

Journal *for* BAPTIST THEOLOGY & MINISTRY

SPRING 2012 • VOLUME 9, NUMBER 1

Chaplaincy: Ministering in Caesar's House



Journal for Baptist Theology and Ministry

SPRING 2012 • Vol. 9, No. 1

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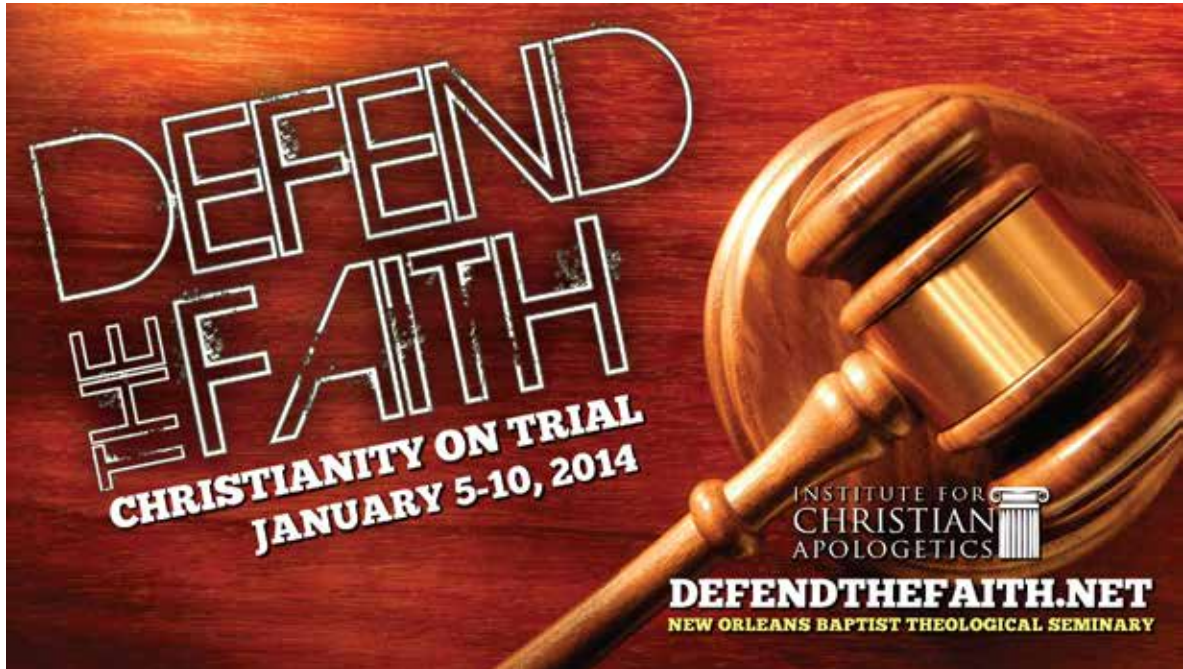
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BCTM exists to provide theological and ministerial resources to enrich and energize ministry in Baptist churches. Our goal is to bring together professor and practitioner to produce and apply these resources to Baptist life, polity, and ministry. The mission of the BCTM is to develop, preserve, and communicate the distinctive theological identity of Baptists.

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EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION CHAPLAINCY: MINISTERING IN CAESAR'S HOUSE



Steve W. Lemke, Ph.D.

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Chaplaincy, Faith, and the Public Square

It seems that almost every week there is some article or news account about the challenges that our military chaplains are experiencing in attempting to fulfill faithfully their ministerial calling within military structures that are increasingly hostile to faith traditions. Lawsuits have arisen from chaplains who felt that their First Amendment rights to free religious expression and to freedom of speech have been circumscribed. Chaplains have been told what they can and cannot say. The recent repeal of the longstanding “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” (DADT) policy regarding the practice of homosexuality in the military has also created unique challenges and tensions for evangelical chaplains. Chaplains face a new day in many ways about how to maintain their own ministerial calling and beliefs with integrity while still staying within the parameters of a secular government agency.

The Apostle Paul was a First Century version of a prison chaplain and military chaplain. He shared his joy with his Philippian readers that his imprisonment in a Roman military prison had not hindered his ministry, but in fact had opened up the opportunity to witness to the Roman imperial Praetorian Guard soldiers (Phil 1:12-14). The Praetorian Guard soldiers were an elite military group who served in Caesar’s house and in other key roles for the Roman government. Paul’s imprisonment provided him with the unique opportunity to minister to them and share the gospel with them.

Such is the opportunity for ministry afforded for our military chaplains. They can minister to soldiers in unique situations and locations that are inaccessible to a local church ministry. Military chaplains are embedded in military units, and thus can build relationships and trust with them. They are uniquely positioned to assist military personnel in times of crises and challenges. They provide an incredible ministry to our military personnel, and greatly enhance the morale and well-being of our soldiers. Of course, not only do our military chaplains provide an incredibly valuable ministry, but so also do hospital chaplains, prison chaplains, chaplains for police and

other emergency responders, and market place and industrial chaplains. All these chaplains serve outside the traditional church, working in a secular setting like Paul, ministering to the soldiers who served in Caesar's house. Indeed, in serving in several hospitals as a hospital chaplain, I have had some opportunities of ministry that would not have been possible apart from the access and presence I had by virtue of that position.

In October 2011, the Institute for Faith and the Public Square and the Baptist Center for Theology and Minister co-sponsored a conference on the New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary campus on the subject, "Chaplaincy: Ministering in Caesar's House." A number of excellent presentations were made, including the following:

- "Current Issues in Chaplaincy from an Evangelical Perspective," by Dr. Page Brooks, Army Chaplain and NOBTS Assistant Professor of Theology and Culture
- "The Impact of Repealing 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' on Military Chaplaincy," by Army Chaplain (Brigadier General, Ret.) Doug Lee
- "What Endorsers Look for in Chaplain Candidates," by former Army Chaplain Dr. Jim Hartz, Chaplain (Lt. Col., Ret.), currently chaplaincy consultant for the North American Mission Board
- "The Chaplaincy Behind Bars," by Prison Chaplain Rev. Orlando Madrid (Major), Federal Bureau of Prisons
- "Chaplaincy: Navigating between the Sacred and Secular," by Dr. Forrest Kirk, former Navy Commander and current hospital chaplain at a Veteran's Administration hospital in Oklahoma
- "Religious Distinctives in a Pluralistic Setting," by Dr. Jim Hightower, hospital Chaplain and Vice President for Chaplaincy of the McFarland Institute in New Orleans
- "Praying in Jesus' Name," by Dr. John Laing, Army Chaplain (Lt. Col.), and Associate Professor of Theology at the Harvard School of Theology
- "Reflections of a Retiring Military Chaplain," by former Army Chief of Chaplains (Major General) Douglas Carver, now serving as the Executive Director of Chaplain Services for the North American Mission Board
- "What Every Chaplain Needs to Know about Biomedical Ethics," by Dr. Steve Lemke, Professor of Philosophy and Ethics at NOBTS
- "How to Serve God When the Government is Your Boss," by Rev. Michael Mann, former Chaplain for the Louisiana Senate and now Chaplain of Clarity Hospice
- "Panel Discussion: Ministry, Chaplaincy and Homosexuality," with Dr. Jim Hartz; Dr. P. J. Banks, former Navy Chaplain and now Director of Remember the Fallen organization; and Fr. Walter Austin, retired Chaplain with the Louisiana National Guard (Lt. Col.) and pastor of Ascension of Our Lord Catholic Church in LaPlace, Louisiana.

All of these presentations were extraordinarily rich in content and wisdom. Out of these presentations, several articles have been chosen for publication by the *Journal for Baptist Theology and Ministry*. In addition, we have added a valuable article about the related issue of the implications of holy war in the Old Testament for New Testament Christians by Dr. Dan Heimbach, Professor of Ethics at Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary. I want to express my particular appreciation for three NOBTS professors who served as co-editors of this edition of the *Journal* — Dr. Lloyd Harsch and Dr. Page Brooks, who had a leadership role in the conference, and Dr. Adam Harwood.

We believe that these articles will be valuable for anyone involved in chaplaincy or considering the chaplaincy ministry. It also addresses for us all a unique fulcrum point in our culture regarding the appropriate interaction between the church and state. We express our profound thanks to each of our contributors of articles and book reviews.

A Transition

I have been serving as Executive Editor of the *Journal for Baptist Theology and Ministry* since it was first printed in Spring 2003. However, my work was largely a supportive and advisory role. Dr. Stan Norman, the founding Director of the Baptist Center for Theology and Ministry, was the primary Editor of the *Journal for Baptist Theology and Ministry*, and played an invaluable role in editing the first five editions of the *Journal*.

However, when Stan left NOBTS to assume important responsibilities at a Baptist college in 2006, I filled in as Acting Director of the Baptist Center, Acting Editor of *JBTM*, and occupant of the McFarland Chair of Theology. Eventually I assumed these responsibilities more permanently, and it has been my privilege and joy to serve as director and editor for the last seven years to try to serve our Baptist churches and students through the Baptist Center and the *Journal*. Please allow me to reflect back on what God has done through the Baptist Center during these years.

First of all, the last ten publications of *JBTM* have been under my editorship. These publications of the *Journal* have addressed a wide range of topics, based around the following broad themes:

- Baptists Ministering in the Midst of Disaster
- Baptists on Mission
- Baptists in Dialogue
- Foundations for Baptists Doctrines and Distinctives
- The Proclamation of the Gospel
- Baptists and the Doctrine of Salvation
- The Bible and Theology
- Calvinist, Arminian, and Baptist Perspectives on Soteriology

- “Tell the Generations Following”: A *Festschrift* in Honor of Dr. Daniel Holcomb
- The Chaplaincy: Ministering in Caesar’s House

Also, we enhanced the Baptist Center website with resources such as Baptist confessions, access to rare early works in Baptist theology, a Baptist Blog with interviews of SBC leaders, Baptist radio with recordings of helpful sermons and presentations, and recognition of Churches of Excellence in the SBC. In addition, we also sponsored or co-sponsored a number of excellent conferences, including:

- “What Is a Baptist?” featuring a paper presentation by Dr. Steve Lemke (2007)
- “The Emerging Church, the Emergent Church, and the Faith Once Delivered to the Saints,” highlighted by a presentation by Dr. Ed Stetzer (2008)
- The John 3:16 Conference at First Baptist Church in Woodstock, GA (2008)
- “The Trinity,” featuring a presentation by Dr. Millard Erickson (2009)
- The Acts 1:11 Conference at North Metro Baptist Church in Lawrenceville, GA (2009)
- The Jerry Vines Preaching Conference, at First Baptist Church in Atlanta, GA (2010)
- The Power in the Pulpit Conference at First Baptist Church in Atlanta, GA (2011)
- “Thomas Grantham on the Theology of Justification and Atonement,” highlighting a paper presentation by Dr. Matt Pinson
- “Chaplains: Ministering in Caesar’s House,” a conference co-sponsored by the Institute for Faith and the Public Square
- “Apologetics in the Local Church,” a conference co-sponsored with the Institute for Christian Apologetics, featuring a presentation by Dr. Bryant Wright
- “The Voice Bible,” highlighted by a presentation by Dr. David Capes
- “Medical Ethics: Who Lives? Who Dies? Who Decides?” co-sponsored with the Institute for Faith and the Public Square and the Center for Medical Ethics of Louisiana Right to Life

In 2011 we helped revitalize the SBC Today blog, which became over the next year one of the highest rated religion blogs in the world. However, the blog responsibilities were incredibly demanding, and it was eventually handed off to Truett-McConnell College. This experience further highlighted the reality of the limits and time demands imposed on my work with the Baptist Center, and especially the time-consuming work of soliciting and editing articles for the Journal, because of my responsibilities as Provost and Professor at NOBTS.

So it is with some relief and joy that I have handed off the Director of the Baptist Center, Editor of *JBTM*, and McFarland Chair of Theology off to Dr. Adam Harwood, the newly-elected Associate Professor of Theology at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary. Dr. Harwood comes to this position with both ministerial experience in local churches and as a Theology teacher at Truett-McConnell College in Georgia. He is author of two books addressing a key issue in Baptist theology — *The Spiritual Condition of Infants: A Biblical-Historical Survey and Systematic Proposal*, and *Born Guilty? A Southern Baptist View of Original Sin*. I have every confidence that with the more focused attention he can give to guiding the Baptist Center and editing the *Journal*, Dr. Harwood will lead the Baptist Center to new heights. With this edition of the *Journal* we are transitioning to his being editor. I will return to my supportive role as executive editor.

Let me express my great appreciation to all the persons who have made presentations at Baptist Center events, submitted articles or book reviews for the *Journal*, our book review editors (Page Brooks, Dennis Phelps, and Archie England), and others who have assisted in editing and producing the *Journal*. You have all enhanced the quality of *JBTM*. I could not have performed these responsibilities in the Baptist Center and the *Journal* without the invaluable assistance of persons too many to name, but especially Christopher Black, Rhyne Putman, Robert Littlefield, Gary Myers, and Suzanne Davis. Also, thank you to those of you who have attended Baptist Center events, or were regular readers of the *Journal* these last seven years. Your support has been a great blessing and encouragement to me, and I pray that the Baptist Center and the *Journal* have made at least a modest contribution in some way to your life and ministry!

Steve W. Lemke

Executive Editor, *Journal for Baptist Theology and Ministry*

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION



Adam Harwood, Ph.D.

Adam Harwood is the Associate Professor of Theology, occupying the McFarland Chair of Theology; Director of the Baptist Center for Theology and Ministry; Editor, Journal for Baptist Theology and Ministry at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary.

In 2002, Stan Norman founded the Baptist Center for Theology and Ministry (BCTM) at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary (NOBTS). The next year, he published the first issue of the *Journal for Baptist Theology and Ministry (JBTM)*. In 2004, Norman organized the BCTM's first conference. His vision and work has resulted in the BCTM hosting several conferences which have gathered some of Southern Baptists' finest pastor-scholars to address issues which are important for ministry in the local church. Norman now serves as Provost of Oklahoma Baptist University and is a valued friend of NOBTS and the present editor.

As the Provost at NOBTS, Steve Lemke provides administrative oversight at one of the largest seminaries in the world. This is in addition to his classroom instruction, denominational service, and publishing commitments. His responsibilities are legion. In August of 2005, Hurricane Katrina displaced the NOBTS faculty, staff, and students. But by God's provision, President Kelley's leadership, and Steve Lemke's oversight, all of the classes continued to meet through off-site and online venues. One year after the storm, NOBTS returned to its rebuilt campus. Since that time, Lemke has served as director of the BCTM and editor of the *JBTM*. His contribution to the kingdom of God and assistance to Southern Baptists has been immeasurable.

As I transition into the roles of director of the BCTM and editor of the *JBTM*, I hope to build faithfully upon the work of Stan Norman and Steve Lemke.

This issue of the *JBTM* focuses on chaplaincy. Most of the articles reflect concerns which are particular to military chaplaincy, but the principles can be applied to other areas of chaplaincy, such as hospital, prison, or workplace, as well as to ministry in other settings. The men and women of the United States armed forces are stationed at military bases throughout the world. Military chaplains serve as resources for those troops who wish to practice the religion of their choice. Like other Christian denominations—and other religions—Southern Baptists endorse qualified individuals who are paid by the military to serve as chaplains among the troops. Such an arrangement between the church and the state is critically important to preserve the free exercise of religion among the troops, but can become difficult due to changing cultural views and legislation, both of which impact this complex church-state relationship.

In this issue's first article, Page Brooks introduces three challenges facing chaplains and suggests they can be met by adhering to the motto of "cooperation without compromise." In the second article, John Laing addresses the questions surrounding the theology and practice of military chaplains praying in Jesus' name at state-funded, secular events. In the third article, which is drawn from his recent Ph.D. dissertation in Theology from NOBTS, Forrest Kirk explores the role of chaplains as "doctors of the soul" in medical centers. In the fourth article, Daniel Heimbach explains why holy war as seen in the Old Testament is not a viable option today. The fifth article offers valuable insights and reflections from Douglas Carver following three decades of service as a military chaplain. In the sixth article, Douglas Lee chronicles the legal shifts impinging upon religious liberty and offers chaplains three "non-negotiables" in moving forward. The issue ends with reviews of three books which are not specific to chaplaincy but may prove helpful to all who serve in Christian ministry, especially Baptists.

The articles in this issue were presented at a conference on chaplaincy sponsored by the Institute for Faith and the Public Square (IFPS) at NOBTS. It is for their work in organizing that conference which generated these presentations that Paige Brooks and Lloyd Harsch are recognized as co-editors of this issue.

IN AFFIRMATION OF “COOPERATION WITHOUT COMPROMISE”: THE CHAPLAINCY IN A PLURALISTIC SOCIETY



Page Brooks, Ph.D.

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Army chaplains have been ministering to soldiers in every minor and major conflict of the United States. In 1775, the Second Continental Congress authorized chaplains to serve for \$20 a month, just above the pay of a first lieutenant. Throughout the history of the US Army Chaplaincy, chaplains have served in a variety of roles: religious leader, commander's ethical advisor, education officer, and when necessary, even a paramedic for the wounded.¹

Over the centuries, the Army Chaplaincy developed a way of ministering that is now summed up in the phrase “cooperation without compromise.” I believe this approach is not only useful for military chaplaincy, but also other types of chaplaincy. My purpose in this essay is to affirm this ethical stance for military, marketplace, hospital, and other forms of chaplaincy in a pluralistic and postmodern society. I also wish to show how this ethical stance is useful for other types of chaplaincy as well. Last, I will identify major issues that I believe will be challenges in the most immediate future of the chaplaincy.

One Phrase

What do we mean by “cooperation without compromise”? The phrase means that chaplains can serve in the military and cooperate with others without having to compromise their own convictions or beliefs. In the military, chaplains constantly interact with those from other faiths, whether they are soldiers or fellow chaplains.

Chaplains are assigned to units and are charged with the spiritual care of every soldier in the

¹“Military Chaplains: A Historian's View from the American Revolution to Iraq,” *Christian Science Monitor*, Oct 30, 2007; <http://www.csmonitor.com/2007/1030/p25s02-usmi.html>, accessed August 11, 2011.

unit, not just soldiers that are of the chaplain's particular faith group. For example, Catholic chaplains are not only taking care of Catholic soldiers. Rather, chaplains care for every soldier in the unit by providing counseling and spiritual care whenever and wherever they can. The chaplain also advises the commander on the welfare of the soldiers and gives an account of their morale. In such a way, the chaplain is quite literally caring for every soldier in the unit.

At the same time, the chaplain also works with other chaplains from other faiths. It would not be unusual in any deployed environment for several chaplains to be located at one base, representing several different faith groups. While deployed to Iraq in 2010, I served with eight other chaplains at one base, representing the Catholic, Presbyterian, Lutheran, and charismatic denominations. On several occasions, the Presbyterian chaplain and I conducted Bible studies together and we "covered down" (or substituted) for each other while away from our soldiers.

In all these situations, chaplains are "cooperating without compromising." We cooperated with everyone, soldier and chaplain alike, as much as we could without compromising our own beliefs, doctrines, or ethics. I believe such a model can be useful for other types of chaplaincy in today's world in dealing with the current societal challenges. Over the years of ministry, I have served as a fire, police, and marketplace chaplain, in addition to serving as a military chaplain. I would constantly refer to the phrase "cooperation without compromise" as a model for how to deal with challenging situations I would encounter.

Two Tasks

Chaplains have two primary tasks. First, we represent the faith group that has endorsed us as a chaplain. We minister to those in our care under the auspices of that faith group. Second, we are to minister to those under our care, whether they are soldiers, firemen, police, or employees. These two tasks sometimes conflict, which is why the model of "cooperation without compromise" is so useful. I have observed that chaplains will sometimes emphasize one over the other. For chaplains who believe that maintaining their doctrinal positions are of utmost importance, the care of people will sometimes suffer. For chaplains who emphasize their pastoral role in caring for people, doctrines may be compromised.

In what situations may chaplains find themselves in which they need to balance these roles? The situations can be in worship leadership (worship services or Bible studies); counseling; performing ordinances, sacraments, and religious rites; or advising a commander or supervisor on ethical issues. Maintaining the model of "cooperation without compromise" provides a guideline by which chaplains can engage their context without compromising their own convictions.

For example, while deployed I counseled on several occasions a homosexual soldier (though at the time he did not disclose his sexual orientation to the army unit). At the start of our counseling, I plainly told him that while I did not mind counseling with him on various issues, I could not condone his choice of sexual orientation. So, for several months I counseled him on various issues and we maintained a caregiver relationship, all the while knowing that I did not condone his

lifestyle. In this way, I was able to maintain my own convictions while still ministering to the soldier as his chaplain. I felt no threat from the situation to have to compromise my doctrines. At the same time, I was able to fulfill my role as a chaplain and as a minister of Christ, to care for every person I could.

As society becomes more and more pluralistic, situations will occur that will challenge the chaplain's role. I do not envision the position of chaplain fading away any time soon, in either the military or in other contexts (such as hospitals, prisons, or the marketplace). News reports and polls show that Americans are still spiritual and maintain a faith, even though they are not affiliating with an organized religion or organization.² However, I do envision the role of the chaplain changing. The chaplain will be seen more as a spiritual advisor or guide rather than a pure minister representing his or her faith group. Or, the chaplain will be seen as more of a counselor. Such an approach can already be seen in most Clinical Pastoral Education programs around the country where chaplains are trained to keep their personal religious agendas separate from their role as a caregiver in the clinical environment.

The challenge before chaplains is to learn how to maintain the balance of roles in the model of "cooperation without compromise." I often use the illustration of building a house in a neighborhood that has been devastated by a hurricane. A person rebuilding his home may be asked to lend others his tools, supplies, and parts. Out of love for people, he may allow his neighbors to borrow a window, a door, a nail, and other items. However, if he is not careful, he no longer can rebuild his own home. Such is the case if chaplains compromise too much on convictions and doctrines. An evangelical chaplain who compromises on core doctrinal issues is no longer an evangelical and no different than any other chaplain from another faith group. However, if we build and construct our homes and fences in the right way, we can hopefully co-exist, cooperating without compromising.

Three Challenges

Three challenges loom on the ministry horizon of all types of chaplains: postmodernity, religious pluralism, and homosexual rights. Postmodernity is the intellectual and cultural worldview that believes no absolute foundation for truth exists.³ While modernity (represented by thinkers such as Descartes) sought to find order, symmetry, and an ultimate foundation for all truth, postmodernity challenges such notions by advocating play, chance, and relativism.

A cultural illustration to explain the mark of postmodernity in Western society may be drawn from World War II. During the late 1800s, economic and scientific progress was producing hopes for society, such as the eradication of disease, the education of the masses, and efficiency

²Dan Gilgoff, "Many Americans Are Saying Goodbye to Religion, but Not Faith," *U.S. News and World Report*, May 6, 2009; <http://www.usnews.com/news/religion/articles/2009/05/06/many-americans-are-saying-goodbye-to-religion-but-not-faith>, accessed August 12, 2011.

³For a helpful, evangelical perspective on postmodernity, see Millard Erickson, *The Postmodern World: Discerning the Times and the Spirit of the Age* (Wheaton: Crossway Books, 2002).

in industrial production. World War I came and was supposed to be the war to end all wars. However, World War II erupted within a generation, and with it came the atomic power to eradicate entire cities. Modernity, emphasizing the use of the human intellect to understand and advance humanity, failed as the hope of humanity because instead of bringing life, it brought death. Many of the challenges evangelicals face today are created by postmodernity. While relativism is nothing new (Consider Pilate's question to Jesus in John 18:38), postmodernity creates an incubator for other challenges such as religious pluralism.

A question constantly facing military chaplains is the question of how one defines a religion. For centuries the military chaplaincy was primarily defined by the three major denominations: Protestantism, Catholicism, and Judaism. Today, many different faith groups seek recognition by the Department of Defense to endorse chaplains. Even secular humanist groups are now seeking recognition as a "religion" to endorse chaplains. The question becomes: How does one define a religion? While the Department of Defense does have guidelines on what constitutes a religion, because of the postmodern worldview, any individual or group of individuals could claim their own worldview as a "religion" and seek recognition. This can create complicated situations at the lower unit levels when dealing with issues of religious accommodation for soldiers in war zones.

This leads to the second challenge of the chaplaincy, religious pluralism. Although religious pluralism inherently presents challenges to any religion or denomination that holds to soteriological exclusivity (Christians, for example, regard Christ to be the only way of salvation), the chaplaincy is unique in that chaplains are called to minister to people of different religions. In the context of the military chaplaincy, our charge is to minister to those of different religions and to protect each military member's exercise of religious freedom in the midst of military duty.

Chaplains have always served in a pluralistic setting, both religiously and politically. In other words, our environment always places us in a context in which we serve along side those who differ from us. The challenge in the postmodern society is that the parameters of religious pluralism will continue to expand. It is likely that the definition of a religion will continue to be blurred and the pressure will increase for chaplains to compromise their doctrines and convictions.

Army chaplains employ the phrase "perform or provide." This means that chaplains support the religious freedoms of all military members by either performing the religious function or providing someone else who can provide the religious function. For example, as a protestant chaplain, I cannot perform the Catholic mass. However, if I have Catholic soldiers in my unit, it becomes my duty to ensure mass is provided a reasonable number of times for those soldiers. While I will not perform those religious functions, I must ensure the religious functions are provided. I predict the political pressure will increase for chaplains to provide religious functions for any person of any religion and to reduce any exclusivist tendencies. In some sense, the function of a chaplain in any ministry context could be reduced to merely the job of a counselor.

The last challenge for chaplaincy is homosexual rights. After the 2011 repeal of Don't Ask Don't Tell (DADT), homosexuals may serve openly in the military. Presently, there are

limitations on benefits to those who are homosexuals. For example, spousal benefits are limited to heterosexual relationships. Also, chaplains are not required to provide any religious functions or services to those who are homosexuals if it violates the doctrines and policies of their endorsing/denominational agency.

Homosexual rights are increasingly being presented as civil rights. Just as African-Americans fought for civil rights in the 1950s and 1960s, so now homosexuals are fighting for civil rights today. While I do not advocate anyone being discriminated against for the basic rights due to any person, I believe chaplains will continue to face the task of defending their own doctrines, convictions, and rights in the face of continued political pressure. By regulation, no military chaplain can be forced to perform any religious function outside of his doctrinal convictions or the policies set forth by his or her denominational endorser.

Conclusion

The best path forward for chaplains in any ministry context is a reaffirmation of the philosophy behind “cooperation without compromise.” Chaplains can continue to cooperate with those from other religions and denominations to provide religious functions and care for all those in their ministry contexts, as long as they are not under compulsion to do anything that would violate their doctrinal convictions. At the same time, chaplains may affirm the philosophy of “perform or provide” in handling situations that may be questionable. If the chaplain is not able to perform the religious function, the chaplain may provide some options for the person. For example, a military chaplain is required to ensure his or her soldiers have their religious needs provided for, even if the chaplain has to arrange for another chaplain to provide the services. In the same way, a marketplace chaplain may recommend or refer a person to another chaplain or minister for services the chaplain is unable to provide. In this way, chaplains are not required to compromise their own doctrines and convictions, but may also continue to minister to any person in their ministry context.

As the pressure and controversy over religious issues in the public square continues to grow, chaplains must constantly find ethical and theological solutions to maintain their own convictions and yet not acquiesce to political agendas or contemporary pressures. Jesus’ words in Matt 10:16 provide a wise admonition for all chaplains: May we continue to minister and be “as shrewd as snakes and innocent as doves.”

PRAYING IN JESUS' NAME



John D. Laing, Ph.D.

John D. Laing is Associate Professor of Systematic Theology at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, Houston Campus, and serves as a Chaplain (Lieutenant Colonel) in the Texas Army National Guard.

Introduction

The title of this article is “praying in Jesus’ name.” It should be noted from the outset that there is a vagueness in this title due to the intense feelings associated with it and to the history of related issues. A paper with this title could address *how* to pray, could investigate, by means of historical inquiry, the specific cases in which persons, corporations, or municipalities have been sued over prayers in Jesus’ name, or have sought to restrict such prayers; could study the nature of prayer and the biblical meaning of praying “in Jesus’ name”; we could ask the specific question about the appropriateness of secularly-funded chaplains offering sectarian prayers at largely secular events; or could address the topic as symbolic for a larger discussion of religion in the public square. All or most of these issues are valid areas of interest and concern, though in varying degrees, to those engaged in chaplaincy ministry; thus, an attempt will be made to touch on most of them.¹

Prayers at Secular Events

It seems that every week there is a report of someone being harassed, censored, or fired for praying in Jesus’ name. Just last week, I received an email which claimed that some Veteran’s Administration hospitals and cemeteries continue to disallow the use of the name “Jesus” in prayer, though a settlement over the issue was eventually reached. It should be noted that much of the recent controversy surrounded prayers at the Veteran’s National Cemetery in Houston, where I live, and that I have conducted internment ceremonies there without incident.² Still,

¹Elsewhere, I have examined many of these issues in some detail, and those interested in evangelical service in military chaplaincy may wish to consult those works for further discussion. See my *In Jesus’ Name: Evangelical and Military Chaplaincy* (Eugene, OR: Resource, 2010); and “Evangelicals, Ceremonial Deism and the Establishment Clause,” *Global Journal of Classical Theology*, 9.2 (2011): 1–22; also presented at Southwest Regional meeting of Evangelical Theological Society (Dallas, TX, 2009) and at National Meeting of Evangelical Theological Society (Atlanta, GA, 2010).

²The dispute regarding the Veteran’s National Cemetery in Houston made national headlines and led to calls for Congressional hearings. See, for example, James Dao, “Final Resting Place, and Battleground” *New York Times*, August 31, 2011, A13; Todd Starnes, “Texas Lawmaker Calls for Congressional Probe

the number of complaints by Christians who have claimed their prayers have been restricted in various settings continues to rise and suggests a widespread problem may exist. Perhaps the most well-known person to make such a charge is Gordon Klingenschmitt. He is the former Navy chaplain who has come to be known as “the chaplain who prayed in Jesus’ name,” [that is how he refers to himself, anyway] the suggestion being that he is one of the few who has dared utter the name of Christ in the course of executing his duties as a military chaplain. The suggestion alone is enough to elicit the ire of those chaplains who serve the Lord faithfully without compromise, but Klingenschmitt has taken it further, claiming to have been persecuted and eventually court-martialed for praying in Jesus’ name! Thankfully, those claims have not had the detrimental effect upon chaplain recruitment that one might expect, but they have put something of a dark cloud over chaplaincy ministry. There appears, at least at times, to be a latent suspicion of chaplains in many churches, especially the more theologically conservative congregations. Parishioners often wonder, either to themselves or expressly to chaplains who are members of their congregations, why *they* were not also court-martialed. Have they (and maybe we should here add “we”) compromised in order to get ahead? Have we denied the name of Christ in the name of professionalism, pluralism, or political correctness? Let me state it clearly and without equivocation: Mr. Klingenschmitt was not court-martialed for praying in Jesus’ name, and a careful analysis of his testimony or investigation of the documents he has posted on his website will make this abundantly clear.

Nevertheless, he has complained of widespread persecution and intimidation of evangelical chaplains within the U.S. Navy, and in this, he is far from alone. Space constraints preclude an adequate discussion of the complex issues involved in the complaints that have been lodged against the Navy, but suffice it to say that litigation is still pending on some cases brought by evangelical chaplains and their endorsers against the Secretaries of the Navy and Defense, and it is clear that many people have been hurt by the proceedings and events leading up to them.

One of the documents to which Klingenschmitt refers as evidence of forced pluralism (he says, “universalism”), intimidation, and religious persecution in the military, is a talking paper developed and published by the Armed Services Chaplains Board, entitled “Public Prayer in Military Ceremonies and Civic Occasions.” The paper addresses situations in which chaplains are called upon to offer prayers at secular events and admonishes chaplains to consider the audience present when choosing words for the prayers. For example, the paper states, “We are often invited to contribute with the offering of public prayer. These occasional ministries, whether they take the form of evening prayers at sea aboard ship or during a formal change of command, almost always take place in a religiously plural context. Unlike our role within the context of faith-specific worship settings, the offering of public prayer at these more secular events calls for a particular sensitivity. This is a burden unique to those who perform their ministries outside

Into Ban of Christian Prayers at Military Funerals,” <http://www.foxnews.com/politics/2011/07/26/texas-lawmaker-calls-for-congressional-probe-into-ban-christian-prayers-at/#ixzz1kbUBjiSG>, accessed January 26, 2012.

the traditional parish setting and in the institutional environment of the military.”³ Of course, chaplaincy ministry in prisons, hospitals, businesses, and the like could also be added. The paper suggests that chaplains ought to seek ways to offer prayers with which all in attendance can agree in an effort to create unity and to avoid offending some participants. However, as I have noted on more than one occasion, this search—even if undertaken in earnest—can prove exceedingly difficult, since there is a growing number of vocal atheists in our culture who do not agree with any prayer.⁴

The paper raises several questions that are worthy of continued discussion. For example, it asks, “Is the chaplain praying on behalf of the assembled audience, or is the chaplain leading the audience in prayer? Is public prayer ‘our own prayer,’ a private prayer, or does it somehow belong to the moment or to the occasion? Who is requesting the prayer? What are the expectations of the requester(s)?”⁵ It seems that the authors of the paper have already decided that the prayer is not *private* and the chaplain is not *leading* the people in prayer, but is instead offering the prayer *on behalf of* the people. In fact, while the authors of the paper explicitly state that the commander/organizer is in control of the event (and thus, the prayer), they suggest that it is really the audience that has ownership of the prayer. The unspoken assumption here seems to be that the faith composition of the audience should dictate the content of the prayer and the one praying is simply the instrument giving voice to the community’s prayer. To be fair, the paper does note that those chaplains who cannot pray in a way that works under these guidelines should not be reprimanded or receive unfavorable evaluations as a result, but also suggests that they should refuse to offer the prayer due to their inability to do so in a pluralistic fashion. These may appear to be good practical suggestions, but on a conceptual level, these issues naturally lead to questions related to the general nature of prayer that are often overlooked. More specifically, they raise questions related to the nature of corporate prayer.

The Nature of Prayer

What is prayer and what is the nature of corporate prayer? These are questions typically ignored in theology programs; if they are addressed in seminary, they are usually relegated to the counseling departments and treated as a “variety of religious experience,” or they are handled under *practical theology* (a reprehensible designation because of what it suggests about systematic and biblical theology) and turned into questions related to how one ought to pray with little attention given to the more fundamental issues. This is not meant to demean counseling or praxis in theological education, but rather to critique the way systematic theology is often taught (and I’m a theology professor!).

³“Talking Paper: Public Prayer in Military Ceremonies and Civic Occasions,” Armed Services Chaplains Board, 1.

⁴See my *In Jesus’ Name*, 45–46; “The Bible and U.S. Military Chaplains” Dunham Bible Museum Lecture, Houston Baptist University, 2010; and “Evangelicals, Ceremonial Deism and the Establishment Clause.”

⁵“Talking Paper,” 4.

Prayer has been defined in numerous ways, but a common thread exists in all definitions; they always involve some reference to communion with God on the part of the supplicant.⁶ It is worth noting that the questions raised by the talking paper are not only applicable to prayers at secular events, but to all prayers offered in a corporate setting, even prayers offered in church or chapel services! When the pastor or chaplain gets up to offer the invocation for a worship service, we still must ask if he is praying his own prayer with which the congregants may agree and join or disagree and reject, or if he is rather supposed to anticipate possible objections and offenses the prayer may cause some of those in attendance and adjust accordingly because he is not really the one praying; the corporate group is. The answer should be obvious, for the clergyman is there to provide proper spiritual leadership for the church. It would be preposterous to suggest that the pastor should avoid denominationally specific prayers in the church setting for fear there may be visitors or guests who do not agree with the specific tenets of the group, and this shows the problem with the underlying assumption in the paper. Some may object to the analogy I have drawn here due to differences of context, and I'll grant that there certainly is a difference between offering a prayer at a secular event like a change of command ceremony and offering a prayer to open a voluntary attendance chapel service at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary or to begin a worship service at First Baptist Church, Anytown, USA. However, the difference in context is immaterial to the question at hand, because it has to do with the very nature of corporate prayer, and in both settings, that is what is being considered.

Some further reflection on what prayer is and how it works is required. Consider several quotations regarding prayer by leaders in the Church from both East and West. Detailed commentary on each will not be provided. They seem to speak for themselves. In particular, note what is being said about prayer in each and then in the corpus.

The early church father, Tertullian, notes the wide-ranging scope of the Lord's Prayer and how it refers to the whole teachings of Scripture because it is primarily a work of praise to God. He writes,

In summaries of so few words, how many utterances of the prophets, the Gospels, the apostles—how many discourses, examples, parables of the Lord, are touched on! How many duties are simultaneously discharged! The honour of God in the “Father;” the testimony of faith in the “Name;” the offering of obedience in the “Will;” the commemoration of hope in the “Kingdom;” the petition for life in the “Bread;” the full acknowledgment of debts in the prayer for their “Forgiveness;” the anxious dread of temptation in the request for “Protection.” What

⁶So Calkins, following William James, defines prayer as “the intercourse of the human spirit with a reality, or being, realized as greater-than-human and either conceived or treated as personal.” Mary Whiton Calkins, “The Nature of Prayer,” *Harvard Theological Review* 4.4 (October 1911): 489. James wrote, “The religious phenomenon, studied as an inner fact, and apart from ecclesiastical or theological complications has shown itself to consist, everywhere and at all its stages, in the consciousness which individuals have of an intercourse between themselves and higher powers with which they feel themselves to be related.” William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: Modern Library/Random House, 1902), 455. We may question James' method, for to study prayer apart from specific theological considerations is to assume that the God to which one prays is inconsequential, and this assumption hardly seems true!

wonder? God alone could teach how he wished Himself prayed to. The religious rite of prayer therefore, ordained by Himself, and animated, even at the moment when it was issuing out of the Divine mouth, by His own Spirit, ascends, by its own prerogative, into heaven, commending to the Father what the Son has taught.⁷

St. John of Kronstadt offers advice to the one offering prayer:

When you pray, try to let the prayer reach your heart; in other words, it is necessary that your heart should feel what you are talking about in your prayer, that it should wish for the blessing which you are asking... Observe, during prayer, whether, your heart is in accord with that which you are saying... A prayer requires that the object of the prayer be expressed concretely or, at the least, that the heart have a clear realization and desire of it.⁸

Maximus the Confessor argued that prayer is a reflection of one's theological disposition; it cannot represent an outside group because it flows out of the spiritual life of the one offering the prayer.

Prayer and theology are inseparable. True theology is the adoration offered by the intellect. The intellect clarifies the movement of prayer, but only prayer can give it the fervor of the Spirit. Theology is light, prayer is fire.⁹

Augustine suggested that prayer is for the one who prays, at least insofar as the effect it has:

But again one might ask whether we are to pray by words or deeds and what need there is for prayer, if God already knows what is needful for us. But it is because the act of prayer clarifies and purges our heart and makes it more capable of receiving the divine gifts that are poured out for us in the spirit... For in prayer there occurs a turning of the heart to he who is always ready to give if we will but take what he gives: and in that turning is the purification of the inner eye when the things we crave in the temporal world are shut out; so that the vision of the pure heart can bear the pure light that shines divinely without setting or wavering: and not only bear it, but abide in it; not only without difficulty, but even with unspeakable joy, with which the blessed life is truly and genuinely brought to fulfillment.¹⁰

So with regard to the issue of participants in the prayer, like a good Southern Baptist theologian, I will defer to Saint Thomas Aquinas, who in his *Summa Theologica*, addressed questions related to proper prayer and whether God hears the prayers of the unredeemed:

I answer that, in the sinner, two things are to be considered: his nature which God loves, and the sin which He hates. Accordingly when a sinner prays for something as sinner, i.e. in accordance with a sinful desire, God hears him not through mercy but sometimes through vengeance when

⁷Tertullian, On Prayer, chapter 9, "Recapitulation" in *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 3, ed. Alexander Roberts & James Donaldson, rev. A. Cleveland Coxe, (Hendrickson: Peabody, MA, 1994): 684.

⁸St. John of Kronstadt, *My Life in Christ*, trans. E. E. Goulaeff (London: Cassell & Co., 1897), 437–8.

⁹Maximus the Confessor, *Letters*, quoted in Christopher Hall, *Worshipping with the Church Fathers* (Downers Grove, IVP, 2009), 86.

¹⁰Augustine, *On the Lord's Sermon on the Mount* 2.3.14.

He allows the sinner to fall yet deeper into sin. For “God refuses in mercy what He grants in anger,” as Augustine declares (Tract. lxxiii in Joan.). On the other hand God hears the sinner’s prayer if it proceed from a good natural desire, not out of justice, because the sinner does not merit to be heard, but out of pure mercy [Cf. 15, ad 1], provided however he fulfill the four conditions given above, namely, that he beseech for himself things necessary for salvation, piously and perseveringly.¹¹

These quotes directly impact the proper answer given to the questions raised by the Armed Forces Chaplains Board regarding chaplain-led prayers at ceremonial events. The consistent teaching of the Church has been that legitimate prayer must be heartfelt, must be born out of faith, and must be directed at the one true God. It must be led by the Spirit—even uttered by the Spirit—and thereby, must be consistent with the teachings of Scripture. This is so basic, it is almost embarrassing to have to point it out; yet some, even in the Church, have questioned this wisdom! We might even claim that the one voicing the prayer owns the prayer once he/she and all appropriate parties involved have agreed, insofar as we may speak of a human being owning the prayer. Theologically, it is probably more proper to speak of God owning the prayer. The Apostle Paul alludes to this maxim when he notes that we do not know for what we ought to pray and therefore, the Spirit intercedes for us *according to the will of God* (Rom 8:26–27), and this could also be what Paul means when he exhorts the Ephesians to “pray in the Spirit” (Eph 6:18). So ownership of prayer belongs to God. Nevertheless, the human agent voicing the prayer remains responsible for the content and to ensure that it meets with the requirements set forth in Scripture. The quote by Aquinas simply set forth these points: Those unbelievers present when the prayer is voiced may choose to participate in the prayer or not; they may turn to God in humility in search for mercy, and thus, have their prayers heard, or they may ignore the working of the Spirit and not have their prayers heard.

Some may take issue with these principles because they believe that a pious follower of a non-Christian religion may agree with the *content* of the prayer, but direct it at a different God. Or they may suggest that many in attendance would agree with the prayer and direct it at the *same* God, even if they have different understandings of the nature of God (i.e., Judeo-Christian based monotheistic religions: Judaism, Islam, perhaps LDS, Jehovah’s Witnesses, etc.). There is not time here to address each, but it should be noted that the differences between these faiths and historic Christianity is such that the very conception of God is different. While Christianity is radically monotheistic, like the Judaism out of which it grew (as well as Islam), it also insists that God is triune. The doctrine of the Trinity is the distinctive belief of Christianity, and it gets to the heart of the very nature or Being (*ontos*) of God. We worship a triune God; others do not. Of course, these issues are really an aside; the important point is that the one praying has the spiritual responsibility to offer an appropriate prayer; that is, a prayer that is theologically sound. This is a fundamental biblical truth — and I would expect it to be a fundamental truth of any religion which takes invocations of the deity’s blessings through prayer or rites and the like, seriously.

¹¹Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* 2.2.83.

Our admittedly brief foray into the theological meaning and implications of prayer may have led you to think that I am thereby supportive of the chaplain offering sectarian prayers or specifically, of evangelical Christians closing their prayers “in Jesus’ Name,” even at secular events. In some sense, you would be right, but in another sense, you would not. Please allow me to explain.

First, I must be honest and note that I am not convinced that Jesus’ exhortation to ask “in My name” is met solely by appending his name to the end of the prayer. In order to understand my point, some attention will need to be given to the biblical material which speaks to praying in Jesus’ name. Second, I fear that the legal battles that loom over the discussion will have disastrous effects on our ability to minister; already a growing number of attacks upon chaplaincy are being lodged and our own words in these battles are being used against us. Third, I do not think the speech of chaplains should be regulated in such a way as to restrict their free exercise rights or hamper their ability to minister effectively as a clergy of their particular faith group.

Asking in the Name of Jesus

It seems a rather curious thing that there is so much hype over chaplains offering prayers “in Jesus’ name” these days. Everyone seems to have an opinion and many have rushed to publish their concerns. By way of example, both Timothy George, Dean of Samford University’s Beeson Divinity School, and Russell Moore, Dean of the School of Theology and Vice President for Academic Administration at Southern Baptist Theological Seminary, have argued that Christian chaplains *must* pray in Jesus’ name. George notes the awkwardness of trying to compromise and criticizes those who attempt to do so. He writes,

We can simply say ‘Amen,’ and breathe ‘in Jesus’ name’ silently, under our breath as it were. We can lamely offer our prayer ‘in your name,’ as though God (or we) were confused about who he really is. Or we can try what Robert Jensen calls ‘syntactically impossible pronominal neologisms,’ such as ‘Godself,’ or blander still, appeal to the deconstructed deity invoked by the Episcopalian bishop Gene Robinson at the Lincoln Memorial inauguration service: ‘O God of our many understandings.’ Of course, the sovereign Lord can hear and even answer prayers offered in this way, and no doubt he does. It is another question altogether whether Christian ministers should sidestep the scandal of particularity in the interest of making people less uncomfortable.¹²

Moore makes the point even more explicit:

Perhaps it wouldn’t seem too much to ask a Catholic soldier to serve himself and his friends Mass since “bread is bread” and the Muslim chaplain to lead the troops in the rosary because “it’s just a

¹²Timothy George, “Rick ’n Jesus,” *First Things* (January 30, 2009); <http://www.firstthings.com/onthesquare/2009/01/rick-n-jesus>; accessed October 17, 2011.

prayer.” But that is too much to ask from the believer’s point of view. A Muslim who would speak of Mary as the Mother of God rejects the Qu’ran, and is just not a Muslim anymore. A Catholic Mass without a priest is just not a Catholic Mass. And a prayer to a “God” who is not clearly the Father of our Lord Jesus is not a Christian prayer.¹³

Now, I personally know both of these men and appreciate their theological insight, zeal for the Lord, and concern for the truth, but I have to question their arguments, partly because they are unclear in exactly what they mean, and partly because they are unaware of the military context and the details of the debates that have raised the issue to the fore.

For example, Moore’s commentary leaves one with the impression that suggesting Christians close their prayers with the phrase “in Your name” or simply “Amen” is equivalent to asking Muslims to pray the Rosary, but that is hardly the case. The position of the military has consistently been that chaplains are to be faithful to their own specific faiths. This is one aspect (and a very helpful one at that!) of the requirement of ecclesiastical endorsement. In fact, a chaplain who attempted to perform services for another faith group could face disciplinary action, if not from his denominational leadership, then quite possibly from the military for offending the other faith group or its adherents.

In addition, and what is of greater concern, is Moore’s last statement, to wit, a prayer must identify “God” as the Father of our Lord Jesus or it is not a Christian prayer, for it seems to suggest that legitimate prayers must communicate certain theological points in order to be effective. This has the uncomfortable consequence of turning prayers into confessions of faith or even creedal statements. If a prayer must identify “God” as the Father of our Lord Jesus in order to be an orthodox Christian prayer, it would seem that it would also need to identify Christ as God-incarnate, *homoousios* with the Father, and also fully human, having two natures which are distinct and complete, but are also united in the one *hypostasis* and *prosopa* of the only-begotten, eternally generated *logos* of God, that is, the Son. But of course, the requirements could be multiplied to include proper references to the doctrines of hamartiology, anthropology, soteriology, pneumatology, ecclesiology, eschatology, and so forth, in order to be legitimate Christian prayers. To be fair, I don’t think this is what Moore was driving at, but it is a direct inference from what he said and here is my point: The rhetoric in the discussion is often passionate but not as reflective as it ought to be. There are good reasons for this passion, for the very core of the Christian faith, the very ideals of our nation, and the very reasons chaplains seek to serve in this capacity are at stake: a love of God and an appreciation for this country and its people.

If it is correct to say that the heart of the Christian faith is at stake, then what must be considered is the biblical text, and an examination of the biblical material on the issue simply will not sustain the idea that when Jesus said to ask in His name, He meant only for His followers to affix his name to the end of their prayers. This is not to imply that it is a bad idea to do so or somehow inappropriate to do so. Quite the contrary, the practice has much to commend it and is

¹³Russell D. Moore, “Uniform Prayers,” *Touchstone* 19.6 (July/Aug 2006); <http://www.touchstonemag.com/archives/article.php?id=19-06-003-e>; accessed October 17, 2011.

a nice way of articulating the intent to subject one's life, desires, and future to the will of God.¹⁴ Nevertheless, it is a legitimate concern that the tenor of much of the discussion surrounding the issue can be unhelpful and possibly theologically irresponsible.

Some may view the structure of prayers as non-negotiable; they may believe that prayers must be offered with the formulaic expression “in Jesus’ name” in order to be legitimate Christian prayers. A fair reading of George and Moore, among others, could certainly lead one to conclude that prayers to God do not count if they do not end in this way. But it seems to me that this position is based on a rather wooden reading of Jesus’ exhortation to ask in His name, and it borders on a dangerous form of sacramental theology. The phrase “in Jesus’ name” almost functions like an incantation, rather than an expression of a relationship.

The specific phrase of Jesus (i.e., “Whatever you ask in my name, will be given”) occurs six times, all in the farewell discourse of John’s Gospel. The first two times follow Philip’s request for Jesus to show the Father to the disciples (14:13–14), and are meant to convey unity within the Trinitarian relations. Jesus’ response is to emphasize the unity of Father and Son. In fact, in verse 13, the prayer is directed at the Father, but in verse 14, it appears to be directed to Christ. Thus, their interchangeability is the focus here, just as Jesus had mentioned in answering Philip’s request: “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father” (John 14:9). Later in the same chapter, the promised coming of the Holy Spirit points to the unity of the Godhead. The *Paraclete* will come in Christ’s name (14:26) and will teach the disciples all things and remind them of what Christ said.

The next reference to asking in Christ’s name is found in John 15 when Jesus teaches about the love He has for the disciples and the love they should have for one another. They are to remain in Christ as a condition for answered prayer (15:7). In doing so, they will bear much fruit (15:8). The disciples are to love one another and to be obedient to Christ (15:12, 14). As a result of this combination of love, obedience and unity, the disciples will bear lasting fruit and it is at this point that Jesus notes the Father will give whatever is asked in Christ’s name (15:16). Thus, in chapter 15, asking in Christ’s name is inextricably linked to union with Christ and a consequent bearing of fruit. The prayers that are answered positively are those requests that flow out of such a close communion with Christ that we could argue that asking in His name must be out of such a context with a view to bearing fruit (which seems to be obedience to his commands grounded in love).

The next three references are found in chapter 16. Jesus tells the disciples somewhat cryptically that they will soon not see Him for a little while and will grieve and will then rejoice when they see Him again. This is an obvious allusion to his crucifixion and subsequent resurrection and all that those events entail—vicarious, substitutionary, and sacrificial death; propitiation

¹⁴I do not want to argue the point too strongly; after all, as you might well imagine, I would not want it to be the case that Klingenschmitt is known as “the chaplain who prayed in Jesus’ name” and I become known as “the chaplain who didn’t pray in Jesus’ name” or worse.

of the Father's wrath; the expiatory nature of his death and the forgiveness that comes; and the conquering of death through life. It is at this point that Jesus makes the rather startling claim that in *that* day, the disciples will no longer ask Him anything, but will ask the Father directly in His name and their requests will be granted (16:23–24). This appears to be a reference to the mediatorial work of Christ in that His death made the way to the Father clear (cf. Hebrews). This leads to the sixth reference, in which Jesus clarifies that He will not ask the Father on behalf of the disciples, but their prayers in His name go directly to the Father because the Father loves them (16:26–27). Thus, all three references to prayers in Jesus' name in John 16 are meant to convey the direct relationship with the Father believers can have as a result of the mediatorial work of Christ. Believers do not have to go to the Son *instead* of the Father, but rather can go directly to the Father through the Son because of his sacrifice on their behalf.

This rather brief examination of the biblical references to prayers offered in Jesus' name reveals that the emphasis in those passages is on unity within the Godhead and unity among the disciples in their union with Christ. To pray "in Jesus' name" is not so much to use that particular phrase, as it is to offer prayers that are heartfelt and sincere as born out in one's actions and life, to offer prayers that are a direct outflow of one's faith in Christ and position in Christ, and to offer prayers that are humble and do not seek to place God in a position of obligation. As Morris writes,

Whatever the disciples ask in his name Christ will do. This does not mean simply using the name as a formula. It means that prayer is to be in accordance with all that that name stands for. It is prayer proceeding from faith in Christ, prayer that gives expression to oneness with Christ, prayer that seeks to glorify Christ. And that purpose of it all is the glory of God, a glory that is "in the Son."¹⁵

Other references to acting *in the name of Jesus* support this view as well. For example, the Apostle Paul's exhortation to do everything in the name of the Lord (Col 3:17) is clearly meant to direct believers to act in accordance with the will of God, submitted to the lordship of Christ. Similarly, the reference to "giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" in his letter to the Ephesians is meant to highlight the change wrought in believers due to regeneration, the indwelling of the Spirit, and union with Christ (Eph 5:20 ESV). Paul's letter to the Corinthians is addressed to those who are "sanctified in Christ Jesus" and who are united with all who "call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor 1:2), and it should be obvious that here, "calling upon the name of Jesus" is a euphemism for salvation; to call upon the name of Christ is to submit to his lordship and identify with him as a follower (cf. Rom 10:9).¹⁶

¹⁵Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, rev. ed. *New International Commentary on the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1995), 574.

¹⁶Cullman picks up on this fact and argues that it points to the whole population of Christians. He uses this to argue for greater cooperation among Christians across denominational lines. Oscar Cullman, "All Who Call on the Name of Our Lord Jesus Christ," trans. A. Anderson Swidler, *Journal of Ecumenical Studies*

As already noted, the point is not to argue *against* ending prayers with the phrase, “in Jesus’ name,” and it is certainly not to criticize or disparage fellow believers who feel their faith is under attack. It is, however, to express concern at the way the discussion over this issue is playing out in the public eye. Just as arguing too forcefully that Jesus’ exhortation to ask in His name does not require one to append “in Jesus’ name” to the end of his prayers could be misconstrued, so also arguing too forcefully for closing prayers with the words, “in Jesus’ name” can be misconstrued. The emphasis the phrase “in Jesus’ name” is getting from some evangelical theologians may add confusion rather than clarity to the theological issues at stake. The insistence by some evangelicals who have written on this topic to say “in Jesus’ name” in prayers sounds virtually indistinguishable from arguments presented by modern-day modalists, who point to, for example, Acts 2:38 as a baptismal formula in order to emphasize the *name* of Jesus over against what they call, “*mere titles*” of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in the Great Commission (Matt 28:19). It is my concern that laypersons privy to the debate may fail to distinguish the particular concerns of orthodox evangelicals who fear pressure from state or liberal leadership to compromise their faith, from the theological concerns of Oneness Pentecostals who deny the doctrine of the Trinity. The discussion over praying “in Jesus’ name” has failed to address this important facet.

However, there is clearly room for discussion here, as there is admittedly great importance placed upon the name of Jesus throughout the New Testament, as upon the name of God throughout the Scriptures. From Jesus’ exhortation to welcome children in His name (Matt 18:5; Mark 9:37; Luke 9:48), to believers gathering in His name (Mt. 18:20), to His warnings that others will come in His name to deceive (Matt 24:5; Mark 13:6; Luke 21:8), to His command to make disciples in His name (Matt 28:18–20), to Paul’s proclamation that His name is above every name in heaven, earth, and under the earth such that every knee will bow at its hearing (Phil 2:10f.), the name of Jesus occupies a place of prominence and is depicted as having a power of its own. At the end of the day, though, virtually all evangelical scholars agree that Jesus was not offering His name as a sort of magical formula to be used for personal power or gain, and that asking in the name of Jesus means to ask according to the will of God and to approach God with a proper attitude.

Free Speech, Free Exercise, and Establishment

One of the theses of my book was that we evangelicals need to be wary of relying too heavily on the Court to preserve our religious rights, or we ought to at least consider the consequences of bringing our concerns to the judiciary. To be frank, I fear that the outcome of judicial review of questions related to our ability to offer sectarian prayers at required-attendance, governmentally-sponsored events will be the suspension of all public prayers.

The closest case related to this issue was *Marsh v Chambers*, when Ernest Chambers, a member of the Nebraska Legislature sued his own state (actually, the state treasurer, Frank Marsh, and the chaplain, Robert Palmer, were co-defendants) over chaplain-led prayers to open the state

legislative assembly.¹⁷ Many of the prayers offered were explicitly Christian prayers, and had been offered by a long-serving Presbyterian chaplain. Of particular concern here is that while the state (and hence, chaplaincy and sectarian prayers) won the day, the close decision of the Court was rather vague in its discussion of the nature of prayers and which kinds are allowable and which are not. The reason for this vagueness is that the Court is loathe to engage in theological analysis (and for this, we should be thankful). At the same time, it expressed concern that the opportunity afforded by the prayer *could* be exploited for proselytization. If it were determined that public prayers were being used in *this* way, then even the findings of *Marsh v Chambers* could be used to disallow them, as Chief Justice Warren Burger, who wrote the majority opinion, intimated.¹⁸ Lest we think this could not be the case, consider the structure of the basic argument against prayers in the public arena: it normally consists of a complaint to the effect that one religion is either being promoted by the government or is being pushed on the attendees. Either way, it could be claimed that a specifically Christian prayer—one offered to or in the name of Jesus—is meant to suggest that Christianity is the true religion and therefore, everyone present *ought* to receive Jesus as Lord. While I personally do not find an argument of this sort convincing—there is a difference between participating in an act that implicitly makes a proclamation or truth claim and directly confronting someone with that claim and calling for a response—I recognize that I am not in a position to make the decision and, just as there are often differences of opinion within the members of the High Court, there could easily be a majority of justices who would disagree with my assessment and rule against sectarian prayers.

One only need consider the legal justification for allowing the public presentation of religious speech, symbols, and the like to see the potential for disaster here. Religious speech (including prayers, references to God, and even religious displays) is only allowed on government property or supported with public funds if it can be properly seen as an instance of *ceremonial deism*. “Ceremonial deism” is the legal term used to describe religious speech, acts, or items which serve a secular purpose for the public good and are thus deemed constitutional. It was first used by Eugene Rostow, Dean of Yale Law School, but has since been utilized in Supreme Court arguments and deliberations. As the argument goes, cases of ceremonial deism are, contrary to appearances, not *really* religious, and it is for this reason that they pass Constitutional muster.

Justice Sandra Day O’Connor has been the primary advocate for ceremonial deism (though Justice Warren Burger also appealed to it on one occasion—*Marsh v Chambers*) as a justification for religion in the public square. She argues that prayers at government-sponsored events, for example, are not really *religious* acts, but are secular because they serve the secular purpose of adding solemnity to the occasion and (perhaps) tying the event to its historical roots or preserving its traditional pattern. She writes:

¹⁷*Marsh v Chambers*, 463 US (1983).

¹⁸“The content of the prayer is not of concern to judges where, as here, there is no indication that the prayer opportunity has been exploited to proselytize or advance any one, or to disparage any other, faith or belief. That being so, it is not for us to embark on a sensitive evaluation or to parse the content of a particular prayer.” *Ibid.*, at 794–5.

For centuries, we have marked important occasions or pronouncements with references to God and invocations of divine assistance. Such references can serve to solemnize an occasion instead of to invoke divine providence. The reasonable observer...aware of our national history and the origins of such practices, would not perceive these acknowledgments as signifying a government endorsement of any specific religion, or even of religion over nonreligion.¹⁹

So, in order to legally offer prayers at government-sponsored events, those prayers have to be seen as lacking religious force, and herein lies the problem with fighting in the courts for the right to pray sectarian prayers. The argument must include an attack on the very ideas underpinning ceremonial deism and instead claim that prayers *are* religious acts. But if this case were made successfully, the outcome would either be the denial of prayers altogether, or some form of forced pluralism. Kao has made this same point, though she came to a different conclusion than I. She argued that the only solution is to cease offering prayers at command events because in order to meet the legal requirements of ceremonial deism, the prayers would need to be stripped of their theological content and thus, rendered meaningless.²⁰ The problem with Kao's argument here is that it is based on a common confusion in thinking about chaplaincy ministry, a confusion even high-ranking military chaplains—some who have worked and taught at the Chaplains' School—have fallen prey to: it is the confusion of legal justification with ministerial praxis and/or theological truth. Let me offer an example.

In my years of service, I have occasionally been shocked, frustrated, and disappointed when other Christian chaplains seem to go out of their way in order to encourage non-Christian religions, and in this, I mean those individuals who seem to almost have more zeal for religiosity than for Christ. This is usually done under the misguided notion that it is the chaplain's role to protect freedom of religion. In fact, when I was a young chaplain, I cannot tell you how many times I was told that part of my job was to ensure that the religious rights of the soldiers of my unit are/were not violated. But this is false; as noted, it is the result of a confusion of the legal justification for a government-funded chaplaincy and the *doctrinal mandate* for chaplaincy operations. The legal justification of chaplaincy as articulated in *Katcoff v Marsh* was, indeed, that the service members' free exercise rights must be protected, and so the government was obligated to provide a means by which those rights may be met: clergy who can go to war (and be forced to stay at war) with them. Weinstein is wrong; Establishment does not trump Free Exercise.²¹ The Court is much more sophisticated in its thinking. It is the chaplain's responsibility to meet those needs as best he can, but it is not the chaplain's responsibility to protect those rights; that

¹⁹*Elk Grove Unified School District et al v. Newdow et al*, 542 U.S. 1, 85 (2003) at 36. See also her reasoning in *Lynch v Donnelly*, 465 US (1984); and *Allegheny County v Greater Pittsburgh ACLU*, 492 US (1989).

²⁰Grace Y. Kao, "Mission Impossible: 'Nonsectarian' Prayer in the Military Chaplaincy" *Political Theology* 11:4 (2010): 577–606.

²¹Michael Weinstein, founder and head of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation, has on numerous occasions, claimed that when the two clauses of the First Amendment conflict, Establishment wins. Although he is a lawyer and served in the Air Force as a Judge Advocate General, he is clearly mistaken on this issue.

responsibility falls squarely upon the shoulders of the commander, who is advised by a military judge advocate. The chaplain has an advisory role, but that is all. Doctrinally, the chaplain is supposed to serve his own denomination, and facilitate for others: *perform or provide*.

In a similar way, Kao has wrongly assumed that the legal justification for prayers in the public setting dictates the theology of the prayers in the public setting. But *Marsh v Chambers* explicitly rejects this notion (and so should we). Evangelical chaplains should not care if the Supreme Court says that prayers at command events are not really religious acts and that they merely solemnize the occasion. I say they are religious acts and not only that, they make a difference because prayer matters. This is precisely why I do not want to make the *legal* argument that they are religious. I fear that prayers at otherwise secular military events and ceremonies or to open legislatures, Scriptures on courtroom walls or historic governmental monuments and the like, would either go the way of prayer in schools, or more situations like the time Hindu priest Rajan Zed offered the invocation to open the U. S. Senate (and was heckled) will prevail. In either case, many evangelicals would be unhappy with the outcome, so as Jesus said, we should “count the cost” before engaging in any work (Luke 14:28).

Conclusion

I will close by presenting two prayers for consideration, one offered at a deployment ceremony prior to departing, the other offered at the welcome home celebration. Before my unit deployed to Iraq, a ceremony was held at Minute Maid Park in downtown Houston, and I was called upon to offer both an invocation and benediction. For the invocation, I read a selection from Psalm 57, and offered a prayer of thanksgiving and protection for the nation, families, and unit in the days ahead, and closed with the words, “...as a Christian, I close, ‘in Jesus’ name,’ amen.”²² Upon returning home, I led the soldiers and family members assembled for the welcome home ceremony and celebration in the following prayer:

²²The full text of my prayer: “The Psalmist, in Psalm 57, speaks some words that many of us, I believe, here today can agree with. Hear the Word: ‘Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast. I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me. He shall send from heaven, and save me from the reproach of him that would swallow me up. Selah. God shall send forth his mercy and his truth. My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed: I will sing and give praise. Awake up, my glory; awake, psaltery and harp: I myself will awake early. I will praise thee, O Lord, among the people: I will sing unto thee among the nations. For thy mercy is great unto the heavens, and thy truth unto the clouds. Be thou exalted, O God, above the heavens: let thy glory be above all the earth.’ (Ps. 57:1–3, 7–10, KJV). Let us pray. Our Heavenly Father, we thank You for this day, we thank You for this country and the freedoms that we have and that we enjoy as a result of being here, and we pray for our families who remain behind as we prepare to deploy. We pray for our soldiers, for our safety, and so we ask that Your grace and mercy would go forth before us, and march us home until the end of our deployment. We thank You, and we love You. And we pray all these things, and as a Christian I close, ‘in Jesus’ name.’ Amen.”

Our Heavenly Father,

We give You praise this day for Your Holiness, Love, and Grace, and we thank You for Your providential watch-care over all of us this past year. And while we acknowledge that we have not always done what is right, we know that Your mercy endures forever, and we ask for strength to turn from evil. We thank You for bringing us home safely, though we stand ready to serve the cause of justice and goodness again until Your kingdom comes and Righteousness reigns on the Earth. We humbly ask that You bless our time with family and friends this day, ensure that we have smooth transitions to our lives back home, and that You grant the same to all of the soldiers and families of the 72nd Infantry Brigade Combat Team who are at home and who are still in the midst of returning from Iraq. All of these things we ask of You because Yours is the Kingdom, and the Power, and the Glory, Forever. AMEN.

The deployment ceremony prayer closed with an appeal to the name of Jesus which was preceded by a reference to my own Christian faith. The reference was not meant to devalue the appeal, but to distinguish the focus of the prayer. To be perfectly honest, I closed the prayer that way intentionally because of all the questions surrounding chaplains and prayers in Jesus' name. The returning prayer was an obvious rendition of the Lord's Prayer applied to our particular situation and people. There are a couple of points I wished to make by noting the content of these two prayers:

We are able to pray in Jesus' name; no one reprimanded me for the prayer and it would be improper for someone to do so, at least so long as sectarian prayers are still legal. Still, it was (I would argue) delivered in such a way as to be sensitive to the pluralistic setting and to preserve my own faith distinctives.

Both prayers are equally valid Christian prayers; a prayer modeled after the Lord's Prayer can hardly be considered "lame" (as George suggested) or a "sellout to the god of pluralism and/or political correctness." While the second did not end with the phrase, "in Jesus' name," it still embodied the theology and ideals to which Jesus appealed in His ministry and it was still consistent in communicating the will of God and it was still uttered in a sense of abandonment to the Lordship of Jesus Christ. It followed His teaching on how to pray.

The prayer ministry of the chaplain does make a difference and is valuable to the organization because organizations are made of people. It would be unfortunate to lose this aspect of the chaplain ministry.

So what are we to conclude from all of this? What are we to do and what is the best way to proceed? Let me make a few suggestions, some of which may be a bit controversial. First, we should at least consider the possible outcomes of pursuing legal action when we perceive our religious rights have been restricted or violated. The case we lose today will impact the abilities of believers for years to come; our children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren may suffer as a result of our failure to win a lawsuit that very well may not have needed to be filed. Second, we should ensure that the hill upon which we have decided to die is, in actuality, worth dying upon.

It admittedly takes courage to sacrifice oneself, but as the saying goes, there is a fine line between a hero and a fool. . .ensuring that we have chosen well with regard to which battles to wage requires sound exegesis and theological reflection. Make sure you have engaged in both before putting your career, reputation, and perhaps even freedom or life on the line. There are times in which we have to take a stand and it is appropriate to fight, even if we know it is a losing battle. Third (and most important), there are ways to engage in ministry in a pluralistic environment without compromising evangelical commitments and beliefs. Sometimes it requires creative thinking and approaches, but it can nevertheless be done.

So how should we deal with the issue of praying in Jesus' name? My faith does not require me to place the words, "in Jesus' name" on the end of every prayer for it to work or be a valid prayer, and I personally close many of my prayers in private, in church, and at home in a variety of ways: "in Your name," "in Your most precious and holy name," "in Jesus' name," "we ask these things trusting in Your mercy," and sometimes simply with "Amen"—so it is not a problem for me to close a prayer in a way other than with the phrase, "in Jesus' name." I typically do not write out my prayers, so if I do close one in that way, I would not apologize for it; there would seem to be something impious or improper about apologizing for using the name of my Lord. Even so, I do not have a problem closing my prayers with a more general reference to God or just an "Amen," and in most cases at military events and ceremonies, I do just that, but if I were told that I *cannot* close my prayers with the words, "in Jesus' name," I would feel compelled to do so. Once the order was given, so to speak, I would have the sense that failing to mention the name of Jesus at the close of my prayers would be tantamount to denying him, which would be contemptible and condemnable. At that point, we would have to, with the Apostles Peter and John, follow the directive of God and not man (Acts 4:19–20). The Supreme Court has attempted to draw a fine line between Establishment and Free Exercise in its First Amendment jurisprudence, and we should pray that that line is preserved for our sakes, for the sake of our nation, and for the sakes of those who follow us in the Way.

Chaplains as Doctors of the Soul



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The fragmentation of theology created a cataclysmic ferment from which “Theologia–The Body of Divinity” has not recovered.¹ Research, through an analysis of the self-manifested ministry approach of twenty-four chaplains who responded in Larry Vandecreek’s inquiry as to whether professional chaplaincy should be more scientific, uncovered an identity crisis among chaplains and the revelation that a number of chaplains had lost confidence in theology as the primary source to conduct spiritual care and instead have turned to secular disciplines like psychology and sociology.² A number of chaplains view theology as irrelevant for addressing the human condition in real world settings. A medical center chaplain as a member of the health care interdisciplinary team needs an epistemology that serves as the normative foundation from which one asserts one’s identity and distinguishes chaplaincy from other disciplines. The aim of this summary is to revisit the necessity of a unity of theology for effective spiritual care and present a framework for a recombined synthesis of the theological disciplines in an effort to locate an appropriate foundation for a Christian chaplain’s identity.

The Freedom from Religion Foundation (FFRF) challenged the Department of Veterans Affairs’ (VA) use of chaplains as a violation of the First Amendment Establishment Clause of the U. S. Constitution. The FFRF opposes the VA’s holistic health philosophy that asserts that optimum health is achieved through the maintenance of a biopsychosocial health triangle that includes spiritual care. The VA’s model considers mental, physical, social, and spiritual entities

Editor’s Note: This essay was drawn from an unpublished Ph.D. dissertation in Theology completed in 2011 at New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary titled “Chaplains as Doctors of the Soul: Navigating Between the Sacred and Secular While Negotiating a Functional and Ontological Ministry Identity.”

¹The body of divinity, since the 19th century, is delineated by Karl Hagenbach’s four-fold division of theological studies into the independent disciplines of Biblical Studies, Historical Studies, Doctrinal Studies, and Practical Studies.

²Larry Vandecreek, *Professional Chaplaincy and Clinical Pastoral Education Should Become More Scientific, Yes and No* (New York: Haworth Press, 2002). The Chaplains who responded were men and women of different faith walks. Eighty-seven percent of the chaplains who responded did not use theology as their primary source for spiritual care. No final conclusions can be drawn from such a small sampling, but one can infer trends that will require a more comprehensive study with a larger sampling.

to be closely interconnected and equally important for wellness.³ The FFRF objects to the VA's notion, "Good healthcare is incomplete without substantively addressing the spiritual dimension of each patient."⁴ The FFRF does not object to chaplaincy in VA hospitals but asserts, "A legitimate role does not give VA chaplains *carte blanche* to promote religion without restraint, even if they avoid overt coercion and denominational preference."⁵

The FFRF objects to the inclusion of spiritual considerations into the philosophy of the VA's medical protocols, specifically the chaplain's interaction with outpatients. VA policy regarding the religious neutrality of chaplains dates back to the official beginning of the Chaplain Service in 1945 and has been consistent over the years.⁶ VA policy prohibits proselytizing by the statement, "No patient will be coerced into engaging in any religious activities against his or her desires."⁷ The FFRF concedes that the provision of spiritual care is patient centered, and becomes religious only in response to patient wishes. However, the FFRF's complaint implies that the VA is being disingenuous if it claims that spiritual care that chaplains conduct is non-religious. The FFRF views a chaplain's performance of care as religious because of who and what a chaplain represents; therefore, the litigation was both an acknowledgment and an indictment of a chaplain's "being."

Employment as a VA chaplain requires fidelity to the VA's Covenant and Code of Ethics which restricts proselytizing in medical center milieu.⁸ Ironically, a chaplain's being and identity are initially formed by assimilation to a denominational or ecclesiastical order; but to become a VA chaplain, one must submit to the socialization process of Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE). The CPE socialization process attempts to produce patient-centered rather than denomination-centered, clergy. The CPE socialization process intentionally minimizes denominational distinctives to increase the potential for inclusiveness and to enhance the primary objective of secular healthcare, which is wellness measured by patient satisfaction. CPE emphasizes the behavioral and psychological disciplines to inform patient-centered theological reflection instead of parochial or sectarian theology. Charles Hall asserts,

CPE developed out of dissatisfaction with the intellectual assumptions of systematic theology separated from religious experience and dissatisfaction with ministry based on that separation.

³ *Taber's Cyclopedic Medical Dictionary* 21st ed (2005), s.v. "wellness." Wellness is good health as well as the appreciation and enjoyment of well-being. Wellness is a subjective measure of one's perception of mental and physical balance and fitness.

⁴ *Freedom from Religion Foundation, Inc. v. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*, 06-C-0212-S (U.S. District Court Western District of Wisconsin) Complaint.

⁵ *Freedom from Religion Foundation, Inc. v. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*, 06-C-0212-S, Plaintiffs' Brief Opposing Motion for Summary Judgment.

⁶ Jonathan B. Perlin, *VA Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook*, 1111.2 Spiritual and Pastoral Care Procedures (March 2005).

⁷ U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Title 38, Part 17.33 Patient Rights.

⁸ Perlin, *VA Veterans Health Administration (VHA) Handbook*, (March 2005). The Covenant and Code of Ethics addresses specific ethical issues pertinent to pastoral care and promotes pluralistic pastoral care in VA facilities.

The clinical method of studying theology in CPE gradually evolved from the emergence of a holistic approach to the understanding of persons, their needs, and the possibilities of pastoral care in serving those needs.⁹

CPE emerged from disenchantment with the sectarian academic model of theology.

During the eighteenth century, a theological encyclopedia developed and consisted of a fourfold pattern.¹⁰ Schleiermacher's theological encyclopedia was different from the prevailing pattern.¹¹ Schleiermacher viewed theology as science and held theology as a unity, the formation of a habit or disposition. However, Hagenbach's clerical paradigm view of clergy mastery of ministry skills – theology as a teaching a collection of theological truths – needed by the shepherds of the community, shaped those who taught in the churches and exercised spiritual leadership. Specialization became the paradigm and the fragmentation of theology was the result.

The fragmentation of theology through specialization also resulted in identity confusion and the decline of theology as the science of pastoral care. Pastoral theology as the theological basis for pastoral care was made autonomous from the body of theological scholarship and eventually adopted psychological and sociological paradigms.¹² Therefore, the theological basis for a chaplain's identity, as socialized in CPE, became infused with secular disciplines. Anton Boisen stated, "The goal was not to develop a new theology, but a new method of theological study, a study of sin and salvation from understanding living human documents."¹³ Richard Cabot asserts,

When we urge a theological student to get "clinical experience" outside his lecture rooms and his chapel, to visit the sick, the insane, the prisons and the almshouses, it is not because we want him to get away from his theology but because we want him to practice his theology where it is most needed, i.e., in personal contact with individuals in trouble.¹⁴

⁹Charles E. Hall, *Head and Heart: The Story of the Clinical Pastoral Education Movement* (Decatur, GA: Journal of Pastoral Care Publications, 1992), xv.

¹⁰Edward Farley, *Theologia: The Fragmentation and Unity of Theological Education* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983), 75. The fourfold pattern is four theological disciplines: Bible, church history, dogmatics, and practical theology.

¹¹Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Brief Outline of the Study of Theology*, trans. Terrence N. Tice (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1966). Schleiermacher defined theology in a threefold pattern as a science comparable to the sciences of medicine and law, with God as its object, clerical education as its aim, and specialized areas as its components.

¹²Traditionally, pastoral theology was considered a subcategory of practical theology, but later some theologians claimed autonomy for pastoral theology as the source for pastoral care.

¹³Hall, *Head and Heart*, 10. See Anton T. Boisen, "The Period of Beginnings," *The Journal of Pastoral Care*, Vol. 5, No. 1 (Spring 1951): 15.

¹⁴Richard C. Cabot, "A Plea for a Clinical Year in the Course of Theological Study," *Survey Graphic* (September 1925); reprinted in *Cabot's Borderline of Ethics* (New York: Harper & Row, 1926), 1–22, in Hall, *Head and Heart*, 6.

Consequently, professional chaplaincy found itself facing a crisis. Shrinking budgets, spiraling costs, and increasing demand for healthcare were forcing hospital administrators to scrutinize closely services provided. Hospital administrators wanted to achieve the maximum value for each service and to delete redundant or nebulous services. As administrators reviewed performance charts, outcome data, and patient satisfaction surveys, the intrinsic value of chaplaincy no longer was accorded to the profession.

In the year 2000, the VA Secretary requested that the Director of the VA's National Chaplain Center "justify the Chaplain Service by explaining why having such a service was superior to having individual medical centers contract for themselves."¹⁵ Two questions were posed: (1) "Should the current VA Chaplain Service be abolished and replaced by contracts with non-clinical clergy serving local parishes? (2) Should the National Chaplain Center (NCC) be eliminated as a resource facility for professional chaplains who specialize in veteran patient needs and care?"¹⁶ At the same time, the secularization of society, coupled with cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity and an overlapping of secular disciplines were reshaping the landscape. The reshaped landscape made justifying professional chaplaincy even more difficult. The National Chaplain Center was challenged with justifying the value of chaplaincy and identifying its uniqueness to administrators, colleagues, and patients. Chaplains began to reflect on and rethink the essence of spiritual care. Ironically, theology-based identity appeared to be diminishing among healthcare chaplains. Instead, the paradigms of secular disciplines appeared to be shaping the being, identity, and practice of chaplains.

E. Brooks Holifield argued that chaplaincy during the twentieth century began to embrace secular solutions, the language and protocols of modern medicine, psychotherapy, and behavioral sciences.¹⁷ Holifield implied that pastoral care yielded to secular science and its values because of the impact of secular developments over the comparative inadequacy of theology. Conversely, Thomas Oden called for a "reversing of the antinomian momentum."¹⁸ Oden recognized the distortion in the essence of pastoral care and concluded that the foundation of pastoral theology was not theology, but psychology, sociology, and psychotherapy.

Oden concerned himself with the foundation of a minister's identity in the conduct of pastoral

¹⁵ U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs, National Chaplain Center, *Executive Summary* (Washington, DC, 2002), 1.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ E. Brooks Holifield, *A History of Pastoral Care in America: From Salvation to Self-Realization* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1983).

¹⁸ Thomas C. Oden, *Pastoral Theology: Essentials of Ministry* (New York: Harpers Collins, 1983), 8. Oden asserted: "Antinomianism is the weird, wild, impulsive, unpredictable sleeping partner of much contemporary pastoral care. It mistakes the gospel for license, freedom for unchecked self-actualization, and health for native vitalism. The classical pastoral tradition has struggled mightily against 'cheap grace' solutions and premature reassurances."

care and surmised that any foundation other than theology for pastoral theology will have a deleterious effect on pastoral care. After all, the identity for public clergy is not a monolithic or normative thing, but foundational to a chaplain's function; therefore, the foundation of one's identity provides clues into how a chaplain conducts his or her spiritual care. One example of pastoral care rooted in a foundation other than theology is the religion and health movement. The religion and health movement espouse a notion of a research-based or science-based religiosity. Joel Shuman and Keith Meador assert that religiosity rooted in science or secularism, rather than faith, was self-defeating.¹⁹ The identity crisis and role confusion of professional chaplaincy appear to support Shuman and Meador's conclusion, which fuels the continued search for being and identity that supports professional chaplaincy's navigation between the sacred and the secular in the public sector.²⁰

*Philoxenosology*²¹ is designed as a "Theology of Hospitality"²² that allows science to serve wisdom and discernment. In philoxenosology, the scope of medical center spiritual care is clarified to function as a basis for identity in a Christian chaplain. The foundation for philoxenosology is the unity of the body of divinity that rejects the autonomy of the fourfold pattern in the theological encyclopedia. Instead, philoxenosology is a synthesis of the disciplines of thought and the disciplines of practice as they relate to and address the human condition. Philoxenosology provides reflection as a framework for a chaplain's identity and scope of practice in a public medical center.

Traditional pastoral theologies over the last fifty years have asserted a theological discipline that contributed directly to the understanding of revelation and theology from the shepherding perspective.²³ The methodology associated with this approach supported the local pastor and

¹⁹ Joel James Shuman & Keith G. Meador, *Heal Thyself: Spirituality, Medicine, and the Distortion of Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003). It is argued that popular culture's fascination with the health benefits of religion reflects not the renaissance of the world's great religious traditions but the powerful combination of pervasive consumer capitalism and a deeply self-interested individualism. A faith-for-health exchange, serves to misrepresent and devalue the true meaning of faith. Such a utilitarian approach renders the content of faith superfluous, allowing a generic, highly personalized description of faith to take the place of a specific, confessional commitment to what one believes and does as a member of the faith community.

²⁰ Larry Vandecreek, *Professional Chaplaincy and Clinical Pastoral Education Should Become More Scientific, Yes and No* (New York: Haworth Press, 2002).

²¹ *The New Testament Greek-English Dictionary, Sigma-Omega* (1991) s.v. "philoxenos" a Greek compound of phil "love" and xenos "stranger," "the love of strangers or hospitality shown to a guest, suggests both a fondness for and a natural desire to serve the needs of others, given to hospitality."

²² *Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary* (2004) s.v. "hospitality," given to generous and cordial reception of guests; offering a pleasant or sustaining environment. The ontology is host, "one who receives or entertains strangers, guests," literally "lord of strangers." The acts are characterized as "friendliness to strangers or guests." Strangers or guests can be a friend or enemy.

²³ See Seward Hiltner, "The Meaning and Importance of Pastoral Theology," in *The Blackwell Reader*

church ministries. However, the shepherding perspective is an inappropriate metaphor for a healthcare chaplain. The shepherding perspective introduced by Seward Hiltner was grounded in the Good Samaritan principle.²⁴

In philoxenosology, the Good Samaritan parable is the foundational metaphor because the parable captures the relational essence and structure of the chaplain-patient relationship in public healthcare. In contrast to Hiltner's view, one can argue for a different thread of similarity between the acts of the Good Samaritan and the appropriate perspective. Instead of Hiltner's shepherding perspective, a "hosting" perspective²⁵ is adopted. The act of giving hospitality to another person as opposed to "shepherding" is a more congruent depiction of the acts of the Good Samaritan. The Good Samaritan's actions are not those of a shepherd toward a sheep, but of a compassionate host for a stranger.²⁶ In addition, one can contend that the acts of the Good Samaritan are not pastoral, but hospitable. In the parable, the Good Samaritan does not perform the shepherding acts of caring for sheep related metaphorically to the pastoral acts of caring for parishioners. The Samaritan does not perform the acts of feeding sheep, locating lost sheep, protecting sheep from

in Pastoral and Practical Theology, ed. James Woodward and Stephen Pattison (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishing, 2000), 27, who writes: "The 'shepherding perspective' basically means regarding experience and theology from the vantage point of the practice of pastoral care, broadly understood."

²⁴Seward Hiltner, *Preface to Pastoral Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1958), 68. The Good Samaritan parable in Luke 10:25–37 was key for Hiltner, who writes, "What we seek above all to retain for the shepherding perspective is the quest for the good of the person or persons involved—temporarily if need be, without thought of the larger good of larger groups or institutions. It is simply the good-Samaritan principle in operation ... The dominant perspective is bringing help now. In simplest terms that is our parable of shepherding."

²⁵Merriam-Webster (2004), s.v. "host," one that receives or entertains guests or strangers socially, commercially, or officially (lit. lord of strangers). Hosting is a more comprehensive term than caregiving in the same way hospitality is a comprehensive term related to the treatment of a fellow human being. A host can perform caregiving acts, but could also perform acts not normally associated with caregiving like mediating a dispute, performing a wedding or baptism, and advocating for a patient's freedom of conscience rights. The Good Samaritan performed acts beyond caregiving.

²⁶*Ibid.*, s.v. "compassion," sympathetic consciousness of others' distress together with a desire to alleviate it. Compassion is granted because of unusually distressing circumstances affecting an individual.

The Good Samaritan parable depicts key elements missing in the shepherd-to-sheep relationship, namely, the presence of a prior and ongoing relationship. The shepherd's motivation to act on behalf of the sheep comes from the shepherd's relationship with the sheep. The Samaritan does not have a prior relationship with the victim nor any other visible connection to the victim. In the parable, there is emphasis on the disassociation between the Samaritan and the victim in that neither the religious leader nor the lay countryman helps the victim, but a foreigner or stranger renders compassionate aid. Additionally, even though the Good Samaritan assists the victim, nothing in the parable indicates that the relationship will continue once the victim recovers. Therefore, one can generalize a conclusion about the shepherding relationship versus the hosting relationship in relation to the parable: a shepherding relationship which is familial and ongoing does not exist, but a hosting relationship that is emergent and brief does exist.

predators, or correcting disobedient sheep. On the other hand, the hosting acts of compensating a stranger, making a stranger feel protected and cared for, and assisting a stranger to her or his next destination are present in the parable.

Another issue of note between a shepherding pastor and a hosting chaplain is the fact that pastors serve homogeneous congregations, meaning that the majority of persons served have the same belief system as the pastor. On the other hand, chaplains serve a heterogeneous population that is multicultural, interfaith, and ethnically diverse. In the parable, the Samaritan's belief system is different from the victim, but the belief system difference does not prohibit or impede compassionate service.

Pastors may be aware of other religious views but are not required by their scope of practice to serve other religions or views, other than to seek converts. In contrast, chaplains regularly interact with a wide variety of religious and non-religious persons and are prohibited by law and a code of ethics from proselytizing. One can argue that the requirement to interact with tolerance to other belief systems amounts to behavioral acceptance of pluralism, which is another area of ferment. Clergy socialized through CPE may feel that sectarian Christology is inappropriate.

The truth and reality of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is the foundation of philoxenosology. The Gospel includes the birth, life, death, burial, resurrection, and return of Jesus Christ. Therefore, a philoxenosologist is tacitly exclusivistic and is expected to acknowledge that he or she is a believer with a total commitment toward Jesus Christ. The foundational assertion in philoxenosology is that a Christian identity is critical to a Christian chaplain who intends to bring to bear the resources, wisdom, and authority of the Christian faith and life in the conduct of spiritual care. In other words, the nature and meaning of the chaplain's spiritual formation determines the manner of ministry interventions with patients and the chaplain's view of self among other professionals. Therefore, an issue for philoxenosology is how to appropriately account for other belief systems in a public setting without setting aside the Gospel of Jesus Christ.²⁷

The Good Samaritan parable appears to account for dissimilar belief systems under a different category identified in philoxenosology as *impartialism*.²⁸ Impartialism is introduced as a category of exclusivism and holds that persons with other beliefs will be treated with compassion and respect. Impartialism does not claim agreement with other belief systems, but treats everyone as an equal. In philoxenosology, impartialism accounts for the meaning and value of other belief systems by asserting that Jesus is the only path to God while treating all people with compassion

²⁷Veli-Matti Karkkainen, *Introduction to the Theology of Religions: Biblical, Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 24–25, writes: “Exclusivism claims that salvation can be found only in the Christian church. Pluralism contends that other religions are legitimate means of salvation. Parallelism contends that all religions run parallel and meet only in the Ultimate, at the end of time. Inclusivism holds that while salvation is ontologically founded on the person of Christ, its benefits have been made universally available by the revelation of God.

²⁸Merriam-Webster (2004), s.v. “impartial” not partial or biased, treating or affecting all equally. Operational definition: treating all rivals or disputants as equals.

and respect.

The difference between impartialism and inclusivism is that impartialism rejects an “anonymous Christian” view where any religious view can be considered salvific apart from an explicit knowledge of Christ. The difference between impartialism and pluralism is that impartialism rejects the view that there are many paths to God. The difference between impartialism and parallelism is that impartialism rejects the plural salvations view. Impartialism is a nuanced view of exclusivism in that it espouses a principle of respectful disagreement with other belief systems. A principle of respectful disagreement means that a philoxenosologist does not affirm an ecumenical “melting pot” view, but a contextual “mosaic” view. A contextual mosaic view respects the right of others to reject one’s interventions even though that individual may be doing everything possible to practice hospitality. However, respect does not mean embracing a plurality of absolutes. The views of others are respected, but not embraced by the philoxenosologist.

Impartialism demonstrates congruence between the theological concept of free will and the secular concept of informed consent. Theologically, free will addresses the issue of whether, and in what sense, rational agents exercise control over their actions, decisions, or choices. At the sickbed, philosophical issues of freedom and cause and whether the laws of nature are causally deterministic are not the issue. Patient choices on how to cope with one’s situation and the discovery of meaning and purpose is the issue. The philoxenosologist offers to partner with the patient in a burden-bearing relationship. However, the decisions a patient may make while coping with her or his circumstances may not be determined rationally or empirically through philosophical, psychological, sociological, or scientific means. How a patient faces circumstances is complex and involves the combined elements of the cognitive soul, the conative will, the affective emotions, and the relevance of one’s faith in coping with suffering. In secular terms, the patient’s personality, constitutional predisposition, milieu, and metaphysical strata of reality constitute a complex biopsychosocial effect on decision making. Nonetheless, how one faces life circumstances and the human condition remain the individual’s choice, even if every other human faculty is removed.

Through impartialism one endeavors to respect a patient’s right of self-determination and freedom of conscience regardless of the patient’s belief system. Impartialism presupposes for the philoxenosologist the obligation to bring no harm to a patient and the commitment never to abandon the patient. The obligation and commitment to do no harm and not to abandon is congruent with the spirit of informed consent that affirms the right of patients to refuse any treatment to include life-saving treatment while the institution retains the obligation to support the patient within those boundaries. The exercise of impartialism is the essence and the spirit of a theology of hospitality and the hosting perspective. The Good Samaritan’s acts demonstrate hospitality in that the Good Samaritan focuses on the victim’s need while showing disinterest to any distraction from rendering assistance. The parable of the Good Samaritan metaphorically demonstrates that the hospitality principle is built on the concept of compassionate impartialism. Compassionate impartialism allows a philoxenosologist to love a fellow human being whether or

not there is ideological or theological agreement.²⁹ Therefore, the hospitality principle depicted in the Good Samaritan parable practiced with compassionate impartialism is an appropriate approach for chaplains in the public healthcare environment.

The hosting perspective of accommodating a stranger, making a stranger feel protected and cared for, and assisting strangers to their next destination reflect three aspects of chaplaincy: relating, remedying, and restoring.³⁰ Relating is demonstrated by three acts in Luke 10:33 and 34a: (1) he saw him, (2) he took pity on him, and (3) he went to him. Remedying is demonstrated by five acts in verse 34b: (1) he bandaged his wounds; (2) he poured oil and wine on his wounds; (3) he set him on his donkey; (4) he took him to an inn; and (5) he took care of him.³¹ Restoring is demonstrated by two acts in verse 35: (1) he provides for the victim's continued care; and (2) he promises to settle the victim's debt.

The parable returns to the original inquiry, who is my neighbor? The question is not directly answered in the parable, as Jesus simply poses another question, "Which of the three men acted neighborly?" The answer is, "The one who had compassion." The question and answer established two things: (1) it is ethical to assist a fellow human being in need, and (2) compassion is the appropriate motivation for the execution of that assistance. The answer to the expert's question means more than just someone with whom one is acquainted or someone who lives nearby, but anyone with whom one comes into contact.

Philoxenosology assigns to chaplaincy the interdisciplinary role of hosting, to focus primarily on the spiritual aspects of a person's wellness or spiritual stratum of reality. Philoxenosology inserts compassionate impartialism as the motivation for hospitality. In this way, a philoxenosologist

²⁹Romans 13:10 provides this description of love: "Love does no harm to a neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law." The second greatest commandment, after loving God, is: "Love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt 22:39 NIV). Carl Rogers, a psychologist, best known for creating nondirective "client-centered therapy" called for "unconditional positive regard" which for this study means full acceptance and support of a patient regardless of what the patient says or does.

³⁰Merriam-Webster, "Relate" to show or establish logical or causal connection between, to have a relationship. Operationally, the establishment of an association, connection, or understanding with a person or persons. "Remedy" to relieve, a medicine, application, or treatment that relieves or cures a disease. Something that corrects or counteracts. The legal means to recover a right or prevent or obtain redress for a wrong. "Restore" to put or bring back into existence or put back into a former or original state. Operationally, to assist one to a more desirable condition, state of health, soundness, or vigor. In public chaplaincy, Relating, Remedying, and Restoring are preferred to Healing, Sustaining, Guiding, and Reconciling.

³¹One could argue for the aspect of healing instead of remedying. Hiltner asserted that a binding up of wounds was healing. Healing is considered outside the realm of human capacity. Healing is a divine activity, something one requests and hopes for, from the Divine, not something a human can control or guarantee. Remedying, or the act of providing relief, is human activity. The Good Samaritan provides relief through a number of remedies; he does not heal the victim.

seizes any opportunity to assist anyone in need as the command to “go and do likewise” implies.³² Thus the hallmark of philoxenosology is the predisposition to practice hospitality with an attitude of compassionate impartialism to anyone in need.

In summary, philoxenosology is Christian reflection on how God, the transcendent and immanent origin, meaning, and goal of the universe, addresses the human condition through a mutually informative dialogue between normative sources and human experience for the purpose of providing an appropriate public delineation of the spiritual strata of reality related to holistic healthcare and complementary medicine. Philoxenosology is a capstone theological study that is in the one sense a personal human endeavor of *scientia habitus* usually called intellectual discipline (cognitive investigation of the conclusions and principles of normative and ancillary sources) for the development of knowledge and understanding that serves in another sense a personal human experience of *sapiential habitus* usually called spiritual discipline (prayer, meditation, and disciplined testing of normative sources rooted in faith in God) for the development of wisdom and discernment. In philoxenosology, the synthesis of both modes of reflection, human endeavor and human experience, is viewed as two sides of the same coin, ethical behavior, known biblically as discretion. One who submits to the sanctifying process of personal (spiritual formation) and practical (rational service) derived from exercising *scientia habitus* and *sapiential habitus* nurtures the gifts considered critically essential for the delivery of effective spiritual care. Philoxenosology is intended as a public theology, but not an all-inclusive theology. Philoxenosology is specifically written to be source reflection for Christian hospital chaplains, though others may benefit. The goal is not to be divisive, but to be transparent by declaring in an unambiguous fashion the core values, distinctions, and preferences inherent in practicing the theology.

A practicing philoxenosologist is an exclusivist who proclaims total faith and allegiance to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and who asserts that the resurrection of Jesus Christ is a true and historic fact thereby rejecting the enlightenment and neo-orthodox notion that the resurrection of Jesus is story or myth. Holding the resurrection to be a true and historic fact, a philoxenosologist affirms that Jesus is only way to the Father (John 14:6) and that Jesus was declared to be the Son of God by His resurrection (Rom 1:4). It follows that the resurrection of Jesus objectively ratifies the Scriptures as the Word of God (Luke 24:27, 32 and 45, and Heb 10:5–10 concerning the Old Testament; John 17:20 and 2 Pet 3:15–16 concerning the New Testament).

In philoxenosology, one asserts that because of God’s decision to permit autonomous choice in created intelligent beings perfection was never a divine goal or intention. Even though God is not the author of sin, He established the framework and the possibility for sin by allowing

³²The goal of philoxenosology is to socialize theologians through the prism of nurtured godliness developed from spiritual disciplines. The essence of godliness is defined as living by and being led by the Spirit. Galatians 5:18 asserts that one led by the Spirit is not under the law. Verse 22 equates being led by the Spirit with the “fruit of the Spirit.” In other words, the result of being led by the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. Against such things there is no law. A theologian acting with this foundation can function in any environment.

His intelligent creatures to exercise independent choice. Evidence of this assertion begins in the heavenly realm with Lucifer and the fallen angelic beings and continues into human creation. An omniscient God knew the gravity and outcome of His decision before He created the universe (Rev 13:8). Neither the actions of Lucifer and the fallen angels nor the fall of humanity surprised God. God has used flawed³³ instruments and objects to do His will from the beginning. However, whether the instrument or object was the incarnate Son of God, angelic, human, animate, inanimate, written or spoken, God's Word and God's will has not and will not fail (Isa 55:6–11). The Christian faith is grounded in the truth and historic reality of the Gospel of Jesus Christ. The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the sign and the seal that the Bible is divinely authored, authoritative, normative, and profitable for teaching, for rebuking, for correcting, for training in righteousness, so that a Christian chaplain may have a framework and a guide, not a step-by-step procedure, to approach the work of the ministry.

The resurrection of Jesus renders Christian resources, wisdom, commands, counsels, warnings, and teachings relevant and real to address all aspects of the human condition. The Apostle Paul asserted what this writer calls the "Christian disclaimer": "If there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. And if Christ has not been raised, our preaching is useless and so is your faith" (1 Cor 15:13–14 NIV). Paul asserts that if the resurrection of Jesus Christ is false then the whole Christian system of beliefs is false. Ultimately, Christianity stands or falls on the truth and historic reality of the resurrection. This is another reason a Christian chaplain should not arbitrarily or summarily dismiss the resurrection of Jesus like Esau dismissed his birthright. If the resurrection of Jesus is false, then Christianity collapses into mythology and Christian chaplaincy should cease to exist.

Finally, the goal of philoxenosology is to establish a workable framework for a Christian chaplain's identity, epistemology, and scope of practice in a secular medical center milieu the combined wisdom and knowledge of the entire body of divinity (Christian theological studies) must be incorporated. The body of divinity includes biblical, historical, doctrinal, and practical studies not as discrete and self-contained disciplines, but as salvation-disposed sources of theological reflection combined to address the human condition. In other words, philoxenosology is a synthesis of Christian theological studies directed toward the advocacy and support of complementary medicine practiced by a Christian chaplain as a provider of spiritual care for holistic wellness. Ultimately, philoxenosology is a tool to nurture Christian chaplains who relate compassionately to those experiencing crisis or trouble, to assist chaplains in discerning the root cause of the crisis or trouble using Scripture as an ethical normative framework, and to restore the spiritual aspect of holistic wellness by treating the crisis or trouble using the body of divinity and ancillary disciplines in the exploration of the patient's spiritual strata of reality as a major factor and significant aspect of the human condition.

³³ My use of the term flawed refers to any created being with the option to disobey and any other object affected by the entrance of sin into creation, both heavenly and earthly. Jesus is excluded from this definition because even though He became flesh and was subjected to temptation with a real option to disobey, Jesus is not a created being.

Crusade War in the Old Testament and Today



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There is no more acute challenge to the moral understanding of Christians than comes with handling the record of the Hebrew Bible concerning Israel's practice of holy war, a sort of war now more specifically designated "Yahweh war."¹ This is because Israel's God, being understood as not just a tribal deity but the one true creator of the universe, is recorded as Himself commanding the wholesale slaughter of women, children, the elderly, the infirm and even animals, as well as soldiers, and as ordering the complete destruction of cities, idols and temples, as well as military fortifications. This study will assess the contemporary relevance of the ethic employed in the Yahweh wars of Israel, that ethic being a divinely sanctioned version of crusade war.

War was a topic of great importance in the life and history of ancient Israel. Of the thirty-nine books in the Hebrew Bible, war is directly mentioned in all but two—Ruth and the Song of Songs—and even in these war is in the near background. Ruth is identified as the great-grand-mother of David, Israel's most famous warrior-king (Ruth 4:17), and soldiers armed and experienced in battle escort the king in the Song of Songs (Song 3:7–8). As Helmut Thielicke well observed, "the Old Testament is full of wars and rumors of wars."² War was ubiquitous in the ancient landscape. But most war activity recorded in the Old Testament is not a matter of war in general, but rather of holy war; and is not just a matter of any holy war, but rather of a particular sort pertaining to Israel's special status with God. While the ethic by which this sort of war operated is foreign to modern thinkers and is for that reason especially hard to grasp, doing so is essential for understanding some very important biblical concepts including the character of God and the development of salvation-history, to say nothing of the nature and coherence of divinely established moral order.

Editor's Note: This article also appears in Daniel Heimbach, "Crusade in the Old Testament and Today," in *Holy War in the Bible: Christian Morality and an Old Testament Problem*, ed. Heath Thomas, Jeremy Evans, and Paul Copan (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2013), 179–200.

¹See Rudolf Smend, *Yahweh War and Tribal War*, trans. Max Gray Rogers (Nashville: Abingdon, 1970); G. H. Jones, "The Concept of Holy War," in *The World of Ancient Israel*, ed. R. E. Clements (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1989); J. P. U. Lilley, "Understanding the Herem," *Tyndale Bulletin* 44 (1993): 169–77.

²Helmut Thielicke, *Politics*, v. 2 of *Theological Ethics*, ed. William H. Lazareth (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 453.

The task of analyzing the ethic of Yahweh war is complex and immense, so it is not surprising to find that doing so raises many important issues. These issues include: whether the Old Testament supports any coherent view on the ethics of war at all; and, if so, whether the close connection of religion and war in the Old Testament means that any ethic justifying war is necessarily in some sense a matter of holy war; and, if so, whether there is in the religiously connected war thinking of the Old Testament only one, or possibly two, different ethics (both a religiously connected just war ethic and a religiously connected crusade ethic); and, if so, whether either or both of the religiously connected war ethics in the Old Testament is in fact compatible with the character of a loving and merciful God; and, if so, whether either or both religiously connected war ethics in the Old Testament is continuous with ethical teaching in the New Testament; and, if so, whether either of the religiously connected war ethics of the Old Testament—but especially whether the crusade ethic of Yahweh war—is a viable option for the understanding and practice of war today.

These issues have special urgency given by the all too real threat now posed by the reappearance of militant Islam as an actor on the world stage, and that is because the war ethic of militant Islam is in ways very like the ethic employed in the Yahweh wars of ancient Israel. This underscores both the relevance and importance of the topic at hand. What mattered formerly to only a few scholars now affects national security, and analyzing the ethics of crusade war in the Hebrew Bible now bears on directions in global leadership.

This study focuses narrowly and will assume and not dispute positions on a number of related questions well defended elsewhere. We will assume and not dispute the standard ordering of approaches to the ethics of war in three mutually exclusive, internally coherent systems of moral thought, these being pacifism, just war, and crusade.³ We will assume and not dispute the possibility of finding and studying a coherent crusade war ethic within the Old Testament

³While Glen Stassen disputes these categories, I am following the standard categories well explained and defended by Roland Bainton in *Christian Attitudes toward War and Peace* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1960). With all due respect, I am certain that Stassen is wrong to conflate the crusade war ethic with just war, and is wrong as well about treating just peacemaking as qualifying to serve as a separate paradigm for the ethics of peace and war in place of employing either pacifism or just war. For Stassen's case see *Just Peacemaking: Transforming Initiatives for Justice and Peace* (Westminster/ John Knox, 1992); and also *Just Peacemaking: The New Paradigm for the Ethics of Peace and War* (Cleveland: Pilgrim, 2008). In my estimate, just peacemaking is misscategorized as a "new paradigm," and that is because it is not (and cannot be) a separately operational ethic for matters of war and peace, but only serves as a strategy for confusing clear moral distinctions by getting proponents of pacifism and just war to pretend their very different and mutually exclusive definitions of "peace" are neither different nor mutually exclusive. This comment is based on personal conversation I have had with Stassen concerning his method and intentions. Beyond Bainton, my claim about regarding crusade as a distinctly different ethic from just war as standard among scholars in the field is supported, for example, in the work of Karl Barth who insisted there are crucial differences between war justified on just war terms and "a crusade or . . . war of religion." Karl Barth, *A Letter to Great Britain from Switzerland* (London: Sheldon Press, 1941), 21.

record.⁴ We will assume and not dispute the notion that any ethic justifying war is religious in some broad sense, and is therefore in that sense also a sort of holy war.⁵ We will assume and not dispute that there is in the Old Testament more than one identifiable and coherent ethic of war—both a crusade ethic and a just war ethic—and that while both are given to Israel by God they are not the same.⁶ We will assume and not dispute the Old Testament record of crusade war employed by God as something that is indeed consistent with his character.⁷ And we will assume and not dispute the logic of thinking that the unchanging moral character of God (Num 23:19; Ps 102:27; Mal 3:6; Heb 1:12; 13:8; Jas 1:17) strongly suggests continuity of moral order between the Old and New Testaments.⁸

This study aims to show that, even when conceived as fully consistent with the unchanging moral character of God, and even when taken as part of a unified moral order applicable in both the Old and New Testaments, there are nevertheless good reasons to conclude that the crusade ethic evident in the Yahweh wars of ancient Israel is not, and never has been, allowable as an

⁴Peter Craigie disputes the presence of any coherent war ethic in the Old Testament. See Peter C. Craigie, *The Problem of War in the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Eerdmans, 1978). But coherence is supported by Gerhard von Rad, *Holy War in Ancient Israel*, ed. and trans. Marva J. Dawn and John H. Yoder (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991); Bainton, *Christian Attitudes*; Helmut Thielicke, *Politics*; Tremper Longman III and Daniel Reid, *God Is a Warrior* (Carlisle, Pennsylvania: Paternoster, 1995); and Eugene Merrill, “The Case for Moderate Discontinuity,” in *Show Them No Mercy: 4 Views on God and Canaanite Genocide*, ed. Stanley N. Gundry (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003).

⁵This view is held in one form by Glen Stassen (verification based on personal conversation), and is held in another form by Roland Bainton, *Christian Attitudes*. It was earlier, and perhaps first, articulated by Max Weber, *Ancient Judaism*, trans. and ed. Hans H. Gerth and Don Martindale (Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1952), comprised of articles originally published between 1917 and 1919.

⁶Rudolf Smend, in *Yahweh War and Tribal War* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1970), first published as *Jahwekrieg und Stämmebund: Erwägungen zur ältesten Geschichte Israels* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1963), distinguishes Yahweh war from holy war in general (Smend, *Yahweh War*, 36–37). This does not go the whole way but does support thinking there must be a different sort of ethical justification involved beyond what applies only to Yahweh war. Texts that support a God-given just war ethic in the Hebrew Bible are Deut 20:10–15 and Amos 1:3–2:3.

⁷This has been defended, at least in some degree, by many different Bible scholars. For a recent defense see, Merrill, “Moderate Discontinuity,” 80–88. For defenders in history see, Augustine, *c. Faustus* 22.74–78; *Letters*, 138.2. 14; *City of God*, 1.21; Martin Luther, *Whether Soldiers Too, Can Be Saved*; John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, 4.20.31.

⁸Many defend this position in some form. For a recent example see Merrill, “Moderate Discontinuity.” The strongest opposition to this position has always, and most consistently, been expressed by proponents of Christian pacifism. On this see Daniel R. Heimbach, “The Problem of Universal Ethics for Christian Pacifists,” *Journal of Faith and War* 1:1 (Fall 2009), available at: http://faithandwar.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=47%3Athe-problem-of-universal-ethics-for-christian-pacifism&catid=42%3Agod-and-human-nature&Itemid=58, (accessed September 13, 2013), also delivered as a paper at the annual meeting of the Evangelical Theological Society, 2008.

option for human decision in matters of war. We will first discuss what makes crusade an ethic of war separate to itself and not to be confused as perhaps a form of the just war approach toward defining and regulating the practice of war on moral grounds. We will then review features specifically characterizing divinely sanctioned crusade in the Yahweh wars of Israel. We will go on to survey efforts by theologians who have sought to explain divinely sanctioned crusade in the wars of Israel. And we will end by developing several good reasons for denying the supposition that accepting the legitimacy of divinely sanctioned crusade in the Yahweh wars of Israel either could or should lead toward making crusade a viable option today.

What Distinguishes Crusade from Just War

There has been much confusion among scholars as to whether crusade exists and if so what makes it an ethic of war to itself identifiably different from pacifism and just war. From a pacifist perspective crusade seems a rather more extreme version of the just war ethic, a case of justifying war without modifying conditions; and even from a just war perspective crusade may not seem that far removed from merely articulating just war in religious terms. Consequently one finds respected scholars treating crusade war in completely contrary ways with some of them confusing what are properly aspects of just war with crusade, and with others confusing what is properly a form of crusade with just war.⁹ It is therefore important first to clarify what in general makes crusade an ethic to itself, and then to clarify more particularly what distinguishes crusade from just war. And, since the latter depends on the former, we shall proceed in that order.

Roland Bainton clearly identifies what it is that requires treating crusade as being, not merely an extension of the just war approach, but an ethic to itself that is mutually exclusive not just in reference to pacifism but in reference to just war as well. For Bainton, holy war covers all treatment of war on religious terms, and he acknowledges that principles of the just war tradition are often conceived in religious terms. What distinguishes crusade as an ethic to itself is not mere concern for some conception of justice. If so, crusade would not be merely impossible to distinguish from just war but from pacifism as well, since both are concerned for justice albeit conceived in very different ways. And neither is reliance on religious authority, meaning, or motivation enough to make crusade a uniquely different ethic, because this also characterizes versions of both just war and pacifism.

According to Bainton, what makes crusade a separate ethic is not merely justifying war at all (with deference to pacifism and per just war). Neither is it concern for justice (per just war and pacifism in different ways). Nor is it even concern for religion (also per just war and pacifism

⁹For example, Harold O. J. Brown, "The Crusade or Preventive War," in *War: Four Christian Views*, ed. Robert G. Clouse (Downers Grove, Illinois: InterVarsity, 1981), 153–68, treats war to recover wrongly taken territory, a traditional part of the just war tradition, as a matter of crusade; and John Kelsay, in *Islam and War: The Gulf War and Beyond* (Louisville: Westminster/ John Knox, 1993), treats Islamic holy war as no more than a variety of the just war moral tradition claiming that "Islamic conceptions of war" entail a "more inclusive just war tradition" and not a different ethic of war altogether. Kelsay, *Islam and War*, 54–55.

in different ways). Rather, what makes crusade an ethic to itself is the manner in which crusade thinking employs religion (or what functions religiously). Bainton explains, “The crusade went beyond the holy war in the respect that it was fought not so much with God’s help as on God’s behalf, (and) not for a human goal which God might bless but for a divine cause which God might command.”¹⁰ He observes that among the ancients, “the just war, to be sure, was not devoid of religion, and to disregard its conditions would be to incur the displeasure of the gods, but it was fought for mundane objectives, albeit with a religious sanction, whereas the crusade was God’s war.”¹¹ Thus Bainton shows that, while the just war ethic may be, and often has been, conceived religiously, wars fought on just war terms are never fought on God’s behalf or for a divine cause. And, while the pacifist ethic is often conceived religiously as well, pacifism never justifies war under any circumstance, not even at God’s direction or for a cause He commands.

Building on this fundamental distinction, it is possible to identify at least twelve features marking crusade as an ethic to itself. These are generally identified as follows:

- (1) Crusade treats war as the ultimate means for eliminating evil and imposing ideal social good.
- (2) Crusade fights by divine command, or on behalf of whatever is conceived as source of ultimate authority and truth. The ethics of war therefore transcends human law.
- (3) Crusade requires no declaration of war. War commanded by God requires no ratification by any human authority.
- (4) Crusade is fought for a divine purpose or social ideal conceived on a universal scale. War is not viewed in terms of limited goals on less than a cosmic scale.
- (5) Crusade accepts no restrained use of force against the opposition. Anything done for good is justified, and nothing resisting good is worthy of tolerance or respect. Crusade war is always a matter of “total war” conducted with “no holds barred” and “no quarter given.”
- (6) Crusade does not spare enemies and takes no prisoners. It accepts conversion but not surrender.
- (7) Crusade does not compromise with opponents except if viewed as a stage toward eventually achieving the ideal for which war is fought.
- (8) Crusade seeks to conquer, to punish, and either to convert or destroy the enemy.
- (9) Crusade opposes the entire social order, belief system, or religion of enemy people, and therefore has no basis for distinguishing combatants from non-combatants.

¹⁰Bainton, *Christian Attitudes*, 44–45. My emphasis.

¹¹*Ibid.*, 44.

(10) Those fighting in wars of crusade fight as volunteers out of zeal (for God, for the divine cause, for the social ideal). They are not conscripts fighting out of duty and rarely consider themselves to be professionals.

(11) Those fighting in wars of crusade fight a double war, one that is material (a war of flesh and blood) and one that is spiritual or ideological.

(12) Crusade wars would end on achieving the ideal for which they are fought; but since no ideal is ever fully realized, crusade wars never really cease.

Having clarified what makes crusade an ethic to itself in a general sense, we can now discuss particular conditions that distinguish crusade from just war and support treating these as distinctly different ethics of war.¹² First, whereas crusade treats war as the ultimate means for eliminating evil and imposing ideal social good, just war treats war as a last resort. While war may be a necessary means for resisting evil to some degree, just war does not employ forces of war to imposing ideals but only to correct specific acts of injustice. Second, whereas crusade fights by divine command, or on behalf of whatever is conceived as source of ultimate authority and truth (and therefore transcends human law), just war treats war as an instrument of civil government fought where necessary for limited human goals and never above, but always under, the auspices of established law. Third, whereas crusade requires no declaration of war; just war requires a declaration of war be made by the authority of whatever human government is concerned.

Fourth, whereas crusade is fought for a divine purpose or social ideal conceived on a universal scale, war conceived on just war terms is fought on human terms, for human goals that are limited to restoring specific infractions of justly established social order. Fifth, whereas crusade neither tolerates nor respects engaging enemy opposition with anything less than maximum effort, with maximum force, for maximum effect, just war never allows more force than is minimally necessary, and the entire just war ethic is comprised of principles of moral restraint. Sixth, whereas crusade does not accept surrender but seeks either to convert or destroy enemies, just war spares those who surrender and recognizes basic human rights for enemy combatants held as prisoners of war.

Seventh, whereas crusade does not negotiate with opposing forces except as a strategy for achieving unconditional results, just war prefers to negotiate any compromise less costly than continuing a war that becomes more costly than the cause originally justifying the war. Eighth, whereas crusade aims to conquer, punish, and destroy, just war seeks only to rectify a specific infraction of justice and no more. Ninth, whereas crusade opposes the entire social order, belief system, or religion of an enemy people and therefore does not distinguish combatants from non-combatants, just war only seeks to rectify specific actions and is careful to distinguish combatants

¹²For more see, Daniel R. Heimbach, "Distinguishing Just War from Crusade: Is Regime Change a Just Case for Just War?" in *War in the Bible and Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Richard S. Hess and Elmer A. Martens (Winona Lake, Indiana: Eisenbrauns, 2008), 79–92.

from non-combatants. Tenth, whereas crusaders fight out of zeal for achieving some universal ideal, soldiers in a just war fight out of duty to protect the weak from oppression or preserve the security of an established political order. Eleventh, whereas crusaders fight a double war, one material and the other ideological, soldiers fighting a just war only fight on material terms. And twelfth, whereas wars of crusade never really cease, just war hostilities cease as soon as whatever specific action led to war is corrected.

Crusade in the Yahweh Wars of Israel

Having supported the validity of treating crusade as an ethic to itself not to be confused with just war, we turn now to consider the particular way in which the crusade ethic of war is employed in the Old Testament, that being the form in which it is employed in the Yahweh wars of ancient Israel. The ethic of Israel's Yahweh wars is not the only instance of crusade in the Bible, since just about every nation with which Israel fought operated on crusade terms as well.¹³ The Philistines, Midianites, Moabites and Edomites all fought on crusade terms, as did the Egyptians, Assyrians, and Babylonians. And nowhere is this more apparent than in the war taunt delivered by the Rabshakeh on behalf of Sennacherib,¹⁴ king of Assyria, when addressing the people of Jerusalem under King Hezekiah. As recorded by Isaiah, the Assyrian Rabshakeh said,

This is what the great king, the king of Assyria, says: On what are you basing this confidence of yours? . . . (H)ave I come to attack and destroy this land without the LORD? The LORD himself told me to march against this country and destroy it Do not let Hezekiah mislead you when he says, "The LORD will deliver us." Has the god of any nation ever delivered his land from the hand of the king of Assyria? (Isa 36:4, 10, 18, NIV).

Nor is the biblical record on crusade war limited only to the Old Testament, for New Testament prophecy indicates that the last battles fought on earth after Jesus Christ returns to impose absolute rule at every level will be fought on crusade, and not merely on just war, terms (Rev 19:17–21 and 20:7–10).

The special interest for moral theologians and biblical ethicists in studying the Yahweh wars of Israel is not because they were unprecedented or were even unusual, but rather is because in the Yahweh wars of Israel we have recorded in sacred Scripture instances in which using the crusade ethic of war is sanctioned by God Himself and therefore regarded as morally approved. And, while divinely sanctioned crusade also occurs in Revelation, the subject is covered in far more detail in the history of Israel than is covered in a few highly generalized verses in just one chapter, from just one book, in the entire New Testament corpus.

¹³Here I disagree with Bainton who says that crusade as "God's war . . . could scarcely have originated in antiquity save among the Jews," and then alleges that "before the Maccabees one may doubt whether a crusade ever really took place in Israel." Bainton, *Christian Attitudes*, 44–45.

¹⁴Rabshakeh is the title of a senior military commander in the Assyrian army.

When it comes to studying the actual history of holy war in the life and practice of ancient Israel, no one has yet surpassed the work of Gerhard von Rad in *Holy War in Ancient Israel*.¹⁵ While some have clarified aspects of his work,¹⁶ and others have disputed points,¹⁷ von Rad's treatment remains definitive on this topic. Gerhard von Rad identified a number of key elements as distinctive of the way Israel conducted war at the direction of Yahweh. Compared to the features we covered earlier that define crusade war in general, the elements von Rad identifies as particular to Israel's practice of holy war do not so much define what makes crusade an ethic of war as such but are better understood as procedures by which the people of Israel knew they were fighting the sort of crusade war ordered by the one true Creator of the Universe.

According to von Rad,¹⁸ the conditions and practices by which the people of Israel knew they were participating in Yahweh-authorized crusade war are as follows:

- (1) God summoned the people to battle by ordering a trumpet call (Num 10:9; Josh 6:8–9; Judg 3:27; 6:34; 1 Sam 13:3–4).
- (2) Men were consecrated for battle (Josh 3:5). Men are circumcised (Josh 5:4–8) and abstain from sex (1 Sam 21:4–5; 2 Sam 11:11).
- (3) Weapons were consecrated for battle (1 Sam 21:5; 2 Sam 1:21).
- (4) Vows were made (Num 21:2; Judg 11:36; 1 Sam 14:24).
- (5) The camp of the assembled army was ceremonially purified (Deut 23:9–14).
- (6) They offered sacrifices to God (1 Sam 7:9; 13:9–10, 12).
- (7) An oracle came from God with directions and/or assurance of victory (Judg 20:13, 18; 1 Sam 7:9; 14:8ff; 14:37; 23:2, 4, 9–12; 28:6; 30:7–8; 2 Sam 5:19, 23).
- (8) God leads/goes before the army into battle (Judg 4:14; 5:4; Deut 20:4).
- (9) The number of troops and amount of equipment is not considered important because God does not need Israel to win but rather commands Israel to fight on his side (Judg 7:2ff; 1 Sam 14:6; 17:45, 47).

¹⁵von Rad, *Holy War*.

¹⁶Smend, *Yahweh War*; Jones, "The Concept of Holy War"; Lilley, "Understanding the *Herem*"; Bainton, *Christian Attitudes*; Longman and Reid, *God Is a Warrior*; Merrill, "The Case for Moderate Discontinuity."

¹⁷Craigie, *Problem of War*.

¹⁸The elements of Yahweh approved holy war isolated by von Rad are listed different ways by different authors. This listing follows my own reading of von Rad, but benefits from careful consideration of similar summaries made by Bainton and Merrill. For von Rad see, *Holy War*, 41–51. For Bainton see, *Christian Attitudes*, 44–48. For Merrill see, "Moderate Discontinuity," 69.

(10) God is the one who fights both on behalf of (miraculously) and through (empowering) the men of Israel (Exod 14:14; Deut 1:30; Josh 10:14, 42; 23:10; 1 Sam 14:23).

(11) The men of Israel are charged not to fear but rather to believe (Exod 14:13–14; Deut 20:3; Josh 8:1).

(12) God sends divine terror over the enemy who are often far superior in numbers and equipment (Exod 23:27; Deut 7:23; Judg 7:22–25; 1 Sam 14:15–23).

(13) The taking of spoils (enemy possessions) is strictly controlled on God's terms by means of the "ban" or herem (Deut 20:1–18; Josh 6:18–19; 1 Sam 15:3).

(14) The army is officially dismissed from service (2 Sam 20:1; 1 Kgs 12:6).

Understanding Approved Crusade in Yahweh War

It is one thing to argue the presence of crusade in the Old Testament and to identify various conditions associated with the practice of divinely approved crusade in the Yahweh wars of Israel, and another thing entirely to address the morality of doing so. And the moral challenge involved in assessing Yahweh war is especially challenging for Christians who accept the biblical record as properly crediting God with burning up enemies, showing no mercy, and directing Israel to destroy everything and spare no one.

Most difficult to assess are passages portraying God as a bloodthirsty warrior, "I will make my arrows drunk with blood while my sword devours flesh" (Deut 32:42); or as burning with anger so ruthless it consumes the enemy "like stubble" (Exod 15:7). Also troubling are passages ordering the Israelites to "carry out the LORD's vengeance" (Num 31:3); to "kill all the boys" and "kill every woman who has slept with a man" (Num 31:17); to "make no treaty with them, and show them no mercy" (Deut 7:2); to "not leave alive anything that breathes" (Deut 20:16); to "leave no survivors" (Deut 2:34; Josh 10:39). In one passage, the people are told, "You must certainly put to the sword all who live in that town. Destroy it completely, both its people and its livestock. Gather all the plunder of the town into the middle of the public square and completely burn the town and all its plunder as a whole burnt offering to the LORD your God" (Deut 13:15–17); and in another "They devoted the city to the LORD and destroyed with the sword every living thing in it—men and women, young and old, cattle, sheep and donkeys" (Josh 6:2), all in obedience to instructions issued by God prior to a particular battle.

Scholars taking a non-supernaturalist approach to Scripture dismiss such passages as comprised of so much ancient prejudice, which was later abandoned as the culture advanced to higher levels of moral understanding.¹⁹ But these passages cannot be so easily dismissed by scholars

¹⁹For example see, Bainton, *Christian Attitudes*; and Marion J. Benedict, *The God of the Old Testament in Relation to War* (New York: Teachers College, 1927).

who believe with the Apostle Paul that “all Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness” (1 Tim 3:16). For us, these passages on Yahweh-approved wars of crusade must be taken as fully consistent with the unchanging moral character of God, and must be accepted as morally instructive along with the rest of divinely inspired Scripture. Our conclusion must be that, because God never sins and is Himself the measure of moral perfection, and because God defines morality for us not the other way around, it must therefore be that God acting as a bloodthirsty warrior is sometimes morally justified. It must also be that at those times fighting on God’s side on crusade terms, allowing no surrender, showing no mercy, and sparing no one, is also entirely justified. But, if so, how can this be explained, especially in view of all the Bible also says about love and mercy even for enemies?

The first and most important answer is that God, of course, owes no explanation to anyone for anything He does. If God truly exists and is not a projection of human prejudice or a mere figment of human imagination, then He is the One who evaluates us, and we have no standing to evaluate him. On this Isaiah says, “Woe to him who quarrels with his Maker. Woe to him who is but a potsherd among the other potsherds on the ground. Does the clay say to the potter, ‘What are you making?’” (Isa 45:9). And when Job questioned God’s moral judgment, God challenged him by asking, “Would you discredit my justice? Would you condemn me to justify yourself?” (Job 40:8).

Theologians through history have stressed this exact point in treating the crusade ethic applied in the Yahweh wars of Israel. Augustine held that a man is “blameless who carries on war on the authority of God, of whom everyone who serves Him knows that He can never require what is wrong,”²⁰ that men who fight wars “by a special intimation from God Himself” are not “implicated in the guilt of murder,”²¹ and that “undoubtedly that type of war is also just (is morally warranted) which God orders, in whom there is no iniquity and who knows what ought to happen to each person.”²² In case of what is now called Yahweh war, Augustine believed that “the commander of the army or the populace itself should be judged [morally innocent, being] not so much the author of the war, as the agent [assigned by God] of it.”²³ Luther maintained that “God’s hands are not bound so that he cannot bid us make war against those who have not given us just cause, as he did when he commanded the children of Israel to go to war against the Canaanites,” and that is because “in such a case God’s command is necessity enough.”²⁴ And Calvin argued that “both Moses (Exod 32:27–28) and David (1 Kgs 2:5–6, 8–9), in executing the vengeance committed to them by God, by this severity sanctified their hands, which would have been defiled by leniency.”²⁵

²⁰Augustine, *c. Faustus* 22.75.

²¹Augustine, *City of God* 1.21.

²²Augustine, *qu. Heptateuch* 6.10.

²³Ibid.

²⁴Martin Luther, *Whether Soldiers, Too, Can Be Saved*.

²⁵John Calvin, *Institutes* 4.20.10.

But, while God owes no explanation for what He chooses to do, this does not preclude analysis of what God has chosen nevertheless to reveal of His character and of His purposes in using the people of Israel to bring about His will on earth; and this has led to offering several secondary insights aimed at giving some sort of explanation for God's approval of crusade war in dealings with Israel. Of these secondary and admittedly more speculative insights, the major observation has regarded the obvious connection made in the biblical record between Yahweh war and the importance of maintaining the holiness of Israel as a unique people, chosen by God to reflect his character and to carry out his plan for saving the world (Exod 19:6; Deut 7:6; 14:2, 21; 26:19; 28:9).

This leads Helmut Thielicke to say that Yahweh war is in a unique moral category "related to the special nature of the situation of Israel," a category wherein they are "a chosen people" with "a privileged position in salvation history."²⁶ Similarly, Eugene Merrill asserts that "a comprehensive theological overview yields the conclusion that Israel must be holy because Yahweh is holy and that one of the major purposes of Yahweh war was to protect that holiness."²⁷ Elaborating further, Merrill argues that

the extreme measure of Yahweh war was necessary for at least four reasons: (1) the irremediable hardness of the hearts of its victims; (2) the need to protect Israel against spiritual corruption; (3) the destruction of idolatry; and (4) the education of Israel and the nations as to the character and intentions of the one true God.²⁸

Beyond this, other explanations mentioned through history as justifying approved use of crusade ethics in the prosecution of Yahweh war have included "righteous retribution" in which God gave "to all what they deserved;"²⁹ the need of God to "rebuke, humble, or crush the pride of man;"³⁰ the affliction of "mercy" by which God suppressed "those vices . . . which ought . . . to be extirpated;"³¹ and the value of "cut(ting) off all wicked doers from the city of the Lord."³²

Why Approved Crusade Is No Option for Us

The most difficult moral question for Christian understanding of crusade in the Yahweh wars of Israel never has been whether it was properly sanctioned by God, but whether approval by God in the Old Testament makes employing the crusade war ethic a legitimate option for war today. Although Pope Urban II called eleventh-century Christians to oppose Islamic crusade in like fashion,³³ most theologians have firmly denied that divinely approved crusade in the wars

²⁶Thielicke, *Politics*, 453.

²⁷Merrill, "Moderate Discontinuity," 81.

²⁸*Ibid.*, 85.

²⁹Augustine, *c. Faustus* 22.74.

³⁰*Ibid.*, 22.75.

³¹Augustine, *Letters* 138.2.14.

³²Calvin, *Institutes* 4.20.10.

³³Zoé Oldenbourg, *The Crusades*, trans. Anne Carter (New York: Random House, 1966), 78.

of ancient Israel makes crusade an option for others. For example, Calvin writes, “Though the correction of tyrannical domination is the vengeance of God, we are not, therefore, to conclude that it is committed to us, who have received no other command than to obey and suffer.”³⁴ Thielicke sees nothing in the Old Testament “which can help to fix a theological position with respect to war as such.”³⁵ Merrill denies “any possible justification for modern genocide for any reason.”³⁶ But these are conclusions, and we must consider why this is, or is not, the case.

The moral relevance of approved crusade in the Yahweh wars of Israel can be denied in three ways: (1) by rejecting its moral legitimacy altogether; (2) by rejecting continuity with the moral order in which it was legitimate; or (3) by identifying conditions precluding relevance in other situations. Marion Benedict, Gerhard von Rad, and Peter Craigie all take the first approach—but for different reasons; Christian pacifists take the second approach; and Helmut Thielicke, Tremper Longman III, and Eugene Merrill all take the third approach. After documenting each, I will explain and defend a form of this third approach.

Benedict, von Rad, and Craigie each deny the relevance of crusade in the Old Testament by rejecting original legitimacy—but all for different reasons. Marion Benedict does so by dismissing original worthiness under any alleged circumstance. According to Benedict, early Old Testament depictions of Israel’s God as a God of crusade are records of a “God whose power is not yet joined to good-will and moral responsibility, but rather to caprice and jealousy and terrifying destructiveness.”³⁷ Gerhard von Rad does so by dismissing transcendence, suggesting that the holy war literature of Israel is to be understood as something produced by writers far removed from the events depicted, who shaped Israel’s history to meet their own needs, and were not recording how an actual God truly acted on their behalf.³⁸ Peter Craigie attacks coherence and doubts whether any ethic of war can be derived from alleging divine presence in various war activities.³⁹

A second way of denying the relevance of crusade war in the history of Israel is an approach most closely associated with Christian pacifism, which is to reject continuity with the moral order applicable in Yahweh war. Proponents of this approach do not attack the legitimacy, transcendence or coherence of the crusade war ethic employed in the Yahweh wars of Israel, but only argue that it describes a moral order that either is discontinued or at least does not apply to the followers of Jesus Christ. Thus Tertullian held that even though Moses and Joshua led the people of God in war, “Still the Lord (Jesus) . . . in disarming Peter, unbelted every soldier.”⁴⁰ The

³⁴Calvin, *Institutes* 4.20.31.

³⁵Thielicke, *Politics*, 453.

³⁶Merrill, “Moderate Discontinuity,” 93.

³⁷Benedict, *God of the Old Testament*, 15.

³⁸von Rad, *Holy War*, 81–93.

³⁹Craigie, *Problem of War*, 41–49.

⁴⁰Tertullian, *On Idolatry*, 19.

Swiss Brethren maintained that while “the sword is ordained of God outside the perfection of Christ,” nevertheless Christians may not in this life “employ the sword against the wicked [even] for the defense and protection of the good.”⁴¹ William McGrath, representing what Amish and Mennonite Christians believe, states that it is plainly “mistaken” to think “what was right then [in the Old Testament] must be alright now, too.”⁴² And Richard Hays writes that, while “the Old Testament obviously validates the legitimacy of armed violence by the people of God,” it is now the case for Christians that “Jesus’ explicit teaching and example of nonviolence reshapes our understanding of God and the covenant community.” As for the moral contrast this involves, Hays simply states, “the New Testament vision trumps the Old Testament.”⁴³

The third way by which the relevance of divinely sanctioned crusade in the Bible can be denied involves identifying prerequisite conditions that preclude selecting crusade for an ethic of war in other circumstances. Proponents of this approach accept the legitimacy, transcendence, and coherence of crusade in the Yahweh wars of Israel. And yet, while accepting these terms, proponents nevertheless reject contemporary moral relevance for reasons having to do with the nature of Yahweh war understood on its own terms, and within the original biblical-historical context in which the Yahweh wars of Israel are reported to have occurred.

But, just as there are variations among proponents of the first approach, so there are variations among proponents of this third approach as well. Thielicke and Merrill do so by, in effect, denying the universality of the ethic involved. Both maintain that the Yahweh wars of Israel must be classified in a moral category that always has been, and remains, unique to the role and mission of Israel, and therefore never could be applicable to others. It is not that moral thinking has evolved, or that morality has changed, but rather they believe it is a case of dealing with a sort of morality that never applied beyond a single, non-repeatable circumstance.

Concerning the ethic of Israel’s Yahweh wars, Thielicke says “they constitute a special category” related to Israel’s “privileged position in salvation history” whereby they were “not just a nation politically” but were “also a chosen people.”⁴⁴ Thielicke concludes, “The situation in Israel is without analogy.”⁴⁵ Similarly, Merrill argues that, “because only Israel was authorized to carry it out in Old Testament times . . . the ramifications of this for the issue of war in general and war conducted under the guise of divine direction in particular are immense.” Merrill decides, “If no case could be made for Yahweh war without Israel’s participation in Old Testament times, surely none can be made today whether done in the name of Christ, Allah, or any other authority.”⁴⁶

⁴¹Swiss Brethren, Article VI: “Concerning the Sword,” *The Schleithem Confession*.

⁴²William R. McGrath, *Why We Are Conscientious Objectors To War* (Carrollton, Ohio: Amish Mennonite Publications, 1980), 18.

⁴³Richard Hays, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament* (San Francisco: Harper, 1996), 336.

⁴⁴Thielicke, *Politics*, 453.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Merrill, “Moderate Discontinuity,” 85.

Tremper Longman takes this third approach. But, rather than dispute the universality of the ethic involved, Longman instead denies continuing material relevance while affirming on-going relevance, not only for Israel but the world, in a non-material spiritual sense. Thus Longman argues that “there is both continuity and discontinuity between the Old and New Testaments on the issue of herem warfare;”⁴⁷ that “the war against the Canaanites was simply an earlier phase of the battle that comes to its climax on the cross and its completion at the final judgment;”⁴⁸ and that “the Bible makes it clear that we are still involved in herem warfare; but rather than being directed toward physical enemies, it is a spiritual battle.”⁴⁹ Longman therefore concludes that, while “it is now a betrayal of the gospel to take up arms to defend or promote the interests of Christ . . . the spiritual battle that has been waged throughout history” is still a matter of “herem warfare.”⁵⁰

I agree with Thielicke, Merrill, and Longman in denying that divine approval of a crusade ethic in the Yahweh wars of ancient Israel makes employing crusade war an option for anyone today, and doing so in a way that yet accepts the Bible as trustworthy and coherent; yet accepts the reality of transcendence in moral order; yet accepts the worthiness of divinely sanctioned crusade in the Yahweh wars of Israel; and yet accepts the continuity of moral order between the Old and New Testaments. But, I do not think Thielicke and Merrill are right in reducing the crusade ethic of Yahweh war to non-universal status. I also do not think nor Longman is correct in restricting moral continuity to the non-material. Rather, I take the position that because God’s moral character never changes (Num 23:19; Ps 102:27; Mal 3:6; Heb 1:12; 13:8; Jas 1:17) and nothing other than God’s character limits what He does, this means the only possible basis for precluding the relevance of crusade as an option for war must be located in prerequisite conditions applying as much to Israel as to others, and applying as much in the setting of Israel’s Yahweh wars as it does today.

I believe three conditions did apply and continue to apply in the same way now as they did before. These prerequisites are: (1) that approved crusade had always to be initiated by God and never by anyone else; (2) that approved crusade had always to be led by God and never by anyone else; and (3) that approved crusade had always to be initiated and led by God in a manner that could be verified by those called to participate.

The first of these conditions is discernable where God orders Israel to “Go in and take possession of the land that the LORD swore he would give to your fathers” (Deut 1:8); where God orders Israel “to conquer and possess” the land of the Amorites under king Sihon leaving them “no survivors” (Deut 2:31, 34); where God orders Israel to attack Og king of Bashan saying, “Do to him what you did to Sihon king of the Amorites” (Num 21:34; Deut 3:2); where

⁴⁷Tremper Longman III, “The Case for Spiritual Continuity,” in *Show Them No Mercy: 4 Views on God and Canaanite Genocide*, ed. Stanley N. Gundry (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2003), 184.

⁴⁸Ibid., 185.

⁴⁹Ibid., 186.

⁵⁰Ibid., 187.

God commands Israel to “Take vengeance on the Midianites” (Num 31:1); where God orders Israel to attack the occupants of the Promised Land commanding that Israel “destroy them totally. Make no treaty with them, and show them no mercy” (Deut 7:2); and where God orders faithful Israelites to attack any of their own towns that starts worshiping other gods saying, “You must certainly put to the sword all who live in that town. Destroy it completely, both its people and its livestock” (Deut 13:15).

This first condition is mentioned by Longman and Reid where they say “Holy war was always initiated by Yahweh, never Israel,”⁵¹ and by Merrill, who says, “God initiated the process by singling out those destined to destruction, empowering an agent (usually his chosen people Israel) to accomplish it.”⁵² Merrill also writes, “If anything is clear . . . it is that such war was conceived by God.”⁵³ So, even though Longman and Merrill rely on other reasons for denying the continued relevance of crusade war, they both recognize this one prerequisite that alone is sufficient to disqualify treating crusade as an option for human decision.

The second condition limiting approved crusade is present in passages when troops going into battle are told “the LORD your God is the one who goes with you against your enemies to give you victory” (Deut 20:4); when Moses tells Israel “the LORD your God himself will cross over ahead of you. He will destroy these nations before you” (Deut 31:3); when on the verge of entering the Promised Land Israel is told “Do not be afraid . . . for the LORD your God goes with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you” (Deut 31:6); when after the conquest of Canaan, God makes sure that Joshua knows it was God alone who “gave them into your hands,” it was He who “drove them out before you,” and “you did not do it with your own sword or bow” (Josh 24:11–12); and when Debra the prophetess assures the commander of Israel’s army of victory by asking him rhetorically, “Has not the LORD gone ahead of you?” (Judg 4:14).

But the critical nature of this second condition is most evident in what took place just before the battle of Jericho. While surveying the future battlefield, Joshua “saw a man standing in front of him with a drawn sword in his hand” (Josh 5:13). But after Joshua challenges this figure’s allegiance, the figure does not answer on Joshua’s terms but rather reverses his challenge by declaring himself to be “commander of the army of the LORD” (Josh 5:14), meaning that He is Yahweh himself. Joshua immediately assumes a posture of total and complete submission and, rather than question God’s allegiance, he instead asks what orders God may have him carry out. The point of all this was to make clear to Joshua, as most senior human commander of Israel’s army, that a divinely sanctioned crusade not only had to be authorized by God, but also had to be led by God. The army of Israel was to follow God Himself into battle. They were following His lead on His terms, not the other way around. And the whole business of losing the next battle to Ai, after victory over Jericho, was about the same point in reverse (Josh 7:10–12).

⁵¹Longman and Reid, *God Is a Warrior*, 33.

⁵²Merrill, “Moderate Discontinuity,” 65.

⁵³*Ibid.*, 80.

Merrill also mentions this second condition when he observes that Yahweh war was not only “conceived by God” but also “commanded by him;”⁵⁴ and when he notes that Yahweh war was, not only always “initiated,” but also always “led,” by God himself.⁵⁵ But, while Merrill notes this second condition, he again does not seem to realize its value for disqualifying crusade as an option for wars initiated by human leaders and led by human generals.

The third prerequisite essential to Yahweh approved crusade war in the Old Testament is that it always had to be initiated and led by God in a manner that could be verified by those called to participate. It is always possible for some charlatan to allege divine orders in a dream, vision, or trance, or even to maliciously claim the mantle of divine authority in calling others to war. And it is possible even to claim divine leadership by alleging the presence of some invisible deity. But that is not what happens in the biblical record of crusade in the Yahweh wars of Israel. Rather what happens is that when Yahweh does in fact initiate crusade, and does in fact Himself lead Israel into battle on crusade terms, He does it in a way that participants can verify.

The people of Israel were able to verify that God did indeed speak to Moses, giving him detailed instructions for leading their nation out of Egypt and into the Promised Land. They saw the plagues God poured out on Egypt (Exodus 7–11). As they “went up out of Egypt armed for battle” (Exod 13:18), they could literally see how “by day the LORD went ahead of them in a pillar of cloud to guide them on their way and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, so they could travel by day or by night” (Exod 13:21). When “Pharaoh, his chariots and his horsemen” approached them on the shore of the Red Sea, they saw how “the angel of God, who had been traveling in front of Israel’s army, withdrew and went behind them” and “the pillar cloud also moved from in front and stood behind them coming between the armies of Egypt and Israel” (Exod 14:18–20), and saw how Yahweh parted the sea “and turned it into dry land” after “Moses stretched out his hand over the sea” (Exod 14:21), and saw and most likely also heard God order Moses to “Stretch out your hand over the sea so that the waters may flow back over the Egyptians and their chariots and horsemen,” and they saw how when Moses obeyed “the LORD swept them into the sea” drowning “the entire army of Pharaoh that had followed the Israelites into the sea” so that “not one of them survived” (Exod 14:26–28).

Later, they heard God delivering instructions to Moses at Sinai (Exod 20:1–21), and saw and experienced many other miraculous evidences supporting the fact that Moses was receiving directions directly from God Himself. They had every reason to believe Moses did indeed have orders directly from God when he told them Yahweh was commanding they “go to war against the Midianites and to carry out the LORD’s vengeance on them” (Num 31:3). So also, when preparing for the conquest of Canaan on crusade terms, the warriors of Israel followed instructions each already had verified came from God (Deut 31:1–6). And beyond that, when entering the Promised Land to fight on crusade terms, they did so under Joshua whose role in succeeding Moses they saw verified in crossing the Jordan “on dry ground” (Josh 3:17).

⁵⁴Ibid., 80–81.

⁵⁵Ibid., 85.

Conclusion

Many have analyzed the ethic of Yahweh war in the Hebrew Bible and have arrived at different conclusions, but no serious scholar defends the notion that divinely sanctioned crusade in the wars of ancient Israel makes crusade a legitimate moral option for human leaders responsible for military operations in the world today. Nevertheless, while those who deny the reality of Israel's God, or insist the Bible is only a human record, can dismiss it as ancient prejudice superseded by a more developed sense of moral enlightenment, those who believe that Israel's God truly exists, and who accept the Bible as a trustworthy record of His will and character, cannot dismiss Israel's ancient war ethic so easily. While such scholars also deny the ongoing relevance of Old Testament crusade, they do so for different reasons.

While denying along with others that crusade war is a proper option for human initiative and leadership, I have taken and defended a position that goes farther than most in affirming the accuracy, worthiness, and continuity of God's moral order revealed in the Old Testament. I have done this, not by limiting Israel's ancient war ethic to something absolutely unrepeatable, or less than timeless, or less than universal, or now relevant only in a non-material spiritual sense. Rather, I have argued that, taken as presented in the Bible itself, legitimate application of crusade in the wars of ancient Israel had always to meet three prerequisite conditions, and these conditions are as applicable now as they were then. In effect, I have argued that taking the biblical record on its own terms, the crusade ethic sanctioned in the Yahweh wars of Israel is not an option for human decision now because it never was in the first place. Yet, I realize in taking this position I am also suggesting that should these conditions be satisfied once more, then crusade war would be as morally legitimate again as it was in the Yahweh wars of Israel.

So, if what is prophesied in Rev 19:11–21 comes to pass, and God again initiates war on crusade terms, and God again leads such a war in person, and God again does it in a manner all can verify, then the crusade ethic of Yahweh war will again apply—but only on those conditions and those conditions alone. Until and unless all three prerequisite conditions are satisfied together, the crusade ethic of war must be resolutely rejected and opposed, because *it never has been, and never will be, a legitimate option for human initiative, human leadership, or even human imagination of divinely sanctioned war.*

Reflections of a Retiring Chaplain



Douglas L. Carver

*Douglas L. Carver (Major General, Retired) served as the
Twenty-Second Chief of Chaplains of the United States Army.*

Soldiering is an honorable profession, and I am privileged to have served every day for the past twenty-nine years as an active duty chaplain in the United States Army. During that period of time I had the opportunity to serve the religious needs of our soldiers, Department of Defense civilians, and their families, in both peace and war and at every level of military leadership—from individual Army units to the Department of Army staff—each with very different roles and characteristics. To say that I learned a lot about ministering in “Caesar’s house” would be an understatement.

This is currently a season of prayerful reflection for me and my family. We grieve the loss of our identity, sense of purpose, and community support received from our years of ministry to our Army family. Personally, I struggle with words like career transition, terminal leave, and retirement. Instead of being asked to address the current spiritual climate and morale of a war-weary Army, I offer these reflections on lessons learned, spiritual battles fought, and wisdom gleaned while ministering within the institution. I feel somewhat like John Piper, pastor for more than thirty years of Bethlehem Baptist Church in Minnesota who, after turning sixty, began to look back over his calling into the ministry. In his book, *Rethinking Retirement: Finishing Life for the Glory of Christ*, he prays:

O God, don't let me waste my final years! Don't let me buy the American dream of retirement—month after month of leisure and play and hobbies and putzing around in the garage and rearranging the furniture and golfing and fishing and sitting and watching television. Lord, please have mercy on me. Spare me this curse.¹

As Piper reflected on his initial calling as a young man into the ministry, he asked the Lord God to renew the passion of that call to serve for the glory of God and to make God's glory known to the next generation. He then claimed a promise from Ps 71:18, “So even to old age and gray hairs, O God, do not forsake me, until I proclaim your might to another generation, your power to all those to come” (ESV). May we, like Moses, maintain the passion and perseverance to proclaim the

¹John Piper, *Rethinking Retirement: Finishing Life for the Glory of Christ* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2008), n.p.; also printed in “Getting Old to the Glory of God,” in *Stand: A Call for the Endurance of the Saints*, ed. John Piper and Justin Taylor (Wheaton: Crossway, 2008), 48.

gospel of Jesus Christ to all those who come before us, and to that next generation after us.

Ministering the Gospel of Jesus Christ within an institutional setting comes at a great cost. It requires incalculable sacrifice, an ineffable compassion for people who often have little to no use for God or religion, and an irreproachable respect for the structured authorities that govern our lives. Chaplains constantly manage a tension between the sacred and the secular, often finding themselves as the sole champion of religion's "place" in their respective organization. They also face an intellectual challenge. Chaplains must devote themselves to learning their institution's unique culture, language, and ethos in order to contextualize effective ministry within the organization. We owe it to the institution to present relevant messages and to remain life-long learners. We cannot minister effectively to the institution if we rely on old sermons, past ministry experiences, and dispassionate responses to those coming to us for a word of comfort, strength, and hope. As one evangelist said, "Don't give your people stale, moldy bread. Give them fresh bread, hot from the oven! Preach a sermon that is fresh from your own devotions and recent experiences with Holy God. People can smell fresh bread from Heaven's bakery!"² Those who serve within our respective institutional settings deserve a fresh and relevant word from God. A recent letter from one of our Southern Baptist chaplains deployed to Afghanistan notes the importance of providing a fresh, anointed word to those who serve in difficult and dangerous ministry settings:

About a week ago 350 soldiers, including myself, were eating in a dining facility having lunch when a rocket landed less than 50 meters away from us. It came in without warning as they frequently do. It's quite obvious that the target was the lunch crowd. It's also obvious that God's grace protected us in that attack as there were no injuries. A few days later another one of our outlying locations received over 100 rockets in an attack. Two buildings were directly hit. No soldiers were hurt. On a different day, another outlying location was attacked with rockets and artillery. The compound took some direct hits. Several buildings caught fire but no one was hurt. These attacks do not begin to represent all that we have been through this past month, but they do remind me of two things: the first thing is that this is a very active combat zone in Afghanistan. The second is that the grace of God Almighty is covering and protecting my soldiers...so that they will have an opportunity to respond to the gospel of Jesus Christ and salvation. I believe new saints will be added to the rolls of heaven because you have been praying for us and our safety. Please continue to pray for the safety of all of our troops and their families back home. Pray that our soldiers will hear the gospel of Jesus Christ. It may shock you that so many of our men and women have never heard the gospel of Jesus Christ or held a Bible in their hand. This would include soldiers from the "Bible Belt." Finally, pray that the chaplains and all the soldiers with us that know Jesus Christ would be faithful to just live a godly example before our soldiers and share Jesus Christ as they do.³

My heart aches every time I read emails from one of our military chaplains, knowing personally the challenges they face daily in providing ministry in a combat zone.

²Source unknown.

³Unpublished letter from a Southern Baptist Chaplain. Name withheld.

To be honest, transitioning from the active Army rolls while our nation remains at war makes me feel like I have walked off the battlefield, leaving my fellow chaplains and soldiers behind. The past ten years of war in Iraq and Afghanistan have taken its toll on our war-weary troops. Many of them, including our chaplains, are coming home bearing the invisible wounds of their combat experiences. When I walk through a crowded mall and hear people complain about life, I wonder if they remember our troops enduring the treacherous mountains of Afghanistan, or the deadly streets of Iraq, or the Horn of Africa, or Libya, or other undisclosed places. Please help remind your communities to keep the members of the Armed Services in their prayers, and to welcome them home with open arms as they transition from the military back to their civilian lives. We enjoy our religious liberty by the grace of God, and because of the blood, sweat, and tears freely shed by men and women who answered the call to wear the nation's sacred cloth. This leads me to several lessons learned while serving as an Army chaplain.

First, I learned the importance of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. The First Amendment states, "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances." Let us focus primarily on the first two clauses of the First Amendment which address the non-establishment and free exercise of religion. One of the chaplaincy's most important responsibilities within an institution is to ensure that all individuals under our pastoral care have the opportunity to exercise their freedom of religion, regardless of their personal beliefs, practices, or expressions, without institutional or governmental influence or interference. We must remain vigilant in advising our institutional leadership regarding the importance of religious freedom while ensuring that the institution neither prefers religion over non-religion, nor favors particular faiths over others. Jim Parco, a former United States Air Force lieutenant colonel and author of *Attitudes Aren't Free*, believes it is increasingly difficult for evangelical chaplains to minister within the context of secular institutions primarily because of their exclusive worldview that their religious belief is the only real truth from God while all other religions are based on false claims.⁴ He also states that evangelicals have an obligation to share their faith with others, violating governmental and institutional policies against proselytizing. He concludes that evangelicals are presumably restricted from their association with unbelievers, potentially creating disharmony or an uncooperative attitude within the workplace. Parco fails to clearly point out that evangelicals have the same freedom of religious expression as any other faith group within an institution.

Chaplains, including those from evangelical backgrounds, serve the institution as champions of religious liberty, advising their leadership on all matters of religion and ensuring a seamless, comprehensive religious program is available to all individuals within the walls of the institution. When chaplains enter the United States Military, they agree to accommodate all religious requests while, at the same, not compromising or violating their own beliefs. As a condition of appointment, military chaplains clearly understand their requirement to function in the diverse

⁴*Attitudes Aren't Free: Thinking Deeply About Diversity in the US Armed Forces*, ed. James E. Parco and David A. Levy (Maxwell Air Force Base, AL: Air University Press, 2010).

and pluralistic environment of the military, with tolerance for diverse religious traditions, and respect for the rights of individuals to determine their own religious convictions.

In recent years American institutions have experienced an increasing uneasiness regarding religion's "place" within the life of an organization. While on active duty, I often counseled senior military leaders on matters of religion, including guidance on appropriate religious activities conducted while in uniform, the display of religious articles in common areas or in an individual's private work space, and the freedom of religious expression. On more than one occasion, I reminded senior leaders that, as the senior leader of their organization, they are responsible for everything, including the religious program. Our respective institution where we serve as chaplains has entrusted us as the principle advisor on all matters of religion. Such an important responsibility requires chaplains to be keenly aware of the First Amendment.

Second, I learned to cultivate an appreciation for religious diversity. An understanding of all religions is critical in relating to a culture. Former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright, in her book, *Mighty and the Almighty*, emphasizes the importance of religion in shaping world events and engaging in international relations.⁵ Unfortunately, she writes, religion has often been the missing link of American diplomacy. Recent studies from The Pluralism Project at Harvard University point out that the United States has become the most religiously diverse nation in the world. The religious landscape of America has radically changed in the last fifty years, primarily due to our nation's immigration policies, open borders, and the rise of the global community connected through internet technology. At the same time, most Americans are becoming increasingly illiterate regarding religion, including their own. Stephen Prothero, chairman of Boston University's religion department and author of *Religious Literacy: What Every American Needs To Know—And Doesn't*, believes the only way to improve religious literacy is by re-introducing religious education back into public schools.⁶ This concept is nothing new. In 1822 Thomas Jefferson, concerned about the rise of religious intolerance and fanaticism in our young nation, suggested that the only way to ensure the freedom of religion was to include religious education in all public school curriculum. He even suggested that universities should allow every faith group to establish "a professorship of their own tenets, on the confines of the universities...to soften [students'] asperities, and liberalize and neutralize their prejudices" regarding their religious diversity.⁷ Jefferson was convinced that, by providing public religious education, university graduates would become more effective American citizens, virtuous men and women more apt to strive for peace, tolerance, harmony, and respect with all people, regardless of their religious or cultural heritage.

⁵Madeleine Albright, *Mighty and the Almighty: Reflections on America, God, and World Affairs* (New York: Harper, 2006).

⁶Stephen Prothero, *Religious Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know And Doesn't* (New York: HarperOne, 2007).

⁷Thomas Jefferson, "To Dr. Thomas Cooper, Nov. 2, 1822," in *The Writings of Thomas Jefferson, Memorial Edition*, ed. Andrew Lipscomb and Albert Bergh (Washington, DC: Thomas Jefferson Memorial Association, 1904), 15: 405.

The events of 9/11 and the ensuing Global War on Terrorism have resulted in a new ministry opportunity for military chaplains: religious leader liaison. Over the last decade of war in Iraq and Afghanistan, commanders have sought the advice and counsel of chaplains regarding the religious beliefs, practices, and sensitivities with respect to the host nations. In many cases, chaplains have advised senior military leaders regarding the effect of military operations on the indigenous people in the area of operation. This ministry has had such a positive effect on stability and reconciliation efforts that the Army Chaplaincy established the first Center of World Religions in the Armed Services whose primary mission is to educate chaplains on culture, worldview, conflict resolution, and religious diversity. The results of this initiative have truly been remarkable. Military chaplains, and those they serve, have a greater respect for religious diversity and a more respectful attitude to those from different cultural backgrounds.

The third lesson I learned while serving as a chaplain within an institutional environment is to settle the issue of authority. Chaplains find themselves constantly balancing the demands of the various structural authorities to which they have made faith commitments or sworn their allegiance. As an ordained minister from a local church, they commit themselves to remain faithful and true to the Gospel of Jesus Christ, uncompromising in their proclamation of the Word of God, respectful and compassionate to the people of God, and responsive to the Great Commission (Matt 28:19–20) by evangelizing the world. From a purely ecclesial perspective, chaplains endorsed by the Southern Baptist Convention agree to faithfully support the *Baptist Faith and Message 2000* in their ministry beliefs, practices, and expressions. Second, they agree to cooperate with other faith groups within the institution without compromising their own faith beliefs, practices, and matters of conscience. Third, as Southern Baptist-endorsed chaplains, in accordance with denominational expectations and the chaplain's own religious conscience, they agree to minister to all persons, regardless of their behavior, choices, ethnicity, physical condition/presence, or religious preference. Southern Baptists expect their chaplains to determine a person's spiritual needs and either provide pastoral care or refer the person to appropriate resources.

From an institutional point of view, the organizational leadership is responsible to provide for the free exercise of religion of all those under its authority. Chaplains play a vital role in helping their institutional leadership to understand the importance and complexities of religion with regard to the people and mission of the organization. They serve as the principal advisor to the institution regarding the impact of religion on the health, morale, welfare, and safety of the organization. Regardless of the chaplain's passion or personal opinion on the accommodation of religious needs within the institution, the authority for religious programs or activities rests solely on the shoulders of the supervisory leadership.

While serving as a supervisory Army chaplain, one of my subordinate chaplains invited a popular Christian personality and tremendous supporter of the Armed Services as the keynote speaker for a solemn religious event. Several days before the event took place, the senior leadership contacted me regarding the guest speaker's participation. They had received an anonymous note from the work force, expressing their concerns over our guest speaker's public comments in the past regarding their faith group. The institutional leadership asked us to provide a number of

recommendations on how best to resolve this managerial concern. We quickly formed a task force of all the stake holders in this issue, defined the problem, and reported back to the senior leadership with the following three courses of action: 1) continue with the event as planned; 2) cancel the event; or, 3) un-invite the speaker and continue as planned. I recommended that we continue with the event as planned, especially since we had invited the speaker to our building on previous occasions and, more importantly, he was the father of one of our combat-wounded soldiers. Against my sincere and prayerful counsel, the senior leadership decided that we had no recourse but to un-invite the potentially controversial speaker, and they directed me to deliver the bad news. At that moment I fully realized that, regarding the institution's religious program, chaplains ultimately must submit to those in authority who truly bear the responsibility for all religious matters within the organization.

As an Army officer and chaplain for almost forty years I have learned countless leadership principles essential for effective and successful service within the institutional setting. But to summarize those discussed in this brief paper, they are:

1. Know the importance of the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States.
2. Cultivate an appreciation for religious diversity.
3. Settle the issue of authority.

May the Lord continue to bless you as you minister the love and grace of God in 'Caesar's house.' On more than one occasion the Apostle Paul thanked God for his "institutional" ministry assignments, often confined directly within Caesar's household. Paul's "bonds in Christ" (Acts 9:15) allowed him access to share the Gospel with the most influential leaders in the Roman Empire. May your calling as institutional chaplains set you before CEOs and authorities and influencers for the glory of God and the spread of the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the entire world.

The “Don’t Ask; Don’t Tell” Repeal: What’s Next?



Douglas E. Lee

Douglas E. Lee (Brigadier General, Retired) served as Army Assistant Chief of Chaplains for Mobilization and Readiness and is Executive Director of the Presbyterian and Reformed Commission for Chaplain and Military Personnel (PRCC) head of PCA chaplains endorsing agency.

It is not an overstatement to suggest that religious liberty is under attack in America. Federal mandates to provide abortion services, litigation from people offended by Christian references, university students being discriminated against for their personal religious convictions, and virulent attacks by many in the media, etc., all point to a dramatic changing moral climate in the USA.

Certain groups have been concerned about religious liberty issues from the founding of this nation. For example, Baptists were in the forefront of these issues during the formation of this fragile republic. Baptist writer and historian Don Boys declares,

The fact is, we would not have the First Amendment (and probably the other nine) if it were not for the Baptists, especially those in Virginia and Massachusetts... They wrote in part: ‘When the Constitution first made its appearance in Virginia, we, as a society, feared that the liberty of conscience, dearer to us than property or life, was not sufficiently secured. Perhaps our jealousies were heightened by the usage we received in Virginia, under the regal government, when mobs, fines, bonds and prisons were our frequent repast...’ (Notice that they said that liberty of conscience was more important than their property or life. It is my opinion that most Christians do not believe that today).¹

Anyone interested in the preservation of America’s founding principles ought to be just as concerned about religious conscience or liberty today—not only for our military personnel, but for our society in general. For the homosexual community (known as GLBT— -i.e., Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transvestite), religious freedom is debatable. An astounding comment came from the lips of the Commissioner of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Chai Feldblum, in 2006. She said this regarding the conflict between religious liberty and homosexual conduct: “I’m having a hard time coming up with any case in which religious liberty should win.” Feldblum made similar arguments in her law review article on that topic, stating that the conflict was a “zero-sum game” where “society should come down on the side of protecting” homosexual conduct.²

¹Don Boys, “Washington, Madison, Baptists, and the Constitution!” available at: <http://www.covenantnews.com/boys080709.htm> (accessed October 17, 2011).

²Chai R. Feldblum, “Moral Conflict and Liberty: Gay Rights and Religion” (2006). *Georgetown Law*

As a retired US Army chaplain with more than thirty years of experience, I prefer to speak and write about the joys of the chaplaincy with titles such as “The excitement of the chaplaincy!” or “Do you want high adventure? Become a chaplain!” I much prefer talking about how chaplains “Nurture the living, care for the wounded and honor the dead” or “How chaplains professionally operate in a religiously diverse environment.” But the so-called “Don’t Ask; Don’t Tell” repeal (DADT) is a fixture in America’s landscape today and needs to be addressed.

Many wonder what the effect of the repeal is having on the military and to military chaplains in particular. Who knows? However, like the hints of a terrorist catastrophe we now acknowledge were present before 9/11 (such as the bombings of the Kenyan embassy, *USS Cole*, and World Trade Center, etc.), there are hints of how the GLBT lobby wants to fundamentally change America and affect religious liberty. Through an examination of many years of GLBT lobbying and legal challenges, we have some idea of how an unchecked repeal will impact behavior, medical issues, education, and religious freedom. Here are some examples of legal challenges proffered by the GLBT community:³

Walden v. Center for Disease Control, Case No. 1:08-CV-02278-JEC (N.D. Ga. 2008). A Christian counselor was fired by her private employer, based in part on pressure from a federal government entity, because she declined to provide counseling that would have facilitated a same-sex sexual relationship, even though she promptly and professionally referred the client to another counselor who addressed the client’s concerns.

Alpha Delta Chi v. Reed. A Christian student group was denied recognition by state university because the group requires its officers to affirm Christian beliefs and live by Christian moral norms.

Ward v. Wilbanks, 2009 WL 4730457 (E.D. Mich. 2009). This case deals with a counseling student that was expelled by a state university for refusing to compromise her Christian beliefs and instead “see the error of her ways” and change her “belief system” regarding homosexuality’s immorality.

Akridge v. Wilkinson, 178 Fed. Appx. 474 (6th Cir. 2006). The 6th Circuit Court upheld a prison’s punishment of a prison chaplain for refusing to allow an openly homosexual prisoner to lead a worship service.

Phelps v. Dunn, 965 F.2d 93 (6th Cir. 1992). A volunteer prison chaplain was allowed to be sued for refusing to permit an openly homosexual prison inmate to take a leadership role in chapel services.

Faculty Publications and Other Works. Paper 80, available at: <http://scholarship.law.georgetown.edu/facpub/80>, (accessed October 17, 2011). See also Maggie Gallagher, “Banned in Boston: The Coming Conflict Between Same-Sex Marriage and Religious Liberty,” *The Weekly Standard* 11.33 (May 15, 2006), available at: <http://www.weeklystandard.com/Content/Public/Articles/000/000/012/191kgwgh.asp?nopager=1>, (accessed October 17, 2011).

³These examples are cited in a letter dated April 10, 2010, from 33 Chaplain Endorsers to President Obama and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates.

Christian Legal Society v. Martinez, 130 S.Ct. 795 (2009). A case in which a Christian society at a public law school was discriminated against by the school because the society required its leadership to abide by certain religious beliefs, including a prohibition on extra-marital sexual conduct like homosexual behavior. The school based its discriminatory action on its “non-discrimination” policy that protected homosexual behavior). Note: Vanderbilt University recently applied a similar policy against four Christian groups.

Elane Photography v. Willock, HRD No. 06-12-20-0685 (N.M. Human Rights Common 2008). A small photography business owned and operated by a young Christian couple was fined over \$6,000 for refusing to photograph a same-sex commitment ceremony, even though same-sex “marriage” and civil unions are illegal in New Mexico.

Bernstein v. Ocean Grove Camp Meeting Assoc., N.J. Div. on Civ. Rights, No. PN34XB-03008 (2008). A United Methodist church campground had its tax exempt status revoked for failing to allow its facilities to be used for same-sex commitment ceremonies.

US Navy Chaplain in Canada. A US chaplain on an exchange program in Canada counseled a lesbian per his Christian beliefs (with her permission). The chaplain was advised that if he had been a Canadian chaplain, he would have been brought up on hate-speech charges.

Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA). A key goal of the GLBT lobby is to rid the US of this law. The GLBT lobby is desperate to seek federal approval of their partnerships and DOMA is the biggest hurdle in that process.⁴

These cases demonstrate the relentless threat to religious liberty. It would be naïve to think this same agenda will not happen in the military where homosexual behavior and worldview is now permissible. These are but a few of the many issues being litigated in courts across America. Will the repeal impact the military? The steady stream of litigation strongly suggests so.

Three Non-Negotiables

Frances Schaeffer, a mentor, coach, philosopher, and missionary in the '60s and '70s, once asked, “How should we then live?” His question is critical in this new millennium. In light of his question, Christians should consider these three non-negotiables:

The first non-negotiable is: **It's all about the Bible.** The Bible should be regarded as the Holy Spirit inspired, inerrant Word of Truth. Francis Schaeffer warned the church that America would follow in Europe's footsteps insofar as ignoring God's Word. Like Europe, America's citizens are becoming woefully ignorant of the Bible. I've heard from younger lips recently, “I just don't believe that part of the Bible.” Biblically-based seminaries have their hands full training pastors

⁴Editor's note: At the time this article was penned, DOMA was in effect, but it was struck down by the Supreme Court in *United States v. Windsor* (2013).

to provide solid biblical content to a skeptical, selfish world. Our world is full of people who think God might have given us ten suggestions rather than ten commandments. The Apostle Paul reminds us that we wrestle against the spiritual forces of evil and our weapon is the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God (Eph 6:10–20). He also reminds us that “faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God” (Rom 10:17 NKJV). When the Bible addresses sexuality, or any other aspect of life, it speaks directly to the human condition with hope and truth.

The second non-negotiable is: **It’s all about sin...and forgiveness.** I recently heard a great definition of immorality (or sin): anything contrary to God’s good design. The official position of the Southern Baptist Convention on sexuality states: “We affirm God’s plan for marriage and sexual intimacy – one man, and one woman, for life. Homosexuality is not a “valid alternative lifestyle.” The Bible condemns it as sin. It is not, however, unforgivable sin. The same redemption available to all sinners is available to homosexuals. They, too, may become new creations in Christ.”⁵ The Roman Catholic Catechism of the Catholic Church declares in § 2357: “Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity, tradition has always declared that homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered.”

Homosexuality is not the only sin, but it is a sin with far-ranging ramifications. Its continued practice strikes at the heart of the Judeo-Christian view of morality. Its practice affects all of life, including public health. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention reports: “In 2010, MSM accounted for 63% of estimated new HIV infections in the United States and 78% of infections among all newly infected men.”⁶ Add to this no natural ability to have children, a twisting of a God-purposed sexuality, and the desire, as the Apostle puts it, for “dishonorable, shameless passions,” we have a society where law becomes useless. The Ninth Circuit Court rejected a lower court ruling of several months ago in which the lower court ruled the 1993 Don’t Ask policy unconstitutional. The Ninth said they were wrong and said, “When judges sacrifice the rule of law to find rights they favor, I fear the people may one day find that their new rights, once proclaimed so boldly, have disappeared because there is no longer a rule of law to protect them.”

The inerrant Bible tells us that homosexual behavior, like other sins, is a changeable and forgivable offense before a holy God, for Paul writes, “And such were some of you” (1 Cor 6:11). Speak clearly about sin. That is what effective Christian pastors and chaplains do. They help people wrestle with sin.

⁵“Position Statements: Sexuality,” available at: <http://www.sbc.net/aboutus/pssexuality.asp> (accessed Feb. 15, 2010).

⁶Center for Disease Control and Prevention, “HIV Among Gay and Bisexual Men,” available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/risk/gender/msm/facts/index.html> (accessed September 11, 2013).

Third non-negotiable is: **It's all about Jesus.** This non-negotiable includes the attendant acts of hope, love, mercy, forgiveness, and grace. Christians must be bold, loving, and clear that no matter what sin besets people, repentance and faith brings forgiveness, restoration, wholeness, mercy, and help. He repairs God's good design. There is no sin so awful that Jesus' blood cannot cover it.

We do wonder what the effect of the DADT repeal will have on the military. But a better question might be, "How will the Gospel of Christ impact the military?" That ought to be the focus of every Bible-believing chaplain and Christian, in and out of the military.

Only God Himself knows the future impact of the repeat. I hope much of my analysis will not come true. In the meantime, we can be encouraged by the Apostle Paul's words to the Philippians from prison – where he was placed due to (in part) freedom of conscience issues in his culture:

Now I want you to know, brothers and sisters, that what has happened to me has actually served to advance the gospel. As a result, it has become clear throughout the whole palace guard and to everyone else that I am in chains for Christ. And because of my chains, most of the brothers and sisters have become confident in the Lord and dare all the more to proclaim the gospel without fear.

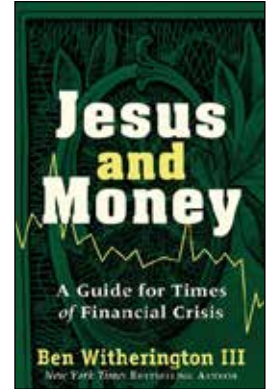
It is true that some preach Christ out of envy and rivalry, but others out of goodwill. The latter do so out of love, knowing that I am put here for the defense of the gospel. The former preach Christ out of selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing that they can stir up trouble for me while I am in chains. But what does it matter? The important thing is that in every way, whether from false motives or true, Christ is preached. And because of this I rejoice.

Yes, and I will continue to rejoice, for I know that through your prayers and God's provision of the Spirit of Jesus Christ what has happened to me will turn out for my deliverance. I eagerly expect and hope that I will in no way be ashamed, but will have sufficient courage so that now as always Christ will be exalted in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me, to live is Christ and to die is gain. If I am to go on living in the body, this will mean fruitful labor for me. Yet what shall I choose? I do not know! I am torn between the two: I desire to depart and be with Christ, which is better by far; but it is more necessary for you that I remain in the body. Convinced of this, I know that I will remain, and I will continue with all of you for your progress and joy in the faith, so that through my being with you again your boasting in Christ Jesus will abound on account of me.

Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ. Then, whether I come and see you or only hear about you in my absence, I will know that you stand firm in the one Spirit striving together as one for the faith of the gospel without being frightened in any way by those who oppose you (Philippians 1:12--28a NIV).

Jesus and Money: A Guide for Times of Financial Crisis. By Ben Witherington III. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2010. 192 Pages. Hardcover, \$18.99.

In his recent book, *Jesus and Money*, Ben Witherington aims to help Christians guard against attacks on the wallet and move toward faithful stewardship and radical self-sacrifice for the good of others and the honor of Christ. The author senses that both the recent downturn in the worldwide economy and the “persistence of a distorted prosperity gospel” (57) make the times right for a book of this sort.



Books aiming to help Christians face financial challenges generally fit one of two patterns: either practical advice for implementing budgeting and stewardship habits or general principles derived from the Bible. Witherington’s work fits the second category, though his expertise as a New Testament scholar helps him avoid the trap of offering proof-texts, contrived sound bites, or overly generalized wisdom that could have come from any number of spiritual sources. Instead, Witherington offers a book that is comprised of historical-grammatical hermeneutics, New Testament theology, and ethics. The result is a balanced approach to the Bible that takes seriously the counter-cultural stance of Jesus and the early church, while incorporating a wide variety of witnesses within the canon.

Jesus and Money begins with a prequel that establishes the purpose, framework, and guiding principles for Witherington’s argument. The subsequent eight chapters provide a (roughly) diachronic survey of biblical texts and themes pertinent to money and possessions. Chapter 9 summarizes how one should develop a New Testament theology of money, stewardship, and giving; chapter 10 offers practical advice for moving beyond a lifestyle consumed by materialism and greed. Witherington also provides two appendices: one represents his attempt to dispel ten common myths about Christianity and money, and the second is an edited sermon from John Wesley titled “The Use of Money.” Finally, endnotes are available for those wanting to trace Witherington’s main lines of research. Unfortunately, the book does not contain an index of Scriptures, which would have been very helpful.

Each core chapter is organized according to general introduction, exegesis of pertinent passages, and a concluding “And So?” section devoted to the hermeneutical task of bringing the biblical text to bear on issues (both practical and theological) facing Christians and the church. Chapter 1 (Genesis/Old Testament in general) lays the foundation for Witherington’s argument by focusing on a creation theology exemplified by Ps 24:1. In chapter 2 Witherington draws heavily from his book *Jesus the Sage* to elucidate the differing views on wealth within Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. Chapters 3 and 4 focus on Jesus and the Gospels, though Witherington does not follow the lead of some historical Jesus scholars who depict Jesus as a poor peasant. Instead, Witherington focuses on the choice Jesus made in leading the sort of life that He did, and the ramifications of this choice seen within His teaching and ministry.

In chapter 5 Witherington moves to Jesus' brother James, who seems to carry forward the counter-cultural teaching of Jesus regarding financial matters, especially as these matters affect the relationship between rich and poor within Christianity. Chapter 6 moves the conversation to Luke-Acts; the Gospel of Luke focuses on care for those in need and the early chapters of Acts offer a glimpse of finances within the early Christian community. Chapter 7 is devoted to the Apostle Paul. As part of this chapter, Witherington helpfully provides an extended discussion on remuneration for ministers. Chapter 8 discusses the critiques of materialism and systemic economic injustice set forth by John of Patmos in Revelation 2–3 and 17–18.

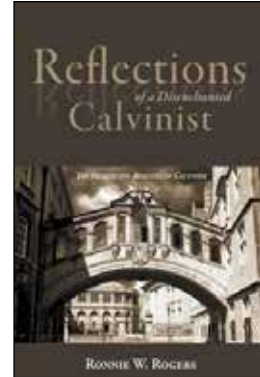
Several threads run throughout the book, and students and pastors should not miss the ways in which Witherington integrates social-science criticism, theological reflection, historical-critical analysis, and ethics. In addition, he reiterates frequently the importance of reading Scripture in context; though the mantra can become wearying, the damage done by those who fail to incorporate the historical and canonical context of a passage justifies the author's emphasis. Also, Witherington refuses to romanticize poverty and consistently eschews any hints of communism/socialism. These cautions, though, do not prevent him from advocating radical self-sacrifice geared toward providing for those truly in need, characterized as "community-ism" and a "theology of enough." This balanced approach is perhaps the hallmark of the book and should prove helpful to pastors who must deal daily with people on one side or another of the financial spectrum.

Readers accustomed to scholarly works should be aware of Witherington's colloquial style of writing, some of which fails to satisfy. For example, he consistently makes reference to prosperity preachers to the point that these caricatured figures begin to take on the role of the Jews in the Gospel of John; the author could have provided more definition and fewer stereotypes in this regard. Also, Witherington offers a necessary critique of legalistic tithing, though his lack of interaction with the end of Matt 23:23 may leave some readers wanting. Finally, a few of the exegetical discussions in the core chapters wander afar before returning to their original purpose, but engaged readers will gain a primer in exegesis for the journey.

In the end, at less than 200 readable (though theologically and biblically robust) pages, *Jesus and Money* is an accessible, solid, and timely book. The great danger is that once again we will find ourselves being hearers alone of the Word and not doers.

Owen Nease, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, LA

Reflections of a Disenchanted Calvinist: The Disquieting Realities of Calvinism. By Ronnie W. Rogers. Bloomington, IN: CrossBooks, 2012. 183 pages. Paperback, \$14.99.



There is no shortage of books critiquing Calvinism. The uniqueness of Ronnie Rogers' contribution is its irenic tone and its rejection of both Calvinist and Arminian tenets (xv). Rogers is the senior pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Norman, Oklahoma. For twenty years, he was a self-identified four-point Calvinist (xvii). This book developed from answering many of the questions about Calvinism from his congregants and to explain his current position as a “disenchanted” (now former) Calvinist (xiii).

After a foreword by R. Allen Street, chair of Expository Preaching & New Testament Exegesis at Criswell College in Dallas, Texas, and a page of acknowledgements, Rogers outlines the structure of his work in the introduction. Rather than an examination of the TULIP acrostic, as was the case with Allen and Lemke's *Whosoever Will* (B&H Academic, 2010) or Roger Olson's *Against Calvinism* (Zondervan, 2011), Rogers structures his twenty chapters topically. This allows him to address particular issues without being bound to answer them according to the theological framework of Calvinism, Arminianism, or Molinism; Rogers aims to be a Biblicist (xxi).

The first sixteen chapters are built around a pair of affirmations and disaffirmations on a particular topic followed by explanation and supporting arguments. For example, in Chapter X, “World vs. Elect,” Rogers affirms “that ‘world’ means all people” and disaffirms “that ‘world’ or ‘all’ always means merely and/or exclusively all people groups, thereby signifying that some individuals do not have a choice to believe” (46–47). A potential liability of these paired affirmation-disaffirmations is that chapters might feel wooden and rigid. But readers may discover that the clarity and precision provided by this format outweighs the liabilities due its style.

Rogers affirms God's sovereignty but rejects monergism's “selective regeneration” (5). Surprisingly, while Rogers repeatedly rejects monergism (5, 60, 78, 132), he falls short of endorsing synergism (62). He seems to find flaws at certain points of all philosophical-theological systems and prefers to draw his theological cues from Scripture alone (xviii).

Rogers affirms God's omniscience as simple foreknowledge by appealing to Lewis Sperry Chafer's distinction between certainty and causation (10). Following Norman Geisler's lead, Rogers identifies libertarian free will as the opportunity for both the origin of evil and grace-enabled salvation (16, 96). Rogers affirms man's depravity but also his ability to respond to God due to having been made in His image and having been provided “grace enablements” such as the conviction of the Holy Spirit, the power of the Gospel, and God drawing all men to Himself (21, 55, 76–77, 98, 154).

Rogers affirms a universal atonement. Because the Calvinists' "general call does not offer anyone a real chance to believe the Gospel and be saved," Rogers suggests replacing it with the term sufficient call. He writes, "The sufficient call, along with God's grace enablement, is sufficient for anyone and everyone to be saved" (27). Every person who responds to the sufficient call receives an "efficacious call," which results in salvation for all who believe. He distinguishes this from the Calvinistic general and effectual call because he regards the former as only the announcement of the gospel and the latter as selective regeneration which is only provided to the elect (71–72, 156–7).

His treatment of the age (or time) of accountability outlines carefully the solutions for infant salvation offered through baptismal regeneration and election prior to the exercise of faith. Instead of these solutions, Rogers advocates a position which "sees faith and election working synergistically" and "a certain mental capacity" required to exercise faith. He explains, "(T)hose who die prior to the 'age of accountability' are covered based upon the sufficient sacrifice of Christ and the rich grace of God" (80–81).

Rogers advocates for a corporate view of election from Romans 9. The strength of his view is that he does not depend on a standard articulation of corporate election, such as William Klein's *The New Chosen People* (Zondervan: 1990; Wipf & Stock, 2001). Instead, Rogers argues his case by interacting with exegesis of Romans 9 by Calvinist commentators such as John Calvin, John Piper, John MacArthur, G. C. Berkouwer and Oliver Buswell (121–34).

Three areas not explored in the book may deserve further consideration. The first unexplored area concerns the eternal destiny of those who have never heard the Gospel. Mission-minded Calvinists who affirm Particularism have an answer to that question. Their answer is that God chose not to extend His grace to those people. Rogers' work may have been strengthened by addressing this important soteriological issue. The second unexplored area is a theological conclusion regarding Calvinism. Rogers affirms clearly his love for people who advocate "major" (which he defines as five-point) Calvinism and respect for their sincerity. Because Rogers regards Calvinism to be a cistern "contaminated with faulty theology and logic" (xvi), it would be helpful to know how those who imbibe of this system should be regarded. Does Rogers consider five-point Calvinism to contain errors that fall within an acceptable range of orthodox Christianity, or does he regard these particular views to be heterodoxy, teaching of another kind mentioned in 1 Tim 1:3? The third unexplored area is a concluding chapter. Because the book was organized as a collection of chapters arranged topically, it may have been strengthened by including a final chapter which either summarized the main arguments of the book or pointed the way forward in the quest for Biblicism.

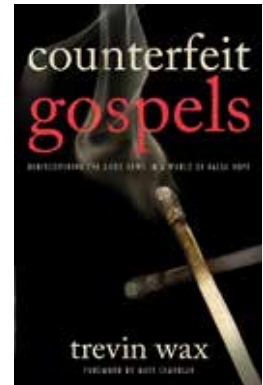
Readers who embrace "moderate" or "high" Calvinism will benefit from the particular examples in which certain theological claims within their system seem to be internally inconsistent. These particular examples are peaceably presented and documented by statements from prominent

theologians past and present. Readers who desire to embrace “Biblicism,” with its radical method of bypassing long-held theological conclusions which do not seem to conform to the plain teaching of Scripture, will find support in these reflections by Rogers.

Adam Harwood, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, LA

Counterfeit Gospels: Rediscovering the Good News in a World of False Hope. By Trevin Wax. Chicago: Moody Publishers, 2011. 226 pages. Paperback, \$13.99.

Counterfeit Gospels is the second book by Trevin Wax, managing editor of LifeWay’s small group curriculum *The Gospel Project*. Prior to his role at LifeWay, Wax served as a missionary in Romania and on pastoral staff at a church in the United States.



Wax employs two similes throughout the book, counterfeit currency and a three-legged stool. Counterfeit gospels threaten the Christian church like counterfeit bills threaten an economy. Also, the gospel is like a three-legged stool. Each leg of the stool frames a major section of the book: story, announcement and community. Wax explains, “The gospel is a story to be entered, an announcement to be proclaimed, and it births a community to be experienced” (218). This provides a balanced set of three major sections each comprised of three chapters. Each of the major sections consists of one chapter explaining the theme and two chapters defining distortions of that particular theme.

In the first major section, the gospel is a story of creation, fall, redemption, and restoration. The counterfeits deny either the devastating impact of the fall (therapeutic gospel) or the judgment and wrath of God (judgmentless gospel).

In the second major section, the gospel is an announcement of God’s work in Christ’s life, death, resurrection, and exaltation. The counterfeits alter the message into either good advice (moralistic gospel) or a private and personal message (quietist gospel).

In the third major section, the gospel is a story of a community birthed by the gospel’s announcement, ethnic Israel under the old covenant and true Israel (the church) under the new covenant. The counterfeits neglect either the work of Christ on the cross (activist gospel) or the church for which Christ died (churchless gospel).

Authors are sometimes gifted to either handle theological matters adeptly or communicate ideas clearly. In *Counterfeit Gospels*, Wax displays the rare ability to do both. His writing style is lucid, his chapters are vividly illustrated, and his writing reflects a strong grasp of both theological nuance and a conservative evangelical perspective on the doctrine of the atonement.

When attempting to define a subject, it can be helpful to say what the subject is *not*. Without explicitly appealing to the eastern church, Wax seems to employ its ancient method of apophatic theology. (This is the attempt to develop a doctrine by stating what is *not* true rather than stating what is true about it.) Wax takes a both/and approach, attempting to clarify the Christian gospel by presenting a faithful view then contrasting it with distorted expressions of the gospel found within the larger evangelical community.

Wax notes that “a counterfeit gospel may lead to heresy,” but in most instances the counterfeit is “either a dilution of the truth or a truth that is out of proportion.” Wax remarks of some counterfeits, “There may still be enough of a saving message to reconcile us to God, but the watered-down version never satisfies our longings” (13). If this is the case, then perhaps the counterfeit simile distorts the message of the book. Currency is either genuine or fake; according to Wax, though, the gospel can be one of three options: heresy, salvific-but-unsatisfying, or salvific-and-satisfying. Although the counterfeit simile is powerful, one wonders if it overshadows and possibly obscures the larger project, which is to identify subtle distortions or under-emphasized aspects of the gospel.

Wax’s book was enjoyable and edifying. Because it was written at a popular level (defining key terms and avoiding technical language) and includes a list of biblical texts at the end of each chapter, it would be a fine resource to use in an adult Sunday School class or discipleship group.

Adam Harwood, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, New Orleans, LA

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THE REPEAL OF THE GOVERNMENT’S POLICY ON HOMOSEXUAL military service, known as Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell (DADT), has caused much concern among Christian military service members, especially chaplains, and has led to much debate about the morality of homosexuality, the ideal of free speech, and the role of clergy in public service. Can it be scientifically demonstrated that homosexuality is normal? What has homosexual political activity shown to be their agenda, if any? What does the Bible say about homosexuality? How can chaplains who disagree with the homosexual lifestyle respond to the repeal in a way that retains their prophetic voice, but protects them from prosecution? How can chaplains minister to homosexual service members and their families in a post-DADT military? These are just some of the questions addressed in this important work by a group of scholars and chaplains, many of whom serve or have served in the academy, the military, and the church.

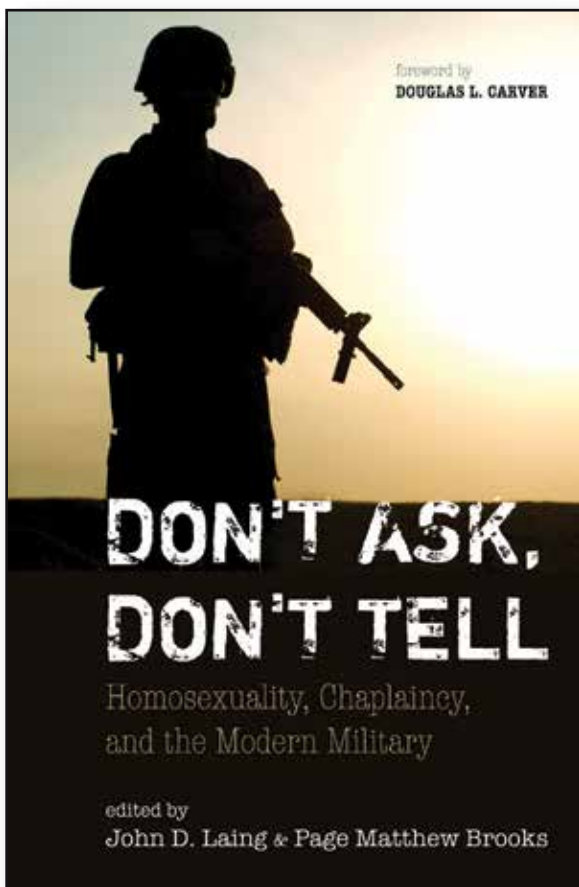
DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL

Homosexuality, Chaplaincy, and the Modern Military

edited by John D. Laing & Page Matthew Brooks

foreword by

DOUGLAS L. CARVER



“Seeking sound guidance for military chaplains following repeal of (Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell)? Look between the covers of this book! You’ll find an exceptional treasure . . . a concise and trusty guide through the medical, legal, political, social, moral, theological, and biblical maze. Belongs on every chaplain’s shelf. . . NOW!”

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JOHN D. LAING is Associate Professor of Systematic Theology and Philosophy at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary’s Harvard School in Houston, Texas. He also serves as the Division Chaplain for the 36th Infantry Division in the Texas Army National Guard. His deployments include Operations Noble Eagle (ONE), Kosovo Force (‘7), and Iraqi Freedom.

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ISBN: 978-1-62032-606-0

\$27 / 242 pp. / paper

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