

THE BOOK, WAR AND THE GOSPEL

This book claims that the New Testament unlike the Old forbids the taking of life under all circumstances.

It argues incorrectly that Jesus stopping his disciples from wishing to use violence against adversaries in Luke 9 and John 18 shows that violence must be wrong (page 36). But it only means that Jesus knew it was not needed and would do no good.

It says that when Jesus told his apostles to buy swords the night he was arrested and when they said they had two he replied that it was enough that this was symbolism or a mistake made by Jesus who was overcome by panic for it was too late for them to buy twelve swords, the mob which apprehended him had staves and not swords and his men having swords at all would give him the name of being the criminal he was accused of being (pages 38-45). The book argues that even though he let two disciples carry swords to the place where he had to face being arrested he did not approve of the swords being used for he rebuked Peter for attacking the High Priest's servant with his sword. Then what did he let them carry them for?

Incredibly the book argues that Jesus was able to drive the moneychangers out of the temple without hitting them and that they ran away because they were scared of the sight of him carrying the whip (page 46). Jesus must have hit them. The whip he made would have been capable of great damage when they all ran out. He must have had friends helping him. He caused an outbreak of violence in the temple. He would not have been able to drive out the animals by himself unless he had beaten the customers and sellers out of the Temple. It is also interesting that Jesus visited the Temple a lot before and never lost the head like that which suggests his whip might have been made of small cords but it could have been made of a lot of them making it formidable indeed. It is pure hypocrisy for this book to insist that Jesus was not violent as if making threats and scaring people was not violence and can hurt more than a physical attack.

Though the apostles used miracles to kill Ananias and Sapphira and strike Elymas blind they commanded these things to happen and that makes them violent and they upset a lot of people by doing this and that is violence too though the book tries to make out that these episodes were anything but violent (page 50).

Page 75 dishonestly rejects the view of Jean Brice that if you hate your neighbour and that is as bad as killing him as Jesus said then why not kill him when you have already committed the sin in your heart? It says that if you sin that is not a reason for doing so again. But this means nothing coming from a man who believes in total depravity which is all over the Bible.

This doctrine says that you must hate your neighbour and God some way. If you stop wanting to kill him you will still want to do something just as bad.

The book tells us that some Christians hold that the Sermon on the Mount is not applicable to us and never was meant to be but is the ethic for the kingdom of God after it has been politically established (page 134). It correctly observes that you see the foolishness of that position just by reading the Sermon. The Sermon was not made to Christians either but to Jews. The Sermon never says that it is the ethic of the kingdom of God and speaks with an urgency that suggests it is to be put into effect before any kingdom comes. Also, why would Jesus tell the people to carry the backpacks of the Romans two miles when asked to do one and say that the Sanhedrin should execute anybody who calls anybody else a fool if he really meant the political kingdom of God when these things will pass away? He wouldn't.

The atonement that Jesus made for sinners is supposed to indicate his total commitment to peace. But it makes us murderers for we commit the sins that only Jesus' death could atone for. It makes sin worse. Paul said the Law of Moses made sin worse for it told us what sin was and we abused it but he did not realize that his Jesus did the same.

The argument of the book that if you love your neighbour you will not kill him is simplistic for if you have to kill him in self-defence that is not hating him or wanting to kill him. You have no choice. It is the same if God tells you to kill as the Bible says.