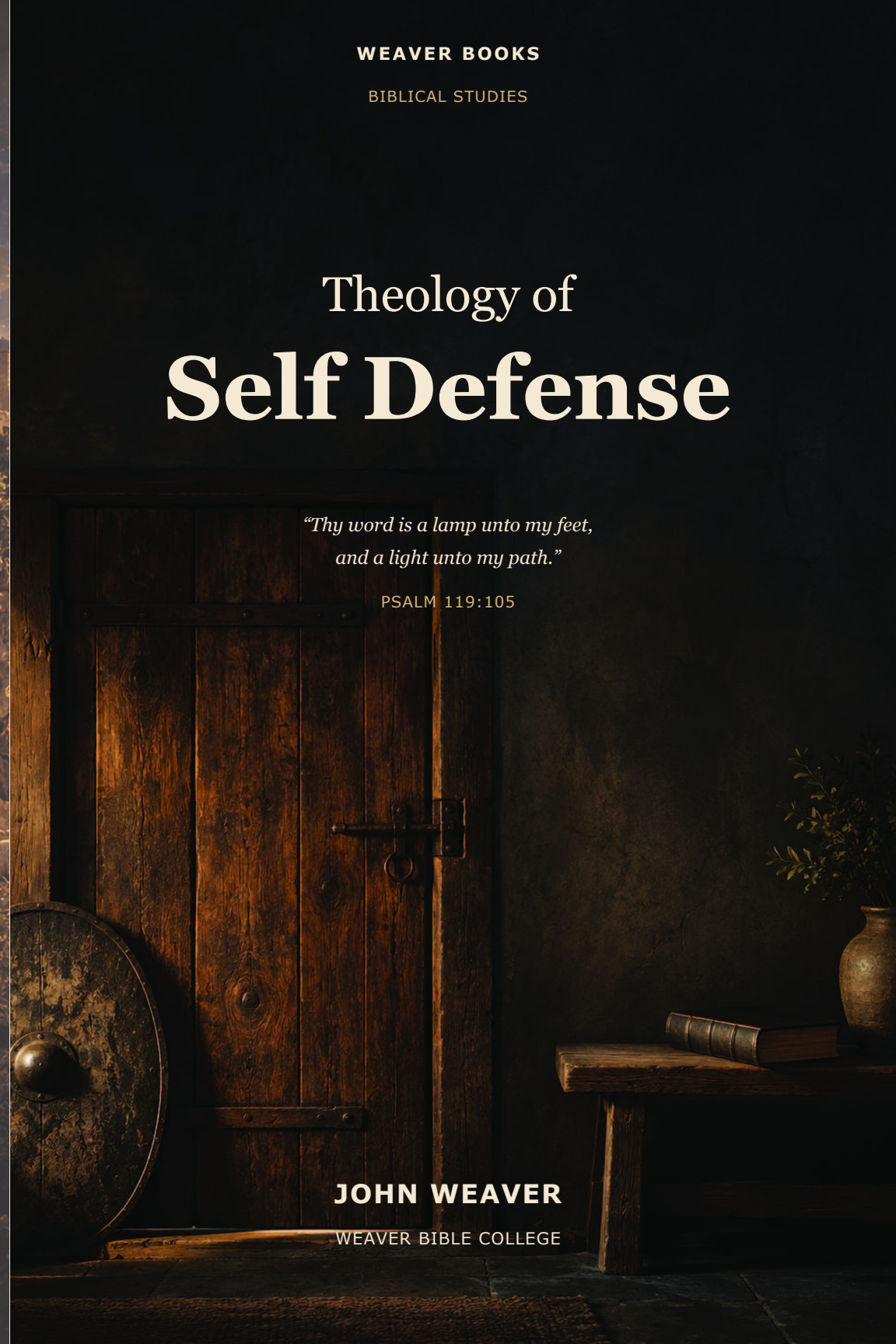
WEAVER BOOKS

BIBLICAL STUDIES

# Theology of
# Self Defense

*"Thy word is a lamp unto my feet,*
*and a light unto my path."*

PSALM 119:105



**JOHN WEAVER**

WEAVER BIBLE COLLEGE





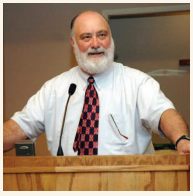
*Deliver the poor and needy: rid them out of the hand of the wicked.*

**PSALM 82:4**

Self-defense raises questions of protection, restraint, and moral responsibility. John Weaver considers biblical principles and the duties associated with defending life. These messages ask readers to examine the subject through Scripture rather than fear, impulse, or assumptions about the use of force.

*“Self-defense, defense of others, and church security must be viewed as a ministry.”*

JOHN WEAVER



## John Weaver

John Weaver's sermons form the teaching collection presented by Weaver Bible College. This volume gathers his teaching from that collection.



**WEAVER BIBLE COLLEGE**

weaverbiblecollege.com

WEAVER BOOKS

# Theology of Self Defense

Old Testament Studies

John Weaver

Weaver Bible College

LIBRARY BOOK 108

# Theology of Self Defense

John Weaver

Weaver Books
Weaver Bible College

Edited from the sermon corpus of John Weaver.

# Contents

Chapter 1: Theology of Self-Defense-1 5

Introduction and Historical Context . . . . . 5

Modern Church Attacks and the Need for Defense . . . . . 9

The Sixth Commandment: Negative and Positive . . . . . 11

Biblical Examples of Righteous Killing . . . . . 13

God's Law on Self-Defense and Property . . . . . 18

Duty to Preserve Life: Animals and Humans . . . . . 22

Natural Instinct and Christ's Teaching . . . . . 23

Conclusion and Teaser for Next Lecture . . . . . 24

Chapter 2: Theology of Self Defense-2 25

Introduction and Scripture Reading . . . . . 25

The Biblical Mandate for Self-Defense . . . . . 26

The Objection from Christ's Arrest . . . . . 26

The Change in Christ's Instructions . . . . . 27

The Command to Buy a Sword . . . . . 31

The Disciples' Question and Peter's Action . . . . . 31

Christ's Response: 'Suffer ye thus far' . . . . . 33

Peter's Actions Were Unwise . . . . . 33

Peter's Actions Were Unnecessary . . . . . 38

Peter's Actions Were Unenlightened . . . . . 39

Proper Use of Weapons and Conclusion . . . . . 40

Chapter 3: Theology of Self Defense-3 45

Introduction: Safety, Preparation, and Situational Awareness . . . . . 45

Two Major Caveats: God's Sovereignty and Human Responsibility . . . . . 46

Accepting the Reality of a Changed Society and Evil . . . . . 48

The Failure of Gun-Free Zones and the Need for Church Security . . . . . 52

Components of Preparation: Weapons, Training, and Mindset . . . . . 54

Situational Awareness: Principles and Practices . . . . . 56

Do Not Act Like Easy Prey . . . . . 58
Practical Questions for Church Security Preparedness . . . . . 60
You Are Not Too Old: Biblical Encouragement for All Ages . . . . . 62
Self-Defense as a Ministry and Moral Duty . . . . . 63
Conclusion: Bringing Thoughts Captive to Christ and Final Exhortation . . . 66
Topical Index . . . . . 71
Scripture Index . . . . . 73
Study Guide Link . . . . . 77

CHAPTER 1

# Theology of Self-Defense-1

## Introduction and Historical Context

Open your Bibles, if you would please, to Exodus chapter 20. We are going to read one verse tonight, while covering many other verses as well. When we speak of the biblical doctrine of self-defense, I have so many messages on the subject that I would love to preach them all, but I cannot. Among them are “Lord, Teach Us to Fight,” based on Psalm 144 and verse 1; “To Teach Them War,” based on Joshua chapter 3; “How to Fight Like a Christian,” in two messages; and many, many more. This subject has been very special to my heart, and I believe that understanding what we share tonight may enlighten and help you.

In Exodus chapter 20 and verse 13, the Bible says plainly, “Thou shalt not kill.” Most people understand that, or at least think they do. The truth is that many do not understand it, because there is not only a negative here but also a positive, which I will clarify later.

One of my favorite stories concerns an old pilgrim walking to church with his blunderbuss on his shoulder. A man from the

community asked him, “Pastor, do you not believe that God is absolutely sovereign?”

“Most certainly I do.”

“If you believe God is sovereign, do you believe He has ordained the day of your death?”

“Absolutely.”

“If God is sovereign, and has ordained the day of your death, then when your time comes, you will die, and there is not one thing you can do about it. Here is my question: Why are you carrying that blunderbuss on your shoulder?”

The pastor replied, “That’s simple: in case I meet an Indian whose time it is to die.”

So he believed in the doctrine of self-defense, that is for sure. Most of us have never understood that our forefathers not only went around armed all the time, but also went armed when they were in church. I have an old book in my library titled "The Sabbath in Puritan New England." It was written by Alice Morse Earle, and thankfully it has been reprinted. The second chapter is extremely valuable and informative. It tells us not only how, but why, our forefathers went armed even on the Lord's Day and in the assembly of the saints. In fact, pastors then told those who loaded their weapons not to discharge them on the Sabbath unless it was at an Indian or a wolf, their two greatest enemies at that particular time.

Trumbull, the historian of Connecticut, made a little jingle in his "McFingal" concerning the carrying of arms to church:

"So, once, for fear of Indian beating, our grandsires wore their guns to meeting, each man equipped each Sunday morn, with psalm book, shot, and powder horn, and looked in form as almost grant, like the ancient true church militant."

In the formation of our nation, many—indeed, it was required by law—had to carry arms on the Lord's Day. For instance, in 1640 in Massachusetts, it was ordered that church attendants carry a competent number of pieces, fixed and complete, with powder and shot and swords each Lord's Day to the Meeting House. Swords were demanded as well as rifles. In Connecticut, in 1643, those who failed

to bring their arms to church were fined twelve cents for each offense. Twelve cents may seem like nothing to us, but then it was really something.

In 1644, a law demanded that the fourth part of a trained band of men—that is, trained fighting men—come to church each Sunday. Sentinels were ordered to keep their matches lit in case they had to fire their matchlocks. I have often wondered what it must have been like to sit in an early church smelling all the smoke from the matches, while they stood ready to fire if needed. In 1692, the Connecticut legislature ordered that one-fifth of the soldiers in each town attend the Sunday meeting so that they might protect the congregation. Thus, in colonial America, church security was often mandated by law.

and sometimes with the militia being there as well. Hence, in 1619, there was a statute in Virginia that required not only attendance, but that all such as bear arms shall bring their pieces, swords, powder, and shot with them under penalty of a three shilling fine if they did not. It says this was phrased in 1623 to require that all men that are fitting to bear arms shall bring their pieces to church. And so it was also made a statute in 1738. So the Plymouth colonies as well as the southern colonies really demanded that all men in the congregation bear arms. In fact, there is a painting, of course, most of you know, George Boughton's painting on pilgrims going to church, showing them walking three abreast with their muzzle loaders or their blunderbusses on their shoulders as well.

And that was basically true. That's basically what happened. In the mid-17th century, the gun carrying to church was also mandated in Plymouth by law as well. And of course Connecticut also required everyone to bring a musket and a sword as well. So the early militia and the men of the churches were concerned then primarily about Indian attacks. But in 1743 in South Carolina again there was a law mandated that they must bring their weapons to church and swords as well.

Many of our modern day habits which we never even stop to consider actually come from what happened during the colonial period. I don't know if you ever noticed this or not. In fact, I can look around right now and just see one or two out. But I was raised in

church. If there was a special meeting during the week, my father and mother and my sister and I were there.

We were there Sunday morning. We were there Sunday night. We were there Wednesday night. And I made an observation as a young man. And I did not understand it, but I just observed it, that most of the men sat on the ends of the pews. In fact, look around tonight. Most of them are like that tonight. Well, one or two exceptions. And I often wondered why. Well, the truth of the matter is this came from a custom in colonial America where the men stacked their muskets in the aisle. And they sat on the edge of the pews so that they could quickly grab those muskets if the Indians attacked or if some other danger arose. The women and the children were on the inside and thus they would not hinder the men, they would not be in the way if danger happened to arise and therefore the men would be able to quickly get their weapons and of course then defend their families as well.

Many people have never thought about this. Have you ever noticed that when the preacher finishes preaching, usually following a prayer, he goes to the front of the church and stands there while everybody files out? You may say, “He goes back there to greet everyone and shake their hands.” No, that is not the reason or the purpose. If you wanted to shake my hand, you could come up here as easily as I could go back there. If you wanted to shake Pastor Robert’s hand, you could come up here as easily as he could go back there.

How in the world did this happen? The pastor was the under-shepherd, the man most responsible for the flock. The pastor, who was always a good shot and usually had one of the finest weapons in the neighborhood, preached with that loaded weapon by his pulpit. When he finished, he took the weapon to the front of the church, opened the door, looked out, and made sure there was safety in his assembly. Then the men filed out, followed by the women and children. The pastor’s going to the front of the church was basically his being the lookout for danger because he was the under-shepherd and was responsible. In Concord, New Hampshire, once again, they stacked their arms in the middle of the church aisle as well.

On June 17, 1775, at the onset of the war for independence, a law was passed that all churches within 20 miles of the seacoast had to have their weapons at the church. All men had to have them. By the time the war was over in 1783, the wisdom of that was certainly discovered.

I have given you a lot of history. In light of this history, were our forefathers correct? Were they biblical? The answer, of course, is yes: they were biblical, and they were correct. Do you consider this fact, in light of the situation we are facing today, to be also biblical and correct?

## Modern Church Attacks and the Need for Defense

Some of you may or may not know about what happened in Cape Town, South Africa, on July 25, 1993. Some of Nelson Mandela's African communists came to St. James Church, the largest evangelical church in South Africa, where more than a thousand people were in attendance. These communist guerrillas opened the side doors, lobbed grenades in, and then opened fire with AK-47s, blowing people to bits and shooting as many as they could. People were diving behind the pews if they could.

Another door opened, and another communist guerrilla went to throw a hand grenade, but one missionary with Frontline Fellowship was armed. He drew his pistol and began shooting at the guerrilla who was going to lob the grenade. The man did not lob the grenade or open fire with his AK. In fact, he turned and ran because he was being shot at. The rest of them ran, and the missionary followed him out and emptied his weapon into the fleeing car. The police in that area credited this missionary with saving at least a hundred lives. He was the only person in that entire church building who was armed, and he used that weapon to defend those people.

Was the missionary right to use that weapon? Was he right to fire it in the church building? Would those Christians say, "Well, wait a minute, we've got to die anyhow. Why not die today? Let's just die today. Let's die at the hands of these communist guerrillas"? Would you say they were not spiritual enough if they did not want to die or sacrifice their lives?

The truth of the matter is this: Had you much rather for righteousness to triumph or for evil to triumph? I don't know about you, but I much prefer the Christian to live than the communist to die. I much rather for righteousness to prevail than for evil to prevail. Do we need such today? When you stop and think about what is happening in this country, the answer becomes urgent.

Within the last six years, attacks on local churches have risen over 800 percent. In Richmond, California, three hooded men entered the Gethsemane Church of God, opened fire, and fled, shooting a fourteen-year-old boy and a nineteen-year-old man. On March 8, 2009, in Maryville, Illinois, Terry Joe Sedelec, twenty-seven, entered First Baptist Church and shot Pastor Fred Winters dead at point-blank range. Other men wrestled him down; he had a knife, and some were cut, but they caught him.

In Knoxville, Tennessee, a gunman opened fire during a church youth performance, killing two and injuring seven. In Colorado, three people were killed and five wounded in two shooting rampages—one at a missionary school in suburban Denver and another at a church in Colorado Springs. An armed guard took down the gunman at that church. In Missouri, a man entered the Missouri Micronesian Church and killed a pastor and two other churchgoers. In 2007, a standoff between police and the suspect in the shooting of three people at a Moscow, Idaho, Presbyterian church ended with three dead, including a police officer. In College Park, Georgia, a twenty-seven-year-old airman was shot and killed at a church where he had once worked as a security guard. At First Baptist Church in Texas, during a youth meeting, someone entered and simply opened fire.

Seven people were killed during that particular attack in Lakeland, Florida. Authorities and family members say a man shot and killed his wife at their Lakeland home and then shot two others at a nearby church. People are going absolutely insane and absolutely crazy today. Formerly, you would think that you were safe at home and safe in church. Communists always like to attack you where you are most vulnerable—when you think you are safest, at home or in a church building.

## The Sixth Commandment: Negative and Positive

When you look at Exodus chapter 20 and verse 13, it is very simple: God says, "Thou shalt not kill." The Ten Commandments are God's law; they are not Jewish law. Jewish law is found in the Mishnah, the Gemara, and the Talmud, while God's law is found in the Bible. Our Lord Himself spoke against Jewish law in Matthew chapter 15 and Mark chapter 7, saying, "With your traditions you make void the law of God." Thus, the law given in Exodus chapter 20 and Deuteronomy chapter 5 is indeed God's law and biblical.

We must understand what God means when He says, "Thou shalt not kill." In Hebrew, it actually means, "Thou shalt not do any murder." In the New Testament Greek, it likewise says, "Thou shalt not do any murder." In other words, we are not to take a life except on God's terms. Many times life is taken, but it is not murder. The command is, "Thou shalt not murder," or, "Thou shalt not take life unjustly"—or, "Thou shalt not take life but except on God's terms." Without going over all these passages, I can give you nineteen biblical reasons why life may be lawfully and legitimately taken on God's terms. Sometimes this refers to the civil magistrate, but it is still the taking of life. For instance, life is to be taken for murder, but not for accidental killing.

Life is to be forfeited, listen to this one, for striking or cursing a parent. You will find that in Exodus 21, Leviticus 20, Proverbs 20, Matthew 15, and Mark 7. Life may also be taken for kidnapping, in Exodus 21. The death penalty is given for adultery in Leviticus 20 and for incest in Leviticus 20. It is also pronounced for bestiality in Exodus 22, and it is demanded for sodomy and homosexuality in Leviticus 20. It is also demanded for unchastity in Deuteronomy 22 and for the rape of a virgin in Deuteronomy 23. For witchcraft, you will find it in Exodus 22; for the offering of human sacrifice, in Leviticus 20; and for incorrigible delinquency, in Deuteronomy 21. Believe it or not, the death penalty is even required for blasphemy, in Leviticus 24. It is required for Sabbath desecration in Exodus 35 and Numbers 15. How about this one? It is required for the propagation of false doctrine in Deuteronomy 13, for refusing to abide by the decision of a biblical court of law in Deuteronomy 17, and for

refusing to restore the bail or the pledge in Ezekiel 18. So here are eighteen reasons why life may be lawfully taken on God's terms.

Now, there is another reason, and I am not adding to the Word of God because it is taught in the Word of God: self-defense. You see, the sixth commandment forbids all violence. Let me make this point very clear: when God forbids anything, at the same time He forbids everything that would lead up to it. When God says, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," that also forbids lusting, covetousness, and anything that would ultimately end in the act of adultery. When God says, "Thou shalt not murder," at the same time He is forbidding anger, ill will, and anything that would lead up to murder. So God says, "Thou shalt not kill," or, "Thou shalt not murder."

Now, God's law is always stated in negative terms, with the exception of two commandments: "Remember the Sabbath day" and "Honor thy father and thy mother." These are the only two positives in the Ten Commandments, but each of these positives is undergirded throughout the Bible by many negatives as well. So here is what you should be doing: whenever you read a negative in the Bible, ask what the positive is; whenever you read a positive in the Bible, ask what the negative is. If I read, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," I should be asking what the positive is. The positive is, "Thou shalt live a holy, righteous, sanctified life." "Thou shalt not steal"—what would be the positive?

According to the Bible, you must earn your own living, working with your hands and doing that which is good, so that you may have to give to him that needeth. In other words, you are not a taker or a covetous individual. You are an honest man, a worker, and you are willing to give and share. When God says, "Thou shalt not kill," the positive command is, "Thou shalt preserve life." The positive application of the sixth commandment is that we must preserve life. That includes our life, the life of our family, and the lives of others.

Based upon the sixth commandment, self-defense is obligatory. God demands it. If you do not defend yourself, then you are guilty of violating the sixth commandment. We are obligated to defend ourselves. Suppose Kevin walked up to me and said, "Pastor, I'd just like to kill you." If I answered, "Well, do whatever spins your wheels. If it'll make you happy, go ahead and do it. I'm going to heaven

anyhow," and allowed him to kill me, I would be violating the sixth commandment. I have a duty, responsibility, and obligation to preserve my life. If, in preserving my life, I end up having to take his life, it is lawful and legal because I would be obeying the sixth commandment.

Self-defense is indeed obligatory. If we do not defend ourselves, we are not preserving our lives. Some of you fellows have been in the military. Have you ever thought about Article 3 of the United States Military Code? It says, "If I am captured, I will continue to resist by all means available. I will make every effort to escape and to aid others to escape. I will accept neither parole nor special favors from the enemy."

We are taught that if we are captured by the enemy, we have a duty and obligation to escape and to help others escape. This is not merely so that we can bring information back to the commanding officer; it is based upon the sixth commandment. We have a duty to preserve our lives and the lives of others. If I am captured, I will make every effort I can to escape. Read some of the lives of those Scottish Covenanters. When they were captured and thrown in the Tower of London, they did everything they could to escape. Many escaped, while some were captured as they tried.

They said, “Lord, we obeyed your law. If you want me to die, I am willing to die for your honor and glory.” Yet they kept trying to escape until their death.

In other words, this is indeed the sixth commandment. Is self-defense wrong or wicked? Absolutely not. If we kill to preserve life, it is not wicked; it is righteous. Can that be proved? I think it can, if you believe the Bible. First of all, most everyone encourages Christians to emulate their Heavenly Father: “Be ye holy as I am holy, saith the Lord.”

## Biblical Examples of Righteous Killing

Consider what God said concerning Hezekiah and Jerusalem. In 2 Kings 19:34, God says, “For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David’s sake.” What did God just say? “I will defend this city.”

The Assyrians wanted to capture Judah and Jerusalem. They had already taken Samaria, the northern kingdom. So God told Hezekiah, “I’m going to defend this city.” He said it again in 2 Kings 20:6: “And I will add unto thy days fifteen years, and I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria, and I will defend this city for mine own sake and for my servant David’s sake.”

Again, in Isaiah 31:5: “As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also he will deliver it, and passing over it he will preserve it.” In Isaiah 37:35, God said, “For I will defend this city for mine own sake and for my servant David’s sake.” Then, in Isaiah 38:6: “I will deliver thee and this city out of the hand of the king of Assyria: and I will defend this city.”

Did God defend Judah and Jerusalem? Yes, He did. In defending Judah and Jerusalem, did God take lives? Did He kill? Yes. Isaiah 37:36 says that the angel of the Lord went out and smote the Assyrian army, 185,000. When they awoke the next morning, they were all dead men—that is, those few that God did not kill.

Could God have delivered Judah and Jerusalem without killing those Assyrians? Yes. He had delivered Samaria from the Syrians by causing them to hear a noise. They said, "The king of Samaria has hired Tirhakah, the king of the Ethiopians, against us," and they fled, leaving everything. God simply caused them to hear a noise.

But in this instance, He did not do that. He slew 185,000 Assyrian soldiers. Is anyone going to be so wicked and blasphemous as to charge God with murder? He certainly killed them in defending the city.

I challenge you to read through the Psalms and note how many times David says, "The Lord is my defense. The Lord is my defender. In the Lord I will trust." Over and over, David says that. In Psalm 89, he said, "For the Lord is our defense." If God defended Judah and Jerusalem, and God is our defense, we may understand that God is certainly going to defend us.

It is never wrong for you and me to emulate our Heavenly Father. When there arises a necessity in our lives to defend ourselves, we must remember that God Himself did that. He defended His people.

You and I really need to grasp these principles and these Scriptures. If you ever get into a situation in which you actually have to defend yourself, it is too late to stand there and say, "Lord, what can I do? What should I do? I do not even know what to do." If you do not know what to do when it is time to do something, it is too late. You had better understand and grasp these matters beforehand.

I have never shot anyone. I do not want to shoot anyone, and I do not want to hurt anyone. But I do not want to be hurt or shot either. I do not want my wife to be hurt or shot, and I do not want you to be hurt or shot. I am simply pointing out that we need to understand what we can do in light of God's Word.

Someone will object, "What God does and what we do are two totally different things." In one sense, that is true, because we are certainly not God. But when you study Scripture and find out what God demands and what God does—for instance, if you simply read through the book of Judges, especially Judges chapter 10 and verse 1—you see this principle.

"And after Abimelech, there arose to defend Israel, Tola, the son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar, and he dwelt in Shamir and Mount Ephraim." God raised up the judges. Who raised them up? God. For what purpose? To defend Israel, His people. That is exactly what those judges did: they went to war. Read about Jephthah and Ehud; read about these men and see how they defended Israel. God raised them up for that particular purpose.

In 2 Samuel, chapter 23, we read about some of David's mighty men. We are not going to consider all of them. They certainly all deserve recognition, but I want to point out a couple of them and show what is happening. Beginning with verse 8, we read: “These be the names of the mighty men whom David had, the Tachmonite that sat in the seat, chief among the captains, the same as Adino the Eznite, and he lift up his spear against 800 whom he slew at one time.” That does not mean he threw it and got 800 skewered at one time, but that he took it in one battle and killed 800 with his spear.

Verse 9 says, “And after him was Eliezer, the son of Dodo, the Ahohite, one of the three mighty men with David, when they defied the Philistines that were there, gathered together to battle, and the

men of Israel were gone away." The Philistines had gathered together to battle, and the men of Israel were gone away. Look what Eliezer did: "He arose and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary, and his hand clave unto the sword. And the Lord wrought a great victory that day, and the people returned after him only to spoil."

He fought so valiantly and with such intensity that, when he finished fighting, his hand clave unto his sword. In other words, someone had to prise those fingers away from the sword. Eliezer was the man killing all of these wicked men. But note verse 10 again: "And he arose and smote the Philistines until his hand was weary. And his hand clave into the sword, and the Lord brought a great victory that day."

How did the Lord get a great victory that day? It was Eleazar who was doing the fighting. It was Eleazar who was sustained by God, empowered by God, and doing the work of God. The people returned after him only to spoil, but the fighting had been done by this mighty man as God sustained and empowered him.

In verse 11, we read: "And after him was Shammah, the son of Agee the Hararite. And the Philistines were gathered together in a troop, where was a piece of ground full of lentils, and the people fled from the Philistines. But he, Shammah, stood in the midst of the ground and defended it, and slew the Philistines, and the Lord wrought a great victory." Shammah was the one doing the fighting, but it was the Lord who wrought the victory, because God enabled him, empowered him, and strengthened him.

We must learn to use the means that God has ordained while trusting God to make those means effectual. Great men in the Bible used swords, bows, knives, and other weapons, yet they trusted in the Lord to deliver them. It was not the power of the weapon; it was the power of God.

You need to read Psalm 44: "They got not the land in possession by their own arm, neither did their sword save them, but it was thou, O God." Israel had to fight to conquer the land, but God gave them the victory and made them effectual in their fighting. Clearly, we must use the means, but at the same time, we must trust in the Lord.

Weapons are actually nothing in and of themselves. You could ask me, “Pastor, do you sleep with a loaded weapon in your bedroom?” I most certainly do—several. “Well, you are trusting in that weapon.” No, I am trusting in the Lord. If God does not awaken me in time during a violent breaking into my house, if He does not enable me to grab that weapon and shoot straight, my weapon is absolutely useless. I could have forty or fifty-caliber machine guns in my bedroom, a bazooka, a mortar, or anything else, but none would do me any good if God did not open my eyes, awaken me, and enable me to fight. I am not trusting in a weapon. A weapon is useless without God and His grace and mercy.

I want you to look in Acts chapter 7. Look at Acts chapter 7, verse 22. The Bible is talking about Moses. I can quote some of these verses, but I want you to see them: Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptian and was mighty in words and deeds. When he was full forty years old, it came into his heart to visit his brethren, the children of Israel. Seeing one of them suffer wrong, he defended him, avenged him that was oppressed, and smote the Egyptian. He supposed his brethren would have understood how that God by his hand would deliver them, but they understood not.

Now, note if you would, Moses saw an Egyptian smiting a Hebrew. He defended the Hebrew and killed the Egyptian. Here's the interesting thing: nowhere in the Bible, Old Testament or New Testament, is Moses condemned for killing this Egyptian. In fact, you might say he is commended because God listed him among the heroes of faith in Hebrews chapter 11.

But you say, "Moses had to flee. He had to get out of Egypt and flee to the land of Midian." Yes, he did. But not because he violated God's law, only because the tyrant Pharaoh was after him and did not regard God's law. And by the way, I have a message on this as well: Means of resistance to tyranny. One of the means that we may biblically use in resistance to tyranny is flight. If you flee, you are not necessarily a coward. No, no, no, no. The sovereign God of heaven and earth told Joseph, "Take the child and flee into Egypt."

There are problems with flight, but Moses was only getting out of the way of a tyrant who was intent on murdering him for doing that

which was right. Nowhere in the Bible is Moses condemned for defending his brother.

When you get to 1 Samuel 17, you do not have to turn there because you know the story of Goliath and David. Everyone was afraid of Goliath, and no one wanted to fight him until little David came along, seventeen approximately. He told King Saul, "Let not the king's heart fail, I'll go and fight him." Saul said, "How in the world can you do that? You're but a youth and he's been a soldier since his youth." David answered, "Well, God delivered me out of the paw of the lion, paw of the bear, and this uncircumcised Philistine, he'll fall just like them." Saul dressed him in his armor. And you know what he said?

David said, "You come to me against me, but I come to you in the name of the Lord and the Lord will give me the victory and I will take your head." Goliath intended to kill David, but David took his sling and picked up five smooth stones. When Goliath saw him, he was incensed: "What? You're sending a kid out here to fight me? I'm a professional warrior. Do you think I'm a dog?" He threatened, "Come to me and I will give your meat to the fowls of the air. I will kill you."

Do you think David intended to kill Goliath? Of course he did. Once David swung that stone and knocked him out, he went up and took Goliath's own sword and cut his head off. Was he right? Absolutely he was right. Goliath was the one who purposely and deliberately pressed the attack, not David. David was the defender.

## God's Law on Self-Defense and Property

Now let us look at what God has commanded. Exodus chapter 22 deals particularly with the law of restitution, but it gives more than restitution. In verse 1, the Bible says, "If a man steal an ox or a sheep and kill it or sell it, he shall restore five oxen for an ox and four sheep for a sheep."

"If a thief be found breaking up and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him. But if the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him, for he should make full restitution. If he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft."

Note how God allows for the taking of life in certain situations. Consider also the law of restitution: "If a man shall steal an ox or a sheep and kill it, or sell it, he shall restore five oxen for an ox and four sheep for a sheep." Why is there a difference in the ratio of restitution? Sometimes in the Bible there is two-fold restitution, four-fold restitution, or five-fold restitution, and in the book of Proverbs there is seven-fold restitution. The restitution is based upon the value and the usefulness of the item that is stolen.

If Randy has a fine little car that his wife likes to drive, and an old work truck full of his tools, I wonder which one he would rather have stolen: the little car or the old truck full of tools? The little car would be a sheep. You can shear a sheep and eat the meat. The work truck is an oxen. You can use its hide for leather and eat the meat, but you can plow with it. The ratio of restitution is therefore based upon the value of that which is stolen.

But look what God says in verse two: “If a thief be found breaking up and be smitten that he die, there shall no blood be shed for him.” Then, in verse three, He says, “If the sun be risen upon him, there shall be blood shed for him.”

Verse two deals with a thief breaking in at night. You cannot see who he is or know whether he is armed. You have no earthly idea. God says that if you shoot him and he dies, there should be no blood shed for him. He had no business breaking in. When we think of breaking in, we normally think of breaking into our homes.

That is probably how the law would look at it today. But in verse one, He said, “...if a man shall steal an ox or a sheep,” and ox and sheep do not live in the house; they are in the barn. Here is somebody breaking into the barn to steal private property. God says that if you shoot him at night, there is to be no blood shed for him. Then He says in verse three, “If the sun be risen upon him, then blood shall be shed for him, for he should make full restitution.”

“If he have nothing, then he shall be sold for his theft.” During daylight hours, you can see him and recognize him. You can also see whether or not he is armed.

There would be a lawful way that you could kill him during the daytime as well. What would that be? If he is armed and points that

weapon at you, then you have the perfect right to defend yourself. But God said that if he has no weapon, and if you know who he is, do not kill him. Just make him make restitution. If we followed the Bible when it comes to restitution, we would have very little crime in this country.

You have heard the old expression, "Crime doesn't pay." That's only under biblical law. It does pay; that's why we have so many criminals today under humanistic law. God says you can take his life.

I was preaching in Greenville years ago when a man came up and asked, "What would you do if you woke up during the night and a man was breaking in your bedroom window?"

I told him, "Well, if I get my hands on a gun, I would shoot him. If I couldn't get my hands on a gun, I'd take a baseball bat and hit him upside the head."

He said, "I don't think you ought to do that."

I asked, "What do you think I ought to do?"

He said, "I think you ought to go in another room and pray about it."

I said, "You mean to tell me you think I should be in a room praying when he's in there raping my wife or murdering my children? Sir, let me tell you something: I would pray. When he stuck his head through that window coming into my bedroom, I would draw that baseball bat back and say, 'Dear Lord, please don't let me miss him this time.' Pow!"

And I would swing it. That's how I would pray. That's what the Bible says. If he's breaking in and it's night, you don't know who he is or whether he's armed. God says life can be taken lawfully in that instance.

I want you to notice this powerful passage in Deuteronomy 22, beginning at verse 23. The Bible says, "If a man be found lying with a woman married to a husband, then they shall both of them die, both the man that lay with the woman and the woman. So shalt thou put away evil from Israel. If a damsel that is a virgin be betrothed unto a husband, and a man find her in the city and lie with her, then you shall bring them forth both out of the gate of the city, and you shall

stone them with stones, that they die. The damsel, because she cried not, being in the city, and the man, because he hath humbled his neighbor's wife, so thou shalt put away evil from among you."

"But if a man find a betrothed damsel in the field, and the man force her, and lie with her, then the man only that lay with her shall die. But in the damsel thou shalt do nothing. There is in the damsel no sin worthy of death. For as when a man rises up against his neighbor, and slayeth him, even so it is in this matter. For he found her in the field, and the betrothed damsel cried, and there was none to save her."

Here is a very interesting comparison. God says that when a man finds a woman in the city and lies with her, both the man and the woman are to be brought out of the city and stoned, that they both die.

Now consider the damsel in the field. If she is attacked, the man only is to be put to death. What is the difference? The Bible says the woman in the city is to be put to death because she cried not out. In other words, she was consenting to the sin; she was consenting to the crime. Since she was consenting, she was worthy of death, just as the man was worthy of death. But when you come to the damsel in the field, the man attacks her, and she cries. There is no one out in the field, but it is later discovered. God says, Put him to death; let her live. What is the difference? The difference is this: the woman in the city, if she had cried out, that meant anyone and everyone who heard her would have had the responsibility to save her. The woman in the field cried, but there was no one to hear and no one to save her. Therefore, the man is to be put to death.

This is a perfect illustration of the positive side of the sixth commandment, "Thou shalt preserve life." Anyone who hears someone screaming and begging for help is responsible to help save that individual.

Here is a very famous case. It happened in 1964. I have never forgotten it. A woman by the name of Kitty Genovese was brutally raped and murdered. She was stabbed seventeen times on a sidewalk and left for dead. She cried, screamed, and begged for help. Thirty-eight people had either heard or observed some part of the

crime, but did not lift a finger to save her. A few undoubtedly called the police. By the time the police arrived, all they could do was draw a line around the dead woman. According to God's law, those thirty-eight people who stood by and did nothing are just as guilty of murder as the man who stabbed and killed her, because we have a responsibility to preserve life.

Now turn to two passages. You are already in Deuteronomy 22; find Exodus chapter 23 also. Since you are in Deuteronomy 22, let us go there first. Begin reading with verse 1, and watch it.

## Duty to Preserve Life: Animals and Humans

"Thou shalt not see thy brother's ox or his sheep go astray, and hide thyself from them. Thou shalt in any case bring them again unto thy brother. And if thy brother be not nigh unto thee, or if thou know him not, then shalt thou bring it unto thine own house. And it shall be with thee until thy brother seek after it, and thou shalt restore it unto him again. In like manner shalt thou do with him, with his ass, so shalt thou do with his raiment, and with all the lost thing of thy brothers, which he hath lost, and thou hast found, shalt thou do likewise. Thou mayest not hide thyself."

"Thou shalt not see thy brother's ass, or his ox fall down by the way, and hide thyself from them. Thou shalt surely help him to lift them up again." If you see your brother's horse stuck in a mud hole, you cannot hide yourself. That happened to me one time. I let my horse go down to a sandy stream to drink water, and the sand gave way; he was up to his chest in sinking sand. Thankfully, someone stopped and helped me get my horse out. God says that if you see an animal in danger, you are bound to help.

You may say, "I'd be glad to help my neighbor. I'd be glad to help my brother any time, any day." Wonderful. But Exodus 23:4-5 says, "If thou meet thine enemy's ox or his ass going astray, thou shalt surely bring it back to him again. If thou see the ass of him that hated thee, lying under his burden, and wouldest forbear to help him, thou shalt surely help with him."

You see a cow having difficulty having a calf? You know that's your neighbor or your enemy. God says it does not matter. You

cannot hide yourself. You are duty-bound and responsible to help deliver that animal and save its life. Why am I telling you this? Because it is an argument from the lesser to the greater. If God holds you accountable and responsible to help save and preserve the lives of animals, how much more does He hold you accountable and responsible to help save the lives of mankind?

I was preaching in Indianapolis, Indiana, dealing with Romans 13, and I came up with something on self-defense. After the service, a young man came with his wife and three or four little children. He said, "Pastor, I've got to tell you something. I don't agree with what you just said about defending yourself."

I asked, "What would you do if a man broke into your house to attack your wife and harm your children?" He said, "I would go off and I'd be praying about it." I looked at him and said, "Sir, I'm so thankful I'm not your wife and I'm not your child."

## Natural Instinct and Christ's Teaching

Let me point something out. God has instilled even in animals a desire to protect their lives and their young. When Alice and I lived in Greenville, South Carolina, many years ago, a mockingbird made her nest in a bush in front of our house. Our neighbor's tomcat came stalking across the lawn, and that mother mockingbird repeatedly dive-bombed his head until she ran him out of the yard. What was she doing? She was protecting her young.

I was raised on a farm. We had to deal with pigs around sows. If you do not know how to pick up a pig without his squealing, you are in trouble, because that sow will eat you alive. Pick him up by his tail, and he will not squeal; put your hand under his stomach, and he will. I have seen men chased by sows. You look around, and regardless of the animal, it will defend itself. If God allowed animals to do that and did not allow us to defend our lives, it would be a terrible anomaly.

Our Lord said in Matthew chapter 10, verse 31, "Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows." If God allows birds and other animals to defend themselves, He most definitely allows us, because we are more valuable to Him than many animals.

"Thou shalt not kill" means, "Thou shalt not take life except on God's terms." The positive command is, "Thou shalt preserve life." So learn this tonight.

Whatever situation or circumstance you face, you have a duty, responsibility, and obligation before God to preserve life—your own life and the lives of your wife, children, neighbors, and friends. What did our Lord say in John 15:13? "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."

## Conclusion and Teaser for Next Lecture

Yes, there is a biblical doctrine of self-defense. You may ask, "But Brother Weaver, what are you going to do with that passage in the New Testament when Peter drew out his sword, and our Lord said, 'Peter, put that sword back up in your scabbard'? What are you going to do about that passage?" You will have to come back tomorrow night to find out. Because it is there.

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we ask You for Your grace, mercy, goodness, and kindness. Lord, we pray that You would help us. Give us understanding and strengthen us, Lord. May we have a heart that is tender and yet strong. May we stand fast in Your Word. In the name of Jesus Christ we ask and pray. Amen.

CHAPTER 2

# Theology of Self Defense-2

## Introduction and Scripture Reading

Open your Bibles to four passages: Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22, and John 18. We will be dealing with just one, but these passages should be found because some will be quoted for time's sake, while others will be examined because they are important to understanding the message.

Let us begin with Luke chapter 22, beginning with verse 35: "And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing. Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and what? Buy one."

"For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end."

## The Biblical Mandate for Self-Defense

Last night I dealt with the fact that self-defense is not only biblical; it is obligatory, mandated, and an absolute necessity according to the Word of God. If we do not defend our lives, it is a violation of the Sixth Commandment. The Sixth Commandment says, "Thou shalt not kill"—thou shalt not murder, thou shalt not take life except on God's terms. But the positive is, thou shalt preserve life.

So you have a duty and an obligation not only to preserve your life, but the lives of your family, the lives of your friends and neighbors, and those who are in trouble. Clearly, then, the Word of God tells us that we do have an obligation to defend our lives. If we fail to defend our lives, then of course we are guilty of violating the Sixth Commandment, which basically teaches the preservation of life. Our Lord said very clearly in Matthew chapter 5 that He had not come to destroy the law or the prophets, but He had come to fulfill.

Therefore, we look in both the Old Testament and the New Testament as well. I have mentioned four passages, and we are going to be looking at each of these four passages, endeavoring to answer a question, or several questions, especially those questions raised by many people who think that they have really got it nailed down that you do not have an obligation to defend yourself and defend

## The Objection from Christ's Arrest

The question or objection to self-defense is usually formed this way: If self-defense is obligatory—if it is absolutely necessary to save your life and the lives of others—why did Christ tell Peter to put his sword back into its sheath or scabbard? And if self-defense is obligatory and mandatory, why did Peter and the rest of the disciples not simply take their swords and hack their way out when they were surrounded by their enemies?

I want to answer those questions from the Word of God. Let us begin with Luke chapter 22, beginning with verse 35, where our Lord asked this simple question: “And he said unto them, When I sent you without purse, and scrip, and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, Nothing.”

## The Change in Christ's Instructions

You always have to interpret Scripture in light of Scripture and in light of its context. There is an immediate context, but there is also a remote context. When our Lord asked His disciples, “When I sent you forth without purse, and scrip, and shoes, what did you lack?” they answered, “Absolutely nothing.” This refers back to Luke chapter 9 and verse 3 and Luke chapter 10 and verse 4, where our Lord sent His disciples out and said, “…take nothing for your journey, neither staves, nor scrip, neither bread, neither money; neither have two coats apiece.” Again, He said, “…carry neither purse, nor scrip, nor shoes: and salute no man by the way.”

In Luke chapter 22 and verse 35, He was now sending His disciples out with new instructions. He told them that they needed a purse, a scrip, and a sword. If they did not have one, they were to sell their garments and buy one. Why this change? Before this, our Lord had provided for His disciples and protected them. That is why He asked, “When I sent you out and you did not have purse, you did not have scrip, you did not have a staff, you did not have anything, what did you lack?” They said, “Absolutely nothing.” But now look at verse 36: “…then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and get one.”

Our Lord here indicates that a dramatic change is taking place. For those who have had Greek, there are two little Greek words used for the word “but” in our Bible. The first is alla, A-L-L-A, and the second is de, D-E, as we would spell it in English. The word alla is a strong word of contrast; in other words, it is a word of emphasis.

It is like saying to someone, “You beat me yesterday, but today I beat you.” That is a strong word of contrast. That is exactly the word our Lord used in verse 36. Then He said to them, “But now”—emphasizing this strong contrast.

Now, when you go forth, He says, you take your purse. The purse was a pouch or depository for money. You take the scrip, which was a leather pouch in which they carried food. And if you do not have a sword, you sell your garment and buy one. The Greek word for “garment” refers to the outer garment. The outer garment worn in

those days was the one most needed and necessary. It was also the most valuable, and it was used for many different things.

Our Lord is saying, “This change is coming around, so now here is what you do. You take your purse, you take your scrip, and if you do not have a sword, you sell the most important garment that you have and buy yourself a sword.” We could translate it this way: Whatever the cost, get yourself a weapon, or get yourself a sword.

Now we must ask, Why is this sudden change taking place? If you look in your Bibles at verse 37, here is why: “For I say unto you, that this that is written must yet be accomplished in me, And he was reckoned among the transgressors: for the things concerning me have an end.” In other words, our Lord is saying, “Look, I am about to be crucified.”

“I’m not going to be with you any longer. I’ve been protecting you. I’ve been providing for you. I’ve been taking care of you. But now I’m not going to be around to do that any longer.” Our Lord is saying, “I’m going to be labeled a criminal. I’m going to be labeled with the transgressors.”

You do not have to do anything evil in this day and time to be labeled a criminal. All you have to do is stand for truth and righteousness and liberty and freedom, and folks will look down on you. Those in positions of authority will hate you and classify you as a criminal.

In fact, if you have read some of the local ordinances published by the FBI on how to recognize real thorough criminals, they have a Bible. You know, they believe in firearms; they believe in liberty; they believe in freedom. You can be classified as a criminal very easily.

Our Lord was arrested. The tendency today is for you and me to think, when we hear that someone has been arrested, that they must have done something wrong or they would not be in that predicament. Let me tell you something: you do not have to do anything wrong today to be arrested. Our Lord certainly did no wrong. Our Lord certainly was not a criminal.

He was and still is the sinless Son of God, and yet He was arrested and crucified as well. So our Lord is telling His disciples, “I’m not

going to be around any longer, or much longer. I'm not going to be able to protect you as I have done and provide for you as I have done." Our Lord laid this truth out for us in John chapter 15: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."

He went on and said, "Remember the word that I said unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord. If they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you; if they have kept my saying, they will keep yours also." Our Lord is saying, "If they have taken me, classified me as a criminal, crucified me, mocked me, and ridiculed me, what do you think they are going to do to you?" If, in their estimation, they hate, despise, reject, and repudiate me, what do you think their estimation will be of you who follow and believe in me? He is saying that there is coming a real change in this situation.

Christ is preparing His disciples to assume full responsibility for themselves. Christ was the miracle worker. In Acts chapter 2 and verse 22, Peter was preaching and said, "Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs, which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know." Our Lord is saying that those miracles are coming to an end in the degree and manner in which they occurred when He was physically with His disciples on earth. Yes, we have miracles today, but not like the disciples had in those particular days. His disciples must now be prepared to take responsibility for themselves. That is why He said they needed to take a purse, a scrip, and, if they did not have a sword, sell their garment and get one.

Although Christ is emphasizing that these disciples will be responsible for themselves and take care of themselves, we must understand that, although we have a responsibility, there must be a proper balance in that responsibility. If we say, "I have plenty of money, plenty of weapons, and plenty of everything I need. I just do not need anybody and I do not need anything," the implication is that we do not even need God.

In other words, you are trusting in whatever you have; you are trusting in whatever you have been given. This, of course, is not only idolatrous, but blasphemous as well. The truth of the matter is that we are not sufficient in and of ourselves. I get tickled at the way we think of all these billionaires. Have you ever stopped to think that, regardless of how much money George Soros or Mark Zuckerberg has, with all their money they could not even feed the birds of the world for one week, certainly not all the animals?

Anybody who thinks he is sufficient in and of himself is self-deceived, that is for sure. But so many people take the opposite position and say, "What I am going to do is just trust in the Lord." In other words, "I am not going to take responsibility for myself. I am just going to trust in the Lord."

I have a missionary friend who is a missionary pilot. One of the things he often does is fly into hot areas where wars and insurrections are going on to rescue missionaries stationed there. One question he asks those whom he is going to rescue is, "Do you have a weapon? Are you able to defend yourself?" If they say, "No, we are just trusting in the Lord," his response is, "Well, you just keep trusting, because I am going to go rescue others who are willing to fight for their lives."

You see what I am trying to say. If, on the one hand, you are trusting in your abilities and in what you have, that is absolute foolishness, idolatry, pride, and arrogance. On the other hand, if you refuse to use the means that God has ordained, you are tempting God.

You remember what happened in Judges, chapter 15 and verse 16, when Samson came down and all the Philistines roared against him. He reached down, picked up the jawbone of an ass, and slew a thousand Philistines. He did not have an AK-47 or an AR-15; he simply used whatever God had placed at his disposal. So you have to have a proper balance.

You have to make sure that God has entrusted you to use the means He has ordained, while at the same time you are not trusting in those means. You are going to trust in the Lord, in His grace, His mercy, and His power Himself.

## The Command to Buy a Sword

Now, if you look back at verse 36, here is something else you must understand: “Then said he unto them, But now, he that hath a purse, let him take it, and likewise his scrip: and he that hath no sword, let him.” “Let him” is an imperative in the Greek, which means it is a command. Our Lord is saying, “I command you to sell your garment and buy one.” That is what He is saying. This change is going to take place in such a dramatic way that you are going to need everything He tells you that you are going to need. Make sure that you do this right now. Our Lord gave this command: “Let him buy one.”

Now look at verse 38: “And they said, Lord, behold, here are two swords. And he said unto them, It is enough.” Notice what the Bible does not say. He did not say, “Two swords are enough.” He said, “It is enough.” What in the world did our Lord mean when He said, “It is enough”?

I saw a cartoon in which a woman walks into her house and finds flowers everywhere and boxes of chocolates. She looks at her husband and says, “OK, what kind of weapon did you buy today?” Well, you know, “It is enough.” What in the world does that mean when our Lord said, “It is enough”?

There are three ways you possibly could interpret this. First, our Lord could be saying that enough has been said on the subject: That is it; it is over. Second, it could refer to the reality that the disciples would understand what He meant much later. I am going to show you that they did understand much later. Third, our Lord could be saying, “It is enough,” meaning that the two swords would be sufficient to demonstrate His purpose, His intent, and His teaching. The disciples did not take too long to figure out exactly what our Lord meant.

## The Disciples' Question and Peter's Action

Skip down to Luke 22:49: “When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?” Notice the words, “when they which were about him saw what would follow.” Now look back at Matthew 26:47: “And while he yet spake, lo, Judas, one of the twelve, came, and with him a great

multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders of the people."

"While he yet spake"—probably while He was saying, "It is enough." Here came Judas with a great multitude with swords and staves. When you look back at Luke 22:49, the Bible says they saw what would follow. In other words, it was at this point that the disciples put two and two together.

If you are walking down the street and a gang of fifteen or twenty tattooed men in black leather jackets, with log chains hanging all over them, comes toward you with a scowl on their faces, how long would it take you to put two and two together and figure out what would follow if you stayed around? What if you were surrounded in an alley? How long would it take you to realize, "I better extricate myself from this situation as quickly as possible"?

These disciples, then, when they suddenly saw this great multitude and realized that they were armed, understood what was going to happen. Luke 22:49 says, "When they which were about him saw what would follow, they said unto him, Lord, shall we smite with the sword?"

It is unclear exactly when this question was asked. Were they asking permission to start a fight? Were they saying, "Lord, Peter's already struck the first blow; should we join in?" They were simply asking, "Lord, shall we smite with the sword?" It could have been that Peter's impetuosity had already driven him to make the first blow. I do not know. The Bible is not clear on that.

But look at verse 50: "And one of them smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear." When you get to John chapter 18, verse 10, the Bible identifies both of them. The man with the sword who did the smiting was Peter, and the man whose ear he cut off was Malchus, a servant of the chief priest.

I have been asked many times, "Pastor, do you really think that Peter meant to cut off Malchus's ear?" My response was, "No, I do not think he meant to cut off his ear. I think he was aiming for the center of his head. He just missed." Remember, these men were surrounding them, and they were armed with swords and staves.

## Christ's Response: 'Suffer ye thus far'

Then, in verse 51, after Peter had cut off his ear, we read: “And Jesus answered and said, Suffer ye thus far. And he touched his ear, and healed him.” When our Lord said, “Suffer ye thus far,” He meant, “Don’t let this go any further. Let’s just stop it right here. Let them take me.” He was willing to be taken, but there was to be no more fighting at that particular point: “Suffer it thus far.”

## Peter's Actions Were Unwise

The words of Christ are not, and cannot be, a condemnation of self-defense. Neither are they a condemnation of what Peter did; that will be explained a little later. But then Christ does something absolutely surprising. If Peter cut off Malchus's ear, our Lord picked it up and stuck it back on. If I happened to be Malchus at that particular point, I think I would have second thoughts about whether I wanted to take this man. It is astounding. Our Lord pacified the situation. He told Peter, “Suffer, let him take me.” Then He soothed the anger by putting Malchus's ear back on.

What happened here in Luke chapter 22 and the other passages in the New Testament is not a condemnation of self-defense, nor even a condemnation of Peter. First of all, Peter's actions were unwise. Matthew 26:52 says, “Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” Our Lord looked at Peter and said, “Put the sword in its place.”

Peter certainly acted unwisely in using the sword. Unwisely is a polite term; I could say that Peter acted stupidly. And he did, but I will stay with the term unwisely. You can be unwise and yet not be sinful. Every one of us has done things in our lives that are unwise. They are not necessarily sinful in and of themselves.

Years ago, I had a dear friend who was a wonderful carpenter. He could build anything and do anything. He was by his swimming pool with an electric drill, drilling in the concrete. The drill bit got hot, and, unwisely, he stuck the tip in the pool water to cool it. He was instantly electrocuted and killed. That was not evil or sinful. He did

not intend to do it. It was certainly unwise and stupid. But you can do things that are unwise and not be evil and sinful at the same time.

How in the world can I say that Peter's actions were unwise? You have to remember that in Luke 22:38, how many swords did they have among them? Two. Two. And when you read Matthew 26, Mark 14, Luke 22, and John 18, all of them say that there was a great multitude armed with swords and staves. Let me tell you, it is one thing to defend yourself against a mob. It is one thing to defend yourself against a multitude. It is quite another thing to start a fight with a mob or a multitude. Those are two totally different things.

Remember Genesis 37. Jacob's sons, Simeon and Levi, did something stupid like that. They took their swords and went in and slew Shechem and Hamor and all the men of Shechem because Shechem had raped their sister Dinah. When they came out and Jacob found out about it, he said, "You've made me to stink in the nostrils of the Amorites. Now they're going to band together and slay all of us." In other words, there is a difference between winning a battle and winning the war. The only reason the Amorites did not chase Jacob—he got out of there—was that God sovereignly protected him, held them back, and held them off. That was it. Jacob said, "You made a mistake. You won the battle, but you cannot, and we cannot, win the war."

Practically speaking, what Peter did by striking the first blow not only endangered himself, but endangered the rest of the disciples as well. Why in the world would you further enrage an already angry mob that was determined to do something wicked and wrong? Why would you further enrage them? Obviously, this is why Christ stopped the fight. That is why He looked at Peter and said, "Put your sword back up in the scabbard," and reached down and healed Malchus's ear. He said, "Suffer it thus far. Let him take me." There was a reason why He said, "Let them take me."

In the context of all this, Jesus Christ is not denying the biblical doctrine of self-defense, neither is He denouncing what Peter did. What Peter did was certainly unwise, but it was not necessarily sinful in and of itself.

Our Lord said in Matthew chapter 21 and verse 32, “For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.” Here is the principle: Our Lord is teaching us that we are bound and obligated to learn from the work of God in the lives of others. The publicans and the harlots believed the preaching of John. The Pharisees and Sadducees did not. He said, “And ye, when ye had seen it”; you knew there were changes in those harlots and those publicans. You knew that. “And yet ye repented not, that ye might believe him.” So God holds us accountable and responsible to learn from His providence in the lives of others, and we need to learn also from this incident involving Peter and the disciples.

This is a fact; this is a truth. When you and I are banded together, there can be bravado and manly talk: “I’ll do this, I’ll do that. They won’t do that to me. I’ll show them.” We can boast and do whatever we want to do. But when we are cut aside and cut off, by ourselves and facing danger all alone, it is a horse of a different color. All the disciples boasted and, through their pride, said, “We will never, ever, we will die with you.” Yet every one of them fled and left Him. Every one of them.

Proverbs 16:18 says, “Pride goeth before destruction, and an haughty spirit before a fall.” What happened with Peter? First of all, his actions were a declaration of pride. Look in Matthew chapter 26, beginning at verse 31. This is astounding: “Then saith Jesus unto them,” speaking to His twelve disciples, “All ye shall be offended because of me this night:”

For it is written, "I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad." So our Lord says, "You are going to be offended." He gives them the Scripture, but then says, "But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee."

Peter answered, "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended." Jesus said, "Verily I say unto thee, That this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." Peter said, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." Likewise also said all the disciples. Every one of them. And yet every one of them fled.

The disciples were emphatic and vehement: "We will never, ever deny you. We'll die with you. We'll go to prison with you." We have to benefit from the lessons taught here. When they were surrounded by their friends and neighbors, they were brave; but when they were cut off one by one, they fell. Here's the second thing: Peter's actions were a demonstration of perceived power. Not only was there pride, but perceived power.

In John 18, Jesus Christ speaks, and here is what happens in verses 4-6: "Jesus therefore, knowing all things that should come upon him, went forth, and said unto them, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he." Judas, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon as Jesus had said, "I am he," they went backward and fell to the ground. Then he asked them again, "Whom seek ye?" They said, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus answered, "I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way: that the saying might be fulfilled, which he spake, Of them which thou gavest me have I lost none."

Now note this: when our Lord spoke, what did they do? They went backward and fell on the ground. If you and I were in a situation like Peter and the disciples, and we heard our Lord speak, or heard a man speak, with such power and force that those against him and against us all went backward and fell on the ground,

Wouldn't you think, “Wow, now would be the time to act”? They were already down. If just the words would cause these people to fall backward, how much more would a manly display of swordsmanship strike fear in them? Now would be our time to fight. Undoubtedly, Peter understood that and probably thought like that. I cannot say for certain, but when our Lord said, “I am He,” and they went backward and fell on the ground, it must have made some type of impression upon Peter and the others as well.

Thirdly, there was really no need for Peter to display the sword. Why? Because the disciples were not in danger. What do you mean, they were not in danger? They came after Jesus Christ; they did not come after His disciples. That is why Jesus said, “I am He. I’m the one you’re looking for. Let these go their way.” In reality, neither Peter nor the other disciples were in danger up to this point. They had been under, and were still under, the authority and protection of

the Lord Jesus Christ. The multitude was not after Peter or the disciples; they were after the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now note what our Lord said in Matthew 26:52: “Then said Jesus unto him, Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.” First, our Lord said, “Put the sword up in its place.” He did not say, “Throw away that sword.” He did not say, “Don’t touch that thing,” or, “Why did you draw that sword out?” He did not say, “Thou shalt not kill.” He did not say, “Weapons are evil.” All He said was, “Put it back in the scabbard.” That is it.

Since He told him to put the sword back in the scabbard, Christ went on to expose and expound a legal maxim: “For all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword.”

What in the world does that mean? It is indeed a legal maxim. Several interpretations have been offered. The first is this: those who use the sword to resist lawful authority shall die by the sword. You will find this many times when criminals think they can walk around murdering people and doing things they should not do. Usually, they are taken down by someone in a position of authority. That is one interpretation.

The second is this: those who use the sword against innocent individuals will be consumed by the sword because of divine vengeance. God is not going to let the wicked escape.

The third interpretation is the most satisfactory: Peter had acted rashly in endeavoring to attack a whole band of men, and his unseasonable and imprudent actions could have occasioned his destruction and the destruction of the other disciples as well. So our Lord simply said, “Put it back up.” He was telling Peter, “You are not going to act irrationally. You are not going to act impetuously here.”

There is a legal maxim quoted in Revelation 13:10. Our Lord said, “He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity: he that killeth with the sword must be killed with the sword. Here is the patience and the faith of the saints.” This New Testament quotation is taken from Isaiah 33:1, where God says, “Woe to thee that spoilest, and thou wast not spoiled; and dealest treacherously, and they dealt not treacherously with thee! when thou shalt cease to spoil, thou shalt be

spoiled; and when thou shalt make an end to deal treacherously, they shall deal treacherously with thee."

It is called the lex talionis, the law of retribution, where God makes the punishment fit the crime.

There is a good illustration in Judges 1:7. Adoni-Bezek was captured by Joshua and his men, and they cut off his thumbs and great toes. Why would they do that? Can you hold a sword without your thumb? No. Can you hold a Glock without your thumb? No. Can you balance without your big toes? No. You are thoroughly impotent and helpless without your thumbs and big toes. Adoni-Bezek said, "Threescore and ten kings, having their thumbs and their great toes cut off, gathered their meat under my table:

"As I have done, so God hath requited me." And they brought him to Jerusalem, and there he died. So Adoni-Bezek said, "Lex talionis, the law of retribution has found me as I have done to 70 others. So now it has been done to me." So, first of all, Peter's actions, we could say, were unwise.

## Peter's Actions Were Unnecessary

Secondly, Peter's actions were unnecessary. In Matthew 26:53, after he told Peter to put the sword back into its scabbard, our Lord said, "Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?" Notice that He said "more than twelve legions of angels." If Peter thought he was protecting Jesus Christ, he thought wrongly. Jesus Christ did not need protection. If He needed protection, it would come from a totally different source. It would not come from a frail, weakly human. He said, "My Father would send me more than twelve legions of angels." In other words, if I needed protection, there would be divine intervention.

A Roman legion had 6,000 men. Twelve legions would be 72,000 angels, and our Lord said "more than twelve legions." When you stop and think about the fact that, in Isaiah 37:36, one angel in one night, with one stroke of the sword, killed 185,000 Assyrians, I do not think 72,000 angels would have any difficulty with the high priest

and the big mob there. I do not think they would have any difficulty with the entire world.

## Peter's Actions Were Unenlightened

But I am simply pointing out that Peter's actions were unnecessary. All our Lord had to do was mutter, "Help me." All He had to do was wiggle His little finger or blink an eye, and more than 72,000 angels would be at His disposal. Peter was not needed. His actions were not only unwise, but unnecessary, because our Lord said, "I don't need protection." Thirdly, Peter's actions were unenlightened. What do I mean by that? In Matthew 26:54, after telling Peter to put up his sword in its scabbard, our Lord said, "But how then shall the scriptures be fulfilled, that thus it must be?" Lord Peter, if you save me from this, how will the Scriptures be fulfilled?

Jesus Christ said, "I came to die." Do you know Peter had a problem with that? In Matthew 16:21-23, Jesus began to show His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem, suffer many things, be killed, and be raised again the third day. Peter took Him and began to rebuke Him, saying, "Be it far from thee, Lord: this shall not be unto thee." But Christ turned and said, "Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men." Peter said, "Lord, no, this is not going to happen to You." Our Lord said, "Yes, it is," because Christ came to die.

He came to be the propitiation for His people. He said, "The cup which my heavenly Father gave me, I must drink." In John 12:27, He said, "Now is my soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father, save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour." He came to die. In John 10:17-18, He said, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again. This commandment have I received of my Father." No man took His life from Him. He came to die, and He knew He was going to die.

If Peter had saved Christ, so to speak, what about the Scriptures? How would they be fulfilled? No, Christ came to die. That is why Matthew 1:21 says the angel told Joseph and Mary, "Thou shalt call

his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." Our salvation is found in His death. First Peter 3:18 says, "He died the just for the unjust, that he might bring us back unto God."

Peter's actions were not only unwise; they were unnecessary and unenlightened. Remember this: Christ did not rebuke Peter for having a sword. He commanded him to have a sword. He did not rebuke Peter for drawing that sword, nor even for using it. He simply said, "Put it back in the scabbard."

## Proper Use of Weapons and Conclusion

But what our Lord pointed out to Peter was this: you do not use your sword—or any weapon—unwisely or unnecessarily, without proper enlightenment and instruction. It was not the time to use it; it was not needed. The Father's will was that they take Him.

The case of Jesus Christ is unique. There is none like it, and there is no other illustration concerning it. Therefore, it is impossible to take this unique case and say, "The entirety of the rest of the Bible's doctrine of biblical self-defense has to be wrong because Christ told Peter to put his sword back into the scabbard." That is totally, completely illogical.

Our Lord did use means of resistance. He used the means of avoidance. Read John chapter 7, verse 1: "And Jesus walked in Galilee: for he would not walk in Jewry, because the Jews sought to kill him." What did He do? He withdrew from them. He got out of their way. You cannot say that Luke 22 is a denial of the biblical doctrine of self-defense. It is not.

Secondly, Christ is not forbidding the ownership of weapons, since He commanded them to buy a sword. He is not forbidding the use of weapons, since one was obviously used. What He is forbidding is using those weapons unwisely and unnecessarily. You know what the Bible says in James, chapter 1, verse 19: "Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath." Be swift to hear.

I marvel at all the illustrations and videos that you can find on the Internet concerning road rage—people pulling out a weapon and shooting people as they drive by. It is insane. This is what our Lord is

forbidding. We are to be slow to wrath, slow to speak, and swift to hear. Let me put it to you like this: We have a modern saying in South Georgia, “Don’t let your mouth overload your brain.” That is exactly what our Lord is saying here.

You have to understand that there are consequences when weaponry is involved. Even when we use our weapons in self-defense, we have to consider the fact that there will be consequences. I have known men—thankfully, it has never happened to me—who had to kill other men, not just in war, but in self-defense. The emotional, mental, and spiritual strain is almost unbelievable, including for men who have lived through war and killed innumerable people.

I will give you one illustration, though I am not going to call a name. I knew this young man since he was a child. He was raised in church and homeschooled; his father was a pastor, and I preached in that church innumerable times. This young man took martial arts and was very, very good. In fact, he took a very deadly form of martial arts. He joined the military.

After he got out, he stayed overseas. One day I received a phone call from him out of the blue. He said, “Pastor, I need you to pray for me. I’m unsaved.” I had known this boy all his life. I told him I would certainly pray for him, but asked what made him think he was unsaved. He answered, “You have no idea what I’ve done. You have no idea how many people I’ve killed at the behest of the government.” After he got out, he said, “I still could not stop killing.” He was a mercenary.

He said, “I can’t sleep. I can’t eat.” This young man was in his twenties. I met one other fellow just like that. We need to come to grips with reality, and we do not need to express bravado, saying, “Well, I’ll do this.” You do not know what you are going to do until you get into that predicament; then it will all come out. But I will tell you what you will do: You will default to the way that you were trained. And if you have not been trained, I am sorry.

One objection to carrying weapons or using weapons in self-defense comes from liberals: “Well, you want to turn us back into the Old West again.” I would like that, because the Old West was

not what Hollywood brings forth on the screen. Let me give you a quote from a book, Legends, Lies, and Cherished Myths of American History, written by Richard Shenkman. He wrote that in 1878, in the heyday of the cattle drives in the boomtowns of Kansas, Dodge City recorded five homicides. Ryan McMaken noted that all the big cattle towns of Kansas combined saw a total of forty-five murders from 1870 through 1885. Dodge City alone saw fifteen people die violently from 1876 to 1885, an average of 1.5 per year.

You think of the lives that could be saved and would be saved if everybody carried and were trained. You have to remember the old saying we had for years: "An armed society is a polite society."

I had, and still do, a pastor friend who was a very small man, but he was a Marine. He carried a pistol in one of those little pouches on his front. He and his wife and children were coming out of a restaurant when a man bumped into him, knocked him into his wife, and cursed them as he went out. The man did not even know him. He took God's name in vain, and this young pastor went out and said, "Sir, you owe my wife and myself an apology. Moreover, you owe God an apology. You took His name in vain."

The man started cursing again. My friend said, "Sir, you are not very observant. Do you see my hand in this pouch? If I had pulled my hand out, you were either going to the hospital or the morgue. Sir, you owe us an apology." The man began apologizing. An armed society is a polite society.

The Sixth Commandment, as I taught last week and last night, is very simple: "Thou shalt not kill." The positive is, thou shalt preserve life. You have the duty and responsibility to preserve life, and you cannot take our Lord's words to Peter, "Put your sword back in your scabbard," as a denial of the truth of the entirety of the Word of God.

You cannot misinterpret one passage and make it contradict hundreds of other passages in the Bible. God requires us to defend ourselves and others. He that hath no sword—here is what God said, our Lord, in the imperative: "I command you, sell your garment and get one." In modern-day phrasing, our Lord would say, "If he has no Glock, sell your coat and get one." Beyond. It is your responsibility. I

am not here to protect you anymore physically, is what He is saying. That is on you.

You must prepare economically, physically, medically, mentally, and spiritually. You must prepare every way, because He has now given us the responsibility to take care of ourselves.

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we bow to Thee. We thank You for Your Word. We thank You for Your truth. Lord, we ask You to help us to hear, to really, truly hear Your Word and apply it to our lives. In the name of Jesus Christ we ask and pray, Amen.

CHAPTER 3

# Theology of Self Defense-3

## Introduction: Safety, Preparation, and Situational Awareness

Open your Bibles, if you would please, to the book of Proverbs, chapter 21. This message deals with safety, preparation, and situational awareness. I will be giving you a number of passages, illustrations, and quotes that are very important. Proverbs 21:31 says, "The horse is prepared for the day of battle, but safety is of the Lord." Everyone should be interested in safety and self-defense. Only those who are foolish and naive will not be concerned about their health, safety, or welfare.

It is normal, natural, and biblical to want to prosper, to be in health, and certainly to be safe. You remember that the Apostle John, in 3 John, said this concerning his loved ones and his people: "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health even as thy soul prospereth." I have often thought about that. If most of us prospered physically and economically the way our souls prosper, most of us would be very, very poor. The truth of the matter is that we need to understand there is indeed both a natural

desire and a biblical desire to be safe, healthy, and prosperous as well.

If you consider your health and safety important, then you are certainly going to be interested not only in self-defense, but also in preparedness. It is impossible to remain safe or healthy if you are unconcerned about your welfare and about the things going on around you. Concern for these matters is therefore not contrary to faith; it recognizes the natural and biblical desire to preserve health, safety, and welfare.

## Two Major Caveats: God's Sovereignty and Human Responsibility

There are two major warnings, or two major caveats, concerning this message. First of all, Proverbs 21:31 says, "The horse is prepared for the day of battle, but safety is of the Lord." Safety, first and foremost, is in the hand of the Lord. It is not in our hands. We may prepare and be responsible, but He is the Sovereign and the One who is in absolute and total control.

Without Him, all of our preparation and training are useless and worthless. It is just that simple. The Bible also says in Psalm 33:17, “A horse is a vain thing for safety, neither will he protect any by his strength.” In other words, we cannot depend upon anything we have for our protection. We could paraphrase that verse this way: “A Glock is a vain thing for safety,” or “a tank is a vain thing for safety,” or “an AR-15 is a vain thing for safety. Neither will it deliver anybody by its great firepower.” The point is that we must understand that, first and foremost, our safety is in the Lord. That is why Psalm 127:1 says, “Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it. Except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.” In other words, safety is of the Lord.

Without going into great detail, let me say that Scripture affirms and confirms that if we desire His protection, we need to be absolutely obedient to Him and to His law. Leviticus 25:18 says, “Wherefore, you shall do my statutes, and keep my judgments, and do them, and then you shall dwell safe in the land.” Safety is in the hands of the Lord, first and foremost.

Here is the second caveat, the second warning concerning this message: God is not going to fulfill our responsibilities for us. God has commanded us and told us exactly what we must do, but He will not do for us what we refuse to do for ourselves. He is sovereign, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent; He is God. Yet God is not going to think, pray, train, repent, or prepare for us. God holds us accountable and responsible.

Therefore, we must keep these two truths in the right perspective. God is sovereign, and safety is in His hand, first and foremost. But secondly, we are responsible.

Now, I want to tell you how these things work together. In 2 Timothy 2:7, the Apostle Paul told Timothy, "Consider what I say. And the Lord give thee understanding in all things." Understanding is the gift of God. He said the same in Proverbs 2:6. But God does not give understanding willy-nilly. You do not go to bed stupid and wake up smart, or go to bed ignorant and wake up knowing everything. "Consider what I say." In other words, it is our duty and responsibility to think, meditate, and consider what God has said, while seeking God to give us understanding.

It is the same when we talk about safety and responsibility. God must keep us safe, but He also expects us to be responsible. Samson came down from the mountain and killed a thousand Philistines, but he had to pick up the jawbone of the ass. God provided the jawbone, but God did not fight for Samson. Likewise, God gave David the victory over Goliath, but God did not sling the stone for David. David had to sling it; he had to be trained in the use of the sling. Clearly, these things go together.

Things have changed drastically in this country. Anyone seventy years or older can verify that we are living in an entirely different nation from the one in which we grew up. Some young people may not think things have changed that much, but it was certainly different in the fifties. I truly think—though I could be wrong—that my generation was the last to taste the last little bit of freedom we really had in this country.

## Accepting the Reality of a Changed Society and Evil

To show how things have changed, when I was a boy, if I wanted to see a policeman, I had to drive uptown and look around, because they were hard to find. There were very few policemen in our small town. We did not need them. Why? Most folks were basically moral. Most at least believed the Ten Commandments, even though they were not Christians, and most acted decently. When I was a boy, my father, a farmer, used to take us on vacation to Miami, Florida, for two weeks during the winter to visit relatives and stay with them.

We never locked a door or a window. He had multiple thousands of dollars' worth of machinery around the barns and in the barns. When we would come back two weeks later, everything was exactly the way we had left it. No one had broken in or tried to steal anything. It was simply there. In other words, things were different back in the 1950s and early 1960s.

For instance, my wife and I grew up in the same area. While preparing this message, I was racking my brain to remember whether there had ever been a bank robbery in our town. I could not remember one. I have a deputy friend, so I asked him, "Can you tell me, has there been a bank robbery in this town in the last fifty years?" He said, "Well, I don't know. There hasn't been one since I've been around, and I don't even remember one. I don't think so."

The point is that today everybody is stealing from dollar stores, convenience stores, and everywhere else. I am simply saying that things have changed in this country.

When we are talking about self-defense and preparation, let me tell you what I think our first step should be. Our first step, I believe, should be what you and I would call acceptance. What do I mean by acceptance? We have to accept the fact that we are living in a totally different society. We are living in a totally and completely different culture.

We have to understand that there are extremely bad people. I will say it another way: there are evil people, and these people rejoice in and delight in evil. They have absolutely no regard for God, no regard for you, and no regard for your property. Stealing is a way of life to them, and killing is a way of life to them.

Years ago, there was a movie called Black Hawk Down. I watched it when it came on television. About a year or so later, it came on again. I thought, “I don’t need to see it again. I’ve already seen it.” But then I thought, “No, I will watch it one more time.” I was thankful that I did, because I had totally missed a scene the first time. In Mogadishu, the Black Hawk helicopter pilot was up against a wall. He had been beaten absolutely senseless—black eyes, blood everywhere—and was tied up. One of the big drug lords looked at him, and here is what he said. Listen carefully.

He said, "You stupid Americans, you think that you can come over here and force your democracy down our throats? And you think you can stop us from killing when killing has been a way of life for us for over a thousand years." By the way, that culture is being brought to America as well. That is the mentality. We have to understand that there are bad, wicked, and evil people.

You remember Luke 18:2. Our Lord said, "There was a certain judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man." If there is no fear of God, there will not be any regard for man. The reason so many people violate God's law and break His commandments is that there is no fear of God. That is what the Apostle Paul said in Romans 3: "There is no fear of God before their eyes." That is what Psalm 53 and Psalm 14 are all about: "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." When you have no regard for God, you are not going to have any regard for mankind. Things have definitely changed. Cultures change. Societies change.

Do not live in a fool's paradise. Do not be deceived or deluded. Do not think that evil will never happen to you, your family, or your church. Good men do not always win. Read 2 Samuel 11 and find out what happened to Uriah the Hittite. In that instance, Uriah was the good man and David was the bad man, but Uriah was murdered to cover up David's sin. Bad things oftentimes happen to good people.

One reason evil is so prominent today is a violation of God's law. Ecclesiastes 8:11 says, "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the hearts of the sons of men in them are fully set to do evil." The wicked are not taken care of; therefore, the hearts of the sons of men are fully set to do evil. We have coddled criminals and not punished them. We have been more concerned for

the criminal than the victim. Look at what is already happening in this country. One woman who had the million-dollar house in New York tried to run squatters out. The police were called, and she was arrested.

Now, in Georgia, a 70-something-year-old man was kicked out of his 20-year-old home and put out on the street. He had lived there for over 20 years because someone had filed fraudulent documents. There are online courses now on how to take over people's homes. I'm simply saying, we have coddled these criminals, and we have not punished anybody.

I think I still have the document, but I had a friend who was sentenced to federal prison for nine months because of a biblical stand that he took. He was not wicked, wrong, or a criminal. I was there every day at his trial. Before he went to federal prison, he showed me the paper. In a federal prison today, you get to go to an air base. There are no armed guards; you could walk off. I've visited him many times. But if you walk off, they put you in a real prison with walls. I saw the letter: "You must report such and such day to begin serving your sentence."

"Please be advised, we do not provide tennis rackets or golf clubs. If you want anything like that, you must bring it with you." What? I am simply pointing out the fact. We have to understand something, folks: we are not living in Mayberry, and Andy Griffith is not our sheriff. Things have changed. You have to accept that.

The next thing you must accept, I believe, is this: an attack could happen at any time. It could happen to you, your family, or your church. It may never happen, but it could happen today. The fact that you do not think anything bad will ever happen to you does not change the reality that it could happen—and it will happen. So, if you are living in Never-Never Land, you are greatly deluded and deceived.

If you are not living in Never-Never Land, then you need to come up with a plan for yourself, your family, and your church. The plan does not have to be publicized, but you need to know what it is. Every person in your family needs to know what it is. If it is a church,

everyone in the church needs to be totally aware of what is going on and what the plan really is.

Now I want to give you a few quotes. The first comes from a man by the name of Ron Borsche. I am sure you do not know who he is, so let me tell you before I give you his quotes. Ron Borsch happened to be a staff instructor at the Kent Martial Arts Club, so he is a martial artist. He was also a paratrooper in Vietnam with the 101st Airborne Division. He was a cop for thirty years, twenty of those years as a range master. He was a pistol-team captain for seventeen years, as well as a SWAT operator and trainer. He is now retired, but he is still in the consulting business in law enforcement. Listen closely to what this man said; I will quote him again a little later.

"One would imagine that among different locations, places of worship would be a safe haven and we would not have to be concerned about safety or violence there. Unfortunately, churches are not the sanctuary they once were. Here we are not talking about mere arson, burglary, mugging, rape, or robbery. Even worse, churches can and have been the site of murder, multiple murders, and rapid mass murder."

About a year ago, churches were the third most commonly targeted location by active killers, after schools, colleges, and universities. Churches were the third most targeted by mass murderers. A survey of more than 1,300 congregations in the United States found that, in 2014, 39 percent of congregations experienced some type of property or violent crime, from vandalism to homicide.

Checking the Stopwatch of Death database back to 1975, we find that church murders have been increasing with alarming frequency. Regrettably, ignoring the problem is only trolling for a tragedy. It is perfectly normal for us not to want to think about violence, much less murder or mass murder in church. Today, however, safe havens do not occur naturally. They require our personal attention, intention, planning, and effort. He is dead on.

In light of this, the skyrocketing number of attacks on Christians and churches explodes. American culture appears increasingly hostile to Christianity. Experts are warning that a skyrocketing number of attacks on Christian churches mirrors the general

anti-Christian tenor of the Biden administration's policies at home and abroad, according to a new report from the Washington Stand, which details how such incidents of violence have exploded 800 percent over six years.

During the first 11 months of 2023, there were 436 acts of hostility against churches in America, including 315 acts of vandalism, 75 arsons, 20 bomb threats, and 12 instances of satanic graffiti. These statistics likely understate the extent of the problem because many acts of hostility against churches are likely not reported to authorities and are not featured in the news or other online sources from which the data are collected. Only a few areas of America were left untouched, with reports coming from 48 states and Washington, D.C. There were 91 such attacks in California.

Someone will say, "We have the answer. All we have to do is post a sign out front saying, 'No weapons allowed.'" You post that sign, and it is an invitation for disaster. Why? Because they now know you are unarmed and unwilling to fight. I saw a cartoon showing two masked muggers with guns in their hands, while the door said, "No weapons allowed."

## The Failure of Gun-Free Zones and the Need for Church Security

One robber looked at the other and said, "Oh, shoot, we can't go in there. They don't allow guns." Do you think that is going to matter to a thief or a criminal? Of course not. The very fact is, a sign like that is an invitation for criminals. It is saying, "Come on in. We don't have any weapons here, and we are not going to fight." It is a fool's belief that will end in tragedy.

Remember, churches were third and schools were second. I would imagine that probably every school in this county has a gun-free zone in it. Listen to this: "Gun-free school zones and shooting statistics 2024. There have been 2,646 school shooting incidents in the United States since 1966."

You may say, "Well, that's bad, but that's not too bad." Hang on. "Of those, 2,205, that is 94%, occurred after the 1990 School Zone Safety Act amended in 1995." Think about this: 94% of these

shooting incidents happened in gun-free school zones. Why? We know nobody is armed. We know no one is going to fight back. The criminals can do what they want to do and kill as many as they want, because it is a gun-free zone.

Clearly, that does not work. There was one prepared church, and it happened to be in Colorado Springs. This happened on December the 9th, when an active killer came to that particular church. He shot five people outside, killing two and wounding three. Twelve hours earlier, 70 miles away, he had also murdered people at the Arvada Missionary Church, killing two and wounding two others. Then he came to New Life Church, which had about 7,000 congregants that day. He had a rifle, several pistols, and hundreds of rounds of ammunition.

When the shooting began outside, those inside heard the shots. They had already prepared for such an incident and had trained individuals there. One was a lady who had been a former cop. When the man came into the church building, she ran toward him, drew her own personal pistol, and began shooting. She hit him multiple times, and finally, when he could not function, he took a weapon and shot and killed himself. There were no incidents inside the church building.

Here is what the woman said: “God guided me and protected me, and I did not think for a minute to run away.” Stop and think about that. She had not only some ability, but also a mindset that she was not going to let evil triumph. She was going to stop that cowardly murderer where he was.

Preparation involves a number of things. Number one, it does indeed involve having a weapon. It involves knowing how to shoot that weapon accurately, and, oftentimes, quickly as well. I trained one man years ago who, regardless of the distance, could put fifteen or twenty rounds in the center of a target, with all the holes covered by a fifty-cent piece.

## Components of Preparation: Weapons, Training, and Mindset

I kept telling him, “Speed up, speed up.” He looked at me and said, “Pastor, I like accuracy. I am an engineer.” He was. I said, “Well, brother, if I ever get into a gunfight with someone, I hope I get into one with someone like you.” He asked, “How? I shoot so accurately.” I said, “I know. While you are trying to put one in me, I am going to put fifteen in you. Although you can shoot accurately, you cannot shoot quickly.”

You have to have both. That does not mean you have to be the fastest drawer in the West, but you must get your weapon out in a timely fashion to confront the threat. If you cannot do that, your accuracy is worthless because someone is going to shoot you first. You also better know the malfunctions—the temporary stoppages of these weapons—and how to clear them reflexively. You must be able to do those things without even thinking.

Any weapon will malfunction. A multitude of lives have been saved simply because weapons malfunctioned and those using them did not know how to clear the malfunction. Preparation also involves a biblical mindset. If you do not have a biblical mindset, you are not going to do anything. If your mind is not already prepared, you are going to be in never-never land, wondering, “What in the world can I do? What in the world should I do?” Then it will be too late. You have to have a mindset.

Do you understand the sixth commandment? Do you understand “Thou shalt not kill” as a negative, and “thou shalt preserve life” as its positive? Do you know how to use less lethal devices—pepper spray, tear gas, and tasers? Do you know how to deescalate if there are only verbal threats? Just because Greg comes around bad-mouthing me and calling me all kinds of names does not give me the right to draw a weapon on him and say, “You better shut up, brother.” No. If I am assaulted verbally, I can respond verbally.

Moreover, please remember Proverbs 15:1: “A soft answer turns away wrath, but a grievous word stirs up anger.” Remember the old adage, “It takes two to tango”? If he is hollering at me, I have two feet; I can turn and walk away. I do not have to stand there and listen

to it. I can deescalate. You do not have to shoot everybody who happens to walk through the door looking mean. Preparation includes mindset, and it also includes knowing how the mind operates under stress.

Do you know what happens to most people in a very dangerous situation? They freeze. When you freeze, that gives an enemy a definite advantage. All of us will freeze momentarily before the fight-or-flight attitude kicks in, and you must be able to deal with that. Usually, when you step around a corner and someone pulls a pistol on you and holds it in your face, the first thing you think is, "This is not happening to me. This is not real. This just cannot be happening." But it is happening.

I have a friend who is a lieutenant and the police force; he lacks probably two years before retiring. He called me a few weeks ago and said, "I want to tell you something, and I want you to tell everyone." He said, "I carry all the time." He is a police officer. But he took his family to a little Chinese restaurant way out in the country. No one was around, so he left his weapon in his car—probably the first time he had ever done it.

He said, "We went in." He went into the bathroom to wash his hands before they ordered. A big man came to the door, knocking, hollering, and screaming, telling him to get out. My friend is a very big man himself. He was with his wife, two sons, and a daughter; his sons are six-three or four, and are big themselves. One son hollered, "Look out, Daddy, he's got a gun." My friend came out of the bathroom, and the man rushed in. My friend looked at the manager. The man was black. He asked the manager, "What's wrong with him?"

He just hates white people. My friend said, "Well, we wanted to eat here, but it's probably best that we go ahead and leave." Before he could do that, the man came out with a weapon in his hand. My friend said, "Well, this is you can have this restaurant; we're going outside and we're leaving." He walked out, and the man followed him with a weapon.

He said, "I had a choice to make. I could try to get my weapon out of the car while he already had his in his hand, or I could get in the

car and drive off. My family is already in the car, so I got in the car and drove off. I went straight to the police station, swore out a warrant for him, and they went down and arrested him."

But he said, "You tell everybody that when they don't think something can happen, that's when it's going to happen. Mark her down." So I'm telling you, you've got to understand that when you freeze, you're giving your enemy an advantage. You need to learn the OODA loop. The OODA loop was invented, or came into existence, by Colonel John Boyd, who was an Air Force pilot. He came up with OODA: observe, orient, decide, and act.

We go over all of that in the advanced class, and then how to reboot. In other words, if I walk around the corner and there you are with a gun sticking in my chest, you already have the advantage on me. I'm behind the loop. I would have to change; I would have to do something to distract you so I could get my weapon, and then you would be behind the loop. It's a very important tactical strategy.

## Situational Awareness: Principles and Practices

But I'm going to tell you something about fighting: the best way to win a fight is not to have to fight. If you can avoid it through observation and situational awareness, that is the thing to do. Most people have no idea what situational awareness really is. I recently saw a video of a woman walking down the street. I guess she was texting or doing something on her cell phone. Two cellar doors were open on the sidewalk with orange cones out. She walked straight into one and fell straight down.

Next thing you know, here comes the ambulance, and they are putting her out on a stretcher. You do not have situational awareness. She had absolutely none. That is where most of us are today, because we are either talking on the phone, playing games on the phone, texting someone, or our minds are a thousand miles away. We are off in La La Land somewhere. We have no idea what is going on around us. Situational awareness is not something you can achieve just by reading a book. It has to be learned, and it turns out to be a life practice.

Here are some truths and tips from Eugene Nielsen to improve your situational awareness. Number one: be mindful of your surroundings. The first step is to pay attention to what is going on around you. Look out for threats and danger; pay attention.

Many times Alice and I have been driving down the highway, and we see a car up ahead weaving back and forth. I tell Alice, "Well, I have two choices. I can either stay back or wait until I can pass him and get away from him, because I do not want to be around him. He is inevitably going to have a wreck or cause one."

This is what it means to be aware of your surroundings. Number two: establish a baseline. A baseline is what you conceive and understand to be normal. Any deviation from that is abnormal. For instance, in a library, you expect to see people reading, talking quietly, or looking for books. That is normal. But if you hear someone screaming, see someone running, or see someone pushing books away, that is abnormal. Something is going on. You need to be alert and able to protect yourself or remove yourself. You have to establish a baseline. The third thing is that you need to anticipate and predict.

In other words, you have to look ahead and behind. Let me take driving, for instance. I look ahead while driving, but that does not stop me from glancing at my rearview mirror and sideview mirrors. I try to make sure nobody creeps up on me or runs up on me. In fact, this past Sunday, I was on the interstate and said to Alice, “Well, here he comes flying by.” I was doing 75, and he flew by me doing 90. I saw him in the rearview mirror.

You have to be able to anticipate and predict. You see someone in a convenience store standing there with his hand in his pocket and just looking around. People do not do that when they simply go in to buy something.

Fourthly, you have to avoid distractions and complacency. A distraction is the cell phone, or anything that breaks your train of thought. Complacency is when you think, “Man, nothing’s going to happen here. This is too dull.” That is what my friend thought in that way-out Chinese restaurant in the country: “Nothing’s going to

happen here." When you get complacent, that is exactly when something is going to happen.

You need to learn to trust your instincts and intuition, and you need to act decisively. Someone has said that your intuition is your subconscious mind dealing with things before they ever become conscious in your mind. We have another way of saying this in the South: when the hair on the back of your neck stands up, pay attention. When you get a gut feeling that something is not right, pay attention. Make sure you follow your gut instincts and intuition. If something appears not right, probably it is not right. It is that simple.

You also have to learn from other folks and get feedback. If you go through something, ask somebody else, "How did you perceive this? How did you respond? How did you act? How should I have responded? How should I have acted?"

Of course, you have to train regularly and realistically, and you have to train yourself. I learned this years ago. One of the men in our church said he was hired to replace the shrubbery around the local bank. I said, "What?" He said, "Yeah, of course, the man had a regular job, but he just was doing it." I said, "There's no shrubbery around that bank."

## Do Not Act Like Easy Prey

He said, "Yes, there is. I've been in that bank, I don't know how many times. I've lived there for years. I never noticed any shrubbery, but it was there." I never paid attention to it. There are so many things that we do not pay attention to. I am simply pointing out that you have to train and be realistic.

Don't act like easy prey. If you are stumbling around, walking without noticing anything, paying attention to your phone, or talking to your friend, I have news for you: people are watching you. You are easy prey. Someone can slip up behind you or come up on the side of you. You are just dead meat, is what it amounts to.

What about that knockout game they were playing up north? Don't you remember how they would run up behind people and hit them upside the head? If you are walking and talking, not paying

attention, and you do not look like you have a fighting attitude, I have news for you: you had better perk up and pay attention, especially in these larger cities. To me, this is a larger city.

You would never make it in Chicago; you would never make it in New York. I wouldn't. I am simply saying, no, I am not even going to go through that, but you cannot look like easy prey. If you see someone dressed inappropriately for the weather or the season, you had better pay attention.

This past Sunday, Alice and I stopped at a little convenience store to get a cup of coffee. I was sitting in the car watching while she went in. Everybody was in T-shirts and shorts; it was eighty degrees. One young man walked in wearing a heavy jacket with a thick collar, and I said, "Uh-oh." I watched him. He went about his business. About that time Alice came out, and I said, "Did you see that young man in that heavy jacket?" She said, "Yeah."

Do you realize how easy it is to hide weapons under a jacket or coat? Have you seen the video where a young man wearing baggy pants and a baggy shirt pulls out all kinds of weapons for the camera and lays them on a table? He has a shotgun, pistols, a rifle, knives, brass knuckles—everything. He had ten or fifteen weapons on him, hidden by baggy pants, a baggy shirt, and a jacket.

You need to pay attention to body language and to tonal patterns. I can look at my wife and say, "Sweetheart, I really love you," and she will say, "He loves me." But I can look at her and say, "I love you," and she knows I am mad and mean, and that I do not mean what I am saying. It is my tonal pattern and facial expression.

You better watch people. You better listen to what they say and to their tonal patterns. When people become excited, their eyes may move quickly, their nostrils may flare, and their voice may quiver and get higher and higher.

Remember that the Bible says God is longsuffering. I hope I remember the correct Greek words; I think it is makrothumia. That word actually means "long passion," or literally "long nose" or "long nostrils." When you get angry or upset, watch yourself. You start breathing, and your nostrils start flaring. The larger and longer the

nose, the less you can see the nostrils flare. God is longsuffering, but mankind is not longsuffering.

Therefore, pay attention to all this bodily language. Listen for threats, whether they are plainly spoken or implied. Look also for concealed weapons. Most individuals who carry concealed weapons are not really concealed; usually, the weapon is imprinted on the shirt or jacket. There is a way to tell if you are paying attention.

I was preaching at a conference in Virginia, way out in the boonies. One brother there was very good and very straight. I walked up to him and said, "Let me ask you a question." He said, "Go ahead." I asked, "Do you always carry concealed in the small of your back?" He said, "You noticed?" I said, "Yes, I noticed." Then I warned him, "If someone comes up and hits you very quickly and you fall on that, it is going to really hurt your spine, and you will not be able to access it if you are lying flat on your back." I did notice that he was carrying in the small of his back. You can usually tell when someone is carrying a weapon.

So I would suggest that you trust your instincts and pay attention.

Here is another quote from Ron Borsch. He is retired law enforcement, a retired cop. He asks questions so you can see whether or not you are prepared. The conference and message are what this is about. "Do you carry a gun at church? Why or why not? If you have a gun, can you access it quickly?" I added, "Can you shoot accurately?" and, "Will you shoot?"

## Practical Questions for Church Security Preparedness

He continues: "Take a look at your church building. Many have very large rooms where the congregation gathers for worship. Could you make a shot with your carry handgun at the farthest distance a threat can appear from you in such a large room? When is the last time you practiced shooting that far? If you cannot make the shot, what is your plan to move closer?

"Often during worship, lights are dimmed, or at night the electricity goes off. Do you carry a bright enough flashlight to fully identify the threat at any range? Do you know how to use a flashlight

and a weapon at the same time?" We teach that. If you do not know how, you need to know how.

Then he asks, "What events would cause you to draw your gun and shoot? Would you shoot the man who is ranting at the pulpit with a gun in his hand, or would you wait until after he shot someone?" There may not be any right answers, but you must know where your personal boundaries lie and what your go signal will be.

He also asked, "Do you have a church security team? These are gaining in popularity, and many churches now have them. If you don't have a team, do you know who else is armed in your church? Do you have a plan to work together to stop a threat? If you plan on stopping the threat, who will take care of your family? That is, who's going to get them to safety? Do you have a plan to get to safety? What can be used as cover or an improvised weapon in your church?"

There is a difference between cover and concealment. I could turn this table over and lie down behind it, and I would be concealed. But you could shoot right through it. Cover will stop a round; concealment will not necessarily. I could hide in bushes and you might not can see me, but the bushes are not going to stop a round. So, look in this building: what would you use for cover? What can you use as an improvised weapon if you do not have a weapon on you?

"If your church has pew seating, listen men, do you sit near an aisle so that you can easily get out of the pew to address the threat? Who is the most likely target of a killer in your church? Do you have a high-profile religious leader or engage in controversial political actions that might anger someone? How do you plan on protecting the people in your congregation who are at the greatest risk?"

"What about less serious threats? Do you have a plan to deal with thieves or aggressive beggars?"

A man once came into our church thirty minutes after I started preaching. He looked around and sat on the front pew, continuing to look toward the rear. My daughter had left her Glock in the car, so she got up and went out the side door to get it. What this man did not know was that practically everyone in our church was armed.

When he saw my daughter leave, he got up and followed her. By the time he arrived, she already had her hand on her pistol, and four or five of my men followed him out. It turned out that all he wanted was money.

He was arrested the next day for harassing a widow. After church was over, I chewed him up one side and down the other. I told him, "Don't you ever, ever, ever, ever come back in this church again like that." I said, "If you want to hear the word, you come in when it starts and sit there until I'm through. Don't you ever interrupt this church again. Do you understand?" Do you have a plan to deal with people like that? It will happen. It happened to me, and it will happen to you.

Here is another question: "In many churches, children have Bible study or separate worship sessions from adults. There may also be a cry room. Who is protecting the children in those locations?" If you cannot answer these simple questions, you are not prepared for a violent incident in your place of worship. It is time to start doing some homework.

I want to close with two truths. First, you must understand that you are not too old to train, and you are not too old to defend yourself, your family, and your neighbor. You are not too old.

## You Are Not Too Old: Biblical Encouragement for All Ages

You may not be able to do what you could do when you were twenty. I cannot. But there are many things I can do. Alice and I were in Pennsylvania, where I was preaching, and they asked me to teach a two-day handgun class. I agreed. One woman was in her sixties. She was never fast; if she had gotten into a duel with some of these men, she would have been shot one hundred times. But although she was not fast, she was extremely accurate.

At her target, she kept putting the shots in the same hole over and over. During a break, I was standing behind her target, beside an oak tree about that big around, encouraging her shooting. All of a sudden, the tree fell over. She had cut the tree in two by hitting the same spot every time.

She may have been slow, but she was deadly. Do not tell me you are too old. I will soon be eighty. Do not tell me that you do not have enough money, that you cannot buy ammunition, or that you do not have time. You prioritize your life. You have time to do what you want to do, and you have money to spend on whatever you want to spend it on. It is not that you are too old, that you do not have enough money, or that you do not have time. You do not care; it does not interest you. You are not concerned about safety, protecting your life, protecting your family, or protecting anyone else. You are not too old.

First of all, look at Psalm 71, verse 18. I love this verse and quote it all the time. Look what David said: "Now also when I am old and grayheaded, O God, forsake me not; until I have shewed thy strength unto this generation, and thy power to every one that is to come." David wanted to show God's strength to that generation and His power to everyone who was to come.

Being old does not stop you from learning. Look at Isaiah 46, verse 4: "And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you." Even to your old age. Do not tell me that you are too old. And ladies, do not tell me that you do not need this. You may say, "Well, my husband is going to protect me." That is wonderful and fine. But what if your husband gets hit or killed? What if someone has your husband down, beating him to death, and there is a weapon, but you do not know how to use it to save your husband? Do not say, "I am too old." You are not too old. You can do what you can do. I have trained a lot of old men, and I always tell people, "Don't hurt yourself. Here's what we're going to do."

I will show you how to do it safely, whether it's running or diving to the ground. I can show you how to do it safely. I can show you how to do it easily. But don't hurt yourself. You can do what you can do. You might not be able to do everything, but you can do what you can do. And old age does not stop you.

## Self-Defense as a Ministry and Moral Duty

Secondly, I want you to understand this: self-defense, defense of others, and church security must be viewed as a ministry. A ministry.

Colossians 3:23–24 says, “And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ.” Whatever you do—training, protection—do it heartily as unto the Lord. For you serve the Lord Christ.

There is no division between the secular and the sacred for the child of God. For the child of God, everything is sacred, and everything is a ministry. I have a ministry to my wife. My wife has a ministry to me. Everything is a ministry for the child of God. First Corinthians 10:31 says, “Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.” Do all for the glory of God.

Those who do not place their faith in God, their heart in His service, and their mind to the task that is at hand are bound to fail. They're bound to fail. Those who naively assume that they will be able to function without training are deceiving and deluding themselves and setting themselves up for failure and death. If you do not wish for evil to triumph, if you do not wish for the wicked to win, if you wish for the criminal to control, you must train for God's glory, for the good of your family, and for the brethren in Christ. You must.

Clint Smith trained many people. What he said is certainly true: “Owning a handgun does not make you any more armed than owning a guitar makes you a musician.” Most folks will buy a pistol, load it, put it on the nightstand, and think that if their house is broken into, they will grab that weapon and save their families and themselves. Usually, it will not work like that.

Dr. Norman Geisler, an Old Testament scholar and theologian, wrote: “Oh, to permit murder when one could have prevented it is morally wrong. To allow rape when one could have hindered it is an evil. To watch an act of cruelty to children without trying to intervene is morally inexcusable. In brief, not resisting evil is an evil of omission, and an evil of omission can be just as evil as an evil of commission. Any man who refuses to protect his wife and children against a violent intruder fails them morally.

“God has laid the expectation at the feet of the heads of the families that they protect, provide for, and defend their families, and

protect and defend their countries. Little ones cannot do so and rely solely on those who bore them. God no more loves the willing neglect of their safety than He loves child abuse. He no more appreciates the willingness to ignore the sanctity of our own lives than He approves of the abuse of our own bodies and souls. God has not called us to save the society by sacrificing our children or ourselves to robbers, home invaders, rapists, or murderers. Self-defense and defense of the little ones goes well beyond a right. It is a duty based on the idea that man is made in the image of God. It is his expectation that we do the utmost to preserve and defend ourselves when in danger, for it is he who is sovereign who gives life, and he doesn't expect us to be dismissive or cavalier about its loss."

"If you believe that it is your Christian duty to allow your children to be harmed by evildoers, and you actually allow it, because you think that Christ was a pacifist, you're no better than a child abuser or pedophile. God demands violence as a response to threats on our persons because of the fact that man is created in the image of God, and life is to be preserved. It is our solemn duty."

I'm afraid there have been too many centuries of bad teaching endured by the church, but it makes sense to keep trying. As I've explained before, the simplest and most compelling case for self-defense lies in the Decalogue: "Thou shalt not murder" means "thou shalt protect life." If you're willing to sacrifice the safety and health of your wife and children to the evils of abuse, kidnapping, sexual predation, or death, God isn't impressed with your fake morality.

If you're capable of stopping it and choosing not to, you're no better than a child molester, and I wouldn't even want you around my grandchildren. Those are hard words, but they are true words. They are strong words. We have to return to the biblical doctrine of self-defense, learn what the Bible says, and get up off our rear ends to do what God has told us: prepare to protect ourselves and our families. You just remember this.

## Conclusion: Bringing Thoughts Captive to Christ and Final Exhortation

When you most need the police, they're only fifteen minutes away. And they'll get there in time to draw the chalk line around your dead body, or the bodies of your children.

In 2 Corinthians 10:3–5, the Apostle says, "For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh. For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds." Paul is not condemning physical weapons. He is simply saying that, in the warfare he is about to discuss, physical weapons would not help us at all. "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds."

What is your stronghold? Your stronghold is your place of defense. Your stronghold is what you think and what you believe. I can't change you; you think like this. But the Apostle continues: "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ."

So let me ask you a question: As a Christian, how many unbiblical thoughts does God allow you to have? None. That means that, when it comes to self-defense, violence, preparation, safety, or any of these subjects, you had better learn to think biblically and bring your mind and your thoughts into captivity to the Lord Jesus Christ in His Word.

The best way to be prepared is not only to trust in the sovereign God of heaven and earth, but also to fulfill your responsibility to the best of your ability, by His grace and by His mercy. You remember, God allowed David to defeat Goliath, but God did not throw the rock for David. David had to use the sling.

Father, in the name of Jesus Christ, we bow to Thee this day. We thank You for Your Word. We thank You for Your truth. Lord, I pray and ask Thee to let this sink deeply into our hearts and minds, and that You would indeed, by Your infinite grace and mercy, teach us, build us up in the most holy faith, and give us, Lord, Your grace and Your mercy. In the name of Jesus Christ, we ask and pray. Amen.

# Source Notes

Chapter 1: Theology of Self-Defense-1
JW00110 | SermonAudio

Chapter 2: Theology of Self Defense-2
JW00107 | SermonAudio

Chapter 3: Theology of Self Defense-3
JW00105 | SermonAudio

# Topical Index

Chapter titles and section headings are listed with the pages on which they begin.

**A**

Accepting the Reality of a Changed Society and Evil p. 48

**B**

Biblical Examples of Righteous Killing p. 13

**C**

Christ's Response: 'Suffer ye thus far' p. 33

Components of Preparation: Weapons, Training, and Mindset p. 54

Conclusion and Teaser for Next Lecture p. 24

Conclusion: Bringing Thoughts Captive to Christ and Final Exhortation p. 66

**D**

Do Not Act Like Easy Prey p. 58

Duty to Preserve Life: Animals and Humans p. 22

**G**

God's Law on Self-Defense and Property p. 18

**I**

Introduction and Historical Context p. 5

Introduction and Scripture Reading p. 25

Introduction: Safety, Preparation, and Situational Awareness p. 45

**M**

Modern Church Attacks and the Need for Defense p. 9

**N**

Natural Instinct and Christ's Teaching p. 23

**P**

Peter's Actions Were Unenlightened p. 39

Peter's Actions Were Unnecessary p. 38

Peter's Actions Were Unwise p. 33

Practical Questions for Church Security Preparedness p. 60

Proper Use of Weapons and Conclusion p. 40

## S

Self-Defense as a Ministry and Moral Duty p. 63
Situational Awareness: Principles and Practices p. 56

## T

The Biblical Mandate for Self-Defense p. 26
The Change in Christ's Instructions p. 27
The Command to Buy a Sword p. 31
The Disciples' Question and Peter's Action p. 31
The Failure of Gun-Free Zones and the Need for Church Security p. 52
The Objection from Christ's Arrest p. 26
The Sixth Commandment: Negative and Positive p. 11
Theology of Self Defense-2 p. 25
Theology of Self Defense-3 p. 45
Theology of Self-Defense-1 p. 5
Two Major Caveats: God's Sovereignty and Human Responsibility p. 46

## Y

You Are Not Too Old: Biblical Encouragement for All Ages p. 62

# Scripture Index

Scripture references identified in chapter readings, headings, and manuscript text are listed with their page locations.


### Genesis

Genesis 37 p. 34

### Exodus

Exodus 21 p. 11, p. 12

Exodus 22 p. 11, p. 12

Exodus 23:4-5 p. 22

Exodus 35 p. 11, p. 12

### Leviticus

Leviticus 20 p. 11, p. 12

Leviticus 24 p. 11, p. 12

Leviticus 25:18 p. 46

### Numbers

Numbers 15 p. 11, p. 12

### Deuteronomy

Deuteronomy 13 p. 11, p. 12

Deuteronomy 17 p. 11, p. 12

Deuteronomy 21 p. 11, p. 12

Deuteronomy 22 p. 11, p. 12, p. 20, p. 21, p. 22

Deuteronomy 23 p. 11, p. 12

### Judges

Judges 1:7 p. 38

### 1 Samuel

1 Samuel 17 p. 18

### 2 Samuel

2 Samuel 11 p. 49

### 2 Kings

2 Kings 19:34 p. 13

2 Kings 20:6 p. 14

## Psalm

Psalm 14 p. 49
Psalm 33:17 p. 46
Psalm 44 p. 16
Psalm 53 p. 49
Psalm 71 p. 63
Psalm 89 p. 14
Psalm 127:1 p. 46
Psalm 144 p. 5

## Proverbs

Proverbs 2:6 p. 47
Proverbs 15:1 p. 54, p. 55
Proverbs 16:18 p. 35
Proverbs 20 p. 11, p. 12
Proverbs 21:31 p. 45, p. 46

## Ecclesiastes

Ecclesiastes 8:11 p. 49, p. 50

## Isaiah

Isaiah 31:5 p. 14
Isaiah 33:1 p. 37, p. 38
Isaiah 37:35 p. 14
Isaiah 37:36 p. 14, p. 38, p. 39
Isaiah 38:6 p. 14
Isaiah 46 p. 63

## Ezekiel

Ezekiel 18 p. 11, p. 12

## Matthew

Matthew 1:21 p. 39, p. 40
Matthew 15 p. 11, p. 12
Matthew 16:21-23 p. 39
Matthew 26 p. 25, p. 34

Matthew 26:47 p. 31, p. 32
Matthew 26:52 p. 33, p. 37
Matthew 26:53 p. 38
Matthew 26:54 p. 39

### Mark

Mark 7 p. 11, p. 12
Mark 14 p. 25, p. 34

### Luke

Luke 18:2 p. 49
Luke 22 p. 25, p. 34, p. 40
Luke 22:38 p. 34
Luke 22:49 p. 31, p. 32

### John

John 10:17-18 p. 39
John 12:27 p. 39
John 15:13 p. 24
John 18 p. 25, p. 34, p. 36

### Romans

Romans 3 p. 49
Romans 13 p. 23

### 1 Corinthians

1 Corinthians 10:31 p. 64

### 2 Corinthians

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 p. 66

### Colossians

Colossians 3:23-24 p. 63, p. 64

### 2 Timothy

2 Timothy 2:7 p. 47

### 1 Peter

1 Peter 3:18 p. 39, p. 40

## Revelation

Revelation 13:10 p. 37, p. 38

**WEAVER BIBLE COLLEGE**

# Your companion study guide

*Theology of Self Defense*

Follow the Scripture references, reflect on each lesson,
and use the written-response space to apply what you learn.

**Scan to open the matching study guide**

Downloadable PDF | 8.5 x 11 inches
No sign-in required

studyguides.weaverbiblecollege.com

If you cannot scan the code, visit the address above
and search for this book by title.