



Taking Life Wrongfully

Why did no Bible teachers support the military for the first 300 years of the Church ?

Death during war—is it murder?

What does the Bible say?

12 Uncomfortable Questions for Military Supporters

This workbook is a Bible Study to Challenge the Hermeneutics of Military Advocates. It is a discussion on the biblical legitimacy of international, Gentile on Gentile wars.

You'll have my comprehensive 22-word definition of murder, (p.7)

At least you'll know why we peacemakers believe pacifism is supported clearly in dozens of Old & New Testament Scripture verses. (p.5)

by Phil Myers, *Conscientious Objector*

Willing to die for my country—not willing to kill for it.

pjmyers, c. 1981
exp. 2009
rev. 2022

Your response in writing is invited, yea verily, challenged. (bottom, p.10)

Enemies of America are simply patriots of another country. Another nation's patriotism is not a biblical crime automatically worthy of the death penalty.

Theocratic approved wars were waged only when the Canaanite people would not flee.

This paper does not address police affairs or self-defense, only war.

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PART I

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"Forcing men to kill is the military's biggest battle."
a statement out of the War Room

"Aggressive war will be dealt with as a crime."
Nuremberg Trial of war criminals

"Blessed are the peacemakers."
Matt 5.9

Those who make war are not entitled to label themselves as peacemakers. A committee of soldiers does not make one a peacemaker.

* America's 4 guidelines for war are not based on Scripture, but are quite similar [not identical] to every Gentile nation we have engaged:

- * revenge
- * self-preservation
- * economic interests
- * patriotism (whatever that may entail)

Theocratic guidelines are in a class by themselves.

There is not one bit of Scripture to affirm the validity of Gentile on Gentile wars.

All American conflicts have been Gentile-on-Gentile.

This paper does not address self-defense or the necessity of a police force. It deals only with war.

For 300 years after Christ, no Christian writer supported the military. Every writer who mentioned the military strongly opposed participation in the military. . . UNTIL. . .Constantine [312 AD] actively began to recruit Christians into his army.

Why did Jesus' followers oppose war?
Why do you believe Jesus approved of all wars?
Please use His words.

If you believed, as I do, that killing 40 million innocent civilians in WWII was murder [not just "unfortunate" or "collateral damage"] - you would also refuse to support all the American aggression in WWII. *pjm*

"Six things the Lord hates. . .hands that shed innocent blood."
Proverbs 6.16,17

The Role of the Peacemaker in International Conflict.

MY 15-POINT OPENING STATEMENT

"I conclude that Bible believers must agree that all deaths during war are murder, except in those wars mandated by God during the theocratic years of Israel."

Phil Myers, 1975

Here is a summary of what I understand the Bible teaches about the statement above.

indicates my opinion

1. The earliest expositors of the Scripture had it right for 300 years. Not one Christian writer supported military service until 312 AD when Constantine stopped all persecution of Christians and recruited them to join the army of the empire he was building. These writers from the first 3 centuries knew the Greek meanings as well as the innuendos of the New Testament better than scholars who live today. They even dreamed in Greek. Expositors concluded that military aggression or retaliation to aggression was not consistent with the message of Jesus or Paul. Eventually Constantine's politics deeply influenced Roman Catholic theology and thus infected the evangelical Church at the start of the Reformation.
2. Proverbs 6.16,17 "These six thing doth the Lord hate. . .hands that shed innocent blood." It is murder, even in war, to shed innocent blood.
*The first question I will ask you is, "Have innocent people died in any of America's wars?" yes no pass
Partial Answer: 40 million innocent civilians died in WWII.*
3. Romans 13.1,2 ". . .the powers that be are ordained of God. . .they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." [pretty strong]
No army nor Christian individual has the right to resist [or overthrow] any power that God has put in place, neither one's own government nor an enemy's government, especially believers.
4. Colossians 3.17,23 "Do all in the name of the Lord Jesus. . .whatever ye do. . .as to the Lord."
One of the next questions I will ask you is, "Can we, in the name of Jesus, take the life of an uncondemned man [even during war] and not commit a sin?" yes no pass
5. There has been only one theocratic government in the history of the world, that is, OT Israel. The rules which governed Israel do not apply to any other nation. *Joshua 1.1,2 "The Lord spake unto Joshua. . .go over this Jordan . . .unto the land which I give unto (you)." Hermeneutically, I must negate any argument which assumes that the divine instructions for Joshua to attack Jericho are applicable to any other country besides ancient Israel. Certainly, theocratic parameters do not automatically extend to all countries, clans, tribes, revolutionary armies, or coups.*

No innocent blood was shed by Joshua. God had condemned every man, woman, and child in Jericho. The purpose of the ethnic cleansing of the Canaanites was for the glory of God.

No American president has publicly esteemed God's help greater than his Joint Chiefs of Staff's acumen. No president has publicly declared war in the name of Jesus Christ for His glory,
6. The Roman Catholic church's fabrication of the "just war" concept is invalid. Scripture's silence about this topic is deafening. This contrivance was expressed by the RC Church following Constantine's edict of 312 AD. There seem to be no universal [secular] nor biblical "rules" which apply to:

a. annexation of neighboring countries	<i>Nazi Germany</i>
b. subjugation by colonization in far flung lands	<i>British, French, Spanish, Portuguese, or Mongolian empires</i>
c. retaliation to hostile military action	<i>virtually all wars</i>
d. armed intervention in any other sovereign country's affairs	<i>Viet Nam, Syria, Iraq, Kuwait, ad infinitum</i>
e. squashing secessionists	<i>US civil war, etc.</i>
f. jihads	<i>Muslim, tribal, or Christian Crusades, Kurds, Rohingya</i>
g. extending one's borders to gain oil, ports, minerals, or cotton	<i>Northern aggression following the South's peaceful secession</i>
h. hostile takeover of thriving cities	<i>WW I</i>
i. glory & fame	<i>[Alex. . .ahh, yes, but he did negotiate several victories]</i>
j. first strike attack because of fear of aggression from another nation	

The justified war myth is exhibit A in the attempt to warrant “Jesuit Casuistry” which allows any sin which seems to fulfill *ad maiorem Dei gloriam* [for the greater glory of God].

7. Romans 12.21 “overcome evil with good”
How can taking others’ lives be considered good to those who have not been tried nor found guilty of any crime worthy of the death penalty?
n.b. The context of this verse is not war, but it comes under the heading “whatsoever ye do.” See point #4 above.
8. I Pet 3.9 “not rendering evil for evil, . . .but blessing.” How does taking civilian and military lives in war render a blessing? The implication is that the blessing should come from God through you.
9. Acts 5.29 “obey God rather than men.”
Obeying political or military commands to kill countermands God’s law which forbids taking lives of the innocent [Prov 6.16,17]. Christians must sometimes disobey governmental instructions.
10. Romans 12.17,19,20 “Recompense to no man evil for evil. . .avenge not yourselves. . .vengeance is Mine, I will repay saith the Lord. . .if thine enemy hunger, feed him.” There is no reason to believe this is hyperbole, as some say.
11. *[admittedly a non-biblical argument]*
31% of US frontline veterans suffer from PTSD within one year of return from deployment. Why? That is, why do they suffer guilt feelings if not from the actual guilt of being part of the cause of human carnage, *[especially toward the innocent]? I do not know whether anyone keeps track of PTSD stats as it pertains to deaths by “gun holders” or naval personnel, or bombardier “latch pullers” or generals-behind-a-desk, but it would be an interesting master’s thesis.*
Conscientious Objectors and volunteer workers who serve as military medics do not have commensurate levels of PTSD though they may be exposed to even more carnage than the foot soldier. Why not?

My Response: Pacifists feel no guilt for causing the carnage. PTSD sufferers feel great guilt or trauma because they are truly guilty, culpable for the deaths they helped cause.

12. Military retaliation rivets its attention on the idea of justice toward enemies. . .but
national forgiveness of an enemy focuses on grace, love, and peacemaking.
We peacemakers never leave the negotiating table until after the table has been bombed.
Yes, I am willing to die for my nation but I am not willing to kill for my nation.

“Blessed are the peacemakers.” Matt 5.9 [with a stern warning 10 verses later, to those who disregard this precept to “break. . .and teach” others to do the same] . Matt 5.19
13. In other publications *[Parts II & III]* I have a compendium of 18 varieties of violations of hermeneutic infractions by proponents of military engagement. I show how they are most frequently utilized. I try to illustrate how these errors have been most commonly voiced by the advocates of war *[see p. 10, bottom]*.
14. The present discussion is not dealing with the concept of “fair” or “who-is-to-blame.” It is not addressing illegitimate reasons for a particular conflict or seemingly valid purposes for aggression. It focuses solely on Scriptures which bear on taking the life of another human being. I do not address gun laws, self-defense, or police forces, just Gentile on Gentile wars.
15. Again & again I will ask you for biblical support *[in lieu of logic or sound reasoning]*, since our single topic is clear and quite limited in scope—

“What does the Bible say about the topic of murder as a result of international war, i.e. taking life wrongfully?”

Phil Myers received an honorable discharge from the United States Army after voluntarily enlisting during the Viet Nam war. He never saw combat. Today he is a flag-waving American, a Conscientious Objector, and a militant pacifist patriot.

n.b. for those who believe military aggression is supported in the Bible.

This is an exercise in casting aspersions upon the process by which you formed your conclusions.

We are both engaged in identifying the weaknesses of each others’ biblical hermeneutics.

I believe your principles of Bible interpretation are fundamentally flawed and are self-benefitting, and I’ll tell you how they are.

Ahh, then you may also point out my hermeneutic errors as you perceive them. See bottom of p. 10.

Taking Life Wrongfully

Death during war—is it murder?

What does the Bible say?

*This is a Bible study to challenge the hermeneutics of military advocates.
(At least you'll know why we peacemakers believe pacifism is taught clearly
in dozens of Old & New Testament Scripture verses.) page 5*

"I conclude that Bible believers must agree that all deaths during war are murder, except in those wars mandated by God during the theocratic years of Israel." Phil Myers, 1975

I'm not at all interested in your defense of military aggression and the horrors of non-involvement, but only your answer to Scripture which seems to me to negate a Christian's participation in war.

I will listen to your biblically based opinion regarding what you believe to be my faulty understanding of Scripture as it applies to the above quotation.

You may send any concise material you'd like me to read. I will do my best to digest it and respond quickly. I prefer material you have personally written, but I'll read cogent [*succinct*] work from others. Mail me the books or email pertinent texts (*but not a bibliography or a list of internet sites*). I'm only interested in discussions about biblical exposition.

By the way, I believe the validity of your presentation seems to hang on your definition of murder and the "Just War" concept which I presume you espouse, which I refute [*see APP #E, p.22, document PART III*]. You have to be comfortable that your definition of murder [*a sin which is forbidden in Exod 20.13 as well as Prov 6.17*] will fit all cultures and governments [*civilized & uncivilized, religious & non-religious*], in all ages, in every situation [*including war, as well as any deaths occurring as a result of war, abortion, self-defense, involuntary manslaughter, crimes of passion, or the death penalty*], and is acceptable with Scripture, too. My 22-word comprehensive definition is on page 7.

If you respond to all 12 questions in Part I (check 19) , I promise to ruminate on your thoughts and will send a written response. At your request we can discuss 40 more questions in Part II. I'm particularly interested in your responses to 10 of those questions marked with red in that document.

I have weighed many responses to the questions I posit, and I doubt you will say anything I have not already heard or seen numerous times, yet I am convinced that the Bible concludes that war is not an option for a Christian;

however, I will be extremely attentive to you when you write.

Most military supporters let me know they have never wrestled with several of the biblical questions presented here.

Scripture presents some uncomfortable truths.

However, I have come to this conclusion solely through immersion in the Word and by asking hard questions. I have rarely read or had a conversation with another conscientious objector. Nor do I seek out or enjoy confrontational discussions, so let's keep it friendly. Keep your exclamation marks to a minimum.

Oh, how I hate to be wrong about Bible things, so I solicit your perceptions of the faulty reasoning of my understanding of this topic caused by my poor scriptural hermeneutics.

Please speak persuasively.
I can be persuaded.

I will gladly [and quickly] answer any questions or affirmations of yours if you will send me an email, pdf, or photocopy of your answers to the 12 questions.

DocMyers3@gmail.com

To me, as a pacifist, and former soldier, it is obvious that almost all of the argument by Christian military proponents is about four topics: **1)** justice and fairness, **2)** consequences of non-involvement, **3)** the sins of the aggressors; then they often shift to hypothetical situations. ["What would you do if. . ."] Their first concern is virtually never about the Bible's stance on Gentile vs. Gentile conflict. Very little time is spent talking about Scripture, and I have never, not once, had anyone bring up the subject of bringing glory to God through Gentile on Gentile wars. Finally, **4)** It seems they feel their [*your?*] strongest defense is Joshua and the Canaanites. Using Israel's Canaanite wars as the cornerstone is extremely weak since the issue today is not about any theocracy - just Gentile-on-Gentile.

Scripture

I am asking you to refute the plain reading of the following texts in context,
all of which seem to me to support the premise of the following statement.

47 verses
context = about
150 vs.

“I conclude that Bible believers must agree that all deaths during war are murder,
except in those wars mandated by God during the theocratic years of Israel.”

The first 25 passages strongly substantiate the above premise.

1. Proverbs 6.16,17 These six *things* doth the LORD hate: yea, seven *are* an abomination unto Him. . . hands that shed innocent blood.
2. I Thessalonians 5.15 See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all *men*.
3. Colossians 3.17,23 Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, *do* all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him, . . . and whatsoever ye do, *do it* heartily, as to the Lord.
4. Romans 12:17 Recompense to no man evil for evil.
5. Romans 12:21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. (see Matt 5.44—Jesus' 4 ways to overcome evil)
6. Mat 5:44 Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you.
7. Romans 12:20 Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head.
8. Romans 13:2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation
9. I Peter 3.9 Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing: but contrariwise blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing.
10. Matthew 5:9 Blessed *are* the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.
11. Luke 6:28, 29 Bless them that curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and unto him that smiteth thee on the *one* cheek offer also the other.
12. Jos 6:16 Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the LORD hath given you the city. [context of war is theological, not political]
13. Deuteronomy 21.22 If a man has committed a sin worthy of death, and he is put to death. . . .
14. Romans 12:19 Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but *rather* give place unto wrath: for it is written, "Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord."
15. Mat 5:39 Whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.
16. Romans 12:18 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.
17. Luke 6:27 Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you.
18. Isaiah 31.1 Woe to them that . . . trust in chariots. . . . [context is international war]
19. Luke 6:31 As ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them, likewise.
20. Luke 6:35 Love ye your enemies, and do good, for He [God] is kind unto the unthankful and to the evil.
21. Joshua chapter 24 Exuberance over military victory which is given by God. [context of war is theological, not political]
22. 1 Sam 11:13, 14 The Lord hath wrought salvation in Israel. . . there Saul and all the men of Israel rejoiced greatly. [after the battle]
23. Romans 13:4 For he [*ruler, king, president, emperor Nero*] is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to *execute* wrath upon him that doeth evil. [context is national, not international]
24. Deuteronomy 20.17 & 7.4 Thou shalt utterly destroy. . . the Canaanites. . . for they will turn away thy sons from following Me. [non-political reason]
25. I Chronicles 6.22 The war was of God. . . Obviously, not all OT wars were "of JHVH." Which ones today would be ordained "of JHVH?" and Why?

Fifteen concomitant Scriptures which tangentially support the opening premise on the top of this page.

- Joshua 1.1,2 & 4.13 The LORD spake unto Joshua. . . arise, go over this Jordan. . . unto the land which I do give to [you]. . . prepared for war.
8:30 Then Joshua built an altar unto the LORD God. [thankfulness & praise]
- John 18:33 Pilate entered into the judgment hall again, and called Jesus, and said unto him, Art Thou the King of the Jews?
18:34 Jesus answered him, Sayest thou this thing of thyself, or did others tell it thee of Me?
18:35 Pilate answered, Am I a Jew? Thine own nation and the chief priests have delivered Thee unto me: what hast Thou done?
18:36 Jesus answered, My Kingdom is not of this world: if My Kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is My Kingdom not from hence.
- Acts 4.19 Peter and John answered and said unto them, Whether it be right in the sight of God to hearken unto you more than unto God, judge ye.
5.28,29 Did not we straightly command you that ye should not teach in this name? and, behold, ye have filled Jerusalem with your doctrine, and intend to bring this man's blood upon us. Then Peter and the *other* apostles answered and said, We ought to obey God rather than men.
- Romans 13.1 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: [all] the powers that be are ordained of God.
13:5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake.
13:6 For this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.
13:7 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute *is due*; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor.
- I Peter 2.13 Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man for the Lord's sake. . . .
- Rev 19.14 The armies *which were* in heaven followed Him upon white horses, clothed in fine linen, white and clean.

Admittedly, few verses above have the context of government, fewer have a distinct context of international conflict. This limits both our positions, but it puts the onus on war proponents since Jesus' words were so dramatically opposed to aggression.

But since direct references to international wars are almost exclusively pertaining to Israel [*the only theocratic nation ever*], there is virtually no Scripture concerning Gentile-on-Gentile aggression on which to support international war. Actually, I am unable to find any verse of Scripture which specifically approves of any Gentile-on-Gentile war. "Then would My servants fight" [John 18.36] is a specific reference to theocratic war and so had no bearing here. Anyone who maintains that Israel's divine and unique caveat is applicable to all nations, runs into serious hermeneutical trouble. Note too, that Israel's role as a theocratic nation has been suspended until the King returns on a white war horse.

PART I Taking Life Wrongfully Death during war—is it murder?

“I conclude that Bible believers must agree that all deaths during war are murder, except in those wars mandated by God during the theocratic years of Israel.”
Phil Myers, 1975

indicates my opinion

- This discussion is **not about** self-defense, the death penalty, or gun rights.
- This is not a discussion about logical or rational reasons which a nation uses to defend its engagement in conflict.
- We will address only one topic: **“What does the Bible say which applies to international war today?”**

Let me ask 12 mostly “Yes or No” questions

I ask you to **identify my misuse** of hermeneutic principles.

This discussion is not about patriotism, not logic, nor interpretation, nor applications based on extrapolation—it is about the plain meaning of Scripture.

► #1 **My Question:** Have innocent people died in any of America’s wars? Yes, all wars No Pass
No explanation is needed. *I probably understand your position.*

Please respond to the following Bible verse as it would pertain to war.

Proverbs 6.16,17 “These six things doth the Lord hate. . .hands that shed innocent blood.”

response: _____

My response: *Individuals are responsible for shedding blood, not nations. No “innocent” people [even children] died during the conquests of Canaan, which were the only “theocratic wars” [just wars?] in history. God [lawmaker, judge, & jury] had passed sentence on His Canaanite enemies. The nation of Israel served as the executioner for God. All the Canaanites were guilty. For Scripture, I use the whole book of Joshua to support this. Josh 1.1,2 Deut 7.4*

► #2 **My Question:** What is the cause of PTSD if it is not guilt of being partially culpable for the carnage committed during war? *Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder [admittedly not a biblical argument but a cogent tangential issue]. Aha, I’ve already deviated from one of the guidelines I laid down—discuss only Scripture. But I’m so curious about your opinion. Skip it if you care.*

response: _____

My response: *It is to be expected that men should feel intense guilt after taking someone’s life without assurance that his death was personally deserved or being a part of human carnage. It is reported that more Nam vets have committed suicide than vets who died during the Viet Nam war. The Office of Veterans’ Affairs reported 22 suicides per day from all conflicts, 8,000/annum. [as of Feb 2016].*

Scripture: none in particular.

All of us handle the profusion of deaths on TV news, but they don’t keep us awake at night because they don’t involve actions we have committed which may have resulted in those deaths.

Nam vets called it the “Million Dollar” question. They asked each other, “Did you kill anybody?” I presume recent veterans [Gulf War, Afghanistan skirmish, Taliban wars, al Qaida, Desert Storm, or I.S.I.S.] have a similar question.

The US government has spent billions on counseling trying to convince veterans that neither they nor the US gov’t did anything sinful in taking the lives of military personnel or civilians in any war. Do you agree?

Yes No

I have wondered whether statistics would verify that few Conscientious Objector medics or Red Cross workers suffer from PTSD or commit suicide even though many are exposed to more carnage, very close up. I think not many. The gov’t evidently won’t publish that kind of info.

► #3 **My Question:** If international war is legitimized by God, shouldn't a Christian be able to say to an enemy combatant "I kill you in the name of the Jesus to the glory of God?" [Col 3.17,23]
Yes No pass

When we all return with Jesus on white horses [Rev 19.14], I will shout something like it and so will you.

A Further Question: Could [did?] Joshua shout the above statement during the conquest of Canaan?
Yes No pass *I've never heard a Christian Vet tell me he
 Joined the military or prepared to fight to glorify God.*

FOUR PRECEPTS: *Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him. . . .and whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as unto the Lord.* **Colossians 3.17,23**

Joshua said. . . "Shout; for the Lord hath given you the city" [Jericho]. . . .So the Lord was with Joshua. **Joshua 6.16,27**

"I [JHVH] will give it into thy hand. . . . Joshua built an altar unto the Lord God of Israel." **Joshua 8.18,30**

"The Lord fought for Israel." **Joshua 10.14 & 42**

► #4 **My Question** to the above "Four precepts": Please apply your answer to the above verses as it concerns taking lives in non-theocratic wars. Does anyone fight against God's idolatrous enemies, today? Yes example _____ No

Is God pleased today that His enemies are defeated in current wars? Yes example _____ No

Since Joshua's soldiers showed no remorse but gave glory to God for victory (**Josh 24**), why do Christians who support political wars consider the conflict horrible and not righteous? Rather, victory in theocratic war was to be celebrated even though they left town with a lot of spilt blood soaking into the ground.

► #5 **My Question:** How do you define **the difference between a legitimate war and an unjust war?** Please identify definitive factors, or at least the most common half dozen.

response: _____

My definition: A legitimate war is one specifically sanctioned by Jehovah. All others are illegitimate.

Concomitant Question: *In your opinion do some wars start as justifiable wars and become unjustifiable? [or vice versa]*

Yes No

► #6 **My Question:** Could you give a precise definition of murder? Would you please write it below?

response: _____

Here is my comprehensive 22-word definition of murder?

Murder is intentionally taking a human life without finding him individually guilty of a crime punishable by death, except in theocratic wars.

I believe this definition will fit all cultures and governments [civilized & uncivilized, religious & non-religious], in all ages, in every situation [including war, as well as any deaths occurring as a result of war, abortion, self-defense, involuntary manslaughter, crimes of passion, or the death penalty], and is acceptable with Scripture, too. Did your above definition do that?

► #7 **My Question:** Is it a sin to kill another godly Christian soldier on the enemy's side during war?

Yes, it's a sin No, it's not a sin I choose not to answer

My opinion: Your Christian "enemy" foot soldier's only "crime" is having a different political or philosophical [or economic?] viewpoint and patriotic allegiance to his motherland? He's just blindly obeying his superior. Consider both the Revolutionary War and the Civil War. Which side deserved to die (or lose)?

Just a note - Any meaningful dialog rests on your willingness to state your position clearly. If you have found yourself reticent or unwilling to fill in these blanks or check boxes about your position or opinion, it will be entirely impossible for you and me to carry on a meaningful conversation. I will answer every question you ask me; however, you must fill in the blanks and check the boxes. DocMyers3@gmail.com

I encourage you to go back and at least fill in the boxes now, so that both you and I know on what grounds we agree and on what grounds we disagree. Agreeing with me on some matters is not conceding defeat, and "Pass" is an acceptable answer.

Precept: I presume you believe that God has put all governments [and/or leaders] in place as stated in Romans 13.1.

"There is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation."

Context: the emperor, Nero or Claudius, AD 60? Note the use of the second person pronoun (6x vs. 3-6).

► #8 **My Question** to the above precept: Do you agree with a literal interpretation of the above verse.

I agree I disagree Why not? _____ Pass

Who then, has a biblical right to declare war on a "power. . .ordained of God"?

us them nobody or another response: _____

Acts 4.19 "right. . .hearken unto you more than. . ."

Acts 5.29 "obey God rather than men"

► #9 **My Second Question:** Do you hold to the opinion that as a citizen of America you have **the right to participate in the overthrow any of God's ordained "powers"** either your own government or another country's? [Rom 13.2,5]

Yes No Pass

Could you have fought in the Revolutionary War? Yes No

If yes, under what country's authority? _____

What Bible verses or passages would you use, for instance, to determine why we were:

(a) justified in initiating the "Liberation of Kuwait"?

(b) justified in refusing to help European friends fight Hitler for a couple of years, [until Asia bombed Hawaii]?

(c) killing Native Americans in the 1800's Indian wars? _____

What biblical criteria do you use, that I have not addressed?

(verses) _____

The context of Romans 13.2-4 admittedly, pertains to one's own citizenship and national government [not international*]. It would therefore countermand the Revolutionary War, because the statement is clear, "whosoever, therefore, resists the power resists the ordinance of God [the British government]. . . ." Wasn't "the South" as justified as "the Colonists"?
OPINION, please.

National rights to enforce laws "with the sword" (v.4)

Since this phrase is explicitly referring to national laws it cannot be extrapolated to mean that Gentile nations have the right to declare war "with the sword."

Concomitant question—

Did British colonists "resist the power" (v.1) of England in 1776? Yes No

I consider the Revolutionary War to be "resisting the ordinance of God" [Rom 13.2] and thus illegitimate. Do you? Yes No

* Extrapolating this context to include international borders should obviously allow others to apply this extrapolation principle to allow legitimacy [in the opposite direction] for vigilante justice. Do you accept vigilantism? Yes No

Precept: *If you feel that the right to engage in a revolution against one’s own government because of “[tea] taxation without representation” [or a king’s capriciousness] is justified by God, it should be easy to identify many other just causes for overthrowing one’s own [USA] government in the 21st century. see also APP #A, p.21, Part II*

► #10 **My Question** to the above precept: Please, will you **name several other issues [biblical or otherwise] which we as twenty-first century Americans** could fittingly use to condone a national uprising against our own federal government—a **coup, if you will?**

Using the reasoning of pro-military thinking, I have come up with about 15 issues you could list. See p.21, Part II.

your list: _____

Obviously, you realize that every one of Thom Jefferson’s 26 protestations vilifying British deeds must be included on your list [assuming you have studied the roots of the Revolutionary War]. Are there any of those 26 you feel our federal gov’t is culpable of today? I feel you should be able to see many abuses of our 2022 federal government which are at least as significant as the “[tea] taxation without representation” or many of TJ’s 25 other complaints as he declared resistance against his king. As I understand it, some of the fuss Thom kicked up was about issues which are still perpetuated by our own federal government in one form or another, today.

see p. 21, APPENDIX #A for my list, and then go read Thom’s “Declaration of Insurgence.”

From Scripture, **what assurance did a NT Christian British colonist have** that he would live under an honest, fair, just, nondiscriminatory, scrupulous, honorable, or non-corrupt government?

No assurance from Bible

What biblical right does a Christian have to “life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness”?

No assurance from Bible, except what comes from obedience to God’s Word.

Remember, God allowed many obedient OT believers to live under Babylonian, Philistine, Roman, Midianite, and Mesopotamian governments.

Your response: _____

n.b. None of the 26 enumerated grievances which Thom Jefferson wrote in the Declaration of Secession are “inalienable” biblical rights of any or all individuals [saved or not].

► #11 **My Question:** If you were a Christian German soldier in 1940 and were assigned to Auschwitz, would you have obeyed your government to rid the nation of “pernicious ethnic elements” (*gypsies, Jews, and homosexuals*) or would you have become a “Conscientious Objector” [*even at the cost of your job or life*]?

Yes, obey gov’t No, become Conscientious Objector Pass

What Scripture would you use to disobey your government? _____

► #12 **My Question:** Explain why **NO** early Church writer or Bible commentator supported participation in the military [*for 300 years*] until precisely 312 AD, the year in which Constantine lifted the persecution against Christians and recruited Christians to join his military machine.

Early writing scholars derived much of their position of peaceful non-engagement based on Jesus’ teachings. **Please show me any of Jesus’ words** which clearly countermand the pacifistic position of the early Church then explain why those writers were **incorrect in their hermeneutics.**

Your response: _____

For 3 centuries, the Church was quite consistently pacifist—actively non-supportive of military.

* “. . .we are not allowed to wear any [*military*] uniform that symbolizes a sinful act.” *Tertullian, b.160 AD*

* “Christians. . .know not how to fight.” *Irenaeus, 180 AD*

- * “. . .we, who in times past killed one another, do not now fight with our enemies.” *Justin Martyr, b. 180 AD*
- * “. . .concerning military service. . . . [the sword which the Lord had taken away]” *Tertullianus, 210 AD*
- * a commonly written tenet: war is inconsistent with Jesus’ message of meekness, mildness, peace, and forgiving others who violate our political views. *multiple sources not cited*
- * “War is an organized iniquity.” *a refrain of early writers*
- * “Evil ought not to be repaid with evil.” [context is military] *Anobius, 300 AD*
- * “The followers of peace used none of the implements of war.” *Clement, 3rd cent*
- * All writers who did speak about military aggression thought war was biblically unlawful.

My “Sine Qua Non.”

This is what you were hoping I would be bold enough to say clearly.

My Affirmation: National forgiveness toward a national enemy is based on grace, peace, and love. *Feed him. Lift him up. Encourage him to do his best. Pay for rebuilding his factories. Clothe his poor. Give him a job.*

We who believe the Bible teaches non-violence are faced with an uncomfortable conclusion. We must never leave the negotiating table even after the table has been blown to smithereens.

We would rather capitulate to an aggressor nation than to kill the aggressor’s children and civilians. Peace with others is more important than protecting our homeland’s national identity. The eternal sovereignty of a nation has never been granted to any country [*ahem, except Israel, which is not a topic central to this discussion*]. Capitulation is not dishonorable.

To relinquish our precious national sovereignty to another power may be agonizing [*I’m a flag waving American*], but to demand the right to murder millions of an enemy’s teenagers in order to protect America’s imaginary “borders,” or a man-made constitution [*which I love*], or a dictator’s property lines, or ethnic/linguistic regional boundaries, is unconscionable.

End Part I

Anybody up to it? I’d love to see a response, called:

“HOW PACIFISTS VIOLATE BIBLICAL HERMENEUTICAL PRINCIPLES”

Your work must address only MY faulty hermeneutics, not somebody else’s implications, extrapolations, context, inferences, applications, et al.

DocMyers3@gmail.com

Send me an email [*pdf?*] or photocopy of your answers to these 12 questions and I will quickly answer any questions or respond to any accusations.

What questions have I raised that you would like me to explain with Scripture?

Part II asks questions #13-54, plus includes several appendices: TJ’s grievances, culpability, war’s 15 “spoils,” capitulation [*the Danish example, a rebuff of “the lesser of 2 evils”*] and what caused me to doubt the evangelical Church’s position.

Part II is only available to those who participate in answering all 12 questions I ask in Part I.