

The Death of Peace

- Today, November 11, is a special day across much of the world
- Many in the United States and across Europe, and probably elsewhere as well, celebrate today, a holiday which was originally deemed Armistice Day,
- As it began as the celebration of the armistice that ended world war one,
- silencing the guns, and bringing what seemed to many, like peace.
- Yet over the years, this “armistice day” celebration was not only drowned out by more thundering guns of war,
- It also transformed into its own antithesis -
- Not the celebration of peace, but the celebration of war.
- But I suppose such a transformation of the good shouldn't be a surprise to us, as the coopting of the good is an age old strategy.
- At the beginning of the biblical narrative in Genesis, Satan coopts God's good garden to become an enticement unto death.
- Likewise, at the beginning of Jesus's ministry in the New Testament, Satan coopts God's goodness and human needs into temptations by which Jesus is offered power.
- Like Satan, we humans - especially human institutions and governments - human abusers - we know how to coopt the good - how to weaponize peace.
- Today, as the world celebrates not Armistice, but war,
- Not those who brought peace, but those who brought death,
- I think it would be invaluable for us to explore how today, November 11, has been coopted as a tool of propaganda

- The first Armistice celebration, of sorts, was not November 11, 1919, as one might expect.

- It was actually celebrated much, much earlier - as early as the late fifth century.
 - In 490 AD, the bishop of Tours, France - recognizing an already long established feast day for Saint Martin of Tours -
 - Instituted a 40 day fast in preparation for Christmas.
 - As this fast began on St. Martin's Day, the day became known as St. Martin's Fast, or, St. Martin's Lent, or Martinmas
 - Today, we know this forty day preparation as Advent.
 - St. Martin's Day became particularly popular in Germany over the years, with St. Martin becoming the patron saint of both the poor, and the **harvest**
 - That's all well and good, knowing that November 11 was formerly celebrated across the Christian Europe and the Christian world -
 - But what does that have to do with our November 11 celebrations?
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- Let's begin by taking a look at the life of St. Martin of Tours.
 - St. Martin was born in the mid-4th century
 - While neither of Martin's parents were initially Christians, Martin was a seeker of Jesus from a relatively early age.
 - Yet even into adolescence, Martin never made it through to becoming a pledged disciple of Christ.
 - While Martin didn't officially join the ranks of the church, he was very committed to a Christ-like lifestyle of love and mercy.
 - That Christ-likeness was severely put to the test, however, when Martin was conscripted into the Roman Army due to his father's rank in the military.
 - It was here, in the military, that Martin had the opportunity to see the Christ's Kingdom pitted against the kingdoms of the world.
 - Martin distinguished himself from the other soldiers in a number of ways.

- First, while his rank was entitled to a servant, Martin actually served others, including his own servant - taking on the role of a servant himself.
- Martin also served those outside the army.
- One day, while riding through **Amiens**, Martin saw a haggard looking beggar.
- Martin reached behind his back and cut off a large part of his cape and clothed the beggar with his own military uniform.
- It was this act which Martin has become most remembered by, and which has earned him the nickname, Martin the Merciful.
- But the act for which Martin seems to be least remembered - an act you really have to dig for to find - is his act of refusing to wage war.
- One day Martin became extremely convicted about the job that he was being called to do.
- The army was about to go out onto the battlefield and slaughter enemy forces, and St. Martin just couldn't reconcile that with his Christian beliefs.
- So, St. Martin confronted his commander and told him,
- "I am a soldier of Christ and it is not lawful for me to fight.
- Wanting to convey his convictions as distinguished from cowardice, St. Martin said that he would stand at the front of the army and walk into the enemy lines just like everyone else,
- Save with one exception -
- He would be weaponless.
- St. Martin's peacemaking wasn't just exemplified in the negative -
- In actions that Martin refused to participate in.
- St. Martin also sought active peace.

- Later in Martin's life, Priscillian, a heretic, was put on trial for his teachings.
- While Martin firmly believed in Priscillian's guilt, he was appalled at the way some in the church were seeking resolution.
- Rather than reprimands or excommunication, Priscillian's accusers were seeking for the government to execute Priscillian.
- St. Martin advocated all the way up to the top for the preservation of Priscillian's life, but to no avail.
- Priscillian, along with several others, was executed by the state, at the behest of the church.
- This execution is considered the first time the state intervened in such a manner on behalf of the church - but it certainly wasn't the last.
- This marriage of church and state opened up dark chapter in church history that is continuing to be written even to today.
- Rather than bringing peace and life, the church has so often wrought death.
- St. Martin, then, is one who is set in opposition to the dark, wayward church -
- The church separated from the teachings of Jesus.
- St. Martin reminds us of the true ways of Jesus, the prince of peace.

Christianity has had a long history since the establishment of St. Martin's day, more than fifteen hundred years ago.

- Priscillian's execution was just the first of MANY at the hands of Christians seeking power,
- And War - this act renounced by Martin as being unlawful for Christians - has become an act strongly supported Christians.

- And not only supported by Christians, but an act many Christians think one must support in order to be a good Christian.
- Jesus flipped tables, but modern Christians have turned them.
- Rather than overturning injustice, many Christians today seek to avoid injustices being done against them by grasping at the levers of power which will create injustice towards others.
- And the mercy that Martin doled out to beggars?
- That's something we no longer do, because our poor are supposedly of a different kind.
- They are the undeserving poor
- Considering our warmongering, wealth hoarding society, it really is amazing that St. Martin's Day has not only been a prominent feast day for so many centuries, but that November 11 has come to be celebrated more globally.
- It's awesome that St. Martin has a day to commemorate all of these things we so badly need to remember as Christians - mercy, peace, and faithfulness.

Unfortunately, St. Martin's day has been drowned out

- it's been coopted
- The celebrations in Germany and many other European countries has been turned into a holiday similar to halloween, with lights, candy, and costumes.
- Sometimes they'll commemorate more than this, but the most I could find is the reenactment of Martin as a soldier, cutting off his red cape
- Just think about the imagery that little act conveys.
- Martin is portrayed as a beneficent and merciful soldier.
- Isn't that what protectors of the fatherland are?
- They are instruments of peace and comfort for those within their borders.

- So St. Martin - if remembered at all - is remembered as a soldier, not represented or remembered as a peace maker.
- Even the wikipedia page at the time I accessed it, says nothing about Martin's larger story of peace
- This type of reframing is something that we see so commonly - the coopting of a positive force in order to neuter it
- I think it was Richard Rohr who argued that the church essentially did this w/St. Francis
- St. Francis was all about throwing off riches, helping the poor, and bringing peace.
- He even made an excursion into the enemy territory of a Muslim group and witnessed to the leader there.
- St. Francis wanted peace and mercy
- But what did the church do? They gave Francis a whole order - the Franciscans.
- That's great, right?
- Just like any little business will tell you after a larger corporation absorbs them, being co-opted doesn't allow you to disseminate your values, but rather causes you to be conformed to the larger entity or institution.
- The Franciscans became like St. Francis in name only, because the church had largely coopted St. Francis and transformed him into an entity they could control.
- I mean, When I was in Italy I saw some of the places used by the Franciscans, and it wasn't at all the type of accommodations you'd imagine St. Francis setting up or approving of.
- Co-opting is essentially the weaponization of peace.
- It's an institution or structure that feels threatened, recognizing the threat, and then bludgeoning them with peace.
- While the church could have sought to destroy St. Francis, that would have cost them greatly, as he had garnered such a large following.

- He was popular!
- But if the church seemed to embrace him, they could not only appear to be on Francis's side, but they could also profit off Francis's popularity and support.
- Institutions don't like loose cannons, especially cannons whose prophetic message is aimed back at one's own ranks.
- So if you commandeer the cannon, you can aim it any which way you like.
- It's not just the church that does this kind of thing.
- Our society and government does the same thing with people like MLK Jr.
- We name roads after him and put up monuments while leaving King's broader, deeper teachings unspoken and the problems he identified unresolved.
- But you'd never know any of that because looking at any map of the Atlanta area, where I'm from, makes it seem as though King was far more influential than he was.
- King's name has been coopted so that our society can say that racism is gone and that we have made peace, when in reality, we've just silenced outcries with the invocation of a name.
- We've talked a bit about silencing in regard to monuments and such.
- We've talked about how monuments like the apotheosis of Washington or the Lincoln Memorial can silence the bad by emphasizing the good - particularly thinking about our Haiti episode here.
- And that's true. You can silence the bad in this way.
- But one can also erect monuments and coopt good leaders to make it seem as though there is recognition for their ideas, when it's actually a way to silence them.

- Read the Radical King and see he was much more about poverty and war, and that many of his core ideas are not addressed today.
 - In light of all this coopting we humans like to do, it sure seems to me that St. Martin's Day has been coopted and transformed.
 - Yes, it was neutered a bit throughout Europe ages ago in the focusing on St. Martin's mercy apart from his peace, but there has been an even greater neutering and bastardization of St. Martin's Day since then.
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- On November 11, 1919, many nations in the Western World began the celebration of armistice day.
 - It was a day intended to remember not only the military dead, but the war dead in general.
 - In many places this is called remembrance day rather than armistice day.
 - It was a day intended to reflect on the havoc war brings, and it was a day to celebrate this armistice that ended the War that would end all wars.
 - It was a holiday that remembered the horror of war, and hope for a peaceful world without war.
 - Of course we have a century of hindsight which enables us to see this notion of a peaceful and warless world as naive, but there were forebodings in the Great War's final gasps that indicated the type of world that would be birthed out of the new Armistice.
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- For starters, there was the symbolic fact that Amiens - the very city in which St. Martin had given his cloak to a beggar in mercy - was the main location from which a counteroffensive began to end the war only three months before the war's end.

- Where Martin had once warmed a poor man with his red cloak, men and women were now made beggars by the tens of thousands, and innumerable cloaks used to cover the countless dead.
- It was here that the Amiens gun was captured - one of the largest artillery pieces of the war, used to deliver death from tens of kilometers away.
- In the main three days of the conflict to advance, forces incurred nearly 50,000 combined casualties.
- And all of this at the hands of Christians who worshiped the same God as St. Martin -
- A God who's law, St. Martin had said, made clear that it was unlawful to fight.
- Did an Armistice soaked with the blood of enemies have any real chance at producing peace?

- Of course symbolism and hypocrisy weren't the only foreshadowing of a failed peace.
- Because, you see, for those who despise an enemy's life, it is only a small step to despise all human life.
- And nothing shows this despising of life more than the final hours of the Great War.
- In the last 11 hours of the war, between Midnight and 11:00AM, the war racked up more casualties than were experienced on D-Day of World War II.
- Whereas D-Day casualties came as the result of a battle to gain the upperhand in the war,
- The November 11, 1918 casualties, which were incurred with the knowledge that the war was already over.
- With very few exceptions, most leaders knew that an armistice was going to be signed on November 11,

- And many leaders even knew that an armistice had been signed prior to delivering orders for assaulting the German positions -
- Orders for assault which came all the way up to 10:30, a mere half hour before the war officially ended.

- Why waste more than ten thousand human lives in a war that was about to end?
- The reasons abounded, with some more conjectural than others.
- Some leaders were looking to make a name for themselves and saw these last moments as their final chance for glory and promotion.
- Some dared not question the orders they received and ordered their men forward out of fear, cowardice, and duty.
- The British and Canadians seemed to have pride bound up in their final sacrifice.
- The war, for them, had begun in Mons, where they had to retreat from the Germans, so it only seemed fitting that in the final hours, they take back Mons and make the Germans retreat.
- Some of the divisions sent to die were expendable in the eyes of leaders.
- The 92nd black division, for example.
- Why not sacrifice a few black lives if it meant killing some more Germans while it was still acceptable?
- For others, like the last U.S. soldier to die in the war, just a mere few seconds before the war ended - Henry Gunther -
- It was his last chance to redeem himself.
- He had told his friend to avoid the war due to its horrors and pointlessness.
- Army censors of course intercepted this letter and demoted Gunther to private, and he was from that point on viewed as a German sympathizer.

- From that point on, Gunther volunteered for dangerous missions, and eventually, charged some German machine gun nests at 10:59 on November 11, in hopes that his name would be redeemed.
- And it was.
- You can now visit Post 1858 in Maryland and find Sergeant Henry Gunther VFW.
- That's right, his rank was reinstated posthumously for his valiant sacrifice.

- Many Americans had the same question you probably have right now.
- Why was there all this waste of life when we knew the war was over?
- In a congressional inquest that question was posed to a number of leaders as well.
- While their answers were largely attempts at avoidance, one of the questions asked to them was, how many generals died on the last day.
- Of course there were zero.
- And other high ranking officers?
- They said they didn't know, but the assumption was zero.
- The lives of simple, expendable men, were thrown away by those with status and power.

- Speaking of power, the final foreshadowing of a tumultuous peace was the peace treaty that came out of the armistice.
- Most people know that the terms of the peace treaty with Germany were so harsh and unjust, that they led to the World War II.
- But the Germans were not viewed as humans, but as enemies.

- President Harry Truman who served in World War I - and the president who would later decide to drop the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki - loved power
- If you've seen the movie Oppenheimer, you'll catch a glimpse of Truman's dealings with the scientist, and his disregard for warnings about the devastation to human life the bomb brings, and the blood that it brings onto one's conscience.
- Truman really doesn't want to hear about consequences.
- He just wants the power to do what he thinks is best for him and his people, despite the cost in human lives.
- Truman gives us a glimpse of his disregard for human - including civilian lives - when he wrote a letter to his soon to be Wife describing his hatred of the Germans.
- In his letter, Truman said, QUOTE:
- It's a shame we can't go in and devastate Germany and cut off a few of the Dutch kids' hands and feet and scalp a few of their old men but I guess it will be better to make them work for France and Belgium for fifty years. END QUOTE
- Of course Truman's hatred for the Germans and his specific methods of violence here are referencing the propaganda against Germany, that they went into Belgium and were chopping off kids hands -
- A sort of irony, in that it was Belgium who had chopped off tens or hundreds of thousands of human hands in the Belgian Congo only a decade before,
- And actually with the tacit approval of the United States, who was the first country to recognize King Leopold the II's sovereignty over the Congo.
- But that's a rabbit trail I'll save for a future episode one day.

- The point is that there was great animosity towards Germany, and that animosity was reflected in this treaty that was called "peace," though it was anything but.
- As a result of the so called peace treaty, Germany was economically neutered, they lost some of their most productive land, and hundreds of thousands, if not more than a million people starved to death as a result of these measures along with the blockade.
- While the armistice and the subsequent peace treaty may have silenced the guns for a time, the terms only made future conflict inevitable

- A few decades later, war did come, and peace was silenced by the roar of the cannons once again.
- All naivete about the possibility of perpetual peace was thrown off, and the realization that war was a way of life became clear,
- Especially after the final scene of the war - the destruction of Hiroshima and Nagasaki with the atomic bomb.

- The dropping of the atomic bombs marked death in a number of ways - not merely a death of the possibility for peace.
- It also meant the death of Christianity, in a sense.
- Consider that the Urakami district of Nagasaki was a historically Christian center of the country,
- Home to an estimated 15,000 Christians who had avoided the government's ban on Christianity through the centuries.

- With one atomic bomb, 10,000 of the 15,000 Christians were killed immediately.
- Christians killed by Christians.
- Yet as the Japanese Christians buried their dead -
- OUR dead
- OUR Christian brothers and sisters -
- A new life sprung into American Christianity.
- President Truman, the destroyer of Christian lives in Japan, and the one who wanted to scalp and maim Christian children and the aged in Germany,
- When he was introduced as the man who helped to create Israel, Truman replied,
- What do you mean, 'helped to create'? I am Cyrus. I am Cyrus.
- With enemies obliterated and a soon to be contested monopoly on nuclear weapons -
- And with the power to resurrect whole nations from the dustbin of antiquity -
- Christian America was reinvigorated with renewed zeal to grasp at the levers of power.
- The president who would immediately follow the great president Cyrus, was a man of war as well - Dwight D. Eisenhower.
- Eisenhower's America was now pitted against the communist threat - a threat not only to economic and political thought, but to theological thought as well -
- For communism was an ideology with godlessness at its core.
- And what could the world need more than Christian crusaders to take the helm of the most powerful nation on earth, commandeer its armed forces, and fight this godlessness.
- Eisenhower was aware of such symbolic force and the constituency that religious adherence promised.

- That is why I think, at least in part, Eisenhower became the first president to be baptized in office.
- He did this only ten days into his presidency, and only four days prior to the first national prayer breakfast.
- My, how he found God fast.
- Eisenhower also Helped to ensure that under God was inserted into the pledge of allegiance in June of 1954,
- And supported “in God we trust” being placed on all currency in 1955.
- And while all this blending of church and state was going on -
- This sacralizing of Christianity -
- Brown vs. the board of education was decided, and racism raged on at home.
- Simultaneously, Eisenhower and the CIA entrenched and expanded the brutal politics of the U.S. through assassinations and threats.
- I think a quote from the book, “The Devil’s Chessboard,” summarizes this era succinctly.
- QUOTE: The Eisenhower-Dulles era was a Pax Americana enforced by terror. The administration ensured U.S. postwar global dominance by threatening enemies with nuclear annihilation or with coups and assassinations. It was empire on the cheap, a product of Ike’s desire to avoid another large-scale shooting war as well as the imperial burdens that had bankrupted Great Britain. By leveraging the U.S. military’s near monopoly on nuclear firepower, the president hoped to make war an unthinkable proposition for any and all American adversaries. And by utilizing the CIA’s dark sleight of hand, the commander in chief aimed to render it unnecessary for the Marines to go crashing ashore in far-flung locales where unfriendly governments had taken office. END QUOTE.

- Just as Cyrus's bomb had killed $\frac{2}{3}$ of Nagasaki's Christian population, so too did Eisenhower's military devastated many Christians across the globe,
- As in places like South and Central America where so many coups and military operations took place, were primarily Christian.
- As Jesus Galindez summarized this period, QUOTE: Never before in the history of the world has one single Government more effectively supported dictatorial powers in free nations."
- Yes, America has known peace at home, and many an invader has been kept at bay knowing that the U.S. army is ready to be policemen of the world - wherever they deem the lives and oil worth protecting
- So sure, there has been peace and stability to a certain extent on much of the world stage.
- But that peace is illusory in at least two ways.
- First, it's illusory because that peace comes at the end of a sword.
- It's a peace obtained by threat.
- Such a peace isn't true shalom - reconciliation and a peace of fullness.
- It's artificial peace.
- But secondly, this peace is illusory because while middle class America and up may experience Pax Americana as comfortable security, this peace is built on the lives of so many slaughtered civilians in developing nations,
- Coups and overthrown democracies,
- Military interventions for oil while refraining from non-beneficial interventions in stopping genocides

- Strong arming the perpetuation of unjust labor practices and economic entrapment to feed Western materialism -
- Sure, we can call this peace because it feels peaceful to a minority percentage of Americans.
- But it's really a facade of peace - a facade that masks the house of terrors that lies behind it.
- The Bible calls this house of terrors Babylon -
- A false prophet who proclaims peace and coopts the church, embraces materialism and comfort, and breeds idolatry and destruction.
- This is not Jesus's peace.
- Yet this is the peace that, since World War II, so many American Christians have been proclaiming and embracing.
- This is the peace that so many American Christians want the power to continue, as they grasp at the levers of government and the military.
- This new life that has been breathed into American Christianity has not only resurrected the ancient state of Israel,
- It's resurrected the ancient city of Babylon - an idolatrous city masquerading as savior - as the prince of peace.

- It should be no surprise to us, then, that Babylon's Peace has led to the transformation -
- To the coopting of St. Martin's day.
- The Armistice and subsequent peace treaty that ended World War I was a peace that, like the Pax Americana and the Pax Romana, relied on the power of armies and the threat of a sword.

- Alternative kingdoms to Christ's kingdom run on the blood of the oppressed and the edge of the sword.
- Because Babylon needs this power to wage war, it has sacralized the military into a religious locus of worship.
- Now, rather than celebrate St. Martin's mercy and peace,
- or even the peace of an armistice,
- we celebrate today as veteran's day.
- But why Veteran's Day?
- When did this change take place?
- This coopting of a day of peace into a day to remember warriors and the battles they raged against their enemies?
- If you paid any attention at all this episode, I bet you can nail the date to within a year or two.
- On June 1, 1954, only a little over a year after President Eisenhower was baptized,
- A little over a year after the first prayer breakfast,
- And less than two weeks before "in God we trust" was inserted into the pledge of allegiance -
- The United States of America began to celebrate November 11 as "Veteran's Day."
- The U.S. was clearly already waging an ideological war, as evidenced by McCarthyism and all the religious posturing by the government,
- But the U.S. was also gearing up for a physical altercation with communist countries.
- They didn't know how long the cold war was going to remain cold,
- And they knew that to keep all their client states on leashes, and any opportunists at bay
- To keep this Pax Americana - they needed a strong military.

- How convenient it was, then, to teach the masses how to celebrate the God of war -
- A god they were already making sacrifices to.
- But with Veteran's day, the sacrifice became sacralized in yet another act
- While America and God were being fused together by the State,
- So too was the military.
- This helps to explain the following years when we see terrible wars like the one in Vietnam or the second war with Iraq -
- Two wars that were fueled strongly by conservative Christians, despite a broader distaste in the rest of the public.
- How could Christians be fans of war at all, let alone unjust ones?
- Because the state had trained them well.
- It had drawn them in with the promise of power and prestige -
- Something Reinhold Niebuhr saw and cautioned against as early as the late 60's in his article,
- The King's Chapel and the King's Court.
- Thus November 11, Martinmas -
- The first Advent intended to usher in the prince of peace,
- Became a day to commemorate war.

- Such a thing only makes sense.
- I mean, those who have refused to fight have long been hated and condemned by their fellow countrymen.
- It's only in the last hundred and fifty years that pacifists haven't been killed outright or sent to prison, and the last hundred or so since they've been able to avoid prison or significant abuse in a time of war.
- The Quakers were often hated and abused for their refusal to fight.
- Hitler blamed pacifists in part for their loss in WWI, and you can see in Bonhoeffer's letters of advice to friends and students, he

recognized that the price for his recommendation in avoiding war could mean death.

- George Patton on the American side, felt similarly about pacifists.
- In a poem he wrote on Armistice Day -
- A poem longing for the day when he can once again know,
QUOTE
- The white hot joy of taking human life, END QUOTE
- Patton says this about pacifists:
- And looking forward I could see
- Life like a festering sewer;
- Full of the fecal Pacifists
- Which peace makes us endure.
- He is depressed that the war is over and that he and the rest of his society must endure peace -
- Which means that Patton must also put up with the pacifists, until war comes again and the pacifists can be despised.
- Other stories from World War II Abound,
- With Desmond Dawes of Hacksaw Ridge coming to mind,
- As well as **Franz** Jägerstätter, from the beautiful movie, A Hidden Life.
- History is filled with the disdain for those who denounce war.
- Peace at the edge of a sword is cherished and revered, while pacifists are hated.
- They're hated because they tear a hole in the fabric of the worship of the God of war.
- False gods and false worship require delusion and cohesiveness.
- If someone withholds their worship - and even worse, if they uncover the object of worship as an imposter -
- They then deny the meaning the acolytes wish to procure from their worship.

- They drain the meaning society has fused into the altar.
- Or, as a Wilfred Owen,
- A World War I poet and a casualty of the Great war, dying in its waning hours -
- He said that the idea, *Dulce et decorum est Pro patria mori*.
- That It is sweet and fitting to die for one's country -
- It is an old lie.
- It's amazing how someone like Owen and someone like Patton could see the exact same horror, yet arrive at opposite conclusions.
- I'm sure there are all kinds of motivations that go into shaping one's views about the glory or the depreciation of war,
- Yet I think something else Patton said highlights what might often be a significant difference between those who embrace war and those who denounce it.

- Patton said, QUOTE: **No bastard ever won a war by dying for his country. He won it by making some other poor dumb bastard die for his country. END**

QUOTE

- Patton loved war because he never planned on being a sacrifice.
- He planned on sacrificing the enemy on the altar of Mars or Ares.
- This is, in my opinion, why we Americans love war.
- It doesn't ever cost us anything.
- I mean, not really.
- When you compare American losses to the losses of those we fight, our deaths are a pittance.
- And since Vietnam, we haven't faced any serious losses - we haven't made any serious sacrifices in terms of numbers killed.
- A twenty year war in Iraq and Afghanistan killed about 7,000 Americans.

- But for the Iraqis and the Afghans, they lost hundreds of thousands, many, civilians.
 - Who really was sacrificed on the altar?
 - I mean, it makes sense.
 - Patton's right, and I appreciate his candidness.
 - War is intended to sacrifice the other in order to benefit myself and my nation.
 - It's only when you begin to see the other as human rather than enemy, and peace as reconciliation rather than threat,
 - That you can arrive at a place where Ares is no longer your god.
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- Today - November 11 - has long been a Christian holy day
 - and despite living in a secular age, it has not stopped being a holy day
 - This holy day, like other holidays, is a commemoration with purpose.
 - It's a day when society and tradition tell us what and who to worship
 - St. Martin pointed us to look outward, towards loving God and others in mercy and peace
 - Our modern celebration on November 11, however, points us inward
 - To the love of self and one's own, at the expense of other and the denial of God's law
 - I think the date given for St. Martin's commemoration is especially fitting, then.
 - See, the saints are usually not commemorated on the day they're born, but rather on the day they die.
 - But St. Martin isn't celebrated on the day of his death - November 8.
 - Instead, he's celebrated on the 11, the day that he was buried -

- Where he requested,
- In a cemetery for the poor.
- I think this is fitting for the commemoration of St. Martin because what is peace and what is mercy, other than a dying to self?
- A dying to selfishness, to greed, to gluttony, and to hatred.
- It's a burying of enmity and prejudice and judgment.
- But this dying to self isn't some kind of masochistic endeavor with no hope.
- Rather, it's a dying to one's lesser self in anticipation of the promised resurrection unto our revealed selves, in Christ.
- This is the very thing that baptism depicts - our having died with Christ and rising again as new men and women.
- That's what Christianity is all about -
- Not making the other poor dumb bastard die for his country -
- Not sacrificing other -
- But rather, laying down our lives for our country - for our Kingdom -
- The Kingdom of God.

- World War I was a terrible war filled with so much bloodshed and pain.
- Yet in the end, all that the weapons and the killing did was change the geography.
- When I was in Belgium I actually had the opportunity to visit Ypres - a place where they had dug underground tunnels and set explosives under the enemy.
- Even today, a hundred years after the war, the geography has been clearly marked by the war.
- Yet the hearts of humanity weren't changed.
- In fact, if anything, they were hardened with even more hatred - the precursor to the next world war.

- Waging war against flesh and blood - against other humans - is a task unbecoming a Christian,
- Not only because, as St. Martin said, it is against God's law,
- But also because it's stupid.
- It doesn't work.
- It has the opposite results.
- So today, as the world around you celebrates war and those who wage it,
- Remember St. Martin -
- A saint who was willing to put down his sword and die, that others might live.

- Talking w/cousin about bombing of Odessa infrastructure and mentioned the investment of generations in a kid
- Smedley butler's letter to mothers
<https://www.anarchochristian.com/a-letter-to-mothers/>

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- Puckle Gun different bullets: square for muslims (like triangle dagger to poke through helmet slits)
<https://sofrep.com/news/the-puckle-gun-for-shooting-square-bullets-into-non-christians/>
- Today find bullets greased with pig fat
- Henry Morton Stanley civilizing the African Congo with the Maxim gun

<https://stmr.hwcdsb.ca/ourfaith/patron/>

<https://web.archive.org/web/20060728130527/http://www1.va.gov/opa/vetsday/vetdayhistory.asp>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kr_OuytI9Ws&feature=youtu.be

<https://encyclopedia2.thefreedictionary.com/Martinmas>

<https://www.britannica.com/event/Battle-of-Mons-1918>

Henry Gunther:

<https://veteransbreakfastclub.org/the-last-man-to-die-in-world-war-i/>

- VFW 1858: <http://vfwmd.org/di/vfw/v2/postroster.asp>

Cut off hands and scalp:

<https://www.trumanlibrary.gov/library/truman-papers/correspondence-harry-s-truman-bess-wallace-1910-1919/november-11-1918>

Truman/Oppenheimer:

<https://screenrant.com/did-president-truman-call-oppenheimer-a-crybaby/>

<https://artsandculture.google.com/story/atomic-bombing-in-nagasaki-and-the-urakami-cathedral-nagasaki-atomic-bomb-museum/uwXRRfqvSwUA8A?hl=en>

I Am Cyrus:

<https://www.christianitytoday.com/history/issues/issue-99/i-am-cyrus.html>

<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/remarks-the-dedicatory-prayer-breakfast-the-international-christian-leadership>

- https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jes%C3%BAs_Gal%C3%ADndez
<https://www.religion-online.org/article/the-kings-chapel-and-the-kings-court/>

<https://www.ncpedia.org/wwi-last-days-war>

<https://www.armytimes.com/veterans/salute-veterans/2017/11/10/nov-11-1918-wasted-lives-on-armistice-day/>

<https://www.poetryfoundation.org/poems/46560/dulce-et-decorum-est>

<https://war-poetry.livejournal.com/879105.html>

<https://quoteinvestigator.com/2015/04/24/war/>

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https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kr_OuytI9Ws&feature=youtu.be