

VIOLENCE

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Violence is the threat of physical force or the use of such force with the intention of causing injury, destruction or death. Violence is often sudden and borne of something intense.

War is violence and it is obscene. It is unacceptable to decency, modesty and morality although one has to say that to go to war to protect oneself is understandable as did the children of Israel.

There are people who glorify war. This is often portrayed in the realms of entertainment, in films and video games.

Entertainment is officially described as enjoyment...that is to say something that gives pleasure and it is also something that is good.

I cannot equate enjoyment with a film that is full of, or contains violence; people burning to death or falling to death from a height or being mutilated by a machine. Such matters are not enjoyable. This is not only violence but cruelty even if it is only fiction. How can people watch and enjoy this?

Violence can also include sadism which means the infliction of pain and suffering upon another especially as a sort of sexual pleasure.

What sort of person would watch a film with violence, cruelty and sadism and enjoy it? Fictional violence being enjoyed is anathema to me. To watch violence and cruelty should not give a viewer the idea of goodness. What is good is that which is admirable; it is something worthy of approval. For someone to be blown up in a real act of war or in a film is surely not to be admired or approved.

Violence is threatening and the committing of an act irrespective of its outcome and effect.

About 1.5 million people a year die as a result of violence, with 35% as murders and 12% as the result of war.

Violence can produce lifelong effects and damage to people whether it be psychological or physical. It can cause permanent psychological harm.

There are hundreds of people in mental units in hospitals for this very reason.

However, film violence enchants some people. Cruelty in real life is repulsive but, in fiction, it can be satisfying to some people. Cinematic violence is on the increase. Some violence is graphic horror. We have vigilante films where the viewers wait for the villains to get their comeuppance and their punishment is satisfying.

The cinema does not seem to major on what is good and wholesome, that is to say what is physically beneficial and morally good. We have endless daytime television shows of people in dispute with others, swearing and accusations, spite (sometimes things that are downright evil), lie detector tests and DNA results. It is all so negative and, often, depressing. Why do people want to be entertained by pessimistic and unhelpful things which can and does sometimes have a negative and cumulative effect upon them?

What do we make of people who enjoy such rubbish and violence?

Philippians 4.7 ff talks about the God of peace and that we should occupy our minds with things that are true, honest, just, pure, lovely and of good report.

Years ago, when wrestling was on television, women would love it and scream with excitement at the violence. What sort of women were these?

The Bible supports my views. Luke 3.14 states the words of the Lord Jesus, 'Do violence to no man and do not accuse anyone falsely.'

The world has always been full of violence. Cain killed his brother Abel. Noah was instructed to make an ark because the earth was filled with violence (Genesis 6.13). There is violence connected with robbery (Job 24.2). There is violence in cities (Psalm 55.9). Violence is often the result of pride (Psalm 73.6).

Isaiah 59. 6ff speaks of men of violence and their works of iniquity and that they do not know, or want, the ways of peace. They are not interested in justice or in what is right. Jeremiah 6.7 speaks of nations and people who enjoy violence.

Before anyone suggests that the children of Israel are favoured by God who turns a blind eye to His people, Ezekiel 8.17 is one example of God's condemnation of the people of Judah for their sins, abominations and violence.

The prophet Amos (3. 9ff.) also foretells God's judgement upon His people because of their violence and how God will allow Arab nations to attack them as a Divine punishment.

God is fair in His dealings.

There are people who believe that Christians must be perfect and because they are not, Christians are condemned and ridiculed.

Micah 2.2 has God's condemnation of those who oppress with violence and take over land and property which is not theirs. Chapter 6. 12 talks of those who have become rich by acts of violence and how God will eventually punish them.

One of the Ten Commandments is Thou shalt not kill which means murder or violence. Obviously, it does not refer to accidental killing or self-protection!

What people do not realise or accept is that God has given us all a free will. We are not His robots being controlled by a vast computer in the sky.

Men have to be responsible for their own actions and God cannot be blamed for any of their indiscretions.

It will be said that God is a God of war. Verses like Exodus 15.31 states, 'The Lord is a warrior; the Lord is His Name.' But it has to be taken in context. The Egyptians had been vile to the Children of Israel for a very long time and they had to be punished and defeated.

But God is also the God of peace as set out in Isaiah 2.8 and Romans 15.13. 1 Thessalonians 5.13 tells us to live at peace with one another. To the Christian, God is our peace (Ephesians 2. 14).

To return to the television and other forms of entertainment with violence, foul language, sex and nudity, it has to be remembered that the majority of people like this entertainment and that tells us what society has become.

Of course, we cannot legislate for anyone else and there will be a majority of people who will contest these observations vehemently and some may become offensive. I will be called holy and, yes, I am associated with God and would prefer widespread morality and everyone to get on with their own lives and be at peace, not causing trouble for anyone else.

I am not a pacifist and would defend those I love and I would fight for my country if it were attacked.

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