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I want to do justice to the topic, but there's a tremendous amount of material to cover and only 45 minutes assigned. I will try to move swiftly, so I tried to put some in print so you can use the ear-gate and eye-gate as we go through this information. On the songs, we sang about a warfare that is raging. We sang 'more than conquerors are we.' It almost seemed like it wouldn't take much to get this group to line up on the highway and go marching into Goshen and take over the city. But that's not the way of peace. We don't have time to turn to Ephesians 6, but we will look at the Christian's warfare. This is not a passive group at all.

I cannot be practical with all the do's and don'ts, but felt led to go back and lay a foundation of Biblical truth and bring in examples. In danger of being a doomsday prophet, this is no longer a given. In the generation that is coming, is it a given among our youth and among our children. Will it continue to be a given unless we're willing to go out and do something.

In the way of peace, we think of the Amish, Brethren, and Quakers. But what does the way of peace really mean to you in everyday life? We think of these things, not going to war, not taking military jobs, we don't go to a court of law with our grievances, we don't vote, we don't have political offices, we don't take offices as lawyers or sheriffs. But is that all there is to the way of peace? Is that really what it is?

Do we as an Anabaptist people know who we are? Do we have a proper identity? Or are we a drift on the ocean of life, not really knowing who we are? Are we just another Protestant church with maybe a few distinctive. We need to get that into the heart of the next generation. If we are not more than a Protestant church with a few distinctive, then I believe we are in danger of becoming extinct. That's not what it's about We are a unique Christian group. What do I mean? We are unique in 2010 as peace churches in that we believe when Jesus spoke the words on the Sermon of the Mount, He meant what he said and He wants us to live it. It's for today, not for a future millennium. It's valid for 2010. The teachings we hold were never meant to be Anabaptist distinctives, but Christian in their totality in their beginning, written for God's people in any cultural situation. It so happens that Christianity at large has chosen to ignore many of them. It's important our children know what that difference is.

There's a quote to that effect that comes to mind. I'd like to relate various accounts. I'd like to

share an account briefly of Pastor and Mrs. Kenneth. They have been operating a school and have changed from a Protestant to an Anabaptist curriculum. During the Nickel Mines shootings, they were enraptured by the ideas they were hearing. They went to Lancaster to see what makes those people really tick. They have switched most of their school to an Anabaptist curriculum. Dorothy and I had lunch with them last year. In our lunch together, the present book the administrator was reading was *The Kingdom That Turned the World Upside-Down*. She said, 'This book makes me angry. All my life I've been sitting in Bible teaching churches and I've never heard it explained like this.' She saw she was being deceived in all these years.

### *1. The Two-Kingdom Concept*

I appreciate Ken Miller's excellent introduction, and he covered a lot of ground. As we look at the two kingdoms, if we don't get this correct, the next generation will lose it. It will not be a given. It must be passed on. Merriam-Webster's defines a kingdom as a politically organized community or major territorial unit headed by a king or queen. Note the difference between abstract and concrete ideas. The kingdoms of this world are concrete, we can see it. It's a place with physical boundaries. We cross state boundaries. When talking about the kingdom of God, we're referring to an abstract, an idea, and the same is true of Satan's domain.

At the creation, we have the first family. From that family, we have the extended family with patriarchs. From there, we go into cities and the city-states, with a strong warrior or tribe that erects a city, and they influence people around them. The formation of nations and kingdoms with boundaries, God was at work with kingdom building. God called out Abraham and he made a people for himself. That group was a theocracy, or, God ruling them. God used the judges, the priests, the prophets to convey His will to the people, but they wanted a king. They wanted a kingdom. So God allowed that, and they wanted one like the other nations around them.

We move then to the New Testament, and we have John the Baptist preparing a kingdom for Jesus. "Repent ye." He's preparing a way. Ken laid the foundation for some of these next points. As Jesus and his followers came, he was teaching about another kingdom, but they were thinking about wanting freedom from Rome. As we think of the Kingdom then, we want to see what all they were involved in. Bondage was a practice for them by Romans, but Jesus was teaching a higher kingdom. Most verses referring to the Kingdom are in the Gospels in the New Testament. Even as Jesus was teaching about another kingdom, they were still thinking about release from Roman bondage.

As we think, then, we think of God calling us to a higher kingdom, out of a physical kingdom, into a higher kingdom. Their Sermon on the Mount is the charter of the kingdom. This committee didn't have any idea that at Slanesville I am preaching through the Sermon on the Mount. It looks like a long term project, but it's coming slowly. By charter, I mean, it's how we operate. It's the way we're set up and how we operate. Jesus repeatedly quotes the law, but each time he does, he raises it to a higher calling. It hath been said, but I say unto you. Each time he does that, he raises the bar. It's not so much what we do only, but it goes deeper: why do we do what we do? What are the motivations? Why do we act the way we do? Now we are responsible for our thoughts. Some of us can keep our actions under control and we can look good, but what is going on inside. Jesus said 'this kingdom is not of my world.' Pilate was thinking of the concrete on earth. Though Pilate had great political power, he found himself powerless in front

of Jesus.

But we are a chosen generation (1 Peter). Do you understand that we have been called into a greater kingdom? We have been called into a higher level of holiness, a higher level of accountability. It's included in that charter and the rest of Scripture. But it's no secret that not all Anabaptists accept the two kingdom concept. While I was preparing for this message, I came across a new source. It didn't even strike me right away I was in the heart of, but I was reading the newspaper, and Goshen is going to play the Star-Spangled Banner at select sports events, followed by prayer. This decision was made after discussion over the past year. The reason was to provide a more hospitable atmosphere for athletic events as a primary reason for the recommendation and the decision. So we have the U.S. flag, the playing of the Star Spangled Banner, and then prayer. Interestingly, I got the recent Calvary Messenger and David L. picked up on it as well.

## 2. *Proper Political Involvement*

*The Christian and the State* by Lloyd Hartzler is an excellent source. Again, if we don't have an understanding on two kingdoms, we will never have an understanding. Our liberal Mennonite friends were once where we are, but they are now on a different path. Our people are asking questions, and I wonder, why are they asking the questions, and are they getting correct answers? Maybe it's my age, but why are we hearing more of these questions? Is it because the teaching is not out there? Think about it. We are living in the world, a perverse society, so how do we interact with political situations around us. Paul in Acts 22 made an appeal to the authorities. I believe when he made that appeal, he showed respect. He honored them. Now not all requests will be honored, but we have the privilege to honor our government and to make appeals as needed. In Acts 25, he appealed to Caesar. Paul could have been released, but he appealed. I don't see he made his appeal for selfish reasons, and I don't believe he was out of place. We make appeals to our government. Brother Elmer on the platform with his work in peace and service has worked with this. The CO process has served us well in appealing to the powers that be. We are not out of the woods. The Amish steering committee has already been interacting with officials with the new health plan, already! Has someone from this constituency been following up with the healthcare? Where do we stand on all that? Maybe we'll hear more at these meetings. Others have made appeals, CASP working with Homeland Security, Social Security administration, and also Selective Service with CO status, appeals for release for jury duty—I don't know where your communities are. Selection is made now from driver's license rather than voting registration. Our people need to go now and be questioned by the people. We are a new Anabaptist group in the area of West Virginia, and we drafted a letter to the judge, and in the last 10 years, we've had maybe ten summonses, and each request for release has been honored, and we give glory to the Lord. We do interact with government, but we do it on appeal rather than a lobby. We can be careful on the types of businesses we patronize. But what about activist activities? Should we go marching into Goshen College? Is that the way we react? Should we participate in anti-abortion marches or right-to-life rallies? Or similar activities? We need to lay the foundation, then make application on that foundation. All need to recognize the way of peace is not through the legislative process, but through the conversion of hearts.

I found a poem in *The Christian and the State*:

We are recipients of many blessings from the Civil government.

We have the highways, the police protection, and other infrastructure. But we also have duties that we need to perform to our Civil governments.

The thing that continues to amaze me is that many of the writings in the New Testament church were written when there were some very evil men in power.

Men like Nero, Diocletian, and others.

While there are many things where we cannot agree with the rulers over us, we still have a much easier time than they did in the early church.

And yet, time and again, by inspiration of the Holy Spirit, these holy men of God wrote letters to us giving direction concerning our duty to our rulers.

We have heard a simplified version of Pray, Pay, and Obey.

That covers most of it and encompasses a lot of territory

The first one is to Pray, to make intercession for those in higher power.

### 3. *Biblical Non-Resistance*

Read the pamphlet *Nonresistance or Pacifism*? I'm not going to differentiate between the two, but we as a people have done well in taking a nonresistant position concerning nonparticipation in the military, even in noncombatant jobs. Have we done as well in applying non-resistance in other areas of our lives? That's really the true test of whether or not we have gotten to the heart. Are we willing to give up our rights, especially in other areas of our lives, such as in business and finances? When the pocket book is touched, it's very easy for principles to go out the back door. I wonder if we as a people are not being tested more in areas of the pocket book than in areas of going to military battle, and it's part of the same package. The two need to go together. In reflecting on those in the past who may have lost the position, perhaps they also fell on this part of the issue, in finances in daily living. How do we do in turning the other cheek, in going to second mile, or suffering material loss for the sake of Christ and the Gospel?

Matthew 5:38-48, [*excerpt*:] "Ye have heard that it has been said, an eye for an eye..." How do you preach from some of those verses? I'll warn you, if you're going to preach through the Sermon on the Mount, be prepared. We have preached around some of those verses. Let's look at the Sermon on the Mount with a fresh look, a new look, and try to look and ask the question, "Did Jesus really mean...?" Can we look at it aside from our culture, our drift, our German background—hard work, thrift, make money? Let's try it, we need to. Then be prepared to follow through. The key verses I'd like to look at are 39 and 44. Sometimes it may not be hard to love the Iraqis and Afghans. A faceless name, it's not hard to love them. But what about the man next door, the person who wants some of your business and making a claim. It's someone you see and face that is harder to love than someone an ocean or two away. Merle Ruth [*quote*]. Nonresistance is positive in expression. It holds the best prospect in turning an enemy into a friend. Nonresistance coupled with assistance, motivated by love, practiced in the name of Christ is the greatest peace-making power on earth.

### 4. *Early Anabaptist Positions*

*The Kingdom That Turned the World Upside-Down* is a good writing on early beliefs.

The Didache, also called the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles: in chapter one, I'd like to read a portion:

There are two ways, one of life and one of death, but a great difference between the two

ways. The way of life, then, is this: First, you shall love God who made you; second, love your neighbor as yourself, and do not do to another what you would not want done to you. And of these sayings the teaching is this: Bless those who curse you, and pray for your enemies, and fast for those who persecute you. For what reward is there for loving those who love you? Do not the Gentiles do the same? But love those who hate you, and you shall not have an enemy. Abstain from fleshly and worldly lusts. If someone strikes your right cheek, turn to him the other also, and you shall be perfect. If someone impresses you for one mile, go with him two. If someone takes your cloak, give him also your coat. If someone takes from you what is yours, ask it not back, for indeed you are not able. Give to every one who asks you, and ask it not back; for the Father wills that to all should be given of our own blessings (free gifts). Happy is he who gives according to the commandment, for he is guiltless.

Another early one is the Schleithem confession, a declaration of Swiss Anabaptist belief in 1527:

Article IV. We have been united concerning the separation that shall take place ...

We have been united concerning the separation that shall take place from the evil and the wickedness which the devil has planted in the world, simply in this; that we have no fellowship with them, and do not run with them in the confusion of their abominations. ... To us, then, the commandment of the Lord is also obvious, whereby He orders us to be and to become separated from the evil one, and thus He will be our God and we shall be His sons and daughters (2 Cor. 6:17). Further, He admonishes us therefore to go out from Babylon and from the earthly Egypt, that we may not be partakers in their torment and suffering, which the Lord will bring upon them. (Rev. 18:4 ff.). Thereby shall also fall away from us the diabolical weapons of violence - such as sword, armor, and the like, and all of their use to protect friends or against enemies - by virtue of the word of Christ: "you shall not resist evil" (Mt. 5:39)

Article VI. We have been united as follows concerning the sword.

We have been united as follows concerning the sword. The sword is an ordering of God outside the perfection of Christ. It punishes and kills the wicked and guards and protects the good. In the law the sword is established over the wicked for punishment and for death and the secular rulers are established to wield the same. Now many, who do not understand Christ's will for us, will ask; whether a Christian may or should use the sword against the wicked for the protection and defense of the good, or for the sake of love. The answer is unanimously revealed: Christ teaches and commands us to learn from Him, for He is meek and lowly of heart and thus we shall find rest for our souls (Mt. 11:29). Now Christ says to the woman who was taken in adultery ... [but] with mercy and forgiveness and the warning to sin no more, says: "Go, sin no more." Exactly thus should we also proceed, according to the rule of the ban. Second, is asked concerning the sword: whether a Christian shall pass sentence in disputes and strife about worldly matters, such as the unbelievers have with one another. The answer: Christ did not wish to decide or pass judgement between brother and brother concerning inheritance, but refused to do so (Lk. 12:13). So should we also do. Third, is asked concerning the sword: whether the Christian should be a magistrate if he is chosen thereto. This is answered thus: Christ was to be made King, but He fled and did not discern the ordinance of His Father. Thus we

should also do as He did and follow after Him, and we shall not walk in darkness. For He Himself says: "Whoever would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Mt. 16:24). ...Peter also says: "Christ has suffered (not ruled) and has left us an example, that you should follow after in his steps" (1 Pet. 2:21). Lastly, one can see in the following points that it does not befit a Christian to be a magistrate: the rule of the government is according to the flesh, that of the Christians according to the spirit. Their houses and dwelling remain in this world, that of the Christians is in heaven. Their citizenship is in this world, that of the Christians is in heaven (Phil. 3:20). The weapons of their battle and warfare are carnal and only against the flesh, but the weapons of Christians are spiritual, against the fortification of the devil. The worldly are armed with steel and iron, but Christians are armed with the armor of God, with truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, and with the Word of God. In sum: as Christ our Head is minded, so also must be minded the members of the body of Christ through Him, so that there be no division in the body, through which it would be destroyed.<sup>13</sup> Since then Christ is as is written of Him, so must His members also be the same, so that His body may remain whole and unified for its own advancement and upbuilding. For any kingdom which is divided within itself will be destroyed (Mt. 12:25).

You could turn to Romans 13, but I'm not going there. Notice "we" and "they" and "them." (Luke 12).

#### *5. Our Duty to the Civil Government*

We are recipients of many benefits from them, the highways, police, infrastructure; it's here. We also have duties we need to perform to our civil government. In many of the writings in the New Testament, those were written when there were some very evil men in power. They were not in a society where they were well protected. Nero, and others, were ruthless, cruel men. There are many things we cannot agree with the rules we have; we still have an easier time than we do with the rules then. In spite of Nero and others at the time, again and again and again by inspiration of the Spirit, holy men wrote these letters, giving us direction in how we interact with rules over us, even in a democratic society. We've accepted the fact that democracy is the best place for the Christian. We may have bought into the Protestant idea that democracy and the church is God's will. This is simplistic: we need to pray, pay, and obey. As we pray, we make intercession and supplication, giving of thanks for all men, for kings, and all authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceable life. We should pray for their personal salvation, that we can live a quiet and peaceable life, that our leaders can make wise decisions. In the OT, we see Lot sitting in the city gate, a political position. But who had the most power with God when it came to it, Abraham or Lot in the political situation? What should we pay, respect, and honor. We need to teach the oncoming generation the same. How do you address a police officer when we're confronted on the highway? What do your children see? Our taxes, paying tribute to Caesar. Obedience, some are hard and unpractical, but is that reason to disobey? We need to have an honest reporting of taxes, and there are many others.

It's time to close. I'd like to close with a few stories. Sometimes we remember better by stories. Alvin York, a Christian from Tennessee, was in a Brethren setting and was a CO. He was denied that. Here is his testimony. "As long as the records remain, I will be officially known as a CO. I was. I joined the church. I had taken its creed, and I had taken it without what you might call

reservations. I was not a Sunday Christian. I believed in the Bible, and I tried in my own way to live up to it.” But he went into WWI as a soldier.

John D. Martin tells of a 1945 B-52 that dropped a bomb on Japan. The entire group was “Christian,” and before they left, their chaplains prayed a blessing upon that crew. If you know history, you know the rest *is* history. As they approached the city, they needed a landmark, and that landmark they chose was the Catholic church in that city.

Soon after we moved to West Virginia, a local church held an Answers in Genesis seminar. O’Hare was a WWII hero for the number of Japanese he shot down, and the Chicago airport is named for him. These are heroes lifted up in Protestant churches today because they have embraced the concept of God and country. Some of these same stories are included in textbooks that are in some of our schools. How can we continue to have Protestant materials in our school teaching God and country and expect to raise a generation with a two generation concept?

Would like to tell of Dean Taylor. They were active in the US army and through studying the Bible came to nonresistance. He concluded a message with a story, and I’d like to borrow the story.

From 1948 to 1994 there was a white minority ruling under a system called Apartheid, similar to the US Civil Rights. It was the white minority, though, not a majority. There were many atrocities. Nelson Mandela was instrumental in mending those evils. A commission brought these men to justice. An elderly black lady came to a trial connected to the man’s evil deeds who was on trial. He admitted to taking her 18 year-old son and shot him and burned his body while dancing and partying. Eight years later they took her husband into captivity. Sometime later, in the middle of the night, they took her out to an isolated area where she saw her husband, tied to some wood, and they poured gasoline over his body, and they lit the gasoline, and there he died. While she watched, she heard her husband say, “Forgive them, forgive them.” We come to the trial of Mr. Van de Brooke, and this elderly lady is there. When he was convicted of the evils, the judge turned to her and asked her what she would like as part of the judgment: “I want him to take me to the place where they burned the body of my husband so I can gather together the ashes to give my husband to give him a decent burial. Mr. Van de Brooke is to come twice a month to come to my ghetto so I can be a mother to him. I want him to know that God can forgive him and that I forgive him too. And, I want someone now to come and lead me to him so I can embrace him and so he can know that my forgiveness is real.” The elderly lady was led across the courtroom, and as she got closer to him, he passed out. It was more than he could take. The entire courtroom remained silent and they realized what he had done. She had truly followed the way of peace. I can imagine the courtroom as silent as this room is today, when off in the back a lady started to sing Amazing Grace. *Sing Amazing Grace.*