

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CHRISTIAN IDEA OF THE JUST WAR AND FAITH IN GOD

The Church holds that war is a great evil and can only be waged for grave reasons. One condition for war to be just is that it must be commanded by a proper authority. That is where the problem lies. Religion says you must act only with God's authority. Monarchs and leaders would have to do that too. But would we believe them if they did considering how corrupt and often evil they are?

Their use of divine authority amounts to nothing more than a feeling that God permits the war. That turns their wars into holy wars in all but name.

And as they are human beings and even the New Testament allows defiance of governors and rulers if they command sin it does not follow that we have to agree with them that they have God's approval.

The God doctrine does not help one iota. But people are murdered over faith. All wars harm children and women the most.

God is just a prop for feeling good or okay about the evil you are about to unleash.

We read in Christianity is Not Great concerning when Christians battled against Christians, "Each side was no less certain that justice - and God - was with them." War creates such intensive suffering and so much tragic and needless death that you would need something better and wiser than human authority to declare it. But you don't have anything else. The Bible speaks of God as being all wise and all good and thus being in a position to command genocide and war. True if he is all wise he would have more right than man to command them. No he has a full right to do it while man cannot for man can never be 100% if the war should happen. But even if God does command it, the problem then is we take it on faith that it is really God saying it. We are left trusting men who say that God commanded it. No matter what we do, we end up having to take a human authority's word for it.

The Church claims to be God's community which he guides. Thus it follows that a Christian nation loyal to the Church is more interested in justice than a secular one when it declares war! It has better potential for justice even if it is not acting very just.

Christianity says that we need to believe in God in order to be able to justify moral values. But in the most important things, we in fact go along with fallible human authority. If you are conscripted, it is the government that is conscripting you and not God. God is not as important to us in practical terms as they pretend. It is hypocrisy of them put so much emphasis on God or are they completely out of touch? And what about the problem that even if there is a God, that does not stop man pretending to have his message. God and religion are simply masks. Man cannot claim to be God so man does the next best thing - claim to be inspired to speak for God. Though we are not to condemn something just because it can be abused, we can condemn religion for the harm it has done because religion is an abuse. Let me explain.

Hearing a voice does not mean it is God's and only God can know if he is really speaking. Even the person who hears cannot be sure but can only guess. If anyone claims to be hearing the voice of God and giving his message to others he is a liar. To think that you don't know where the voice comes from means it is not from you is arrogant. It is, "I don't know where this inspiration comes from so it comes from God." It makes no sense. By spreading your message you inspire a worse arrogance in others. The arrogance takes the form of "X has a voice in his heart or head and doesn't know where it comes from therefore it is from God." That is not logical. The more your faith in a prophet is based on hearsay the worse the problem gets.

It is better when men say on their own authority that war is necessary. Then you can check them out and challenge them. You cannot see what is really in the mind or heart of another but you will have some knowledge. But you cannot challenge God at all for God's motives and reasons are not up for examination. So men saying they were told by God whether by a direct revelation or indirectly through prayer and scripture to wage war is inherently fanatical and dangerous.

No political fundamentalist can seriously think that nothing can hurt them or their cause. You can only seriously think that you are invincible if you think God is on your side. Religion sows the seeds of fundamentalism. It might not control what kind of fundamentalism emerges though. The person who is inspired to be intolerant can use that inspiration to be a political bigot rather than a religious one. But a bigot is a bigot. However, it is possible to imagine a person who grew up with nobody to look up to only religious Christian fundamentalists to turn to some form of bigotry other than Christian later on in life. The faith is still to blame even if the person becomes an atheist bigot.

Eller in Christianity is Not Great talks about how St Augustine argued that we are to love all and that we can keep this command and exile and kill heretics because it is not personal and because we are punishing them not persecuting them. To me this teaching opens the door to excusing religious war or persecution by calling it something else. And Augustine indicates that it is bad for the soul to be heretic so putting them out of their misery is an act of love. The book tells us how Aquinas said that killing in self-defence is fine as long as you intend to keep safe and not to kill the other person. That way killing the person is really a side effect of self-defence - it is not intended. So killing is never licit. It is illicit as an end in itself or as a means to bringing about a greater good.

Augustine sanctioned the actions of those "who have waged war in obedience to the divine command, or in conformity with His laws". A Christian country that fights seeks to fit in with God's laws even if it does not make this explicit. You cannot argue that it is not a holy war. Not all holy wars need to be explicitly about God.

The just war doctrine has merit but that merit is diminished by religion and by the concept of God. Bringing God and faith into war in any respect turns the war into a religious crusade and therefore necessarily unjust in outlook and intent even if the end result is for the best. It might be an implicit crusade but a crusade all the same.

If as Jacob Bronowski stated, war is a sign of how we act as a community in the interest of all, then a religious nation that wages war which considers faith in God to be in your best interest, is fighting a holy war even if this is not explicit.

If war is down to our survival of the fittest natural instinct and we cannot help it, then having religion around is dangerous for there are too many excuses for war as it is.

Secular man needs the just war concept. But only as a tragic and necessary evil. The concept is tragic and a necessary evil. It should not be honoured by saying that it comes with a divine sanction. Yes it is immoral to say that God gives you the just war concept and validates it. It is bad enough that man does it but to say a holy and good being does is disgraceful. It is making it sacred instead of treating it with revulsion. It is like reinforcing what does not need to be reinforced as if it were not really a necessary evil. It moves from accepting the need for the just war concept to embracing it. There is a terrible and telling difference.

Very few wars even when waged by nations that endorse the just war doctrine could be really classed as just wars. Overall, the doctrine has hurt not helped. And Christianity, its fan, refuses to take responsibility. It refuses to truly care. The casualties of war and the victims have been seen by the Church as opportunities to show off how good the Church is.

Reason says that a war needs to be self-defence in order to have any hope of being called just. But for many in the Church, the just war is not always about self-defence. It is worrying that such a view can be tolerated by leaders who pretend to be servants of peace.

The Church says nowadays that human life is the most important consideration in morality. Then why are most of its members who fight in a war unable to prove that they should be doing so? War is uncontrollable and can see how a war waged even for an "unjust reason" will turn out in terms of overall benefits. One would expect them to be sure if life is that important. If God loves us and has made his Church infallible like it claims then he would incline it to protect human life more than anything else. But its chief concern is trivial stuff like the Immaculate Conception of the Virgin Mary and the power of the sacrament of the sick to heal if God wills and I could go on for a month. The Church used to believe that life did not begin at conception and that heretics should be killed. Its claim to infallibility implies that God does not want to tell us if a particular war should be fought or not meaning human life matters little to him. Its Bible is liberal in commanding capital punishment. Conclusion: the Church practices hypocrisy in relation to human life and has no divine guidance in how to deal with its protection.

Those who say capital punishment is lawful see it as the state warring against the dangerous citizens it has. So to execute murderers is society waging a just war against them. If you get caught up in a criminal gang you will find that you lose control over what choices you have. You will be shooting at the next gang just to look after your own skin. In reality, you are a person who would drop the gang but who cannot. The Church will send the police to shoot you dead though clearly you are in a sense an innocent person. That is capital punishment at its worst where if you are a lone wolf slaughtering children the Church will say you should not be put to death. The anti-capital punishment brigade are just hypocrites and hate-mongers.

The Church has no real sympathy for the idea of human life being the supreme concern when it allows killing under some conditions and never allows sex outside marriage or lies or blasphemy. Obviously, the only thing that is really important is the Church and its rules. This is not about love or God at all but about men claiming to represent God. They had to invent a God to manipulate us with for they knew they could not set themselves up as gods to be served. How could a religion that has a Bible that encourages capital punishment mostly for minor crimes in the name of God care about human life? How can such a religion bless the police and private detectives who have to lie to catch criminals?

The Christian doctrine that all must be offered to God means you consecrate your being a killer soldier to God. If you are in the middle of war you realise is unjust you still have to fight. So that is offered to God too! Please understand how evil these doctrines are.

Christians say that war even if unjust is not a sin if you really believe its the right thing. You are told you must follow even a dodgy conscience as long as you have made a reasonable effort to know better. There is no moral condemnation as such of genocide. The condemnation only applies to those who eradicate nations but who know its wrong.

Politics inherently is the lie that the absence of war is peace. It takes advantage of the people and the people cannot see that peace is deeper than that!

Christianity will see war as the absence of peace in the light of the doctrine that God is so good that evil is not real but is just good in the wrong place and time. Evil is just good that lacks something. Evil is the absence of good. Health is not just the absence of sickness. What use is having no sickness? You want to feel wonderful as well! Health is both the lack of sickness and on the positive side, a sense of wellbeing. Peace is more than just a condition of non-violence or the absence of war. It is more than just not being at war. Seeing peace that way means that even when violence happens it is only a symptom of an illness that is there. It is not the problem but the sign of the problem. This prevents diagnosis and softens the opposition to war that it deserves. Its subtle permission. Its lacking hope of real peace. That sense of war being inevitable is too negative and hinders real peacemaking and conditions society and the next thing predictably it ends up at war. It prevents proper healing in the aftermath of war. We see now why any peaceful believers in God must be held to blame in some way for bloodshed. They add to the problem and denying makes them a thousand times more culpable.

Can a just war be fought by a Christian nation that is founded on lies and hypocrisy? No. Lies and hypocrisy are the enemies of true peace.

## APPENDIX

Abortion is considered to be murder by Christianity. When considering war, surely the country having an abortion regime is a consideration? So what would normally be an unjust war becomes a just one when you take into consideration how the abortion regime can be broken. This shows the fanaticism of Christianity and its potential danger.

