devil's agents, and the earthly kingdoms, which were originally set up in rebellion to His rule and authority, and continue to rule today. They will be destroyed when the world is destroyed. Rev. 11:18, 19 and Rev. 19:11 to 21.

At one time the Israelites in rebellion against God's rule and authority asked for a king like the nations around them. God allowed this but said to Samuel, "for they have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, that I should not reign over them." When the Israelites asked for a king, other than God, they turned from God's supreme authority to an earthly governor or ruler. This was true also of worldly powers who turned away from God's authority and set up their own laws and governments in rebellion and defiance against His rule and dominion. God did not approve but allowed it.

It would be impossible to hold the thought that God could approve of those things which are a part of the governments of the world. The wickedness, the licentiousness, the unrighteousness, the covetousness, the brutality, the dishonesty and the violence and hypocrisy, which is a part of all earthly governments, whether good or bad, could not be condoned and approved by a righteous God. One shudders at the thought of even a suggestion. But the author was reckless, and not only suggested it, but boldly proclaimed it as a fact.

Some even go so far as to think because Romans 13 says, "There is no power but of God. The powers that be are ordained of God", that this means that God appointed and set up as well as authorized the earthly governments to function. The world is in rebellion and disobedience to God. God could not approve of such. He allows them to function, even as He allows disobedient and wicked men and women to live and to carry on in rebellion to His law and authority. And He sometimes uses wicked men to carry out His designs for good; even as He uses the wicked world to bring good unto His children. If we can understand the one, why is it we can't understand the other?

God ordained that the governments which are under man should be allowed to stand -not as so many of the brethren falsely teach -that he ordained -“set them up” -thereby approving of them -He allowed the power they had usurped from Him to continue to reign over men until such time as He so determines or elects -all wars are resolved by God as He so determines.

In due time, both the governments of the world, which are a part of the devil’s domain, as well as rebellious, disobedient and unbelieving men will be taken care of in God’s own way. “Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord.” However, the world has presumed to confiscate and carry out their own laws of vengeance and sometimes Christians think it is part of their business to help them out. They overlook the fact that God’s people have always been separated from the world -not a part of it. Deut. 7:1 to 19 and Cor. 6: 17

But God teaches in 1st Cor. 15:24, “Then cometh the end when He shall have delivered up His kingdom to God, even the Father; when He shall have put down all rule and all authority and power.” So the power and authority which man exercises over men will be put down by God as He so wills and when He so decides. These verses teach that God recognizes that there is other authority and power in the world -but recognizing and allowing it is not necessarily approving and authorizing it. God could only approve of that which is righteous and holy. However, if this authority and power as well as rule mentioned in these verses, was of God and righteous, then there would be no necessity for it to be put down.

These verses prove that God does not sanction and approve of that which is wicked and worldly and of the devil, but tolerates and allows it, but in the end it will be done away with. God could not approve of it for we all know that the world is not righteous but unrighteous and follows not the will of God but their own man- made authority. That is why man allows men to rule and subject him to their laws, etc., because they reject God’s authority and law.

Continuing this line of thought we find the author again boldly asserting, “that because there is law and order in the world, that it could not be the result of the devil’s influence, thereby must be of God.” This is an example of the “scriptural proof” the author gives to uphold some of his theoretical ideas. We have a statement but not any scripture to substantiate it. This is so vague and in- conclusive that it is difficult to know what he intends to convey by it. However, he has used it to help support the shaky foundation of his major premise no doubt in trying to uphold his theory that the governments of the world are approved and authorized by God.

But actually it does not do so, for the lawmakers of the world, as well as the religious organizations in the world, have borrowed freely from God’s divine word and from His omnipotent wisdom in managing their affairs. However, although the religious world has adopted portions of the divine instruction, and has drunk freely from the fountain of God’s wisdom, we certainly could not say that they were approved and sanctioned by God. That God’s wisdom and His law and influence are felt in the world is axiomatic how could it be otherwise? Christ is the light of the world.

He overlooks the fact that man, although unregenerate and unsaved, is intelligent enough to understand and accept, as well as use, the benefits derived from having law and order in the world. It would be illogical to assume that a non-Christian, because he is morally good and has other fine attributes, is approved by God. Because the world has law and order in it does not

prove God sanctions or authorizes it. The only law God approves is His law and if all mankind lived by it, we'd not have the cruelty, the crimes, the war, the violence and hatred and such that we now have.

Chapter 3 *God's Law And Authority Limited To His Kingdom*

While God's power extends over all the world —“There is no power but of God”, yet His law and authority are limited to His kingdom. We know this because there is no law in the gospel by which the governments of the world function. The earthly powers could not operate with God's approval unless they operated according to His law. And under what law do they carry on? God speaks to us through His word and it only. It would be interesting for the author to communicate to us the method and law under which the earthly governments operate. To meet the approval of God is to obey His law. Where is God's law to the world? And where is their authority to function? Certainly Romans 13 is not the answer to this question.

If God's authority and approval are extended out of His kingdom into the world -it would be a divided kingdom. In the light of the scriptures this cannot be so. The Bible says the devil is “the prince of this world” (Eph 2:2), and if the devil is the “god of this world” -then it must of necessity be ruled by him and be subject to his authority. God could not approve of that which is ruled over by the devil. Matt. 12:25 and 26 reads, “every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself; how shall then his kingdom stand? “

The author in the evasive and uncertain method which he uses, attempts to artfully convey the thought that because we are asked to honor the kings who reign over us, that they serve under the authority of God. He says, “God orders us to honor the king”. If the king is serving under the authority of the devil this scripture is the equivalent to a command to honor the devil. What ridiculous conclusions one inherits when he embraces a false premise. It would seem however, that he reaches a ridiculous conclusion without any premise at all, for he has no scripture to uphold such a conclusion. I'm inclined to think if he should find himself with a real premise for any of his conclusions he would be almost as surprised as the witch of Endor when she raised Samuel.

What he actually says is that kings and rulers serve under the authority of God. He has made an unfounded assumption, ambiguous as it may be. We reiterate again, that Nero, Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Bismark, Alexander the Great, as well as all other rulers of the world, were in the devil's domain and under his authority. The governments of the world, “good” or “bad”, are in the kingdom of the devil and must of necessity be subject to his authority. It would be unreasonable to suppose that they could act under the devil's authority and by God's approval at one and the same time.

However, we can all understand that all the rulers and kings of the earth are sinners; they are not the children of God, but children of the devil; therefore followers of the devil and not of God. Man could only be under the authority of and be approved by God by following God's law. All who do not follow God's law are sinners and subjects of the devil. Otherwise there would have to be a separate law under which the earthly governments function -and we have no knowledge of such law.

God's law and authority is extended only to and over those who are His subjects; and the only subjects God has are Christians. The rulers and powers of this world are not in the kingdom of God -the church- therefore it is impossible for them to be under His authority or subject to His

law. His law is confined to His kingdom -it does not extend into the world. The only part of the law of God which is given to the world is that part of the gospel commanding them to hear, repent and be baptized. Therefore, the worldly governments are not under the authority of God. They could not have his approval for to approve them would be to condone the devil's subjects in their sins.

This same line of thought is continued when the author poses the question, "When did God direct His children to obey the devil?" It is easy to see where the author is trying to lead his readers. He assumes kings and rulers must be under the authority of God because He would not ask that we obey them otherwise. Having disposed of his first suggestion viz: that kings and rulers are under authority of God, that leads us to the second thought -which is, that God would be asking us to obey the devil if kings and rulers were under the devil's authority.

However, we believe we have proven that kings and rulers are not under God's authority but in the world and under the jurisdiction of the devil. The only way they could be under the authority of God would be to follow His law and this they do not do. In answering this statement we took care of the one above. However, the devil's power over the world is limited in a sense. God, of course, can and does use His power to overrule the devil's designs when He so wills. Rev. 8 as well as Rev. 9.

However, we might say this, that God in asking us to obey the rulers of the world, did not ask us to obey the devil- but we obey His commandment. The commandment to obey the rulers of the world came from God and not the devil. God's commandments are righteous and when we obey them we obey righteousness. Therefore we are not obeying the devil but God. However, when the laws of the land command us to kill we would have to disobey such a law for it is contrary to God's law.

However, this does not license a Christian to obey any law of the earthly government which would cause him to disobey the spiritual law of God. Obeying the laws of the land cannot harm our spiritual life -for their laws do not pertain to the spiritual but to the physical. If however, we are asked to obey a law of the land which would conflict with God's law we would have to refuse, for it would affect our obedience to God and cause us to sin. In obeying our rulers (which do not rule our spirits—for they are ruled by the righteous laws of God), if we do not violate any precept of God there is no sin -for sin is a transgression of God's law. God's law has commanded that we obey our rulers -so we must obey or become transgressors of His law. Christ gave a lesson along this line, "Render to Caesar the things which are Caesar's," obligation to rulers - keep peace.

In looking for something to substantiate his weak and ineffective efforts to prove that God's authority extends into the realm of the devil, the author is forced to resort to the incident when Paul stood before Festus and said, "For if I be an offender or have committed anything worthy of death I refuse not to die." He seizes upon the word 'worthy' and tries to convey the thought that Paul in using this word recognized the right of the government to take life; and thus implied that God authorized that right.

Surely he was hard pressed to hang something on the hook when such irrelevant and weak material had to be employed to uphold his position. Most of us are familiar with the laws of our

country and state, but upon what basis of logic would one assume, that because we recognize and know the laws, that we believe that the government is authorized by God and their laws are approved by Him.

Were the governments of Nero, Alexander the Great, Hitler, Mussolini, and some of the cruel and despotic popes, authorized by God; and were they given the right to lawfully kill? Either the world was given the inalienable right to govern themselves and God approves of their government and their laws or they were not. To try and differentiate between 'good' and 'bad' governments is only begging the question, for there is not one word of authority nor any law which governs this principle.

Therefore, we know beyond doubt that God has never given the governments of the world the authority to rule or approved of their laws nor given them the right to lawfully kill- as the author asserts. To do this, God would have to approve of unrighteousness, for the world is wicked and sinful, as well as cruel, brutal, licentious and in rebellion to His laws and authority. Yet the author tries unsuccessfully to uphold this untenable theory. Nadab and Abihu used some strange fire, and the author uses some strange "logic". I do not believe one is more acceptable to God than the other.

However, Paul recognized as do we, the laws of the country in which he lived, and had knowledge of those crimes which were punishable by death. He knew he had committed no crime, according to their laws, and he merely tells Festus that if he had broken the laws of the country, and the penalty was death, he was willing to die as any other criminal.

It would take something more than a stretch of the imagination to assume from this flimsy evidence, that Paul recognized that the Roman government was approved by God. The Roman government was one of the most despotic, cruel and oppressive that has ever been known. Nero was one of the worst fiends in history. He slaughtered men like men slaughter animals; and he was the ruler of this country. Yet the author would have us to believe that God could authorize and approve of such bestial behaviour. The author is as short of evidence and scripture to prove his false premise as Samson was short of hair when the Philistines got through with him. The honest seeker after truth will be compelled to call in question the author's knowledge of God's word, in the face of such damaging evidence of the weakness and fallaciousness of his position.

In trying to escape from the trap in which he just snared himself, the author tried to differentiate between "good" and "bad" governments, by leading us to believe that God approves only "good" governments; and His authority is extended only over the "good". However, by inadvertently using the incident of Paul and Festus to substantiate his theory that God approves only of good governments, he evidently overlooked the fact that Paul lived under a "bad" government, one of the most evil in history. He uses this incident to prove that Paul recognized that God authorized and approved of the earthly governments -thereby disproving the very thing he has tried to prove.

Reason and scripture could not support the thought that God could authorize and approve of such a bestial and wicked government as functioned under Nero and others like him. Yet this is the position in which our author finds himself. Either God sanctioned all earthly governments or He did not. If he approved, as the author inadvertently admitted of the Roman government, then

God approved of “bad” governments; for this was one of the worst. This leaves the author on the horns of a dilemma from which he cannot extricate himself. We’ll leave him in this painful position and perhaps when he realizes the fallacy of his position he will descend from the untenable stand which he has taken.

In summing up what we have written regarding the pro- position whether or not God’s authority extends over the earthly governments, we find the one outstanding fact, and that is if God approves and His authority extends over the governments and powers of the world, we have God condoning and approving of that which is a part of the world and the world is the devil’s kingdom -the world -with all of its wickedness and its rebellious power. This presents us with another dilemma and one which is unanswerable in the light of the scriptures. It proves of course that the author is wrong in his major premise, for God could not approve of anything unrighteous and unholy and the earthly governments are both, whether good or bad and they are in conflict with His law.

It has been proven that the power and government of the world are in the devil’s domain therefore they belong to him. 2nd Cor. 4:4 refers to the devil as “the god of this world”, and he is; and in Eph. 6: 12 we find that there are rulers over the darkness of this world.

Where is the law under which the earthly governments function? He could not approve of that which He did not authorize and He could not authorize that which is in the devil’s territory and which follows him. Yet there are those amongst the brethren who will teach that God approves of the unsaved and the ungodly. This skirts the hem of blasphemy. God tolerates and allows these powers to function, but that is the extent of His jurisdiction and He uses them whenever He so wills to do. As in Romans 13:4 we see Him using one nation against another to execute His wrath upon them. And He uses His power to punish the world by bringing holocausts of all kinds upon it (tornadoes, floods, fires, earthquakes, etc.). Catholicism is a government- Vatican, ruled over by Pope -does God approve?

However, whether we believe negatively or affirmatively on this question, we still have another aspect of it to consider before we make up our minds one way or another about it. Whether God’s authority extends over the realm of the devil or not has been answered; but whether -a Christian can kill by authority of God is still to be rationalized. But in destroying the author’s major premise we have practically answered this question. The authority to kill comes from the world. The world is in the devil’s domain- so killing comes from the devil, not God.

The author has an artful method of leaving a suggestive thought by asking a question which he rarely answers. He leaves the reader to conjecture a meaning from his suggestion. In other words he hangs a hook, but seldom hangs anything thereon. When he tried to distinguish between murder and killing, he left the hook entirely bare. His opinion could not be substantiated by scripture. He labors under the misapprehension that there is such a thing as “lawful killing”, but fails to give one scripture to prove such a theory. Therefore, we will proceed to drape the hook for him.

He shows an abysmal lack of understanding of God’s word when he makes this statement, “Surely God would not forbid killing under any circumstances, and then command killing under specified circumstances.” But that is exactly what God has done. One need only to familiarize themselves with the teachings of Moses law to ascertain this information. God never sanctioned indiscriminate killing of His creatures, even under the old law. King David was not allowed to build a house for God because of killing the innocent or killing without the authority of God. Today we have no authority to kill anyone.

All killing is unlawful unless authorized and commanded by God. However, we fail to find any such commandment in the New Testament authorizing any Christian to kill under any circumstances. This is the reason that those who approve killing their fellowman must attempt to prove that God authorizes the world to kill for they can find no commandment in the New Testament giving the Christian that prerogative. And because they cannot find a scripture to substantiate their position that Christians can kill (for there is none in all of God’s word) they have to resort to the untenable theory that God gave the world the lawful authority to destroy and kill mankind. However, there is no scripture to support this opinion.

God’s command to the Israelites, “Thou shalt not kill,” limited their killing. This scripture acted as a warning and a reminder that they did not have the authority to kill on their own prerogative, but must wait for God’s counselor command in the matter. Inasmuch as God, under the old law did allow His people to kill their enemies under “specified circumstances,” this command could carry no other meaning. It would be paradoxical for God to command them not to kill; unless they acted at His command and by His authority only. When they had no direct command they often went to God in prayer for counsel. Judges 20:18- 1st Sam. 14:37- Jer. 40:17. Therefore, God always directed them in their warfare. However, as we know they often broke God’s law in this respect.

When blood was shed without the counsellor commandment of God it was unlawful even under the Law of Moses. Indiscriminate killing was not allowed by God -then or now. Ex. 21: 12 reads, “He that smiteth a man, so that he die, shall surely be put to death.” To kill a man deliberately was murder -then and now - unless of course they had a command from God. When men war and kill it is planned and premeditated; therefore it is murder. There is no command in the New Testament for Christians to kill for any reason.

Ex. 21: 14 states, “But if a man come presumptuously upon his neighbor, to slay him with guile; thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die.” In warfare a man slays

presumptuously. Under the law of Moses that man was a murderer. The principle has not changed, and death is the punishment for murder, which for Christians means death eternal.

2nd Sam. 21: 1 to 3 -from which I quote only the first verse says, "Then there was a famine in the days of David three years, year after year; and David enquired of the Lord. And the Lord answered and said, it is for Saul, and for his bloody house, because he slew the Gibeonites." Saul's house was bloody in the sight of God because he slew indiscriminately and on his own prerogative. Without God's authority or command it was unlawful. David was guilty of the same thing, and was called a "bloody man", both by God and by his people.

Ez. 22: 1 to 6- and I quote from the fourth verse -"Thou art become guilty in the blood that thou has shed. ." God was speaking here to the Israelites. If God commanded them to kill, why should He hold them guilty of shedding blood? The sixth verse answers this question. 'Behold, the princes of Israel, everyone were in thee to their power to shed blood.'" The princes used their own prerogative -their own power -their own counsel in the shedding of blood and God held them accountable -they became guilty in His eyes.

Ez. 36: 17 and 18 proves that which has just been said above. God holds man responsible for murder when they shed the blood of man without a commandment from Him. He did under the old law and He does under the new law. There is no commandment in the New Testament giving Christians the right to kill, so all killing becomes murder.

"Son of man, when the house of Israel dwelt in their own land, they defiled it by their own way and by their doings; THEIR WAY was before me as the uncleanness of a removed woman. Where- fore I poured my fury upon them for the blood they had shed upon the land. ." Because the Israelites deigned to shed blood and follow their own way without consulting God -they defiled themselves and the land wherein they lived, and brought God's wrath upon them. The principle has not changed.

Ez. 7: 23, "Make a chain: for the land is full of bloody crimes, and the city is full of violence." Where you find the shedding of blood you find violence. Cities, nations, men, are all bloody when they shed the blood of a man without a commandment of God. A Christian, if he goes forth to war and kills, is not called to arms by a commandment of God -but by the world. The world is composed of unregenerate men who are the subjects of the devil. Therefore, they are guilty of murder for presumptuously and willfully and with premeditation, slaying their fellowman at the instigation of the devil's subjects. Therefore, if a Christian is called to war by worldly men -he follows unregenerate men of the world and not God.

So that we might know that God has never allowed man the prerogative of slaying or killing anyone without counseling with Him or following His commandment in the matter, we quote from Ex. 23: 20 to 23, ' Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee In the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared ...But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries.'" God was with His people in their warfare if they obeyed His voice. Today His voice is silent. There is no commandment authorizing Christians to kill. So killing becomes murder.

But we continue. In Ez. 22:27, we read, “Her princes in the midst thereof are like wolves ravaging the prey, to shed blood and to destroy souls, to get dishonest gain.” These princes mentioned here were Israelites and under the law wherein they lived God allowed killing. But as previously mentioned the killing of the Israelites was limited. It became murder when not directed by God. Where does the Christian find the law or the commandment ordering him to kill?

In the verses just quoted God calls these princes wolves and said they destroyed souls in the shedding of blood. We are also told the reason for their warfare; it was for dishonest gain. Down through the ages the reasons for war have changed but little. Only God could have the wisdom and the authority to know who should be killed. These verses prove that unless God authorized the killing -it was unlawful and condemned. God condemned His own people for shedding blood and destroying souls of those whom they killed. Today when Christians kill their fellowman they destroy his soul also for they take away his opportunity to hear the gospel that he might be saved. The New Testament gives Christians no authority at all for the shedding of blood. And certainly the world has less. Even in the Christian dispensation in Rom. 13: 1-10 God still uses His prerogative to turn the swords of men against each other as He wills for His own purpose, but He does not authorize Christians to participate in it.

Again in Jer 22: 17 we read, “But thine eyes and thine heart are not but for they covetousness, and for to shed innocent blood, and for oppression and for violence, to do it.” “The innocent” were those whose blood was shed by man’s prerogative and not by commandment of God. Oppression, violence and covetousness are all fruits of war, then and now. Such was forbidden God’s people under Moses’ law; and it would be difficult to understand how Christians could believe that it could be tolerated under the law of God’s Son.

Even accidental killing was punishable by death -unless the guilty party fled to a city of refuge. God was jealous and careful to preserve the lives of not only His people but those of the world. If this was true then, how much more so how when we have the glorious gospel of Christ to preach that the souls of the lost might be saved. As Christians we must try to save the unsaved -not kill them.

In Numbers we find a great deal about murder. Nu. 35: 16 to 23 we find that all those who killed anyone with enmity or in hatred or with premeditation, were murderers. The principle has not changed. All war (unless directed by God) is motivate hatred, enmity, covetousness and is premeditated. This was condemned in the Old Testament, how much more in the New “But if he thrust him of hatred or hurl at him by laying in wait, that he die; or in enmity smite him with his hand that he die, he that smote him shall surely be put to death.”

These scriptures prove that God governed the killing of the Israelites. To kill anyone without this authority was murder. God controlled His people in this respect by His law; and even accidental killing was punished. How much more so if the killing is done deliberately and with premeditation.

We do not find any law in the New Testament directing or governing the world in their indiscriminate killing. It is irrational to presume that God would give the world. Who are unsaved and subjects of the devil, the authority to kill by their own prerogative and whenever

they pleased, yet denied that prerogative to his own People. We cannot reconcile the thought that God, who discriminated so minutely between murder and killing in his dealings with the Israelites, would authorize the subjects of the devil (the world), to kill ex-officio, whomsoever and whenever they pleased.

In the beginning God gave man dominion over every living, creeping thing upon the earth; but He did not give man dominion over man. That right God reserved for Himself. However, man rebelled against God and confiscated His authority; and presumed to arrogantly take dominion over man also, enslaving oppressing and killing him whenever his lustful desires so dictated. Therefore, when man presumes to exercise this confiscated authority by killing God's creatures he becomes a murderer.

Again we repeat that under the law of love there was no provision made, nor commandment given, for man to kill anyone. "Vengeance is mine saith the Lord." Therefore, a Christian when he follows the dictates of the world and kills and sheds the blood of his fellowman, becomes a murderer. War is legalized murder; for when there is not war killing is punishable by death. It is not God that makes this law or laws—but the earthly governments. Therefore, we know it is a sin -because if we kill without a commandment of God it is murder.

Some have wondered and failed to understand why God commanded the Israelites to kill their enemies, but commanded that we love them. Under the Old Law God's purpose included the physical destruction of the enemies of His people. His purpose in this respect has changed. However, by allowing the Israelites to kill their enemies God protected them (or attempted to) from spiritual corruption. The heathen nations, because of their degenerate and depraved religious practices, were a constant menace to the spiritual integrity of God's people. His method, at that time, was to destroy the wicked and profligate nations to save His people from spiritual corruption. His purpose, at that time, further included, in some instances, that the Israelites should obtain their physical and material necessities by killing those who sought either their lives, or who were a threat to their spiritual welfare. Also, it was sometimes God's vengeance against man for their sins.

Under the law of Christ, the Christian's spiritual and economic welfare is protected and taken care of by God. We do not need to kill to protect our spiritual integrity for the gospel of Christ takes care of that. Our spiritual strength is drawn from God's word, and we are protected as well as kept in God's grace by application of it.

Our physical needs are supplied by God also, but through a different medium. The world, while a part of the devil's kingdom, and subject to his authority, is employed as an agent by God to render benefits to His people in a material and physical manner even as during the time of the Israelites. We do not need to war and kill to obtain these things. God's people were admonished in James 4: 1 to 4 against trying to satisfy their desires by fighting and killing.

If we follow God, we need not worry about the material things of this life. Some of the brethren are unnecessarily concerned about protecting "their way of life"; and they believe they must, if necessary, kill that the necessities of life will continue to be supplied. But they lack faith and fail to see that it isn't the world or the nations about us which supply our every need, but that it is God. They fail to understand that God is our benefactor and from Him come all our

blessings, both material and spiritual. He has not commanded, as He did the Israelites, that we kill to obtain these things, but have admonished and commanded that we lead a peaceful life in love and service to mankind; and to love even our enemies and He has promised to take care of our necessities.

What the Christian attitude should be about the material things of this life is explained in Matt. 6:25 to 34. "Therefore, take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, what shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? (For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things. But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you."

The Gentiles sought by wars and strife (and still do) to obtain the material thing~ or this, life; but God's people are taught not to worry about them. Instead we are to seek after righteousness and God will provide for our every need. While we work in the kingdom of Christ -promulgating the gospel of salvation, doing good unto mankind, God will take care of us. This is His promise. But I'm sure that killing man to obtain such things is not following after righteousness; and the very thing which we fight to obtain and protect will be taken away from us for disobeying God's command.

This is no commandment to kill for any reason whatsoever in all of the New Testament. Therefore all killing becomes murder. All sin is a transgression of law; and to kill violates the very essence of Christ's teaching. We have only to study the Old Testament to find the difference between killing and murder; and the principle which governed the Israelites is still in effect today. Unless Christians can find a commandment ordering them to kill, and directing them as to whom and when they should kill, they commit sin.

God does not want men murdered; He wants all mankind saved. Our responsibility here on earth is to teach the gospel and convert the lost to Christ. We have complete instructions as to whom we are to attempt to save. God's word says, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature." We won't have time to kill nor will we have time to write booklets encouraging Christians to participate in warfare, if we are busily engaged in teaching and converting men to Christ.

The type of rationalizing which led the author to believe that earthly governments are approved and authorized by God, influenced him to make other assumptions which are false. His stand in so far as I was able to ascertain, runs something like this -because God has commanded Christians to obey their governments, they must not refuse to bear arms for the government in time of war. And because governments had been given the lawful right to kill, a Christian is not held responsible for taking life because his responsibility in this respect is shouldered by the government, who in turn is the guilty party because they started it.

It has been rather difficult to ascertain the author's exact position for much of what he has to say is stated in an ambiguous and subtle manner. However, even though his position is not too clearly defined, yet I'm sure that I have stated it as he intended it to be understood.

The supposition that the earthly governments have been given the lawful right to kill cannot be upheld by scripture. Furthermore, most of us realize that no man or government can shoulder the individual's responsibility in anything they do. God holds everyone morally responsible for every act they commit here on earth. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Ezekial 18:20. If it is right and lawful to kill there is no guilt attached either to those who start it or those who participate in it. However, if it is wrong and unlawful then when the Christian participates in it he is held responsible.

Not finding any scripture which allows or command a Christian to kill, those who uphold this untenable theory are forced into the false position of trying to make the government responsible; not only for the actual killing, but for drawing the Christian into it in the first place. The author's position that a Christian is not responsible because he did not start the fight, and if he had no part in the cause of the fighting he is not held guilty cannot be upheld by the Bible. It would be interesting to see the verses of scripture upon which the author bases his claims and these strange ideas. We could expect this kind of reasoning from some of the denominationalists but it is appalling and tragic to find it amongst our own brethren.

They have almost as much scripture to back them up in such inconsistent drivel as the Jehovah Witnesses have to prove that Christ is going to reign a thousand years here on this earth. Outside of the fact that the twentieth chapter of Revelation mentions 'one thousand years' there is little or nothing else to support the erroneous claims of the Jehovah Witnesses.

Our brethren depend upon the 13th chapter of Romans to support this kind of teaching, but except that it says that God ordains the governments of the world and "they carry not the sword in vain," there is nothing else to support the thought that Christians can kill- or that governments are approved by God; or that the Christian will not be held responsible for killing if he didn't start the fight. It has to be stretched and then stretched a little more to get all this out of it.

Before going into the main proposition which is -Is killing lawful? , We would like to say a few things about war. The author says (and it fits his theory) that war is a result of sin. War is sinful. It is sin in its most degraded and violent form. It turns men into beasts. How could God approve and authorize the world to indulge in such a concentration of murder? If war is the result of sin -then it must be sinful, therefore there is no argument.

Military men, as well as others who hold important political and governmental offices have spoken openly against war and bloodshed. Many military men, including Napoleon, Wellington, General Sherman, McArthur, and Eisenhower, have pointed out the demoralizing and brutalizing effects of war. It does violence to reason to suppose that God could sanction that which man cannot condone. The recent war in Vietnam was stopped by public opinion because so many deplored the slaughter and the bloodshed.

The author seems to have a very unrealistic and impractical viewpoint of war. In fact, he barely touches upon the brutal and bloody aspects of physical combat, but confines his disquisition to theoretical questions which are never realistically or scripturally answered. His discourse is confined almost entirely to questions, such as -whether or not God condemns a man for wearing a uniform; or whether or not a Christian can accept the position of a postmaster or work as a mailman. He dresses the Christian in a nice new uniform and leaves him there ready for a dress parade. He never follows the soldier into battle where with gun in hand he disembowels the "enemy" and slashes and butchers to death his fellowman.

But if we are to write books favoring Christians engaging in actual warfare we must meet the issue realistically and follow it through to its logical end. What does it mean for a Christian to put on a uniform? It means he will be asked to kill, and once in uniform he must obey. Most people do not take time out to think of the terrible demoralizing effects, the chaotic mental condition, and the desperate attitudes of those who must watch men die horribly and agonizingly by their hands. Once a Christian goes through this cruel and inhuman experience, books will not have to be written encouraging him to kill, and absolving him from any moral or spiritual responsibility in the matter. He will see through such chicanery. However, it might be too late.

As we have said before and now reiterate again, only God has the power to order anyone to kill. It was never the prerogative of any man or government; not even that of His own people. We read in Deut. 32:39, "See now that I, even I, am He, and there is no God with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand." The futility of killing, is realistically portrayed in this verse of scripture. God only has the power and authority to kill. When He commands it, it becomes morally right -when He does not command it- it is condemned.

The Israelites realized that only God had this authority, and we find in 2nd Kings 5:7, "And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter that he rent his clothes and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive..." This man was familiar with the scripture above; and he knew that God had reserved the right for Himself and Him alone to kill and to make alive; and to make the decision as to who would war against whom.

However, the world does kill -it carries the sword - lawfully? We find no scriptures in all the Bible where God conferred that right upon the world. Only He has that right. However, they not only kill but they make their own laws -and they run the world by them. Their law is not God's law and many of them run counter to God's righteousness. Yet some of the brethren have the audacity to teach that we must obey their law when they ask us to kill. Such reasoning could lead us to follow other worldly laws. Such as the divorce law of the world, which is contrary to God's.

On page 17 of his booklet the author states, “that the world is given authority by God to kill violent and unscrupulous men.” There is no scripture for such teaching. It would be interesting to know who is the judge as to who is violent and unscrupulous. When nations go to war, do they take a poll to ascertain who are the undesirables; and then sift them out so that only the violent and wicked go to war? By asking this question we can see how inconclusive and foolish such a statement can be.

He does not give one verse of scripture to support such a wild and unwarranted assertion. However, it would be useless to do so for there is nothing in the New Testament which teaches such as this. This is just another example of the author’s use of his opinion to support his major premise. To ascertain God’s disposition in the matter we would have to refer to His word—and to make a statement like that is not being scrupulous.

The author assumes that all we can do with violent and unscrupulous men is to kill them. He might concede for the sake of argument, that if wars were fought by only the violent and unscrupulous, perhaps there might be some justification for the above statement. However, God’s plan is different. God teaches, “Go ye into all the world and teach every creature...” We are not to kill the creatures of God but to teach and convert them to Christianity, both the good and upright, as well as the violent and wicked. The gospel is for all.

It is the law of the world- that violent and wicked men should be killed- it is not the law of God. God’s law is a law of love and it is for all. Furthermore during war both the innocent as well as the guilty are victims. If Christians participate in warfare they will be killed as well as the violent and unscrupulous and so fighting would be in vain. And God’s warning would be carried out -“ All who carry the sword shall perish by the sword.” This is a maxim and includes Christians as well as the world.

God has ordained and allowed the world its own power -and so they fight and kill and fulfil the words of God in Gen. 6: 2, “The earth was corrupt before God, and the earth was filled with violence.” However, God will let their power endure until the end when it will all be put down. 1st Cor. 15: 24. God has ordained that the world should be allowed to have power and authority and their own laws. We make the mistake of confusing the laws made by man and those commanded by God.

The Christian does not try to solve the problems of the world. He realizes that, “Vengeance is mine, saith the Lord.” It is not the Christian’s duty to punish the violent and unscrupulous. God ordains and allows the world to take care of these things -thus leaving the Christian free to live a peaceful, Godly, consecrated life in the promulgation of the gospel and in the work of converting the world. If the world finds it expedient to electrocute, to hang, and to kill and fight -to oppress and to destroy, that is their affair (and God has so ordained that it should be the world’s business; Rom 13:1); but He also ordained that a Christian is to take no part in it. 2nd Tim 2: 4.

The Israelites turned down God’s authority that they might have an earthly king and they suffered the terrible penalties attached thereto. The world turned from God’s authority and set up their own rulers and made their own laws, and they are suffering the penalties resulting from their defection and rebellion. In bloodshed -in violence -in oppression, in famine and poverty and spiritual death, they continue to pay for their sins and rebellion against God.

God has commanded that Christians not entangle themselves in the affairs of the world. 2nd Tim. 2 and 4 and if they heed this admonition they will keep themselves free from violence and the shedding of blood. The author says the violent should be killed; but if the Christian participates in war (and there is nothing more violent than warfare) does he not become violent? And if so should he not suffer the penalty also and be killed? God pronounces the sentence in Gen. 9:6, "Who so sheddeth man's blood by man shall his blood be shed...for in the image of God made He man." When we kill we send that to hell which is made in the image of God -the soul of man.

In trying to further substantiate his theory the Christians can kill, the author, in commenting upon John 18:11, states, "When Christ told Peter to put up the sword He did not tell him to throw it away." His thought is evident and the suggestion is that God intended for the apostles to carry swords and to use them. If this was part of the plan of God, it is exceedingly strange that in all the dangers which the apostles encountered at the hands of their enemies there is not one reference made wherein they ever used a sword, or as far as we know even thought of killing anyone to protect their own or anyone else's lives.

But I believe, in the light of the scriptures, that this incident has a different meaning from that which the author suggests. It is obvious from reading the Bible that only two of the apostles had swords. It is also clear that Christ intended to teach a lesson using the swords to illustrate it. There is little doubt but that the author's exegesis of this particular episode is colored by his belief that Christians can kill. He is trying desperately to find something to hang on the hook.

The Lord had spent several years impressing upon His apostles the importance the glorious mission of His kingdom. And they would no doubt be tempted to fight and kill to protect it. Under the Jewish economy the sword was used to further God's designs and to kill the enemy, and Christ intended to convey an important and vital lesson to them relative to their attitude as Christians towards those who would threaten not only their lives, but their work in the establishment of the kingdom.

In this lesson they were taught that not even the precious person of their Lord was to be protected by the sword. And later they would realize that if the sword could not be used to keep their beloved Saviour from harm, neither could they protect the church with carnal weapons. The sword of the Spirit was to be their weapon. They were to find that their mission in life was not to fight with a sword, but to establish the incomparable kingdom which their Saviour had died for. They would follow Paul's teaching in 2nd Cor. 10:4, "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds."

Christ said, "It is enough" when he found that there were two swords amongst His apostles. This would prove that the apostles were peaceful for only two swords were found. However, He needed only one to teach the lesson He had in mind. And when Peter rose to the occasion (as Christ knew he would) and used the sword, Christ rebuked him and commanded, "Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish by the sword."

Here is a command to put away the sword and the dire consequences to ensue if the command was not heeded. Yet the author would have us believe that Christ intended for the apostles to carry and use swords. This incident teaches just the opposite of what he tries to

convey. Christ has never countermanded the order “to put up thy sword.” For true Christians the sword has been put up nevermore to be taken out again. Proph. Isa. 2 And this is exactly what the Lord intended to teach. The apostles learned the lesson for we find no place in all the scriptures where they ever used or taught us to use the sword.

Furthermore, we read in Isaiah 2:2 to 4 of the establishment of the Lord’s house and the prophecy that all nations would flow into it. And that there would be no more wars -and that God’s people would not learn war anymore. This prophecy does not fit into the author’s viewpoint so he ignores it. But it is additional proof that our teaching against Christians taking part in war is wrong and unscriptural. Even in prophecy God foretold that His people would no longer participate in war and killing; but that they would be a peaceful people.

The author continues in the same strain -desperately trying theories when he says, “When Christ told Peter to put up his sword, He meant it was the wrong time to use it.” If there was ever a right time for the apostles to use the sword the Bible is silent about it. All those who believe that Christians can kill have to resort to such palpable misrepresentation as this to uphold their theories. It is enough to convince any honest seeker after the truth that they do not have the understanding of the principle taught in this episode.. and/or they do not believe this scripture.

The author continues, “Peter was instructed to continue to carry the sword.” When Christ said, “put it up”, the author says it means to continue to carry it. Why carry it if they couldn’t use it? And when Christ told them to put it away, He never gave them a command to take it out again. Therefore, it would have to stay sheathed- for if this lesson teaches anything it teaches them not to use the sword. .

It is an outstanding fact, the author to the contrary, that throughout the New Testament, after Christ’s death, we do not find an apostle nor a follower of Christ ever using a sword or suggesting its use, for any reason whatsoever. There is no doubt their lives were in constant danger. They were surrounded by enemies on every side. The country in which they lived was constantly at war, yet the scriptures fail to teach us that any Christian ever lifted a sword against any man or ever fought for any country.

To further substantiate the Bible teaching that the followers of Christ were a peaceful people, we find in Acts 14, when Paul and Barnabas were in Iconium they were assaulted by both the Gentiles and the Jews. The account says, “They were aware of it and fled unto Lystra.” Here was a wonderful opportunity for Paul and Barnabas to fight it out with their swords, if they carried them, for the scriptures read, “and part held with the Jews and part with the apostles.” They were equally divided and stood a good chance of whipping their foes. Either they were cowards and afraid to fight for their lives; or else they carried no weapons and therefore had no intention of fighting. This we do know, if they carried swords they did not use them when they had a splendid opportunity to do so. And we are sure it was not cowardice for they knew God was with them. They had a bigger and more important job to do -converting the world -and if Christians would dedicate their lives to serving Christ and converting the lost there would be no time left to engage in killing mankind.

Again we find the disciples fleeing from danger instead of fighting it out in Acts 9:29 and 30. It reads, “and disputed against the Grecians: but they went about to slay him. Which when the

brethren knew they brought him down to Caesarea and sent him forth to Tarsus.” Although Paul’s life was in danger we find the brethren, instead of fighting it out with the enemy, they ran away. If they had swords why didn’t they disperse the enemy and kill them so that they could not again be a threat to Paul’s life?

In Acts 14:19 we read that the enemies of Paul grew so dangerous they stoned him and left him for dead. However, we do not find that he used a sword or attempted to protect his life. The disciples were there and watched the violent act but we do not find that they tried to protect their brother from the mob by using the swords (which the author seems to think they carried). If the disciples carried swords reason would lead us to think that they would certainly have used them to protect the apostle’s life. But instead they just stood and watched these violent men stone Paul to death and did nothing about it.

If it was God’s will that violent and unscrupulous men should be killed this would seem the perfect setting for the job. It would seem that if there was ever a time when Christians should have used the sword it would have been to have saved their brother from being stoned to death by an angry mob. But we find the Bible is strangely lacking in such teaching. We find at all times God’s people were peaceful and avoided violence and killing.

Thus we find the scriptures teaching something entirely foreign to the author’s suggestions. We find the followers of Christ evaded the enemy at every opportunity; and when it seemed they could have successfully routed the enemy by fighting, they in- decorously fled. We find Paul also acting in this strange manner. He never fought, but used every available means to extricate himself from danger by peaceful methods. Even when threatened with death and taken out and stoned he never lifted a hand to protect himself. Could it be that he trusted in God for protection instead of the sword? Our brethren do not have enough faith to believe God can protect us from enemies and without us shedding blood.

We find also that Paul, instead of killing his enemies, asked for protection from the local police force. He used his Roman citizenship to escape from those who threatened his life. He, as well as his brethren, used every peaceful method available to keep from fighting; even fleeing from the enemy when convenient, that they might avoid killing. The scriptures do not indicate that Paul, nor any of the apostles or followers of Christ ever used a sword against any man. It is strange that if God intended that Peter and the others use their swords to kill violent and unscrupulous men, that we are not given one example or scripture in all of the New Testament for them to do so. The Bible teaches to convert men to Christ, not to kill them.

The author continues in the same strain -desperately trying to find something upon which to hang his untenable supposition. He asks, “Does Jesus condemn anyone who would take up the sword?” He has no scripture to confirm his viewpoint, so he airily answers, “not necessarily so”. When it comes to a matter of condemnation or one of salvation it would seem that we should have a more positive answer than the one given. It’s too vital a matter to cast lightly aside with ambiguous “not necessarily so”, Christ said, “He that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword” Rev 13:10 Do these words sanction the use of the sword or condemn it?

The author has his own method of altering the scriptures to make them fit his ideas. “All who carry the sword shall perish by the sword, “does not agree with his viewpoint so he was again

forced to ask that we modify its literal meaning however, he didn't leave it to the reader but he changed it to suit his own purpose. He states, "Sword condemned (became unlawful), and those who perish will perish (by those who have a lawful right to use it). "He believes, of course, that the world has a lawful right to kill, and because this verse did not enforce his theory he must of necessity change or alter it so that it would. I have never found in the doctrines of men a more glaring or presumptuous perversion of God's word than this brazen attempt to corrupt the pure meaning of this verse of scripture.

It is quite apparent that he does not believe this scripture and in his approach to this particular scripture for he says Jesus does "not necessarily condemn" anyone who uses the sword. And, of course, if the world has been given the lawful right to use the sword there would be no condemnation. This being so why did he use the ambiguous "not necessarily so" instead of an emphatic and plain answer. For if there is no condemnation he should state it and give scripture to prove it

Could it be that an unequivocal answer would call for scripture to support it and unable to find any he resorted to his usual procedure -a suggestive thought -And then that was not enough so he altered the meaning of a scripture to make it agree with the suggestive thought. It's a crooked path -but an acceptance of the pure word of God will straighten it out. The author, with his modifying and his opinions has as much trouble as some of the Churches of Christ today in trying to make Gods word and their own opinion agree.

However, the principle involved in this verse of scripture, and others of similar nature, such as, "whosoever sheddeth the blood of man by man shall his blood be shed," is incompatible with the viewpoint of all those who have a taste for the blood of their fellowman. They have to resort to such chicanery for there are no scripture that teach what they attempt to propound. The scriptures teach just the opposite from that which is contained in the booklet, "Christians in Uniform."

We read such scriptures as those in 2nd Cor. 10:3 and they conflict with the warlike attitudes and the combative spirit of those who sanction killing and would burden the Christian with something which is not found in the law of God. For instance, "For though we walk in the flesh we do not war after the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit." Hear God speak, "To be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace."

Certainly no man can read the verses above and believe them and be content to accept the carnal teachings of man which are in conflict with them. Certainly those who advocate and teach that Christians can kill are carnally minded. Romans 8:7 says, "to be carnally minded is enmity with God". There is nothing spiritual in the walk of those who go forth with hand grenades, guns and bombs to slaughter mankind. God tells us they mind the things of the flesh, therefore they are carnally minded and are condemned.

Ephesians 6: 10 to 18 plainly enlightens us as to the kind of warfare true Christians are to engage in. Our warfare is a conflict against sin, and it is the only battle we can lawfully fight. If we are busily engaged in this kind of warfare and in the promulgation of the gospel, we will not have time to follow the world in its bloody pathway down into the depths of hell.

And again we are asked to modify (change) the meaning of, "resist not him that is evil," as well as "if they enemy hunger feed him; and if he thirst give him drink. For in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head." Matt. 5:39 commands us to "resist not evil" - The author in his booklet says and I quote, "We are to resist evil with all the power of our beings". One can easily see why the author would want these verses altered for they do not fit, as they are applied as God intended they will help to allay the strife and the lust in our natures and cause us to mind the things of the spirit instead of the things of the flesh. It is the lack of application of scriptures such as these which tend to make Christians carnally minded, and it is the reason they fail to understand God's word, but instead teach that Christians can kill.

We find that those who teach and encourage warlike tendencies in Christians are inclined to take every verse of the Bible which has the slightest tendency to subdue the fleshy and carnal proclivities, and ask that we alter, change or modify their meaning. They cannot accept them as they are and continue to believe as they do -so they must modify them or change. We can hope that they may change.

Next we have along the same line a rather subtle attempt upon the part of the author to suggest a thought contrary to Christ's meaning in the verses which read, "Christ came not to send peace but a sword," and, "a man's foes shall be those of his own household." These verses do not mean that Christ would send or approve of a literal sword; nor that we are actually to fight those of our own household. These verses could have no place in his polemic unless he intended conveying something contrary to what Christ really meant. They certainly do not mean that His coming into the world would bring carnal war and murder instead of peace.

The sword of the Spirit, the word of God, will often bring discord and variance among those who will not bow their carnal natures in subjection to the mighty hand of God. That is the reason

when true Christians believe and teach God's word in all its truth as well as its exacting rules and positive commands, that those of the brethren, whose carnal and fleshly natures rule their spirits, fight their own sisters and brothers in the Lord because their teaching is compromising and soft instead of sound and doctrinal.

Christ realized that this would be the result of following His stringent teaching and so we have the verses above. When the gospel is preached it will make enemies for us even amongst the household of god. These verses serve only as a warning and are not to be used to license someone to kill.

Again we are asked, "Is it possible to live at peace with all men?" And he answers, "The Bible does not teach that it is always possible to do this." The Bible perhaps does not teach that all men will be at peace with us, however, it does not teach us to kill if they are not. It does not teach that because all men will not live peacefully with us, that we are to war and strive, and to hate and to kill.

Hatred and strife is condemned in Gal. 5:20; and there is no war without hatred and strife. Therefore, any Christian who indulges in strife, is condemned, and will be cast into the lake of fire on judgment day. And all those who encourage and teach Christians to participate in anything so violently opposed to the gospel of peace as bloody, carnal warfare, will be held accountable.

"All those who live Godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted." How well does the true Christian realize the truth of this verse? Teaching the truth of God's word will make enemies even amongst God's own people. However, because our brethren will not live peacefully with us, does not mean we are not to continue to be peaceful. Their carnal and devious ways should not affect the peaceful life of the Christian. Because some of the brethren believe in strife, in bloodshed and resisting evil with violence and brutality, does not change the pure, peaceful teachings of God's word. The Christian continues his peaceful, busy life amongst the hatred, war and the strife of the world and does not change His Christ like nature because those around him malign -persecute and instigate strife against him. Peace comes, not by using the sword, but by application of the peaceful and sublime teachings of our Saviour.

The apostles were hounded from place to place, beaten, jailed and stoned by their enemies; many of whom were their own brethren. They had anything but peace. Their lives were a constant turmoil, but they had peace of the spirit and they never retaliated, nor turned to fight with swords or guns. If God's word does not allow us to fight for His kingdom here on this earth, or fight to protect His church from the corruption and wickedness which lies around and about us, surely there is no other kingdom, no other principle worth fighting or dying for. Carnal men as well as the world may try to keep us from living peaceful lives, but Christians are a peaceful people walking in the light of the divine teachings of the Saviour of the world. They do not war and hate and kill and persecute.

Because Christ whipped the money changers out of the temple does not teach that Christians are licensed to use force and violence against others. Isa. 53:9 reads, "because He had done no violence, neither was any deceit in His mouth." There was no violence in Jesus' character or nature, therefore the episode wherein He whipped the money changers from the temple does not

suggest -what the author intends to suggest -when he used it. It was not to teach that we might use force and violence -for there was no violence in Jesus. So we would have to look for some other meaning in this verse, for it is plain that again the author has failed to arrive at the proper understanding of the scriptures.

This incident was merely an illustration of Christ's fervor and zeal for the house of God. The temple of God must be kept clean and free from vice and commercialism. The Christian fights to preserve Christianity; and fights the good fight of faith to preserve his soul. If one should continue to wrest its meaning it would still be difficult to find within this incident an excuse for Christians to kill, for violence is a part of killing and Christ had no violence in Him. We can't follow Christ and be violent. If we can't be violent we can't kill.

The author states that because John did not tell the soldiers to get out of the army he was literally teaching that God sanctioned a man being a soldier. As was mentioned in the beginning we are not dealing with the question of whether or not a man can lawfully wear a uniform, but whether or not a Christian can kill. Then the lesson to be derived from this illustration is not whether John condoned a man in the profession of a soldier, but whether the soldier was licensed to kill his fellowman.

John lived under the law of Moses which justified killing under certain circumstances. This probably explains why John did not tell the soldiers to change their occupation. However, that point is not important. What we want to find out is did John, who was a peaceful follower of the lowly Jesus, teach that these men were licensed to kill? We find that John commanded these soldiers, whose lives, like that of all soldiers, were violent and turbulent, "Do violence to no man."

To tell a soldier to "do no violence to no man is tantamount to telling him that he cannot kill; for killing is one of the most violent and savage acts known to man. If we argue that war is not violent then we are incapable of rationalizing this subject in the light of facts. There is no man who has participated in bloody, brutal warfare upon the ravaged, blood soaked battlefields, who will not give incontestable proof of the fact that warfare is violent. The author was looking for something to hang on the hook, but again it has been left bare.

In this connection the author adds, "wearing the uniform and drawing the pay of even a tyrannical government was not condemned so long as the soldier behaved himself." The issue is not whether a man can wear a uniform, but rather what he does when wearing the uniform. Would a soldier be behaving himself if he deliberately and with premeditation took the life of his fellowman? However, John did not condemn the soldiers for wearing a uniform but he did make it impossible for them ever to kill again when he forbade them to do violence to any man. A Christian transgresses the law of God when he participates in acts of violence; and warfare is violent. Therefore, he cannot lawfully kill. And it follows he would be condemned if he dies in the sin of transgressing the law of God. For in all of Christ's teachings there is no example or commandment sanctioning killing.

Again he questions, "Did Jesus tell the centurion to get out of the army; did Peter and John tell the centurion Cornelius to get out of the Roman army; did the Phillipian jailor lay aside his

sword?" These questions have been answered by the preceding paragraphs. But we will deal with them specifically although it will entail some repetition.

The author intimates that Christ was praising the centurion because he was a man of war. This incident is dealing with faith as most of us know. He praised the man for his faith -a great faith. We need more of the faith of this man -This booklet would need not have been written if Christians would have faith in God's word. Christ was not teaching -in this instance -whether or not a man could serve in the military -but simply giving us a great lesson upon that vital element so necessary in a Christian's life, faith. It has no bearing upon the fact that the man was a centurion.

To assume that the Lord sanctioned the calling of Cornelius would be presumptuous, as the Bible is silent upon the matter. Whether or not Cornelius continued to serve as a centurion after obedience to the word of God we do not know. We can be certain, however, if he stayed faithful to the word of God, he would have of necessity had to obey the admonition, "do violence to no man," and "love thy enemies". He would have realized that all war comes from the lust of the flesh, James 4: 1 to 4; and if he wanted to walk in the Spirit, and not after the lust of the flesh, he would have had to discontinue participating in actual combat. He would have had to accept, "love thy neighbor as thyself," and this would have prohibited him from killing anyone.

Some of my brethren have the same trouble with the above verses as the denominationalists have with, "Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins," and, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Practically no denominationalist believes these verses -and they modify and alter them to fit their own ideas and convenience. All who are blinded by prejudice and carnality will have difficulty with God's word and will wrest it to their own destruction -whether in the church or out of it.

We are asked, "Did the Phillipian jailor lay aside his sword?" If he believed what Christ told Peter in the garden when the soldiers came to take Him away, he did. Christ commanded, "Put up thy sword," and if the Phillipian jailor heeded Christ's words he put away his sword. However, he might have continued, after his conversion, to live a carnal, worldly life. He may have encouraged Christians to use the sword, and kill and to do violence, and to shed the blood of man. I say he may have done this. I prefer to believe however that the Christian jailor was sincere, and that he grew in grace and knowledge, and obeyed the New Testament's teachings. If he did he put away his sword and never used it again.

But it is foolish to speculate upon the word of God. The last we saw of the Christian jailor was the day after his conversion. The author suggests because he still carried his sword the day after becoming a Christian that he continued to use the sword. We can hardly judge a Christian's life by what he is the day after his conversion. Christ had to grow in grace and knowledge and surely the jailor changed his life and his ways after becoming a Christian. And this takes time, we can hardly learn to obey all of Christ's teachings in one day. I prefer to believe that he obeyed the admonition, "do violence to no man" and learned to love his enemies instead of killing them. There is one thing we know if he followed the peaceful Saviour he never drew his sword against any man.

We find this statement in the booklet, "That if the jailor killed himself he would have robbed himself of the opportunity to be saved." It is indeed strange that the author can understand this and yet be so blind to the fact that the same principle holds true if a Christian kills his fellowman. In depriving a man of the right to live, the Christian deprives him of his right to hear the gospel and be saved. In other words he is guilty of helping to send those whom he kills to hell. The author by making this statement condemns the very thing he seeks to prove, viz: -that Christ condones killing.

How can a Christian advocate the children of God kill their fellowman and deprive them of the opportunity of being saved? The responsibility of every Christian is to promulgate the gospel to the world. We obstruct and thwart the divine design and plan of God when we kill those whom Christ came to save. He came to save all mankind; and violent and unscrupulous men are just as much as subject of the gospel call as any other. One would think from the position taken by those who believe Christians can kill, that those whom we war against are just animals and fit only to be killed. Christ teaches us to love and to try and save the wicked and the lost. The world kills and wars and destroys each other; but the Christian does not follow the world in their lust and in the shedding of blood. They overlook the fact that God loves all mankind -not just a chosen few. Even those who crucified Christ (and this was a violent and cruel deed) were given an opportunity to be forgiven and many accepted, Acts 2: 1-47.

Again we are asked, "Would a postman, a governor, a Post- master General, or a mayor have to quit their positions if they were converted to Christianity?" This question is asked of course to leave the suggestion that if a Christian can't serve the government as a soldier then he would be prohibited from serving in any of the capacities as outlined above. But the question does not evolve around whether or not a Christian can work for the government, but whether if working for those who have the rule over him saying he can kill at their command.

The author has admitted that if a government asks a Christian to lie or steal he must refuse to do so. Upon the same basis if the government asks him to kill, he must refuse. Or is it more reprehensible to lie and steal than to butcher and slaughter our fellowman? Does Christ's law permit killing and forbid lying and stealing? Christ's word is never inconsistent. If it is wrong to lie and steal, it is wrong to kill.

Sin is the transgression of the law. 1st John 3:4. If a Christian should act as a postman, or a mayor, or a governor or a Post- master General, he would not sin unless he transgressed the law of God. What law does the postman break? Do we find scripture forbidding a Christian acting in any of these capacities? However, if in the line of duty, in holding any of these positions, he should kill or act as an accessory to killing -or transgress the law of God in any other respect, he would be condemned.

It runs counter to reason to suppose he could not serve in any of these professions. God has not law prohibiting such a thing. But if as a governor or a mayor or Postmaster General, or a postman, the Christian should be called upon to disobey or transgress God's law; then he would, of course, have to resign or sin. However, it would be difficult if not impossible for a Christian to hold political office and not be called upon to make decisions, as well as to participate and involve himself in worldly matters which lead him to disobey the law of God.

It is no violation of the law of God to hold such offices. We are not to entangle ourselves in the affairs of the world politically or otherwise. The sin would be in transgressing the law of God in carrying out the duties of the offices. And logic continues that it would not be wrong to serve as a soldier if in acting in the capacity one did not transgress the law of God.

At this point the author brings his booklet to a conclusion by stating among other things that the New Testament does not teach, “that it is wrong for a Christian to serve the Civil government in time of war .” We all know the Civil part of the government is the non-military and that it would not be a sin to serve in that capacity at any time if a Christian did not transgress the law of Christ in carrying out his duties for his government.

However, he goes on to state that the New Testament does not teach that, “it is wrong for agents of the government to use the sword to protect society” ; and again that it does not teach, “it is morally wrong to lawfully carry arms.” While he is as evasive as a fly on a hot summer’s day and just about as hard to pin down, and while the issue might be slightly clouded by his play upon the “Civil” part of the government, it is not difficult to ascertain the motive which prompted these assertions.

One only has to read his booklet to know that he not only thinks it is not wrong to serve the Civil government in time of war but he believes unequivocally that a Christian sins if he is not willing to bear arms in defense of his country in time of war. The mistake he makes is not making it clear that these are his opinions only; for he did not give one verse of scripture to prove that it is lawfully right for the world to carry arms; and that it is lawful for the government to use the sword to protect society. It would be interesting to see the verses of scripture which prove these opinions.

We have proven that God has never given the world the lawful right to carry the sword. Romans 13: 1-8 says He allows or ordains that the authority of the world by His will may be allowed to stand until the day of judgment when it will all be cast down. Also we have shown conclusively that God could not approve and sanction earthly governments for to do so would have God approving of that which belongs to the devil; for all earthly governments are in the kingdom of the devil and not in the kingdom of Christ.

We have proven that the earthly governments belong to the devil and are under his authority. It would be impossible for them to be under the authority of God for it would be impossible to reconcile their wickedness -their dishonesty -their disobedience -their rebellion and their unwillingness to accept the teachings of Christ with God’s righteousness, and the thought that He condones and approves as well as sanctions all of this. Such a thought is reprehensible. The author makes these bold statements but he does not offer scripture to prove them. But inasmuch as we have conclusively proven his major premise to be faulty, his conclusions upon the matter would of necessity have to be wrong.

To better understand the subject of killing, which is a part of all warfare, we should try to understand something about warfare which involves the act of killing and slaying our fellowman ; and not by two's or three's but by the hundreds of thousands. Some of the brethren condone killing because they do not believe the teaching of James 4: 1 to 4. Others take the opinions of men rather than searching the word of God diligently to find out for themselves what God's word teaches on this subject. However, if these verses were believed, a Christian could not conscientiously participate in bloody combat, because that would be tantamount to believing a Christian could follow the lusts of the flesh and follow Christ at the same time. To believe this would violate such teachings as contained in Romans 8:4 to 9 as well as 2nd Cor. 10:2 to 4.

It is rather difficult to understand, but the world seems to have a better conception, at least in one respect, of what a follower of Christ should be than some Christians. For instance, the government under which we live passed a law giving Christians the privilege to refuse to bear arms in time of war. In allowing a Christian the right to decline to engage in killing, the government realized that a man who follows the Saviour would not make a good fighting man, such as would be needed to actively engage in warfare.

It is obvious to them, although not to some Christians, that the very nature of war, its brutality, its violence and its bloodshed would be inimical to a man schooled in the teachings of Jesus Christ. Recognizing that those who followed the righteous and peaceful teachings of Christ would ill serve their country in time of war, a benign government, one of the greatest and best the world has ever known, made it possible for them to lawfully refuse to bear arms and serve in actual combat. So a Christian is without excuse if he kills another. It is a reflection upon the spiritual discernment of some who call themselves Christians, that they cannot recognize what the government, which is not Christian, can and does understand.

However, the true Christian returns the favor because he makes the best and most satisfactory citizen a nation can have. True Christians obey the laws of the government. They are honest. They do not commit offences contrary to good government. The government need never fear them as evildoers in any respect. They are neither subversive nor detrimental to their country in any manner whatsoever. They honor their rulers as well as pray for them. They are an example in every community in which they live of peaceful, self-respecting people. The righteous, peaceful lives of true Christians exalts and is a credit to any nation. A nation which harbours the people of God are blessed because of them.

One of the most convincing proofs of the unscripturalness of the author's position, as well as the sinfulness of carnal warfare, are the verses from James 4: 1 to 4. "From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust and have not; ye kill and desire to have, and cannot obtain; ye fight and war, yet ye have not because ye ask not. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

There are three outstanding principles contained in these verses. First, that wars and fightings come from the lusts of the flesh; secondly, the futility of war; with the explanation from God,

that to obtain that which we desire does not come from war and fighting; and last, that to lust, and fight, and war, is of the world, and whosoever is a friend of the world is an enemy of God. We cannot escape from the overwhelming truth of these verses, nor overlook the fact that God has defined war in His own way; all war, not just war amongst the brethren.

Those who oppose and refuse to accept the full import of the spiritual principles contained in these verses, usually resort, as did the author, to the old hackneyed explanation. "This 'among you' means in the church. James here is fixing the cause of wars and fights among members of the Lord's church". However, these verses cannot be circumscribed to fit war amongst a certain people. It is an insult to the intelligence of thinking men and women, for those who profess to teach God's word, to resort to such a shabby explanation.

These verses are diametrically opposed to the assumption that Christians can participate in violent and bloody war and fighting. They follow the flesh when they do so. And to follow the flesh is to follow the devil. But those who are reluctant to accept them as God intended are hard pressed to find something to hang on the hook and so they usually cast them lightly aside as of little consequence.

We must believe Christ's teachings or we are damned, Mark 16: 16. To refuse to accept the lesson embodied in these verses is to disbelieve God's word. We find that James teaches that lust is the cause of fighting. The same motive, lust, which would impel Christians to war and fight among themselves, is the same as that which would compel him to fight and war as a friend of the world. It would be illogical to suppose that wars of the world are caused by a purer motive than wars in the church. Or that those participating in wars and fightings in the world are not motivated by lust but by some other desire. When a Christian involves himself in war and fighting he is following the lust of the flesh whether in the church or out of it. Are we to believe that wars amongst the brethren are condemned, but the wars of the world, which is the devil's kingdom, have the approval of God?

However, this is the irrational position assumed by those who refuse to accept the true meaning of James 4: 1 to 4. And they will presume to believe it rather than change their carnal nature, their fleshly desires, and their lustful thoughts, by accepting that which God teaches in these verses. However, these verses will stand in judgment upon all those who meet their Maker with the blood of their fellowman upon their hands.

Wars Are Caused by Lust. Lust is of the flesh. Lust is of the world. Lust and friendship with the world is enmity with God. How can one who believes in war and killing escape from the terrible indictment against lust and war contained these verses? To kill and to be willing to be killed at the command of the earthly governments is certainly being a friend of the world.

Not only is one condemned for wars and fighting, but God condemns all those who are friends of the world. Skirting the hem of truth and trying to escape the literal force of these verses by saying that this teaching pertains only to the church, will not take away the principle contained therein; which is, that wars and fightings are caused by lust.

No Christian can walk by the Spirit and in the lust of the flesh at one and the same time. 2nd Cor. 10:3 and 4 agrees perfectly with James 4: 1 to 4. "For though we walk in the flesh, we do

not war after the flesh: For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.” One cannot evade the meaning of these verses, they plainly tell us: We Do Not War After The Flesh And We Do Not Use Carnal Weapons. If we believe these verses, we will discard our carnal thoughts, our worldly approach, our lustful spirit and our taste for the blood of our fellowman, and subject ourselves unto the peaceful and glorious gospel of Jesus Christ.

These verses sum up my whole argument, viz: Christians cannot kill. There is not an example nor a commandment in all of the New Testament teaching or even inferring that Christians can kill. It is a gospel of peace. Luke I: 79 reads, “To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace.” Prophecy speaks in Isa. 32:17, “And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness- ness, quietness and assurance forever.” ,

These verses prove that Christians cannot engage in war and bloodshed without following the lust of the flesh. In James 3: 16 to 18 we read, “But where envying and strife is there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And The Fruits of Righteousness Is Sown In Peace of Them That Make Peace.”

No man that wars makes peace. So he does not have the fruits of righteousness but the fruits of death for God has pronounced the sentence in Gen. 9:6, “Whosoever sheddeth man’s blood by man shall his blood be shed.” The sin in killing God’s creatures is not so much the actual taking of life but that the soul of the one killed is sent to hell. The soul was made in the image of God and it is God’s prerogative only to take this step or give the order for man’s life to be taken. For only He could know whether that man would ever obey Him and thus have a hope of heaven, or whether he was hopelessly dead in his sins. The New Testament does not give us orders or commands to kill so we must forbear taking the life of our fellow beings.

I’d like to add here that these verses which I have used in the conclusion of this dissertation, are just as much an indictment of those who, while not actually participating in warfare, believe, advocate and promulgate the unscriptural dictum that a Christian can kill as those who actually participate in the physical combat. They do not sow peace but confusion and every evil work. This is the fruit of their ungodly efforts. The fruits of righteous- ness are sown in peace, and the very nature of what they teach is incompatible with peace. We can hope that those in the church who are in error upon the participation of Christians in carnal warfare will study the Bible and change their minds.

To further prove that wars come from lust of the flesh we want to add a bit more evidence to the already insurmountable proof of all that has been said. The author by his own words confirms these verses and indicts and condemns war. We are reminded of the book of Esther in which Haman, who built a gallows upon which to hang Mordecai, ended by being hanged thereon himself. The author erected his gallows by his own words, and we will now proceed to hang him thereon.

On page 26 we find this question, “Is war a good way to settle disputes?” And he answers, “War is not even a poor way to settle disputes. War settles nothing, it only breeds more wars.

War is wasteful, stupid, brutalizing, and the nation which promotes war will eventually be destroyed by it. Not only Christians but all thinking men of every generation are unanimous on this point, War Has A Demoralizing Effect on Society; it is condemned.” yet his booklet is written to help persuade Christians that to kill is sanctioned by God.

After using up a whole booklet to try and convey the thought that God approves and sanctions earthly governments and gives them the lawful right to kill ; he in two or three sentences destroys his whole argument. If he believes that war is condemned by God and has a demoralizing effect upon society; he has God sanctioning and approving of that which He has condemned. And he also has God approving of Christians participating in that which will take away their morals. To teach such is irrational and it is plain that the author has made a terrible mistake in his major premise. When we find contradiction, we find error. We also will understand that actual unbelief of God’s word is the underlying motive for all of the false teaching so prevalent in the booklet written by a Church of Christ minister.

Again he says that wars are wasteful, stupid, and brutalizing and yet attempts to convince Christians that participation in war, which settles nothing, and is wasteful, stupid and brutalizing is condoned and approved by God. It certainly would be utterly sinful for a Christian to participate in something which would demoralize him, which means of course that he would be without morals and so without hope of salvation. It would be sinful for him to engage in that which will settle nothing anyway, and which will brutalize his character as well as make him anything but Christ like. A man who has had his morals taken away and his character brutalized is not a fit subject for heaven. The gallows are ready and waiting.

But there is more. In the face of such condemnation of war, the author has the audacity to say that a Christian can and should serve his country in time of war. He goes further and says, “The conscientious objector in refusing to serve his government, violates the law of God. In such a position he stands condemned and without hope of salvation.” These are strong words for a man who has no scripture to support them and has just admitted that war brutalizes and demoralizes those who participate in it. They are probably the only really strong words in all of his booklet. And he is again wrong.

A Christian cannot go against his conscience at any time. He would have the Christian who conscientiously objects to killing his fellowman condemned if he doesn’t go against his conscience and serve his country in time of war. This is contrary to God’s word. In Rom. 14:22, 23 we read, “Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.”

If a man’s conscience will not let him kill, he must forbear or else he is damned. He is accountable to God only and his brother cannot sit in judgment on him. However, the author by his own words has condemned all those who conscientiously refuse to serve their government in time of war. For a Christian to go against his conscience is to defile it. However, in the face of the scriptures above, the author insists that a Christian must kill. When the major premise is wrong -all our conclusions are wrong. This time the author not only doesn’t have anything to hang on the hook, he hasn’t any hook.

The author's whole premise is built upon the theory that God sanctions, approves and authorizes earthly governments. Unless, this is true his whole argument in favor of Christians participating in warfare, is false. To try and uphold this false theory, he suggests that the devil does not own the earthly governments. This is a natural conclusion for him to make, for if the devil controls and owns the earthly governments then we would have God approving and sanctioning that which is owned and controlled by the devil. This is contrary to reason and scripture. But if his major premise is true he must of necessity believe that the devil does not own the governments. However, he did not give one verse of scripture to support this.

But the author by his own words has proven that the earthly governments are of the devil, for he admits that that which engage in -the slaughtering of mankind -is stupid, wasteful, brutalizing, demoralizing, and is condemned. All thinking men and women will agree with him on this. However, it logically follows that God could not approve and sanction that which is brutal - demoralizing and condemned. Yet the author asserts that the Christian must obey his government and engage in war - the results of which will brutalize and take away his morals. He goes further and says God approves of this, because he approves and sanctions the governments which carry on savage and brutal warfare. Such a theory, as we can all see is untenable and cannot -in the light of God's word be believed.

Again he says that "war is condemned". The governments of the world carry on war. If it is condemned -it is God who condemns it. But he says God approves of earthly governments. Therefore, we have the author saying, that God approves of that which He condemns. The governments are composed of men and women who are unsaved and therefore, subjects of the devil. They follow the devil, not the law of God. Therefore, it follows that the devil owns and controls the governments of the world.

He also stated that if the government asks a Christian to lie or steal, he must refuse to obey the government. But he also stated if it asks him to participate in warfare and kill, he must obey - lest he be condemned by God. If he can refuse to lie or steal for his government, it would seem if the author had rationalized his subject, he could understand that a Christian could also refuse to kill for his government. It is common knowledge that a Christian cannot corrupt his morals, and involve himself in that which God condemns and expect to go to heaven. God could not approve of governments waging war, and the Christian's participation in it, if it corrupts them morally and brutalizes their character. The author has admitted, what we already know, that war does this very thing. By his own statements he has convicted himself. The structure which he erected to prove his premise that Christians can but must kill, ~e have used to prove him wrong. Poor Haman!

It may be that the author may deny that his booklet was intended to encourage and persuade Christians participating in warfare. However, if this was not the purpose of it, it is without any purpose whatsoever. Either it was written to allay any conflict of conscience, or other fears a Christian might have relative to serving the government in time of war, or it does not. The title of it is indicative of its contents.

So in anticipation of that which might be said, and so that there is no confusion on the subject, we affirm, that no matter how ambiguous or subtle it might be, that his booklet was written with the express purpose of encouraging and teaching Christians their duty to their

government in time of war. There is no question of his position in the matter. He teaches most assuredly and holds the opinion that it is not wrong for a Christian to engage in warfare and kill if his government calls him to serve in that capacity.

As a last thought before closing this book, I want to say, lest some believe that we stand alone on this question, that many great and noble men of the church have considered this matter and have left their writings for us to read and to gather strength and courage from them. Practically all the scholars as well as most of the great teachers of the church, have been in full accord upon this subject for the Bible teaches but one thing -and that is truth. There is only one answer to this question -not many.

We will quote from several of the great teachers and scholars and while it is true their views upon the matter do not necessarily mean that they are right -for it is God's word we have to rely upon to fully ascertain the truth. But I believe they taught truth. Most Christians have heard of Alexander Campbell, J .W . McGarvey, Benjamin Franklin, Moses E. Lard, T. Fanning, David Lipscomb and H. Leo Boles. Their noble Christian lives are reflected in their great and scholarly writings. They have all written openly upon this question and, if one is interested, their books may be obtained from any of our publishing houses. H. Leo Boles has one of the finest booklets, of recent years, upon this question, and one well worth reading. Christians should always investigate a question before making up their mind about it.

Alexander Campbell, in his address on war said, "War is not nor was it ever a process of justice. It never was a test of truth, a criterion of right. The precepts of Christianity positively inhibit war, by showing that 'wars and fighting come from men's lusts' and evil passions, and by commanding Christians to 'follow peace with all men.' "

Brother U. Wright, in the Gospel Advocate, 1868, had this to say, " And that while Christ has taught us that we must necessarily be subjects of Caesar even unto death, we have never learned from Christ that we are to be soldiers for Caesar, even in the remotest degree, in war or peace, to fight for him in bloody combat."

H. Leo Boles, in his booklet "War" says, "Christianity is constructive, while war is destructive; Christianity is elevating, war is debasing; Christianity is purifying, war is corrupting; Christianity blesses, war curses; Christianity calls for the best and the noblest that is in man, war degrades and depraves man; Christianity makes men moral, war makes him immoral; Christianity cultivates kindness and gentleness in men, war makes them hard and ferocious; Christianity makes men a blessing unto each other, war makes them a curse; Christianity saves, war damns; Christianity gives life, war destroys life ; Christianity leads men to God and heaven, war leads them to destruction."

There are many more that could be added to these, but these are sufficient to know and understand that the noblest and the best in the brotherhood have stood for Christ's principles and have defended His word. May God help all those who have erred in this matter to rectify their error and to undo that which they have done. Let us all study God's word and bow our will humbly to its teaching. This would eliminate controversy, and bring us all together in the bond of love and peace. ❧