

Christian War Fever

By Chuck Baldwin

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Some time ago, Laurence Vance published a compilation of excerpts from the famed British Baptist pastor, Charles Spurgeon, on the subject of the proper Christian attitude regarding war and peace. These sermon excerpts are as germane to Americans today as they were to the citizens of Great Britain in the mid to late 1800's when Spurgeon delivered them.

I tried to warn listeners of my radio talk show on how then President George W. Bush was turning Christian people throughout the United States into warmongers. Because Bush claimed to be a born-again Christian and had successfully garnered the support of so many conservative evangelical Christians, he was able to shift the entire spiritual paradigm of the country. But that's what wolves in sheep's clothing do. Phony Christians do more destruction than overt unbelievers. Phony conservatives do more destruction than overt liberals.

Ever since the two administrations of G.W. Bush, America's conservative Christians have become infected with a serious malady; it's what Vance correctly calls "war fever." And the evangelical church in America is eaten up with it. And now that we have another Republican warmonger in the White House, war fever has reached epidemic proportions among evangelical Christians.

The United States and its coalition allies have killed tens of thousands (a very conservative number) of innocent men, women, and children in its so-called war on terror. The doctrine of American hegemony (not to mention the globalist/Zionist doctrine of "Greater Israel") has turned the Middle East into a giant killing field. Through perpetual bombings, drone attacks, missile attacks, etc., President Trump has killed more innocent civilians in the first five months of his presidency than ISIS, al-Qaeda, al-Nusra, Iraq, Afghanistan, Libya, Iran, Syria, Russia, China, and North Korea combined. And that fact does not take into account the billions of dollars in U.S. weapons sales to terrorist states such as Saudi Arabia and Turkey that account for thousands of additional deaths. Barack Obama and G.W. Bush did the same thing, of course. Trump is merely carrying on the same international crimes of empire as did the two presidents that preceded him.

And just who are the biggest cheerleaders for war? You guessed it: evangelical Christians.

When Donald Trump unjustly, unconstitutionally, illegally, and immorally ordered the bombing of Syria for what was clearly a false flag chemical attack in that country, evangelical Christian leaders immediately jumped in to provide spiritual cover for Trump. And this they will continue to do for the next four years.

See this analysis by a Marine Corps colonel and veteran combat pilot on how U.S. government reports of Assad using chemical weapons against his own people in order to justify the U.S. missile attack against Syria were totally FAKE:

[Senator Black: CIA Lies Getting Harder To Believe](#)

But in the eyes of the so-called Religious Right, ANY war a Republican president sends the U.S. military into is a just war--no matter how unjust the war really is. Evangelical Christian pastors are unabashed apologists for war. It is safe to say that a majority of conservative Christians have become rabid warmongers. They cheer for war; they promote war; they glorify war; they worship those who wage war; and they enthusiastically vote for neocons like Lindsey Graham and John McCain because of their support for war.

For Christian conservatives to talk about the bloodthirstiness of Muslims is laughable. Islamist jihadists don't hold a candle to the sheer numbers of innocent people who have been killed (and are daily being killed) by the American empire. At the same time, conservative Christian pastors constantly trumpet more and more war, more and more killing. These pastors would do well to familiarize themselves with the "Gospel of peace" (Romans 10:15; Ephesians 6:15) as proclaimed by the "Prince of Preachers," Charles Haddon Spurgeon.

Laurence Vance introduces Charles Spurgeon this way:

Charles Haddon Spurgeon (1834–1892) was an English Baptist minister who served as pastor of the Metropolitan Tabernacle in London from 1861 until his death. But Spurgeon was no ordinary minister. He was a pastor, a preacher, a teacher, an author, an editor, and the overseer of a pastor's college, a Christian literature society, and an orphanage. He is still widely revered today among Baptists (and others as well) as one of the greatest Baptist ministers in history.

Spurgeon preached his first sermon as a teenager and, in 1854, was called to the pastorate of the historic New Park Street Church, Southwark, London. During his thirty-eight-year tenure, the church increased from 232 to over 5,000. this was in a day when the only attraction to the church was the preaching of God's Word: no rock music; no smoke; no colored lights; no espresso machines; no twenty-minute sermonettes During the remodeling of the Park Street chapel to house the growing congregation, Spurgeon preached at the 5,000-seat Exeter Hall, a public auditorium. But because the remodeled chapel was still too small to accommodate the crowds, the church began construction of the Metropolitan Tabernacle, which sat 5,500 and had standing room for 500 more. In the interim, Spurgeon preached to thousands at the Surrey Gardens Music Hall. He was truly one of the most popular preachers in history. When he died in 1892, 60,000 people filed past his casket in the Tabernacle.

Spurgeon lives today through his sermons. From 1855 until his death, his Sunday morning sermons were published weekly. By 1865, Spurgeon's sermons were selling 25,000 copies every week. They would eventually be translated into more than twenty languages. The sermons were then collected in one volume and reissued at the end

of each year in book form. After Spurgeon's death, the series continued until 1917 using his Sunday evening sermons. The six volumes of the New Park Street Pulpit (1855–1860) and the fifty-seven volumes of the Metropolitan Tabernacle Pulpit (1861–1917) contain 3,561 sermons, 25 million words, and fill 41,500 pages. Many of these volumes are available online, and most are in print.

Unlike some Baptist preachers today who shamelessly serve as spokesmen or apologists for [war], Spurgeon was not the least bit excited about war and war fever.

Vance quotes Spurgeon:

“Long have I held that war is an enormous crime.”

“So combustible are the materials of which this great world is made, that I am ever apprehensive of war. I do not account it wonderful that one nation should strive against another, I account it far more wonderful that they are not all at arms. Whence come wars and fightings? Come they not from your lusts?”

“Sin is the mother of wars.”

“It is astonishing how distance blunts the keen edge of anything that is disagreeable. War is at all times a most fearful scourge. The thought of slain bodies and of murdered men must always harrow up the soul; but because we hear of these things in the distance, there are few Englishmen who can truly enter into their horrors. If we should hear the booming of cannon on the deep which girdles this island; if we should see at our doors the marks of carnage and bloodshed; then should we more thoroughly appreciate what war means. But distance take away the horror, and we therefore speak of war with too much levity, and even read of it with an interest not sufficiently linked with pain.”

“He is the God of peace, for he is the restorer of it; though wars have broken out through sin. He is the preserver of peace. Whenever I see peace in the world, I ascribe it to God, and if it is continued, I shall always believe it is because God interferes to prevent war.”

“The church, we affirm, can neither be preserved nor can its interests be promoted by human armies. We have all thought otherwise in our time, and have foolishly said when a fresh territory was annexed to our empire, ‘Ah! what a providence that England has annexed Oude’--or taken to itself some other territory--‘Now a door is opened for the Gospel. A Christian power will necessarily encourage Christianity, and seeing that a Christian power is at the head of the Government, it will be likely that the natives will be induced to search into the authenticity of our revelation, and so great results will follow. Who can tell but that, at the point of the British bayonet, the Gospel will be carried, and that, by the edge of the true sword of valiant men, Christ's Gospel will be proclaimed?’ I have said so myself; and now I know I am a fool for my pains, and that Christ's church hath been also miserably befooled; for this I will assert, and prove too, that the progress of the arms of a Christian nation is not the progress of Christianity, and that the spread of

our empire, so far from being advantageous to the Gospel, I will hold, and this day proclaim, hath been hostile to it.”

“Did you ever hear of a nation under British rule being converted to God? Mr. Moffat and our great friend Dr. Livingstone have been laboring in Africa with great success, and many have been converted. Did you ever hear of Kaffir tribes protected by England, ever being converted? It is only a people that have been left to themselves, and preached to by men as men, that have been brought to God. For my part, I conceive, that when an enterprise begins in martyrdom, it is none the less likely to succeed, but when conquerors begin to preach the gospel to those they have conquered, it will not succeed, God will teach us that it is not by might. All swords that have ever flashed from scabbards have not aided Christ a single grain. Mahomedans’ religion might be sustained by scimitars, but Christians’ religion must be sustained by love. The great crime of war can never promote the religion of peace. The battle, and the garment rolled in blood, are not a fitting prelude to "peace on earth, goodwill to men." And I do firmly hold, that the slaughter of men, that bayonets, and swords, and guns, have never yet been, and never can be, promoters of the gospel. The gospel will proceed without them, but never through them.”

“While, however, we shall anxiously watch the contest, it will be quite as well if we mingle in it ourselves. Not that this nation of England should touch it; God forbid. If tyrants fight, let them fight; let free men stand aloof. Why should England have aught to do with all the coming battles? As God has cut us off from Europe by a boisterous sea, so let us be kept apart from all the broils and turmoils into which tyrants and their slaves may fall.”

“The Church of Christ is continually represented under the figure of an army; yet its Captain is the Prince of Peace; its object is the establishment of peace, and its soldiers are men of a peaceful disposition. The spirit of war is at the extremely opposite point to the spirit of the gospel.”

“War is to our minds the most difficult thing to sanctify to God. The genius of the Christian religion is altogether contrary to everything like strife of any kind, much more to the deadly clash of arms. . . . Now I say again, I am no apologist for war, from my soul I loathe it, and I do not understand the position of a Christian man as a warrior, but still I greatly rejoice that there are to be found at this present day in the ranks many of those who fear God and adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour.”

“For if there be anything which this book [the Bible] denounces and counts the hugest of all crimes, it is the crime of war.”

“What, then, is to be done? Shall we unite with the clamorous patriots of the hour and sacrifice peace to political selfishness? Or shall we in silence maintain our own views, and despair of their ever being received by our own countrymen? There is no need to take either course: let us believe in our principles, and wait till the present mania comes to an end. We would persuade all lovers of peace to labour perseveringly to spread the spirit of love and gentleness, which is indeed the spirit of Christ, and to give a practical bearing to

what else may become mere theory. The fight-spirit must be battled with in all its forms, and the genius of gentleness must be cultivated. Cruelty to animals, the lust for destroying living things, the desire for revenge, the indulgence of anger--all these we must war against by manifesting and inculcating pity, compassion, forgiveness, kindness, and goodness in the fear of the Lord. Children must be trained with meekness and not with passion, and our dealings with our fellow-men must manifest our readiness to suffer wrong rather than to inflict it upon others. Nor is this all: the truth as to war must be more and more insisted on: the loss of time, labour, treasure, and life must be shown, and the satanic crimes to which it leads must be laid bare. It is the sum of all villainies, and ought to be stripped of its flaunting colours, and to have its bloody horrors revealed; its music should be hushed, that men may hear the moans and groans, the cries and shrieks of dying men and ravished women. War brings out the devil in man, wakes up the hellish legion within his fallen nature, and binds his better faculties hand and foot. Its natural tendency is to hurl nations back into barbarism, and retard the growth of everything good and holy. When undertaken from a dire necessity, as the last resource of an oppressed people, it may become heroic, and its after results may compensate for its immediate evils; but war wantonly undertaken, for self-interest, ambition, or wounded pride is evil, only evil, and that continually. It ought not to be smiled upon as a brilliant spectacle, nor talked of with a light heart; it is a fitter theme for tears and intercessions. To see a soldier a Christian is a joy; to see a Christian a soldier is another matter.”

“Many of our bravest soldiers are on the side of peace, and in the present crisis have spoken out more boldly on the right side than we might reasonably have expected of them. This must be duly acknowledged and taken into account, and we must speak accordingly.”

See Vance’s column here:

[Charles Spurgeon On Christian War Fever](#)

When is the last time you heard words such as these coming from the pulpits of today’s evangelical churches? And when Vance quoted Spurgeon saying, “Many of our bravest soldiers are on the side of peace,” I thought of the words of King David. He said, “I am for peace: but when I speak, they are for war.” (Psalms 120:7 KJV) I know that feeling very well.

I am also reminded of the words of Major General Smedley Butler (USMC). General Butler wrote a book entitled “War Is A Racket.” This book is a classic treatise on why wars are conducted, who profits from them, and who pays the price. Few people are as qualified as General Butler to advance the argument encapsulated in his book’s sensational title. When “War is a Racket” was first published in 1935, Butler was the most decorated American soldier of his time--including receiving TWO Congressional Medals of Honor. He had lead several successful military operations in the Caribbean and in Central America, as well as in Europe during the First World War. Despite his success and his heroic status, however, Butler came away from these experiences with a deeply troubled view of both the purpose and the results of war. I consider General Butler’s book “War Is A Racket” to be MUST READING.

Order Major General Smedley Butler's book "War Is A Racket" here:

[War Is A Racket](#)

The spirit of war will never be extinguished from our country until it is first extinguished from our churches. A sizeable percentage of all of the evangelical/fundamentalist churches in America today are splits and splinters off of other churches. Christians will fight at the drop of hat. They will split a church at the drop of a hat. They are filled with the spirit of war.

But Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers." (Matthew 5:9) As long as God's people continue to abandon the spirit of peace and embrace the spirit of war, we will never be able to sing "God Bless America" without abject hypocrisy, knowing that God will never bless those who are not peacemakers.

P.S. Again, to order Major General Smedley Butler's book "War Is A Racket," go here:

[War Is A Racket](#)

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