

Where are you when it comes to nations at war . . . especially when there's so little you alone can control?

It's Out of My Hands

By **Dan Stuecher**

I am not a pacifist. Threaten the welfare of my family and you will incur my wrath. But I am not a fighter, either. I will do everything possible to avoid an altercation.

Maybe I'm a diplomat. There have been those occasions when I've talked my way out of potentially difficult spots. But then again, maybe I'm not. Down deep is a confrontational part of me that will rush to manipulate and coerce if left unchecked.

Jesus tells me not to resist an evil person. But Paul mandates that I give allegiance to my government. God did not equip those in authority with a sword for nothing.

Confused yet? I'll bet. So where are you when it comes to nations at war, especially when one of them happens to be your own?

I have two sons both grown and married. If they chose to join the armed forces to fight a war, I would support their decision with great pride. But neither of my sons joined the military . . . and I'm glad about that.

Many Possible Responses

When it comes to the many-faceted and controversial issue of war, whether I'm a "hawk" or a "dove," I have to begin by understanding it's out of my hands.

If I can argue powerfully for the newly emerging doctrine of preventive war in this radically changing age of terrorism, or if I think such terminol-

ogy smugly masks aggressive and hidden agendas . . . it's out of my hands.

If I am energized to such a degree as to sacrifice myself for the cause or if I am so indifferent that I'm oblivious to what is happening . . . it's out of my hands.

If the nations of the world regard America with respect or seize every opportunity to spew their contempt . . . it's out of my hands.

If it's all out of my hands, what do I do? I know there are those who

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have already given what Lincoln called "the last full measure" of sacrifice defending my freedom. I also know there are those right now giving the heart of their youth standing guard to protect that same freedom. And I pray there will be countless others in the future who will stand in the gap. But what do I do?

It's all out of my hands. And I'm glad about that as well. The questions of just war, preventive war, resistance, pacifism, or retribution against tyranny are all much too difficult for me to settle. The answers, even if I could determine beyond the shadow of a doubt which ones are right, would all have two very sharp edges cutting both ways.

A Plan of Action

Here is what I will do.

I will respect your freedom to adopt whatever view you choose even though I may disagree.

I will honor and never disparage those who are willingly putting themselves in harm's way for you and me.

I will live rightly. Although I am just one person, I will honor God with my life and in His honor strive to be a citizen worth defending.

Above all, I will pray fervently to the One in whose hands all matters rest and ask that His purposes are served and that His will is accomplished.

That is what I will do.

This script is now airing on the Worship Television Network. It was written by **Dan Stuecher**, a Worship host and senior minister at Harborside Christian Church in Safety Harbor, Florida. (Additional Worship hosts include Rick Rusaw, senior minister at LifeBridge Christian Church in Longmont, Colorado, and Greg Allen, worship minister at Southeast Christian Church in Louisville, Kentucky. Paul Williams, editor-at-large of CHRISTIAN STANDARD, also is a Worship host.)

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