

WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION

Eric Chisi
Lilongwe, Malawi

Every army should have weapons it can use in time of need. Most nations today do have powerful weapons, some of which are believed to have the capability of destroying the entire planet Earth in minutes. In spite of this power, these nations, called big powers, are busy trying to improve their military might to claim supremacy.



New Testament Christians are pictured in scripture as an army of the cross, working under their Commander in Chief, King Jesus, who gave His marching orders: *“Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature”* (**Mark 16:15**).

Even in the Old Testament, God gave the prophets opportunities to peer into the future Messianic kingdom. Prophets—like Daniel, Isaiah, Obadiah and Zechariah—foretold the nature of the Messianic kingdom and depicted it as militant in nature. For example, Daniel foretold that the God of heaven would establish a kingdom that would crush all other kingdoms (**Daniel 2:34-35**).

As well, Isaiah tells about God’s people being strong enough to swoop down on their enemies and plunder them. Since these people will not be fighting physical battles, it is understood that this is a spiritual battle to be fought under Jesus (**Isaiah 11:14**). The Prophet Zechariah reveals a time when God’s people will march into battle, again contextually referring to a spiritual battle and not a physical one (**Zechariah 10:4-5**).

These are difficult passages to understand, but the Apostle Paul clears up our doubts about the nature of the battle in which the Messianic kingdom is going to engage itself. *“For though we walk in flesh, we do not war according to the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty in God for pulling down strongholds”* (**2 Corinthians 10:3-4**).

Paul explains to a young preacher that ours is a good fight of faith (**1 Timothy 6:12**) and then makes it clear to the Ephesians that we don’t fight as the world fights: *“For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood...”* (**Ephesians 6:12**). He continues by telling Christians to put on the whole armor of God, highlighting this teaching by saying, *“And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God”* (**Ephesians 6:17**). The sword is an offensive weapon unlike the other items in the armor of God, which are defensive. Through the preaching of the word, the church accomplishes its mission of making disciples of all nations, witnessing the saving of many souls.

Soon after the establishment of the kingdom in Acts 2, the Apostles started occupying enemy territory with the sword of the spirit, the word of God, our weapon of mass destruction.

Phillip went down to Samaria and preached Jesus with success (**Acts 8:12**). The same evangelist met the Ethiopian treasurer and preached Jesus to him, resulting in his being saved (**Acts 8:34-38**). Cornelius, the Roman general, and his household were saved through Peter’s preaching the word to them (**Acts 10:44-48**). These are a few examples in the book of Acts, showing how brethren successfully wielded the sword of the Spirit.

Christians are also reminded to be sober and vigilant because our adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion seeking whom to devour (**1 Peter 5:8**). This powerful warning teaches us that if we are not on the offensive with the word of God, the devil will surely defeat us.

For us to survive in the battlefield and occupy more enemy territory, we must first know the Bible (**2 Timothy 2:15**), reading and continuing in it. We must love the souls of men (**1 John 4:9; Ephesians 2:5**). We must be careful to stay with what it teaches and continue steadfastly in the Apostles’ doctrine (**Acts 2:42**). Finally, we

Sundays at 6:30 AM



November Topics

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cannot go beyond what is commanded. We can't waste time talking about political issues, social issues, or personal experiences. Our responsibility is to preach Jesus and His word and be ready at all times to convince, rebuke, and exhort with all long suffering (**2 Timothy 2:4**).

If we preach the word correctly, we will be able to snatch precious souls from the hands of the devil, influencing them to obey the gospel and to become Christians. The sword of the Spirit, the word of God, indeed our weapon of mass destruction, will not suffer loss; but it will endure forever after claiming many souls and occupying much enemy territory (**1 Peter 1:24-25**).

SINS OF OMISSION

Trey Jones
Riverbank, CA

Many of us understand what sin is, but we may not realize there are two categories of sin. The category that most of us are familiar with is sins of commission, that is, breaking a command—doing things we are told not to do. The Apostle Paul writes about these kinds of sins in his first letter to the Corinthians: *“Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God”* (**1 Corinthians 6:9-10**).



These sins are generally more obvious; so, they are easily recognized by most people. On the other hand, sins of omission are not always so obvious. A good definition for sins of omission comes from **James 4:17**: *“Therefore, to him who knows to do good and does not do it, to him it is sin.”* By this definition, we can commit sin by failing to do something the scriptures tell us to do.

It is my understanding that the main ways we commit sins of omission are in the way we treat others and in the way we help each other. It is my goal to point out some of the most obvious ways we commit these sins because Paul teaches, *“Therefore comfort each other and edify one another, just as you also are doing”* (**1 Thessalonians 5:11**).

For instance, one of the easiest ways to commit a sin of omission is to fail to treat another person as we should. The

parable of the good Samaritan in **Luke 10:25-37** illustrates this sin well. This parable tells us of a man who fell among thieves, was stripped of his clothing, was beaten, and was left for dead. Then in verse 31, a priest, who should have been a righteous person, didn't stop to help this man in such a dire situation; rather he chose to walk on the far side of the road and avoid this man. Likewise, in verse 32 a Levite did the same thing, whereas in verse 33 the unexpected happened. A Samaritan man, someone with whom the Jews didn't even associate, was the one who stopped and showed compassion. Surely, this Samaritan had places to be, but he stopped to take care of this one who was in need; he actually went beyond just barely helping. So, the sin in this situation was that the first two men failed to do something they should have done.

This Samaritan took time to care for the man. We can learn some valuable lessons from the actions of the good Samaritan. We may not always have a dire situation like this one, but the story shows that we need to have compassion for one another. Often times we get too caught up in what we have to do for ourselves, even if what we are doing is trivial in comparison to someone else's needs, and such behavior is wrong.

James provides a clear-cut example of a Christian's behavior:

Pure and undefiled religion before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their trouble, and to keep oneself unspotted from the world (**James 1:27**).

From this scripture we learn that if we fail to help widows and orphans, we have committed a sin of omission. Other scriptures teach other things we are to do to help others.

Adding to these examples, we notice **Matthew 25:31-46** where Jesus talks about judging people from every nation on that final day. This story is parallel to how we treat our brothers and sisters in Christ. If Jesus himself were in front of us today, would we drop everything to take care of him? If so, why don't we drop things to take care of one another? How we treat each other mirrors how we treat Jesus; thus, we should treat each other just as we would treat Him.

To summarize, all sin will keep us from the glory of God, but it is well we consider seriously the sins of omission because we could easily overlook them. Our challenge is to study all scriptures that teach positive commands, to reflect on our own actions, and to be honest in evaluating whether we are committing a sin of omission.



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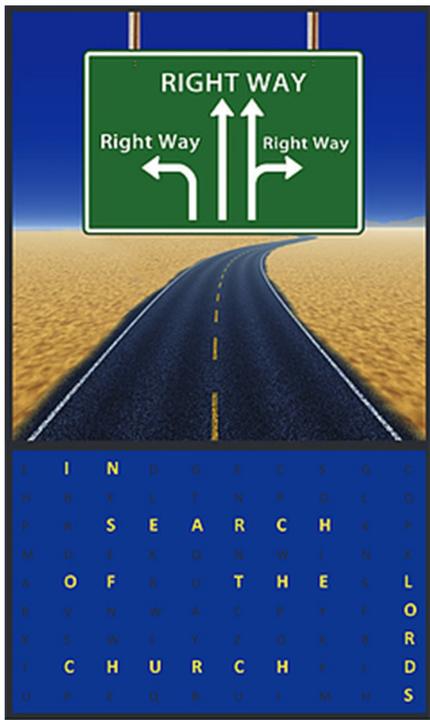
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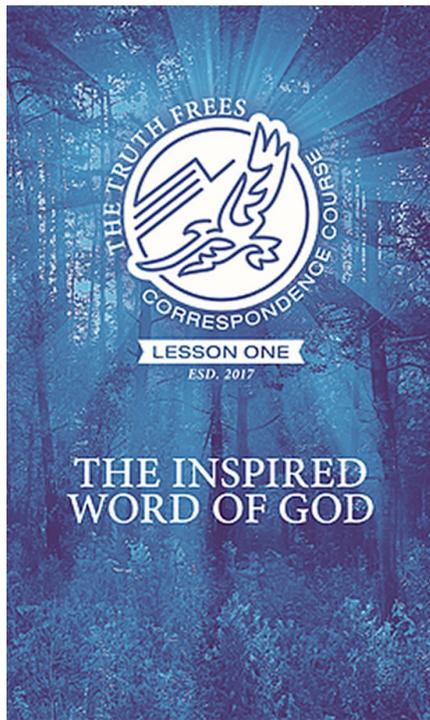
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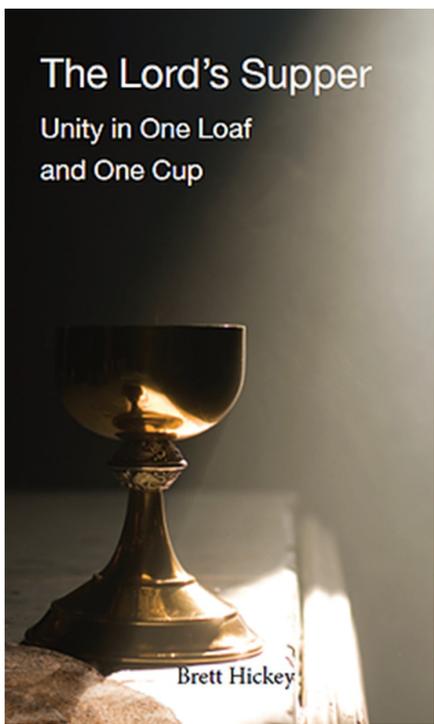
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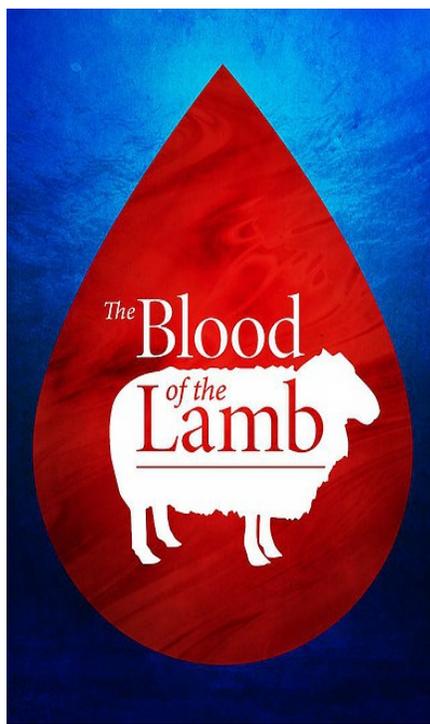
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