

Justice and War: Theological Principles on the Use of Force and the Ethics of Armed Conflict

1 hour credit

Threats to security and peace throughout human history have prompted questions about the morality of war. The recent rise of non-state actors and new terrorist challenges adds to the complexity of such moral concerns. In the face of external security threats, what is the statesman's responsibility to act in the interest of peace? Is the use of force by political authorities a "necessary" or "lesser" evil, or is it an exercise of virtuous principle? What theological ideas should guide policymakers overseeing and military leaders engaging in armed conflict? This course will discuss the just war tradition and key just war objectives of order, justice, and peace. It will also identify the divergent theological roots of pacifism. The seminar will equip Christians--whether serving in policy and military capacities, in ministry around them, or simply engaging as citizens--to reflect theologically on the ethics of force and armed conflict. Co-hosted with *Providence: A Journal of Christianity & American Foreign Policy*, and taught by:

Keith Pavlischek, Ph.D., Military Affairs Expert and United States Marine Corps Colonel (Ret.)

Eric Patterson, Dean, Regent University School of Government and Research Fellow, Georgetown University's Berkley Center for Religion, Peace & World Affairs

Marc LiVecche, Ph.D., Managing Editor of *Providence* and Scholar of Christian Ethics, War, & Peace at the Institute on Religion and Democracy

Hosted by Jennifer Marshall

Reading Assignments:

A) Essential Readings (Required for Credit Students and Auditors)

- C.S. Lewis, "Why I am Not a Pacifist"*
- Keith Pavlischek, "Just and Unjust War in the Terrorist Age"*

B) Required Readings for Credit Students

- Nigel Biggar, *In Defence of War* (chapters 1-4, 7)
- J. Daryl Charles & Timothy J. Demy, *War, Peace & Christianity: Questions & Answers from a Just-War Perspective* (Selections 1-40, 50-53, 61-64, 99-100)

Articles and primary sources

- Augustine, "Letter to Boniface" and excerpts from *Contra Faustum**
- Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*,
II.II.40 <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/3040.htm>

- John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book IV, Ch. 20 • Schleithem Confession*
- Eric Patterson and Timothy J. Demy, eds. *Philosophers on War*. Introduction and chapters by Keith Pavlischek on John Calvin, and Marc LiVecche on Jean Bethke Elshtain*
- James Turner Johnson's "Just War, As it Was, And Is," *First Things*
- U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, "The Challenge of Peace" (1983) <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/war-and-peace/nuclear-weapons/upload/statement-the-challenge-of-peace-1983-05-03.pdf> and "The Challenge of Justice is Sown in Peace" (1993) <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/the-harvest-of-justice-is-sown-in-peace.cfm>
- Eric Patterson, *Ethics Beyond War's End*, "Conclusion: Toward a Twenty-First Century *Jus Post Bellum*"*
- Darrell Cole, "Good Wars." *First Things*
- Collected denominational statements on war*
- Paul Ramsey, *Basic Christian Ethics*, ch. 5*
- Paul Ramsey, "The Uses of Power," *The Just War: Force and Christian Responsibility**
- Reinhold Niebuhr, "Why the Church is Not Pacifist"*
- Reinhold Niebuhr, "Theology and Political Thought in the Western World" and "The Conflict Between Personal and Social Morality"*
- Keith Pavlischek, "Reinhold Niebuhr, Christian Realism and Just War Theory: A Critique" in *Christianity and Power Politics Today: Christian Realism and Contemporary Political Dilemmas*.*
- Marc LiVecche, "Reinhold Niebuhr & the Problem of Paradox"*

C) Recommended Reading:

- *Providence Reader** (Strongly recommended)
- A.J. Coates, *The Ethics of War*, chapters 4-11 (about 200 pages)
- Reinhold Niebuhr, *Children of Light and Children of Darkness*
- Jean Bethke Elshtain, chapter on genocide in *Ethics Beyond War's End**

* = Available on Canvas course page

Grading

Reading report (email to jmarshall@rts.edu with percent of reading completed by March 16) 25%

Writing 30%

- Summary paper: Complete a 10-12 page paper, double-spaced, making a theological argument on one of the issues presented in the class. This can be

presented in a ministry-applicable format, such as a Sunday school lesson or small group discussion or a white paper to be presented to a church or denominational committee considering an issue, rather than as a typical academic essay (though the latter is fine as well). (Email to jmarshall@rts.edu by March 16) 30%

Exam 25%

- Take-home, open-note exam; essay format based on key concepts presented in lectures and readings. (Email to jmarshall@rts.edu by Feb. 16)

Class participation 20%

Please direct questions to jmarshall@rts.edu