

23. Peace and Love?

Part 1 War

(Part 2 covers problems with finding love and friendship)

Serial killers stalk society's imagination.....

Yet some soldiers acted worse than these hellions. They disemboweled civilians with bayonets, burned homes to the ground, collected trophies of human ears, and perpetrated other nefarious deeds. Receiving no punishment or public scorn, some soldiers received medals.

The "Night Stalker" Richard Ramirez prowled Los Angeles County and San Francisco in the mid 80's; his antics made him internationally infamous. Yet Richard, at twelve, associated with war veteran cousin Miguel. Miguel killed at least 29 (Richard killed 13), raped many women, and brought back shrunken heads. He showed Richard photos of him performing sexual abuse and decapitations in Vietnam, constantly bragged, and taught Richard his stalking and killing tactics. Yet because of his United States uniform, his actions not effecting Americans; Miguel is largely unknown.¹

Pacifism?

Some admonishments have been "Come on people now.....Everybody get together, try to love one another," and "All we are saying is give peace a chance."^(2,3) Yet trying to bring diverse groups of adults together and simply telling them to get along is naïve and smacks of arrogance, like trying to admonish three year olds. And since people clash over differing racial, ethnic, national, and regional interests, separating diverse people would aid peace and everybody getting together would increase strife.

A false dilemma is sometimes presented: either be pro-war or a pacifist: defined as nonresistance to violence. Those who oppose war are often labeled hippies, peaceniks, pacifists, or liberal reactionaries. There is much truth to this; people tend to polarize. However, the options are not either or; we can embrace conservative religious values while rejecting the war mentality which became associated with it. Some wars are undoubtedly justified; most are not.

Men are obligated to use violence to protect their family when necessary and the law must use violence to protect society against criminals when necessary. And if the law isn't doing its job, martial law is in order. But these means should be exercised until our own country's vast criminal element is conquered before hypocritically laying a finger on another country.

Some struggles must be undertaken with physical force and weapons which offer hope of success. Superior justice alone cannot conquer. Otherwise justice would have prevented struggles from arising in the first place. And superior intelligence alone cannot conquer because the vast majority lack superior intelligence. One genius could be silenced by thirty idiots, supported by their fists and blabbermouths. Anyone who desires the victory of pacifism would have to fight with all means at his disposal for pacifism to prevail. Like it or not, we would have to wage wars in order to arrive at pacifism and keep pacifists from being wiped out. Therefore pacifism is currently self-contradicting nonsense.

Besides, if unsocial or unworthy treatment calls for resistance, these struggles, as long as no legal authority exists to eliminate evil, can only be decided by superior power. Pacifism could only work after men of the highest virtues already conquered and subjected the world to the extent that pacifists are the sole rulers of this planet. Then this idea cannot produce evil effects. Therefore, first struggle and see what can be done. But before exercising this last resort, read my critique of warfare to avoid misguided zealotry.

Being Busybodies in Other People's Matters

In rare instances a country must invade a barbaric people for the purpose of territorial expansion, in order to support its growing population. However, countrymen should not sacrifice their lives just because their government wants to redesign the world to suit themselves. Besides, these supposed reconsolidation attempts fail to facilitate justice, and often spark resentment, causing even more violence and injustice. "An enemy must be aided, so that he may not continue as an enemy. For by help, good feeling is compacted and enmity dissolved" (Clement of Alexandria's *Stromata or Miscellanies* chpt. 19, AD 195). Besides, most wars cost trillions of dollars, robbing worthy causes of monetary benefits. Now the United States has only one political party: the War party. Political candidates preach peace before they're elected, but give in to bloodlust and aggressive policies. Former vice-presidential hopeful Sarah Palin wrote "We'll put a boot in your ass; It's the American way," while men did her dirty work.⁴

And whose way would soldiers be fighting for in a multicultural and multiracial nation? The United States has one of the highest incarceration rates of any country, its murder rate is sky-high, 89% of the world's pornography comes from U.S. Internet, 75% of all arms are exported from the USA, and many don't have adequate health care. Americans are drowning in materialism, obsess about winning the lottery, and compete in a relentless acquisition of material goods, while not even knowing their neighbor's name. Instead of attempting to Americanize other countries by force, we must fix ourselves.

Using Others as Pawns

Say you're a Middle-Eastern man. "Hello, Mustafa. You live with your parents in a mud pit. You're illiterate, and can't afford schooling. Even with a good job, because of polygamous marriages, no women are available; you'll never have a wife and children. Besides, your brother has an extremely painful disease, and can't afford medical treatment. However, there's good news. If you die as a martyr helping to destroy the American infidel, I, Sheikh Hassan, will provide for your family, and seventy-two beautiful virgins will await you in Heaven, just as you've heard all your life." With Islam's violent component jihad, a very threatening situation exists. Heaping disparagement upon these circumstances is imperative.

Some young Middle Eastern soldiers encouraged by an older "brother" butchered civilians in a surprise attack. They were killed while one was captured. The survivor was brought to see the bodies of his fallen companions. Expecting to see a wonderful display of peaceful smiling bodies enveloped in a heavenly glow, he discovered mangled rotting corpses distorted with grotesque expressions; his hopes were shattered.⁵ Most countries use young men to do their dirty work, partly because young men are naïve, but mostly because they are single. Most family men are disinclined to wage war. By fixing women's rejection of men, and Arab countries stopping polygamy, both of which stop men from being married, we would have a shocking turnaround; most of the war mentality on this planet would cease.

Misery of War

Civil War reenactments are inaccurate, only showing men shooting rifles and cannons, while two out of three men died from diseases, not bullets. Most men caught chronic diarrhea, and 57,265 Yankee soldiers died of dysentery (fatal diarrhea), while 44,238 died in battle.^(6,7) In all wars, men's lives are wasted by diseases, inclement weather, and "friendly fire" (fellow soldiers accidentally killing each other). War movie battles have been whitewashed and sanitized. A notable exception, *Born on the Fourth of July*, portrays real life Vietnam

veteran and subsequent war protestor Ron Kovic, who wrote about his experiences.(8) To see the true results of warfare, research war wounds.

Concerning America's wars in the Middle East, these escalating wars produced a million dead and maimed civilians including many children, thousands of killed and maimed American soldiers, and 360,000 veterans with potentially permanent brain injuries.(9) Although soldiers are courageous, after getting seriously wounded, morphine has been available, a drug so powerful it eliminates pain completely. If you care to admire a courageous man, admire Jesus Christ who was willingly tortured to death. Besides, Jesus was offered wine mixed with myrrh (a painkiller) yet He declined it, still avoiding the easy way out.

Blaming Religion

“Wars are over religion” is a familiar banter. Yet even the Crusades were fought over cultural differences and possession of territory (Jerusalem), by poor people expecting to take home plunder. Depicting Crusaders in expensive suits of armor emblazoned with big crosses is a distortion. Without any ethnic, territorial, and financial motivations, there would be no Crusades. And if the Crusades weren't over religion, no war in history was over religion. Religion is simply a pretense. Furthermore, there have never been enough devoutly religious people to form an army.

Say there are a dozen homes on a street, every family has the same religion. Yet each house has a “black sheep” of a different religion. Do you honestly think that each family loves the neighbors more than the differing family member due to sameness with the neighbor? That would be ignorance as to how people work; blood is the biggest factor. And those who disown their children “over religion” is because rejecting the family religion is seen as rejecting the family. For example, immigrants aren't allowed into Israel without proof of Jewish lineage. Their professing to be Jewish seals the deal, even if they are atheists. The profession allegedly says that they want to be part of that extended family and work with it; a different profession says they don't.

Christianity and War Mentality Scrambled Together

Disconcertingly, Modern Christendom often promotes war mentality, contradicting the early Church's imperative of peace. A documentary showed a Catholic school allowing a soldier to visit the classrooms, supervised by a nun, to lecture on the Vietnam War. The soldier justified the war by saying:

“They are gooks” and “They're not like us.”(10) Being a war veteran is often a prerequisite to being a popular Protestant preacher, while no preacher in the early Church was a war veteran. Modern Christian belief and military-ism have become so intertwined that many non-Christians are dissuaded from Christianity.

However, I wouldn't condemn people based on pro-war mentality alone. Many great theologians were war veterans, yet were excellent moral examples. Perhaps they were carried away by society's pro-war mentality; being subject to serious error is part of the human condition. Besides, the people they fought against were no angels; they often fought against those who had an even greater war mentality. When dealing with barbarians, using military action against them might be justified. Hopefully it won't result in acquiring their barbarism.

Actually, John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, and the Apostle Paul, after encountering soldiers, never remotely suggested that they leave the army. However, those soldiers may have not been on active duty, and immediately leaving the army may have jeopardized their families whom they were supporting by their service. Embracing Christianity should have naturally weaned them away from warfare.

Secondly, airplanes and swift battleships were nonexistent, keeping soldiers from being busybodies in far away matters that didn't concern them; immediate threats were always their focus. In Christ's day fighting always involved battling an obviously hostile enemy that one could visibly see. Modern warfare is the op-

posite, incorporating bombs and high powered weapons that kill masses of unseen people indiscriminately, soldiers and civilians alike.

Although New Testament Scripture has several allusions to warfare, none allude to being a busy-body in affairs of foreign countries. For example, Americans stopping their petroleum dependency would end battles for control of foreign oil fields.

The Early Church

“We who formerly murdered one another now refrain from making war even upon our enemies” (*Justin Martyr’s First Apology Chapter 39 AD 160*). “A soldier of the civil authority must be taught not to kill men and refuse to if he is commanded” and “If an applicant or a believer seeks to become a soldier, he must be rejected, for he has despised God” (*Hippolytus’s Apostolic Traditions 16; AD 200*). “We employ the one instrument of peace: the Word alone.....We no longer use the ancient psaltery, trumpet, timbrel, and flute; for warmongers customarily used them..... Let our seals be either a fish, dove, or ship.....we are not to draw an outline of a sword or bow, since we follow peace.” (*Clement of Alexandria’s The Instructor AD 195*) Early Church father Origen concluded that exercising oneself in righteousness and prayer was far more beneficial than any justified war could possibly be. (*Origen Against Celsus AD 248*).

However, persecution against the Church became so intense that eventually, military action was justified to prevent it from being wiped out. Emperor Constantine is said to have seen a miraculous sign in the sky; a blazing cross with the words *By This Conquer*. Christ then supposedly told him to conquer His enemies under a Christian banner; (*Life of Constantine Chapters XXVIII-XXXII by Eusebius Pamphilus*). Yet torture remains unscriptural in all circumstances. Regardless, its effectiveness is doubtful.

America was never fully Christian, but most citizens held to basic Christian principles. Unlike Constantine, who slowly journeyed from paganism to Christianity, America is going the wrong way. And again, amidst a multicultural mishmash, whose way would we be fighting for? Therefore, warring against foreign nations is inexplicable; we’re warring against ourselves, and can’t even get that right.

Side Benefits of Military Action?

Holocaust victim Anne Frank wrote that massive amounts of money were spent on World War II, yet cheap construction was used in homes, and no money was left aside for artisans, medical care, or the starving poor. Besides blaming the political bigwigs, she also blamed society, since the people could have revolted and changed things. She saw an innate urge to rage, murder, and destroy, exclaiming “Why are people so crazy?” She also felt that until everyone everywhere underwent a massive transformation, wars would keep occurring until everything was destroyed.¹¹

Supposed character building benefits of military service are countermanded by soldiers being ensnared by tobacco and alcohol abuse, drug addiction, gambling, and prostitution from being separated from the stable structure that families provide. Gang members incorporated tactics they learned in the military to create more violence on the streets. The resultant post-traumatic stress disorder from warfare also harms one’s character. And households are weakened by men being absent. Notably, serial murderers are far more likely to have a military background than the average citizen.¹²

Who Wins Wars?

There’s no hard evidence that any army ever wins a modern war because God is on their side. Neither do armies win wars via asymmetrical battle strategies or the art of war. That’s true in chess because both players always have identical armies. But an average club player with twice the pieces of the world champion would beat the

world champion. There's an account of three hundred men beating a hundred thousand. However, those seven thousand (the three hundred had reinforcements) simply held off the bigger army for a week before being annihilated.⁽¹³⁾ Exceptional bravery or heart is also a relatively minor factor. Choreographed action movies similarly distort empty hand combat, having one man beat many. In real videotaped fights one person always loses when ganged upon.

It's certainly a numbers game. Given the same weaponry and supply line, those with a sizable numerical advantage will win. Therefore one human army beating another is akin to a bigger ant colony beating one smaller. They are equally barbaric and often equally nonsensical.

Analyzing America's Foreign Wars

Whether against Afghanistan, Bosnia, Iran, Iraq, Kosovo, Somalia, Syria, or the Persian Gulf, my United States engages in nonsensical warfare two out of every three years. Lawmakers and politicians insist that Americans fight Islamic militants throughout the world. Yet with few exceptions their own sons and daughters are uninvolved in this fighting. This hypocrisy alone should be a major wakeup call.¹⁴

Secondly, consider that in the 1970s, the USA began arming, funding, and training Islamic militants, including Osama Bin Laden, to fight Russians in Afghanistan.⁽¹⁵⁾ Now consider the supposed reasons for these wars. The Iraq war rested on the lie that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction, which was proven false. Then Americans heard that Bin Laden ordered the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks and lived in a vast underground armory complex. Instead, he lived in a shack and had nothing to do with 9/11, neither did "the Taliban." Rather, numerous disjointed groups around the world that hate our Zionist policies and interference in foreign affairs were responsible.

Considering these facts, never go overseas or engage any Islamic group whatsoever. Don't kick the hornet's nest. In response, someone disagreed because of their supposed threat to dominate the United States. Allegedly, by not fighting them, they'll decapitate our heads as they did to a few Americans living overseas (who kicked the hornet's nest). Supposedly, all Americans will be oppressed, and all Christians will be required to renounce their Christianity and adopt Islam.

However, this could only happen by integrating with such people. For a people of three hundred million, all we must do is stop their entrance into our country. However, this requires renouncing political correctness. Pointedly, not enough whites side with Islamic militants to pose any threat, and we know the racial makeup of Islamic militants. Therefore the solution is preventing any Arab or African citizen from taking up residence in America or even vacationing here, coupled with securing our ports by intercepting any unauthorized ship, using battleships if necessary. Regardless, continued battle with Islamic militants could result in our complete annihilation if they obtain nuclear weapons. Note their belief that dying while battling infidels (us) sends them directly to Paradise; their death is no deterrent. Think about it.

Everybody thinks They're Right

American veterans are honored because of their self-sacrifice and heartfelt service to God and country. However, Japanese kamikazes sacrificed themselves in service to their country by bombing Pearl Harbor. We should honor them for that. Islamic militants sacrificed themselves, serving God and country by bombing New York's World Trade Center. They should be honored for that. And since each aforementioned group acted wholeheartedly, they should all be proud of themselves (I'm speaking facetiously and hypothetically).

Regardless of which country, culture, religion or lack thereof; societies consider themselves good and divergent societies evil to justify warfare. Although everyone calls themselves "freedom fighters," no group stands apart as holy and innocent. Jews themselves are responsible for one of the biggest holocausts; tens of millions of Christians were murdered by the Jewish-led Bolsheviks in Russia and Europe. Even Anne Frank

understood this and sympathized with anti-Semites. She was also interested in exploring the Christian scriptures, but couldn't get around to it.^{16,17}

From James 4:1-2: "From whence come wars and fighting among you? Come they not hence of your lusts which war in your members? Ye lust, and have not: ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain: ye fight and war, yet have not." People must control their materialism. In everyday life, doing without something saves lives (see *Blood Diamond*).⁽¹⁸⁾ Justifiable warfare would be defending one's own people from invasion, direct attack, or the criminal element, while unnecessary warfare is the opposite of love. Confucius say "War not determine who is right, war determine who is left."

By mistakenly paying a million dollars for a bag of pyrite or "fool's gold," we could feign wisdom to save face, or we could do the right thing, warning others not make the same mistake. Likewise, if veterans of unjustifiable wars expressed regret, and denounced their former actions instead the world would be better off. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."-----Hebrews 12:14. The Apostle Paul (as Saul) passionately killed Christians for God and country, convinced that he acted righteously. Later, he repented, denounced his former actions, and became an excellent example. Let's do likewise.

Part 2 Seeking Love

A: Love Denied

Some parents self-righteously disowned their child because of disapproval over the child's behavior, consequently removing their influence completely, and sending the child headlong into the very behaviors the parent disapproved of. Other parents cherish their children because they love a form of themselves. If parents loved their children sufficiently, they wouldn't constantly try to conform them to their own personality, which is a form of selfishness.

Some adults are certainly guilty of disowning their parents although they are obligated to care for them in their later years as they themselves were taken care of. Cutting all ties with one's parents after leaving their house, a common occurrence today, was almost unheard of in yesteryear. Oftentimes screaming fights dominate households and extinguish the love. Yet love ought to begin in the home and flow outward from it. Some people believe in a supreme Creator, while only mentioning Him as a curse word. Others declare that if some macho guy renounces God his entire life, but on his deathbed, belches from his mouth "I confess Jesus Christ", that's acceptable. It's as if "I really don't love God, but I'm forced to "cry uncle." Christianity is a religion of love; love requires time to develop.

Despite improvements for physically handicapped people, this world system is designed so that most mentally challenged people cannot succeed. Victims of mental conditions often feel unwelcome everywhere, avoided by everyone, and feel a total lack of love and understanding; hence a complete affective void. If Christians should love and serve their enemies; how much more their fellow needy Christians?

Sometimes loves is in name only. The Beatles sang All You Need Is Love, causing girls to scream themselves hoarse, while they drove a jewel-encrusted Rolls Royce. On the late night radio talk show *Love Line* with Dr. Drew Pinski⁽¹⁹⁾, people didn't call to share their positive loving experiences or ask advice in improving their love lives. Half the callers posed sexual related questions; the other half because they were in crisis. Sometimes expressions of love are only temporary. I've attended different group therapy sessions, church groups, and self-help groups. People professed love for one another; everyone hugged, cried, and called one another sister and brother. These things touched my heart and inspired me. I felt trust, caring, and sharing. Yet after the initial high wears off, created by a built-up crescendo of emotions, groups fizzle out. People grow cold, drop out, stop calling, and move away. Larger organizations also consistently fail, such as the 1960's "decade of love" hippie communities.

Considering our fallen nature, extremely few have an abundance of love inside them. Love groups, emotional support groups, church groups, or community groups arouse the needy. Groups may begin with good intentions, but most people, when their needy feelings or financial needs are satisfied or they find something else, quit. Although certain people get satisfaction from these groups, what proves that somebody likes you is their willingness to see you outside the designated group. Besides group members often failing to connect outside these groups, sometimes the groups disband completely. Society's attempts to foster love and community have failed miserably.

For most of my life, nobody called, visited, wrote me, or sent birthday or Christmas cards, which pattern never ended. That, coupled with being single, estranged from my cousins and being an only child was terrible. A notable exception was a man without a car calling my work, having employees chase me down so he could ask for a ride. This behavior is typical; lottery winners become suddenly inundated with telephone calls and letters from people who haven't spoken to them in years.

I did manage to meet about twenty wonderful friendly people throughout my lifetime, both male and female. Later in life, after taking an early retirement and feeling lonely, I went out of my way to extend myself to those important people in my past, contacting them on social network sites, or calling and visiting them personally. I was also careful not to discuss anything controversial. Surprisingly, none of them showed any interest in me as if I were a stranger.

Truthfully, there are some whom nobody loves except God. Love isn't something hidden and mysterious; love is a shining light. Those who love others show an ongoing interest in them, they don't abandon them or write them off.

B: What Love Is

Corinthians 13:4-8: "Love suffereth long, and is kind; love envieth not, vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Love never faileth....."

► Self-Sacrifice and Service: Paraphrasing John 15:13: "There's no greater love than sacrificing one's life for others." Alleged examples of individuals sacrificing themselves for others are found in *Tortured for Christ* by Romanian pastor Richard Wurmbrand.(20) Contrarily, whatever your religious proclivities, lacking adequate love torpedoes your faith. Quoting former Tonight show host Jay Leno: "Give the airport test: Go through your phone book, call people, and ask them to drive you to the airport. The ones who'll drive you are your true friends. The rest aren't bad people, they're just acquaintances."(21) I'd give the moving test. Ask people to help you move, and almost everybody disappears. Don't use the Fred G. Sanford test. My grandmother did that, looking as fake as the actor from Sanford & Son feigning a heart attack. Excuses for not loving and serving needful people don't fool God either.

After Jesus washed the disciple's feet He wiped them with a towel, declaring, "If your Lord and Master has washed your feet; ye should wash one another's feet. I've given you an example; ye should do as I've done to you."(John 13:12-15) He meant serving other's needs, not specifically washing feet, since enclosed shoes and paved roads made foot-washing before entering a home obsolete.

Love isn't merely abstract and nebulous. Love is concrete, sacrificial, and active. In *The Five Love Languages*, love manifests as words of affirmation, quality time, receiving gifts, acts of service, or physical touch. So without any of these, love is absent.²²

► **Humility:** “Without converting, becoming as little children, you won’t attain Heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in God’s Kingdom” (paraphrasing Matt.18:3-4). Yet faith often becomes a competition with others and nothing else. In extreme cases, various individuals attempt to top others by claiming that they’re Jesus Christ (including John Lennon of the Beatles, in a drug-addled state). Arrogant thinking is timeless. In Luke 9:46-48 there arose a reasoning among Christ’s apostles, which of them was the greatest. Jesus, perceiving their motivation, brought forth a child, saying unto them “Whosoever receives this child receiveth Me.... the least shall be great.” Other things can foster humbleness and love towards our Great Almighty Creator, Love Personified.

Merely taking a long walk outside can produce a great respect and admiration of the Lord’s knowledge, power, and loving care. Contemplating the stars and the magnitude of the universe is very humbling. How small and weak we are!

For those who pride themselves on neatness and cleanliness: microscopic eight-legged arthropods inhabit everyone’s house. Conventional vacuums cannot remove them. Most adhere to fabric with leg hooks. The few that are sucked up pass through the vacuum and reenter your house. Thousands to millions of Demodex mites crawl upon 97% of people, nestling in eyelash follicles. Everyone’s skin supports billions of Staphylococcus bacteria. Everyone also has streptococcus on their teeth, despite brushing diligently, and Lactobacillus bacteria lives in every woman’s private parts. Firmicutes and Bacteroides live inside everyone’s body, billions of microbes weighing over two kilograms.(23,24) Many foods variously contain small quantities of maggots, fly eggs, insect feces, rodent feces, rodent hairs, or mold, which is unavoidable.(25) We’re all embarrassingly unclean, which should humble us. Though Homo sapiens are the capstone of terrestrial creation, we sometimes act like creation’s lowest form. So be humble and stop emphasizing self-love, which is devilish pride. The more we inflate ourselves, the more others are comparatively deflated.

► **Obedience to God:** There are those who are adamant about various doctrines, and those who are angry with sticklers about doctrine, accusing them of only caring about getting things right and impeding freedom. Let’s demolish this false dichotomy between doctrine and love. Deeply loving somebody inspires one to want to know everything about them, and how to please them. Unfortunately, “doctrine” is often warped into unproved and oppressive dogma, and “love” warped into emotional or reactionary zeal. There should be no distinction; those who love God should believe and obey whatever doctrines have been revealed by Him. Doctrines of men should be rejected.

There are different ways of serving and expressing love towards God since personalities and life situations vary widely. However, doctrine (synonymous with knowledge and obedience), has been deemed essential for proper love towards God throughout Jewish and Christian history. Since God’s ways are beyond ours, and He always knows what’s best, this unique relationship calls for complete submission. For insight into the difference between what is allowed and what violates Christian morality, see my other dissertations.

► **Connecting with Others:** Everyone possesses an inherent need to be loved, wanted, and needed. Cases existed, under extenuating circumstances, notably in “ultra-hygienic” orphanages where infants deprived of being held or even touched (though getting plenty of food, liquids, and medical care) died, while those cradled in loving arms lived. This is called “non-organic failure to thrive.” (26) Far from suggesting immature needs, this illustrates inborn, natural needs. If someone doesn’t receive adequate love and attention from either their immediate family, religious group, or circle of friends, they can eventually drift towards any possible avenue of perceived fulfillment, no matter how harmful, and thereby be entangled. ***People need people***

C: Factors that Prevent Loving Friendship

●Only Children: People falsely suppose that only children are happier than those with siblings and are spoiled. That facilitates ignoring them instead of embracing them. In China, 60% of only children responded that they're lonely and miserable like I was. Although only children are becoming somewhat common, I'm too old to befriend preadolescents and don't live in China. Pointedly, some are more in need of friendship than others; so let's be aware of each other's needs.

●The Marriage Only Idea: Frank Sinatra sang: "Love and marriage go together like a horse and carriage, you can't have one without the other." Although that may be true, Christ's intention was that the Church should be as loving as an immediate family. But over time the Church departed from Christ's ideology; most have apostatized regarding this crucial point. Happy couples with big families may be satiated, while many divorcees, singles, only children, and social outcasts carry around heavy weights.

Single men's suicide rate is always several times greater than married men's. Forest park ranger Roy C. Sullivan was struck by lightning seven times and survived, entering the *Guinness Book of World Records*, yet killed himself because he was "unlucky in love."²⁷

Some think "People discount me while I'm alive but will be sorry when I'm dead." NO. Freddy Mercury from Queen sang *Don't Try Suicide*, rectifying this misconception. He sang "Nobody cares anyway," "Nobody's worth it," and "Nobody gives a damn."⁽²⁸⁾ Those who offer a wasteland for persons falling through society's crack will answer for this deep shame and tragedy on Judgment Day. Besides the fact that some cannot find a mate, historic Christianity had very strict criteria for what constituted legitimate married life, which most people aren't meeting. That's why I emphasize close friendships, which could fulfill the roles of companion and helper, and with less headaches. See 29. Singleness.

●Claiming that Christianity is not a Social Religion: Actually, Christianity is completely social; we see Jesus through others. People who have never experienced social isolation do not understand and often don't care. They, along with others, have three circles of human relationships: family, friends, and acquaintances; those outside these circles are strangers. Yet with "Blood thicker than water," their acquaintanceships and friendships evaporate. People with big families often consider friends a temporary entertainment. When the friendship breaks (by conflict, moving away, or drifting away) a clinging person suffers. I've clung to friendships like a rope suspended from a gym ceiling. Over my lifetime, meeting someone has been like grabbing the rope. As time progressed, these friendships were like climbing the rope. Inevitably, usually by moving, friends indifferently cut the friendship, and I slammed to the ground.

A former friend and his mother, devout believers, always had Jesus' picture prominently and properly displayed on high. The daughter/sister's picture was also prominently displayed, but this young woman had disowned them, and disappeared for thirty years while my picture was tossed in a drawer. The world exclusively loves its immediate family, treating everyone else as outsiders, but Christians are called to something higher and supernatural. Jesus' mother and half-brothers urgently desired to speak to Him. He responded "Who is my mother and who are my brethren? Pointing to His disciples, He declared: "Behold my mother and my brethren." (Matthew 12:47-50)

Fellow believers often call each other sister and brother. For those designations to be legitimate, one must be extremely radical, running contrary to society's disordered culture. Noting the problems between parishioner's families, a priest stated that people often treat strangers better than their own family. Actually, strangers are subjected to less abuse and shown more politeness and etiquette because strangers might erupt into violence, whereas one knows which family members are docile. If everyone knew which strangers were safe, they would suffer even more abuse.

●Conditioning Males not to Love: I'm shocked: Love between males is almost nonexistent. Male-male platonic love was an integral sociodynamic from ancient times till the nineteenth century. That dramatically vanished, perhaps the result of homophobia or the competitive business world. (29) Most men are aggressive competitors and essentially enemies; perhaps this was hammered into them since childhood. Unless this problem is rectified, treating most men like enemy soldiers in order to protect yourself is sad wisdom. But what's truly sad is being naïve; knowing the truth protects you from harm.

Women live longer and they're happier; they love each other and cooperate. That equals success. Whereas women frequently have deep, intimate, meaningful, and lasting friendships, men typically have several shallow, superficial, and temporary acquaintances. Though married men handle friendlessness better than single men, married men's suicide rate was still several times greater than women's throughout the twentieth century. Some women claim that there's plenty of love out there (false), and men who feel unloved haven't extended themselves to find it. Many men have extended themselves and were consequently shunned.

●Muddled Philosophy: After I noted society's lack of lifetime friendships, someone responded "The world moves too fast to share the same piece of ground." That's platitudinous flatulence; the world is a nonentity, and conditions are self-imposed. More flatulence that ruins friendships is "I don't want to associate with the same old people, I want to move forward." Yet loving others requires getting to know them, which takes time; bouncing around prevents love. Others express a survival of the fittest philosophy, where people are supposed to try to dominate others, not be social. Yet extraordinary effort, consisting of ignoring slights, putting aside differences, and always thinking of others, makes lifetime loving companionships possible.

In my United States, politics is dominated by a two party system: Republicans and Democrats. A Republican mused "Why, in our upper class neighborhood, are people so antisocial and uncommunicative?" (Wealth supposedly creates niceness). A similar sentiment posed by Democrats, is "poverty causes crime." Republicans and Democrats have the same non-Christian presupposition that people are basically good. Both parties are an odd mixture of secular humanism and Christian policy. One party portrays itself as religious, blames big government and lack of education, and sporadically upholds humanistic policies. The other portrays itself as anti-religious, blames prejudice and uncaring government, and sporadically upholds morality.

Countering the sentiment that criminal and antisocial behavior is simply "uneducated," liberals also construct convoluted arguments. Liberal philosophy taken to its extreme endpoint is that murder, rape, drug dealing, and pillaging isn't the perpetrator's fault, it's the fault of oppression or people not getting what they want. However, loving one's neighbor would stop many problems, not solutions without love in their equation.

●Being Oblivious: Generally, people want very quiet neighbors. Quiet neighbors are "the greatest neighbors in the world." People generally feel, as long as my neighbors don't bother me, I don't really care what they do. However, true neighbors are neighborly. If they're not, they aren't your neighbor; they're simply someone who lives next door. The fact that society is antisocial is quite clear.(30) Yet if everyone showed an interest in their neighbors, many problems would be eliminated.

●Material Possessions: There's much to be thankful for. I've always had an abundance of food and drink available while some people starve. I've always had someplace to stay while some are homeless. I've always had disposable income while some people cannot afford to go anywhere or do anything special. I have a car while some people must walk. I've never experienced warfare, imprisonment, or torture like some have. Practicing my religious faith has never been illegal like it is for many. I learned to read at age two, while some adults are illiterate. Even simple things which we take for granted, such as buying a frozen bag of peas, aren't so simple for some. People used to pick each pod, and then do hours of pea shelling. However, some people of means spend all their free time on home remodeling to "keep up with the Joneses" instead of socializing with the

Joneses. Others spend all their free time watching cable television or being immersed in degrading Internet sites. Having disposable income often causes the disposal of others.

- Fear: Single women won't be alone with single men whom they aren't dating, perhaps predicated upon incidents of men assaulting women. Since a third party is often unavailable when planning to get together, this prevents the development of male/female friendship. Many women are paranoid about men (androphobia). And single males won't be alone with other single males unless they blather endlessly about women or make disparaging jokes about gays.

Some misguided religious leaders say that congregants of the opposite sex, even those over forty, should never be alone together, to prevent temptation to sin. But what if someone also has same-sex attraction; must everyone avoid them? Must people should take brain wave tests to prove that they aren't prone to sexual assault or liable to entice a particular person? If that's what it takes to stop singles from social isolation, it would be worth it.

- Moving Away: The most common source of shattered friendships and companionships is someone moving far away. Yet moving away is rarely necessary or beneficial. Even those who are offered a higher paying job far away can patiently wait for a better job in the local area. Transience destroys the possibility of love, since love takes time to develop. It stops people from relating personally and vulnerably to others, and so prevents them from growing through adversity. Getting to know others over time teaches you how to best interact with them, while moving away undoes that whole process.

For Christians, transient behavior also eliminates personal accountability to other Christians and submission to the authority of church leaders. Yet many have the audacity to tell others that their transient behavior is God's will for them. See *Transient American Culture*, a fantastic article on this subject.³¹

Jesus, the example of all Christians, spent His entire life in a localized area. Although lacking modern transportation, large ships could easily transport people, their families, and all their possessions halfway across the world, which He didn't utilize. So let's repent of evil transient behavior and thinking.

Mega-millions otherwise bound for Heaven might attain Hell instead because they never befriended the friendless, or they cut off potential lifetime friendships by moving away or through unforgiveness. If Heaven epitomizes the state of numerous permanent friendships, rejecting that ideal is choosing the alternative, is it not? Imagine you went to Heaven, but later, God moved away and took Heaven with Him. Or you went to Heaven, but later, God became irritated, so you had to rot in Hell.

Summarily, I try to live by the Golden Rule (note XXII.Righteousness). However, you can not apply the Golden Rule to those who don't even want you around. In this situation, "There's one golden rule to keep before you: laugh about everything and don't bother yourself about the others! It sounds selfish, but it's honestly the only cure for anyone who has to seek consolation in himself." (Anne Frank's coping mechanism while forced to hide with seven others in the "Secret Annex").⁽³²⁾ Summarily, loving those outside one's immediate family is Christianity's absolute requirement. Jesus said "By this shall all men know that you're my disciples, if ye have love to one another" (John 13:35). So..... repent.



