

Commandment 6: "You shall not murder"

III. War

- A. The sixth commandment is not talking about question of killing in war
1. Heb. word *ratsach* (Exod. 20:13) - 49X in OT, but never used to refer to killing in war (other Heb. words used)
 2. God himself commands Israel to go to war at times - would be contradictory to command something and forbid it at same time: Deut 20:1, etc.
 3. In NT, soldiers not condemned for being soldiers: Lk 3:14; Acts 10 (Cornelius); Luke 14:31: no hint of condemnation for king
- B. One of primary duties of gov. is to protect citizens, w/ use of force if necess. to restrain evil: Rom. 13:4; 1 Pet. 2:14
- C. There are times when war is necessary to stop an evil aggressor: 1 Sam. 13:5; 17:1-11 (David/ Goliath), etc. (many examples in OT); Psalm 144:1; Example: Hitler's invasion of many European countries
- D. How can we know when war is justified?
1. God does not allow nations simply to take over other nations at will: Deut. 2:9, 19.
(People generally recognize this: true democracies do not generally (ever?) authorize wars of aggression.)
 2. But God does authorize governments to defend themselves against evil aggression (Rom 13.4)
 - a. Because there is some evil in world that can only be restrained by superior force
 - b. It is sometimes right to help another country that is being attacked: Ps. 82:4
Obadiah 11: judgment on Edom for not helping when Jerusalem was conquered
 3. We should earnestly seek other means to resolve a situation justly if possible
Matthew 5:9 "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God."
Romans 12:18 If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.
- E. **"Just War" principles:** standards that have been developed over the years to help people decide if going to war in a specific situation is right. (this list and verses taken from private paper by Dan Heimbach, Jan. 15, 1991-then White House policy staff, now prof. at Southeastern Bapt. Seminary)
1. **Just cause (Rev. 19:11)**
 2. **Competent authority (Rom 13:1)**
 3. **Comparative justice (Rom. 13:3)**
 4. **Right intention (Prov. 21:2)**
 5. **Last resort (Matt. 5:9; Rom. 12:18, above)**
 6. **Probability of success (Luke 14:31-32)**
 7. **Proportionality of projected results (Ps. 52:1, 3)**
 8. **Right spirit (Ps. 68:30: judgment on those who "delight in war")**
- F. To help decide if a war is just, it is sometimes helpful to think of a spectrum of situations
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|------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|
| Clearly
wrong | Requires mature
judgment | Clearly
right |
| ----- | | |
| Aggression | | Defense |
- G. There are also moral **restrictions on conduct in war**. How should a just war be fought?
(also from Dan Heimbach paper)
1. **Proportionality** in use of force (Deut. 20:10-11)
 2. **Discrimination** between combatants and non-combatants (Gen. 18:23, 25; Deut. 20:13-14, 19; Amos 1:6, 13)
→ conquest of Canaan was unique in Israel's history and was a foreshadowing of final judgment. As such it was similar to flood (Gen. 6-9) and destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen. 19). Therefore rules were total destruction, different from every other war. (Deut. 20:16-18 different from vss. 10-15, 19-20)
 3. **Avoidance of evil means** (Psalm 34:14: Turn away from evil and do good; seek peace and pursue it.)
 4. **Good faith** (Matt. 5:43-44; Rom. 12:18)
- H. What is responsibility of a Christian citizen (Christian man) if called upon to fight in a war?
1. If war is clearly right, fighting to defend one's country:
 - a. is not "morally wrong but necessary"
 - b. is not just "morally neutral," but
 - c. is morally good
Rom. 13:4; Luke 3:14; John 15:13; Ps. 144:1; Note also Num 32:6, 20-23 and 1 Sam. 28:18
 2. In that case, what attitude should a Christian have in combat?
 - sorrow for evil, even godly anger against evil
 - yet also "goodness, faithfulness, self-control" (Gal. 5.22-23), even love for enemy (as David, Absalom): 2 Sam. 18.33 (Lincoln: 2nd Inaugural Address)
 3. If war is clearly wrong, then a Christian should refuse to serve
 - a. Acts 4:19; 5:29
 - b. And flee country (as many did from Germany): 2 Cor. 11:33; 1 Sam 19:10-12
 - c. Or stay and resist, or take penalty (may vary in diff. situations)
 4. If it is unclear, a matter for sanctified wisdom, individual conscience
Rom. 14:4 may apply; Rom. 13:1-4 still applies, however

- I. Responses to a Christian non-violence position (pacifism)
1. Arguments in favor of pacifism:
 - a. Teaching of Jesus: Matthew 5:38 “turn other cheek”
 - b. Requirement to love our neighbor (Matt. 22:39): but how can we love our neighbor and kill him in war?
 - c. Jesus did not use force to advance his kingdom (Matt. 26:52-53)
 - d. Use of military force (at least by Christians) shows lack of trust in God and is disobeying Jesus’ teachings.
 2. Responses:
 - a. We must appreciate Christian pacifist’s concern to be faithful to Christ
 - b. Nevertheless, it is an unsatisfactory position for several reasons:
 3. Pacifism fails to recognize that people working as agents of government can do things that are wrong for them to do as individuals

<u>Government employee/ agent</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · taxation · apprehend speeder · execute retribution on criminal (Rom. 13:4; 1 Pet. 2.14) · killing others in war if necessary (to make peace! 1 Tim. 2.2) 	<u>Personal</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · stealing · taking law in own hands, speeding · taking personal revenge (Rom. 12:19) · murder
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 4. Pacifism fails to recognize that Matt. 5:38-42 is addressed to individuals, not to governments. Jesus did not come to take leadership of civil government or to serve in capacity of a policeman or soldier.
 - He did not (and we should not) use force to advance gospel
 - But that says nothing about whether governments should use force to restrain evil (Rom. 13:1-4 approves).
 5. Pacifism fails to see that Scripture itself views love for neighbor as consistent with killing in war
 - a. Both love and war are commanded in OT: Lev. 19.18 (“love your neighbor as yourself”); Deut. 20 (rules for war); 1 Kgs. 2.28-34; NT: Rom. 12.19 with 13.4
 - b. Love for neighbor near at hand requires that I protect him from aggressor
 - c. Jesus, who is pure love, will come in judgment one day - will use force against evil (Rev 19.11-16)
 6. Pacifism fails to recognize that a Christian who fights in (just) war is “God’s servant” and doing “good”: Rom. 13.4; 1 Pet. 2.14
 7. Pacifism is inconsistent in saying only unbelievers should serve in government as soldiers or police
 - No commands in Scripture pertaining to moral conduct are for believers only: Lk. 10.25-32; Rom. 2.14-15
 8. We have no warrant to “trust in God” for things different from what his Word teaches, and Rom. 13:1-4 teaches that God authorizes government to use deadly force if necessary to oppose evil.
- J. Application to recent wars in Afghanistan, Iraq: were these just wars?
1. Just cause (Rev. 19:11): At least four, in order of importance:
 - a. defend U.S. against attack (war on terrorists world-wide carried out by attacking most central and strategic centers of their activities)
 - b. help protect allied countries and rest of world against similar attack
 - c. change extremely evil government (would probably not be thought a sufficient cause by itself if there was no threat to U.S. or other countries)
 - d. begin process of bringing democracy to Muslim nations and greater stability to Middle East.
 2. Competent authority (Rom 13:1)
 3. Comparative justice (Rom. 13:3)
 4. Right intention (Prov. 21:2)
 5. Last resort (Matt. 5:9; Rom. 12:18, above)
 6. Probability of success (Luke 14:31-32)
 7. Proportionality of projected results (Ps. 52:1, 3)
 8. Right spirit (Ps. 68:30: judgment on those who “delight in war”)
- K. Where would these wars fall on a spectrum of situations?
- | | | |
|---------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| Clearly wrong | Requires mature judgment | Clearly right |
| | ----- | |
| Aggression | | Defense |
- L. Nature of present-day suicidal terrorism means that prevention of evil must be different:
1. Punishment after crime is does not deter it (old method)
 2. Therefore only effective deterrents seem to be:
 - a. pre-emptive strikes (in Afghanistan against Al-Qaida and Taliban; in Iraq against suppliers and trainers of terrorists)
 - b. pre-emptive arrest and containment (terrorist cells in U.S. and in other countries)
 - c. prevention of access to our citizens (airport and stadium security)

M. Nuclear weapons

1. Existence of nuclear weapons means world now has greater destructive power than ever before in history
 - a. Nuclear weapons used at Hiroshima and Nagasaki killed 80,000 in initial attack, 60,000 more of radiation wounds later
 - b. Estimates of U.S. losses that would result from conventional war invasion were 193,500 - 1,000,000 casualties, with 40,000 dead to perhaps 200,000 (plus Japanese losses, equal or greater)
2. But now that other nations have nuclear weapons (including potential aggressors such as North Korea) we must have them
 - a. In order to deter aggression the US must have = or greater nuclear power – enough to keep any nation from thinking they could win in a nuclear conflict, large or small
3. But can't we reason with other nations, come to peace agreements with them?
(shouldn't we seek a nuclear-weapons free world?)
 - a. We should seek workable, verifiable agreements to reduce or limit nuclear arms
 - b. But we must recognize that there is irrational sin in the world, irrational enough that it can only be restrained by force (this is why God gives gov's. the authority to use force to restrain evil)
4. But wouldn't it be better to run the risk even of giving in to a potential aggressor than run the risk of nuclear war and world destruction?
 - a. It is alarmist simply to assume that any use of nuclear weapons would escalate until it resulted in destruction of the whole world
 - b. What about a "nuclear winter" where sun's rays are largely blocked and the whole world freezes, and all human life is destroyed forever? (a real fear of avid nuclear opponents)
→ As a Christian I do not believe that all of history will end that way.
 - c. We fail sufficiently to realize the horror that would result from totalitarian domination of the entire world. (note millions starving now in N. Korea; similar horrors in USSR under Stalin, China under Mao, Germany under Hitler)
 - d. Nuclear deterrence has worked now for 67 years. (since 1945)
5. Conclusion: we must maintain enough nuclear weapons to keep any potential aggressors from thinking they can win.
6. What about anti-missile "Strategic Defense System"?
 - a. Yes, definitely!
 - b. Argument that "it won't work" is continually being disproved. (Israel's Iron Dome system against Gaza, Hamas in Nov., 2012)
 - c. Argument that "it will lead to more weapons" is not happening.
(bad logic: defensive systems make war more likely). (??)
if anybody builds more weapons, peaceful nations will build more defenses, and stay ahead.
the goal: that non-aggressor nations (democratic nations) always stay ahead.
– as far ahead as possible.

→ All of the class lessons and outlines are posted on the class website www.christianessentialsbc.com