



## Week Three War and Peace

September 25, 2016

Woodbury Lutheran Church

Pastor Mark Koschmann

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*“And this is my prayer: that your love may abound more and more in knowledge and depth of insight, so that you may be able to discern what is best and may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ—to the glory and praise of God.”*

**Philippians  
1: 9-11**

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### **Class Objectives:**

- 1) Apply our Christian faith to the most pressing of issues today.
- 2) Equip ourselves for mission and ministry, especially in urban, suburban, and multicultural settings.
- 3) Grow as disciples of Jesus by placing a greater trust in Christ as our Lord and Savior. By trusting Jesus with our whole lives, we will - by the Spirit's power - more radically love and serve others.

### **How should Christians respond to war and military force?**

How should Christians respond to the ethical dilemmas of war and military force? Can Christians engage in warfare? Why or why not?

- You shall not murder (Exodus 20:13).
- *What does this mean?* We should fear and love God so that we do not hurt or harm our neighbor in his body, but help and support him in every physical need (Martin Luther's *Small Catechism*).
- "Put your sword back in its place," Jesus said to him, "for all who draw the sword will die by the sword (Matthew 26:52).
- Do not repay anyone evil for evil. Be careful to do what is right in the eyes of everyone. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone (Romans 12:17-18).
- "But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer" (Romans 13:4).
- Then Jesus said to them, "So give back to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's" (Matthew 22:21).
- "Peter and the other apostles replied: "We must obey God rather than human beings!" (Acts 5:29).
- "But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you" (Matthew 5:44).
- Jesus said, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.
- Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 5:3-10).

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### **Christ Against Culture: Christian Pacifism**

**Sep. 11:**  
*Living as a  
Disciple in  
America*

“The church does not exist to provide an ethos for democracy or any other form of social organization, but stands as a political alternative to every nation, witnessing to the kind of social life possible for those that have been formed by the story of Christ.”

“As long as it is assumed that war is always an available option, we will not be forced to imagine any alternative to war.” — Stanley Hauerwas

**Sep. 18:**  
*American Politics*

### **Christ of Culture: Christian Support for Military Force (e.g. “Just War”)**

“There are historic situations in which refusal to defend the inheritance of a civilization, however imperfect, against tyranny and aggression may result in consequences even worse than war.”

**Sep. 25:**  
*War &  
Peace*

“We take, and must continue to take, morally hazardous actions to preserve our civilization. We must exercise our power. But we ought neither to believe that a nation is capable of perfect disinterestedness in its exercise, nor become complacent about a particular degree of interest and passion which corrupt the justice by which the exercise of power is legitimized.” - Reinhold Niebuhr

**Oct. 2:**  
*Immigrants and  
Refugees*

### **St. Augustine’s Criteria for Just War**

1. **Just Authority:** Is the decision to go to war based on a legitimate political and legal process?
2. **Just Cause:** Has a wrong been committed to which war is the appropriate response?
3. **Right Intention:** Is the response proportional to the cause (i.e. is the war action limited to righting the wrong, and no further).
4. **Last Resort:** Has every other means of righting the wrong been attempted

**Oct. 9:**  
*Black Lives  
Matter*

### **Christ and Culture in Paradox: Theology of Two Kingdoms**

“Silence in the face of evil is itself evil: God will not hold us guiltless. Not to speak is to speak. Not to act is to act.”

**Oct. 16:**  
*The  
Messiness of  
Social Justice &  
the Beauty of the  
Gospel*

“Being a Christian is less about cautiously avoiding sin than about courageously and actively doing God's will.”

“There is no way to peace along the way of safety. For peace must be dared, it is itself the great venture and can never be safe. Peace is the opposite of security. To demand guarantees is to want to protect oneself. Peace means giving oneself completely to God’s commandment, wanting no security, but in faith and obedience laying the destiny of the nations in the hand of Almighty God, not trying to direct it for selfish purposes. Battles are won, not with weapons, but with God. They are won when the way leads to the cross.” - Dietrich Bonhoeffer

### **Christ Transforming Culture: Transform Culture of War to a Culture of Peace**

“We pray that people may move away from hatred to Love; and by so doing they move away from senseless violence and war to True Peace with GOD.”

— Errol Anthony Smythea

## Theology of the Two Kingdoms

1. Spiritual arena
2. Temporal arena
3. Finite elements of the human condition
4. People's relationship with neighbors
5. Human person's life of faith and relationship with God
6. Civil Use of Law (curb)
7. Theological Use of Law (mirror)
8. Laws, customs, and institutions that order human life
9. Law makes us aware of sin and need for forgiveness
10. God's promise of forgiveness and acceptance through the work of Jesus Christ
11. Establishes and maintains peace necessary for human community
12. Elevates importance of everyday tasks of the household, marketplace, and town hall
13. Frees the Christian to work for the good of family, neighbor, community, and world
14. Orients the Christian to life in this world

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### Left hand kingdom

God governs civil affairs in the left hand realm through the law.

### Right hand kingdom

God governs believers and the Church (gathering of believers) through the gospel.

## Testament of Dom Christian de Chergé (opened on Pentecost Sunday, May 26, 1996)

Facing a GOODBYE....

If it should happen one day - and it could be today - that I become a victim of the terrorism which now seems ready to engulf all the foreigners living in Algeria, I would like my community, my Church and my family to remember that my life was GIVEN to God and to this country. I ask them to accept the fact that the One Master of all life was not a stranger to this brutal departure. I would ask them to pray for me: for how could I be found worthy of such an offering? I ask them to associate this death with so many other equally violent ones which are forgotten through indifference or anonymity. My life has no more value than any other. Nor any less value.

In any case, it has not the innocence of childhood. I have lived long enough to know that I am an accomplice in the evil which seems to prevail so terribly in the world, even in the evil which might blindly strike me down. I should like, when the time comes, to have a moment of spiritual clarity which would allow me to beg forgiveness of God and of my fellow human beings, and at the same time forgive with all my heart the one who would strike me down. I could not desire such a death.

It seems to me important to state this. I do not see, in fact, how I could rejoice if the people I love were indiscriminately accused of my murder. It would be too high a price to pay for what will perhaps be called, the "grace of martyrdom" to owe it to an Algerian, whoever he might be, especially if he says he is acting in fidelity to what he believes to be Islam.

I am aware of the scorn which can be heaped on the Algerians indiscriminately. I am also aware of the caricatures of Islam which a certain Islamism fosters. It is too easy to soothe one's conscience by identifying this religious way with the fundamentalist ideology of its extremists. For me, Algeria and Islam are something different: it is a body and a soul. I have proclaimed this often enough, I think, in the light of what I have received from it.

I so often find there that true strand of the Gospel which I learned at my mother's knee, my very first Church, precisely in Algeria, and already inspired with respect for Muslim believers. Obviously, my death will appear to confirm those who hastily judged me naïve or idealistic:  
"Let him tell us now what he thinks of his ideals!"

But these persons should know that finally my most avid curiosity will be set free.

This is what I shall be able to do, God willing: immerse my gaze in that of the Father to contemplate with him His children of Islam just as He sees them, all shining with the glory of Christ, the fruit of His Passion, filled with the Gift of the Spirit whose secret joy will always be to establish communion and restore the likeness, playing with the differences. For this life lost, totally mine and totally theirs, I thank God, who seems to have willed it entirely for the sake of that JOY in everything and in spite of everything.

In this THANK YOU, which is said for everything in my life from now on, I certainly include you, friends of yesterday and today, and you, my friends of this place, along with my mother and father, my sisters and brothers and their families, You are the hundredfold granted as was promised! And also you, my last-minute friend, who will not have known what you were doing:

Yes, I want this THANK YOU and this GOODBYE to be a "GOD-BLESS" for you, too, because in God's face I see yours. May we meet again as happy thieves in Paradise, if it please God, the Father of us both.

AMEN ! INCHALLAH !

Algiers, 1st December 1993 / Tibhirine, 1st January 1994

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