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WHEREFORE COMFORT ONE ANOTHER WITH THESE WORDS!

"But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."

The apostle Paul said that we can "***comfort one another with these words***" and indeed we can! It will be a glorious day for all of the saved when Jesus Christ comes in the clouds and takes His people into Heaven for all eternity! For not only will we behold the face of our Savior at that time, but also the face of our heavenly Father as well as the Holy Spirit. And furthermore, it will be a joyful occasion as well because we will see our loved ones again who died in the Lord! And we will be with them forever never having to say goodbye again. And so we can indeed "***comfort one another with these words.***"

ANSWERS TO LAST MONTH'S BIBLE QUESTIONS:

The name of the king who was slain by an arrow from an enemy was Josiah. The nation that was responsible for his death was Egypt and the battle took place in the valley of Megiddo. (2 Chronicles 35:20-27)

The name of the New Testament king who was influenced by a dancing girl to put to death a prophet of God was Herod. The prophet was John the Baptist and this event took place on Herod's birthday. (Mark 6:17-31)

QUESTIONS FOR THIS MONTH:

Who was the first king over the nation of Israel and from where did He reign? How did the Israelites respond to His reign? And who was the next king to reign from the same place He did? (Think carefully!)

In what chapter of the New Testament do we read about the establishment of the Lord's church? On what day of the week did this take place and how do you establish this to be true?

BRINGING GLORY TO GOD!

In Matthew 5:16 Jesus makes the following statement: ***"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."*** It is the duty of all Christians to live their lives in such a way as to **"bring glory and honor to God and His cause."** When Paul was converted and began to preach the gospel faithfully, he brought glory to God. (Galatians 1:22-24) Paul furthermore teaches that we should ***"glorify God in both our bodies and our spirits, which belong to God."*** (1 Corinthians 6:12-20) We do this by avoiding fornication, which is the context of these verses. We can also **"glorify God in the way that we handle suffering."** 1st Peter 4:16 says that ***"If any man suffers as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God in this name."*** By bringing **"glory to God"** in this lifetime, we can **"share with God in glory in Heaven."** Romans 8:17 says that ***"...if we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified together."***

ARE YOU BRINGING GLORY TO GOD IN YOUR DAILY LIFE?

CHRISTIANITY AND PACIFICISM!

There seems to be a belief among many people in the world today that in order to be a **"true Christian"**, that you must be a pacifist as well. That means you must be against **"violence of any kind"** for Christians you know are to be **"lovers of peace."** Yes the Bible says that we should **"...seek peace, and ensue it."** (1 Peter 3:11) And yes the Bible says that **"Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God."** (Matthew 5:9) And yet at the same time we see in the Bible on many occasions in the Old Testament God sending His people Israel ~~into~~ war against an enemy nation for various reasons that may not always be clear to us. (Joshua 8/1st Samuel 15) Because God is a righteous God, we know that His reason for sending Israel to battle was for a just cause.

Furthermore, in every Bible dispensation God has decreed the death penalty for certain crimes committed by humanity. (Genesis 9:6/Exodus 21:12-17/Romans 13:1-4) Jesus Himself recognized the power of civil authority to put individuals to death. (John 19:10-11) And the apostle Paul understood that certain crimes were indeed worthy of the death penalty. (Acts 25:11) Does it make me a **"bad Christian"** because I believe in the death penalty? Does it mean that I am not a **"seeker or a lover of peace?"** Of course not!

And furthermore, we as individual Christians have the right to **"self-defense"**, even if that means having to kill someone to protect our homes and our families! (Exodus 22:2/Matthew 24:43)

Our country now faces the prospect of war with Iraq. No one truly desires to go to war, but sometimes war is necessary for the sake of peace. Remember that God is not opposed to war if it is for a **"just cause."** If our country's history shows us anything, it shows us that **"bloodshed is sometimes necessary in order to bring about peace and freedom."** (American Revolution/Civil War/MWII, etc.)

Let us give heed to the admonition of 1st Timothy 2:1-4 and **"...pray for kings and for all that are in authority that we might live quiet and peaceable lives..."** But if we end up going to war with Iraq to ensure our peace and freedom here in America and the same peace and freedom for the people of Iraq, then let us pray for the safe return of our men and women in the armed forces of America! They will be fighting in a just cause; they will be defending the freedoms that we as Americans so often take for granted, and that the people of Iraq long to enjoy!

And let us never forget that it is because of the **"shed blood of Jesus Christ on Calvary's cross"** that we are able to be at **"peace with God"** and be **"free from our sins!"** (Matthew 26:28/Romans 5:1) This is the **"true peace"** that we as human beings need more than anything else!