

Sovereign Grace Church
“War....What Is it Good For?” outline
September 25, 2016

Exodus 20: 13

As we continue our study of the Heidelberg Catechism and the 6th Commandment we have been looking at certain teachings that result from a proper understanding of this commandment. We have seen that the positive aspect of the command is not only to prohibit murder but to promote life! We have seen that, though it is clearly wrong to murder, it is not necessarily always wrong to take life! The reason for this is because sometimes, allowing a particular life to continue [e.g., one whose life purpose is to annihilate life at every opportunity], is to actually be guilty of favoring death over life.

We have looked at the 6th commandment with reference to capital punishment and abortion. Today we will consider the sixth commandment in light of war. Is war a violation of this commandment? If it is, how can a society protect itself from aggressors? If it is not a violation of the commandment, are there no restrictions on its pursuit? And finally, is warfare our final line of defense? Or is there a better hope for this world. The Scriptures say a lot about warfare and we will consider some of its teachings during this morning's sermon.

1. Are there biblical grounds to kill?

- **Religious/Cultural Extermination I Sam 15: 2-3**

- **Capital Crimes Ex 21: 12,14; Jms 2:10**

- **Self-Defense Ex. 22: 2-3**

- **Just War Rom. 13:4; Ex. 17: 8-10**

2. Christian Views on War

- **Pacifism Lev 19:16; 11: 48,50**

- **Just War**

- **Biblical Criteria Rom. 13: 4; Dt. 17: 16; II Chron. 35: 20-24; Dt. 20: 19-20; 23: 9**

3. Summary
Dan. 2: 44-45

Questions for Discussion

- 1. How would you describe the Bible's view of war in your own words? Do you believe that the Old Testament restrictions on war should be implemented today? Why or why not?**

- 2. How would you describe America's wars from a biblical perspective? Were these wars just according to biblical grounds? [War for Independence; Mexican War; Civil War; Indian wars; Spanish-American War; WW I; WW II; Vietnam; Gulf Wars]**

- 3. What are we to make of our governments "strange" wars: War on Drugs; War on Terror? Are these "wars" legitimately described as wars? How would the doctrine of "total war" affect these "wars"? Is total war ever legitimate from a biblical standpoint? Why or why not?**

- 4. Is it ever legitimate to refuse to go to war? What are the arguments for and against such a decision? What is the responsibility of an officer who is given an unjust order (e.g., to shoot unarmed civilians).**

- 5. What have been your personal experiences in war? Did you learn any lessons concerning human nature? What were they? What are some possible negative consequences of that favorite veteran pastime of telling war stories to younger folk?**