

Will There Be A Nuclear World Holocaust?

By

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WILL THERE BE A NUCLEAR WORLD HOLOCAUST?

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Dr. Desmond Ford is the founder and radio speaker for Good News Unlimited (GNU). The GNU ministries are designed to apply the gospel of Jesus Christ as proclaimed in God's holy word to our hearts and lives. For more than twenty years as a college professor of religion, and recently with Good News Unlimited, Dr. Ford has sought to demonstrate the contemporary relevance of the principles of the Bible. In *Will There Be A Nuclear World Holocaust?* Dr. Ford deals with a topic that is indeed pertinent today - Nuclear War. He addresses some of the problems and feelings that we, as Christians, may have regarding this most frightening event and what our future may hold in the light of it.

Table of Contents

[Introduction](#)

[Chapter 1:](#)

[The Story of the Bomb](#)

[Chapter 2:](#)

[Children and the Bomb](#)

[Chapter 3:](#)

[Christians and the Bomb](#)

[Chapter 4:](#)

[The Christian and the Just War](#)

[Chapter 5:](#)

[Nuclear War - Inevitable?](#)

[Chapter 6:](#)

[The Real Problem and Its Solution](#)

[Chapter 7:](#)

[What of the Future?](#)

INTRODUCTION

At one time there was no comparison between the strength of the USSR and your own. Then it became equal to yours. Now, as all recognize, it is becoming superior to yours. Perhaps today the ratio is just greater than equal, but soon it will be 2 to 1. Then 3 to 1. Finally it will be 5 to 1. .. With such nuclear superiority it will be possible to block the use of your weapons, and on some unlucky morning they will declare: "Attention! We're sending our troops into Europe, and if you make a move, we will annihilate you." And this ratio of 3 to 1 or 5 to 1 will have its effect: you will not make a move.

- Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn

The teachings of Jesus must be understood in the context of the political and racial tensions of his day. As Jesus anticipated, these political and racial tensions finally led to the great national catastrophe of the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70.

In the light of this national disaster the words of Jesus, "You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, ..." (Mt 5:43-45) have to be seen not as nice little aphorisms to be framed and hung on a wall, but as urgent "life or death" imperatives to turn around and be more like God who makes the sun to rise on the evil and on the good (Mt 5:45). Had his fellow countrymen done so, there would have been an immediate moral transformation that would have depoliticized the situation and would have averted the suicidal clash with the Romans.

The times in which we are living seem to be, in many respects, analogous to that of Jesus'. Once more political and racial tensions are at a high level. Fear, lust for power, and material possessions seem to be driving the human race into a terrible conflict. Once more the simple teachings of Jesus are proving their enduring worth and relevancy.

There is, however, one aspect that is unique and not analogous to the times of Jesus. For the first time in history, mankind has the power to destroy not only the human race but also every living creature on planet earth. Since the days of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, the Christian church has carried a new responsibility which is qualitatively different from that which it bore in the pre-nuclear era. Frankly, if we fail to bring a moral transformation in the immediate future we may never have another opportunity to do so. The eighties may be our last chance to convince the world that the way of Jesus is the only way to peace and life.

Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, ..." (Mt 5:9). In our day the lives of men like Gandhi and Martin Luther King bear witness to the powerful influence that an example of genuine love can have on society.

Would God allow a nuclear war to happen? Every man and woman hopes that God would preserve us from such a horror. Yet it is clear from a study of history that God has not intervened to save us from the folly of wars that have led to the destruction of human beings on a vast and horrifying scale of magnitude. It is my conviction that in a world where God has given human beings free will there can be no absolute guarantee that a nuclear war will not happen. In the sixth century B.C. many people in Jerusalem believed that their beloved city and temple were indestructible. Their presumptuous faith is reflected in Psalm 46, 48, and 132. But alas, in 587 B.C. Nebuchadnezzar shattered their smug convictions. They were completely baffled by the shocking events that led to their exile. Their sorrow and despair is recorded in the book of Lamentations.

In light of the history of the twentieth century, its two world wars, the Jewish holocaust, and the destruction of Nagasaki and Hiroshima, Christians cannot sit back in passivity, naively assuming that God will not permit a terrible nuclear war.

In the pastoral letter, "The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response," Bishop McManus says, "Not to think morally about the morality of nuclear weapons is immoral" (p. 53). And in a powerful summary statement, the bishops write, "Faith does not insulate us from the daily challenges of life but intensifies our desire to address them precisely in light of the gospel which has come to us in the person of the risen Christ" (p. 188). Dr. Ford concurs with this conviction. In the following pages he expresses his conviction that the real problem is not the nuclear bomb but the nuclear man. "You and I wouldn't be worried if Mother Teresa was in charge of all weapons," says the author. The bomb symbolizes the fear, the aggressiveness, the lust for power that lie deep within the human heart. Knowing the power of the gospel to transform the chaotic human heart, Dr. Ford believes that it is time for Christians to make a more concerted effort to penetrate more deeply into all levels of society with the gospel.

This little book is published in the hope that many will be inspired to take more seriously their role as peacemakers (Mt 5:9) and that many troubled hearts around the world will find peace and assurance in the promise of Christ.

-Noel Mason

CHAPTER 1

The Story of the Bomb

In our generation, planet earth has become a gigantic whirling bomb, liable to explode at any moment. The story of how it happened is a fascinating one.

Little did Albert Einstein, the gentlest of men, realize what men would do with his new insight into energy and mass. Not long after the turn of the century, he was writing on the blackboard the famous equation: $E = mc^2$. This equation explained the origin of atomic energy. The equation is used to calculate the amount of energy that will be released in a nuclear reaction. The calculation can be made provided one knows the masses of the nuclei. Thirty years later science was to enter its Elizabethan Age. Amazing advancements were made simultaneously in various European countries. Names such as Enrico Fermi, Chadwick, Bohr, Hahn, Strassmann, and the Joliot-Curies are prominent in the story.

It is difficult to believe it now, but in 1939 the word physicist was hardly known. Many Americans couldn't even pronounce it. Even the industrialists ignored the physicists.

The story changes with the flight of Lise Meitner, from Berlin to Sweden. As a Jew, she was not welcomed in Germany but she did find hospitality in other countries. In Sweden, she met with Niels Bohr and Hahn. Meitner had been engaged in bombarding uranium with neutrons. The results were unbelievable.

Nine months later Hahn wrote up a report on his experience with splitting the atom. He was hardly able to believe his own words. Bohr read the account and cried out, "How could we have overlooked that so long?"

On hearing of these experiments, the leading physicists knew that if it were true that more than one neutron was being liberated in the disintegration of uranium, then a chain reaction would be possible and this could lead to the construction of bombs that would be extremely dangerous. What troubled these men was the fact that with such bombs Hitler could either destroy or conquer the whole world.

The Kremlin had not encouraged fission experiments though some had been conducted in a shaft of the Moscow subway. Orders from above declared that such experiments had no practical value and should be stopped. But in America academic freedom encouraged adventurous scientists. After the publication of Hahn's article the Nazis knew about nuclear fission. The following year six of Germany's top atomic scientists met in Berlin. They discussed the possibility of constructing a "uranium machine." Dr. Flugge, one of the German scientists opposed to Nazism, published an extensive report on uranium chain reaction and the information found its way to Zurich and then to America.

While Einstein was vacationing at Long Island away from Princeton University, he was approached by fellow scientists who urged him to write to President Roosevelt. Einstein dictated such a letter in German and it was translated by Edward Teller. Part of the letter declared that "extremely powerful bombs of a new type may thus be constructed. A single bomb of this type, carried by boat and exploded in port, might very well destroy the whole port, together with some of the surrounding territory."

The story has often been told that Roosevelt didn't want to be bothered. But when someone reminded him that Robert Fulton had offered his steamship invention to Napoleon to guarantee a victorious invasion of England, Napoleon had waived away such a suggestion as fantastic, and thus lost an empire. As Roosevelt pondered the implications he at last declared, "This requires action!" Roosevelt's advisors told him that by 1945 a new bomb of the type to which Einstein had referred could be constructed. They were uncannily close in their estimate of the time required for the project.

The American leaders now feared that Hitler's scientists would be the first to succeed in assembling the atomic bomb. The allies believed that if Hitler should win the race the world's destiny would be entirely different than if they should win it. The famous Manhattan Project was immediately launched. It began at Chicago University in a large squash court. Robert Oppenheimer was in charge of what had once been the Los Alamos Ranch School for Boys, New Mexico. The project went ahead under conditions of the utmost secrecy. The ups and downs were many, including an accusation that Oppenheimer was a Communist spy. As a matter of fact, there were genuine Russian spies (under instructions from Moscow) near Los Alamos.

By December 2, 1942, at the Chicago University, Fermi and his co-workers had succeeded in producing the first manmade chain reaction. The fissionable material was shipped to the weapons research laboratory at Los Alamos. Here the elaborate techniques needed to detonate an atomic explosion were worked out by scientists and engineers.

The First Explosion

The test explosion of the first atomic bomb was planned for July, 1945. Stimson, Secretary of War, declared that the test bomb would yield about 500 tons of TNT. The first bomb dropped about twice that amount. He was only 5% right in his estimate. The first atomic bomb exceeded the equivalent of 20,000 tons of TNT.

Men like Einstein condemned the plan to use an atomic weapon. Others like Truman and Stimson agonized over the matter. It seemed to them that the alternative was the loss of millions of other lives as the war dragged on. Few really envisaged the full possibilities of the evil genie about to be released.

The test itself could have ended everything. No one knew the outer limits of a chain reaction and therefore some feared that the entire planet would be dissolved when the bomb exploded. They were also afraid of lightning setting off the bomb beforehand and incinerating the experimenters. Their fear was not unfounded as one conventional bomb used for rehearsal had previously been exploded by a bolt of lightning.

On the day of the first countdown, scientists were in a bunker ten miles southwest of Los Alamos. What happened was greater than anything that had been anticipated. The dazzling reflection of light, the hurricane-force wind, the deafening roar stupefied the beholders.

William Manchester quotes the words of William L. Lawrence regarding the event:

. . . A sunrise such as the world had never seen, a great, green supersun climbing in a fraction of a second to a height of more than 8,000 feet, rising ever higher until it touched the clouds, lighting up earth and sky all around with a dazzling luminosity. Up it went, a great ball of fire about a mile in diameter, changing colors as it kept shooting upward, from deep purple to orange, expanding, growing bigger, rising as it expanded, an elemental force freed from its bonds after being chained for billions of years. For a fleeting instant the color was unearthly green, such as one sees only in the corona of the sun during a total eclipse. It was as though the earth had opened and the skies had split. One felt as though one were present at the moment of creation when God said: "Let there be light." (*The Glory and the Dream*, Bantam Books, New York, 1975, pp. 377-378)

Oppenheimer was reminded of some words from the Hindu Scriptures "I am become Death, the shatter of worlds." One physicist present cried out, "The sun can't hold a candle to it!" He was right. For the temperature at the center of the explosion had been 100,000,000 degrees Fahrenheit which is three times the heat of the interior sun.

The message was sent in code to the allied leaders at Potsdam. The presidential party read these words: "Operated on this morning. Diagnosis not yet complete but results seem satisfactory and already exceed expectations." Stimson in a note to Churchill wrote, "Baby satisfactorily born."

The Potsdam Declaration: Hiroshima and Nagasaki

The famous Potsdam Declaration warned Japan that unless they surrendered unconditionally there would be "prompt and utter destruction." The atomic bomb was not mentioned as such. On July 28, the Premier of Japan rejected the Potsdam Declaration. On August 6, at 9:15 a.m., the first atomic missile was exploded over Hiroshima. The heart of the city of 340,000 was wiped out. Four and a half miles of the city were vaporized. Within a few years the death toll from that explosion would grow to 200,000.

Three days later a plutonium bomb was exploded over Nagasaki. A few days later the war was over.

Nuclear Proliferation

The Russians tested their first atomic bomb in August, 1949. A little later they exploded the greatest bomb ever – one of 50 megatons. (A kiloton is the equivalent of 1,000 tons of TNT, while a megaton is 1,000 kilotons.)

Countries that have already built and tested nuclear devices include United States, Soviet Union, Britain, France, China and India. Those that are believed capable of building a nuclear bomb include Argentina, Canada, Iran, West Germany, Israel, Italy, Japan, Pakistan, South Africa, Sweden and Switzerland.

Within the next six years the following countries will probably have the bomb: Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brazil, Denmark, Iraq, South Korea, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, and Taiwan. Four years after that, "Egypt, Finland, Libya and Yugoslavia are expected to manufacture the bomb.

It is this multiplying of nuclear missiles which inevitably will make the international situation sensitive and electric. Chances of nuclear warfare are multiplying by geometrical progression. No wonder that many of our leaders in the western world regard a nuclear war as inevitable and possibly imminent.

CHAPTER 2

Children and the Bomb

Much has been written in recent years on the effects of the nuclear arms race upon children. Writers such as Robert Lifton and John E. Mack have stressed that we have robbed children of the future by the fear environment we have created. Mack speaks of a questionnaire given to 1,000 grammar and high-school students between 1978 and 1980. He comments that these students were a somewhat biased sample because they were better informed about the dangers of nuclear war than might be expected in the average adolescent school population. Nevertheless, according to Mack, the comments of these students are "quite disturbing and demonstrate that the imminent threat of nuclear annihilation has penetrated deeply into their consciousness." The great majority of these students did not believe that they or their country could survive a nuclear attack. As regards the impact on their future plans, typical responses indicated that the adolescents saw the world as a place unstable and uncertain. Says Mack, "There is a revelation in these responses of the experience of fear and menace. There is also cynicism, sadness, bitterness and a sense of helplessness. Both feel unprotected. Some have doubts about planning or are unable to think ahead in any long-term sense." He continues, "It seems that these young people are growing up without the ability to form stable ideals, or the sense of continuity upon which the development of stable personality structure and the formation of serviceable ideals depend. We may find we are raising generations of young people without a basis for making long-term commitments, who were given over, of necessity, to doctrines of impulsiveness and immediacy in their personal relationships or choice of behaviors and activity" (April, 1981, *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*, "Psychosocial Effects of the Nuclear Arms Race," pp. 18-23).

The Bomb and Mental Health

The fact that suicide among adolescents has increased 300 percent since the sixties is certainly linked in part with the nuclear threat. These youngsters have grown up with the conviction that their world could dissolve at any moment and therefore purposeful living has no rational basis.

Let none ignore the impact of an uncertain future upon children. Professionals in mental health now link family disruption, drug abuse, increased loneliness, mental hospital admissions, and soaring suicide rates to the pandemic fear of annihilation by the bomb.

Because it seems to children that adults have stolen their world of the future by placing it in such jeopardy, some of their spontaneous responses are sprinkled with acrimony. Vivienne Verdon-Roe, author of *Growing Up in the Nuclear Age*, cites certain juvenile spokesmen as follows:

Kirk (15 years old): There are old men with fingers on the button and they're playing with our lives, which we haven't had yet, while they have had long full ones. It makes me mad. Personally, I feel it is hopeless - that it (the arms race and nuclear threat) is not going to stop and I'm going to die before my time. We take drugs because we're trying to make the best of the time we have got.

Suzanne (12 years old): We are playing God with a world that does not belong to us alone. . . Our world might be split in two before this day is over. I am terrified.

Verdon-Roe rightly comments that the modern generation of youth lack the ability to develop stable ideals and moral principles because they do not see the world as stable. Instead their mentality often veers towards impulsiveness, risk-taking, and extreme hedonism.

A typical adolescent reaction is that of Jessica (17 years old):

By allowing the whole thing to get us down and think what can I do as one person, it's going to happen anyway - that's a very dangerous attitude, cause it moves the force along. By agreeing it may happen you're almost making sure it does happen.

Jessica is making an important point. We all know the power of auto-suggestion. Psychologists are now emphasizing the necessity for adults to become obviously involved in efforts against nuclear war so that their children find a measure of security in the awareness that their parents at least are acting rationally.

The Reaction of Young Children

The evidence is clear that even young grade-school children are aware of the threat of nuclear holocaust. When 350 youngsters were asked in the sixties what they thought about the world of the future, seventy percent mentioned the bomb in their response, even though it had not been named in the question. A 1982 survey by William Beardslee and John Mack included over one thousand children in grades 5-12 in Baltimore, Los Angeles, and Boston. The majority of the children thought that war was likely, and approximately half did not believe a limited nuclear war was possible. Data gleaned over the past five years reveals an increase in awareness of the dangers of nuclear weapons by children.

Past generations have exalted the ideal of self-denial in the present in order to have greater achievement and joy in the future. For many that motivation has vanished in this atomic age. Why delay present gratification for a future that may never be? Only the assurances given by the Judaeo-Christian revelation can stem the prevailing tide of meaninglessness which threatens to annihilate our children.

CHAPTER 3

Christians and the Bomb

The nuclear dilemma is infinitely complex. There are no simple solutions. Even Christians vary greatly in their approach to the problem. Some look upon an imminent nuclear war as God's means of chastening the world. Others recognizing the biblical doctrine of depravity and the legitimate place of force as set forth in Romans 13, believe that the method of deterrence is the best available to us. While some demonstrate on behalf of a nuclear freeze, their critics point out that the communist countries might not participate in endeavors towards the same ideal. A number of people can be found who proclaim that they would rather be "red than dead," but others question the sincerity of the claim. Most Christians would rather have their children alive regardless of political pressures.

Kenneth Kantzer, in *Christianity Today*, spoke for many thoughtful Christians when he declared:

Our Christian duty is clear. People of principle must renounce nuclear warfare and work desperately for bilateral, verifiable agreements. We must begin by firmly repudiating the policy of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD). We simply will not threaten to bomb civilian population centers indiscriminately as a deterrent. It's wrong to murder innocent people; and if it's wrong to do it, it's also wrong even to threaten to do it. No military value would be achieved by such bombing. It would be an empty gesture of hate unworthy of a follower of Christ.

Yet we must spend every effort to seek agreement with the Soviet Union: First: to freeze the nuclear arms at the present level. Second, to cut nuclear arms limits back step-by-step. Third, to outlaw nuclear arms altogether, either as tactical or strategical weapons. And fourth, to reduce and then ultimately to outlaw conventional weapons in warfare. (*Christianity Today*, January 21, 1983, p. 11)

Dr. Kantzer is aware of the problem that exists even with this approach. "Essential to this whole process, of course, is verification. Unfortunately, it's very difficult to check the build-up of atomic weaponry."

Just recently, Tom Dybdahl, who works with the Louisiana Coalition on Jails and Prisons, wrote an article for *Spectrum*, setting out a view that would appeal to many evangelical Christians. He emphasized the incongruity of Christians in one country being willing to destroy fellow Christians just because they happen to live in another country. He has in mind the hostage situation, whereby each country holds the citizens of the other country as hostages. Says Dybdahl:

The cross is the great opposite to the bomb. The bomb says we deal with our enemies by force, and if necessary, kill them. The cross says we deal with our enemies by loving them, and if necessary, dying for them. The bomb says peace comes through strength; the cross says that peace comes through forgiveness and reconciliation. The bomb represents the ultimate in human might, the cross represents the power of God. The bomb appeals to our fears; the cross calls us to hope. The bomb brings the possibility of death for all people. The cross brings the possibility of life for all. We simply cannot march under both banners. (*Spectrum*, Volume 14, No.2, p. 42)

Dybdahl continues by reminding us that choosing the cross may lead to crucifixion and then he says, "But not even death can separate us from God's love and the promise of resurrection. The biggest threat to our Christian life is not that we might be forced to live in a totalitarian society, or even that we might be killed, but that we might fall away from our Lord." He even goes so far as to say, "We cannot take up the cross until we lay down the bomb." Here is certainly one viewpoint that must receive our prayerful consideration.

The Bishops and the Bomb

Thoughtful presentations on the opposite side are found in *National Review*, April 1, 1983, and *Harpers*, May, 1982. The articles by Michael Novak and Michael Kinsley, give a liberal perspective.

The American Bishops' Pastoral Statement on Modern War, affirms that a government that is threatened by armed, unjust aggression, must defend its people using armed force if necessary. The Bishops' Letter, *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response*, does not advocate unilateral disarmament or illegal resistance (such as not paying taxes), nor does it advise Christians to quit working in defense industries. It does call for a halting of the arms race. But the Bishops' statement has been criticized by some on the basis that it does not take into account the vast differences in modern nuclear weapons to those of the 1950's.

The Modern Weapons

There are, for example, satellites that are so powerful that they can detect the heat from a missile launched from a silo or a submarine and even see a newspaper from hundreds of miles above. There is a new kind of Soviet spy satellite that is known as the Rorsat (radar-equipped ocean-reconnaissance satellites). These spy satellites have an active radar system which scans the surface of the ocean detecting naval forces in any weather. It is feared that such orbital radars can even detect subtle patterns in the sea, indicating the passage of submarines hundreds of feet below the surface. This is important because such technological breakthroughs could neutralize trident missile submarines.

General Pierre Gallois, a retired French air force officer, who helped to design France's independent nuclear force, has also pointed out that modern missiles are vastly different to their predecessors. There is now an amazing increase in missile accuracy and a corresponding reduction in warhead yields. According to Gallois, this means that the Jonathan Schell scenario of devastating exchanges against cities "may be obsolete neither side would dare" (*The Fate of the Planet Earth*, Avon Books, 1982). Modern weapons are designed to attack military targets, preferably without causing extensive collateral damage that would invite reprisals. Because of this, the mega tonnage of the U.S. arsenals has shrunk by almost half since 1970 and by three-quarters since the fifties. The problem, however, in Gallois' statement is that word "may." The fact is that men cease to be rational when they are emotional, and there is nothing like war to make people emotional. No man can promise, guarantee, or predict with certainty that a limited nuclear war would not become a global holocaust. Even known superhawks, such as Colin Gray and Keith Paine have admitted that current American strategic policy is immoral because it is incompatible with at least three of the six 'just war' guidelines. Gray and Paine point out that the current American policy "contains no definition of success aside from denying victory to the enemy, no promise that the success of nuclear power would ensure a better future than surrender, and no sense of proportion because central war strategy in operational terms is not guided by political goals" ("Victory Is

Possible, Foreign Policy," Summer 1980, p. 17).

Fear and Irrationality

The limited nuclear war theory is all the rage now on both sides of the Atlantic. Indeed modern nuclear weapons are designed with this in mind. It is not, therefore, strange that the two most recent presidents, as well as Lt. Col. Haig, and Casper Weinberger have referred to the possibility publicly. The so-called counterforce weapons are weapons which, if they are to be used at all, must be used first. Such weapons aim at wiping out the arsenals of the other side before they can be employed. The problem is that such counterforce weapons create fear in the opposing nation which can prompt it to a first-strike activity. This leads to a scene where both sides have people planning war, and on both sides people come to the conclusion that the war nobody wants cannot be avoided. Activity that involves millions of people on both sides is engaged in every day based on the premise of nuclear war. As Richard Barnett has said, "The world is drifting toward war, toward nuclear war." This conclusion is representative of thousands of thinkers today.

What gives Barnett's prognosis credibility, is the evidence from history which demonstrates that man, in spite of his rationality, has an infinite capacity for folly. When men are excited they do things not anticipated prior to that moment. Many thoughtful scholars of history observing this phenomenon warn us that fear on either side can engender extreme reactions placing the whole globe in jeopardy. While ancient wars were often triggered by greed, most of the great wars of recent decades have been the result of fear. While greed wants to absorb something for its own use, fear would rather annihilate the object of its dread. This has tremendous implications for the present scenario. The arms race is the child of fear. It's a race that one side can lead but can never win.

Part of nuclear irrationality, of course, is our readiness to blast into oblivion scores of millions of innocent men, women and children. Both sides believe that the bulk of people in the opposing nation are innocent and it is only their leaders who are wicked. Yet both sides are prepared to destroy the innocent because of the comparatively few wicked ones who control the government. For Christians who stop to think about that - it just doesn't make sense.

Sheer mathematics and the science of proportion should offer some guide to us. If it is true that soon just about any group can play war games with nuclear missiles, and if it is also true that the ecology of the globe could be so affected as to destroy the very capacity of our natural environment to sustain life, then we are compelled to admit that the real issue here is not finite but infinite. And that being the case one dare not take any avoidable risk. When the stakes are as high as they are in this instance, taking chances is immoral.

Christian Responsibility

There are other more obvious moral questions too.

One child asked what right did some old men have to keep their fingers hovering over the buttons that could bring an end to the generation not yet grown up. Does anyone generation have the right to play roulette in such a manner with countless generations as yet unborn? Do we have the right to deny them the privilege of an opportunity to live a full life? In a public debate at Princeton Theological Seminary George F. Kennan called this an unquestioning and greedy advantage. Kennan continued:

This civilization we're talking about is not the property of our generation alone. We are not proprietors of it; we're only the custodians. It's something infinitely greater and more important than we are. It is the whole: we're only a part. It is not our achievements; it's the achievement of others. We did not create it, we inherited it. It was bestowed upon us; and it was bestowed upon us with the implicit obligation to cherish it, to preserve it, to develop it, to pass it on - let us hope improved, but in any case intact - to others who were supposed to come after us.

Kennan's argument is worth serious and careful thought by every Christian. Towards the end of the debate he said:

Where the Christian duty lies, in the face of these facts, seems to me so obvious as to require no extrapolation. Not only must we encourage our public and our government to put aside the very idea of using nuclear weapons against any country whatsoever, but we must help our government both by criticism and by encouragement - to avoid the war that might place us under the temptation to use them, or place others under the temptation to use them against us.

In two world wars of this century, the chauvinists on both sides have claimed Christian merit for their respective causes, and have appealed to the Almighty to support them in their military undertakings. Whether this combination of religious faith and secular chauvinism was ever wholly forgivable, ... is a question I commend for your contemplation. But that the development of modern military technology has now created conditions which allow only one Christian answer to the possibility of a Soviet-American War seems to me inescapable. I do not need to tell you what that answer is.

It should be remembered that George F. Kennan is a former United States ambassador to the USSR in Yugoslavia. He won the Pulitzer Prize for history (*Russia Leaves the War*, 1956). He is also a member of the Institute for Advanced Study and Professor of History in International Affairs Emeritus at Princeton University.

It should also be kept in mind that some men who have been heavily engaged in nuclear plans have, after retirement reflections, repudiated all sympathy with nuclear missile promotion. Such men have come to agree with General Douglas MacArthur who said, "War has become a Frankenstein to destroy both sides ... no longer does it possess the chance of the winner of the jewels. . . it contains, rather, the germs of double suicide." A recently discovered letter written by Harry Truman before his death sets forth his fear that the world might be destroyed by nuclear war in harmony with what he understood to be the prediction of Old Testament prophets. It was Eisenhower who warned us that "The era of armaments is over." He went on to say that the nations who forgot that fact would surely perish. And undoubtedly his fear was that if some nations forgot it the whole world might perish. President Carter has given similar warnings since leaving the White House.

Another factor that should not be forgotten is that jurists have ruled that nuclear weapons are illegal and a large number of the world's statesmen have come to agree with this legal ruling. On December 7, 1963, the District Court of Tokyo delivered a lengthy decision declaring that the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki had violated international law. They asserted that what was done violated all the rules of law set forth in the Conventions of Geneva and The Hague, which conventions forbid the destruction of all property except that which clearly belongs to a military installation. For those who regard that verdict as a naturally biased one, the stronger fact remains that on November 24, 1961, in the United Nations General Assembly, Resolution 1653, which condemned all nuclear war as a violation of international law, was adopted by a vote of 55 to 20/ with 26 countries abstaining. The reasons given on this occasion are of importance to all.

Section I of the Declaration on the Prohibition of the Use of Nuclear and Thermo-Nuclear Weapons declared that:

1. The use of nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons is contrary to the spirit, letter and aims of the United Nations and, as such, a direct violation of the charter of the United Nations;
2. The use of nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons would exceed even the scope of war and cause indiscriminate suffering and destruction to mankind and civilization and, as such, is contrary to the rules of international law and the laws of humanity;
3. The use of nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons is a war directed not against an enemy or enemies alone but also against mankind in general, since the peoples of the world not involved in such a war would be subjected to all the evils generated by the use of such weapons;
4. Any state using nuclear and thermo-nuclear weapons is to be considered as violating the charter of the United Nations, as acting contrary to the laws of humanity and is committing a crime against mankind and civilization.

It should also be pointed out that where groups are given the opportunity of expressing themselves about government policy, the majority are opposed to a nuclear arms race. Nine months before the last election two citizen groups in Weston, Massachusetts began organizing to give the people of that area a chance to speak their minds on the issue. According to Carter, this issue of nuclear weapons was the most important in the campaign. In this area of the U.S. where voters were informed as to what the nuclear arms race was costing them in terms of security, taxes and jobs, the majority voted to stop the nuclear arms race.

An article in *Christianity and Crisis*, December 8, 1980, "Stopping Armageddon: How?" closes with these words:

The Massachusettes' message must be repeated and amplified. Otherwise we can expect a replay of the Cuban missile crisis in 1962 but with a different ending: Thousands of Hiroshimas within a span of hours.

Again in 1980 the United Nations General Assembly demonstrated the international consensus by affirming the use of nuclear weapons to be a "violation of the Charter of the United Nations and a crime against humanity. And in the same document we find the conclusion that the "use or threat of use of nuclear weapons should therefore be prohibited, pending nuclear disarmament." Prior to these rulings but after Hiroshima were the four Geneva Conventions of 1949 which in Article 35 outlawed nuclear weapons by this mandate: "It is prohibited to employ methods and means of warfare which are intended, or may be expected, to cause widespread, long-term and severe damage to natural environment.' ,

Even more convincing to most Christians are the words of Jesus. "So whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them; for this is the law and the prophets" (Mt 7:12). "Truly, I say to you, as you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me" (Mt 25:45). In 1900 Andrew Carnegie predicted that in the twentieth century, to kill a man will be considered as disgusting as we in this day consider it disgusting to eat one. But since 1900 we have exterminated 200,000,000 human lives. The nuclear bomb is the most efficient instrument of mass murder ever devised. When we tamper with the building blocks of the universe we run the risk of turning creation into chaos.

CHAPTER 4

The Christian and the Just War

Since the days of Augustine (354-430) the majority of Christians have believed in the concept of a just war. By surveying the literature available on this concept it is possible to gather a number of criteria used to determine a just war. The authors of *Nuclear Holocaust*, Ronald J. Sider and R.K. Taylor, isolate the following elements that have been used to determine whether a war is just.

1. Last resort. A just war can only be fought after every possible just solution has been considered and tried.
2. Just cause. "The goals for which one fights must be just. And the opponent must be clearly unjust, even though one recognizes moral ambiguity even in oneself" (*Nuclear Holocaust*, p. 62).
3. Right attitudes. No just war can be fought in the spirit of hate and revenge. William Temple spoke on this issue during World War II: "We Christians in wartime are called to the hardest of all tasks, to fight without hatred, to resist without bitterness, and in the end, if God grant it so, to triumph without vindictiveness."
4. Prior declaration of war. The war leaders of a just war must make a formal declaration to allow the potential opponent an opportunity to cease from aggressive immoral activities.
5. Reasonable hope of success. The cost of lives and resources even in a just war may be heavy. In the light of these costs war leaders must ensure that the objectives are attainable.
6. Noncombatant immunity. In a just war military action should not be directed at innocent noncombatants.
7. Proportionality. The good results of the war must exceed the terrible costs.

If all seven of the above elements have to be present for a war to be just then it must be apparent to all with the slightest knowledge of history that there never has been a just war. Many have thought that World War II was a just war. Perhaps it could have been and perhaps it was for some of the Allies. But the battles of Somme and Dresden (100,000 noncombatants perished in one day in the battle of Dresden) certainly mar the record of the participating ally nations.

It is clear from the teachings of Jesus that a Christian cannot be involved in war - just or otherwise. Consider Matthew 5:38-48:

You have heard that it was said, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth." But I say to you, do not resist one who is evil. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also; and if anyone would sue you and take your coat, let him have your cloak as well; and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles. Give to him who begs from you, and do not refuse him who would borrow from you. You have heard that it was said, "You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy." But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust. For if you love those who love you, what reward have you? Do not even the tax collectors do the same? And if you salute only your brethren, what more are you doing than others? Do not even the Gentiles do the same? You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.

The full significance of this statement of Jesus can only be appreciated when it is remembered that it was said at a time when the Zealots were arming themselves in the hills of Galilee and were making raids on their enemies, the Romans. The Zealots, like the Crusaders of the Middle Ages, believed that they had the approval of God to spill the blood of an enemy. Jesus' attitude was quite different. It was simply, "Love your enemies." This command of Jesus does not, of course, rule out all forms of resistance. We must not take his statements out of context and absolutize them. Jesus constantly opposed evil persons. He did not bow before all forms of evil in an indifferent, meek and passive way (Mt 23:13-33). An example of his nonviolent resistance; is seen in his rather dramatic act of cleansing the temple (In 2:13-21).

While all Christians are called to be peacemakers, Scripture, it would seem, teaches that governments have the authority to use the sword to bring judgment on evildoers. Consider Romans 13: 1-5:

Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Would you have no fear of him who is in authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive his approval, for he is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword in vain; he is the servant of God to execute his wrath on the wrongdoer.

Many Christians have used this passage as a scriptural basis for a just war. But it must be admitted that R.J. Sider and R.K. Taylor are correct in pointing out that the passage has no direct reference to nations going to war. Note the following comments by these authors:

... Romans 13:1-7 says nothing about war. Verses 2-6 show that Paul is talking, not about the governmental function of waging war, but rather that of policing the society. The question of whether or not the government ought to wage war is not the subject of discussion. Rather, it is the government's police role of punishing those who disturb society with wrongdoing. Even the word for "sword" (*machaira*) used in verse 4 underlines this point. The *machaira* was a long dagger, not a long sword used in battle. The *machaira* would be the equivalent of a policeman's pistol rather than a soldier's M-21 rifle. (p. 150)

But while Romans 13:1-7 is not specifically addressing the issue of a just war, its basic principle is surely applicable on the level of international disputes. That principle is that governing authorities are providentially used by God to bring judgment on an evildoer.

The Just War and Nuclear Weapons

The question which faces all war strategists is whether a war involving nuclear weapons could meet the criteria for a just war. One evangelical scholar and pastor has faced this question. Referring to immunity of noncombatants, John Scott has said that the principle of immunity for noncombatants "is sufficient to condemn the use of strategic nuclear weapons. Because they are indiscriminate in their

effects, destroying combatants and noncombatants alike, it seems clear to me that they are ethically indefensible, and that every Christian, whatever he may think of the use or the possibility of a 'just' use of conventional weapons, must be a nuclear pacifist" (*Christianity Today*, February 8, 1980, p. 451. The authors of *Nuclear Holocaust* quote Billy Graham as saying: "The opportunities I have had to visit Yugoslavia, Hungary, and Poland have been very significant. I went with many stereotypes in my mind, but I came away with a new understanding especially of how the church exists and in some instances thrives in these societies - and a new awareness of their concern for peace ... No. I do not think the present differences are worth nuclear war" (*Sojourners*, "A Change of Heart," Aug. 1979, p. 13).

According to these two Christians, then, to wage a nuclear war now against the USSR or the above communist countries would violate a number of the just war norms. Only a blind and prejudiced nationalism could justify such a horrible event at the moment.

CHAPTER 5

Nuclear War - Inevitable?

I want you to think the unthinkable. I'm going to share facts that only 2% of the inhabitants of this country know, although they are available everywhere. The first most terrible fact is this: Nuclear war is inevitable and possibly imminent. That is the belief of many of the best-informed leaders of our western world.

Did you know that the modern nuclear weapons are designed for a limited nuclear war? Did you know that the Pentagon has on several occasions recommended the use in past years of nuclear weapons? Do you remember the war of Yom Kippur in the Middle East in 1973? Did you know that Henry Kissinger put the nuclear arsenals in this country on alert at that time? He thought the Russians intended to unilaterally invade the Middle East and the world's destiny hovered in the balance. Do you remember the Cuban crisis? To John Kennedy it seemed a 50/50 possibility that there would be a world holocaust at that time. In Cuba, the Russian engineers were feverishly assembling the plans for projecting the missiles. In those last few hours the Russians called it off. Did you know that one year after Hiroshima was incinerated, before any country but the U.S. had a nuclear weapon, Harry Truman threatened the Russians that he would drop another bomb on them unless they moved out of Iran?

Many of our best-informed leaders believe that a nuclear war is inevitable. But, of course, they mean a limited nuclear war. Today we have weapons that are so refined that they need only the explosive power of one-thousandth of what was used in the forties and the fifties. We have weapons that are 150 times more accurate. It is possible for the Russians to project a missile from their country to hit a specific football field in this country (USA). That wasn't possible decades ago. And because of this, nuclear strategists think that a limited nuclear war would be possible. Two famous strategists, Colin Gray and Keith Paine of the Hudson Institute, (well-thought-of by the Pentagon), said America must develop the capability and the determination to wage nuclear war on an ever-ascending scale of violence until the desired outcome is achieved.

We are all survivors. We are a new breed, a generation such as the world has never known. It has now been demonstrated that the universe is inflammable. We're only waiting for some fool to set a match to it. We have thousands of weapons positioned around the world aimed at other nations. On the other side of the world are thousands of weapons directed at us. At any time someone can give the word of command to launch them. We are survivors of that potential tragedy.

About four years ago there were fifty-one American hostages in Tehran. We all recall the anger, frustration, and heartache it caused. But today our world has over 500 million hostages in two countries alone. Holding hostages has been deplored as barbarous ever since the Dark Ages. The leaders of each country, America and USSR, hold the inhabitants of the other country hostage. If their leaders do the wrong thing, innocent populations will be blotted out. So we have grown used to standing before a firing squad. We've gotten used to the thought of not only being targeted but targeting even fellow Christians, innocent men, women and children - by the millions. How tragic, how terribly tragic! Science has given us everything, except tomorrow. Who wants their baby to be born in an air raid shelter and to die of radiation sickness?

Nuclear Weaponry

Let me tell you a few facts about the Trident. The Trident has followed the Polaris and the Poseidon. One Trident submarine can wipe out any country on earth in a few hours. One Trident submarine has enough missiles to wipe out 408 major cities each with a blast five times that of Hiroshima! One submarine can convey more explosive power than all that was used in World War II.

Just think of that! That's the perilous world in which you and I live.

Think of what happened back there on August 6, 1945. At 9: 15 a.m. a B-29 dropped the first nuclear weapon. Within seconds a city of 340,000 was transformed into a hell. Instantaneously tens of thousands of men, women and children were burnt, blasted, crushed. Four square miles of civilization were wiped out. A colossal tower of flames sucked in everything within three miles and cremated all that was combustible. The searing light could melt the eyeballs of someone miles away. The thunderous sound shattered eardrums. Every tree within a mile 'was knocked out of the earth. Windows seventeen miles away were shattered. Here is a woman half-mad looking for her child - at last she finds him. His head is like a boiled octopus. Here is a man, stark naked, standing in the black descending rain, holding his eyeball in the palm of his hand. Here are girls in agony crying out, "Stupid Americans." People are black and red and the front of people cannot be distinguished from the back. That was Hiroshima! Just think one Trident could create more than four hundred Hiroshimas.

A Poetic Version

A poet, Ernest Cardinal, has put it like this:

I saw an angel, all his cells were electronic eyes
And I heard a supersonic voice saying, "Open up thy typewriter and type"
And I beheld a silver projectile in flight which went from Europe to America in twenty minutes.
And the name of the projectile was the H-bomb
And hell flew with it
And I saw a kind of flying saucer fall from heaven
And the seismograph patterned a shock like an earthquake.
And all the artificial planets fell to earth
And the president of the National Radiation Council
The Director of the Atomic Energy Commission,
The Secretary of Defense were all deep in their sheltering caves
And the first angel set off the warning siren
And from the heavens rained strontium 90
And the second angel set off the warning siren
And all the eardrums for 300 miles were shattered by the sound of the explosion

All retinas that saw the flash were seared throughout those same 300 miles
The heat of ground zero was like that of the sun
And steel and iron and glass and concrete were burnt up
And sucked into the skies to fall as radioactive rain
There was loosed a hurricane wind the force of Hurricane Flora
Three million cars and trucks flew up into the skies and crashed into buildings bursting like Molotov cocktails
Then the third angel set off the warning siren I beheld a mushroom cloud above New York
And a mushroom cloud above Moscow
And a mushroom cloud above London
And a mushroom cloud above Peking
And all the stores and all the museums and all the libraries and all the beauties of the earth were turned to vapor
And went to form part of the cloud of radioactive dust which hung above the planet poisoning it.

M.A.D.

The whole world is now a valley of the shadow of death (ps 23:41. It is so terrible that we have invented euphemisms to deal with the horrors.

We talk about MAD - Mutual Assured Destruction. What a strange euphemism! In other words, each of the superpowers can wipe out each other. We have enough bombs to perform the task - the equivalent of a million and a half Hiroshimas! We can incinerate the world ten times over. We have stockpiled ten tons of TNT for every man, woman and child on earth. We talk about "Collateral Damage" - that means the destruction of innocent civilians. And we talk about the "Peacekeeper" - that's the MX-missile with its ten nuclear warheads.

The Terror

How terrible is it? Think of Hiroshima, think of it for one second and remember that the heart of that fire was three times as hot as the center of the sun. And now another second has passed, another Hiroshima, think of a new Hiroshima with each second. Go on for thirty-five minutes. There you have pictured what one submarine can accomplish. One submarine armed with nuclear weapons. Keep on saying it if you can - Hiroshima, Hiroshima - each second picturing the death of 200,000 people. Now do it for seventeen hours. That's a submarine fleet. But if you have the courage, keep it up second after second - Hiroshima, Hiroshima - keep it up for over two weeks, only then will you have the meaning of the nuclear arsenals of the world. That's the terror that we face.

Now war strategists are planning star wars. We're extending the arms race into space. We'll have satellite battlestations, hundreds and thousands of miles up into space. It will cost the U.S. 500 billion dollars. Do you know how much it costs to feed, clothe and house the inhabitants of earth per year? Seventeen billion dollars! But we spend that much every two weeks in military preparation. Do you know how much we spend on military control and disarmament? Half as much as we spend on military bands! 1/25,000th of what it will cost for the space battlestation.

Isn't there something wrong; haven't we gone mad?

No Justification for War

Think of John Kennedy through those terrible hours in 1962. He knew that there was a 50/50 chance of the destruction of civilization. Think of the possibility of our whole civilization being blown to glory or to hell because of some Russian missile 200 miles from Florida! War is no solution to the problems of mankind.

President Eisenhower said, "The era of armament is over. And the nation that doesn't realize that will perish." What we have now isn't war at all. War died in 1945. Now we have a new thing, a terrible nameless thing.

I ask you to think on the gap between the horrors of nuclear warfare and the reasons that foolish men give for it. Think of the gap between the supposed causes of war and the wars themselves. Remember the battle of the Somme during World War I? It went from July to November 16, and took 1.3 million lives. What reasons could excuse that? World War I took fifteen million lives. World War II slaughtered fifty-one million.

What can justify such mindless, extravagant waste of human life?

The Kaiser said about World War I: "Even if we're destroyed, the British will lose India." What a ridiculous remark! He was prepared to risk all of Germany so long as the British lost India. Just before Pearl Harbor was bombed, the war minister of Imperial Japan said, "Sometimes we have to shut our eyes and just jump -even if to suicide."

Do you see the insane gap between the horrors of war and the reasons that people give for it?

While I was in Australia recently I read the biography of Mr. Robert Hawke, the Australian prime minister. The book tells the story of his tense moments in Israel in the 1970's when their relationship with Egypt broke down. Hawke was shuttling to and fro from Jerusalem to Moscow. At one stage the Israelites shook their fist in Hawke's face as though he were a Russian. They said to him, "You tell them there in Moscow it'll be nukes next time." It will be nuclear weapons next time. No one can tell me that a nation going down the tube, losing its way won't resort to the powers that wrecked Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Eisenhower once said, "The problem in defense is to know where to stop without undoing from within what you are trying to save from without." Henry Kissinger said, "It's not an easy and simple matter to find a strategy that will protect your own life style without destroying it." There is no easy answer. But there are some things we do know. The great majority of people on both sides want peace.

Did you know that the cardiologist of Brezhnev, Dr. Schozolv, went on TV in Russia and spoke to one hundred million people warning them against nuclear war. He then travelled to the U.S. and gave many lectures on the dangers of nuclear war. Many, many physicians and scientists in Russia are very much opposed to nuclear war. The trouble is we have to trust people who lead us into wars like Vietnam.

Our Global Village

The nuclear war threat has made this world into a bedroom. We're married to the Russians, we live that close. The awesome powers of the

nuclear weapons have reduced our world to the size of an orange. We can't afford to fight, we live in the same room. We're in the same rowboat, and if there's a hole in the Russian end we'll go down too. We're like two men in a sea of gasoline. One has six matches, the other has three. Both think they can prevent an explosion if one gets twelve matches and the other gets six. That's the arms race. It won't work too well!

It is fear that creates war. It is fear that is behind the arms race. Fear started the wars between Sparta and Athens, between Rome and Carthage, between England and Germany. And when fear comes, man shows he has an infinite capacity for folly. He makes irrational decisions. He fails to count the cost.

False Alarms

Some authorities believe that within ten years thirty nations will have nuclear weapons. It is rumored that Iran has all it needs to make a bomb. Imagine some fanatic willing to commit suicide with the bomb! There was some measure of control when it was just the U.S. and the USSR in possession of the bomb.

However, there would be no room for complacency even if the bomb was confined to the superpowers, for there have been one hundred and seventy-six false alarms in the nuclear system in recent years. One such alarm was caused by radar signals bouncing off the rising moon. No provision had been made for this contingency. The rising moon could have caused World War III. There have been mechanical failures. Then there are the risks created by personnel with psychological problems. Five thousand employees are eliminated every year because of mental instability. Many psychological problems are hard to detect before they appear in strange behavior.

In light of the above considerations how can anyone believe that nuclear war is impossible. In spite of the assurances of some, we have never made a weapon of war without using it. The history of the twentieth century alone is enough to raise serious doubts about the arguments of those who feel that a nuclear war will never happen. We need to understand the root of the problem. Our next chapter focuses on the reasons why the history of the twentieth century has been one of war and bloodshed.

CHAPTER 6

The Real Problem and Its Solution

The problem is not the nuclear weapons. It is the nuclear man. No one would be worried about nuclear war if Mother Teresa was in charge of the nuclear weapons. It's not the hardware, it's the heartware. The problem lies in the heart of man.

Man, the nuclear animal, is a weird animal. His soul has been sundered from God. Long, long ago there was a nuclear explosion in the soul of man that separated him from God and paradise. He looked at God and said, "Not thy will but mine be done." And he turned paradise into hell. The problem is nuclear man. That's our real tragedy, our real threat.

Recently, I saw a cartoon showing a plane flying at the speed of sound. Underneath was a slow, ponderous turtle, hardly moving. The cartoon suggested that man is a technological giant, but a moral midget. Morally, we travel like the turtle. We have improved our weapons but not our morals. Think of our stupidity. We stand hip deep in garbage, in our pollution, shooting rockets at the moon.

Man, the nuclear animal, is a weird animal. His soul has been sundered from God. Without Christ he's sad, bad, and mad. However, once he receives Christ by faith he is more precious than the golden wedge of Ophir. Once he believes, he receives a life that can measure with the life of God. It has often been said that Newton banished God from the universe when he likened the universe to a vast machine running according to fixed laws, that Darwin banished man when he explained how man had ascended from the animals and that Freud banished mind when he explained that man was controlled largely by his glands. With God gone, man gone, mind gone, man becomes an animal. So he behaves like one.

Most of the men agitating for war are atheists. They think human beings are only animals. Where there is no God there is no man. Only flotsam and jetsam, animated mud. Man has lost God and that is the reason for his crazy behavior in times of war. Man is worse than an animal. An animal only kills when it wants to eat. An animal rarely kills its own kind. Many are wondering what sort of animal is man. Is he governed by his inherited impulses as Darwin said? Is he governed by an empty stomach as Marx said? Or is he governed by his sex glands as Freud said? Is it any wonder that we behave like animals?

Every ideology, every system of belief depends on anthropology, which is the study of man. Whatever you believe about reality depends first on what you think you are. One poet looked up into the heavens and said:

Twinkle twinkle little star,
I don't wonder what you are.
You're the cooling down of gases
Into incandescent masses.

Ironically, tragically, we know what the stars are, and we have probed the inner secrets of the atom, but we don't know what we are. Just "star-stuff"? Is that all we are? We are human beings halfway in the scale of magnitude between the atom and the star but we don't know who we are.

The Solution

Long ago our Lord Jesus Christ said, "You will not come to me that you might have life" (Un 5:40). The bomb is limited in its power, it can't destroy personality. Our lives are hid with Christ in God once we believe. The bomb is limited in its range. The worst it can do can only last until the resurrection. For Jesus says in John 5:24, "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears my word, and believes in him who sent me, has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life." You needn't fear death if you've already died. When you and I come to Christ and to the cross and learn in the words of Scripture, that if one died for all, then all died; when you and I learn that by faith we died with him - at that moment we have everlasting life. Those only who have died in Christ have no fear of death. The power of the cross is our only hope.

A young man was asked to go on a dangerous mission. He was warned by the captain of the boat that he might die if he went. He said, "My friend, I have died already." He had lost the fear of death because he knew that in Christ he had passed from death unto life.

The God-man came to this earth two thousand years ago and he experienced the worst that hell could offer. He went through death to offer us life. He intended that the cross should be the one lever that would raise the world. Behold him! He has the blood of aliens in his veins (Ruth the Moabitess) that he might be a brother to all, be they Russians, Americans, Communist Chinese or Australian Aborigines. Christ is a brother to all. He can bind us together in the bonds of love if we will but let him.

In his first months of life he was a refugee fleeing from one country to another. He was assaulted by Herod, a totalitarian tyrant who was determined to kill the newborn king. But Herod was taken by surprise, he didn't expect a king whose scepter would be a cross.

When Jesus said, "When these things come to pass lift up your heads" he was speaking to people who had "died" already (Lk 21:28). Christ took the whole world with him on that cross. He died as the Representative of the whole human race. We died with him. We were buried with him. We rose with him. Let's make this a little more personal. If he represented the whole world he represented me. And I died with him, I was buried with him, I rose with him. Now by faith I am seated in the heavenly places above and I have everlasting life.

The bomb has no threats for the Christian.

Only in Christ do we find out who we are. That great scientific genius Pascal said, "Without Christ, we don't know what life is or death or God or ourselves. Without Christ we cannot but act as animals." And if we are just animals go ahead and blast, why not? Why not?

But, there is something in us that rebels against that. You and I can't speak for very long without using the word "ought." We have a strong conviction about right and wrong. We are not content to be animals. If we were animals we could never complain about anything. There would be no ethics, no morality, no oughts. But you and I can't live without oughts. Nietzsche, the philosopher who went mad the year Hitler was born, taught the German people to ignore Jesus Christ and enthrone the superman. He died a madman. He's a parable of our age. Our age has come to ignore Jesus Christ and it's dying in madness.

There is only one key to life and that is God. And there is only one key to God and that is Christ. Christ is the only key that is not also a lock. Have you ever thought of that? Science came along offering to be the new messiah but science turned out to be a lock. It gave us a Frankenstein that is threatening to wipe us all out. That was a key that became a lock. Many thought that education was the key. Have you seen the cartoon of the two men in prison. One man says to the other, "Well, you can just play cards, but I'm going to study and prepare myself and one day when you're a common thief I'll be a shrewd embezzler." Education just makes bad men more efficient in their badness. Degrees in education were as common as blackberries in Hitler's government. Education doesn't solve man's dilemmas. It was a key that turned out to be a lock. God is the only key to life and Christ is the key to God. But if there's no Christ as God, then there's no God, and if there's no God, then there's no man, and if there's no man, then there's no moral values. If there's no values then there's no meaning and therefore no oughts. So blast away, why not? But if man is made in the image of God, and if we must give an account to our Creator as to how we treat those made in his image then that's another thing, another thing altogether.

The Facts of Life

People ask for the facts of life. Let me tell you the main facts of life. The facts of life are these: ruin, redemption, and regeneration. Read Genesis chapter three for the story of our ruin, Romans chapter 3 for the story of our redemption, John chapter three for the story of our regeneration. "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (In 3:3). If you're born only once you'll die twice, To be born twice means you may not die at all!

Would you think with me for a moment on how different the world would be if we took Christ seriously? If the world would only hear his words, "Whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you do ye even so unto them" (Mt 7:12). Would there be an arms race? Would there be the risk of nuclear war? Would there be greed? Would there be hate? Would there be murder? Would there be kidnapping? Would there be adultery? Would there be theft? Jesus says, "Inasmuch as you did it unto the least of these my brethren, you did it unto me" (Mt 25:40). Paul could speak about a brother for whom Christ died, he could say we are members, one of another. O, what a world it would be if we took Christ seriously! In our families, in our churches, in our governments. Why is it that there has never been a century without war, never a nation that has not been involved in war, never a city that hasn't its troubles, never a family without arguments, never a heart without wrong desires? It's because we were ruined by the nuclear fission of the soul that separated us from God.

But the good news is that we have been reunited by the work of Jesus Christ. And when we believe it, life is so different. He says, "I am the way, the truth and the life" (In 14:6). He and only he is the way. And if the whole wide world won't take it, let's you and I take it and find everlasting life' this very day.

The problem is we can never unlearn what we have learned. Burn all the books, murder all the physicists, the problem will still be with us. We can never unlearn the dreadful secret. Sin is God-almightiness. And we have taken over from God. We're harnessing his power. We're undoing creation.

Did you know that it took less than a thirtieth of an ounce to destroy Hiroshima? Mass is congealed energy. God by his vitality and energy spoke matter into existence to give life. We work in reverse, we take that frozen energy and unfreeze it, and instead of a paradise such as God gave us, we make a hell. Scientific knowledge can never be lost. Recently a high-school boy described the process of nuclear fission and how to make a hydrogen bomb. It is in every modern encyclopedia. It can never be lost. The knowledge is with us for keeps. We are teetering on the edge of hell forever, until Jesus comes.

Three Life-giving Words

If only the world would believe three words – just three words. It would bring a marvelous transformation. Those three words are: "God is love."

During World War I, parents who had given a boy to the war, placed a star in the window of their homes. A father and his son were walking along the street, counting the stars. "There's one, there's two, they've given three sons, there's none at this one, one here, two there, three stars here." And then they came to a break in the houses. Looking up to the sky, the boy noticed the evening star and he said, "Daddy, God has given his Son." If only the world could believe it.

Could we with ink the ocean fill,
Or were the skies of parchment made,
Were every stalk on earth a quill
And every man a scribe by trade
To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry,
Nor could the scroll contain the whole,
Though stretched from sky to sky.

God is love. That's the only security we have.

CHAPTER 7

What of the Future?

The Bible clearly teaches that this world will not pass away in a nuclear holocaust. It will not! There may indeed be a limited nuclear war. That seems inevitable if time lasts, but there will never be a destruction of the entire earth by nuclear weapons.

There are many verses in Scripture that almost sound as though they were describing a nuclear war. Joel chapter two speaks about blood and fire and palm trees of smoke. I do not think that this passage refers directly to a nuclear bomb, but I do believe the imagery conveys a catastrophic end with the intervention of God.

I read in Revelation 8 about a time when there will be blood and fire and mountains falling into the sea. A time when the earth will become like a great abyss with great, dark fumes like a cloud of radiation. I don't think the author of Revelation was referring directly to atomic bombs. But once more it does appear to be a catastrophic end that is pictured. I read in Revelation 11:19 that God will come and destroy those who would destroy the earth. And the word that is used for "destroy" appears in an earlier chapter where it is talking about the destruction of the ships. God is coming to destroy those who would destroy the earth. On the authority of the Bible, and our Lord Jesus Christ, we can say that the Creator is the only one who will bring an end to this world. Man may have the power but he doesn't have the authority. God will not permit man to usurp his authority.

The Promise of Christ

This world will end with the intervention of God. The second coming of Christ is mentioned two thousand times in the Bible. On the last night of his earthly life Jesus said, "Let not your hearts be troubled; believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And when I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again ... " (Jn 14:1-3). Think of the encouragement he gives us. Think of the reasons that he gives us to be cheerful! As you know, the darker the night the brighter the stars. "The night also is thine" says the Scripture. In the darkness, think of the promises of Jesus. If you know Christ, you know God and you'll have eternal life. "In my father's house ... I will come again ... " There will not always be a charnel house in God's universe. There will not always be a hell down here where cancer, disease and starvation take their toll. We spend a million dollars every minute on armaments and in that same minute twenty-eight people die of starvation! But it won't be like this forever.

When Jesus was ascending to heaven, the angels were there and they said, "Men of Galilee, why do you stand looking into heaven? This Jesus, who was taken up from you into heaven, will come in the same way as you saw him go into heaven" (Acts 1:11). The first prophecy of the Bible is really about the Second Coming. It's found in Genesis 1-3. It is the story of how the seed of a woman would crush the serpent's head. Legally, that took place on the cross. That crushing will become completely effective at the Second Advent when that great serpent will be destroyed. The sinewy, cunning serpent who gets into every heart, every house, every government will be destroyed when Jesus returns.

The prophets of the Old Testament, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel and Daniel, etc., in their own way witness to the inbreaking kingdom of God. Every writer in the New Testament speaks of the second coming of Jesus and the establishment of God's kingdom. The Lord's Prayer mentions it, " ... thy kingdom come" (Mt 6:10). That's a prayer for the Second Coming.

When we participate in the Lord's Supper we do so acknowledging that the same Lord is coming again. Paul says, "Do this until he comes."

The second coming of Christ is not good news unless you believe in the Christ who came the first time. The Second Coming is not good news unless you're right with him who's coming. It's not hard to be right with God. Consider Romans chapter 3:20-24:

Now do you see it? No one can ever be made right in God's sight by doing what the law commands. For the more we know of God's laws the clearer it becomes we aren't obeying them; His laws serve only to make us see that we are sinners. But now God has shown us a different way to heaven - not by "being good enough" and trying to keep his laws but by a new way (though not new really, for the Scriptures told about it long ago). Now God says he will accept and acquit us - declare us "not guilty" if we trust Jesus Christ to take away our sins. And we all can be saved in this same way, by coming to Christ, no matter who we are or what we've been like. (Living Bible)

You needn't fear your sins. They have all been buried in the Red Sea of Christ's blood. You needn't fear your past. He says, "Whosoever will may come." You needn't fear your sinful heart. He says, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee" (Heb 13:5). God delights in mercy. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins. As far as the east is from the west that's how far he removes our sins from us. He casts them into the depths of the sea. Your warrant to come is his command to believe. He that comes, I will not cast out.

Romans 5:10 says: "If when we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his son, much more being reconciled we will be saved by his life." While we were enemies he died for us. The Passover lamb was slain while the Hebrews were still in captivity. The blood of the Passover lamb was put on the door while they were still in bondage. While we were yet enemies, we were reconciled. There is no barrier between any sinner and God except unbelief. That's the only barrier. If you believe that Jesus died for you, you can never perish - never. "No one can pluck them out of my hands" are the words of Jesus. That is the glorious news of the gospel.

The Bible says, "Perfect love casts out fear" (Jn 4:18). We have already noticed that you can read that text in reverse. Fear casts out love. We have already said that the cause of every war since time began has been fear. Not just greed, but fear. Fear casts out love, but love casts out fear. When we really believe that God loves us, and acts for our best good, we cease to worry about the past, the present, or the future. Our will is swallowed up in the will of God. We know that all things work together for good to them that love God. We know that neither death, nor life, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come - we know that nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. That is all we need to know to live rightly. Isn't that what we need to sustain us in the rigors, the trials, the problems, the doubts and the fears that assail us every day? The knowledge that God is for us and not against us, as demonstrated on the cross, can sustain us through all the perplexities and anxieties of life.

People ask, why doesn't God do something? But God has done something. Only those with wounds can minister to the wounded, and God came down and was wounded. He was wounded on the cross. That cross is like an inverted sword, with God's hand on the hilt. God gave

his Son for you and for me. In his last words Jesus told us how to live and how to die. His last words were, "Father into thy hands I commit my life" (Lk 23:46). You and I can commit our lives to him today. We can either believe our own sinful hearts or believe God. We have done the first one many times and it has always landed us in trouble. But if we believe him, he will never let us down. There will be no one in the judgment who will be able to say, "Lord, I trusted you but you let me down." None. Let us come, knowing we are accepted in Christ. There is no condemnation for them that are in Christ Jesus. It is the power of the cross that we need, not that of the bomb.

Now What?

By now many readers will be asking: "What must I do?" There are several things that a Christian must do if he wishes to be an active peacemaker.

First, a Christian must be informed. This little book is really only a primer on the subject. Every Christian should read literature that fairly represents both sides of the question.

After debating both sides of the question of nuclear war the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches made the following proposals:

- a nuclear war can under no circumstances in no region and by no social system be just or justifiable, given the fact that the magnitude of devastation caused by it will be far out of proportion to any conceivable benefit or advantage to be derived from it;
- a "limited" nuclear war is unlikely to remain limited, and therefore any contemplation of such "limited" use of nuclear weapons should be discouraged as dangerous from the outset;
- all nations now possessing nuclear weapons or capable of doing so in the foreseeable future should unequivocally renounce policies of "first use," as an immediate step towards building confidence;
- the concept of deterrence, the credibility of which depends on the possible use of nuclear weapons, is to be rejected as morally unacceptable and as incapable of safeguarding peace and security in the long term;
- the production and deployment of nuclear weapons, as well as their use, constitute a crime against humanity, and therefore there should be a complete halt in the production of nuclear weapons and in weapons research and development in all nations, to be expeditiously enforced through a treaty;
- all nations should agree to and ratify a comprehensive test ban treaty as a necessary step to stopping the future development of nuclear weapons technology;
- all means leading to disarmament, both nuclear and conventional, should be welcomed as complementary and mutually reinforcing - multilateral conferences leading to effective decisions, bilateral negotiations pursued with daring and determination and unilateral initiatives leading to the relaxation of tensions and building of mutual confidence among nations and peoples;
- the conviction expressed by the Public Hearing: "We believe that the time has come when the churches must unequivocally declare that the production and deployment as well as the use of nuclear weapons are a crime against humanity and that such activities must be condemned on ethical and theological grounds," should become an official position for churches and Christians; such a position supports the struggle to make one's own nation commit itself never to own or use nuclear weapons, despite the perils of nuclear vulnerability, and to persuade Christians and others to refuse to cooperate with or accept employment in any projects related to nuclear weapons and nuclear warfare. (Before It's Too Late: The Challenge of Nuclear Disarmament, Appendix 1, pp. 383-4)

It will be obvious to many readers that not all Christians would support the above proposals. They are included here because they express the viewpoint of a significant number of Christians.

Second, every Christian ought to join or form a peacekeeping organization. In their book, *Nuclear Holocaust*, R.J. Sider and R.K. Taylor list a number of organizations that are currently working for peace (see Appendix B, p. 301).

Third, every Christian should encourage others to become informed on the issues of nuclear war and disarmament. Christians ought to encourage others to subscribe to a magazine that discusses the issue of peace and nuclear disarmament from a Christian perspective.

Fourth, every Christian peacemaker ought to write to his political representative to encourage him to work for peace.

Fifth, all Christians should pray for peace and the success of their attempts to eradicate the terrible possibilities of nuclear war.