



Peace Advocate News

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. Matthew 5:9

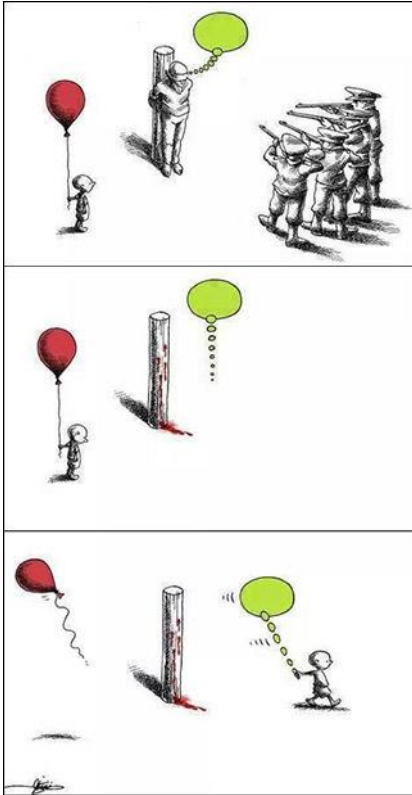
Peace begins when you make your peace with Jesus, accept Him as Savior and follow Him as Lord.

Volume 9:2

Spring 2016

You Can't Kill an Idea

Clyde C. Fry, Pastor Emeritus, Northern Ohio District, Mansfield, Ohio, 12-20-15



Wars just don't happen; they are caused; sometimes for reasons that build up during the course of many, many years. Today, the most common reason for violence is injustice. When people, cultures and nations are not fairly treated in their social, economic, religious and political lives, trouble will brew until one day, it boils over and explodes. The result of injustice is that those who feel victimized will often retaliate with military power, if they have it, or small

violent attacks (*terrorism*), if they don't.

Because of the high cost of violence, it can only be sustained when it is seen as a necessary means to a desirable end. That requires an ideology; something you believe in so much that it appears to make the terrible cost of violence worthwhile. Myths, based on such things as patriotism, born of ones love for ones country; religion, with its promises of eternal or ultimate reward for the faithful, or belief in the redemptive value of violence (Holy War), are built up using misinformation and exaggeration so that people will support and pay the costs and endure the suffering necessary to fight, kill and destroy in an attempt to achieve "total victory" over their "enemies."

Ideologies are made up of ideas that drive people until they are willing to kill in the name of what they believe in. Medgar Evers said: "You can kill a man, but you can't kill an idea." That's the problem. Our new objective, in the "war on terror," is to "kill ISIS." We can kill their fighters with bombs and bullets but we can't kill the ideas that inspire them to do what they do. For example, we stopped the terrible Nazi military machine, created by Adolf Hitler and his countrymen, through the horrific violence of WW 2 but we still have not stopped his ideas! In the USA today there are 142 active Neo-Nazi

groups of which six operate here in Ohio!¹ Even his dreadful, idiotic book, *Mein Kampf*, is being re-published (15,000 pre-publication orders) in Europe today! John F. Kennedy pointed out: "A man may die, nations may rise and fall, but an idea lives on..."

The esteemed scientist Albert Einstein wrote: "Insanity is doing the same thing over and over again and expecting different results." If you accept that truth, then the majority of our foreign and military policies are insane! Example: we were out to stop Communism by fighting in Korea (result: uneasy cease fire) and Vietnam (result: we lost). Communism lives on and continues to threaten. Today, we are out to stop "terrorism" in Afghanistan (fighting the longest war in our history), Iraq (still fighting) and now Syria (carpet bombing and beginning to put American "boots on the ground"). Result: World-wide terrorism is spreading; yet we continue to enlarge our defense spending to do the same thing over and over again (*at least 55% of our national budget goes to the military*).² Contrary to the current political propoganda, our national debt is not the result of high domestic spending but of fighting these wars (*4.4 trillion dollars worth*)³ that we don't underwrite by raising taxes. In the midst of our thirst for more security we are facing rising domestic killings and newly inspired foreign acts of violence, turning our society into a fearful, suspicious, armed, surveillance state. More insanity!

Today our countrymen are insecure, divided and reactionary and our infrastructure and social fabric is tattered. Isn't it time for us to try to understand the real causes of the violence that we face? Isn't it time to demand accountability from a military and foreign policy that has miserably failed to achieve its objectives, compromises our democratic integrity, drains our resources, and multiplies the number of bitter enemies that we must face? Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said: "Hate multiplies hate; violence multiplies violence, and toughness multiplies toughness in a descending spiral of destruction." The Prophet Micah wrote: "What does the Lord require of you, O man, but to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8).

Before the theological "softening" found in modern translations, the old King James Version reads: "Thou shalt not Kill" (*Deuteronomy 5:17*). If we want to follow Jesus, the Christ, the Prince of Peace, then that's the way to go. If we don't go that way, expect violence to multiply here and around the world and get ready to pay the price!

¹Intelligence Report, Spring 2015, Issue 157, Page 43

²Based on President Obama's 2015 federal discretionary budget request set to Congress 3-2014. (Congress raised the "Defense" budget above that request 12-15!)

³Watson Institute for International Studies, Brown University

Some Appalling Facts

- The 62 wealthiest people in the world now own as much as the poorest half (roughly 3.6 billion people) of the world's people combined.
- In fact, the poorest half has become poorer by a trillion dollars since 2010 and the wealthiest 62 people have become richer by 1.76 trillion in the same time.
- The idea that wealth 'trickles down' from the top is false. Once the people at the top get wealth, they keep it – much of it 'off shore' so that they pay no taxes, even to their own governments, thus making their wealth unavailable to help anyone but themselves.
- An example: almost one third of all of Africa's wealth is held off shore. That is \$500 billion, which deprives African governments of \$14 billion in tax revenue – enough to save the lives of 4 million children and employ enough teachers to get every child in Africa into school.
- The CEOs of the top American firms have seen their salaries increase by 53.3% since 2009. The wages of ordinary workers have barely moved in the same time.
- Oxfam reports that the global 1% of wealth holders now own more than the rest of the world combined.

Source: Lauren McCauley. "New Extreme in Inequality Crisis as 62 People Own as Much as Poorest Half". *Common Dreams*. 1-18-2016. [licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 License]

Slavery is Not Dead; Now It's Called Human Trafficking

Many Americans think that slavery ended with the Civil War. For many people world wide and here in the U.S. that is not the case. Modern-day slavery is also called "Human Trafficking". It is defined as recruiting, harboring or transporting a person by using force, fraud, or coercion so that person can be exploited for commercial sex acts or for labor.

- Human trafficking is now the 2nd leading crime in the world (the drug trade is number 1).
- 80% of trafficking victims are female. 50% are children.
- The victims of human trafficking (especially in the sex trade) are often under the age of 18.
- The FBI considers Ohio one of the top 5 recruiting states for underage victims (the other top 5 states are California, Florida, Texas, & Minnesota). A recent study estimates 1,100 youth ages 12 to 17 are being trafficked in Ohio.
- There are 1.3 million children listed as missing or as runaways. 1 in 3 of them is in fact being trafficked.
- The average starting age of a girl trafficked for sex is 13. The average girl used in the sex trade is forced to have sex 20 times a night.
- 62% of victims are tricked into it, 35% are sold or trapped into it by a family member or friend, 3% are kidnapped
- The largest event in the country where sex trafficking happens is the Super Bowl (as many as 10,000 mostly girls and women are trafficked in the Super Bowl host city alone. Many more are traf-

ficked at Super Bowl parties & other related events around the country.)

- One of the next largest events in the country where sex trafficking happens is the Republican National Convention which is in Cleveland, Ohio this year.

Ohio is a top 5 recruiting state because:

- Ohio has a good highway system that makes movement easy for transporting victims (there are lots of truck stops; you can be out of the state from anywhere in 2 hours; an international border is nearby)
- Ohio has a lot of colleges and universities (where young people are on their own for the first time & can be vulnerable)
- Ohio has a large vulnerable immigrant population
- Ohio has many places that tend to encourage demand for the sex trade (several military bases; strip clubs; tourist areas/casinos)

Young people can be at risk of being trafficking victims if they:

- are under 18
- walk to school the store, etc. alone
- own or have access to a computer
- are attracted to consumer goods
- want a romantic relationship
- sometimes feel insecure
- feel misunderstood
- fight with their parents
- sometimes feel their parents do not care
- want more independence
- test boundaries and take risks

Not all girls who are trafficked into the sex trade are taken away from home. They may be taken for the night (even every night) or a day or two and returned. Some continue to live at home or college, go to school, etc. but threats (against them and their families), abuse, fear and coercion keep them from telling family and friends what is happening. **Red flags that may indicate a child is being trafficked in the sex trade include:**

- having an older 'boyfriend' (who may do all the talking for both of them)
- running away (or seeming to?)
- in possession of large amounts of cash (not spent or saved because it must go to their pimp)
- have new clothes or a cell phone given by a boy friend
- have a false ID or lie about their age
- have recurring stds, bladder, or urinary infections
- have physical marks (bruises cuts, etc.) or tattoos (especially a mans name or a slang name)
- disappearing for a long time
- missing school
- drastic drop in grades
- always tired
- cannot (or will not) account for their time or where they have been
- substance abuse

To report suspected sex trafficking call the National Human Trafficking Hotline 888-373-7888; text BeFree (233733) for specialized victim services referrals or the report the situation; call the local police or 911; call the Polaris Project Victim Support Service's 24-hour hotline at 1-800-346-7555 or visit www.polarisproject.org.

Source: Human Trafficking Awareness Event, Ashland University. 1-25-2016. Theresa Flores & Jen Albert presenters.

Continue Prayers for Nigeria



People walk past burnt out houses after a Boko haram attack in Dalori village

According to an Associated Press report, on January 15 Boko Haram attacked the village of Dalori and two nearby refugee camps (where 25,000 people are housed) 3 miles from Maiduguri. A survivor said the shooting, firebombing of huts, and explosions lasted for 4 hours. Some men, women and children burned to death when their huts were fire bombed. Some of those who were able to escape to neighboring Gamori village were killed there when 3 female suicide bombers blew themselves up. Officials report 86 people died and 62 people are being treated for burns after the incident. Survivors fear they will be attacked again.

Boko Haram has increased their use of suicide bombers and has been seeking out easy targets since the Nigerian military drove them out of the towns and villages they had occupied last year. In the 6 years since the Boko Haram uprising began 20,000 people have died and 2.5 million people have been driven from their homes.

Keep Nigeria in your prayers!

Source: *Officials: Boko Haram burns kids alive in Nigeria, 86 dead.* By Is-mail Alfa and Haruna Umar. Associated Press. January 15, 2016.

Even In Devastation There Is Hope!

The Church of the Brethren Newsline issued a special section on Nigeria in February (look for it at brethren.org). In it there are several reports on the situation in the Northeast where Boko Haram violence has been devastating. Carl and Roxanne Hill report on their trip further into the north than Americans have been since Boko Haram began their major insurgency in 2014. Where the Hills expected to find burned out ghost towns, they instead found that the resilience of the Nigerian people is amazing. In community after community, the churches and people's homes have been burned to the ground, but where Boko Haram has been pushed back, many people have returned home to try and resume their lives. Most are not waiting for help. They are doing what they can to put their lives back together. Local government officials and police forces are not back in many communities, so people are running things themselves for now. Church buildings may be gone but in some places 70% or so of the congregations – some of them 1,000 strong are meeting again under the trees. Children, many of who have not been able to go to school for more than a year are back in classes also meeting under the trees or in what ever locations they can with what supplies they can get together. People are rebuilding houses if they can or living in the ruins of their homes where they must. Everyone knows there is risk.

Boko Haram is not gone and could attack again any time. In some places like Lassa, site of one of the early Brethren missions and hospital, the children do not have school on market days because of the danger that Boko Haram fighters may sneak into town with the market crowded. Schools are one of their favorite targets. . .



A burned out church building in Nigeria



Children praying

Relief efforts continue Rebecca Dali (wife of the EYN president) and CCEPI (Center for Caring, Empowerment, and Peace Initiatives) distributes food and relief supplies – especially to the women left widowed and children left homeless by Boko Haram. As spring approaches, Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria's (EYN, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria) relief efforts are turning to providing seeds and the other things needed for farmers to get back to farming. The hope is that when harvest time comes, many will be back on their feet enough to be able to feed themselves and their neighbors again. If that happens, the money now going to provide food aid can be used to help in other ways like housing and rebuilding. The need for housing and food for the thousands of internally displaced people continues, and church buildings will need to be rebuilt.

The memories of loss are still fresh. The Americans took part in a time of silence to remember two Kulp Bible School students who were killed. The threat of violence is ever present and people live with fear, but fear has not taken over their lives because, at the same time, evidence of the power of love is also strong. Continue your prayers and support our brothers and sisters trying to survive the violence and continue the work of Jesus in Nigeria!

Carl and Roxanne Hill are co-directors of the Nigeria Crisis Response, a joint effort of the Church of the Brethren with Ekklesiyar Yan'uwa a Nigeria (EYN, the Church of the Brethren in Nigeria). For more information go to www.brethren.org/nigeriacrisis.

What the Headlines Did Not Say

On January 2, 2016 Saudi Arabia executed Shiite cleric Nimer al-Nimr. The Saudi government said he was part of the "anti government faction" that has been "causing trouble" in their country. They implied that this "anti government faction" means violent extremists which includes the Islamic State (ISIS) whose brutality and violence are demonstrated by their beheading people on camera, brutal attacks on civilians, and use of suicide bombers – not all of whom may be blowing themselves up voluntarily.

What has not been in the mainline news is that Nimer al-Nimr was beheaded by the Saudi government. Also, far from being associated with ISIS, he was in fact one of the leaders of the Muslim peace movement in the region. "In 2011, Mr. Nimr became known as the voice for peaceful protests by Saudi Arabia's minority Shiites against the Kingdom's harsh rule. He was later convicted on charges that Amnesty International called 'unfair.' His civic resistance helped draw attention to the Saudi royal family's nondemocratic rule and injustices."¹ It was his opposition to the authoritarian Saudi government that got him into trouble.

Almost all of the 1.5 billion Muslims in the world favor peaceful means to resolve differences not the violent actions of the tiny minority which includes ISIS. Evidence of Mr. Nimr's peaceful leadership and of the desire for peace by most Muslims is seen in the fact that the reaction to his death has been largely peaceful – as he would have wanted it to be. "His family called on Muslims to 'adopt peaceful means when expressing their anger' as a way to follow his example. In Iraq, Prime Minister Haider al-Abadi tweeted his sadness over the execution and wrote that 'peaceful opposition is a fundamental right. Repression does not last!'"² "Even in Iran, whose Shiite regime is in a power struggle with the Sunni monarchy of Saudi Arabia, President Hassan Rouhani condemned a group of Iranians that attacked the Saudi Embassy in Tehran. 'It is unjustifiable,' he said."³

Since Mr. Nimr was arrested Shiite scholars in Saudi Arabia have reaffirmed that religion condemns violence and terrorism. They also reaffirm that political violence only serve to destroy nations. More attention needs to be given to these peaceful voices and the growing nonviolent movements among Muslims.

- The 2011 Nobel Peace Prize went to Tawakkol Karman a proponent of nonviolence in Yemen.
- 2015 the Nobel Peace Prize went to a group in Tunisia for their peaceful political process at a time when Tunisia was on the brink of civil war.
- The Dawah movement is one of many groups proselytizing to Muslims to follow nonpolitical spiritual paths.
- A large Indonesian movement called Nahdlatul Ulama is reaching into the Middle East with an interpretation of Islam that promotes nonviolence, compassion, and the acceptance of other religions.

These peaceful movements within Islam will do more to bring peace in the Middle East than all the violent intervention from the outside can hope to.

¹"The Monitor's View: A Muslim Cleric's Lasting Legacy of Peace". *The Christian Science Monitor Weekly*. Jan. 18, 2016. p. 34

² The Monitor's View

³ The Monitor's View
NPR News

Worship Resources

Make Prayers for peace part of your worship

Remember in prayer:

1. **South Sudan:** has the worst human rights records in the world – women & children burned alive; many women & girls raped; parents forced to watch children gang raped; children forced to watch their parents killed; children taken from families as 'payment' by soldiers; their government is responsible for most of this

2. **Japan:** March 11 was the 5th anniversary of the earth quake, tsunami and nuclear disaster there March 11, 2011 – 18,000 died; many people are still in temporary housing; the nuclear danger has not been contained; the search for bodies continues
3. **People affected by gun violence.**
4. **Mothers & children in prison** – more than 1,000 mothers & their children (infants, toddlers, teens) fleeing violence in their home countries are held in U.S prisons. More unaccompanied children are seeking safety now than when the story broke in May 2015.
5. **Nigeria:** for the Chibok school girls missing 2 years as of this April 14; EYN, all those affected by the violence
6. **Republic of Congo** – where war continues
7. **People facing torture.**
8. **Those in prison** because of their beliefs.
9. **Those facing execution** – & those willing to execute because they put revenge above redemption & forgiveness
10. **Ukraine** – were political violence continues.
11. **All people in this world who live with war.**
12. **Yemen** & other places where the U.S. regularly launches drone attacks – many attacks hit civilians.
13. **People Displaced** because of war or political unrest.
14. **Veterans'** living with their part in war. 18 U.S. Iraq/Afghanistan veterans commit suicide every day. (US Veterans Affairs statistics)
15. **Families of all people killed** in Iraq, Afghanistan, Iran.
16. All those whose lives are dominated by **fear**.
17. People **working for peace** locally and in the world.
18. Those who **do not know the peace of God** in their lives and so have lost sight of hope and joy.
19. **Girls & Women** facing abuse and violence every day
20. **Child Soldiers**
21. **Community – Police issues**, that communities and police will work together respectfully with each other for the common good.
22. **Those now waging war by remote control** – those who push buttons from far away that hurt or killed men, women, children
23. **Syrian refugee crises** – 220,000 Syrians fled to Europe in October 2015 – the same number who came in all of 2014. More are refugees are attempting to reach Europe everyday



Peace Witness News Action Options

Learn About Christian Peacemaker Teams and How You Can Help

David Jones and Michael Himlie are biking across the country to raise awareness and support for the work of Christian Peacemaker Teams. The Center Congregation will host them for the night June 16. Center invites everyone to come to meet David and Michael and hear about Christian Peace Maker Teams Thursday June 16 at 7pm.



See specific articles for related resource information.



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