

# The Amish Northkill Massacre

by Dean Taylor

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*The sermon recounts the tragic story of the Amish Northkill Massacre, illustrating the power of faith and forgiveness in the face of violence and adversity.*

**Duration:** 41:44

**Scripture:** Romans 8:35

**Topics:** "Nonresistance", "Surrender To God"

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## Description

This sermon delves into the story of Jacob Hostetler and the Hofstetler Massacre, highlighting the challenging decision to follow Jesus' teachings on nonresistance even in the face of extreme danger and tragedy. It emphasizes the importance of fully surrendering to Christ and trusting in His love and protection, even in the midst of turmoil and persecution.

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## Transcript

Hello, I'm Pete Taylor. Before we get started with this little teaching video, I just wanted to say a few words about what you can expect to see. Mike Attenbiff and I made this video to try to talk about a couple of things.

First of all, I wanted to talk about the teaching of Jesus Christ. We're going to be asking you throughout the movie, and particularly at the end of the movie, do you really think that Jesus meant every word he said? And if he did, some of the teachings that he gave us come out in situations like what you're about to see. Another thing we'd like to do in the midst of that teaching is show a radical example of someone that actually kept to the words of Jesus.

Just north of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, where Mike and I both live, there was an early Amish settlement in the 1700s that went through a situation where some Indians had attacked a house. As an old example, what happens if somebody comes into your house and is going to attack your family? Well, it happened right up here north of Lancaster County in this early Amish settlement. Jacob Postetler, who was the man there, did beautiful in this, and he left a legacy of people who radically believed the words of Jesus Christ.

So that's what you can expect to see in this video. What you cannot expect to see in this video is high quality. We're two guys with a couple of video cameras and some cheap computer software.

So if you cut us a little slack with the quality of the video, Mike did some really good research on the Hofstetler Massacre, and it's a message we hope that you enjoy and get something out of and not the quality of our video. So, okay, we'll see what you think. The warfare that is raging For the truth and for the right When the conflict is raging With the powers of the night God keeps me for friends and foes May the end come near In about the year 1740, peaceful members of the Amish faith settled in the North Cape Creek in what is now Berks County, Pennsylvania.

They had fled persecution and sought religious liberty in William Penn's colony. William Penn had treated the Indian nations with respect, and for about 15 years, the North killed settlers who lived in harmony with their Indian neighbors just over the nearby Blue Mountain. The troubles between India and France for control of North America and unprincipled settlers from other communities who settled on Indian lands without paying for it drew the Indian nations into conflict with the Europeans.

Many of them sided with the French, and the French urged the Indians to attack the English. This escalated into the French and Indian wars. Raids were carried out on the seaboard settlements, in which the French and Indians killed and took captive frontier settlers.

As they took seriously the words of Jesus concerning war, the Amish settlers on the North Cape did not take part in the hostilities. On September 19, 1757, the Jacob Hostetler family had an apple snitching, in which the youth of the community gathered to their home to cut up apples for drying. Late in the day, the helpers all left, and Jacob and his family settled into bed for a peaceful night's rest until the dogs began to bark, and young Jacob Hostetler, Jr. rose to see what the fuss was all about.

No, son. Jesus said to his operating room, do not resist evil. Did Jesus really mean it when he said in Matthew 5.39, But I say unto you, that ye resist not evil, but whosoever shall smite thee on the right cheek, turn to him the other also.

That question may have run through Jacob's mind. One of the French or Indians had just shot Jacob, Jr. in the leg. The two older boys still at home, Joseph and Christian, went for the two hunting rifles the family had.

According to tradition, the boys begged to use them, but Jacob, Sr. stood firm in his conviction that Jesus really did mean what he said. Logistically, the family had the advantage over the attackers, being in a log house, with the attackers having little cover close by. They could see out the windows, but the French and Indians could not see in.

They saw a couple French and about ten Indians. The attackers held a short consultation behind the nearby outdoor bake oven, then taking ambush from the oven, they set the house on fire. It would have taken time for the house to become fully engulfed in the flames, but eventually the family was forced to take refuge in the cellar.

When the fire started burning through the floor above them, they doused it with the cider stored in the cellar. It was getting daylight, and the attackers were getting nervous and started to leave. It was also getting too hot for the family.

Hoping that all the attackers had left, they began to escape out a small basement window, seen in the picture here. This might be the very window which they escaped out of. But it took a while for the family to get out.

Jacob, Jr. was wounded, and Mrs. Hostetler was a large lady, and she had a hard time getting through the small window. Unfortunately, a young brave had stayed behind and was eating ripe peaches from the tree. He noticed the family crawling out and alerted the other attackers, and they quickly captured them.

However, Joseph escaped running and outran a couple of his pursuers. But being scared and not knowing if there were other attackers in the area, he eventually circled back and dropped down behind a log to watch the proceedings. Unbeknownst to Jacob, his oldest son John, who lived on a nearby farm, had heard noises and wondering what was going on, saw what was happening.

He took and hid his family about a quarter mile south in the woods and then returned to watch what was happening but felt helpless to do anything. Another neighboring family, the Jacob Cripser family, had also crept up to the scene but also felt unable to do anything. The attackers killed and scalped Mrs. Hostetler, a daughter whose name is not known, and Jacob, Jr. But one Indian had noticed where Joseph had hidden himself behind the log, so they quickly circled him and captured him too.

So with Jacob, Sr., Joseph, and Christian, the attackers left, heading over the nearby Blue Mountain. Up here today on the Blue Mountain, about 10 miles from where Jacob, Hostetler, and the boys were massacred at, Jacob and his boys would have walked along in this area somewhere in here as they were Jacob's captive, and that's under the ideal state. I think this day, the morning after Jacob's massacre, I can imagine it's probably one of the lowest days of his life.

You know, Jacob chose to believe the words of Jesus when his family was being attacked, but, you know, that's pretty easy to do. And as long as you're still inside of a safe little house and you think, well, maybe these French and Indians will just leave. But now you feel it's in the afternoon, perhaps, like it is now, a sunny afternoon.

He's walking along the ridge here. And his wife and his son and his daughters and scouts are probably hanging there on the side of one of his Indians. I can imagine it would have been a real good time for Jacob to just say, did Jesus really mean that? Or in situations like mine, should have we used a gun? But Jacob Ostetler chose to believe in Jesus and act in faith.

And to believe in Jesus means to take his words and swallow them hook, line, and sinker, even when your house is being burned down. See they come on day of vengeance, coming from the dead before. Before heading over the mountain, Jacob had filled his pocket with the peaches and advised his sons to gather some, too, and to submit gracefully to their faith.

For three days they walked over the mountains on the Philpott-Hawken Trail, which is now Route 501 north of Bethel, Pennsylvania. Jacob knew that sometimes prisoners were made to run the gauntlet. The gauntlet was two rows of Indians lined up profile facing each other with switches, clubs, and tomahawks.

The prisoners then had to run between the two lines receiving blows. Some never made it to the end of the line. But even without running the gauntlet, prisoners were often mistreated when they entered an Indian village.

They were hit and squished and beaten by the squirrels and even the young Indians. But Jacob and his two sons approached the chief and offered him some of the peaches. The chief was so pleased with this that he ordered the beatings to stop and the cappies never were forced to run the gauntlet.

Here we see an example of Jacob returning good for the evil doing to him. I guess what really struck me about the story is apparently it was recorded that, I don't know if it was a couple of years before, sometime before, apparently a band of tired Indians, I guess they'd been out hunting or something, and apparently approached the Hope Settler farm requesting food. And the legend has it that Mrs. Hope Settler denied them and sent them away hungry.

And I guess I kind of had to wonder what would it have been like? How would the story have been written different for the history? If she would have done what she was supposed to do, and when your enemy is hungry, feed him. I don't know, I had to wonder, could it have prevented the whole tragedy? Tradition has it that while they were going over the mountains, they passed a clearing in which another Amish man was chopping with his axe. The Indians shot at Mr. Miller, hitting him in the hand while he was raking his axe.

Mr. Miller then fled, but the Indians did not chase him. In three days they reached the Susquehanna River and forded it, about 20 miles below what is now Sunbury, Pennsylvania. For the next 14 days they traveled up the west bank of the Susquehanna over the slow chute path to Vanongo, present-day Franklin, Pennsylvania.

Then they went by canoe up French Creek for three days, and finally one more day walk brought them to Presque Isle, which is present-day Erie, Pennsylvania. Here is where Jacob was probably separated from his two boys by the French, and the French sent them to three different Indian villages to be held captive. Before parting, Jacob advised his boys, if you are ever taken so far away and are kept so long that you forget your German language, do not forget the Lord's Prayer.

You're about the age of Joseph when Joseph was taken captive. What do you think it would have felt like to be caught up on the blue mountain there, perhaps in the man walking in front of you as your mother's scalp cluttered on his belt, but what do you think that would have felt like? Your life was before you, and all of a sudden here it is, a calamity has happened. What kind of feelings do you think would go through a young man's mind like yours? Well, probably bitterness at times.

You probably get pretty angry at the Indians, and also probably just shocked how it could happen like that so quickly. And, yeah, there's probably a lot of just mixed feelings. There's a lot of emotions that would have gone into all that.

You know, you would have thought maybe all your life, like Joseph's, had been responsible to forgive people. I think it would have been very hard to forgive those people, seeing your sister and your brothers and your brothers' scalp cleaned there. I would imagine it would have been pretty hard to forgive them.

After the separation, Jacob was sent to Buccaloones, near present-day Irvine, Pennsylvania. The Indian life didn't appeal to him, and he looked for his chance to escape. When all the men of the village left to make more raids, Jacob was given a gun and a few bullets each day, with a measured amount of powder, and told that his job was to provide meat for the camp.

He was made accountable to tell where each bullet had gone and where all the powder had been used, and explained why he missed if there was no meat brought in for each bullet. He planned his escape and was able to hide a little powder in a hollow tree as well as a few bullets, day by day. But the question was, where was home? Where was home? that wherever he went, there was a military camp around the hill, and he was told it was purposeless to go there.

he was sent to the town of Buccaloones. His home is in Irvine, near present-day Irvine, and he lived there until his death. He was sent to the town of Buccaloones, One day, Jacob noticed an older man drawing in his ashes.

He drew nearer and realized that they were drawing a map. He passed back and forth, trying not to act too interested, but soon he formed an idea in his mind exactly where he was on the map, and with this in mind, he began to plan his escape. John Speck was another captive German in buccaloones, and the night before he left, Jacob let him in on the escape plan.

The next day, Jacob was sent out to hunt again. John left in the opposite direction, and then the two of them met at an appointed place. They went to the hollow tree for the powder and bullets, and made fast track for home.

Evening came, and they decided to camp at a low spot under an overhanging cliff where they could build a fire unnoticed. To their surprise and embarrassment, a lone Indian showed up. Jacob and John quickly made another quick escape plan, in German, of course.

They both acted as if they were gathering sticks for the fire, and slowly went farther and farther out. They were to meet at a determined place on a little creek, and from there they would flee together. Jacob did his part, and he waited until dark for John, but John never showed up.

Jacob then sneaked back to peek at the campsite. The fire was dying down, and by its light, Jacob thought he saw blood and meat. Thinking John had been killed by the Indian, Jacob fled alone, going all night without any sleep.

John's specter was never heard of again. You know, as we start to think about this situation, here was two men, they had a gun, and one Indian. Jacob kept on believing in Jesus.

I don't know if the Indian had a gun or had a weapon, but no details were given, but you would think two men against one. They could have done the Indian in and took off. But they just decided, or at least Jacob did, to keep on believing in Jesus.

Keep on doing what Jesus said. It was another one of those situations where real faith had to kick into gear. Jacob headed east over mountains, streams, and through the beautiful forest.

He avoided paths, often traveling at night, for six days. He soon reached what he thought might be the headwaters of the Susquehanna River. He followed it for four days, and when the creek became larger and seemed to be headed in the right direction, he decided it was time to build a raft.

But he had no axe to cut up the logs, so he found a dry log, built several fires on the log at the right lengths, and tended the fires all night long. By morning, the fires had burned the log through into several pieces, which he tied together with vines and saplings and made a raft. He hopped on and began his journey.

But after some time, Jacob noticed that the river seemed to be heading southwest, in the wrong direction. Thinking he was perhaps on the Ohio and not the Susquehanna, he became discouraged and pulled ashore. Jacob had been living on grass and whatever he could scrounge from the forest.

At this point, tradition said that Jacob found a dead possum, full of maggots, which he ate to his fill. That night, he had a dream in which his murdered wife appeared and told him he was on the right way and could keep going. The next morning, he got on his raft again, determined to stay there until he reached white civilization.

He floated for five days until he arrived back at Shamokin. Here, the soldiers at the port rescued him. Tradition says he was so weak that he could only raise one arm to signal that he wanted help.

Since he had been behind enemy lines, Jacob was then sent to Carlisle, Pennsylvania to be debriefed. It is from the record of this debriefing that some of the details of this story have been taken. There are various written and oral accounts of Jacob's story, in which the details sometimes contradict each other, but the main points of the story agree.

Jacob then returned home to be reunited with his son John and daughter Barbara, who was out of the home when the family had been attacked nine months earlier. What a joyful day that must have been. Jacob bought land about ten miles south of his old place.

Then later on, he eventually moved to what is now Lebanon County, Pennsylvania. He remarried to a lady named Anna and died there in Lebanon County. Of the boys' captivity, details are very sparse.

They had been treated very well while in captivity and were most likely fully adopted into the Indian culture. Christian was about 11 years old and Joseph 15 when they were captured. At the end of the French and Indian War, the English demanded the release of all the white captives to which the Indians agreed, but several years passed before it was fully carried out.

In August of 1762, Jacob attended a council at Lancaster, Pennsylvania, where a group of captives were being returned, but he looked in vain for his sons. Jacob then had an official petition written to Governor Hamilton, the original copy which still survives to this day. In this petition, Jacob states that he knows exactly where one of the boys is.

King Custaloga has one of them, and Custaloga was president of the council. At a later time, Jacob wrote another petition to Sir William Johnson, the British Superintendent of Indian Affairs. In this petition, of which only portions remain, it appears that Jacob is willing to travel to New York to bring Christian back.

The details are sparse and sometimes conflicting, but by 1765, almost eight years later, it is almost certain that both boys were back home. One story states that on returning home, Christian approached his father's house during mealtime. The visitor was given some food, and he sat on a stump to eat it.

When Jacob finished his meal, he went out to see what this Indian man wanted. To his surprise, the Indian man said in broken German, My name is Christian Haas Settler. Tradition has it that Christian had a hard time transitioning back to European culture, and that he remained on friendly terms with the Indians, going on hunts with them.

Christian eventually married a girl named Barbara. Joseph married a girl named Anna. Interestingly, both sons, who had earlier begged to use the rifles in the attack, joined non-resistant churches after their return.

Later on, Joseph joined the Amish, while Christian became a preacher in the Dunkard Brother Church, sometimes called the German Baptist. Today, there are an estimated one half to one million descendants

of Jacob Haas Settler scattered all over the U.S. and into other parts of the world. In the late 1990s, descendants of Jacob Haas Settler's family took the stones from the old bake oven that was falling apart and built this memorial.

It was from behind the bake oven that the Indians and the French had attacked the house. Thus ends the story of Jacob Haas Settler. Of the personal lives of the French and Indians who attacked Jacob Haas Settler's home, very little is known, except for one man, Tom Lyons.

His story comes from his own mouth, which, as we shall see, has reason to be doubted, but we shall tell it. Tom Lyons was a young brave of about 18 years old who stopped to eat just before leaving the attack. He was the one who noticed that the family was crawling out of the window and called the others to come back.

Tom said in his letter that he was the one that scalped Jacob Haas Settler's wife. After the attack, Tom Lyons fought in many wars, including Pontiac's war. When the rest of the Lenni-Lamonti moved west, Tom Lyons stayed back.

It seems he couldn't get along with his own people, neither with the Europeans. The interesting aspect of Tom Lyons' life is that in his old age, Tom moved to what is now Holmes County, Ohio. This is the very community where some of the grandchildren of Jacob Haas Settler moved.

So Tom Lyons and some of Jacob Haas Settler's grandchildren were neighbors. Tom bragged about his cruelty. He never seemed to get past his contempt for the Europeans.

He had a strain of 99 tongues, which he claimed were the tongues of 99 white Europeans that he had murdered. He always bragged that if someone bothered him, he would put number 100 on the strain. One day, Tom disappeared.

No one knows where he ended his life. Some have surprised that a white man got tired of his bragging and did him in privately. But Tom's problems were not unique to him nor to his race.

We could mention names like Adolf Hitler or Joseph Stalin, men who seemed to never get past their pride, contempt, and revenge and bitterness. If Tom had any descendants, they are not known. He was a lonely old man who died, one of the last of his race to live in Holmes County, Ohio.

Thus ends the story of Tom Lyons. That was the story of Jacob Haas Settler's family. Very interesting history.

I have today with me here Brother Dean Taylor, the author of a very interesting and thorough book called A Change of Religions. So, I'm going to ask a few of these hard questions, Dean. The question, what if? As I think this book, I've watched through the Christian view of Jesus' words, love, and grace.

Did Jesus really mean that? Yes, amen. You know, I think that I love this story about the Haas Settler family and the massacre there because it really puts into a more modern day, you know, that was a few hundred years ago, but a more modern day example of someone just taking the words of Jesus Christ and putting them into practice and willing to die over it. And when you're thinking that story how, you know, the boys were, you know, in their zeal were wanting to say, hey, Dad, we have enough gunpowder, we have enough bullets to be able to do this.

Why don't we just do something about this? And the father said, no, we're going to lay down and we're going to die. And I think this is a beautiful story about someone putting these things into practice. But I do think, I think that one of the things that constantly challenged me in my life is that in my testimony, my whole life was changed when I believed that Jesus Christ put his hand to these words of his and just simply said, I mean this.

And my life has been changed ever since and it continues to be changed because it's an ongoing thing of trying to follow that. But I really think that he means every word that he says. And this is one of those hard ones.

What do you do in a terrible crisis like this? And yes, I do think that he meant it when he told us to love our enemies even in something like this. That's easy for Dean Taylor to say sitting here, nice little table, comfortable. But put yourself there in Jacob's shoes.

The Indians are here at your door. They've shot your son. He's bleeding.

The guns are there. Is it viable? Great question. And you're exactly right.

I mean it's so easy. These things can be such a, just a theology. And where I think that Jacob really had this indwelling of Jesus Christ within him, the scripture says that we are transformed into the image of Jesus Christ.

And here's a beautiful example that faith in a situation where he pretty much could figure out we're all going to die. But somehow he knew that through this death, God would be glorified. And the only way that I think that a lot of the teachings of the New Testament, particularly the teachings of Christ, make any sense, is that I believe in them as there comes out this theology of martyrdom where if we see this idea that our life is not to be lived out to the fullest, to have all of the great things we want out of life, but to be poured out as a sacrifice, sometimes a literal sacrifice, then those are the things that I think that he's talking about.

And that's when these things make more sense. Otherwise, if you're just trying to have a happy, great life and trying to apply the words of Jesus, I don't think it works that well. So you're saying that Jacob Hostetler had to die before the bullets ever started flying.

Yeah. Amen. Well said.

Jacob Hostetler had died the day he gave his life to Christ. And that was way before the bullets started flying. Yes.

Amen. So we're seeing a battle here, not between French and Indians and English. We're seeing a battle against--we've looked at the life of Jacob and we saw how his life went.

We've looked at the life of Tom Lyon and we saw his life. We're not seeing Indian against white. We're seeing white against darkness.

Amen. Amen. That's right.

And I think that's the continual battle that has gone through every age. And the thing about what we have to realize is that Jacob Hostetler is a war hero. We have--if we go down to the Arlington there in Washington, D.C., you see a lot of things, some tragic things happen.

You see Pearl Harbor and men that gave their lives for a cause. It can't help but anybody who looks at those things just feel a lump in their heart about what people sacrificed for a cause. And it makes you very thankful for what they did for America in that way.

But here we have an idea that Jesus is taking us to a different kingdom and he wants and expects the same kind, perhaps even more, of the allegiance to that kingdom that we would have for American heroes and war heroes as well. And so here is a man who died a war hero. And the thing to keep in mind is that some people think, well, it's terrible.

I mean, somebody comes into your home and somebody does this kind of a thing, and I agree, it is terrible. It is tragic. But in this warfare, in this warfare that you spoke of, there are some things that are tragic.

There are some things. But I would argue the point, though, is it not a bit ironic, though, that when people try to use these sort of scenarios when somebody breaks into your house and they try to make the column of sympathies for this as a defense or as a reason to go and make nuclear warhead, to make bombs, and to have all these sorts of armories and things to go out to war, because isn't it in wartime people die as well? I mean, people die, and tragic and terrible things do happen. And so here we hear a story of a terrible, terrible thing that happened.

The difference, though, is that Jacob Hofstadter had Jesus Christ and his teachings alive in him, and now that permeated the whole situation, and I think as you have demonstrated, it shows fruit even to this day. So we're seeing a battle of light against darkness. We're seeing a battle of vengeance against forgiveness, and they meet each other here in the life of Tom Lyons, who seems to, you know, he bragged about later about killing Hofstadter's wife.

And yet, as we look at that from man's eyes, we say, well, Jacob Hofstadter lost the battle because he lost his wife, but the reality is Jacob Hofstadter won. Amen, that's right. You know, you think of how many massacre sites could we find around here.

I mean, as we were there, you know, even talking to the man there at the house, we found that there's other little places and little houses. Why does this one stand out? Why does this one somebody put up a plaque still to this day, a historic marker? It's because somebody laid down their life, and it was different. And Jesus says, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it cannot bear fruit.

But I believe that what they did and what these Amish men did there in that massacre has borne fruit. And a perfect example, and maybe we could talk about this at a different time, is the old nickel mines right a few miles down from here. Still to this day, a testimony goes out to the whole world that when these terrible things do happen, they still take the words of Jesus Christ and say, He means it.

So this memorial that we looked at is really a memorial to the resurrection. Hallelujah. Amen.

The seed to the resurrection. Amen. One of the verses that I like to look at, you know, this obviously gets this type of thing.

It gets us deep. It gets us in our emotions. I mean, somebody coming into your home and killing your wife.

That's the classic nonresistance. And it gets us so deep because that's where our emotions are. Our emotions are there in the deepest for our family.

But Jesus Christ has promised us that when we give our lives to Him, we are to not worry about the things that happen to us, that He will completely take care of us. But sometimes you see the people that even Jesus loved the most, sometimes He asks us to go through something very, very hard. Let me just give you one quick thing here from Romans 8, verse 35.

I like to call this when I preach sometimes the Christian atomic weapon. It's Romans 8, beginning at verse 35. And before we do, I want you to imagine any kind of what if.

What if Hitler wouldn't have been stopped? What if Islam gets out of control? What if somebody breaks into your home? What if capitalism falls? What if, you know, all of these different what ifs that could happen. And put them and listen to what Paul tells us here in this Christian nuclear weapon. He says, verse 35, Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Any of those things.

The sword. You're going to be in a famine, persecution, distress in your life. Tribulation.

He says, as it is written, and don't miss this point. For thy sake we are killed all the day long. We are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

If you get there, that's where Jacob Hofstadter was before. He would consider himself sheep for the slaughter. So the question is not, what if someone breaks into your home? But the question really should be, what if Jesus really meant every word you said? And what if there is a resurrection after the cross? Amen.

What if there's a resurrection? You're exactly right. Because he goes on to say, nay, in all these things, we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. What things? You know, famine, nakedness, peril, sword.

Somebody shooting your wife. Somebody shooting your wife. Amen.

For I am persuaded, Paul said. That means Jacob Hofstadter was persuaded too. I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

That is the Christian nuclear weapon. From His throne of love, it's Jesus. Angels help us to prevail.

And our leader is Jesus. Thank you for watching this story of the Hofstadter Massacre. In closing, I would like to bring this message down to you and me.

What would I do? What would you do if someone came into your house like they did in the Hofstadter family? Now, I don't believe that Jacob Hofstadter made his decision on the spur of the moment. Jacob made his decision when he gave his life to Christ. And when Jacob gave his life to Christ, I believe that Jacob thought that being a Christian meant being an actual follower of Christ.

That's amazing. You know, the thought of someone coming in and harming our family is unthinkable to us. As a matter of fact, that very question, that is, what would you do if someone comes into your house to harm your family, is the classic stopping point in the nonresistance debate.

You see, we all know what Jesus said, but we think, come on, He can't be serious. You can't expect Him to actually do these things. But you know what, I think that Jesus was serious.

I think that He did mean what He said. And I think that Jacob Hofstadter was right. So what about you? At the end of this documentary of the Hofstadter family and this massacre, allow us to bring this down to asking a very personal question.

We want you to think about it. What would you do? You know, thinking about that whole idea of Jesus Christ has said these words, and I have this terrible situation happening, it leaves us with, I admit, a very difficult situation. Now, for those of you out there who would quickly say, oh, there's no doubt about it, I would quickly pick up a gun and kill to protect my family.

Allow me, if you would, to be able to turn this a little bit the other way. I was reading a book David Bersow wrote called *The King Who Turned the World Upside Down*. And in this book, he turns the question in an interesting way.

He says it this way. He said, what if a foreign government or a terrorist group or something ordered you to drop a bomb on a United States city or to assassinate the American president or else they would harm your wife and children? What would you do? In other words, let's say you're a pilot and a terrorist group came in. They said, okay, you've got to go and bomb this city in America or we're going to harm or maybe even kill your family.

What would you do? You know, I think that most Americans would allow their wives and their children to be harmed, maybe even killed, before betraying their country. So how is this situation any different when it concerns loyalty to Jesus? In Jesus' teachings on nonresistance, it's quite clear. It's a matter of either denying him or denying my family.

To be sure, that's a very difficult choice. You see, I had already made that choice when I gave my life to Christ. Does that mean I would do nothing to protect my family? Of course not.

I have already done the best thing that I could possibly do to ensure their safety. I have entrusted my home and my family to the care and protection of Jesus Christ. Jacob Hofstadter chose the way of Christ.

To be sure, he suffered great personal loss because of it, as we've seen. But like always, all throughout history, the blood of the martyr, the blood of the one who was able to be sacrificed for Christ's sake, the blood of the martyr becomes the seed of the church. From Jacob's faithfulness, thousands have been inspired and still today hold firmly to faith in Christ, believing that Jesus actually meant every word that he said.

Well, here's the good news. Today, if you believe, if you believe Jesus and you believe that he meant what he said, he has promised us that he will give us the grace to be able to stand.

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Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/WrzWNsFt2vg.mp4>

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