

# Editorial: Keep the whole world and Christ in view

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The war in Ukraine deserves our attention. So does ongoing unrest in at least [23 other places](#) around the world.

Afghanistan, Algeria, Burkina Faso, Burma (Myanmar), Cameroon, Chad, Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ethiopia and Eritrea, Iraq, Libya, Mali, Mexico, Mozambique, Niger, Nigeria, South Sudan, Syria, Tanzania, Tunisia, Yemen and Saudi Arabia—all are experiencing open conflict in the form of civil war, drug turf wars, ethnic hostilities, terrorist insurgencies and/or political unrest.

This is to say nothing of the [tension](#) between China and Taiwan, Israel and Palestine, India and Pakistan, North Korea, Iran and others, and within countries such as Cuba, Haiti, the United States and Venezuela.

It's a lot to get our heads around. In fact, it may be numbing, paralyzing.

When presented with such overwhelming difficulties, a natural reaction is to plead with God to make it all go away and to put on blinders. When we are left with nowhere to avert our eyes, when the strife is everywhere, we may be tempted to check out altogether. But that's not what we're here for.

## The temptation to look away

It is tempting to give in to our human limitation and to focus on one thing. Right now, much of the world is focused on Ukraine. Much of the world is concerned the war there could broaden and could become World War III. A writer for *The Atlantic* thinks we're [already there](#).

Focusing on Ukraine makes sense at present. The war directly involves countries with nuclear weapons. Many interpret Russian President Vladimir [Putin's warnings](#) as a threat to use Russia's nuclear weapons. Undoubtedly, if the war escalates and/or broadens into other countries, the world will be affected far more than paying more for gas and bread.

With or without the nuclear threat, many people in Ukraine are suffering horrifically right now, and we need to demonstrate our concern for their well-being in tangible ways. We cannot look away.

It's also tempting to reduce what is happening into the embodiment of Ezekiel's "[Gog and Magog](#)" (Ezekiel 38). Adherents of this interpretation of world events believe Russia fulfills Ezekiel's prophecy that Gog, a "place in the far north," will advance against Israel, an event preceding the Lord's final victory over evil in the world.

This view of Christ's return almost seems to focus the whole of the Christian life on looking for the "end times." Yes, Jesus told us to be vigilant for his return (Matthew 24, 25:1-13), and he told us to be about his work until then (Matthew 25:14-46). However, it's not either/or; it's both/and. What the world needs now is for Christians to walk and chew gum at the same time.

## **A complex call**

David French recently told the world Baptists are doing just that. In his March 13 weekly column "The French Press," he wrote:

"When great evil arises, great good answers. ... I'm thinking, for example, of the [report](#) that the average Baptist World Alliance church in Ukraine is 'feeding and sheltering 100 people.' ... I'm thinking of churches [like First Baptist Church of Robertsdale, Alabama](#), sending a team to Moldova to help Ukrainian refugees."

A [Baptist church in Mariupol](#), Ukraine, has housed “hundreds of citizens” in its basement. [Texas Baptist Men](#) has been in Poland assisting [Polish Baptist churches](#) and a school welcoming Ukrainian refugees. [Baptists in Moldova](#), a small neighbor on Ukraine’s western border, are also providing aid to Ukrainian refugees. This is just a representative sampling of what Baptists are doing in and around Ukraine.

Baptist Christians not only are proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ and preparing people for Christ’s return, they also are heeding Jesus’ instruction to care for hurting people in tangible ways. What’s more, Baptist Christians aren’t the only ones doing this work. Christians from around the world are engaged in Eastern Europe.

## **Being the body of Christ**

While we keep our eyes on Ukraine, we need to keep our eyes on the rest of the world, too. What is happening now in and around Ukraine is needed to varying degrees all around the world, including the United States. The world needs the spiritual and physical ministry of Christ, not just when the media spotlight is on one place or another, but all the time.

As individual people, churches, associations, conventions or denominations, this is impossible. As human entities, we only have so many eyes, ears, arms, legs; we only have so many able bodies and so much money.

Therefore, not only do we need to keep the whole world in view, we need to keep Christ in view. We are not solely human entities. We are the body of Christ. And the body of Christ has no limitations with Christ as its head.

Don’t count yourself out if age, physical or financial ability, current life situation or something else prevents you from going to one of the many challenging places anywhere in the world. God has work for us to do wherever we are, whatever our situation.

The world is connected enough that you can make a difference right where you are. More than that, making a difference right where you are that eventually ripples around the world may be exactly what God is calling you to do.

We live in a hurting world at a time when all creation is groaning. Jesus died to redeem and restore this broken world. We need to bring all resources to bear, wherever and whenever brokenness is found.

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Visit [Baptist World Alliance](#) or [Texas Baptist Men](#) to learn more about how God may be calling you to address need in the world in the name of Christ.

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