



Christians and war

Christians differ about the rights and wrongs of war. On the one hand, we are called to love our enemies, to do good to those who hate us—indeed, Jesus was called 'the Prince of Peace'. And yet on the

1914: The war to end wars?

That was what they called it, and it began on 28th July 100 years ago. But then there was the Second World War. And since then we have had the Falklands War, the war in Afghanistan, and any number of other conflicts around the world. As I write, in Iraq and Syria, South Sudan and Nigeria, and many other seemingly forgotten corners of the world, human beings are inhumanely tearing each other to shreds. In war there are only losers.

Fighting for the cause?

The news recently was full of pictures of cheering young men, proud of having just enlisted in the Iraqi forces, off to fight people of their own country whose main difference is some features of their common religion. My photo album likewise has proud photos of my sons in uniform—even if they are only cadets: and before you think I'm pointing the finger at another religion, of course I know about the troubles in Northern Ireland!

other hand, we should seek the cause of justice, and defend the needy. For some, that means pacifism—a refusal to bear arms. For others, that means real anguish as they go to war, but on the understanding that the cause is just.

The war trigger

If you've studied it in history, you'll know how the assassination of Arch-Duke Ferdinand in Sarajevo was the spark which lit the fuse of WW1. One death set in motion a series of events with implications for the whole world, bringing war.

The peace trigger

It is ironic, then, that the assassination of one man in Jerusalem 2,000 years ago was also a trigger, and one which has implications for the whole world, but offering peace. We long for peace among men; Jesus brought peace between men and God. Those who join up in human armies may be unsure whether they will be victorious; those who fight evil under Christ's banner are assured of victory, whatever things may look like in the skirmishes, because Jesus has already defeated the ultimate enemy, death.



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