



**Why I
Couldn't
Fight**

Table of Contents

	Foreword	v
	Introduction	ix
Chapter One	The Subject	1
Chapter Two	My Background	7
Chapter Three	Our Present Situation	11
Chapter Four	Biblical Reasons for Nonresistance	15
Chapter Five	Additional Reasons	25
Chapter Six	Related Involvements	37
Chapter Seven	Related Questions	71

FOREWORD

My earlier booklet, *I Couldn't Fight*, is only an account of some actions and reactions arising from deep convictions born in me from my firsthand faith. This faith came from my understanding of God's Word under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

I feel indebted to the readers of *I Couldn't Fight* to explain more about the faith and convictions behind those actions and reactions, for I would have them experience the same spiritual satisfaction and security I feel because of God's work in me. That is the first reason for this new book.

I am also deeply concerned about the changing attitudes toward the doctrine of nonresistance. Nonresistance is a New Testament discipline for

believers; it is necessary for a rounded-out Christian life. It applies to the saints, or disciples of Christ. On the other hand, it is not our place to teach and reform society, thus considering ourselves peacemakers in the world. But that seems to be the trend among many of our brethren and sisters today. Nonresistance is not a bandage for patching up our battered society. It is intended to beautify and purify Christians so their witness might be more effective in the salvation of souls. That is another reason for a new book.

Some people dislike the term *nonresistance*. The expression “peaceful living” may be more positive, but the term *pacifism* carries an undesirable connotation. Some use the term *nonviolence*, which is much weaker than *nonresistance*. Nonresistance includes “not going to law” and “the second mile.” Nonviolence addresses only such acts as killing, murder, maiming, and fighting, all actions that destroy or injure by great force or wild passion. Also, nonviolence is a comparatively recent term and is closely related to

noncooperation and civil disobedience, which often provoke violence. We would do well to keep the term *nonresistance*, for it covers well all the Biblical aspects of this subject.

An anti-government or anti-American attitude has also become prevalent. It is true that church and state are separate entities. But we can honor and respect the government as Christ taught without condoning the wrong things about our country or our rulers. We respect rulers as rulers. It is not our role to judge and classify officials, honoring only those we judge are good. Faultfinding comes too easily for some of us.

It is not our role as Christians to insist, or even suggest, that government officers operate by Christian principles.

In this book I let the Bible be its own interpreter, depending on the Holy Spirit to illuminate the Word. This, along with my observations on the confusion among our people on this subject, has given me the convictions I have expressed.

My prayer is that this brief treatise will help our young people know the reasons for their faith, and that it may also help youth of other denominations who are searching for light in the matter of nonresistance.

Lloy A. Kniss

INTRODUCTION

Why I Couldn't Fight is more than a catchy title. It involves an issue deserving logical answers from the Bible. Lloy A. Kniss, a man of broad experience as a schoolteacher, foreign missionary, minister, and bishop has given us the answers.

Having pastored under the author's supervision for about twenty years, I found him to be a genuine "peacemaker" with an exceptional working knowledge of the Bible. He rightly warns against participating in various forms of worldly pacifism, none of which are supported by New Testament Christianity. Equally important, he emphasizes the difference in God's rules for His people under the Old Testament covenant and those for the Christian church in the New Testament.