

April 11, 2021

## Scott's Thoughts



*“For it has been granted to you that for the sake of Christ you should not only believe in him but also suffer for his sake, engaged in the same conflict that you saw I had and now hear that I still have.”* (Philippians

1:29–30, ESV)

In brief: Difference Between War and Conflict

- War is intentional, disclosed, widespread and long duration armed conflict between countries.
- War requires mobilization of troops and use of arms and ammunition to destroy enemy targets.
- Conflict is disagreement between parties where parties perceive a threat to their interests and needs.
- Conflict can be between individuals, communities, or even countries.
- There are mechanisms to resolve conflicts but when they fail, conflicts can give rise to full scale wars (when involving countries).

I have conflict, not the kind that leads to war, but the kind that causes me to lose sleep. I read an article recently about going or staying and it added to a growing conflict in my mind. It was about how some feel the need to go into the mission field but are unwilling to put in the time and effort it takes to be able to go. It is kind of like wanting to finish at the top of your class (which you know you have the ability to do) but not wanting to do the homework.

What do I do when two choices are both good choices? Should I go to Ukraine or Mexico to do

mission work? Both are places that need the gospel. What choice do I make? The decision often is a personal preference.

My conflict over the last few days has not been about going or staying, not this time. It has been about what to preach. Is it time to have a few lessons on our responsibilities as God's children or would a few lessons on loving-kindness be in order? I stop and ask myself some questions every week; the first question is why am I preaching this? To win praise, to build the church, am I concerned about something? So, it is not only what I can preach, but why will I preach that topic. If things don't go right with the sermon, I wonder what is the cause? Am I preparing or saying too little or too much?

Sometimes we have conflict with ourselves. Have we reached a comfort level in our lives because we know that if we fail to notify anyone of our absence, someone will always step up to fulfill our responsibility? We're in conflict because as a human we sometimes want to lash out, but as God's servants we must find what He wants us to say or do. Keep praying that we use wisdom and discernment to solve conflicts God's way.

*“What causes quarrels and what causes fights among you? Is it not this, that your passions are at war within you?”* (James 4:1, ESV)

Thanks for listening and keep on shining.

—Scott