



A holy war against the Satanic West

What does the “Russian world” mean? Why is Russia waging war against Ukraine? What will happen when the USA stops helping Ukraine? And what significance does this war have for Christians in the USA?

A large majority of Americans associate the term “holy war” (jihad) only with extreme Muslims from either Asia or Africa who are religious extremists waging war or a violent campaign for their beliefs. However, in 2014 in Ukraine a “holy war” was unleashed by people who falsely label themselves as “Christians” and live in Europe. In 2022 a “holy war” was turned into a full-scale war by the launching of missiles, warplanes, tanks, and ships against Ukraine and the collective West. Below we will see the reason why Russia’s aggressive war in Ukraine is a “holy war” against Ukraine and the collective West.

One may try to deny that Russia’s war against Ukraine has nothing to do with a “holy war.” However, in the USA and Europe this war is being viewed as a political, economic, and military struggle of Russian aggression against the sovereign state of Ukraine. But to have an objective picture and understand the reason for the war, one needs to analyze the Russian point of view, which was presented at the XXV World Russian People’s Council in a document that openly outlined the vision of this war. The Council was held in Moscow on March 27, 2024, and was considered an important event in Russia. It was held under the chairmanship of Patriarch Kirill, the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, and the president of Russia, Putin, addressed representatives of religious, cultural, and business communities of Russia. The relevant document is called “The Order of the XXV World Russian People’s Council. The present and future of the Russian world.” It declares the essence of the “Russian world” that is the new imperial Russian ideology. The document has 8 articles; however, the first article is of utmost importance as the Russians clearly talk

about a “holy war” that they are waging on the collective West. The article is entitled “Special Military Operation” (SMO) and it is as follows:

*The Special Military Operation is a new stage in the national liberation struggle of the Russian people against **the criminal Kyiv regime and the collective West behind it**, waged on the lands of Southwestern Rus’ since 2014. During the SMO, the Russian people, **with arms in hand**, defend their life, freedom, statehood, civilizational, religious, national and cultural identity, as well as the right to live on their own land within the borders of a single Russian state. From a spiritual and moral point of view, the Special Military Operation is **a Holy War**, in which Russia and its people, defending the single spiritual space of Holy Rus’, fulfill the mission of “**Restrainer**,” protecting the world from the onslaught of globalism and the victory of **the West, which has fallen into Satanism**.*

(See the preamble and first two articles of the document translated to English at the end with accompanying original Russian text. Link to the full document in Russian: <https://vrns.ru/forumy/nakaz-xxv-vsemirnogo-russkogo-narodnogo-sobora-nastoyashchee-i-budushchee-russkogo-mira/>)

Three expressions are used in one sentence: “Holy War,” “Restrainer,” and “the West that has fallen into Satanism”; these words are taken from the biblical lexicon and their meaning needs to be explained for one to understand the message. The Russian document was made public on March 27, 2024, by the head of the Russian Orthodox Church, Patriarch Kirill, which indicates its importance. This is not a statement by a monk, priest, hierarch in a monastery or a single Orthodox church, but the Council which presided over the head of Russian Orthodoxy. The document is called “the order,” which indicates the need for its implementation, not only by citizens, but also by the legislative and executive powers of Russia, as written in the preamble. Let’s analyze each expression separately.

First, the Russian authorities officially call the war against Ukraine the “Special Military Operation.” However, the head of the Russian Orthodox Church openly declares that this is a “holy war.” This characterization of war justifies killing, capture, and destruction for the sake of a higher goal. In this sense, Kirill says that the war against Ukraine and the West is “holy” for Russians. As noted in the first article, Russia started the war in 2014 with the occupation of Crimea and parts of the Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine. Since 2022, the Russian Federation continues to invade the territory of Ukraine. In 2024, Russia finally recognized the real goal; it is a “holy war” against the collective West as well. After such a statement, it is naive to think that Russia will stop in Ukraine. As made clear by the Russian document, the head of Russian Orthodoxy, Kirill, openly calls Russians to war against the West, including the USA.

Secondly, the next expression to focus on is the “restrainer.” “Restrainer” is taken from the Bible from the 2nd Epistle of the apostle Paul to the Thessalonians 2:7: “For the mystery of lawlessness is already at work. Only he who now restrains it will do so until he is out of the way.” In the Greek text, the word “katechon” is translated as “the one who restrains.” In the



Russian Orthodox priests sprinkle “holy water” on military tanks, deployed to fight in Ukraine.

context of the Epistle, the apostle Paul speaks of restraining evil. What does the word “restrainer” mean in the Bible and in what sense did the Russians use it in their document? The apostle Paul did not specifically name someone or something, but rather used it as a generalized word. Therefore, there are several interpretations among notable biblical commentators that the restraining of evil can happen through the Holy Spirit, a church, or a spiritual force. For Christians who know the 2nd Epistle of the apostle Paul to the Thessalonians, it seems very strange that the head of Russian Orthodoxy described the Russian Federation as “restrainer.” This shows either a deliberate twisting of the Holy Scriptures or a complete misunderstanding of it. Such a statement indicates a gross use of the Bible for political manipulation, where the Russian Federation is equated with the Holy Spirit or God's church.

Lastly, according to the Russian document, the countries of the West have fallen into Satanism. The Russians assumed the authority to judge the countries of the West to be on the side of Satan. The West means the USA, as the leader of the democratic camp, as well as the European countries. The head of Russian Orthodoxy, Kirill, declares that all Christians who live in these countries, and are not Orthodox, have fallen under the influence of Satan or worship him. He qualifies them as heretics, apostates, enemies of God that are worthy of condemnation. Here, the rejection of and hostile attitude toward Christians of other denominations inherent in Russian Orthodoxy is manifested. From the entire Russian Council, Kirill shows contempt for Protestants and Catholics, who make up the vast majority of the Christian world as opposed to the Orthodox. According to statistics of worldwide Christian demographics for 2024, the Orthodox make up only 11%, where Russian Orthodox are a small part, while Catholics are 49% and Protestants are 39%.

This is the devastating reality of a “holy war”: 630 destroyed or heavily damaged church buildings in Ukraine (<https://irf.in.ua/p/125>), dozens of Ukrainian priests and pastors killed or tortured, hundreds of pastors and priests deported or forced to leave their homes, thousands of surviving Ukrainian Christians facing persecution in the occupied territories in Ukraine, church buildings confiscated and converted by the Russians for other purposes. Exact numbers are difficult to establish right now due to the closure of the occupied territories, but the scale of damage to Christians in Ukraine is vast.



Before



Now

In Melitopol, the Russian occupiers turned the captured church building into their administration building. Before it was the building of “Grace Church.”



Before



Now

“New Generation Church” in Melitopol was turned by Russian occupiers into the “Ministry of Youth Policy” of the occupied Zaporizhzhia region.

RELIGIOUS BUILDINGS AND SACRED PLACES

damaged by shelling or looting because of Russia’s full-scale invasion of Ukraine



At least **630** religious sites were damaged or looted due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine

* As of December 1, 2023

What is the “Russian world”? War and aggression are cynically called a “holy war.” The head of Russian Orthodoxy declares that the Russian Federation is a “restrainer” of evil; at the same time the Russian army carries out evil, shelling children's hospitals with rockets, and bombing Ukrainian cities and villages every day. The Russians describe the countries that help Ukraine in its defense against military aggression as “fallen into Satanism.”



Destroyed Baptist “Bethany Church” building in Mariupol after the Russian army besieged the city for a few months in the spring of 2022.

The Russians call Ukrainian evangelical Christians agents of the USA, accusing them of espionage. This is what the communists did during the Soviet Union in relation to Christians, and now the Russians are repeating it with the blessing of the Russian Orthodox Church. It should be noted that Protestants in Russia do not officially condemn the war against Ukraine, but rather support the actions of the Russian authorities.

On June 18, 2024, Kirill met with the leaders of Russian Protestant associations, where he spoke about the unity of the Orthodox and Protestants in Russia in support of the policy of their country, and mentioned the persecution of the Orthodox subservient to the Moscow Patriarchate in Ukraine. (<https://mospat.ru/en/news/91890/>) It is necessary to note that those priests subservient to the Russian Orthodox Church in Ukraine who clearly called for the overthrow of the legitimate government of Ukraine, justified Russian aggression, and cooperated with and assisted the Russian invading army that bombs Ukrainian homes, were detained as collaborators under the law of Ukraine. All Christian denominations in Ukraine have complete religious freedom and the authorities do not interfere with them. On the contrary, the Russians persecute Ukrainian Christians in the occupied territories.



The head of Russian Orthodoxy, Kirill, met with the Protestant leaders in June.

In conclusion: Why is Russia waging war against Ukraine? American people should know that Russia has declared a "holy war" and has no intention of stopping only in Ukraine but will go further if it is not resisted. Russia wants to take revenge after the collapse of the USSR in 1991 and its defeat in the Cold War. The USA remains the main rival. Russia is trying to regain countries it used to control, and Ukraine is a key for the Russians in terms of human resources, which they will try to use to increase their army in a confrontation with the USA. The Russians are now forcefully mobilizing Ukrainians in the occupied territories to fight against Ukraine. They regard Ukraine's rapprochement with the USA and the European Union as the second defeat after 1991.

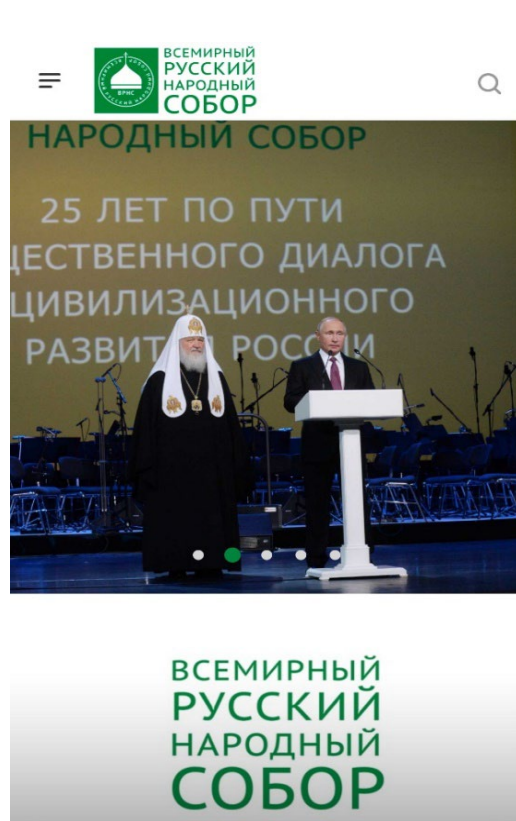
What will happen when the USA stops helping Ukraine? The Russians declare that the Russian Federation is a global "restrainer." Russia calls its aggression and invasion containment of evil. In fact, if Russia is not restrained now, it will perpetrate a lot more evil: commit genocide of the Ukrainian people, occupy European countries, and continue to instigate wars against allies of the USA, as we are seeing in Israel. Russia's support for Iran, Israel's enemy, points to an "axis of evil" where Orthodox Russia and Muslim Iran have joined together against free and democratic Ukraine and Israel to destroy them. Now the Ukrainian army is holding back the Russian army, the second largest army in the world. The USA spent 0.33% of its GDP on supporting Ukraine in 2023, and the USA's delay in supplying Ukraine with weapons gives Russia more opportunities to attack Ukraine and kill more civilians. If we assume that Russia will be able to occupy Ukraine, European countries will be invaded and as a result the costs will increase hundreds of times. The USA will be forced to fight against Russia with its troops in Europe.

What significance does this war have for Christians in the USA? The Russians claim that they are against "the West that has fallen into Satanism." An example of how they are fighting against Western Satanism can be seen in Ukraine. In the occupied territories of Ukraine, the Russians are carrying out a total genocide of Ukrainian evangelical churches, because for them they are carriers of Western Christianity. Ukrainian churches of other denominations are also persecuted, but the Russians pay special attention to evangelical believers, calling them agents and spies of the USA. If Christians in the USA show passivity and remain silent about the persecution of Ukrainian Christians, they will contribute to the destruction of Christian churches in Ukraine, in the center of Europe. Today, Ukraine has the largest representation of evangelical churches in Europe. Ukraine is a key evangelical country in Europe. Even during the war, Christians in Ukraine have full freedom to preach the Gospel, organize children's camps, study in educational institutions, hold conferences, and publish the Bible. Since beginning of the Russian invasion, Ukrainian Christian emigrants in Europe have opened hundreds new churches, and groups. In Russia, it is the opposite; in recent years, all foreign missionaries and Christian missions supported from abroad have been banned, and a lot of evangelical churches have been closed. In the European countries, the number of churches decreases every year due to the secularization of the population. In Ukraine, the number of churches decreased because of the Russian invasion. Christians in the USA need to realize that support of Ukraine is of utmost importance for the spread of evangelical churches both in Ukraine and beyond its

borders in the post-Soviet space. Ukraine is the Bible Belt in this part of a planet. As long as Ukraine exists as an independent country, churches will spread in Russia as well, since Ukrainian Christians have always been active in supporting churches and founding new churches in Russia. Together we need to stop Putin, Russia, war, and a genocide of Ukrainian people.

By Roman Kapran

romankapran@gmail.com



Translated from Russian

March 27, 2024

During the Council, which took place on March 27, 2024, in the Hall of Church Councils of the Cathedral of Christ the Savior, chaired by the Head of the WRPC, His Holiness Patriarch Kirill, the Order of the XXV World Russian People's Council "The PRESENT AND FUTURE OF THE RUSSIAN WORLD" was approved (Moscow, November 27-28, 2023). Order of the XXV World Russian People's Council "The PRESENT AND FUTURE OF THE RUSSIAN WORLD" (Moscow, November 27-28, 2023).

This document, summarizing the most significant proposals put forward within the framework of the work of expert platforms and during the Plenary session, is a program document of the XXV World Russian People's Council, as well as an order addressed to the legislative and executive authorities of Russia.

1. Special Military Operation

The Special Military Operation is a new stage in the national liberation struggle (battle) of the Russian people against the criminal Kyiv regime and the collective West behind it, waged on the lands of Southwestern Rus' since 2014. During the SMO, the Russian people, with arms in hand, defend their life, freedom, statehood, civilizational, religious, national and cultural identity, as well as the right to live on their own land within the borders of a single Russian state. From a spiritual and moral point of view, a special military operation is a Holy War, in which Russia and its people, defending the single spiritual space of Holy Rus',

fulfill the mission of “Restrainer,” protecting the world from the onslaught of globalism and the victory of the West, which has fallen into Satanism.

After the completion of the Northeast Military District, the entire territory of modern Ukraine should enter the zone of exclusive influence of Russia. The possibility of the existence in this territory of a Russophobic political regime hostile to Russia and its people, as well as a political regime controlled from an external center hostile to Russia, must be completely excluded.

2. Russian World

Russia is the creator, support and defender of the Russian world. The borders of the Russian world as a spiritual, cultural and civilizational phenomenon are significantly wider than the state borders of both the current Russian Federation and greater historical Russia. Along with representatives of the Russian ecumene scattered throughout the world, the Russian world includes everyone for whom the Russian tradition, the shrines of Russian civilization and the great Russian culture are the highest value and meaning of life.

The highest meaning of the existence of Russia and the Russian world it created -- their spiritual mission -- is to be the global “Restrainer,” protecting the world from evil. The historical mission is to over and over again destroy attempts to establish universal hegemony in the world -- attempts to subjugate humanity to a single evil principle.

27 марта 2024 г.

В ходе соборного съезда, который состоялся 27 марта 2024 года в Зале Церковных Соборов Храма Христа Спасителя под председательством Главы ВРНС Святейшего Патриарха Кирилла, утвержден Наказ XXV Всемирного Русского Народного Собора «НАСТОЯЩЕЕ И БУДУЩЕЕ РУССКОГО МИРА» (Москва, 27-28 ноября 2023 года).

Наказ XXV Всемирного Русского Народного Собора

«НАСТОЯЩЕЕ И БУДУЩЕЕ РУССКОГО МИРА» (Москва, 27-28 ноября 2023 года)

Настоящий документ, обобщая наиболее значимые предложения, выдвинутые в рамках работы экспертных площадок и в ходе Пленарного заседания, является программным документом XXV Всемирного Русского Народного Собора, а также наказом, адресованным органам законодательной и исполнительной власти России.

1. Специальная военная операция

Специальная военная операция является новым этапом национально-освободительной борьбы русского народа против преступного киевского режима и стоящего за ним коллективного Запада, ведущейся на землях Юго-Западной Руси с 2014 года. В ходе СВО русский народ с оружием в руках отстаивает свою жизнь,

свободу, государственность, цивилизационную, религиозную, национальную и культурную идентичность, а также право жить на собственной земле в границах единого Российского государства. С духовно-нравственной точки зрения специальная военная операция является Священной войной, в которой Россия и ее народ, защищая единое духовное пространство Святой Руси, выполняют миссию «Удерживающего», защищающего мир от натиска глобализма и победы впавшего в сатанизм Запада.

После завершения СВО вся территория современной Украины должна войти в зону исключительного влияния России. Возможность существования на данной территории русофобского, враждебного России и ее народу политического режима, а равно политического режима, управляемого из враждебного России внешнего центра, должна быть полностью исключена.

2. Русский мир

Россия является создателем, опорой и защитником Русского мира. Границы Русского мира как духовного и культурно-цивилизационного феномена существенно шире государственных границ как нынешней Российской Федерации, так и большой исторической России. Наряду с рассеянными по всему миру представителями русской ойкумены, Русский мир включает в себя всех, для кого русская традиция, святыни русской цивилизации и великая русская культура являются высшей ценностью и смыслом жизни.

Высший смысл существования России и созданного ею Русского мира — их духовная миссия — заключается в том, чтобы быть всемирным «Удерживающим», защищающим мир от зла. Историческая миссия заключается в том, чтобы раз за разом обрушивать попытки установления в мире универсальной гегемонии — попытки подчинить человечество единому злему началу.