

## ***WAR: 10 Biblical Principles***

1. God created the world for peace, not war. War is abnormal and temporary.
  - a. **Genesis 1:31** 31 God saw everything that he had made, and behold, it was very good.
2. God is not to blame for the existence war. We are. War is a consequence of our rebellion against him.
  - a. **Genesis 3:6** 6 When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was to be desired to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate, and she also gave some to her husband who was with her, and he ate.
3. Because of man's sinfulness (arrogance, greed, hatred, pride, selfishness), war is inevitable. We must be realists, not romantics. War is a fact of life.
  - a. **Ecclesiastes 3:1-8** 1 For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven: 2 a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted; 3 a time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; 4 a time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance; ...8 a time to love, and a time to hate; a time for war, and a time for peace.
  - b. **Matthew 24:6-7** 6 You will hear of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not alarmed, for this must take place, but the end is not yet. 7 For nation will rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom....
  - c. "In the last 3,421 years of recorded history, only 268 have seen no war."<sup>1</sup>
4. War is horrible. It involves death, destruction, fear, injustice, killing, pain, and violence. There's no way around it.
  - a. "My memories of the last war [WWI] haunted my dreams for years. Military service...includes the threat of every temporal evil: pain and death which is what we fear from sickness: isolation from those we love which is what we fear from exile: toil under arbitrary masters, injustice and humiliation, which is what we fear from slavery: hunger, thirst, cold and exposure which is what we fear from poverty."<sup>2</sup>
5. God is involved in wars. He himself is a warrior, and he fights on the side of good.
  - a. **1 Samuel 17:46-47** 46 This day Yahweh will deliver you [Goliath] into my hand, and I [David] will strike you down and cut off your head. And I will give the dead bodies of the host of the Philistines this day to the birds of the air and to the wild beasts of the earth, that all the earth may know that there is a God in Israel, 47 and that all this assembly may know that Yahweh saves not with sword and spear. For the battle is Yahweh's, and he will give you into our hand.
6. How a nation fights is as important as whether it wins. Ends do not justify means.

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<sup>1</sup> Will and Ariel Durant, "Lessons from History" (McLean, VA: The Trinity Forum, 2004), 36.

<sup>2</sup> C. S. Lewis, quoted in Armand Nicholi, *The Question of God: C.S. Lewis and Sigmund Freud Debate God, Love, Sex, and the Meaning of Life*, Kindle ed. (Free Press, 2002) 232-233.

- a. “Morally conscientious military personnel need to understand and frame their actions in moral terms so as to maintain moral integrity in the midst of the actions and stress of combat. They do so to explain to themselves and others how the killing of human beings they do is distinguishable from the criminal act of murder.”<sup>3</sup>
7. Warfighters must remember that all human beings, including their enemies, are created in the image of God.
  - a. **Genesis 1:27** 27 God created man in his own image. In the image of God he created him. Male and female he created them.
  - b. **Matthew 5:43-44** 43 You have heard that it was said, You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy. 44 But I [Jesus] say to you, Love your enemies.
8. The sacrificial death of a warfighter on behalf of his nation typifies the sacrificial death of Jesus on behalf of all humanity.
  - a. **Matthew 20:28** 28 The Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.
9. In the future God will end all warfare. War won’t exist in the new heavens and earth.
  - a. **Micah 4:2-3** 2 Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of Yahweh from Jerusalem. 3 He shall judge between many peoples and shall decide disputes for strong nations far away. And they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.
  - b. **Revelation 21:1-5** 1 Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. ...3 And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. 4 He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning, nor crying, nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away. 5 And he who was seated on the throne said, Behold, I am making all things new.
10. Warfighters who believe in Messiah Jesus will live again!
  - a. **Psalms 23:4-6** 4 Even though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil, for you are with me. Your rod and your staff, they comfort me. 5 You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil. My cup overflows. 6 Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of Yahweh forever.
  - b. **John 3:16** 16 God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.
  - c. **Revelation 20:6** 6 Blessed and holy is the one who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they will be priests of God and of Messiah, and they will reign with him for a thousand years.

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<sup>3</sup> Martin L. Cook, “Ethical Issues in War,” in *The U.S. Army War College Guide To National Security Issues*, Vol. II: National Security Policy And Strategy (Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute, 2010).