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God, You, and the War in Ukraine



By Steven J. Hogan

~ A Saturday Morning Post #240 ~

There's a war in Ukraine, and it's terribly evil, unbelievably cruel, sadly tragic, utterly heart-breaking, and deadly. I'm not going to comment on it militarily, politically, or societally. I leave that up to others, to the so-called experts. My desire is to help you know how to think spiritually, to help you realize that this war in Ukraine relates to you as a Christian, and to point out that Jesus prophesied that wars like these would happen in the end-times, the final years leading up to His return to earth. So what do we need to know and do?

1. God is in control, He is in total charge of this war. God is not surprised by what is taking place in Ukraine. He is sovereign over all things, even that most evil Russian ruler. And you can't understand the ways of God, why He allows this evil to happen, but we do know He is holy, righteous, purposeful, and merciful. (Lam. 3:37-38; Isaiah 40:12-26, 55:8-9; Rom. 8:28, 9:17). What we also know is that we live in the end-times, which means this Russo-Ukrainian war is directly related to Christ's return to earth to rapture the church. Christ told us that it's one of the *"birth pains"* we will be *"hearing of"*, that it *"must take*

place”, but that it *“is not yet the end.”* Matt. 24:6-8

2. Be at peace and give glory to God. Knowing that God is sovereign over this war, that it’s part of His end-time purposes, should give you hope and peace. Trust God, for He will help you, watch over you, and protect you and all Christians from evil. (2 Tim. 4:18). God is now receiving glory through all that is going on, and will receive even more glory in the future, when Christ comes back to take over and reign over this world (Ps. 72:19, Phil. 2:9-11). *“God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble… He makes wars to cease to the end of the earth… cease striving and know that I am God; I will be exalted among the nations.”* Psalm 46:1, 8, 10

3. Jesus Christ is building the church. With this war dominating the news, you may have forgotten that Jesus Christ is still building the church, whether it’s in the United States, Colombia, Nigeria, Romania, China, Russia, or anywhere else in the world, even Ukraine. This war will not stop Christ from doing His work in Ukraine but, in fact, is part of His plan to build the church. Remember Jesus’ promise – *“I will build My church and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.”* Matthew 16:18

Here are three examples: 1) Last week, I read about a Christian ministry that has trained 900 men to be pastors in Ukraine since 1991, men who have gone to all parts of Ukraine. That’s extremely encouraging! 2) Franklin Graham explained this past Sunday how his organization, Samaritan’s Purse, is working with 3200 churches in Ukraine which have been distributing 660,000 gift boxes to children. Pray that the children receive them and, along with their parents, are greatly moved and affected by them! 3) I remember two mission trips I took to Kiev in 1994-1995. I can still see some of the faces of the people we ministered to, and I believe God is still working in their lives. (John 15:16). In the future, we will hear many stories of how Jesus Christ, through His church, caused light to shine in darkness, brought good instead of evil, showed mercy instead of wrath, and defeated the devil. Matthew 28:19-20

4. There's spiritual warfare in Ukraine. You see the physical warfare, the soldiers, hurting people, and bombed out buildings, but more-so, there's spiritual warfare, a struggle not against *"flesh and blood, but … against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness"* (Eph. 6:10-12). Whereas you are not actually engaged in the physical fight, you are a soldier for Jesus Christ, and are engaged in a spiritual fight, a fight for the truth, the gospel, and the souls of men and women. Yes, you should care if people physically die but, most importantly, you should care about people who are spiritually dead, who are spiritually separated from God and, if they physically die and are without Christ, will be apart from God forever. Jesus said, *"Do not be afraid of those who kill the body and after that have no more that they can do. But I will warn you whom to fear: fear the One who, after He has killed, has authority to cast into hell; yes, I tell you, fear Him."* Luke 12:4-5

5. Pray for the church in Ukraine. *"My house will be called a house of prayer for all the nations"* (Mark 11:17). Pray for a special outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Pray that the Christians would draw close to God (Psalm 23, Eph. 1:17). Pray for God to supernaturally protect the believers. Pray He would give them a great abundance of grace and an extraordinary amount of peace. Pray for the Christians' faith, and that they are strong and courageous. Pray they have a deep love for one another and encouraging fellowship. Pray they have hope, that they understand what Christ said about His return, how they will soon be glorified and be in heaven with Jesus. Pray they are not afraid to die, however that may happen, that they know that to die is gain, is the best thing that ever could happen to them. Pray they would be sharing the good news of Christ. Pray they understand that any affliction is momentary and light and is producing for them an eternal weight of glory. Pray that God leads the pastors and church leaders, gives them much wisdom, a special love for the people, and the truth their flock needs to hear. Pray for the parents, for grace, wisdom, and endurance, and for the children, that they would look to God for help and mercy. And pray for all their needs to be met, both physical and spiritual. Matthew 6:9-13

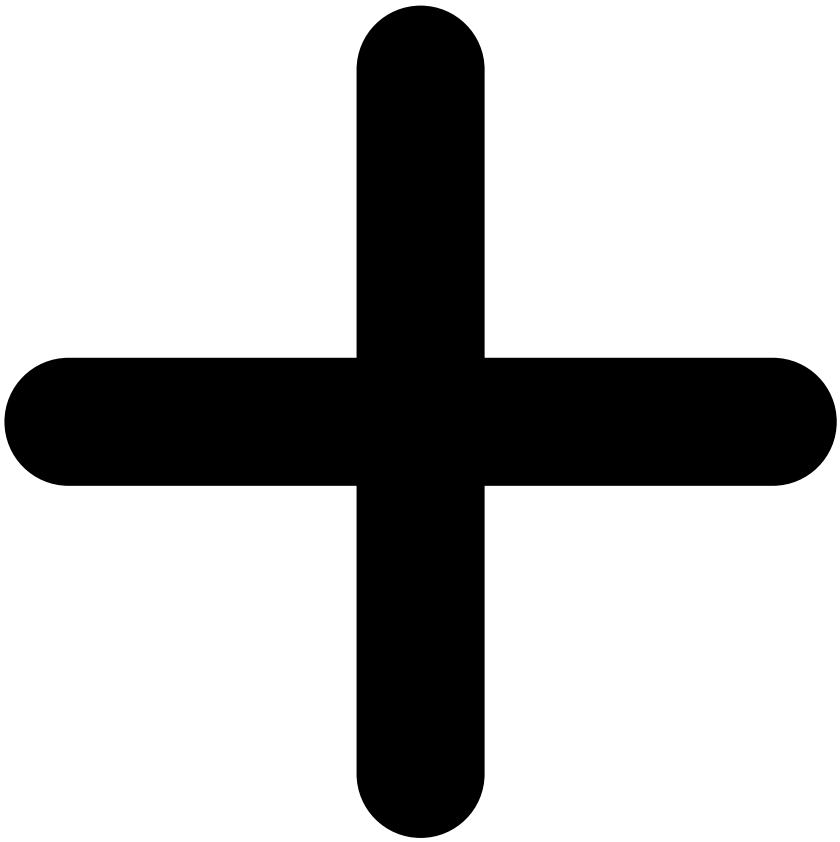
6. Pray for the lost, the unsaved in Ukraine, for those who don't know the mercy and love of God. Pray they would see the love of the saints, that they would be convicted of their sin, that they would understand the truth of the gospel, that they would realize that the physical problem of the war is small compared to their spiritual problem of sin, and that it must be dealt with, or they will pay *"the penalty of eternal destruction away from the presence of the Lord"* (2 Thess. 2:9). Pray that many unbelievers turn from their sin, turn to Jesus Christ, and trust Him for forgiveness, eternal life, and peace. *"Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."* Romans 5:1

7. Share God's truth with your friends, family, fellow church members, and others you happen to meet. This is a special moment in history, and God has ordained the present events in Ukraine to wake people up, to not be worldly, but to be spiritually minded, to be humble, to get them to look to Himself for truth, life, joy, and peace. As a Christian, you are to share the truth, whether it's gospel truth for the lost or comforting truth for the saved. Be ready to tell both Christians and non-Christians about Christ's 2nd coming to rapture the church and judge the world. Tell them that real peace on earth takes place during Christ's 1000-year kingdom, when He is righteously and perfectly ruling over the world. Take advantage of the opportunities God gives you – He wants to use you in a special way at this time. *"Conduct yourself with wisdom toward outsiders, making the most of the opportunity,"* Col. 4:2-6, Eph. 5:15-17

In dark times like these, God wants you to spiritually shine, to be lights in the world, to be holy and loving truthtellers, to be doing your part. Know that God is causing all these events that are happening, whether it's in this country or other parts in the world, to hasten the return of His Son. *"Since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. For God has not destined us for wrath but for obtaining salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ… Therefore,*

encourage one another, and build up one another." 1 Thessalonians 5:8-11

P.S. I encourage you to read my last post, *"Russia at War Against Ukraine – Matthew 24:6"*. Here are three other articles you should read sometime – *"Matthew 24 – The Most Important Prophecy Chapter in the Bible"*, *"The Father's Love For His Children"*, and *"The Coming of the Antichrist – the Devil's Man on Earth."*





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