

Book Title: Why does God allow war?

Author: Dr Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Publishers: Crossway Books

No. of Pages: 128

Reviewer: Pastor Cheah Fook Meng

Most people would not pick this book to read. "After all," they reason, "the world is not at war." But to ignore these powerful sermons is to miss something prophetic and instructive. After reading these sermons preached in Westminster Chapel, London during World War 2, I begin to understand why some Christians said that the Doctor's sermons were more powerful than the bombs that landed in London.

The title "Why does God allow war?" is taken from one of the five sermons in the book. All of the sermons were preached by Dr Lloyd Jones when he was yet a new minister in Westminster Chapel. He arrived in London when the war broke out. Londoners were looking for answers. The Doctor, with his acute insights and biblical vision, explained why God allowed the war.

He looked at the horror and sufferings of war and asserted that the world had no answer to such a crisis. In the sermons, he refuted the inadequate human theories and urged the Christian public to confront the issue of war with an "other-worldly" perspective. Dr Lloyd Jones' evaluation of the whole crisis is first and foremost spiritual. In his sermon "Why does God allow war?", he explained from James 4v1 that the cause of such fighting is due to human sinfulness. The solution, he proposed, is to repent before God and turn to Jesus Christ.

Our need for Jesus Christ, he argued, is the most crucial thing if we are to see real peace in life. In a sharp analysis of what might happen after the war, Dr Lloyd Jones also said that man would soon forget God when the war is over. Complacency and the love for peace and prosperity would make people turn away from God eventually.

The last sermon "The final answer to all our questions" is a masterly exposition of Rom 8v28. Here, the Doctor expounds the Christian's hope and optimism. He contrasts the Christian's hope with the pagan idea of courage and concludes that the latter idea is really an admission that everything is hopeless. This is not what Christianity is, he contends. The Christian, he argues, lives by hope and lives in hope.

The world presently is not at war. But, the forces of war are working mightily in the world. These sermons are extremely thought provoking, relevant and challenging. They teach us how to deal with crisis, and to hope in God when everything seems to be beyond our control.

Londoners who at this present time are confused and angry about the recent terrorists' attacks should once again read these powerful sermons. Send one to your friend in London.