A Strategy for Connecting Military Families to the Local Church through the Military Evangelist

Thomas T. Cook

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Kurt Fredrickson

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BY
THOMAS TINE COOK
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ABSTRACT

A Strategy for Connecting Military Families to the Local Church through the Military Evangelist
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2011

The purpose of this paper is to present a strategy for connecting the military families of Camp Pendleton to the local church, New Song Community Church, through the evangelical work of the military chaplain. New Song Community Church began to implement strategies contained in this paper in 2006, which has led other churches to implement similar programs to reach families on the base for the cause of Christ.

The mission field of the military evangelist is a complex culture, made more so by the constant debate over the definition of the establishment clause in the First Amendment. It is further complicated by diverging religious and political views on the subject of war, which unfortunately the warfighter gets caught in the middle of. It is also a dangerous ministry that takes the chaplain into combat right alongside the very men and women he ministers to. To this work the military evangelist must possess a deliberate sense of calling, for this is a unique field of ministry unlike any other the Christian may embark upon. He or she must also possess a firm biblical warrior ethos to undergird this ministry, balancing the extreme views of war-mongering and pacifism. Without a firm understanding of the theological issues, the chaplain will find himself or herself unprepared to deal with the questions that American warfighters will no doubt have in response to these issues.

This paper will consider a model for ministry found in the lives of three men in the Bible, two of whom served God through secular offices. It will also consider the model of Christ himself who balanced his role here on earth and his membership in heaven perfectly. These insights will provide a foundation for implementing a strategy for reaching Camp Pendleton through the unique office of the military evangelist—the chaplain.

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INTRODUCTION

Endorsed Chaplains . . . in ministry relate to Southern Baptist life and practice in a continuing capacity through the Chaplaincy Evangelism Team, NAMB, and through local Southern Baptist churches.

—from the Foreward of the Southern Baptist Convention’s North American Mission Board’s Endorsement Manual

The purpose of this ministry focus paper is to present a strategy for connecting the military families of Camp Pendleton to the local church, specifically New Song Community Church (hereafter, New Song), through the evangelical work of the military chaplain. Chaplains come from many different faith backgrounds, are recommended for service by their local congregations, are appointed by their denominations, and are commissioned by their respective service branches. Though called out of their respective denominations to serve as chaplains, too often the local religious bodies from which they are called and the chaplains who are called out of them are at odds with one another, or at the very least they are ambivalent about the existence of the other.¹ Too often, chaplains attend their local churches, and may even serve in some capacity, but neither they nor their families fully connect with the local body of Christ for mutual support or for ministry. Some of this may be due to the short assignments of chaplains, which for some can be as short as two years unless they find an open position in the same geographical area. For most junior chaplains, the career path includes the following assignments, in no particular order: a Marine Corps assignment for thirty months, a ship assignment for

¹ Churches like First Baptist Church of Norfolk, with the pioneering vision of Gary Sanders, have been making great strides to connect the local church with chaplains for mutual support and cooperative ministry to US military members and their families.
twenty-four months, and then a shore or other assignment for twenty-four to thirty-six months. This third assignment can offer the chaplain some freedom to avoid moving his or her family, unless that “other assignment” is specialized with the Coast Guard or some other training command. Most manage to achieve the additional time at one station, but this still only brings their time in a local church to five and a half years at most.

Some of the difficulties between chaplains and churches are due to theological or political positions based in an anti-war or sometimes anti-military theology. Richard G. Hutcheson, in his book, *Chaplain at Sea: Holding on to Values in Changing Times*, articulates this as he describes how many within the military during the Vietnam conflict felt they were “rejected as immoral by a large segment of a sharply divided nation.”

Two phenomena have had a profound influence on how the Church interacts with chaplains and with the military as a whole: the first is the national guilt regarding how veterans from Vietnam were treated; and the second is the influence of liberal theology from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, which found fertile soil in which to flourish in the converging movements of the 1960s.

This is not to suggest that the anti-war movement had its birth in the protests of the Vietnam era, for there are accounts of great men and women who served the military

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2 The use of the term “anti-war” in this paper is intentional and distinct from pacifism, whose difference will be elaborated upon in the appropriate chapter. It is an important distinction in developing the theological foundation of this paper, which not only makes room for pacifist views but acknowledges the benefit of such views as a conscience and counterpoint to the violence of the warrior culture.


4 There is not adequate space to discuss these topics here, but Lee Griffith’s book, *The War on Terrorism and the Terror of God*, is an excellent example of how the anti-war sentiments of the Vietnam era, which were the offspring of the “social gospel” of the early twentieth century, have and continue to impact the theology of the contemporary Church and its opposition to the military and its mission.
in capacities that did not conflict with their non-violent beliefs well before the advent of that historic conflict. It is crucial to understand that with the advent of Vietnam came a very public voice that to this day reverberates in the theological constructions of religious leaders as well as those to whom they minister. These theological foundations color the way in which many of these congregations engage the public discussion, but more importantly how they engage in ministry to military members and their families. Both of these interactions can serve to help or hinder spiritual growth and healing from combat and operational related injuries. This is being played out today in the context of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Denominations struggle with how to support the military and its members, as well as how their anti-war theology has left them with very little religious voice within the military institution. For instance, Eden Theological Seminary in St. Louis, Missouri is trying to boost its training of military chaplains "despite reservations about military involvement and objections to war."

Other issues between chaplains and churches are due to a perception that chaplains are somehow “less than” clergy, or even sell-outs to the State. There is ample anecdotal evidence of this opinion across the Internet, and in the writings of some Christians. The assumption of many is that in pledging not to proselytize, chaplains will

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6 As one example, Stephan Mansfield’s book, *The Faith of the American Soldier*, presents a confusing and contradictory picture of chaplains as hardworking on the one hand, but confused about their role or incapable of providing ministry due to a lack of training on the other hand. He presents them as being in touch with their troops on the one hand, but on the other hand, as incapable of answering the deeper spiritual questions of life because of fear that their ministry will be cut short by a lawsuit. Even worse, he presents a myopic view of ministry “outside the wire,” where chaplains, he claims, are not allowed to go. A little more research on Army chaplains and Navy chaplains serving with Marines would have provided ample correction.
never preach the Gospel or pray in Jesus’ name. Unfortunately both chaplains and religious communities alike often forget that chaplains are extensions of the local body of believers. Perhaps they never understood it to begin with. The solution to this “disconnect,” and a part of the strategy of this ministry focus paper, is to train religious communities about the calling of the chaplain, and to invest in affirming chaplains from the beginning about their calling to military ministry. In this way denominations can connect the evangelist to a local body through a strategy of training and implementation.

Rather than working independently to minister to military members and their families, chaplains and local bodies have a unique opportunity to form a partnership for the spiritual development of these families. This partnership is based upon the biblical/historical model of the missionary, and the belief that chaplains are evangelists to the military and extensions of their local bodies of faith.

Regardless of which denominations chaplains represent, it is expected that they will care for all faiths in their respective units. That being said, each one is only required to provide such religious services as authorized by his or her denomination and acceptable to his or her conscience. From the perspective of the Southern Baptist denomination, it is the calling of the chaplain to be a messenger of the Kingdom of God to his or her mission field for the purposes of ministering to those of like faith, creating worshipers where there are none, and connecting them to the universal Church through a

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7 Throughout this project the use of the words missionary, evangelist, and chaplain will be used in reference to the military chaplain. It is with this understanding of the role of the military chaplain as evangelist and missionary to the military that teaching to the chaplain and the local congregation will focus.
relationship with the local church. This project presents a strategy for chaplains and their sending denominations, as well as the local churches from which they are called, to connect the military families of Camp Pendleton to the local church, specifically New Song, through the evangelistic work of the military chaplain. This project will seek to articulate this in three parts: the mission field, the missionary, and the mission.

Chapter 1 will focus on the mission field in question, which is that of combat warriors, their dependents, and authorized personnel as outlined by Department of Defense Directive 1304.19 of 18. For this project the mission field includes the Marines, Sailors, and families of Camp Pendleton. The military, her individual branches, and even the individual Military Occupational Specialty (MOS) communities within these branches have their own unique cultures; however, they do, as a “total institution,” have some things in common. Erving Goffman, in his theory of the “total institution,” presents a foundation for explaining the nature of the military and civilian culture of Camp Pendleton. The chaplain must realize that he or she is ministering “to persons whose lives are encompassed by a total institution,” while at the same time realizing that family members of these “persons” are affected by this institution but are essentially outsiders to the institution. In defining the culture of Camp Pendleton this paper will identify aspects important for the military missionary to have in mind as he or she goes to

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9. There is a population of retired personnel that are routinely ministered to in the base chapels, as well as contractors and civilian personnel other than families. For this project these individuals are not the primary focus as they are by and large cared for at the base chapels. Others, like Marine Corps Community Services (hereafter, MCCS) employees, for instance, do not fall into this care category, though chaplains often have the opportunity to minister to them.

work there—some distinctives, some constraints, and a view toward a doorway into the culture.

Chapter 2 will focus on the unique struggle that military evangelists face while serving the military members of Camp Pendleton and their families. First of all, the very culture the evangelist is working in is the one responsible for his or her livelihood. Secondly, the missionary lives with and alongside the very people he or she is trying to reach in a way unlike any other minister. Further, military evangelists are non-combatants working alongside combatants, often deployed with them in the combat zone. In the case of Camp Pendleton, the chaplain will spend at least twenty months of a thirty-month assignment either deployed to the combat zone and/or involved in training to be deployed into combat, unless he or she is serving on base or at Edson Range as a part of the recruit training cadre. Though a non-combatant the chaplain will be where his or her troops are, a part of the war machine but very much an outsider as well. This is a part of the tension the chaplain will experience as he or she works out the calling from God in the context of the military. An understanding of the history of the chaplain corps, combined with a solid calling to both realities, is essential to being successful in reaching families at Camp Pendleton. In straddling the role of pastor and military staff officer it is appropriate, as one author has described it, to say that he or she is a “servant of two masters.”

My own journey into military ministry began in earnest after the events of September 11; however, the seeds of making the military a vocation have their roots in a love of country, love of family, agreement with the ideals of military service, and most of

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all a deep belief that I could best please God by serving as a chaplain in the military. Without a sense of calling on both my life and that of my wife’s to this place, we would have never pursued this ministry.

Chapters 3 and 4 will focus on developing a paradigm for ministry by suggesting a theological foundation for a biblical warrior ethos for the Church, through exploration of relevant biblical and historical/theological writings on the subject. It has already been mentioned, but it bears repeating: military chaplains serve in a combat-oriented, warrior society where people kill and are killed. This does not mean that chaplains should or do advocate for a blood-thirsty God bent on destruction; however, a purely anti-war theology which abhors war as the ultimate evil on the planet is equally inconsistent with the biblical text, and will actually harm those who the United States sends into combat. Chaplains need a balanced view on the issue of war, not just empty platitudes. Their role, as a reminder of the eternal to those they serve, will demand that they be able to answer questions about the ethics of killing and combat. Specifically, chaplains must be able to discuss the meaning of certain verses in the Bible that call for peace in the greater context of other verses that call for violence. The sentiment, “the instruments of war must be transformed into the instruments of peace,” is a prophetic truth about what the kingdom in its fullness will be like, not guidance on what foreign policy a State should adopt or

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12 The National Security Act of 1947 and subsequent updates to the act established the United States Marine Corps as a “Force in Readiness” to be trained, organized, and equipped for offensive amphibious employment. While it is employed for humanitarian missions from time to time, a recent development in its long history, it is primarily an offensive weapon in the service of National Security. The State Department of the United States, “The National Security Act of 1947,” http://www.state.gov/ww/about_state/history/intel/intro6.html (accessed October 3, 2010).
more importantly whether Christians should be involved in the military.\textsuperscript{13} War will cease after the great battle of Armageddon and humankind’s sin is consumed in eternal fire. As mentioned above, certain modern views of war have had a particular impact on the Church’s view of war and warriors; these views of war are therefore relevant to the discussion and in need of being addressed if a complete biblical warrior ethos is to be constructed that will help to shape a suitable paradigm for military ministry.

Chapter 5 will focus on establishing a ministry model for the chaplain based upon the lives of Daniel, Joseph, and Jesus, two of whom were engaged in strictly secular jobs in the fulfillment of their missionary work. Each missionary was an expert in his field, each one operated as a member of the culture to which he was called, and each one, while successful in his secular profession, did not sacrifice his faith to achieve that success. Jesus, the final example, provides New Testament authority for the calling to be a missionary and the duality of that work between the culture of the missionary field and the missionary’s own membership in heaven.

Finally, a strategy will be proposed for connecting military families to the local church, using the chaplain as a bridge to the community of faith based upon the model developed in Chapter 4. The transitory nature of military assignments means those bridges must be established in a short period of time and in such a way as to endure past the billet assignments of individual chaplains.\textsuperscript{14} The chaplain must approach ministry


\textsuperscript{14} In his book, \textit{Missionary Methods: St. Paul’s or Ours?} Roland Allen notes that within ten years Paul had established churches in four provinces. For him this is no accident or some extraordinary circumstance, but a work “endowed with a universal character.” He accomplished this with the same speed that will be required of this strategy, if it is to endure as Paul’s work did.
with a holistic strategy that involves five areas for balance: glorification, discipleship, community, service, and reproduction. As a part of this strategy the military missionary must endeavor to teach churches the difference between being military focused and military friendly, which involves more than just having military members in the congregation. In this regard it is vital for the senior pastors of local congregations to be involved with chaplains to build trust and maintain relationships. This strategy is based upon over four years of trial and error with New Song, a community of faith that is located very close to Camp Pendleton.

The concepts that will be articulated in this project are the foundation of the current work being done at New Song, as well as at other churches in the area. Chapter 6 will document the evaluation of the program at New Song and assess how other congregations are doing with their efforts via interviews with them. It is hoped that there will be an overall thrust in the North Bay to connect to Camp Pendleton for greater ministry.

Without a strategy based in a firm historical-theological grounding, it is impossible to speak with conviction to the institution of the Chaplain Corps, a smaller community within the larger institution of the Navy and the Department of Defense. The chaplain is equally called to shape and change the Chaplain Corps for the good of the military and souls at stake. Chaplains must bring to the ministry an understanding of the cultural context of the mission field, the historical markers that have affected it, and their own convictions of calling. As the military deals with the repeal of “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell” and becomes more and more secularized, this role is going to be ever more complicated. Chaplains are going to need not only the fraternity of chaplains for support
in these times, but the support of their denominations through their local churches. The Church has an opportunity like never before to engage in the spiritual battle that is taking place within the halls of our own military institutions, through the mechanism and relationships created by the military evangelist. Without a solid historical-theological girding for the strategy, chaplains are just special staff officers with no biblical conviction or prophetic voice with which to guide them in their everyday ministry to our fighters and their families.
CHAPTER 1

CAMP PENDLETON MARINES, SAILORS, AND THEIR FAMILIES

Another, as she handed her son his shield, exhorted him saying, “Return with this or upon this.”

—Plutarch, *Lacaenarum Apophthegmata*

The military, and especially those called to the United States Marine Corps, is a culture of combat. From the first steps of boot camp, everything is focused on creating warriors who can withstand the rigors of battle and kill the enemy while doing it. “Every Marine is a rifleman” is an often overused quote used by researchers in an attempt to convey the ethos of a culture that is completely foreign to most civilians. Thomas Ricks, in his book, *Making the Corps*, interprets this in a rather derogatory fashion: “It means that the essence of the organization resides with the lowest of the low, the peon in the trenches.”

Movies like *A Few Good Men, The Rock*, and even the recent *Avatar* reveal the ignorance of some as to the ethos of Marines, as well as a distinct distrust of the warrior’s loyalty to a “code” and to his fellow combatants. Ricks echoes this paranoia: “The U.S. military’s new contempt for American society is especially troubling. . . . From

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commandant to drill instructor, [Marines] seem to define the enemy as ‘chaos.’ That is worrisome because it can blur the line between foreign and domestic missions. Take this view to extremes—and some Marines do—and you wind up believing that the next war the U.S. military fights could be here at home.”²

It is true that these men and women have a passion to kill the enemy, which is often misunderstood as a passion for violence. In 2005, Lieutenant General James Mattis made the following comments, which raised much concern: “Actually it's quite fun to fight them, you know. It's a hell of a hoot. . . . It's fun to shoot some people. I'll be right up there with you. I like brawling.”³ The Rifleman’s Creed can provide a better understanding of the meaning of the phrase “Every Marine’s a Rifleman” for those who actually take the oath. An excerpt states, “Before God I swear this creed. My rifle and I are the defenders of my country. We are the masters of our enemy. We are the saviors of my life. So be it, until victory is America's and there is no enemy.”⁴ There are not many who understand this unwavering commitment of mind and body to the country and the Constitution, the devotion to a cause greater than oneself. The warrior ethos is foreign and threatening to a society that is largely being told that there are no moral absolutes, and that to hold to such a view is intolerant and evil. In a letter written sometime in

² Ricks, Making the Corps, 23.


1956, General William Thorson remarked, “There are only two kinds of people that understand Marines: Marines and their enemies. Everyone else has a second opinion.”

What the general public and certain intellectuals fail to understand about Marines, and the other warrior branches of the military, is that they have committed themselves to a code of conduct that is stricter than the laws most Americans are held to. *Posse Comitatus*, passed in June 18, 1878 under Title 18 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice, protects the citizenry of the United States from the Federal Government and any use it might make of the military as a domestic law enforcement agent. From the founding fathers to the inception of *Posse Comitatus*, the real fear of lawmakers has been that the civilian leadership of the military would attempt to use the military against the citizenry, not that military leaders would rise up against the very country they swore to protect. “The code restrains the warrior. It sets boundaries on his [or her] behavior. It distinguishes honorable acts from shameful acts.”

The chaos that is being spoken of is that of combat, for which the ambiguous morals of the majority of society are incapable of processing and coping with. Ricks later reveals this fact, but fails to connect it to his earlier comments when he quotes the battalion Commander, “The reason we do [boot camp] the way we do is to create uncertainty. . . . War is chaos. . . . They learn that if they follow orders, their life will be calmer.”

David Grossman, renowned author on the effects of combat on the human being and the need for realistic training to help warriors

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7 Ricks, *Making the Corps*, 57.
prepare for it, writes, “Every other sane creature . . . [flees the sound of gunfire, but] . . . if we did not have warriors, men and women willing to move toward the sounds of the guns and confront evil, within the span of a generation our civilization would no longer exist.”

Most critics of the military fear that the desire to kill is a symptom of a sociopath, and that it will carry over beyond the battlefield. Ricks, once again, portrays this misapprehension with literary flare, “He [Sergeant Carey] is just the sort of person that militaries need in wartime, but don’t know how to handle at other times.” Oddly, the character trait of this recon marine and successful drill instructor that makes him suitable only for killing, explains Ricks, is that “he’s outspoken.” He is not reckless, bloodthirsty, or a drunkard in danger of going on a rampage; Ricks only writes that he is outspoken. It is ironic that one of the major criticisms leveled at military types is that they blindly follow orders. In this case Ricks is complaining of the opposite: he sees this Marine’s “outspokenness” as a sign that he is only fit for military duty during combat.

However, Marines are not wanton killers, who upon returning to “civilized” society will have to be retrained not to kill innocent people. This misrepresentation of our heroes in uniform is displayed plainly by Chris Hedges in his book, War Is a Force That Gives Us Purpose: “For even as war gives meaning to sterile lives, it also promotes killers and racists. . . . War also empowers those with a predilection for murder.” On the contrary, by and large military professionals know the difference between a combat

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9 Ricks, Making the Corps, 60.

10 Ibid.

zone and their neighborhoods, and can adjust their responses accordingly, even when in
the combat zone. This discernment between combat and non-combat environments is
embodied in the core values of the Marine’s institution—Honor, Courage, and
Commitment. Their code, “Marines don’t do that,” reflects this simple moral certitude
about how Marines should conduct themselves both on and off the battlefield, first
penned by then Commandant of the Marine Corps, General L.F. Chapman. 12

Some, such as Doctor Brent Litz, who are ostensibly seeking to help combat
veterans “heal” from the damage of war, do not understand this. Anecdotally, Litz
believes that those in combat have trouble justifying the righteous killing of an enemy,
even though interviews with combat marines and soldiers illustrate the fact that they are
more than capable of morally justifying their actions in such cases. 13 It is important to
consider how an ordinary citizen becomes this kind of trained killer, capable of
withstanding the chaos of war on one hand, and providing aid and comfort to a tsunami
ravaged third world country on the other. As Grossman suggests, most are wired this
way, but all must be trained to follow orders and do their jobs under highly stressful
conditions. It takes a program to accomplish this, a program where an individual is torn

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12 L.F. Chapman, Jr., “Commandant of the Marine Corps Memorandum,” Department of the Navy,

13 Brent Litz, “Professional Development Training Conference,” Naval Station Little Creek,
Virginia Beach, VA, April 2009. At this seminar, Litz taught Navy chaplains and medical personnel about
Marines and Soldiers who believed that the killing they did in Iraq was good. His response was that they
may not feel guilty now, but they will later. In contrast, interviews with Marines from 3/1 after the invasion
of Fallujah in 2004 showed that to a soldier they felt no guilt over killing bad guys. Additionally, I
personally questioned a soldier back from Iraq suffering with PTSD at an annual PTSD conference held at
Camp Pendleton in 2007 about his stated guilt. “Do you feel any guilt about killing insurgents?” His
response was, “No sir. It felt good to kill them. I struggle with the innocent people I have killed as
collateral damage on the battlefield.”
down and built back up again with the mindset necessary to accomplish complex and diverse mission sets.

The Total Institution

The total institution of the military is designed to create fighters—to install a warrior ethos in its recruits. This warrior ethos is embedded in the history and personality of the United States Marine Corps and is common to all Marines. It is an essential starting point in understanding Marines in general, and Camp Pendleton personnel in particular. Retired General Victor H. Krulak summed up this warrior culture in the introduction of his book, *First to Fight: An Inside View of the U.S. Marine Corps*, now required reading in the Marine Corps:

In a century and a half, they evolved an elite, almost mystical institutional personality. Partaking variously of pride, aggressiveness, dedication, loyalty, discipline, and courage, this complex personality was—and is—dominated by a conviction that battle is the Marine’s only reason for existence and that they must be ready to respond promptly and effectively whenever given an opportunity to fight.  

The typical military spouse is a warrior as well, but fights the battle in a much more subdued and less visible way. The average age of the Marine spouse is 28.5, with the average age of a Navy spouse being over 30. The Camp Pendleton family faces multiple periods of separation from their warrior whether it be during training or deployment, leaving them to manage their homes with little or no help from their warrior. The family members must deal with the emotional changes of these arrivals and

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departures, as well as the constant realization that their spouse/parent could be killed in combat. This creates for them, much like for the military spouse, a sense of isolation from their civilian piers. “They [military families] understand and identify with each other in a special way.”

On daily basis they must deal with the bureaucracy of the military for medical care, housing, and everyday administrative issues. The healthy military family makes connections for mutual support quickly, whether with those they live near or with relatives—many families live with extended family during deployments to achieve this very support, only to come back to base when the deployment is ended. The military spouse is a complex bundle of emotions, both longing to have their warrior home while at the same time looking forward to them deploying again.

All of this takes place within the confines of the military machine, which provides care, entertainment, housing, food, and miscellaneous resources to provide for nearly every need of the warrior and his or her family without their ever having to leave a base. It is “a total institution,” as Erving Goffman explains.

In 1957, Goffman wrote a paper on the characteristics of what he called a “total institution.” Amongst the many institutions he used as an example of a total institution is the military, though more precisely the cultural phenomenon known as “boot camp.”

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17 This is a difficult phenomenon to describe to those unfamiliar with how life is disrupted by the comings and goings of the military member within their household. The family begins to function as a single-parent household, with habits and routines separate from the service member. When the service member returns, he or she disrupts the routine and seeks to eventually impose his or her own routines on the family. Eventually the military spouse, though missing the warrior, begins to prepare for the next inevitable deployment.

underlying foundation of the total institution is its desire to sequester the members from
the outside world, or more specifically, from the values of the culture from which the
members have been drawn. Goffman’s understanding of the total institution will go a
long way toward helping both the chaplain and the Church to understand the culture of
the families of Camp Pendleton.

The military as a whole, but especially those whose primary focus is combat,
becomes an all-encompassing system that permeates every corner of the participant’s
life—even the bedroom. Goffman identifies five characteristics of the total institution:
1) total control of the lives of its members; 2) the reality that “spheres of life” are not
mutually exclusive; 3) bureaucratic handling of human needs; 4) a separation between the
member’s workplace, the institution, and his family; and 5) a separation between the
caretakers and the inmates or inhabitants. Those inside the military institution can
readily see four of the five of these characteristics at work, which is one reason why so
many seek to find housing accommodations outside those provided by the government on
base or designated residential area. For many within the military there is a deep need to
get away from the institution and anything that represents it at the end of the workday and
on the weekends.

Goffman’s essay on total institutions is not purely about asylums, but about the
development of the types of institutions that seek to control, either completely or to a
large degree, the actions of its participants. Goffman himself admits that not every total

19 Goffman, Asylums, 4.

20 Uniform Code of Military Justice, Articles 80, 125, and 134 restrict the manner in which
military members may have sexual relations.

21 Goffman, Asylums, 3-124.
institution has the five characteristics in common, or to the same degree as all the others. In fact, he believes that all institutions do exercise some constraint in one or more of these areas to a greater or lesser degree. 22 During “Boot Camp” one can see all five of these characteristics at play, with the training cadre of supervisors fulfilling the role that Goffman labels as the institution staff. Outside of this initial training stage, the military does not have a staff or caretaker population, though some may want to view the divide between officer and enlisted in this way. The culture of the military does have a history of this divide, and there is no doubt that a rank structure exists with all of the rights and responsibilities that those titles command; however, within the U.S. military, the class divide that was characteristic between officers and enlisted has long since been eroded. Within the Marine Corps in particular one will find junior and senior enlisted individuals with college and post-graduate degrees; however, the roles of officer and enlisted within the rank structure are still maintained with fidelity.

What is critical for the chaplain to understand, and why Goffman’s analysis is helpful, is that the work of the military evangelist is a “ministry to persons whose lives are encompassed by a total institution, and to understand the effect of the total institution on those lives and that ministry.” 23 It is one thing to share experiences with a congregation or to live amongst a people group day in and day out. It is quite another thing to shower next to, eat with daily, and sleep alongside the very people to which you are ministering. Granted this happens only during field exercises and while on deployment, but it is a substantial part of the chaplain’s ministry to the total institution.

22 Goffman, Asylums, 5.
The military in a democratic society, even a representative democracy such as the United States of America, occupies a precarious position underneath a civilian authority whose position and strength can change with the political climate. Under the authority of civilian leaders, the military’s senior leaders function as advisors to their civilian leaders on matters related to the military, its upkeep, and strategy. As advisors to their civilian leaders, military leaders are constrained by an unspoken belief that they are not political and therefore should not comment publicly on the politics of the day. According to The Armed Forces Officer, a publication of the U.S. Department of Defense, “The officer must subordinate personal political, military, strategic, and social views to those of our nation’s elected leadership.”

The Armed Forces Officer goes on to compare and contrast the conduct of George Washington and Douglas MacArthur as commanders of armed forces. In the case of MacArthur, his conduct in dealing with President Truman has been deemed by most military historians and officers as a violation of this principle. According to The Armed Forces Officer, the “military leader” does not have “the right or obligation to judge the decisions of his political masters,” at least not publicly and certainly not in the midst of a war. This is in large part the reason why the military maintains a social and cultural separation from the very society it has sworn to protect, in order to maintain its unique perspective, and in order to be an effective advisor to the political leadership of the country to which they have volunteered to be submissive to. Officers are best described by the title, “Defender of the Constitution and Servant of the

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25 Ibid., 37.
Nation,” although this is a title fit for anyone who takes an oath to support and defend the Constitution.

The total institution of the United States Marine Corps, and specifically boot camp, is designed to “transform civilians into basically trained Marines, who are imbued with our core values of honor, courage, and commitment . . . to win the Nation’s battles and create quality citizens,” as is stated by the Marine Corps’ “Recruit Training” manual. 26 The total institution is required to achieve this transformation, explains Ricks, in a battle to overcome the recruits’ “un-marinelike values.  Self-indulgence, me first. I’m-going-to-do-what-I-want-to-do.” 27 Ironically, these “un-Marinelike” values come from America, from the very communities that every military member has sworn to protect.

Ricks discusses this intended transformation: “When we take young people off the streets of America, we’re in a war to transform them from their old values, or no values, into Marine values.” 28 This is a different kind of war than what the Marines are technically being prepared for. According to Ricks, one third of all recruits do not make it past their first term, the reasons for which in one platoon revolve around how big an impact the institution had on the young recruits. Those recruits who were stationed farther away from home than others seemed to have the greatest success in being transformed, while those who continued to maintain sometimes weekly visits to their old neighborhoods suffered the greatest failures. In his study of one battalion of recruits that

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27 Ricks, Making the Corps, 57.

28 Ibid.
was sent to Camp Pendleton, the group seemed to have great success based on the proximity to beaches, entertainment, and the aforementioned distance from home.  

In order to understand the Marines and Sailors of Camp Pendleton and their families, it is important to keep this divide between civilians and the institution in mind. Many will chafe at the constraints of the military, but at the end of the day this separation also creates a sense of *esprit de corps*, a sense of nobility that is often mistaken for arrogance. The total institution of the United States Marine Corps creates men and women who are confident in what they are and, more importantly, who have a unique responsibility that is both more restrictive and more serious than most of the members of the society they protect: they have been trained to inflict lethal force when duty calls them to exercise that responsibility. This warrior ethos is common to all Marines and the Sailors who serve with them, but Camp Pendleton does produce some unique cultural phenomenon of its own.

**Distinctives of the Culture of Camp Pendleton**

Amongst these warriors there are as many different personalities as there are people. There are roughly fifty-two thousand military personnel serving at Camp Pendleton according to the Defense Manpower Data Center. Of this number, 66 percent of the Marines are 25 years old or younger, making them the youngest of all the services, and 46 percent of the Marines are married, while 55 percent of the Sailors are also married. The average age of a married enlisted Marine is 27.2, and he or she is

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29 Ricks, *Making the Corps*, 239.

usually 23.6 when his or her first child is born. There are about an equal number of military members to family members, with Staff Non-Commissioned Officers (SNCO) having the greatest number of children.\footnote{A Staff Non-Commissioned Officer (SNCO) is anyone of the rank E-6 to E-9. The Army and the Air Force do not recognize this title, choosing instead the title Senior Non-Commissioned Officer, while the Navy divides its titles between Junior Enlisted, Petty Officers, and Chief Petty Officers.} Roughly 2 percent of this population is a dual military family. Of all the services the Marine Corps has the lowest number of females, comprising 6.23 percent of the population, and the Navy is third with 14.48 percent of the population. Within the Marine Corps, 68 percent is ethnically white, with African Americans comprising the largest of the minority populations. As far as education is concerned, 90 percent of Officers have a BA degree or higher, while 93 percent of Enlisted Marines hold a high school diploma or its equivalent.

Camp Pendleton personnel differ from their East Coast siblings in the casualness of their dress while off-duty, and they are often at odds with each other about who the true Marines are. Those Marines who go through boot camp at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego are often referred to as “Hollywood Marines” by those who train at Parris Island in South Carolina. Recruits at Parris Island see themselves as the true Marines because of the sweltering humidity and sand fleas that make the training “tougher,” in addition to what they view as a less stringent training regime consistent with the California lifestyle. West Coast Marines, on the other hand, often refer to their East Coast brothers as “hump waivers” due to the flatter terrain.\footnote{As the nickname indicates, the belief is that with the flatter terrain Parris Island Marines suffer fewer hikes, “humps” in the vernacular, and are therefore given “hump waivers.” Stephen F. Tomajczyk, To Be a U.S. Marine (Oscoda, WI: Zenith Press, 2004), 153.} The openness of the base and its close proximity to the beach cities of California also give it a much more
laid-back flavor than Camp Lejeune in North Carolina. At the same time there is the mystique of the 1st Marine Division at Camp Pendleton, and the belief that their distance from Washington D.C. allows them to focus on what is most important—combat.

Marines at Camp Pendleton are unique in their financial priorities because of the proximity to so many entertainment and vacation spots near the base, as well as the ease with which military members can cross the border into Tijuana. At the same time, the cost of living in California makes long-term investments like purchasing a home in the area more difficult. This has created suburbs like Temecula and even Hemet, where service members will commute several hours in order to have their own homes.

According to one statistic, the average home value in California is $430,000, while the average is only $139,600 at Lejuene. Most families who live within driving distance of the church live on base, though some choose to live in town. Living on base provides a very low-cost housing arrangement for the service member with no cost in rental, home ownership, or certain utilities. Rents differ for those who choose to live in town, but then so does the Basic Allowance for Housing.

There is a keen sense of community amongst most service members at Camp Pendleton. While deployed to Afghanistan, I received a care package from the members of my neighborhood on base. This same neighborhood frequently has block parties to celebrate holidays or any other excuse for a get-together. Alcohol is almost always involved at these events, to which the empty cans and bottles overflowing the trash cans

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34 The Basic Allowance for Housing, or BAH, is a stipend that every military member receives, though when living on base that money is never delivered into the hands of the service member. BAH varies based on geographical location, rank, and number of dependents.
will testify. In another anecdotal experience from life on base, during my first deployment to Iraq, my attended a number of gatherings with other wives and was always offered an adult beverage. Feeling obligated to offer a gathering at our house, she hoped to avoid the issue of alcohol by holding the event at 10:00 am. To her surprise, the first question on the lips of those in attendance was, “Where’s the alcohol?” This is not to suggest that service members and their spouses are always drunk or on their way to becoming intoxicated, but alcohol is a fundamental part of their celebrations and how they socialize. Sadly, many also use it for self-medicating.

One last word needs to be mentioned about fidelity. It is a sad commentary that while deployed some marriages are irrevocably changed for the worse. Adultery is an uncomfortable fact that many must deal with as their spouses deal with deployment and the absence of their loved one for the first time. However, despite what Americans might hear in the press about the “stress of two wars” taking its toll on military marriages, the military divorce rate across the services is 3.6 percent annually, which is almost identical to the civilian divorce rate of 3.5 percent.\(^\text{35}\) False information has been circulated which erroneously leads people to believe that more military marriages fail. Pauline Jelinek, in her article, “Divorce Rates among Military Families Grow,” claims that there is no “comparable annual system for tracking” the civilian trend, but this simply is not true.\(^\text{36}\)

Regardless of the statistics, while divorce is a reality, the military takes the health of marriages seriously, because healthy marriages are a force readiness issue. A Marine


or Sailor whose family is strong will be better prepared to deploy and fight the nation’s battles. Chaplains within the Sea Services provide a myriad of relationship- and marriage-building classes to forestall divorce. This, combined with the services of Marine Corps Community Services and the new FOCUS project, makes for a robust program to preserve the peace in military member’s homes. What this means in reality is that marriages by and large within the military are at the very least stronger, if not healthier, than their civilian counterparts.

Another statistic that is often blown out of proportion as a measure of the “stress of war” is suicide. In 2009, 46 Marines committed suicide out of an active force of 200,000 which is roughly 0.02 percent of the Marine population. This compares with a national statistic of 1.4 percent of the population who died due to suicide. Like marriage, the military takes the issue of suicide very seriously as a force readiness issue. One suicide is too many. The military evangelist is very involved in providing for the commanding officer a robust suicide prevention program, the purpose of which is to prevent any attempt and reduce overall suicidal ideations.

Constraints of the Culture of Camp Pendleton

In assessing a strategy for reaching the families of Camp Pendleton, there are some constraints, both formal and informal, that the culture puts on the military

37 Chaplains Religious Enrichment Development Operation (CREDO) has offices at every major installation across the globe, offering PREP for Marriage and other relationship development techniques.

38 The “Families Overcoming under Stress” Program (FOCUS) is the Navy’s newest family resiliency program. See www.focusproject.org.

39 Center for Disease Control and Prevention, “Births, Marriages Divorces, and Deaths: Provisional Data for 2009.”
The biggest constraint on reaching families is the growing argument over the issue of the “separation of church and state,” the adherents of which work daily to limit the ministry of evangelical chaplains. This is not the place for a detailed argument over the issue of “non-establishment” and “free practice.” As of the writing of this chapter, Franklin Graham, who was to speak at the National Day of Prayer meeting at the Pentagon, was asked not to come by officials in the United States Army. This was in reaction to a letter written by Mikey Weinstein of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation. Graham’s crime was that after the 9/11 attacks he called Islam “an evil religion,” though he qualified those remarks by stating that Muslims themselves were not evil. He is also critical of how women and children are treated in predominantly Muslim countries where sharia law is practiced. Chaplains have come under attack from Weinstein’s group, from the chaplain at Camp David for his book, A Table in the Presence, to chaplains in Afghanistan for alleged proselytizing, whose chapel services were recorded and aired on the internet.

The real issue at work in the culture from which most of the Marines and Sailors of Camp Pendleton come is a rebellion against absolutes, which suggests that there is no

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concrete reality to which humanity can turn to for solid footing when it comes to moral or ethical issues. For example, some theologians looked at the destruction on September 11th and declared that post-modernism was dead, arguing that there was no doubt on that morning that there was real evil in the world. Those who would deny the existence of evil could not explain away the evil that took place on that morning; clearly the planes flying into the World Trade Center’s twin towers was an unmitigated display of evil.

However, many underestimated the fervent hatred that some U.S. citizens had for their own country, and they lacked the foresight to see how those citizens would justify the terrorists’ evil actions, claiming that they were attacking “the real evil in the world,” the United States of America. Noam Chomsky is one such individual who comes close to justifying the terrorists’ actions. In his article, “Drain the Swamp and There Will Be No More Mosquitoes,” Chomsky writes, “On September 11, for the first time, a Western country was subjected on home soil to a horrendous terrorist attack of a kind all too familiar to victims of Western power.” Chomsky does not justify the events of September 11th, but he expresses understanding regarding why these oppressed people (the terrorists) might lash out at those they perceive to be the instigators of their suffering.

In the face of these obstacles, there is nevertheless a doorway to the heart of the military members at Camp Pendleton and their families. Their sense of duty and sacrifice are not unlike that of the Christian call to discipleship. The sacrifice and the calling are

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worth the price because of the sense of being a part of something larger than oneself. Their fatalistic view of life, death, and God create special opportunities for dialogue. It is to their fundamental belief in God that this chapter now turns, as a key entry point into the culture.

**Parallels to a Biblical Culture: Doorway to the Culture**

The spiritual beliefs of Marines and their families are often caricatured in movies like *Full Metal Jacket* or *A Few Good Men*, where God is pictured as largely impersonal, legalistic, and aloof from the world of humanity, and religion is a set of codes to be followed. An example of how Marines view God is displayed in the exchange between drill instructors and their recruits from Platoon 3086, once again by Ricks. On the one hand, Staff Sergeant Rowland is perplexed when a young recruit tells him that he observes no denomination, while on the other Sergeant Carey tells a young recruit, “The only place you should be looking is up to God, ‘cause he’s the only one whose gonna save you, besides the senior drill instructor.”[^46] Sergeant Carey embodies the ironic mixture of profane actions and words and profound reverence at the same time that is characteristic of so many service members.

Marine families reflect civilian cultural trends in their own views of God and organized religion, even though their Marine or Sailor has been indoctrinated through boot camp. The Barna Group notes that amongst people aged sixteen to twenty-nine, where the majority of the Marines land demographically, there is an increasing

[^46]: Ricks, *Making the Corps*, 69-70, 72.
skepticism about Christianity.\textsuperscript{47} This is juxtaposed against another study which shows that a majority of young people pray, although with varied frequency.\textsuperscript{48} Like their civilian contemporaries, most Marine and Navy families believe in and pray to God, but they are disenfranchised from the local church. The issue in reaching Marines and Sailors at the base with the Gospel is making the church palatable again, which means building relationships with them at natural points of transition in their lives.

Chaplain Mark Smith noted the following based upon interviews with returning Marines from Iraq in 2007: “Very few Marines actually found themselves angry with God. Very few blamed God for what they had seen or for what was going on around them. . . . Many actually had some newfound appreciation for the faith of others.”\textsuperscript{49} There were a number who also claimed that their faith carried them through the stress of combat, and saw that faith deepened by the experience. This is an important doorway, but attitudes against faith articulated in the rhetoric of separation of church and state will stymie the discussion and may prevent combat veterans from receiving spiritual help, which, according to empirical evidence, is having a positive impact.

Another doorway into the culture is the sense of service and honor felt by both families and service members. No anecdote better conveys the tenacious and combative spirit of this group than the story of Lieutenant Jason Redman, a Navy SeAL who was


\textsuperscript{49} William P. Nash et al., Combat Stress Injury: Theory, Research, and Management (New York: Routledge, 2007), 297.
shot seven times in the face and arms while in combat operations in Iraq. In the course of his recovery he became frustrated with the sorrow that many displayed who came to visit him. He had the staff attach the following note to his door with his Special Warfare Badge:

Attention to all who enter here. If you are coming into this room with sorrow or to feel sorry for my wounds, go elsewhere. The wounds I received I got in a job I love, doing it for people I love, supporting the freedom of a country I deeply love. I am incredibly tough and will make a full recovery. What is full? That is the absolute utmost physically my body has the ability to recover. Then I will push that about 20 percent further through sheer mental tenacity. This room you are about to enter is a room of fun, optimism, and intense rapid regrowth. If you are not prepared for that, go elsewhere.

Those on the outside of this institution can strive to embrace them, dismiss them, and even revile them. Many of them attempt to communicate with those outside the family, and write books to help them better understand this unique culture. The bridge for churches is that unique figure who straddles the military institution and the kingdom, the chaplain.

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50 SeALS wear the very identifiable SEAL Trident.

CHAPTER 2
SERVANT OF TWO MASTERS

I am an American, fighting in the forces which guard my country and our way of life. I am prepared to give my life in their defense.

—U.S. Code of Military Conduct

The first article of the *U.S. Military Code of Conduct*, one of six such articles, was created in 1955 in response to the need for a code to which military members could adhere under the extreme duress of captivity and/or torture. The gravity of this article is reinforced by similar oaths made by Officers and Enlisted alike when they enter the military to “defend the Constitution against all enemies foreign and domestic.” In peacetime or when at war, this is the culture to which every military chaplain commits himself or herself when accepting the commission as an officer; it is a warrior culture in which people kill and are killed. And while chaplains themselves are non-combatants, they “must possess the technical and tactical skills to perform effectively on the battlefield,” to

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1 U.S. Marine Corps Press, *U.S. Military Code of Conduct*, http://www.usmcpress.com/heritage/code_conduct.htm (accessed on February 2, 2010). Chaplains and medical personnel under the Geneva Conventions are considered “retained personnel” so long as those who have captured them recognize this status; if not, they revert to being regular Prisoners of War. For a sobering account of how chaplains have endured captivity see Bill Keiths, *Days of Anguish, Days of Hope*, which chronicles the ministry of Robert Preston Taylor and his captivity during World War II. Father Emil J. Kapaun was actually illegally identified as a Prisoner of War by enemy forces in World War II.
prevent them from becoming a liability in combat. Chaplain Jeffrey Saville, in his dissertation titled, *A Self-Care Plan for U.S. Navy Chaplains*, confirms this truth when he states, “Chaplains are required to participate in nearly all of the same military training as other service members.”

But there is a master they serve prior to their commitment to support and defend the Constitution, a master whom they serve through the offices of their respective denominational endorsing agencies. Chaplains work at the pleasure of the President of the United States, through the agency of their denominations, at the confirmation of their local churches, and by the impulse of their own desires. It is in the calling of the creator of the universe and by his will that chaplains experience success in any endeavor.

Before they accept their commission to defend the Constitution, chaplains have already accepted a different commission from their local churches through their denominational apparatuses. The Department of Defense recognizes that denominations, and not the United States Government, have the sole authority to confer clerical office upon an individual, though the individual branches of the military reserve the authority to award a military commission. The military does not confer religious authority on a candidate; only denominations do. A chaplain, by virtue of that commission, brings the culture, beliefs, traditions, and ethical training that he or she has developed through the

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5 Ironically, the Department of Defense has a board that determines which denominations meet the criteria for recommending clergy as candidates for military service.
denominational apparatuses of his or her own faith tradition to the complex, pluralistic, and authoritarian structure of the military. A chaplain has one foot firmly planted in the traditions of his or her particular faith group, and one foot firmly planted in the boot of the military branch to which he or she has committed.

A part of what makes this ministry complex is the continual argument both publicly and within the Chaplain Corps itself over the definition and application of the non-establishment clause. Contrary to common perception, there is no conflict between the doctrine of separation of church and state and military participation as a chaplain. Some mistakenly believe that this doctrine restricts the participation of Christians in political dialogue because of their adherence to a separation of church and state. In his book, The Baptist Faith and Message, Herschell H. Hobbs describes the balance well: “A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and unhindered access to God on the part of all men, and the right to form and propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.” Christians see the division as a gate that swings one way, providing unfettered access to the government, not a fence between which the two shall never meet.

The work of the chaplain is a marriage of the secular job of special staff officer with the religious commission of a minister taking place in the context of service to the Marines, Sailors, and families of their respective units. Hutcheson writes, “Chaplains live and work in an awkward straddle, with one foot in the world of religion and the other

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in the world of warfare.” On one side are individuals who focus solely on the role of the chaplain as pastoral in nature, with little or no role as a staff officer beyond that direct ministry. On the other side are those who believe that chaplains are nothing more than state sanctioned religious representatives who should keep their religious preferences for divine services only. Barry W. Lynn echoes this type of thinking in his article, “Military Maneuvers: A New Day for Religion in the Armed Forces?” He writes, “They [Chaplains] are part of an institution with a unique chain of command. They are subject to orders from commanders, not heaven.” In the middle are the chaplains trying to balance their religious convictions and their missionary convictions as members of the culture, against attacks from both sides.

And while the bulk of a chaplain’s career is not spent in actual combat ministry, combat is what every chaplain should be preparing for regardless of the climate in which he or she receives a commission. Every facet of the military is involved in preparation for combat operations, even Military Operations Other Than War (MOOTW), in which participants must prepare for the eventuality that such operations could turn violent. For the unique ministry to Camp Pendleton, which was addressed in the previous chapter, it is even more focused to intentionally prepare for combat in “Every Clime and Place.”

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7 Hutcheson, Chaplain at Sea, x.


9 The 2010 Commandant and Sergeant Major’s Marine Corps Birthday Message highlights the fact that Marines have always been and need to always be prepared for combat to any place in the world and in any climate. It highlights the Korean War, and specifically the austere and freezing conditions experienced by the “Frozen Chosin” of the Chosin Reservoir engagement. See http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mW4Gm5uFYQk (accessed November 14, 2010).
The complex nature of the ministry of the military evangelist has already been mentioned, but a better understanding of its history and foundations will go a long way toward understanding how the chaplain fits into a warrior culture like Camp Pendleton. Many histories have been written about the Chaplain Corps, which this chapter will not seek to duplicate; rather, it will examine critical parts of the foundation of the military evangelist in brief. The history of the Chaplain Corps is important in discussing the calling of the military evangelist, because the chaplain inherits the failings and successes of all those who have gone before—both from the spiritual perspective of a gospel minister and the physical tradition of the professional military officer. All of this comes together in the military evangelist’s two callings: first to the gospel ministry, and secondly to the support and defense of the Constitution of the United States of America.

**Historical Foundations for the Chaplain Corps**

The Continental Navy, which predates the United States Navy, was approved by Congress on October 13, 1775. It was administered by a Marine Committee of three members, which was later expanded to seven members. The Navy Regulations adopted by the Marine Committee on November 28, 1775 mirrored those of the Royal Navy. The second article of the Navy regulations of 1775 read, “The Commanders of the ships of the thirteen United Colonies are to take care that divine service be performed twice a day on board, and a sermon preached on Sundays, unless bad weather or other extraordinary accidents prevent.”¹⁰ The chaplain is not mentioned in the article; however, the reference

to a sermon would suggest that Congress intended that there should be an ordained clergyman on board.

The first mention of a chaplain in the *Journals of the Continental Congress* refers to his share in the distribution of prize money. On January 6, 1776, Congress passed a resolution detailing the prize share percentages and names the chaplain. On November 15, 1776, Congress fixed the base pay of the Chaplain at twenty dollars per month. The first chaplain known to have served in the Continental Navy was the Reverend Benjamin Balch, a Congregational minister whose father had served in a similar capacity in the Royal Navy. Benjamin Balch’s son, William Balch, is the first chaplain known to receive a commission in the United States Navy after the Navy Department was established in 1798.

From an etymological point of view, the title “chaplain” has its foundation in the tradition of Saint Martin of Tours, particularly in the account of him giving a portion of his cloak to Jesus who came to him in the guise of beggar:

Accordingly, at a certain period, when he had nothing except his arms and his simple military dress, in the middle of winter . . . he happened to meet at the gate of the city of Amiens a poor man destitute of clothing . . . when Martin, that man full of God, recognized that a being to whom others showed no pity, was, in that respect, left to him. Taking, therefore, his sword with which he was girt, he divided his cloak into two equal parts, and gave one part to the poor man, while he again clothed himself with the remainder.¹¹

Saint Martin’s cloak ever after became a sacred relic, entrusted to a priest for safe keeping. The priest who carried the *cappa Sancti Martini* was called cappellani, or in French, *chaplain*, and he was charged with bringing it into battle whereupon the King

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and his army would receive blessings. Through time and tradition the chaplain performed priestly duties, including absolutions for the troops, and was a constant fixture alongside the King.\textsuperscript{12}

**The Calling to be a Military Evangelist**

The calling to be a military evangelist is not unlike other calls to professional ministry service which should be considered carefully by both prayer and testing. Questions should be asked about potential for professional service, the requirements of which are outlined in *Department of Defense Instruction 1304.28*.\textsuperscript{13} The prospective missionary must consider the state of his or her relationship with others, and most importantly with Christ. He or she must also reflect upon whether there is a call to deploy for months at a time, often into the middle of a combat zone. The prospective missionary must also consider whether his or her family is prepared for such separations as well.\textsuperscript{14} The individual must also determine whether he or she is prepared for the unique environment of the military and ministry to its members under a secular institution’s rules. The beginning of one’s calling must include, like any calling, some basic convictions—the greatest being that of a calling to the Gospel ministry.

In *The Power of the Call*, Henry T. Blackaby and his colleagues provide a simple guide to encourage and challenge the pastor: “You are a specialist in what God has to say

\textsuperscript{12} Severus, “Sulpitus Severus on the Life of St. Martin.”


\textsuperscript{14} This is perhaps as important a question as any, for if one’s spouse is not called to be a single parent for months at a time while the chaplain is deployed—he or she will be at a constant deficit for support. Many chaplains have experienced the heartbreak of divorce for this and other reasons.
Chaplains-to-be must first settle in their minds that they are indeed called to this position of specialization, and they must proceed with conviction to confirm that calling through prayer and testing both through the opinions of those they respect and in actual ministry. Anderson University in Anderson, South Carolina has a succinct booklet for prospective students who feel called to the Gospel ministry as well. Perhaps the most cogent statement in helping someone decide if he or she is indeed called to the Gospel ministry is: “If you can do anything else and be happy, do it.” There must be a sincere conviction that this and nothing else will please God, which in turn will ultimately affect one’s sense of personal contentment.

Relationship is another important part of the calling to be a military evangelist. In the field, horizontal relationships include those friendships within the Religious Ministry Team as well as within the command relationships. Command relationships include relationships with the individual Marines and Sailors that the chaplains and Religious Program Specialists deal with. If the chaplain has been working on his or her own vertical relationship with Christ, which is the most important relationship in the process, he or she will have more success in keeping the command relationships healthy. Fundamental flaws in character, lack of spiritual maturity, forsaking the spiritual

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17 The Religious Program Specialist, or RP, is both an assistant to the chaplain and a bodyguard, for lack of clearer term, when in a combat environment. The original RPs were enlisted Marines assigned to protect the chaplain. In the development of the Chaplain Corps, the need for an administrator/combatant protector precipitated the development of this important rating.
disciplines, and ignorance about the military structure may not hinder the chaplain from being promoted, but it will make his or her overall impact on the kingdom less successful in the context of the military institution. The chaplain may even be successful in kingdom growth, but will ultimately fall short of God’s potential for him or her, by only understanding the religious accommodation facet of this ministry. Chaplain Saville thoroughly discusses the spiritual disciplines and “self-care” required for any minister of the Gospel—including chaplains—to maintain a healthy ministry and finish strong.\textsuperscript{18}

The power of these horizontal relationships is “secondary” to the vertical personal relationship the evangelist must have with Christ, as Christ himself communicated when he said, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” (Matthew 22:37). John Piper extols this virtue and that of enjoying God’s creation, while warning the believer against worshiping the created. Piper reflects on the words of Augustine as he writes, “If created things are seen and handled as gifts of God and as mirrors of His glory, they need not be occasions of idolatry—\textit{if} [sic] our delight in them is always also a delight in their maker.”\textsuperscript{19} Thus, the perpendicular relationship with the Creator, in one’s theology and in one’s life, must take first precedence if believers are to prosper in their secondary relationships and fulfill God’s desire in them to “love [one’s] neighbor as [oneself]” (Matthew 22:39-40). This could rightly be listed as first priority in one’s calling as a believer in Jesus Christ, for Christians are called to many different professions; however, this paper focuses specifically about the calling to the Gospel ministry and the even more specialized calling to be a military chaplain. Too

\textsuperscript{18} Saville, \textit{Self-Care}.

often ministers can reverse this order and give primacy to the secondary relationships at the expense of the first, or by going to the other extreme, they neglect the sheep the Lord has entrusted to them. Chaplain Saville writes, “A Chaplain who has lost touch with the call to lay down her life for God’s sheep is not likely to sacrifice the perks of positional power or the things it can acquire and achieve.”

The importance of the calling to build secondary relationships with the created is crucial, especially for the chaplain, where crisis and death can accelerate the opportunities for redemptive conversations. This is a critical consideration for those who may be wondering if they are called to the unique ministry of the chaplaincy, for the military members they will be serving are daily confronted with the potential for combat service. Chaplain George Mendes, in his Doctor of Ministry project, *Soul Cloaking: A Strategy for Navy Chaplaincy Utilizing Its Religious Ministry Tasks as Pre-evangelism*, articulates the importance of the chaplain in the midst of these divine opportunities:

Struggles with mortality are seen among members whose personal transience is challenged by their experiences in the combat zone (i.e., Afghanistan, Iraq). The frequent exposure to casualties, death, and the uncertainties of war hastens a confrontation with human limitations for which many are unprepared. Overcome by a severe sense of existential isolation, such members often have difficulty reconnecting with their normal relationships and life routines upon their return.

This opens the door for the most important part of ministry to the military, simply “being there,” or what is commonly referred to as “a ministry of presence.” For many this is seen as a reminder of the presence and authority of God. Each chaplain performs religious services and rites according to his or her faith tradition, but most chaplains

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agree that it is their involvement in the day-to-day schedule of the ship or battalion where they have the greatest impact. Hutcheson, who is a former Chief of Chaplains Rear Admiral, conveys the gravity of serving as a chaplain in the Navy, his thoughts coalescing after visiting the devastation of Hiroshima shortly after armistice in Japan. “For a Chaplain . . . seeking to help sailors and marines make sense of a life devoted to the art of destroying life, that visit to the ruins of Hiroshima . . . brought a whole new moral context.”22 The chaplain is constantly confronted with the gravity of death and destruction, which further highlights the importance of his or her role in providing a spiritual context within which the troops can interpret such weighty matters.

Becoming a Professional Military Officer

The military’s primary mission is to break things and kill people, though it often is called upon to perform humanitarian missions as well. General Charles Krulak describes this new role the military would play in combat as the “three-block war,” where Marines might find themselves killing the enemy on one block, and handing out humanitarian aid on the next.23 It is autocratic not democratic, and at times can be downright dictatorial. As a member of this gun club, chaplains fall under the Uniform Code of Military Justice—a stricter law of order than the one to which a civilian is held to. For example, adultery is still an offense that can ruin one’s career, reduce one in rank, and possibly get one dishonorably discharged from the military. Becoming a professional

22 Hutcheson, Chaplain at Sea, 7.

23 Current operations in both Afghanistan and Iraq by both Special Operations Forces and conventional forces are characterized by this complex mission.
officer involves accepting these stricter standards and being willing to hold others accountable to them.

As a military organization there is a rank structure that chaplains fall under. Chaplains answer to the Commanding Officer of whatever unit they belong—i.e., battalion, regiment, group, ship, etc. They operate within the command as a special staff officer answerable only to the Commanding Officer. Within the larger chain, they also have senior chaplains to whom they answer unofficially. This can become complicated if a senior chaplain tries to exercise too much command and control over his or her junior chaplains. More than one Commanding Officer has been offended by the intrusion of a senior chaplain into the affairs of his or her unit chaplain. But this unofficial chain exists, and smart chaplains will recognize and pay proper respect to those in the chain of influence.

Officers are further bound by the guidance of the Department of Defense and their individual branches’ policies and procedures, along with their oath to defend and protect the Constitution from all enemies foreign and domestic. Chaplains further fall under the direction of their parent command, for example, Marine Expeditionary Force, then 1st Marine Division, and possibly the Regiment and/or Battalion. As one works down the chain, directives can be more stringent than those imposed from above, but they can never be broader in scope. For instance, the Marine Expeditionary Force (hereafter, MEF) General can authorize that watch caps may be worn during the winter months instead of the regulation 8 point cover. The Division General can agree with that, but then order the wearing of the 8 point cover regardless. This is a more stringent policy than that of the higher General, but it is not contradictory.
The chaplain is further restricted by the obligation on his office to protect the 1st Amendment Rights of the Commander’s troops. The first role a chaplain has as a Staff Officer in the military is to advise the command on issues of religion, ethics, and morals. This does not require chaplains to perform a Wiccan service, but it does mean they will do their best to provide the materials and space they need to practice their faith for those who desire to do so. According to Secretary of the Navy Instruction 1730.7B, “Navy Chaplains . . . provide for the free exercise of religion for all military members of the Department of the Navy, their family members, and other authorized persons.”

This is very different from the role a minister will play in the pastorate. A pastor’s primary audience may be unbelievers; though statistics would indicate otherwise, the benefit of the doubt is given here. Pastors may tailor their preaching to the vocabulary and understanding of the seekers, they may gear their programs to seekers’ needs, and they may even involve themselves in public organizations as pastors of local churches. This is very similar to the work that chaplains at base chapels do. The paths of the pastors and the chaplains diverge, though, in the fact that pastors do not have to become involved with or concerned about the needs of the Buddhist members of the community. Pastors do not need to provide places of worship for them in the back of their churches, nor do they need to order The Life and Times of Ghuattama Buddha for their studies. The Southern Baptist Endorsement Manual for Chaplains and Counselors in Ministry makes this distinction clear when it states, “A Southern Baptist who is endorsed to Chaplaincy ministries must understand that the context of Chaplaincy is

\[24\text{ United States Navy, “Religious Ministry Support within Department of the Navy,” Secretary of the Navy Instruction 1730.7B, October 12, 2000.}\]
beyond the ministry environment of a local church setting.” This is one of the marked differences, because of context, between a pastor and a chaplain. Chaplain Mendes highlights the complexity of this evangelistic ministry: “As they [Chaplains] minister to the sea services community, Chaplains stand in the midst of their own ‘Areopagus’ (Acts 17:19).” In this calling Chaplain Mendes sees the role of the chaplain as a guide through the “pluralistic veil of the military, to the Gospel of Jesus Christ.”

The chaplain is further restricted by the direction of his or her faith group or endorser. As a Southern Baptist chaplain, for example, my first priority is to look after Southern Baptists and those of like faith—I am a Southern Baptist chaplain. However, the military has commissioned me to minister to all, regardless of their faith tradition. Yet while it is expected that I will facilitate the opportunity for all to practice their faiths, I am not a Rabbi, Imam, or Catholic Priest; therefore, I do not perform religious services for those who practice those beliefs.

Finally, the chaplain is restricted in religious practice by his own personal faith and conscience. Depending upon one’s denomination this may allow for greater or lesser freedom. For instance, a Missouri Synod Lutheran chaplain may have no problem baptizing someone who is not Missouri Synod, but his or her denomination does. In the case of the Southern Baptist denomination, restrictions are much lower, and many situations are left up to the judgment of the individual chaplain. There are some Southern Baptist chaplains who will not baptize or serve communion because they see it as a local


26 Mendes, Soul Cloaking, 101.
church function that they do not wish to encroach upon, thereby expressing their personal understanding of those church ordinances.

This is the context in which chaplains must fulfill their calling to God. This is the context that challenges chaplains to be more than mere purveyors of influence, but spiritual leaders influencing the command as well as the institution. It is also the context that challenges chaplains to be something different from pastors, and something more complex than a simple missionary in a foreign land. Because it is a secular institution and not a religious institution, to be successful and influential chaplains must render to Caesar what is Caesar’s.  

**The Military Evangelist’s Two Commissions**

Chaplain Richard M. Budd notes that the most important period in the development of the professional military chaplaincy for both the Army and the Navy was the period from 1860 to 1920.  

It was during this period that both organizations saw the greatest institutionalization of their ranks, and the development of their own “autonomy” within the larger institution. For Budd, the greatest sign of that advancement in the history of the chaplaincy was the creation of an administrative head of their “specializations” in both the Navy and the Army. It was during this time that both the Army and the Navy

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27 A case could be made that the military is in fact a religious organization. For instance, the Marines venerate heroes and hold them up as icons within the institution. Battles are remembered and celebrated at functions. Much like the Christians in the first century, Marines are given derogatory nicknames like “jarhead,” which they adopt for themselves as badges of honor. Mottos have become canonized like Scripture. Each branch of the military has its own religious vocabulary, has its own observances, and its own hymns. “Hallelujah” translated into Marine is “Oorah,” or some other variation on a dog barking.

28 Budd, *Serving Two Masters*, 153.
appointed Chiefs of Chaplains for their respective Corps.  

Chaplain Budd provides an excellent review of this critical period in military chaplaincy, but the autonomy he speaks of is not as complete as he presents it to be. Much has been accomplished in the years since the first Chiefs were appointed, but chaplains still serve at the mercy of their commanders and at the goodwill of the President. The Chiefs do have budgets to operate with, and they do control which chaplains will go to which billets. As a professional corps within the military, they are developing benchmarks for training that will standardize how chaplains will progress within the organization as staff officers. On the other hand, however, the budgets that chaplains receive are under the authority of their respective Commanding Officers, to whom they serve directly. Billets exist where the larger institution determines they will, though chaplains are involved in the process of making those decisions. And while chaplains may set benchmarks for professional development, line officers write their Fitness Reports (“FITREPS”) and sit on their promotion boards to determine their advancement.  

In 2007, the Chaplain Corps took another step forward in becoming more professional as they developed the Religious Ministry in the Department of the Navy Strategic Plan for FY 08-13. The document details the vision of Religious Ministries in the Department of the Navy, including the mission as well as how it is to be achieved and measured. The biggest challenge facing the development of the strategy is how to shape

29 Budd, Serving Two Masters, 153.

30 Fitness Reports occur annually, and the date of submission is determined by the rank of the one being reported on. These reports consist of a rank structure which measures professional expertise, teamwork, leadership, military bearing, and equal opportunity involvement. It also includes a narrative highlighting the period of assessment.
the Chaplain Corps “force structure” to meet the changing human resource challenges of a diverse military population, “and the need to expand performance measures and metrics.”

Though not involved in the process of professional development of the chaplain, the denominations provide a spiritual anchor to their respective chaplains and act as advocates on their behalf to the larger bureaucracy of the Department of Defense, Congress, and even the President. Each denomination has safeguards for their chaplains, though they vary in order to protect their right to free practice. A perfect example is the debate that led up to the repeal of “Don’t Ask Don’t Tell.” In the days leading up to its repeal in Congress, various denominations and the endorsers associated with the military were vocal on both sides of the issue. While no denomination has called for the retirement of their chaplains from the military as a result of the repeal, doing so would require chaplains associated with said denomination to obey their denomination or petition the military to change their endorsement.

The military evangelist occupies the precarious role of clergy and military professional. The chaplain is expected to be where the rest of the unit they are assigned to is, whether that be in training, in a combat zone, or on the ocean. It is a calling to the professional clergy to be present and to serve in these settings while being subject to military commands and orders. The military chaplain is expected to be a leader among their peers and to be a resource for their unit.

Endorsers act as agents for the denominations or umbrella groups that provide chaplains, and they process applicants for recommendation to the various branches of the military. They also act on behalf of their commissioned chaplains as advocates to military leaders and policymakers. The Department of Defense recognizes hundreds of different religious denominations; however, only a few have the educational requirements and denominational apparatus to merit having dedicated endorsers. Those denominations that do not have their own endorsers have recourse to contact an umbrella organization for application to become a military chaplain.
Gospel ministry as both a pastor and an evangelist, working under the dual authority of a secular institution and one’s particular denomination. The history of the Chaplain Corps provides some insight into the continuing struggle that chaplains face in their dual role as clergy and staff officer. Saint Martin’s story conveys the divine nature of the calling of the chaplain, and the “ministry of presence” slogan so often used by chaplains to explain deck-plate ministry. The early history of chaplains and the crucial period during WWI shows the Chaplain Corps’ continued struggle for autonomy and legitimacy within the institution as not just “keepers of the cape,” but professionals in their own right alongside the other professional communities in the military.

It is a ministry calling much different from that of a pastor or missionary, though they share many similarities in terms of conviction for the Gospel, training in theology, and skills required in proclamation and spiritual disciplines. It is a different calling by virtue of the context of ministry, and the skills required to operate within a secular institution. Having been a pastor of a local church myself before joining the Navy, the most profound difference is the reality of combat, the stresses of which provide frequent opportunities to minister to the soldiers. These divine opportunities are summed up quite poetically by Chaplain Mendes: “The Chaplain’s calling identifies how and where mortality, meaninglessness, and many schemes are being manifested and [he] responds to them mercifully.”

Although this topic is much too involved to elaborate on here, the chaplain is also, in his role as an advisor within the military institution, a prophet to the Church in its ministry to the military as well as in its fulfillment of God’s strategies.

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34 Mendes, *Soul Cloaking*, 102.
CHAPTER 3
THEOLOGICAL FOUNDATIONS AND THE OLD TESTAMENT

Forever quarrelling is dear to your heart, and wars and battles; and if you are very strong indeed, that is a god's gift.

—The Iliad 1.177-178

As a member of an institution whose mission it is to “break things” and “kill people,” a military chaplain must come to an understanding of the theological implications of the decision to join such an institution. Christian proponents of military membership are balanced by their detractors, and both the proponents and the opponents of military membership base their beliefs on scriptural and historical traditions. In seeking a military theology of the church, one of the intents of this project is to establish a theological foundation for military service—not a polemic for war. Cicero articulated the conditions for a “Just War” in his De Republica as such, “A war is never undertaken by the ideal state, except in defense of its honour or its safety.”1 The validity of the United States’ claim to protecting sovereignty and safety through a strategy of preemptive strike in Iraq and continued involvement in Afghanistan is an argument outside the scope of this project, though certainly an important one to undertake. In

establishing a biblical warrior ethos for ministry to the military upon which the chaplain can build, this chapter will explore historical/theological perspectives, the Old and New Testament perspectives, as well as modern perspectives on the warrior. These modern perspectives in particular will examine the impact of the Vietnam era on theological views of war; for out of that conflict an anti-war philosophy coalesced which has impacted the theological foundations of churches and thus their dealings with the military and chaplains in the present. The paradigm in Chapter 5 will be built upon an understanding of the cultures at work in Chapter 1, the calling of the military evangelist in Chapter 2, and the foundation of a military theology, which will be established in this chapter.

**Personal Presuppositions**

Before exploring the theological foundation for this project, it would be helpful for the reader to understand the personal perspectives from which this project is being written, in order to convey to the reader my own biases, which will no doubt color my understanding of Scripture and my responses to those who write about it. I am a conservative evangelical who was raised in the non-denominational Christian tradition, though heavily influenced by the teachings of Calvary Chapel. Educated at a Southern Baptist Seminary in Northern California, I believe in a literal interpretation of Scripture, the inerrancy of Scripture, and my beliefs fall within the historical pre-millennial view of eschatology.²

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² My eschatological views are more akin to a dispensational view, but I find the categories of dispensation to be artificial and too difficult to reconcile with recorded history.
The Baptist Faith and Message provides a common statement of faith, of a sort, as to the Southern Baptist view of Scripture:

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation. ³

Furthermore, I hold the sovereignty of God as paramount over free will, though I fall more into the camp of foreknowledge than predestination. I am not a pacifist, though I do believe that pacifism itself is biblically defensible as a personal response to religious persecution. That said, I do not believe that pacifism is the only biblically ethical model. ⁴ I admire those pacifists who in spite of their beliefs have served honorably in the military while still staying true to their non-violent choices. This admiration is in part informed by my mother’s family, who come from a long line of Amish pacifists. Some of the more interesting stories of the Hostetler family involve death at the hands of Native Americans on the frontier. ⁵

I am further affected by three combat deployments with Marines to Iraq and Afghanistan, where I participated in the Battle of Fallujah. Between my eight years in


the Navy as a chaplain and five years prior to that as a volunteer police chaplain, I have
delivered over seventy-five death notifications to families of military and civilians alike.
These events in my life have affected my views of war, combat, those who heroically
volunteer to participate in war, God’s sovereignty in the face of evil, evil itself, and
death.

Theological Motifs

Millard Erickson, in his book, *Christian Theology*, writes that the best place to
start in such an endeavor is to suggest a motif from which to build, one that is broad
enough not to hinder proper exegesis. Erickson states, “Care must be exercised lest this
become a hindering, rather than a facilitating factor. Our central motif must never
determine our interpretation of passages where it is not relevant.” At the same time it
must be narrow enough to reflect the unique religion and theology of the Christian faith.
Erickson continues, “Theology, as well as life, needs to be centered on the great living
God rather than on the human creature.”

An example of a motif centered on the creature is found in the remarks of Edwin
Markham on 31 May 1908 at the Christian Socialist Fellowship at Carnegie Hall, when
he said he believed in “the religious goal of building God's kingdom on earth and in a
Jesus who could save the economic order.” It sounds God-centered in its form, but like

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7 Ibid.
8 Ibid., 82.

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the theological constructions of liberation theologians, salvation becomes something other than the spiritual liberation of the soul through the work of the Holy Spirit. More importantly, the focus is on the creature—in this case, the economic order—rather than the creator. It becomes something political, where salvation is achieved when humans right the injustices of one against another, and where human beings are not the instruments of the Grand Designer but the architects themselves. Erickson states that for liberation theology, for example, “Religion is clearly pragmatic, concerned with alleviating the injustices within the human race.”

Erickson contrasts his approach to theology, which he sees as akin to what psychology provides to human emotions, with this pragmatic approach, which sees doctrine as a tool to speak to the so-called “inequities” of the human race.

It is easy for a chaplain in his or her role as advisor to the military institution to become lost in seeking God’s redemption of the institution, rather than the souls who serve within it. That is not to say that the chaplain should not be involved in advising commanders when corrections should be made to a process or government entity; but there is a danger when the chaplain begins to see the institution as the purveyor of grace through its offices, which is where a creature-focused motif can lead. Romans 1:25-26 is a warning against theological constructions that center on human institutions and creation as ends unto themselves. The natural outcome is worship of an institution, or the machinations of that creation, instead of the living God. In Romans 13:1-7, Paul further

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10 Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 22-23.
11 Ibid.
elaborates on the specific role of government in God’s economy: government is not to be worshiped, but it is to be respected as an instrument of God’s authority.  

Even when the Bible does focus on God’s provision for his creatures, it is not the first priority of the provision but a secondary benefit. Deuteronomy 4:6-8 speaks very clearly about the purpose for remembering all the good that has been done for the people of Israel, and particularly the reason they should obey God’s specific statutes on dealing with poverty. The author writes,

Keep them and do them, for that will be your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the peoples, who, when they hear all these statutes, will say, “Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people.” For what great nation is there that has a god so near to it as the LORD our God is to us, whenever we call upon him? And what great nation is there, that has statutes and rules so righteous as all this law that I set before you today?

God’s glory is the highest priority in all that he does, and in all that he commands. The secondary benefits of that are expressed in his blessings to his people as a result. For the purposes of this project the motif that will guide the discussion is “loving God first and loving him most.” This comes from a reflection on the writings of several theologians, but especially that of John Piper.


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12 Romans 13:1-7 states, “Let everyone be subject to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, whoever rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves. For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and you will be commended. For the one in authority is God’s servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God’s servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer. Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also as a matter of conscience. This is also why you pay taxes, for the authorities are God’s servants, who give their full time to governing. Give to everyone what you owe them: If you owe taxes, pay taxes; if revenue, then revenue; if respect, then respect; if honor, then honor.”
works of creation and providence, was the manifestation of his own glory in the highest happiness of his creatures." He identifies the chief end of humankind being to glorify God by enjoying him forever. This is a sound motif, but having experienced the suffering of combat and observed the impact of death, it is difficult to reconcile enjoyment with such endeavors, though certainly obedience is not the highest ideal even in these cases. Piper addresses this concern in Chapter Ten of his book, which presents a beautiful picture of the soldier who sacrifices his own life freely for the sake of his comrades and his country as he “chooses suffering.” This mimics what Jesus did in John 10:18, when he said, “No one takes it from me, but I lay it down of my own accord.”

While it is true that there is in the choice of suffering a recognition that there is a greater good being served, there is no “delight” in the death itself. On the contrary, when confronted with death, life often fights to remain rather than depart. The joy is found in the prize of suffering—the love of God—not in the suffering itself. One need not succumb to the lesser virtue of duty in these cases, if that duty arises from the love that one feels. In all of these cases—duty, suffering, or delight—these can become an end unto themselves if not experienced with God as the primary focus of one’s affections. God provides all good things for us to enjoy; there is no conflict for the creature in enjoying what God has created, in the proper context and from the proper perspective.

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14 Ibid., 253-54.
15 Certainly believers are called to delight in the Lord, without a doubt; however, even in the Lord’s Prayer, which John Piper expounded on at the Southern Baptist Convention in Phoenix in 2011, it is not for the joy of God’s name being hallowed that Christians pray, but rather in love of his name.
This is critical for any theological construction, but especially for chaplains as they serve two masters—much of which has been covered in the previous chapter. The primary mission of humanity is to love God first and love him most, which is modeled in the beautiful organization of the trinity (Matthew 3:17). It could be said that the problem with creature-focused motifs is not that they address human suffering, but that their priority is alleviating that suffering, which changes the whole focus of God’s affections and, quite frankly, the concept of justice. Another way to think if this is strategic thinking. These foci must be placed in their proper priority for strategic purposes.

**Thinking Strategically**

Within the military leaders across the spectrum will divide priorities according to the level at which plans are being made and in which orders are being followed. Milan Vego, in *Operational Warfare*, outlines the philosophy associated with operational arts as they are taught at the Naval War College: “Operational art occupies an intermediate and indispensable position between policy and strategy on the one hand, and tactics on the other.”\(^{16}\) The marine in the fire team is operating at the tactical level of planning and execution, as are most battalion-level chaplains. These tactical missions are a part of a larger operational plan which happens at various levels, from the specific Area of Operations (AO), to the Commanders of regional areas, the Central Command Commander (CENTCOM), for example. There is often some overlap in the next level of planning (strategic) which involves regional commands and policy makers who all form

these objectives in accordance with the President’s strategic plan for the military, which
is usually a part of some larger national and foreign strategy.

Vego writes, “Strategy guides operational art by determining objectives,
allocating forces and assets, and imposing conditions on tactical combat.”17 This idea is
going to be anathema to the anti-war crowd, and even a veteran of the South African
Army, Peter Christofides, now lecturer at Vose Seminary in Western Australia, disavows
any association between a military hierarchy and the Kingdom of God.18 In 2 Timothy
2:3, which is one of many biblical passages that compare the kingdom to the military,
Paul writes, “Endure hardship with us like a good soldier of Christ Jesus.” God is no
different in delivering his strategic, operational, and tactical planning, all of which are to
achieve his overarching strategy: for all of creation to love God first and love him most.
Historically, explains Vego, one of the cardinal mistakes in military planning is to
“elevate tactical combat experience to the level of a strategic concept.”19 One of the
greatest examples of this from military history is the Maginot Line, which wrongly
applied the “superiority of fire over movement.”20 The same can be said for chaplains
and churches in formulating their goals and missions, and in scholars in their formulation
of theological motifs and premises. God’s grand strategy must be kept in mind with all

17 Vego, Operational Warfare, 4.

18 Peter Christofides, The Functional Role of Peace in the Ethos of the Followers of Christ
According to Paul (Johannesburg: Rand Afrikaans University, 2000), 364. Christofides bases his argument
on passages such as Matthew 20:25, but Paul’s military allusions contradict this notion altogether. It also
rises out of the mistaken notion that in the military, the enlisted serve the officers, which is a
misunderstanding of military hierarchy. The enlisted follow the orders of officers, and officers serve at the
pleasure of the President; all of them serve the nation as defenders of the Constitution.

19 Vego, Operational Warfare, 9.

20 Ibid.
other planning, so as to make the most of God’s resources. This is just another way of viewing the guidance of Erickson with regard to motifs, but with regard to priorities for the Church. It must also be kept in mind when formulating one’s theology, from which one’s ethics and actions overflow.

An example of how tactical passions can override one’s perception of history as well as Scripture is Miroslav Volf’s review of Naveed Sheikh’s Body Count, which is an apologetic for Islam seeking to show that more have been killed throughout history for the cause of Christianity than Islam. Volf does quibble over some of his numbers, but in the end agrees. He goes on to talk about Muslim/Christian relations in response to this review in the current context of the War on Terror and its multi-front war. Like the crusades of old the U.S. is engaged in tackling the problem of terrorism in the wrong way. The answer to the U. S.’s current problems is the “vigorous dialogue” proposed by Nicholas of Curas, who single-handedly ended the trend of crusades through the power of his pen.21

Volf’s revisionist and simplistic view of history completely ignores the socio-economic as well as political climate of Europe at the time, which was exhausted from its own internal wars, let alone engaging in another crusade. It also ignores the Cardinal’s initial support of a crusade as well as his strange intolerance of Jews. The most egregious of these is his call for them to wear a yellow badge if involved in usury.22 Thomas Izbicki, in his summary of the Cardinal’s views on Jews, notes that this “decree

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represents the more negative aspect of Cusanus’s thought on the Jews. . . . Cusanus was concerned not just with Jews being mistaken for Christians.”23 In this case, a passion, even a biblically supported one, subordinates not only the larger question of the creator but historical facts and information.

The reason believers are to love God first and love him most is because of Christ’s own words in Matthew 22:37, which are quoted from Deuteronomy 6:5, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.” He desires people’s recognition of him and his status because there is none above or more deserving of it, and as a secondary outcome it benefits his creatures. The primary purpose of humanity is to glorify God by loving him above all else because there is nothing above him; therefore, it is also the primary purpose of God to love himself above all else. God is for himself above all else, because for him to be for anyone or anything less than himself he would cease to be God. People in turn would need to love or worship that thing which God holds above all else, or he would cease to be God. Thus, while this may sound egotistical and self-absorbed (and it truly would of any other creature), for God to place his highest affections on any other would cause him to cease to be God. As such he drives creation toward his purposes and his ends, which ultimately culminate in his glory.

Hebrews 11:3a states, “It is our conviction through thoughtful consideration that the ages of creation are being brought to perfection at God’s word.”24 This passage conveys the truth that God is bringing his creation to a climax through his strategic

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24 This is my own personal translation from the Greek.
management of it. Paul alludes to it in his letter to the Roman Christians when he tells them that the very earth groans under the curse of sin waiting for its redemption (Romans 8:18-22). The book of Revelation is John’s encouragement to believers that God is bringing history along to his purpose, and that their suffering will only be for a time.

John P. Newport, in his book, The Lion and the Lamb, explains, “He [John] declared a message for the present as well as for the future.” God is the root cause of the events that take place in the world and throughout history, in the sense that everything falls within the grand dominion of his will, and his will is to focus all of creation through events in history to glorify himself by loving him first and loving him most. This is his overarching strategic plan, or grand strategy, of which there are other strategic plans that fall under that grand plan. His creatures are invited to participate in this mission in various operational and tactical ways, but clearly not everyone decides to accept the mission or the God who has ordered it. Luke 24:46-47 states, “The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” God does use finite creatures to accomplish his ultimate end, and it is in one’s best interest to align oneself

25 Argument could be made that the meaning here for the word “ages” should be the initial point of creation of the universe, but the meaning of the Greek verb καταρτίζω, which is in the perfect/ passive/ infinitive form, conveys a completed action with durative results. The object of the verb, a;iwn, is in the aorist tense which further bolsters this interpretation. It could certainly be used to describe the initial creation of the universe, but the richness of the meaning of a;iwn conveys something more complex than the singular event of creation.

26 John P. Newport, The Lion and the Lamb (Nashville: Broadman Press, 1986), 30. For more information on the Kingdom both here and in the future, see progressive dispensationalism. A helpful survey can be found at http://mb-soft.com/believe/tkh/progdisp.htm.

27 This will no doubt bring up the argument of God’s responsibility for evil in the world, which many have trouble reconciling with a loving God. The Bible clearly indicates that everything that happens falls within the dominion of God. Freewill, which has been ordained by God, plays a large part in how this coincides with the holiness of God. Unfortunately, the scope of this paper does not permit an extensive discussion of this important argument.
with that mission. Erickson’s warning is an ideal place from which to evaluate other motifs that will maintain a focus on the greater strategic vision of God; his thoughts help the reader to avoid the temptation of becoming focused on the creature at the expense of the creator. For the exegetical work that follows in this chapter, a model will be proposed that is based upon Scripture. Unfortunately, there is not adequate time to discuss various potential models. It should also be noted that the model presented is not necessarily one upon which believers should view their faith. It is simply a model for the exegetical work that follows. God’s name, God’s word, and God’s community will be the model for exegetical as well as ethical reflection in developing a biblical warrior ethos.


30 Despite the question of Barth’s view on the authority of Scripture, he did not believe that one could construct a dogma that was not based on Scripture. Likewise, despite Hays’s low view of the authority of the Scripture, he gives higher marks to those theologians who involved more of the canon than others in their theological constructions. Long sums it up in his little book when he writes, “Christians share Scriptures with Jews and believe we cannot know God’s identity without these shared Scriptures.” Long, Christian Ethics, 6.

31 The overarching vessel of God’s strategic plan is the community of faith. This paper will discuss the work of Hays as well as John Howard Yoder and Stanley Grenz. There is no argument with Hays, Yoder, or Grenz about the importance of the Church—both the individuals and the smaller communities who make up the larger tradition of it—but its authority is in deference to the authority of God and the Bible. See John Howard Yoder, The Politics of Jesus: Behold the Man Our Victorious Lamb (Grand Rapids: W.B. Eerdmans, 1972); Stanley Grenz, Theology for the Community of God (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000).
Toward a Biblical Warrior Ethos

A part of that management includes the need in a sinful world for good and godly men and women to defend the innocent and those who cannot defend themselves. In the case of the United States, it often includes the defense of its interests. This leads to an important question: How does one love God by serving in the military, and even more importantly as a willing participant in killing other human beings? Grossman, in his book, *On Combat*, asserts his belief that the most important thing that should be said to a combat warrior is that lawful killing in the context of combat is justified. As an advocate for the morality of killing, Grossman is not talking about wanton killing or murder, but the kind of focused violence that takes place as a result of the citizen of one country taking the life of another as a lawful combatant in the midst of armed conflict. War in the Bible is not evil, and decrying the “evils” of war as a biblical position or holding up opposition to war as virtue is not good biblical scholarship. For in large part, to do so one must completely ignore the Old Testament record of God commanding war and the New Testament record of Christ’s high view of the military and his own return in judgment.  

An example of this is seen in Peter C. Craigie’s statement that there is “an unbroken tradition of univocal opposition to the evils of war.”  

War is ugly, unclean, and terribly chaotic in its practice, but unfortunately necessary at times in the face of evil.

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32 Peter C. Craigie, in his book, *The Problem of War in the Old Testament*, states that he takes a balanced view on the subject of war. However, his choice of language reveals that he is foundationally opposed to war in principle. In his conclusions in Chapter Nine (notwithstanding pages 107-112), he is espousing an antiwar ethic that cannot be reconciled with the entire word of God. See Peter C. Craigie, *The Problem of War in the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1978).

33 Ibid., 15.
Other writers similarly espouse a position which holds that the Bible is morally opposed to war. In *Christians and the Military*, Helgeland, Daly, and Burns relate this opinion: “Overly broad and uncritical pacifist assumptions often serve, ironically, to discredit pacifism and nonviolence and weaken the cause of peace. . . . But the evidence supporting the New Testament (NT) call to nonviolence . . . is overwhelming.” Even this opinion seems either biased or ignorant of passages like Matthew 10:34-36, Luke 22:36 and John 2:13-16, which convey a much different message than that the New Testament is overwhelmingly in favor of nonviolence.

G. Ernest Wright, in his essay contained in *The Flowering of Old Testament Theology*, wisely suggests that many presuppose a message of nonviolence in the New Testament, in large part because “theologically we are unable to keep up with our emotional attitudes toward war.” Richard B. Hays, in his book, *The Moral Vision of the New Testament: A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics*, is guilty of this in his treatment of “violence in defense of justice”; he states that Christians who bomb abortion clinics and lawful combatants in war are under the same umbrella. The danger of such a simplistic approach, which Wright sees as based on idealism rather than faith, is that it reaps a belief system incapable of accommodating the realities of everyday life. Such rhetoric also makes connecting the church to members of the military all the more

34 Helgeland, Daly, and Burns, *Christians and the Military*, 1.


37 Another problem with this view is that in war combatants are legally allowed to kill, and the one who bombs an abortion clinic is breaking the law. This statement also ignores the consequences of a lawful combatant who commits illegal acts while in the service of legal ones.
difficult, to say nothing of the fact that the lawful combatant is not breaking the law and the abortion clinic bomber is. Piper would distinguish the actions as private versus military, which is helpful in the discussion of a biblical warrior ethos.\textsuperscript{38} It presupposes a common faith system amongst not just different nations but different people—a common faith system which is required if the peace described in the Bible is to come to fruition. It is this idealism which drives a social Christian theology, one which ultimately subverts the authority of Scripture to pursue its pacifist ideal. Biggar explains, “Bearing witness to an alternative society so completely governed by God as to lack need of the sword” is exactly what Christians are calling people to, but the reality of that society on a global scale has not yet been fulfilled, even within the borders and sovereignty of a nation.\textsuperscript{39} Biggar continues, “Such a society is not a practicable alternative under current conditions of rampant sinfulness” (italics added).\textsuperscript{40}

Wars will cease after the great battle of Armageddon, and humankind’s sin is consumed in eternal fire. Craigie’s sentiment, “The instruments of war must be transformed into the instruments of peace,” is a prophetic truth about what the kingdom in its fullness will be like.\textsuperscript{41} But to say that this should be the foreign policy of a State in today’s current historical struggle is naïve at best. That is not to say that there is no theological foundation for such a stand, but it misunderstands the context upon which a

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{enumerate}
\item Biggar, “Specify and Distinguish!” 172.
\item Ibid.
\item Craigie, The Problem of War, 91.
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present peace between nations could and should be built. John Oswalt, in his commentary on Isaiah, notes that the kind of peace spoken of, specifically in the Old Testament, was not primarily a vision of the millennial age but an imminent reality.  

However, this peace flows from the teaching of the Lord from Mount Zion and a mutual belief in that teaching. Oswalt writes, “Until persons and nations have come to God to learn his ways and walk in them, peace is an illusion.”  

In the present, the Church extends the olive branch of God’s love through his revelation in Jesus Christ and the Gospel message of the New Testament. In the Millennial Age this peace will finally be enforced by “God with us” as the prophet in Isaiah 9 articulates. Susan Niditch, in her book, *War in the Hebrew Bible: A Study in the Ethics of Violence* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), notes, “This prophecy... is set far into the future 'at the end of days.' Only then can one expect disarmament.”  

Passages like Craigie’s—“The instruments of war must be transformed into the instruments of peace”—are a part of the apocalyptic genre, and should be interpreted in light of both the resurrection and the Millennial kingdom, in light of both the Old Testament understanding of the coming of the kingdom and the New Testament understanding of the spiritual kingdom through the lens of the Messiah.

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43 Ibid.


45 Craigie does take this approach in Chapter Nine of his book where he discusses the issue of how Christians should go about turning the instruments of war into instruments of peace, but he still falls prey to an anti-war sentiment by leaning toward saying that the instruments of war are not good.
Paul’s writing in Romans, according to Hays, seems to fly in the face of Isaiah’s words. Hays writes, “Isaiah envisioned the restoration of Israel, followed by the gathering of Gentiles to Mount Zion to worship God, [but what we have in the New Testament is] the reversal of the prophetic scenario.” But Hays misses the point that these passages are instructions to the Church to persevere in faith and action, not a direction for foreign policy to an ostensibly secular government. His conclusions are flawed from the beginning because of his theological focus, as Erickson mentions, and because of his low view of Scripture. Hays states, “The biblical story focuses on God’s design for forming a covenant people.” He believes that this puts the primary “moral concern” on the “corporate obedience of the church.” The community is the primary “addressee” of God’s directions, but the central message of the Bible is not about “forming a covenant people.” This has been dealt with in large part already, but Grudem, in his book, Systematic Theology, adds that God created humanity for his glory. When one puts the created rather than the creator as the primary focus of his or her exegesis, this scholar will be hopelessly confined to an ultimate conclusion that is no longer


47 Ironically these very ideals, to which many point as a defense against war, are contained in the Bible, which is the very document that so many of these same opponents of war wish to see barred from the public square. The new religion that is being espoused under the guise of non-establishment is ecumenicalism. This will be discussed in greater detail in the section below on the Old Testament. A more biblical recommendation to a State would be to adhere to the teachings of the Bible and deal with other nations accordingly. For instance, nations with whom the Bible is the sole arbiter of faith should seek peace with other such nations at any cost. This would send a powerful message to those who do not follow the Bible.


49 Ibid.

50 Wayne Grudem, Systematic Theology: An Introduction to Biblical Theology (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994).
biblical. This is why Karl Barth, in his book, *Church Dogmatics I/1, The Doctrine of the Word of God, Part 1*, had to form a caveat for his understanding of peacemaking and war.\(^{51}\) In the development of a warrior ethos, if it is to be biblical, it must include a focus on how such service glorifies God. The primary moral concern of the Bible is not about obedience, but about glorifying God.

The Kingdom of God is a present geo-political reality, not just a spiritual state whose physical culmination is set at a time to be determined in the future. In his book, *The Politics of Jesus: Behold the Man Our Victorious Lamb*, John Howard Yoder contends that Jesus is a political figure and a model for ethical praxis. Although this much is true, Yoder mistakenly continues by asserting that Jesus can only be one kind of political activist; he seems to be confined to only one course of action which is inconsistent with the totality of Scripture. S. G. F. Brandon, in his book, *Jesus and the Zealots: A Study of the Political Factor in Primitive Christianity*, makes the same mistake of confining Jesus to a certain kind of political activism. As it happens, Yoder and Brandon provide the polar extremes of views, with Brandon advocating violence and Yoder advocating political pacifism.\(^{52}\)

Those focused on injustice and world peace are often concerned with the spiritual state of people as well, but many times the focus is on the social justice issues at the expense of a focus on people’s relationships with God. For example Erickson concedes, “While it is possible to make a sound case for the use of force in a good cause, the


liberation theologians have not established an adequate argument for using force in their present situation.\footnote{Erickson, \textit{Christian Theology}, 1017.} It is also an unfair judgment to charge that those who see these passages as concerned with a spiritual reality are not concerned with the physical state of humanity or the injustices of the world. The slippery slope of theological formations that focus on political means for solving spiritual issues is that an institution becomes god, as the arbiter of salvation, enforcing whatever “equality” has been deemed the religious ideal. This salvation then is defined no longer as a personal relationship with God, but a personal relationship with whatever social or physical construct has been designated as the righteous goal of one’s efforts. The slippery slope in a purely spiritual construct is that Christians will stand silently by and allow such evils as Nazi Germany to rise and nearly eradicate an entire ethnic group.\footnote{Very little discussion is made by opponents of war to the events that led to World War II, and the role that appeasement played in Germany’s violent enslavement of Europe.}

Roman 13

Earthly peace is the result of the culmination of war—specifically, the battle of Armageddon—not the absence of it. Niditch writes, “Many scholars have noted that for the ancient Israelite authors peace, the state of shalom, also implied Israel’s dominance over all nations who might threaten her and often their coming to accept Israel’s own worldview and her God.”\footnote{Niditch, \textit{War in the Hebrew Bible}, 134.} These passages are instructions to the Church; however that does not mean that secular governments do not play a part in the unfolding of the divine plan. Romans 13:4 states, “For he is God's servant to do you good. But if you do wrong,
be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God's servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.” As they have throughout Scripture, governments will certainly play key roles in the unfolding of God’s divine plan, and the servants of those governments have been put into place by God (see Romans 13:4). This Scripture in Romans raises the question of whether all leaders have been put in place by God, even those considered to be evil.56

John Howard Yoder would answer this in the negative. Yoder writes, “God is not said to create or institute or ordain the powers that be, but only to order them.”57 For Yoder, governments are not somehow made holy or ordained by their existence based upon this verse. The problem with this interpretation of the Greek word τάσσεω is how the rest of the New Testament uses it, which has the sense of ordering but is more profound than simply organizing something. It is interesting to note that the same word is used by the centurion in Luke 7:8, “For I myself am a man under authority, and have soldiers under me.” The word itself has military connotations, which Yoder cannot escape, which means to place another under one’s control. Yoder’s arguments about the words “create,” “institute,” and “ordain” are really meaningless since it does not matter, based on Romans 13, governments of the world are placed under God’s control. For those concerned about the implications of a God ordained government such as Nazi Germany, Piper notes that while Romans 13 places the responsibility for the formation of

56 Someone will ask, “Was Hitler put into place by God, or any of a number of other evil regimes throughout history?” But if he was not put in place by God, then by whom was he put in place? And if not by God, what should the response of godly people be to an ungodly ruler such as Hitler? One’s whole attitude about war, evil, and what a state’s response should be will answer that question. It was the question at the heart of concerns in the days leading up to World War II, and the center of debate amongst the world’s leaders.

57 Yoder, The Politics of Jesus, 201-02.
governments under his control, it is also, “by implication, God’s sovereign
disestablishment of every government in the world that has ever ceased to be.”\textsuperscript{58} In other words, every government that has ever existed or will exist on the planet has been born and died at the pleasure of God, under and within his will.

Biggar argues for no distinction between “publicly authorized sword-users,” but that if violence by the state for certain purposes is good for the state, then it must also be good for the Christian under the same circumstances.\textsuperscript{59} His argument is in response to Hays and the Anabaptist call for a distinction between a said government and the Christian in regards to the use of the sword. Biggar notes that rather than necessitating “two distinct classes of people” (which thus presumes that there will always be a government and a class within such a government’s sovereignty to provide the sword of protection for its people), the logical conclusion of this thinking is actually the production of “one class only—those who use the sword pacifically.”\textsuperscript{60} He notes that this would bring the reader not to a doctrine of pacifism, “but to the doctrine of just war.”\textsuperscript{61}

Biggar is close to heart of the problem, for “the distinction in roles is not coherent.”\textsuperscript{62} Daniel Heimbach, in his article, “The Problem of Universal Ethics for Christian Pacifism,” notes the ethical dualism in proponents of the anti-war agenda, pointing to Romans 13 as the lynchpin for the discussion. In the Anabaptist


\textsuperscript{59} Biggar, “Specify and Distinguish!” 171-72.

\textsuperscript{60} Ibid., 172.

\textsuperscript{61} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{62} Ibid.
understanding of pacifism, to which Hays subscribes, there are two ethical systems at play; there is no universal ethic that applies to all. If, as Biggar argues, the true anti-war devotee upholds violence as good for the government, he cannot logically argue that it is not for the Christian. Heimbach concludes,

On the one hand, those trying to apply pacifism universally must rely on biblical authority to establish the sort of moral relevance required to obligate the entire world. But if so, they are checked by New Testament teaching authorizing government use of lethal force. On the other hand, if those seeking to universalize pacifism undermine or reject biblical authority to avoid the relevance of New Testament approval of government using lethal force, they lose the sort of authority required to obligate everyone in the world.63

Biggar again notes that the context of Romans 12 fits with Romans 13 as the culmination of a warning about private violence in the face of injustice.64 Heimbach writes, “It should be understood as an answer to the ad hoc question of whether or not Christians should respond to their persecutors by taking the law into their own hands.”65 In other words, Paul is encouraging Christians to put their trust in the legal system and not seek personal violence against their oppressors as the answer. Public order was his concern, which private violence could easily cause to descend into anarchy.

Evil will exist in the world until Christ comes again; therefore, good nations will have to make war for their own protection, and often for the good of others. Barth sees this as a reason for going to war, in spite of his peacemaking emphasis. Hays reflects on Barth’s ability to posit peacemaking as the central task of Christian ethics, while still holding to a view that nation states could be directed by God to go to war based on the


64 Biggar, “Specify and Distinguish!” 172.

65 Ibid.
freedom of God. The reason for Barth’s ability to hold this dichotomy without anxiety is due to both the supremacy of scripture in his theological process as well as the priority he placed on Jesus Christ in his theology. Barth writes, “What finally counts is whether a dogmatics is scriptural.” In short, Barth despised war but held open the ability of God to command war, which for the Christian to ignore would be disobedience.

Erickson’s guidelines explain that it is Barth’s theological motif that allows him to take such a position. To quote Erickson again, “Theology, as well as life, needs to be centered on the great living God rather than on the human creature.” Hays sees this as a consequence of where Barth has placed the discussion: Barth treats this concept under the category of “The Command of God the Creator,” but Hays believes Barth would treat it differently if it were explored under the category of “The Command of God the Reconciler.” He may be right, but it is more than likely that Barth’s focus on the creator would have led him to the same caveat.

This is not a call to some theocratic nationalism either, which, despite the warnings of some scholars, is not a consequence of national patriotism. Christofides writes, “Those who identify God’s kingdom with a geo-political entity are far more likely

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67 Ibid., 235-36. Hays identifies these attributes of Barth, and remarks on the tension without coming to my conclusion.

68 Barth, *Church Dogmatics I/1*, 287. There is a great deal of discussion as to whether Barth held a high view of Scripture or not. He certainly did not hold a Southern Baptist view of inerrancy, but the point is still made that his view of scripture made it impossible for him to arrive at a completely pacifist ethic.

69 Ibid., 222.

70 Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 82.

to identify the nation’s wars with the will of God.”\(^{72}\) Yoder equates nationalism with the worship of Mammon, which is further responsible for “social injustice and the disintegration of community.”\(^{73}\) Warnings against placing one’s patriotism above one’s relationship with God are completely appropriate, but concerns that patriotism is in itself a precursor to unbiblical actions or interpretations of Scripture, let alone responsible for social injustice, as some define it, are absurd. Nonetheless, Heimbach, in his paper on the Crusades, makes it clear that holy war is not for today, and the “just war” theory provides extremely rigid guidelines under which war may be undertaken. Nationalism is a two-edged sword, for Scripture states that Israel was God’s people, and yet in Isaiah 45:1-7 God raises up another nation for the sake of Israel but more importantly for his own sake: “This is what the LORD says to his anointed, to Cyrus, whose right hand I take hold of to subdue nations before him.”

In spite of the role that creatures of the world’s governments will play in God’s divine plan, the ultimate end of time as we know it is not going to be determined by governments or citizens of the most benevolent of nations; rather, peace of the kind that Isaiah saw and to which Paul was writing about was and is in the omnipotent hands of the creator. Matthew 24:36 states, “No one knows about that day or hour, not even the angels in heaven, nor the Son, but only the Father.” Nations, and Christians, are called to live in accordance with God’s laws in the meantime, but peace of the kind mentioned in the Bible is not something that can be manufactured this side of the second coming because until then sin will be at war with the Spirit of God. Biblical passages about


peace are both messages of hope and ethics for living—but they should not be used as proof texts for Christian anti-war sentiments.

It is intellectually dishonest to say unequivocally that Jesus was a pacifist or against war, or that the Old Testament in light of the New Testament communicates a pacifist or anti-war philosophy. Old Testament and New Testament writers agree that a present reality of peace is only possible when the inhabitants of the world embrace the teachings of God. In the face of this, the State has an obligation to protect its people. The warrior has and always will be God’s tool to protect and save others. But whether one is the warrior, the chaplain, the State, or the pacifist, God is calling all to love him first and most.

The Old Testament Warrior

The limits of war in the Old Testament depended upon the direction of God. At times the Lord called for complete annihilation of a people or city, where at other times livestock, children, and women were spared. God himself is pictured as a warrior, and as commander of the armies or “Lord of Hosts”—ךָּלָּבֹד בַּלַּמָּן. 74 In their book, God Is a Warrior, Tremper Longman and Daniel G. Reid note, “To discuss or cite every passage that is relevant to the image of the divine warrior . . . is inconceivable, given the incredible pervasiveness of the theme.” 75 They note five parts or stages in the development of the divine warrior motif across the Old and New Testaments: “God fights

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74 Gerhard von Rad, Holy War in Ancient Israel (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991). Von Rad deals with the image of God the warrior throughout this concise but thorough book.

75 Tremper Longman and Daniel G. Reid, God Is a Warrior (Nashville: Zondervan, 2010), 22.
for us,” “God judges us,” “God delivers us,” “God conquers,” and “God judges.” The first three occur through the Old Testament, with the final book in the canon ending in the midst of Israel’s watchfulness for the Messiah. The New Testament encompasses the latter two parts of the development of the motif. Scholars on the subject of war generally agree that each biblical war was unique in character and in terms of the guidance provided by God, but that all of them were religious in nature. This was not a unique characteristic for Israel, for the advent of secular wars is a fairly recent development in the history of humankind. Regardless of God’s leadership there were people involved who bore the brunt and hardship of combat.

It is difficult for an American today to understand this wedding of the secular and religious, as has already been mentioned, due to American cultural sensibilities regarding the separation of church and state. Douglas Johnston and Cynthia Sampson, in their book, Religion: The Missing Dimension of Statecraft, discuss the separation of church and state to the degree it exists in America today; they consider it to be “desensitization” to the rest of the world. They write, “The rigorous separation of church and state in the United States has desensitized many citizens to the fact that much of the rest of the world does not operate on a similar basis.” However, even in Western society, religion plays a larger role in citizens’ worldviews than they are aware of or might care to admit.

Deuteronomy 20 lists some specific guidelines for how the people of Israel are supposed to conduct war, including how to avoid fear in battle, but the Old Testament

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76 Longman and Reid, God Is a Warrior, 14.


78 Ibid.
does not prohibit war. The very first direction to Israel in Deuteronomy 20 is to not be afraid: “When you go into battle do not be afraid [because God is with you].” Consistent throughout the biblical text is the admonition to be courageous. Moses in Deuteronomy writes, “Do not be afraid . . . do not be fainthearted or afraid; do not be terrified or give way to panic before them [your enemies].” In Joshua, God says, “Be strong and courageous,” no less than five times in the first chapter of the book alone. This emphasis on courage is notable. Navy psychiatrist William Nash, in his book, *Combat Stress Injury: Theory, Research, and Management*, explains that the courage God desires is confidence: “Trust in oneself and one’s peers, leaders, and equipment to perform under stress.”

Lord C. M. W. Moran, in his book, *The Anatomy of Courage*, sees courage as a moral quality, which some possess and some do not. What is clear from the Bible is that courage was critical in battle, and affecting the enemy’s courage was a key strategy for gaining the upper hand.

Priests and prophets were significant players in bolstering that confidence, and equally important in undermining it. Numbers 22-24 is a comical example of how a prophet can be used to attempt to undermine an enemy force. The prophet Balaam is contracted by Moab to discourage the people of Israel, because Balaam has a reputation for having his curses come true. Balaam confers with God, and God instructs him bless, not curse, the people of Israel. In the end, he ends up cursing the King of Moab, a prophecy which, in a turn of fate, comes true.

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In contrast to this is the account of the spies sent to Canaan. In Numbers 14 and 15 is the account of the twelve spies sent by Moses to explore the land of Canaan, a land God had promised to the people of Israel. Upon their return two reports are given, a positive and a negative report. Caleb is the hero of this incident, along with Joshua, but the majority of the spies speak out against an invasion. Caleb tries to encourage the people that they can succeed in this invasion, but in response to his positive report the people begin to ț¢, that is, to quietly spread a false report about the land. For their deception God curses them to wander in the wilderness for forty years, but worse than the fate of wandering is that he denies them entrance into the “promised land.” Their actions not only showed a lack of faith in God’s promise, but undermined the courage of the people and the purpose for which they were being called to shed blood. Their love for God first and most was overshadowed by their love for their own safety. From the context, they loved themselves and their own families more than they loved God.

Another direction to the warriors in Deuteronomy relates to the state of their personal lives, and getting them in order. In some cases this involves dismissing troops, for the good of the nation and the army. For instance, Deuteronomy 20:8 illustrates the fact that if frightened soldiers are allowed to stay in the ranks they may cause others around them to become frightened as well. The process plays out in Judges 7 where God instructs Gideon to sift his army in various ways, including culling them out based upon their fearfulness. Granted, the reason for sifting the troops is so that no glory is taken from God, but the similarities in strategy suggest a consistent course of battle preparation.

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81 This word comes from the root țțț, which implies a furtive or subtle movement.
by the Israelites. It also highlights once again the importance of courage, and how fear within the ranks could be detrimental to the success of the troops; one bad report could work its way through and ruin the whole army. The troops need to be unified in their courage and understanding of why they are about to give their lives, and more importantly, why they are about to take lives. The lawful taking of a life is not something that comes naturally to most people; killing is not easy.

Colonel Grossman, as mentioned above, believes that a discussion of the ethics of taking lives is “the most useful, powerful and healing information” that one can give to veterans of combat. The Old Testament and New Testament differentiate between kinds of killing, the most common word in the Hebrew being גָּרֶה, a neutral term that encompasses killing of various kinds, including judicial killing and murder. Many writers, including Grossman, focus on the Ten Commandments’ prohibition against murder. The Hebrew word used in both Deuteronomy and Exodus is כֹּל, which the King James Version translates as “killing.” Brevard S. Childs, in his book, The Book of Exodus: A Critical Theological Commentary, contends that the proper translation is “killing” because the word is used to describe killing that is both intentional and unintentional, even though the word would later develop the specific meaning of killing that was intentional. Regardless, Childs sees it as wholly separate from the type of killing that takes place in the context of combat. He writes, “The verb has often been translated, ‘thou shalt not murder,’” which avoids the difficulty entailed in reconciling the

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82 Grossman, On Combat, 351.
broad prohibition of killing with the frequent taking of life in war and capital punishment throughout the Old Testament.”

But killing is not as simple as that, for the Bible is also very clear that human beings have been created in the image of God. Taking a life is an attack on the image of God, which in part explains the prohibition against murder. Grossman uses the example of David from 1 Samuel 18:7 where he is praised for the number of the enemy he has slain, against David the murderer in 2 Samuel 11. There is a difference in the two types of killing in the eyes of God, and David’s subsequent punishment, as predicted by the prophet Nathan, is an example of that difference. In 1 Chronicles 28 David is prevented from building a temple to God, because he is a מָלָיֶת מַעֲשֵׂה ("man of war") and מָכָר ("has shed much blood"). The honor of building a house to the Lord is left to his son Solomon, because he is free of the blood of war. This does not mean that what David did was wrong, but that the blessing of building the temple would not be his. David knew his own blessings from God and was used for God’s purpose, which was the consolidation of the tribes of Israel and the establishment of the holy city Jerusalem.

This does not constitute a prohibition against the kind of killing that takes place in war, though it does suggest that there is a spiritual significance to what takes place when lawful combatants take the lives of lawful enemies. Warriors understand the profundity of taking another life, even without feeling remorse over the act. For those who struggle with the reality of taking another life, discussion of the reality of the prohibition against


murder, whether viewed as anecdotal or not, is helpful in bringing healing. It will also produce a deeper faith in the individual who recovers from the inner conflict that often accompanies the symptoms of those suffering post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

One further issue needs to be addressed in this brief exploration of the Old Testament in order to form a solid biblical foundation for the warrior ethos, and that is the issue of how a good God could not only command war, but be a willing participant in it.

**War and the Character of God**

Various passages of Scripture state that God does not change (see Numbers 23:19, Psalms, 102:27, Malachi 3:6, Hebrews 1:12, 13:8, and James 1:17). In light of this, one must consider how to reconcile the violence ordained by God in the Old Testament with his holy character.\(^85\) One must begin with a premise that if God is good and holy, then war *a priori* must not be evil. This flows from the fact that in the Old Testament, as Longman and Reid state, “Warfare is a divine activity.”\(^86\) God is not only the Lord of Hosts; he is a warrior fighting Israel’s battles, at times out of concern for their holiness.

As discussed above, the Old Testament Scriptures do in fact testify to God ordering Israel to go to war. Regardless of biblical discussions regarding who wrote what when, and whether or not it was redacted, there is evidence that these documents do in fact present a deity who orders war. If this is indeed true, then one is left with three possible conclusions about the nature of war and God: (1) God is in fact evil and not

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\(^85\) One must also consider how to reconcile the holy character of God with the New Testament. This discussion will be taken up in Chapter 4.

\(^86\) Longman and Reid, *God Is a Warrior*, 21.
good,87 (2) the facts of the Old Testament are in fact fabrications for political purposes by later writers and God never did order war;88 or (3) war as a concept is not evil.

The first two conclusions can be drawn together into one ultimate result, which is that to accept either of these conclusions one must disregard the inerrancy of Scripture. If one disregards inerrancy, then any conclusion at all can be drawn upon which to base one’s beliefs. Heimbach writes,

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.89

This is in part why Barth had to provide a caveat to war, under the circumstances of a divine mandate to do so. One cannot say that all war is evil and simultaneously hold to the inspired word of God; therefore, one must conclude that war is not always evil.

The next point of consideration relates to God’s motives for war. Heimbach believes the motive is to maintain the holiness of Israel, and he summarizes a number of different variations on the holiness motive.90 Psalm 106:8 explains the reason for God’s destruction of Egypt’s army in the Red Sea: “Yet he saved them for his name’s sake, to

87 Since those of the “moral injury” crowd and many Christian anti-war devotees view war as the greatest evil humanity faces, God in ordering war must himself be evil.

88 The theory of a few scholars is that the instances of holy war in the Old Testament are imposed by later writers who themselves were trying to justify such conduct based upon precedent.

89 Heimbach, “Crusade,” 12. Heimbach is making a distinct point in his article about the difference between crusade war, more consistent with the holy wars of the Old Testament, and lawful wars of the kind called for in “just war” theory. He establishes lengthy criteria by which a true war of crusade can be engaged in, the most important being that of a direct mandate from God that all its adherents can agree to engage in.

90 Ibid., 13.
make his mighty power known.” Romans 9:17 gives a New Testament interpretation of the events that led to Pharaoh’s obstinacy toward the people of God: “For Scripture says to Pharaoh, ‘I raised you up for this very purpose, that I might display my power in you and that my name might be proclaimed in all the earth.’” Richard S. Hess, in his article, “War in the Hebrew Bible: An Overview,” notes that “Yahweh’s warfare forms part of his commitment to preserve his holiness.”

This is not a light discussion and the position taken in this paper is not a popular one in academia, but it is an important discussion, especially in the context of preparing men and women who will go into battle. Hedges does have one thing right about our warriors (though he has the motives all backwards). He writes, “Most of us willingly accept war as long as we can fold it into a belief system that paints the ensuing suffering as necessary for a higher good.” Thus, if it can be said that Yahweh-directed war is not evil, the next question is whether there is ever a time outside of this circumstance when war could be considered morally good. Opinions can be generalized into three camps: anti-war, ethical dualism, and selective conscientious objection.

The anti-war opinion states that war is the ultimate evil on the planet, a universal ethic applied to all. Lee Griffith, in his book, The War on Terrorism and the Terror of God, holds such an opinion. He writes, “All wars are based on blatant lies and brutal terror, but they are also based on assumptions that these unsavory means can be harnessed in the pursuit of good ends that will someday be evident to all. Part of the

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92 Hedges, War Is a Force That Gives Us Purpose, 10.
pathos of war lies in the repeated recourse to this illusion that good will come of it.”93 He argues that America is at fault: “When there is a problem, America goes to war because the world is viewed as ripe for conquest rather than ripe for redemption.”94 Griffith references Augustine in his arguments on the evil of war, arguing that Augustine “conceded that wars are evil.”95 Unfortunately, he does not support that claim, though he does use a quote of Augustine’s against pacifism.96 In fact, John Mark Mattox, in *Saint Augustine and the Theory of Just War*, notes that Augustine never states that “war is evil”; Augustine does, however, allude to various aspects of war as being evil, but never the existence of it as a rule.97 Griffith’s comments are reminiscent of Walter Rauschenbusch’s statements in his book, *Theology for the Social Gospel*, written in 1917. Rauschenbusch writes,

But in fact the war is the most acute and tremendous social problem of all. . . . How is it that only in the modern era has a world-wide social movement arisen to put a stop to the exploitation of the poor, and the consciousness of sin that only in the last three years has war been realized as the supreme moral evil? . . . War is inherently evil and in contradiction to Christianity. . . . [It is the] supreme expression of hate.98

The second group is a combination of individuals. This group includes anti-war believers as well as Christians who are sincerely wrestling with the notion of violence

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94 Ibid., 76.
95 Ibid., 29.
96 Ibid.
and war, and the moral reality of a loving God who called for war in the Scriptures. The ethical dualism of this argument has been discussed in this chapter.99

The third group are those who fall into the “just war” camp, whom Arthur F. Holmes calls “selective conscientious objectors.”100 Former Chief of Chaplains Louis Iasiello, not long after the fall of Saddam Hussein’s government, sounded a call to all nations to add to the long-standing ethic of “just war” theory.101 He stated, “From war’s inception (jus ad bellum) and throughout its prosecution (jus in bello) the goal of all should be the establishment of a just and lasting peace.”102 Chaplain Iasiello calls for a new category in the just war theory which he calls jus post bellum (“justice after a war”). He suggests seven categories for this stage which include a healing mindset, just restoration, and the transition of warriors.103 Iasiello makes it clear that within the Sea Services chaplains are to be involved in the process of reintegrating warriors into society. He writes, “Chaplains understand from firsthand experience that in the chaos and uncertainty of war, one of the unstated yet critically important missions of a chaplain is to help warriors retain their humanity and deal with their visible and invisible wounds post

99 I wish there was more time talk about sincere believers who are struggling with these realities, versus the anti-war crowd who are anything but non-violent.

100 Arthur F. Holmes, War and Christian Ethics (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 4. It is not certain what Holmes means by “not legally recognized in the United States.” A member of the military is not allowed to choose which operations he or she may participate in.

101 The “just war theory” traditionally calls for jus ad bellum (“the right to go to war”) and jus in bello (“just conduct in war”).


103 Ibid., 4-5.
Here is in fact the goal of just war theory, and to give credit to those sincerely seeking an understanding of God and how to understand war and peace. Adherents of these beliefs differ on more than just the authority of Scripture; they also disagree on this concept of peace as well as its antecedents.

Isaiah 32:17 provides a basic framework for understanding the Old Testament concept: “The fruit of righteousness will be peace.” This verse is often paraphrased today as, “To obtain justice, practice peace.” Christofides states that in the Old Testament, “the opposite of Shalom is not ‘war’, but evil, calamity.” In 1 Corinthians 14:33 Paul presents the contrast as being between peace and disorder: “For God is not a God of disorder but of peace.” The key to peace here is הַצְּדָקָה, which is “righteousness” or “doing right.” There is a common misconception that in the Old Testament righteousness was something achieved, thus if one followed the law he or she would be declared righteous. Cristofides falls prey to this concept when comparing Old and New Testament concepts of peace and justice toward an understanding of peace: “The New Testament question is not how to obtain peace but how to obtain justice. Justice is not something we ourselves have, based on the law, but something which comes through faith in Christ (Philippians 3:9).” It was the same in the Old Testament, for in Genesis 15:6 the author writes, “Abram believed the Lord, and he credited it to him as righteousness.” The number of passages that speak to the futility of sacrifices and rites

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106 Ibid., 22.
in deference to faith are too numerous to offer here, but it is clear from Hebrews 11 that Abraham modeled belief, יִּאמְרְךָ, which is what produced righteousness.

A similar course of logic is found in the message of the New Testament writers, as Christofides notes above. There is a consistent message in the canon of Scripture which is that peace comes not through justice, but through reconciliation with the creator through faith. Christofides writes, “Peace, rather, has a dual meaning; reconciliation given by God, and well-being in all its fullness. Justice is the fruit of the first and the cause of the second.”

This does not absolve Christians from רְצִיךְ (“righteousness”), but as Paul writes in Romans 13:10, “Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law.” Sometimes the loving action is to deny a person what he or she wants, and sometimes the loving action is to make war. Winston Churchill is often cited as one of the premier critics of appeasement, which is in large part blamed for the severity of the conflict of World War II, though he himself did not believe it was an inevitable war. In response to this, Jeffrey Record notes in his monograph, Appeasement Reconsidered: Investigating the Mythology of the 1930s, “A state bent on war or possessing territorial or ideological objectives that cannot be satisfied short of war is most likely unappeasable.”

Like the Old Testament warrior, today’s warrior needs courage to deal with these issues. The reality of killing is something that he or she should deal with prior to the

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advent of combat, not in the middle of the firestorm. It is for this reason that chaplains who serve their units well will provide the kind of programs that help prepare their men and women to deal with these issues as a part of a pre-deployment program. As Christian warriors they should be further encouraged about their greater role in God’s kingdom; as David was used by God as a “man of war,” they too are being used by God and they should seek God first and most in the midst of it.
CHAPTER 4
THE NEW TESTAMENT WARRIOR

They exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshipped and served the creation rather than the Creator.

—Romans 1:25-26

Jesus did call for believers to “love [their] enemies,” but to say that he called for the outright “rejection of violence,” as Helgeland, Daly, and Burns propose, ignores some important words and actions of Jesus in the Gospels, as well as his deep respect for members of the military. ¹ Jesus was a warrior who embodied the warrior ethos to the end of his earthly ministry, and called for his followers to embody that ethos in their various roles in the Kingdom, whether in the earthly military or the spiritual army. This theme is far more “subtly woven” into the themes of the New Testament, contend Longman and Reid, especially in the Gospels.² They indicate that “the conflict between Jesus and demonic powers, and the future return of the Son of Man on the clouds of heaven” are

¹ Helgeland, Daly, and Burns, Christians and the Military, 108.
² Longman and Reid, God Is a Warrior, 83.
probably the easiest to see. Longman and Reid note that in Mark especially (though there are echoes in Matthew and Luke), the reader sees the divine warrior motif in Christ’s baptism and subsequent battle in the desert, which are reminiscent of the battles of Israel in the desert. It is also unmistakable that John the Baptist, working in his capacity as Elijah, ushers in the age of the divine warrior. 

Longman further explores the warrior Jesus in his article, “The Divine Warrior: The New Testament Use of an Old Testament Motif,” in which he asserts, “The NT utilizes Holy War themes, particularly that of the Divine Warrior.” Longman approaches the use of the motifs from two perspectives: eschatological and non-eschatological. He breaks these down further into sub-categories for each, but the emphasis is clear that sometimes the motif is used to speak to events that are yet to happen, and sometimes to events currently taking place. Jesus himself alludes to this title in his speech before the Sanhedrin recorded in Matthew 26:64, which is a direct allusion to “the divine figure in Dan 7:13 who rides the Divine War chariot.” It is important to remember that this is an eschatological title, but one which Jesus referred to in regards to himself nonetheless.

John the Baptist struggles with this very issue in the seventh chapter of Luke. Imprisoned for his words, he asks if Jesus is the Messiah they have been waiting for—the apocalyptic warrior. But Jesus is a warrior in his earthly ministry. Longman writes,

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3 Longman and Reid, *God Is a Warrior*, 83.

4 Ibid., 83-85.


6 Ibid., 297.
“Thus Jesus’ first coming was not in the role of the Divine Warrior of the Consummation as John expected. However, Jesus does wage war during his earthly ministry—a war which culminates on the cross.” Colossians 2:13ff uses the language of a victory parade in honor of a conquering leader as he describes the work of Jesus as “disarming” and one in which he “made a public spectacle.” Ephesians 1:19 also uses military language to describe the enthronement of Jesus. Longman writes, “[Such language is] fitting in with the ancient pattern found in the Psalms and ultimately Canaanite mythology.

Furthermore, later in the book Paul quotes a well-known Divine Warrior psalm (68:18). His ascension is here seen as a military victory.” The truth is that the motif of the divine warrior, which is by no means a key to the Old or New Testament, is as pervasive as Hays’s peacemaking theme.

Further allusions to the warrior nature of Jesus are found in the book of Matthew, specifically in Matthew 14:25-26 when Jesus walks on water. Andrew R. Angel, in his article, “Crucifixus Vincens: The Son of God as Divine Warrior in Matthew,” understands this Matthew passage as an “allusion” to Job 9:8 where the divine warrior conquers the chaos waters. Angel does an excellent job of comparing the Greek as well as enumerating the arguments for and against this allusion, and his conclusions seem not only plausible but likely. Angel also illustrates that between his walking on the water and his calming of the seas, “Jesus is declared the Son of God because of their recognition

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8 Ibid., 304.
that he is so by virtue of his demonstration of the attributes of the divine warrior.”

According to Angel, the gospel writer further alludes to attributes of the divine warrior in Christ’s death in Matthew 27:51-52 where the earth quakes (Psalm 18:7; 46:3; and Nahum 1:5) and rocks split (Nahum 1:6), which prompt the centurion and his cohort to declare that Jesus was the Son of God in Matthew 27:54. This passage reveals the transformation of the divine warrior from physical conqueror to spiritual conqueror, in this case over chaos and evil. While it is true that God’s war turns toward the spiritual powers through the work on the cross, it is still prevalent as a theme. And despite the significance of that transition, such a truth does not absolve Christians from the duty to act physically at times.

There is another picture of the warrior that can be seen in Jesus, in the garden of Gethsemane. Yoder himself cannot avoid the characterization when he describes Christ’s temptations in the Garden as “Holy War.” Here, Jesus the warrior prepares himself for battle by praying. In fact, the very act of prayer is itself a battle, a battle for the courage to fulfill his mission. Each of the Gospels describes these last events before Jesus is betrayed, but Luke offers a unique insight into the warrior’s heart. In dialogue with God, Jesus asks for the battle to be avoided, for he knows what is in store for him on the field of honor. However, it is not the physical agony he will experience that challenges his courage and obedience, but his separation from the Father that inspires his pleas. Like a

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11 Ibid., 314.
12 Yoder, The Politics of Jesus, 46.
warrior before a great battle (though this one knows the outcome for certain), he makes his peace with the Creator.

I have seen this “night of Gethsemane” in families as they part with their warriors on a parade ground, and I have prayed with them. I have seen it in the faces of Marines as they prepare to go outside the wire on a convoy, or find themselves preparing to go into Fallujah, or embarking on another dangerous mission in Afghanistan. In these agonizing moments in Gethsemane, unlike most warriors going into battle, this warrior knows the agony he is about to face and willfully pledges obedience.

To ignore the theme of the warrior will alter one’s interpretation of the New Testament passages that follow. There are too many examples of Jesus as the divine warrior in the Pauline corpus, the Gospels, and without argument the apocalyptic writings, of which Revelation is the largest. Jesus is a warrior who conquers death and the spiritual realm, but also one who conquered physically through his obedience to the Father. It is beyond the scope of this project to explore all the historic and synoptic issues associated with these biblical passages, but rather this paper will attempt to answer some of the issues in focal passages in order to posit a biblical warrior ethos.

Noticeably absent from this discussion will be an examination of Matthew 5 due to the constraints of space, and because there is no disputing the pacifist ethic of Jesus in this teaching, even though the context for that ethic in practice is disputed. John Nolland, in his commentary on Matthew, conveys a fairly balanced view of the passages in his commentary, “It goes way beyond the evidence . . . that it would rule the use of violence entirely out of court.” He admits that the purpose of these directions, which should be
taken in their entirety and not isolated from one another, is to “overcome evil with good,” but in a narrow and “restricted range” of conduct.  

**Clearing the Temple**

Jesus’ actions could be described as violent when he cleared the temple in John 2:13-16. John writes, “So he made a whip out of cords, and drove all from the temple area, both sheep and cattle; he scattered the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables.” Scholars differ in their interpretations of this passage; some believe that Jesus merely drove the animals from the temple with a whip, while others believe that he drove all—the people as well as the animals—away. Michael Ramsey, in his commentary on John, states that the definite articles in verse fifteen indicate that Jesus directed his anger against the sellers and the money changers. Hays, Yoder, and others believe that Jesus ran only the animals out. The definite article argument makes far more sense grammatically, and is the simplest way to translate the passage—all means all not just the livestock with a definite article delineating to whom the action was directed against. Scholars choose the animals as the source of the whipping for the same reason that scholars probably added “a kind of whip” to early manuscripts; these changes reflect

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15 Ernst Haenchen does not believe that Jesus used the whip against people, based on the construction of the gender of ἀλλάξ, (“all”) in verse 15. He writes, “Jesus—and this is important—does not attack money changers with his whip.” See Ernst Haenchen, *John I*, Hermeneia—A Critical and Historical Commentary on the Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), 138. The crux of the argument is whether the male gender construction of ἀλλάξ would have been used to refer to the neuter livestock. N. Clayton Croy does a fantastic job of unpacking the grammar, though he chooses the livestock since the Greek grammar does not “exclude” the possibility. See N. Clayton Croy, “The Messianic Whippersnapper: Did Jesus Use a Whip on People in the Temple (John 2:15)?” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 128, no. 3 (2009): 555-68.
“an attempt to tone down the action of Jesus.”\textsuperscript{16} Regardless of whether Jesus whipped the animals, the people, or both, this was an aggressive and violent event, not in keeping with a “turn the other cheek” ethic or non-violence approach to conflict resolution.

The “Anti-war” Perspective on the Passage

Anti-war devotees do not like this picture of Jesus for obvious reasons. Hays opts for the translation that Jesus whipped the animals only and not the merchants. He concedes that the actions are “described” as violent, but that that this “violent activity must be carefully delineated”; Hays writes that Jesus’ actions are “prophetic symbolism.”\textsuperscript{17} A number of scholars see this possibility and there is no arguing the point that Jesus had in mind the prophetic passages to which John (the gospel writer) would later refer. However, based on this argument, one could say that when a Christian is demonstrating prophetic truth through a public display, he or she is authorized to commit violence. Hays would say yes, as long as no one gets hurt.

Hays goes on in his explanation of the temple clearing, stating that it is nothing more than an “act of symbolic street theater. . . . Thus, it is an act of violence in approximately the same way that antinuclear protesters commit an act of violence when they break into a navy base and pour blood on nuclear submarines. No one is hurt or killed in Jesus’ Temple demonstration.”\textsuperscript{18} The problem with this analogy is that Jesus


\textsuperscript{17} Hays, \textit{The Moral Vision}, 334.

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., 334-35. I wish I could fully convey to non-military Christians how truly offensive this analogy is. There is not time or space to address it, but if the reader is beginning to see an anti-military tone
was not breaking any laws, while the protestors are. Additionally, Hays appears to be suggesting that the existence of ballistic submarines rises to the level of what was taking place in God’s holy temple, and warrants not the scattering of livestock and tables but the pouring of blood. Finally, there is no comparison between the house of God and a federal institution; one is where worship of God takes place while the other is a secular facility, where Christians very well may work, but which makes no pretense at being a house of worship. Perhaps a more appropriate analogy would be that of a student running into a seminary library, throwing books on the floor yelling, “I testify that every man that hears the words of the prophecy of this book and adds to them, God shall add to him the plagues listed in it. If any man should take away any words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the tree of life.” In this hypothetical situation, nobody gets hurt, and it is far more analogous to what Jesus was doing.

The Legality of Jesus’s Actions

Hays, Yoder, and others who argue for Jesus whipping the animals only, also argue that this really was not much of an event at all. Yoder believes that the offense is in response to the Messianic claim, “and not simply to the offense against order.”19 If it had been illegal, explains Yoder, then they would have had reason to arrest him, which apparently they did not find.20 But perhaps they did not arrest him, not because the act

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20 Ibid.
was not “illegal,” but because Jesus once again met their verbal confrontation with truth that they could not refute.

In truth, it is fairly well attested that law enforcement was under the supervision of Jerusalem authorities and the Temple guard, which were placed under their authority. If the decision was something beyond the scope of their jurisdiction, it was turned over to Jerusalem, and specifically the Sanhedrin, who were the “highest court in the land.”21 It was this judicial body, which was “competent to deal with the affairs of the Temple and the priesthood,” which had the Temple police arrest Jesus and made the arrangements with Judas for his betrayal.22 These are more than likely the Jews who, in the verses following the clearing of the temple, asked him by what authority he was acting.

This explanation more than adequately answers both the question of the legality of his actions as well as the issue of how such an event could have gone unnoticed by the Roman authorities. It did not go unnoticed, but such incidents were left to the jurisdiction of the Jewish authorities. Michaels in fact believes the offense was not to any Messianic claim; he contends that the offense the Jews take is not to Jesus’s words, but to his actions in verse 18.23 This was a violent act, whether the reader believes Jesus whipped the people or not. Yoder admits that “the whip in the temple has been considered the one act in the life of Jesus which could be appealed to as precedent for the Christian’s violence.”24

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22 Ibid.
The Theological Significance of the Act

Beasley-Murray has an interesting take on the theological significance of the act; he writes that it is “an act of wrath which the traders were powerless to resist.”

Beasley-Murray explains that these actions were being taken to usher in the “eschatological order wherein God will be glorified in his house and in the worship of his people.” But this is not as a result of the cleansing of the temple of merchants, explains Beasley-Murray, but rather “through that to which the action leads: the death of the Father’s Son.” Furthermore, Jesus’s actions were designed to show that he had come to “remove all barriers to the true worship of God.”

Ernst Haenchen, in his commentary on John, asserts that Jesus whipped only the animals, but cannot deny the violence of the act: “It is not essentially an act of violence employing armed followers, but the act of a man of God himself that produces paralyzing fright and unresisting timidity.” Gerald L. Borchert notes this in his commentary on the passage that, “It is doubtful whether Jesus’ ‘words’ were less effective than the ‘whip.’” Regardless, this is was not a gentle act. Jesus acts with focused violence to achieve a political, physical, and theological purpose. No one gets hurt, because no one resists.

The political and theological purposes may very well be as Hays suggests: “The incident is a forceful demonstration against a prevailing system in which violence and

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26 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
29 Haenchen, *John 1*, 188.
injustice prevail, a sign that Jesus intends to bring about a new order in accordance with Isaiah’s vision of eschatological peace.” The physical purpose is more likely as Beasley-Murray suggests above: to move Christ closer to the cross, where the ultimate eschatological work of peace will be ushered in. In response to those who have trouble with a loving Jesus acting this way, Gerald Borchert states the following in his commentary on John: “Personality is not single-faced, and any theology that is monofocal and fails to encompass both love and judgment ultimately ends up in heresy.” Heresy is a strong word, but Borchert’s point is reminiscent of Erickson’s warning about motifs that are too narrow or too broad. For Yoder, Hays, and others, the message of the New Testament is that this political Jesus could not have acted in a violent way, and peacemaking can only occur through non-violent methods.

This is not a call for wanton violence, nor is it a justification for it. Brandon, who argues that this was an act of group violence with the disciples in tow, and that they actually experienced resistance, is just as wrong in his understanding of this event as Yoder and Hays, though certainly there is a political nature of Jesus and the Christian faith. The warrior ethos, and specifically the biblical warrior ethos, promotes neither wanton violence nor a justification for it. But to attempt to perform grammatical gymnastics to explain away the violence or criminalize the military in comparison is not biblical. The warrior ethos seeks to preserve life, and the biblical warrior ethos is to conduct oneself in a manner consistent with Scripture, both on and off the battlefield.

33 Brandon, Jesus and the Zealots.
Christofides notes the violent actions of Peter in connection with the deaths of Ananias and Sapphira, Paul’s blinding of Elymus in Acts 13, as well as Jesus’s cleansing of the temple as evidence of exceptions to the rule of non-violence. Christofides writes, “Nevertheless, it is fair to say that the overwhelming impression left by the narrative portrayals of the leading figures in the New Testament is of people who are willing to accept blows and beatings without inflicting them on others.” Jesus’s focused violence in the temple does not nullify his admonition to turn the other cheek, nor does it absolve anyone of the responsibility of peacemaking.

**Bringing a Sword**

Jesus also uses “violent” words to describe the coming of the kingdom in Matthew 10:34-36: “Do not suppose that I have come to bring peace to the earth. I did not come to bring peace, but a sword. For I have come to turn a man against his father, a daughter against her mother, a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law—a man’s enemies will be the members of his own household.” Nolland makes the point that “the ‘sword’ stands as an image of destructive hostility.” Many readers will spiritualize this passage, especially with the words in verse 36 that state that one’s enemies will be in one’s own household.

Donald A. Hagner, in his commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, contends that Christ’s use of the sword in this passage is a metaphor. He explains that it symbolizes the “hostility now in view,” or “division” as he proceeds to call it, that will come in between

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34 Christofides, *The Functional Role of Peace*, 86.
close relationships. Hagner’s is an appropriate interpretation of the sword, since Jesus never wields a sword in his earthly ministry, but that does not resolve the issue that it is Jesus who brings this hostility that Hagner is referring too. Furthermore, Hagner states that the word μαχαιραν (“sword”) is only used in the context of when Jesus is arrested in the Gospels, when it is used to describe both the swords of the officials as well as that of the disciple who uses his weapon. Hagner makes the point that it must have been the disciples’ belief that Jesus came to bring peace, so he must make it clear what obedience to him will result in. Jesus’s message in Matthew 10:34-36 will result in a strong reaction by those who oppose it. R. T. France makes this point in his commentary on Matthew, highlighting the impact of this verse that Jesus did not come to establish peace.

It is difficult to make this passage a proof-text for non-violence, and one can enjoy the verbal gymnastics required to do so. France declares Christ’s, “nonconfrontational style,” while stating that the sword is a metaphor for conflict. He writes, “Their mission to establish God’s peaceful rule can be accomplished only by sharing his experience of conflict.” He wrestles with the obvious tone of conflict in this passage, while attempting to retain a non-violent ethic. France would assert that Jesus comes to bring conflict, but his response to the violence he provokes is to not fight back. Yet Jesus is very confrontational throughout the Scriptures. It is only in the days leading up to his crucifixion that he remains as quiet as a lamb led to the slaughter. There does

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38 Ibid., 408.
seem to be a case for a non-violent reaction to those who persecute believers for their faith.

Matthew 10:34-36 says nothing about combat, self-defense, or other legal forms of violence. Even more important are the eschatological implications of the sword and the battle involved in what Jesus is calling disciples to. For Albright and Mann these verses reflect what the disciples must “endure at the cost of his fidelity.” Their answer to the problem of the sword in this passage is to see the sword as a symbol of divine judgment, and not translate it as “sword” at all but as “war.” Their translation offers a difficult transition from the first part of verse 35 and the latter part, which they solve by suggesting that a homoioteleuton has occurred based on the bad grammar of the verse. Based on a “statement of true messianic purpose,” Albright and Mann add the words, “divide the just from the unjust.” Their use of “war” instead of “sword” is not consistent, however, with the overall biblical use of the Greek word.

Most commentators are unanimous in their belief that verse 35 is an echo of Micah’s apocalyptic writing in Micah 7:6, which is a prediction of the character of the messianic age. Hagner notes that these passages from Matthew are in part referring to the eschatological age, or the messianic age, and that the period prior to it will be characterized by a “time of trouble.” Apocalyptic passages in the Bible encourage believers that Christ is over all, but Newport asserts that they also remind the reader “of the kingship of God in Christ [which] can be seen best by remembering that it opposes

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40 Ibid.

the kingship of the dragon, the beast, and the queenly rule of the harlot.”  

This is where an *a priori* position on pacifism is going to mix eschatological truth for present reality, because, as Heimbach states, it is a “perfectionist social ideology” that holds to a society “impossible ever to achieve before Jesus comes back.” The only way one can get there is to read these passages without an apocalyptic understanding of history, and one must ignore the Old Testament in the context altogether.

**The Apocalyptic Context**

Hays believes that Jesus’s followers “can no longer wield the sword,” based upon Revelation 12:11 and parts of Revelation 19, both of which he takes out of context. He further states that the entirety of the Old Testament’s teaching on holy war is “subverted” by this one verse in Revelation 12:11, of which he only quotes a part, “the word of their testimony.” This is where Hays’s argument directly contradicts his own criteria for proper exegesis and for a solid biblical ethic on the subject of violence. Even if his motif were focused enough with the proper priorities, his exegesis of a critical passage of Scripture fails to meet his own criteria. For the purposes of this paper, his criticism of a literal interpretation of Scripture will be ignored, and his symbolic approach will be accepted.

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42 Newport, *The Lion and the Lamb*, 30.


Hays believes that Revelation 19:13 depicts Jesus as a warrior conquering with the symbolic word of his mouth, his robes dipped in his own sacrificial blood. Hays understands Revelation 12:11 as being in harmony with chapter 19. He writes, “Those who read the battle imagery of Revelation with a literal bent fail to grasp the way in which the symbolic logic of the work as a whole dismantles the symbolism of violence.”\(^\text{46}\) If that were all there was in Revelation 19, it would be easy to agree with Hays; however, the “image” is incomplete. Contrary to Hays’s assertion, the “symbolism” of violence is not overcome at all, but actually culminates in the devouring of flesh by the birds of the air. Revelation 19:21 concludes the image of the warrior with the sword from his mouth as follows: “The rest were killed with the sword coming out of the mouth of the rider on the horse, and all the birds gorged themselves on their flesh.” Regardless of how one reads the symbolism of this passage, the essential story is that the lamb conquers its enemies through a violent act.

J. Massyngberde Ford, in his commentary on Revelation, takes no stand on the literal carnage of the battlefield at the end of chapter nineteen, only that it is a “ghastly paragraph.”\(^\text{47}\) He also notes (as do other scholars) that Ezekiel 39:17-20 provides a parallel picture of the carnage. Ford concludes his commentary with a simple summary of the scene and no comment on the literal nature of the passage, only that the “superhuman powers of evil are destroyed.”\(^\text{48}\) Far from dismantling the symbolism of violence, commentators seem agreed on the fact that regardless of the symbolism, this


\(^\text{48}\) Ibid.

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will not be a peaceful event, though specific time and circumstances are not conveyed. Another Revelation commentator, David E. Aune, notes that this is a day of judgment, not redemption, characterized by a combination of metaphors—the winepress of God’s wrath and the cup of wrath. Aune writes, “The emphasis here is on the judicial function of the Parousia.”

Another argument against Hays’s “removal of the symbolic violence” in Revelation is the word for “sword” employed by this pacifist warrior, which is unique from the word for “sword” that is used in most other verses in the New Testament. This one is used almost exclusively in the book of Revelation. It is a ῥομφαία, a large two-handed sword typically employed by the Thracians, which the Septuagint uses for the swords employed by Goliath and the angel who guards Eden. The significance of its use, much like the use in Luke 2:35, is how rare it is and how “dependent” on the Old Testament its meaning is. As Gerhard Kittel notes in his Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, “It is characteristic that the great number of literal ῥομφαία passages in the OT, which often speak of violence and vengeance, has influenced the NT only in Rev,” though Kittel believes that it only influences Revelation “directly” in 6:8.

Robert H. Mounce, in his commentary, does not believe the sword in verse twenty-one is to be taken as a metaphor for the Gospel. He writes, “The scene is one of

50 Ibid.
51 Kittel and others believe that the use of this word in Luke 2:35 may have been inspired by Ezekiel 14:17. See Gerhard Kittel and Gerhard Friedrich, Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. by Geoffrey William Bromiley, Volume XI (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1967), 996.
52 Ibid., 998. It is ironic that Kittel, a man who was linked to the murder of so many Jews, would seek to remove the military aspect of the other translations of this word in the book of Revelation. There is not time to discuss this at length, but he can single out one translation based upon his view of Scripture.
judgment, and the sword is the proclamation of divine retribution that slays all who have . . . arrayed themselves against God and the forces of righteousness.”

G. K. Beale, in his commentary, believes the sword could be taken literally, but that “it is still best to view it as a figure for the accusatory word of God . . . a decree of death.”

Regardless of what one may believe coming to the text, the importance here is that the significance of the word and its meaning must be gleaned from the Old Testament, due to its isolated use in Revelation. Ladd seems to take an “in between” view of this, neither wishing to spiritualize it to the degree that Hays does, nor interpret it as an actual battle with weapons. Ladd sees the latter as impossible, though he does not explain why. He does believe that this depicts the final overthrow of evil by God, though he does not believe it will be a literal event.

The final point at which Hays’s exegesis falls apart is his conclusion about the robe, which is a lynchpin in the discussion. Hays contends that it is the blood of his sacrifice since he has not yet engaged in battle. Mounce corrects this misunderstanding of apocalyptic writing, when he writes, “The argument that the blood cannot be the blood of battle because the conflict has not been joined misunderstanding the nature of apocalyptic writing. The blood stained garments symbolize his victory in the coming

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53 Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1977), 350. “We are not to envision a literal sword but a death-dealing pronouncement which goes forth like a sharp blade from the lips of Christ.” Mounce also notes the parallel to the fourth Gospel’s naming of the Messiah as the Word and the Hebrews 4:12 analogy to the word of God; however, these are different Greek words so it is hard to see a direct parallel.


conflict.” Mounce believes that the entire picture of the Messiah in verse twelve is symbolic. As to the garment, “The blood which stains the garment of the conquering Messiah is not his own, but the blood of the enemy shed in conflict.” Mounce contrasts this with the Messiah’s own blood in verses 1:5, 5:9, 7:14, and 12:11. In addition to Isaiah 63, which is by most scholars considered to be in parallel with this picture, he looks to the Targum on Genesis 49:11, which conveys a similar picture of the conquering Messiah. Beale offers a helpful middle ground on the subject: “In this vision Christ is not presented as the Redeemer, but as the Judge and Warrior.” Regardless of how one chooses to interpret the passage, one cannot summarily dispose of the Old Testament theme of holy war and use this passage to do so; this passage’s dependence on Old Testament Scriptures makes such a reading inaccurate.

The Importance of the Old Testament Context

Unfortunately, Hays diminishes a broad concept from the Old Testament with an incomplete exegesis of the Revelation text, which he uses to subjugate the Old Testament concept of holy war. He is making conclusions based upon his preconceptions of what the Bible says or does not say. He admits, “The Old Testament obviously validates the legitimacy of armed violence by the people of God under certain circumstances. . . . [However] if irreconcilable tensions exist . . . the New Testament vision trumps the Old Testament.” He goes on to compare dietary laws, circumcision, and laws regarding

56 Mounce, The Book of Revelation, 345.
57 Beale, The Book of Revelation, 970.
divorce as examples of such Old Testament laws that have been “trumped” by New 
Testament messages. The problem with these comparisons, as Douglas Moo points out 
in his balanced review of Hays, is that some of these laws are connected to covenant 
obligations while others are not. But that does not matter for Hays, and this is where his 
motif and his view of Scripture truly affect his exegesis and interpretation of Scripture: he 
simply trumps any verse he does not like. With regard to the conversation about anti-
Judaism in the New Testament Scriptures, Hays writes, “Given the variety of 
incompatible positions within the New Testament canon, I believe that we are forced in 
this case to make a clear choice among the possible options offered us. No 
thoroughgoing synthesis is possible.”59 His exegetical criteria also allow him to ignore 
other passages in Scripture that he does not like: “Thus, forced to make a choice among 
conflicting New Testament witnesses, we choose to see John’s position on this issue as a 
historically understandable but theologically misconceived development. The church 
will do far better to enter dialogue with Judaism on the basis of the Pauline option.”60

As an evangelical, it is difficult to accept such a cavalier attitude toward the 
Scriptures whereby selections can be summarily discarded in favor of others. The 
Evangelical Theological Society provides a doctrinal basis for evangelicals, which is at 
odds with Hays, “The Bible alone, and the Bible in its entirety, is the Word of God 
written and is therefore inerrant in the autographs.”61 As a Southern Baptist, no


60 Ibid., 434.

interpretation or model of exegesis that treats the Scriptures with such lack of authority can be given much credibility, no matter how logical the argument may be.\textsuperscript{62}

An evangelical position on the subject of violence must view Hays’s conclusions with much skepticism, and theologically speaking, his choice of motif limits his theological and exegetical insight. Given one’s inability to synthesize his opinions with other voices that hold to a higher view of Scripture, and given better theological motifs through which to synthesize conflicting biblical passages, his opinion must be discarded in favor of others.

W.D. Davies notes, “The time of Jesus and his church is not, despite the presence of the kingdom of God, the messianic era of peace.”\textsuperscript{63} Evil exists in the world and works through social and cultural structures. The Church, through the power of the Holy Spirit, is called to take a stand against them. In the spirit of Hays (who cites a hymn in defense of his anti-war sentiment), it might be helpful to offer a picture of Revelation 19 in the form of a hymn. The anti-slavery-inspired lyrics of Julia Ward Howe are one example:

Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord:
He is trampling out the vintage where the grapes of wrath are stored;
He hath loosed the fateful lightning of His terrible swift sword:
His truth is marching on.

I have seen Him in the watch-fires of a hundred circling camps,

\textsuperscript{62} The problem, again, is the motif, even though Hays rejects the community in his discussion of violence while holding true to the community tradition in his view on homosexuality. Erickson provides another warning with regard to the motif of community in his review of Stanley Grenz’s \textit{Theology for the Community of God}, in which he points out that such a focus on community has led many evangelicals to criticize his [Grenz's] theology as too “human” focused to the detriment of a focus on God and Scripture. Grenz and Hays start from the same place: community. On the subject of violence, Hays’s position within the Christian community, and specifically the academic community, means that one must engage him in dialogue on the subject, but where conflicting opinions outside the canon are brought to the debate one is thus forced to make a choice among conflicting witnesses.

They have builded Him an altar in the evening dews and damps;  
I can read His righteous sentence by the dim and flaring lamps:  
His day is marching on.

I have read a fiery gospel writ in burnished rows of steel:  
"As ye deal with my contenders, so with you my grace shall deal;  
Let the Hero, born of woman, crush the serpent with his heel,  
Since God is marching on."

In the beauty of the lilies Christ was born across the sea,  
With a glory in His bosom that transfigures you and me:  
As He died to make men holy, let us die to make men free,  
While God is marching on.64

The battle for believers now is to follow Christ, and one’s “enemies” will oppose this way of life, or at the very least live in a way that is antithetical to the life of a Christian.  
Christ was making it very clear that the foundation of the Christian faith is not “peace” in the sense of there being a lack of conflict.

This is not a call for wanton violence. It is the affirmation that focused and lawful violence is authorized for men and women who are called to serve in that capacity.  
Private killing and random violence are not condoned by Jesus, by Scripture, or by the community of faith. The overwhelming witness of the Old Testament; evidence from several New Testament sources including the Gospels, Paul’s epistles, and apocryphal writings; and the example of the warrior Jesus all point toward one conclusion—focused violence is not forbidden but is encouraged under special and specific circumstances.

There is still more evidence to support not only the biblical use of focused violence, but Christian participation in that vocation and calling.

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The Military Professional

Jesus had a healthy respect for the soldier and those who go to war. In Luke 14:31 Jesus uses the example of kings preparing for war as an example of how those who wish to follow him should count the cost of discipleship. Jesus says, “Or suppose a king is about to go to war against another king. Will he not first sit down and consider whether he is able with ten thousand men to oppose the one coming against him with twenty thousand?” It would be wrong to presume that Jesus is advocating for war by his use of this passage, but it would be equally wrong to say that the tenor of the New Testament message is against war when Jesus invokes an illustration from war to make a positive point about discipleship. Heimbach remarks that Jesus embodies the just war ethic in his illustration of how a good king analyzes the human cost in evaluating going to war.65

In Luke 7:1-10, Jesus praises the centurion’s faith, saying, “I tell you I have not found such great faith even in Israel.” Grossman makes an interesting observation about this interaction in contrast to the rich young ruler: not only does Jesus praise his faith and obedience, but at no time does he challenge the centurion to give up his weapon or profession like he did the rich young ruler.66 Hays concedes this: “The New Testament writers did not see participation in the army as sinful a priori, nor was the question of military service a question being debated in their communities.”67 But he does not agree that they held a position of respect. He goes on to compare them to tax collectors and

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65 Heimbach, “For the Record.”
prostitutes, “as examples of how John’s preaching reached even the most unsavory characters.” This is Hays’s connection; the Bible never connects soldiers with “the most unsavory of characters” of the day, the biggest reason being that unlike other “unsavories” they are never instructed to discontinue their profession. In this particular passage they are in fact instructed to be content with their wages.

If Christ’s own words were not enough to convey the special place of soldiers, the Gospels make it clear that it is soldiers at the cross who, in spite of the torture they inflicted on Christ, identify Jesus as the Son of God. In Matthew 27:54, writes Angel, “The centurion and his soldiers declare αληθώς θεού υιός ην ούτος (‘Truly this was the Son of God.’)” Biggar discusses at some length the issues with Hays’s interpretation of soldiers in the Bible, with special attention to the story of Cornelius from the book of Acts who is referred to as not a sinner, but a God-fearer. Biggar explains that Cornelius was never “moved to surrender his military profession.” Biggar also points out that while in Luke 19 the salvation of tax collectors is tied to their changing their practices, no such “renunciation” of violence for the soldier is encouraged. In short, Biggar observes that “the awkward presence in the text of soldiers who are neither rebuked for their profession, nor repent of it, makes the stance of the New Testament canon toward the use of violent force less ‘unambiguous’–and the ground for arguing that Christian discipleship could include it more robust – than Hays supposes.” Despite his bias Hays

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69 Angel, “Crucifixus Vincens,” 301.
70 Biggar, “Specify and Distinguish!” 170.
71 Ibid., 171.
writes that while the New Testament’s central message is peacemaking, “the narratives about soldiers provide the one possible legitimate basis for arguing that Christian discipleship does not necessarily preclude the exercise of violence in defense of the social order or justice.” Hays’s answer to these seemingly contradictory opinions on military service in the New Testament is predictable; they are discarded on account of their “paucity and ambiguity.”

Rather than portraying them as the lowest of the low, Matthew seems to be setting soldiers apart. Angel notes, “According to Matthew, this victory of the divine warrior is recognized only by the gentile soldiers.” For him this symbolizes the inclusion of this group of people into the people of God, and thus the inclusion of Gentiles into the redemptive plan of God. This in no way sets apart the vocation of the military, but it is noteworthy that soldiers are accorded such places of honor in the Gospels. Perhaps this is the Gospel writer’s attempt to extend grace to those who beat Jesus so savagely and crucified him. Regardless, both Hays and Yoder concede the possibility for a defense of violence (Hays in this case and Yoder in his discussion of the clearing of the temple). Yet both remain resolute in their defense of non-violence as the only method of peacemaking that can be accomplished biblically. And more importantly, they both remain steadfast in their belief that this is a central New Testament message. Erickson explains that this is because their motifs are too narrow, thus making them incapable of interpreting the text any other way—despite their concessions. It is also the result of a

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73 Biggar, “Specify and Distinguish!” 171. This is an example of Hays’s synthesis of a New Testament theme, namely pacifism.

74 Ibid., 316.
very low view of the authority of Scripture. Regardless, there are at least two passages that provide a legitimate basis for military service and violence in the exercise of that calling.

“Use the Sword; Die by the Sword”

In another example of his respect for the authorities and those who carry arms, the Synoptic Gospels all record the event at Gethsemane where one of the disciples cuts off the ear of one of the High Priest’s guards. John writes that this disciple was Peter, and in each account the disciple is rebuked for raising his sword against the guard. The statement in Matthew 26:52, “He who draws his sword will die by the sword,” is often used in defense of an anti-war agenda, but it is used out of context as such. While Jesus does rebuke Peter, at no time does Jesus rebuke the guard for raising his sword, but only for coming to arrest him with weapons as if he were a criminal. The sword that the disciple raises is against a lawful authority (the guard), who was acting legally in accordance with his orders. Even if one were to suggest that Jesus spoke these words to the soldier and not Peter, one would be hard pressed to deny that it is and has been the fate of many warriors to die by the sword—thus it is the possible fate of those who take up arms to die in battle. Jesus is talking about attacking a lawful authority, who was acting in accordance with his mandate and according to their laws; he was not talking about war per se.

75 It was not a case of civil disobedience either, for Christ had broken no law.
Nolland comments on the proverbial style of the words; he believes that this “expresses the principle as foundational to human justice.” He believes that Jesus has taken the concept of prohibiting using violence to coerce someone else, as displayed in the crowd, to prohibiting the use of violence in defending oneself from such intimidation. He does not see the verses that follow as having any bearing on the statement, ignoring the entire context in coming to his conclusion. There is no basis for coming to this ethical construction at this point, especially when Jesus states in Matthew 26:53-54, “Do you think I cannot call on my Father, and he will at once put at my disposal more than twelve legions of angels? But how then would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen in this way?” Christ’s words about the sword cannot be taken out of the context of the overall passage, or one could make it say whatever one wished. But Nolland’s point about human justice is very useful for a warrior ethos, and more likely the point Jesus was trying to make. Most commentators see a relationship between this statement and the Genesis 9:6 statement, “Whoever sheds the blood of a man, by a man shall his blood be shed.” Here is a reality that men and women of battle understand: that their vocation is one of focused violence of which they are not only an aggressor but a recipient. The profound nature of this vocation is that as easily as one may be called upon to take a life, so also their own lives can be taken in the same exchange. The image of God on humanity is upon each human life, no matter how marred by sin it may be, and it is a profound and terrible thing to take another human life. To remove this truth from the heart of a warrior is to rob him or her, not only of his humanity, but his very soul.

76 Nolland, The Gospel of Matthew, 1113.
Two Swords

Luke 22:36-38 offers another justification for self-defense (at the very least), when Jesus encourages the disciples to sell their belongings in favor of purchasing a sword. This passage is confusing because Jesus does not elaborate on the purpose for purchasing a sword, and his final words on the subject are ἐκατονταύρων ἔστιν (“It is enough”).\(^{77}\) A. T. Robertson, in his book, *Word Pictures of the New Testament*, believes that Christ’s intent is obviously that the swords will be used for defensive purposes, which Peter misunderstands and is rebuked for later.\(^{78}\) Hays believes that the sword itself is symbolic, but even if this is true, it is not an argument against lawful violence such as that in combat. If anything, the sword may symbolize the fact that indeed a spiritual war is going on, and the disciples are now warriors in it. In one context it is the inner battle to keep God foremost in one’s affections, but Christians are also soldiers for the Kingdom ambassadors to a fallen world. Christ’s words were not intended to relate specifically to how a warrior conducts himself or herself, but as a strategy for living the Christian life regardless of one’s profession. An array of scholars argue that this passage does not “overturn” the pacifism of Jesus, but that in context the passage reflects Jesus’ awareness of and desire to fulfill prophecy by being “numbered with the transgressors” in Luke 22:37. In other words, by brandishing swords they would present themselves as an illegal

\(^{77}\) Hays sees this as a frustrated statement from Jesus, because the disciples do not understand. Hays’s interpretation of the passage is, “Enough already,” but this is not supported by the Greek. For Hays’s interpretation to be correct, the phrase would have been in the imperative, but it is in the simple indicative, which reads as, “It is enough.” See Hays, *The Moral Vision*, 332-33.


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mob, thus numbering Jesus amongst criminals. Ellul and Yoder both argue that the fact that Jesus identifies two swords as being enough is an indication of this, because two swords could not possibly have been enough to defend Jesus from the arrest that was soon to take place. 79

If in fact the disciples were the other transgressors with whom Jesus was to be “numbered with,” then it follows logically that all of them would have been arrested, when in fact they were not. In Matthew 26:51, Peter strikes a servant of the high priest, removing his ear. Jesus then asks his accusers in the following verses if he is leading a rebellion, that they come at him with swords and clubs, for he has never been violent to the point that they should need such weapons of war. They seize Jesus and no one else. Thus, there are no other “transgressors” for him to be “numbered among.”

Mark 15:28 states that these transgressors were the two criminals he was crucified with. Howard I. Marshall, in his commentary on Luke, agrees that in being counted with evildoers, “Jesus sees it as a prophecy of his death.” 80 Marshall sees the significance of purchasing a sword as demonstrating the severity of the situation they are about to find themselves in. In verse thirty-eight Marshall opts for a translation that is a rebuke to the disciples, based upon a Semitic equivalent which simply means “enough.” Marshall notes the possibility of the other two interpretations: that two swords will be enough to “make us look like brigands,” or that two swords will be enough to show the inadequacy

79 Alexandre Christoyannopoulos, Christian Anarchism: A Political Commentary on the Gospel (Exeter: Imprint Academic), 109-10; see also Jacques Ellul, Anarchy and Christianity (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1991), 64; see also Yoder, Politics, 203ff.

of human effort. But Marshall contends, “Neither of these alternatives is at all probable.”

These instances of “sword” talk are for Yoder instances where Satan is tempting Jesus to fulfill the Messianic vision in terms of a violent revolution, rather than the sacrifice that must be made. It is as though Satan is saying to Jesus, “Now is finally the time for Holy war.” Yoder sees the fulfillment of the swords as the thing which propels Jesus into fulfillment of the prophecy that he would be counted among transgressors because of the “armed insurrection into which Jesus was placed by the presence of weapons and Peter’s defense.” Biggar makes an important point in support of the notion that Jesus was unwilling to commit violence against authorities when he points out that not only was Jesus avoiding “violence inspired by religious nationalism” but “declined to participate in violence that was not publicly authorized.” This would be consistent with a view that Jesus wanted to avoid a Holy War and that he may have been attempting to convey the new battlefield upon which God’s Holy War was to be fought, while still balancing the need for the disciples to execute violence if necessary in their own defense. Regardless, an honest assessment of the text cannot defend either a symbolic understanding of the sword, or the disavowal of violence in all cases.

Conclusions for the Warrior

God’s grand strategy for glorifying himself is to make his name holy. This is clear in his prayer: “Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.” He reveals this purpose in

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82 Yoder, The Politics of Jesus, 47.

Scripture, which is the inerrant word of God, and chose by his grace to accomplish this task through his creatures and more specifically the community of faith. A part of that grand plan was and is the use of God-directed war, war brought against the community of God by the enemies of God, and war by secular governments. The final war will be the ultimate subjugation of creation, and more specifically the destruction of the enemies of God, all under the authority of the Messiah. And then there will be the peace spoken of throughout the Scriptures as all are reconciled, one way or another, unto the living God.

In the meantime the Christian warrior is called to suffering for his or her faith in various forms, and to accept that as a precursor to the return of the Messiah. Where beliefs differ the Christian warrior is to engage in peaceful but rigorous dialogue, always being ready to give an answer for the joy he or she has. The moral mandates of the Bible are for the Christian warrior as much as any Christian. In regards to specific direction to those in the military, there is also the mandate in Luke 3, which directs soldiers not to intimidate those civilians over whom they have authority in an occupying capacity or while in a combat zone, nor should they complain about their wages.

There is no scriptural prohibition against the kind of lawful violence the Christian warrior is required to execute in the performance of his or her job, including the unfortunate taking of life which is and has been the vocation of warriors since before the establishment of Israel as a people. God himself has directed such violence in the past, and will again in the final consummation of his grand earthly strategy. The Christian warrior who performs his or her duties according to the provisions of the law, including theater Rules of Engagement, need fear no eternal judgment for such actions. However, even in such cases where the Christian warrior has not acted lawfully or according to the
Scriptures, he or she may call upon the promise of 1 John, which states that one can and will be forgiven when one asks. There also appears to be a dispensation made for believers to arm themselves with appropriate force for personal defense, as long as such force is not used against law enforcement officials in the performance of their duties.

Strategically the heart of a warrior should be set first and foremost in the pursuit of making the name of God holy, as he is a warrior’s primary Commander in Chief. In serving those appointed over the warrior within the armed forces, the warrior should seek to serve his earthly commanding officer as if he were serving God. To that end the Christian warrior should be involved in his or her local church, practice the disciplines of the faith, and aggressively share his or her faith. These just scratch the surface of what a biblical warrior ethos might look like, and the kinds of principles a chaplain might model as he or she acts as a bridge between the local church and those in the military.
CHAPTER 5
A MISSIONARY PARADIGM

When his master saw that the Lord was with him and that the Lord gave him success in everything he did, Joseph found favor in his eyes and became his attendant.

—Genesis 39:3-4

One of the fundamental issues confronting every new chaplain in the military is how he or she can be effective while balancing the role of staff officer with the role of spiritual leader within the organization. Complicating this job are forces both within the military and outside it seeking to silence the evangelical chaplain, as well as the complex issue of war. The military chaplain is a servant to two masters, but he or she best serves the earthly master by serving the eternal one first. Mendes writes, “Confronted by the range of human issues characteristic of American culture, beliefs, and backgrounds, the chaplain is a missionary in the truest sense. Hence, evangelical chaplains are positioned to engage this culture as ambassadors of Christ amidst its distinct challenges.”¹

Additionally, not only should chaplains have a firm grasp of their own theology regarding war and the warrior, but they need to be aware of the highly toxic dialogue that revolves around the issue and know how they will respond. Again, Mendes offers a

¹ Mendes, Soul Cloaking, 1.
corroborating opinion, “There is a need for the Navy chaplaincy to devise an evangelistic strategy that is both biblically informed and contextually relevant to the sea services culture.”

This chapter will focus on establishing a missionary model for the chaplain based upon the lives of three evangelists, Daniel, Joseph, and Jesus. Two of these men—Daniel and Joseph—were engaged in strictly secular jobs in the fulfillment of their evangelistic work. Each evangelist was an expert in his secular job, each one operated as a member of the culture to which he was called, and each one, though successful in his secular profession, did not sacrifice his faith to achieve that success. Each one embodied the basic ministry that Jesus exemplified in Matthew 4:23: “Jesus went throughout Galilee teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.” This is the ministry part of the model, with the professional part being excellence in the execution of their jobs. This is the tactical model of missionary work that the chaplain must engage in.

At the strategic level is the issue of how the chaplain will engage the command at all levels to connect people to the local church. Through relationships on base and within the local church, there are a number of opportunities to engage commands at the battalion and larger level, as well as at the individual level. This involves creating crowds of military members for the purpose of introducing them to the local church, and moving them from a position of being outsiders to being fully devoted disciples of Christ. While the chaplain engages at the tactical level with the core functions of the chaplain core, embodied in Matthew 4:23 for the Christian chaplain, he or she must also think on this strategic level of ministry as well.

\[2\] Mendes, *Soul Cloaking*, 2.
In the midst of all of this is the need for leadership within a team to bring this ministry to a command, both amongst chaplains and Religious Program Specialists. Daniel was part of a team within his hostile environment, as did Jesus. While Joseph did not, his reactions upon being in the presence of his family once again prove that a team of similar believing people would have made his exile more bearable. In looking at Jesus, one must also keep in mind the model of Paul who always worked with a missionary team.

Operating as a chaplain in today’s military can be described as being a modern-day Daniel serving in the courts of Babylon, or Joseph running the government of Egypt. Jesus, from a missiological point of view, provides New Testament authority for the calling to be an evangelist and the duality of that work between the culture of the mission field and the evangelist’s own membership in heaven. Chaplain Mendes again illustrates the missionary-like role of chaplains in the military, especially given their transitory existence within the institution. He writes, “Enduring recurring transitional adjustments along with ever-shifting contextual demands, the role of Navy chaplains are more akin to short-term missionaries as Christian workers.”3 This must be a part of any suggested paradigm for military chaplains to follow, if it is to be successful in reaching those within the military.

God has often used professionals as missionaries to minister to powerful men and women and their kingdoms, and he still does so today. In fact, the most powerful influencers upon this post-Christian culture are not pastors, but professionals who

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embody their faith in Christ within secular institutions. The model for ministry in the military, a diverse and often antagonistic institution, is the Christian who knows the culture and language of that culture as well as his or her own faith—and then lives out his or her own faith within that culture regardless of the consequences. This is where the context of ministry and the character of the chaplain meet for optimal impact; the chaplain’s character or lack of it will help or hinder work within the military. As discussed in Chapters 2, 3, and 4, there are many forces at work both within the institution and from outside it, seeking not only to distort the message of evangelical chaplains but silence them altogether.

Like Daniel in the land of Persia whose ministry could only be successful with the king’s endorsement, modern-day chaplains must balance their professional lives with their spiritual calling. As Joseph came to know Egypt, chaplains must come to know the military institution very well, though they will never fully be a part of it by virtue of their calling. Chaplains today face the same challenges as these biblical patriarchs: in order to be successful they must operate within the military structure. Navy regulations articulate this reality: “The Navy expects its chaplains to be competent staff corps officers who understand the systems and structures of the Naval service.” Their ability to function within the institution will give them credibility with the Commanding Officers for whom they are responsible, which will in turn give them the freedom to be

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4 Rick Warren, while possessing great influence in the public arena, is an anomaly in God’s overall scheme for reaching lost people and cultures. For every Rick Warren there are many more “Shadrachs, Meshuhs, and Abednegos” who are profoundly influencing their secular institutions with the grace of Jesus Christ.

5 United States Navy, “Professional Naval Chaplaincy,” Secretary of the Navy Instruction 5351.1, April 21, 2011, 4.
more creative and effective in the sacred areas of their ministry. A chaplain whose advice is not only sound but consistent with knowledge of policies and directives will earn the trust of the command.

Professional expertise, identification with the culture, separation from the culture, and a sense of calling are all a part of what the military evangelist must have to be effective. At times it will be the sense of calling and nothing else that keeps the chaplain moving forward in ministry. It is for this last reason especially that Daniel and Joseph provide such important models for chaplains in ministry. Both men experienced significant challenges to their obedience to God, as well as persecution from the very culture they were trying to reach. Calling is that sense of confidence believers can have, that regardless of the circumstances they are exactly where God wants them to be. In the case of the military it is a calling to work in and among combatants, and for an institution whose job it is to kill people and break things. The ministry of the chaplain, state the Navy regulations, “is most effective when based on strong relationships developed in the context of a shared life in the same unit.”

God may not rescue each soldier from death, but he will fulfill his purpose in them and more than that, glorify himself in the midst of it all. Daniel and Joseph are two men who glorified God by loving him first and loving him most.

The first two examples are Joseph and Daniel and their contemporaries. These two model professionals who know the culture of the organizations they work in, excel in their secular jobs, but are removed from them spiritually by virtue of their calling by

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6 United States Navy, “Religious Ministry Support within Department of the Navy,” Secretary of the Navy Instruction 1730.7D, August 8, 2008, 5.
God. It is the model of a missionary operating within an organization that is potentially antagonistic if not diametrically opposed to one’s chosen faith. Both Daniel and Joseph were captives in foreign lands and became advisors to the supreme leaders of these nations by virtue of their faithfulness to God and their expertise in secular skills. As stated in Daniel 1:3-5, “Then the King ordered . . . his court officials, to bring in some of the Israelites . . . young men . . . showing aptitude for every kind of learning, well informed, quick to understand, and qualified to serve in the king’s palace. He was to teach them the language and literature of the Babylonians. They were to be trained for three years, and after that they were to enter the king’s service.” This chapter now turns to Daniel and his work in Babylon, where an example of team leadership is portrayed, as well as evangelistic work directed towards the most powerful man in the world at the time.

**Daniel the Evangelist to Babylon**

Daniel and those with him were of high regard in Babylon, which is why they were chosen for service. But Daniel and his friends were also committed to their call, and though a part of the culture they continued to communicate the message of God to the king. A simple summary of Daniel’s actions in the book named for him reveals these facets of his work as a missionary to Babylon.

The story of Daniel in the lion’s den is one that every kid who has attended Sunday school knows from the telling, if not the reading of the book. Daniel’s book in the sixth chapter gives us an account of this event, which illustrates the power of relationships, specifically that between a godly man and a worldly ruler, as well as the
importance of professional excellence. Throughout the book of Daniel the satraps and wise men of the kingdom were continually looking for ways to get Daniel and the team into trouble, often resulting in their own demise for their deception. Daniel was to be made an administrator over the satraps in the kingdom, and they were not pleased to have him over them. Because of Daniel’s professional excellence they realized that the only way they could trap Daniel would be through his religion. So they tricked the king into making an edict enforcing the decree against praying to anyone or any god other than the king, an edict designed to remove Daniel from power since he prayed three times a day to the God of the Israelites. Once the edict was made, it could not be removed.

In one instance the satraps caught Daniel in the act of praying and brought the matter before the king, to have the law enforced. But the king did not want to punish Daniel, being “very distressed” when he learned what had happened (verse 14). The king then went out of his way to try and save Daniel, but could not because the edict had been made. So Daniel was thrown into the lion’s den, while the king prayed, “May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you!” (verse 16). Fortunately for Daniel, he survived unscathed. His accusers were then thrown into the lion’s den along with their families.

Here is the most powerful man in the known world, prayed to as a god by his people, polytheistic in his understanding of the universe. Here is Daniel, a monotheist, who is a trusted advisor to the king but nonetheless of a different faith. Because of Daniel’s relationship with the king through both his devotion to his god and devotion to the king, he had a powerful ally outside of his own faith. God saved Daniel, and because of that relationship stood as a powerful witness to the living God before the king. It is
through the balance of his faith and his devotion to the secular institution that God was able to use Daniel to turn a potential tragedy into a time of testimony. If on either side of this event Daniel had been lax in his devotion to God or his job, the result would not have been the same. Daniel was one of the best servants to the king, so much so that the king was willing to consider going against his own edict to save Daniel. At the same time Daniel’s devotion to his God was so evident that the king could pray and hope that Daniel’s God would save him.

Even more amazing is that Daniel’s obedience to God before this earthly ruler caused the king to make edicts that declared the existence and sovereignty of the one true God. Anthony Guggenberger notes in his book, *A General History of the Christian Era*, that “of utmost importance was the providential mission of the Hebrews to revive the worship of the true God and the knowledge of His moral law among the heathen nations.” Daniel and his fellow Hebrews in Babylon were instrumental in seeing this happen, whether consciously or not, which ushered in a golden age of religious thought, referred to by some scholars as the Axial Period. The rise of monotheism during this period is one of the key features of this time, and Daniel C. Snell, author of *A Companion to the Ancient Near East*, gives credit for this in part to Daniel and the prophets of the Babylonian exile. He was an expert in his secular role to the king, through his commitment first to glorify God by serving him first and serving him most.

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Within the Old Testament narrative is a model for leadership. The model of leadership evident in the story of Daniel is one of teamwork. This is an emphasis throughout the Scriptures, and in the New Testament, but even in the Jewish Scriptures it is written, “Though one may be overpowered, two can defend themselves. A cord of three strands is not quickly broken” (Ecclesiastes 4:12). Teamwork is vital to the success of the chaplain and it is prescribed in Scripture—even Jesus had a team.

The development of teamwork is an area where the Chaplain Corps could implement a program both in the schoolhouse and in the fleet. Chaplains do not operate as lone rangers, though many do work very little with their Religious Program Specialists. There are probably quite a few reasons for this, but the bottom line is that when this team is working optimally, it benefits everyone. More effort needs to be spent on team-building skills for chaplains, which will benefit both the command team as well as the Religious Ministry Team, not only by providing better religious/ethical services but also by providing an expert to the command for team building.

Within the team chaplains need to begin with a simple list of expectations, what commanders call their “intent.” This is usually published so that there is no confusion for the staff or the company commanders about what is expected. By creating a welcome letter chaplains are forced to think about what their expectations are, and this dispels any ambiguity as to what they expect. The unspoken expectations in relationships are usually the ones that cause problems. As an exercise at the beginning of their assignment to the fleet, or during the basic course, chaplain students should develop a welcome letter. Even within the command supervisory, chaplains can help by having their juniors develop these welcome letters for their respective teams.
When mentoring or again while at the schoolhouse, time should be spent discussing different styles of leadership, with special attention on how personality types gravitate toward one style. Leadership is discussed quite a bit in seminary, but not enough time is spent looking at how God created distinct personalities, hard-wiring each person toward certain styles. A part of the discussion should include the pitfalls of these styles, when taken to the extreme. Object lessons from Scripture could easily include Moses and Jethro, and how Moses learned to delegate. Other object lessons could come from military examples, such as the leadership problems presented at the Battle of Midway. Finally, the chaplain would use examples from personal experience to show changes in leadership.

An example from my own experience took place during the first eighteen months of my relationship with a Religious Program Specialist (hereafter, RP). I had to adapt my leadership style to his needs and for the good of my command. My natural leadership style is hands-off; I prefer to share my vision and let the experts do their work. I am not a good micromanager, which is what this RP required. He needed constant supervision to complete the simplest of tasks, and it was draining for me as a leader. This created friction between the senior enlisted RP and me, as he perceived the problem with our

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9 Diversity would make the inclusion of biblical examples delicate, but as an evangelical I see this as an opportunity for evangelism.

10 In the days leading up to the Battle of Midway during World War 2, it was Admiral Halsey that was supposed to lead the battle group. Unfortunately, he had developed a nasty skin condition, and had to be temporarily relieved. Admiral Spruance took over the battle group. The difference in their leadership styles was night and day, which caused some difficulties on the ship at first. Halsey was a micro-manager, part of what caused his illness, but Spruance depended upon his staff to make suggestions based upon their expertise. They were at a loss at first, because they were unaccustomed to having to make decisions.
“team” was me; he stated that our personalities were not a “good match.”¹¹ I changed leadership styles in order to get the job done, because I had a young RP who needed to be micromanaged. Anytime I loosened the reins to resort to my natural style, things would fall apart. This went on for eighteen months. In the combat zone this young RP was moved to where he could be more closely supervised in the hopes that with another enlisted person supervising him he might develop into a solid RP.

One positive aspect was that my RP trusted me. To this day he still trusts me and is grateful for my leadership to him; he just does not seem to know how to become a better RP. With one RP leaving the command I was given a new RP. With the friction between the senior RP and me, my new RP came with the expectation that I was going to micromanage her. This was due in part to the “Welcome Aboard Letter” I sent to her prior to joining me. She was offended by the letter because it raised concerns for her about the way I would be. We had quite a long conversation on the subject, which caused her to trust me as leader after all. She knew that as long as she was getting the job done, we would not have a problem. She also had the freedom to be creative in how she conducted her job and set up her space. In addition, she knew that I would listen to her input on problems within the command.

By employing some principles of team building, the new RP and I got more accomplished in the management of the Chapel in one month than the previous RP and I did in four months. I began with rather strict expectations, but realized that this RP needed a very free hand. Because of this I was able to focus on other issues, as well as

¹¹ This is an amusing statement, something Marines do not tolerate. In the military, personality issues are not an excuse. The junior is expected to adapt to the personality of the senior.
focus on ministry. There were still problems that arose, but nothing like with the first
RP. For example, within the first month of my old RP joining me, he had an
unauthorized absence (a UA) from the range. Instead of charging the RP as we should
have, my Master Gunnery Sergeant and I decided to give him a second chance. This was
a major mistake in leadership on my part in that we should have charged him. Our not
charging him for that first instance communicated that there were no consequences for
bad behavior.

The book of Daniel provides an illustration of team building on the part of Daniel,
and the trust that developed because of it. The first chapter introduces men from Judah:
Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah, and of course the author. These would become the
famous Shadrack, Meshack, Abednego, and Daniel. The initial phase of growth as a
team is when Daniel requests that his team be given a different diet than that of the others
who are training, so as not to “defile” themselves “with the royal food and wine” (Daniel
1:6-21). He turns the request into a challenge, which cements the team with a crisis. The
end result of this ten-day test was that Daniel’s team was healthier than the others. It also
resulted in them being taken into the king’s service, because through their teamwork and
faithfulness to God they shined above the rest. More team building takes place later in
the second chapter when Daniel consults the team regarding the king’s dream, urging
them to pray to God that they might be spared from being killed like the rest of the king’s
wise men. They were spared this time, but the team would be tested many times in the
course of their lives and service to the king.

12 Generally, an unauthorized absence from the shooting range requires “non-judicial
punishment.”
Relationships and building them is where the wheels of character and teamwork meet the proverbial road. If chaplains are deficient in their personal relationship with God, they may not even get out of the spiritual starting gate. George Wayne Thomas, in his DMin dissertation, *The Continuing Personal Spiritual Development of Pastors*, sums it up very succinctly: “Maturity reflects the concept of finding out God’s vision and staying with His vision. Immaturity has to do with the pastor wanting to do what he wants and ignoring the plan of God.” Mendes puts this plan into context for the military evangelist when he writes, “Biblical ministry in this setting endeavors to uphold contextual sensitivity with a mature sense of spiritual discernment.”

If chaplains have not developed their teams, they may not have the energy or gas to make it to the finish line, much less in a respectable place. Relationships are where the Holy Spirit uses all that one is, and is not, and bridges one’s inadequacies to make Kingdom advances. Within a team each individual will see his or her deficiencies painfully revealed, but it is within these teams that people become more than they thought they could be alone.

**Joseph the Evangelist to Egypt**

Not everyone views Joseph as a missionary, let alone an example for missionaries to follow. James McKeown, in his commentary on Genesis, does not believe that Joseph can be called a missionary since he charged for the food that Egypt stored, because he was too integrated into Egyptian society, and because there is no indication that he

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14 Mendes, *Soul Cloaking*, 27.
influenced the Egyptians to worship God. If this is the criteria for being a missionary then there are many missionaries today who could not claim the title.

Several theologians are in agreement, however, that Joseph ought to be considered a missionary. Robert Glover, in his book, *Bible Basis of Missions*, contends that Joseph was a missionary. Also, Alfred H. Kellogg, author of *Abraham, Moses, and Joseph in Egypt*, believes that Joseph influenced the religion of Egypt in the direction of monotheism. Kellogg presents the work of Lenormant and his work in researching the religion of Egypt at the time of Amenophis IV, which had come to focus on one God, whose name pointed to the Semitic name of Adonai. John Bright, in his book, *A History of Israel*, carries perhaps the most conservative view of when Joseph was elevated, placing it sometime in the end of the Late Bronze age. He in fact places the entirety of the Patriarchal period in the Bronze age, but most importantly he cautions against a concrete date with what he sees as a lack of corroborating evidence both with the Bible and from outside sources. With that in mind it is not inconceivable that the religious changes that took place during Thutmose IV could have been the result of the influence of Joseph on the Pharaoh. Finally, John P. Dickson in *Mission-Commitment in Ancient Judaism and in the Pauline Communities: The Shape, Extent and Background of Early Christian Mission*, makes the case that Joseph was involved in a “verbal

18 Ibid.
apologetic”; Dickson writes, “Some Jews [like Joseph] advocated less structured types of persuasion oriented toward the promotion of Judaism and the winning of Gentiles to the worship of God.”20 Regardless of where Joseph served historically, clearly he certainly served as a witness to the most powerful man in the world at the time, through his spiritual gifts from God and then his expertise in running Egypt.

A person’s relationship with the creator is the most important aspect of a chaplain’s character, and what will ultimately have the most profound impact on those being served by chaplains. The story of Joseph provides an illustration of how God, as the primary or root cause of events, at times acts through the weaknesses of his creatures. Joseph was a braggart; his brothers were liars and cheats; and his Father was an unfortunate carrier of the family sin, favoritism. Joseph’s pride was revealed when he shared a revelation from God with his brothers, a revelation that revealed how his brothers would be subject to him. This brought out the jealousy in his brothers. Certainly, the dream came true. But it was not necessary to reveal that truth at that time to his brothers. Under the circumstances, given his Father’s unhealthy favoritism, it was a recipe for disaster.

Joseph was sold into slavery by his brothers, and was then taken for dead by his father through their lies. As a slave in the Egyptian courts Joseph is jailed under false charges leveled by another liar, and through the process of humiliation Joseph’s pride is brought under control. Now through Joseph’s conduct and his humility, God uses him to

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elevate his name amongst the Egyptians. A testament to this humility is Pharaoh’s own statement in Genesis 41:39: “Since God has made all this known to you, there is no one more discerning and wise as you.” God can better use the gifts he has given to Joseph to glorify himself and do even greater acts for the sake of Joseph’s family, and to further glorify himself. Joseph’s growing humility allows him to forgive his brothers and embrace them after all they have done, but more importantly it allows Joseph to deliver his family from the ravages of the worldwide famine. God used what was planned for evil to bring glory to himself across the known world. Through the providence of God’s gift of interpretation of dreams, Joseph is now second in command of the most powerful nation in the world. This nation was made so powerful in large part by the leadership of Joseph, which came about through his obedience to God and the change in his own character, brought about by the trials of prison and betrayal. But more importantly, such is Joseph’s integrity and commitment to God that Pharaoh asks in Genesis 41:38, “Can we find anyone like this man, one in whom is the spirit of God?”

To summarize, God’s ultimate end is to glorify himself through chaplains. He desires to use chaplains’ various personalities and gifts in his overall plan. That is, God desires that chaplains’ secondary desires would actually line up with his primary purpose for creating them: to glorify him by enjoying him. There is tremendous joy in the living of one’s life for this end, which is contagious through one’s presence with others.

At best my worship services may attract 10 percent, maybe even 15 percent of my command, but statistics say it is probably more like 3 percent. In one hour’s time that is maybe one hundred people out of one thousand, even though I have unfettered access to all one thousand. The greatest impact I have in my command is God working through me in my everyday relationships with the other nine hundred of his creatures, whom he desires to have enjoying him too. More than that, the one hundred who attend worship services will have an even greater impact if I as a chaplain can marshal them to engage in the grand plan that God has already in motion. It is an amazing opportunity to do ministry in the military, but for God to use chaplains most effectively they have to be officers as well as spiritual leaders, experts in their craft but humble before God.

The Ultimate Missionary

“A record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ the son of David, the son of Abraham. . . . Thus there were fourteen generations in all from Abraham to David, fourteen from David to the exile to Babylon, and fourteen from the exile to Christ” (Matthew 1:1, 17). Jesus was one of these descendants. There is no doubt that the early Church included this genealogy to make that very point, as well as pointing to Christ as the fulfillment of messianic prophecy. John Nolland, in his commentary on Luke, writes, “Ancient

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22 In Iraq, of a command of fourteen hundred people, I saw attendance range from fifty to seventy every Sunday, and I was one of the more successful chaplains in theater.


genealogies were used for a complex variety of purposes, not all of which can be
reconstructed successfully by historical inquiry from such a distance." 25 Johnson
believes the purpose is midrash in order to identify Jesus as the “Son of David” and the
Son of God. 26 It is hard to argue this point, for it seems clear that the intent of Matthew is
to show that Jesus was and is the fulfillment of the Old Testament Messiah and that this
Messiah is unlike the perception or expectation of the Jewish people, for he is the Son of
God, the eternal King of the line of David. 27 The Gospel of John further makes the
assertion that Jesus was one of them: “He came to that which was his own, but his own
did not receive him” (John 1:11).

Jesus was also not one of them. Also in the first chapter of John, the gospel writer
states, “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was
God. He was with God in the beginning” (John 1:1-2). The grammatical construction
here of the last portion clearly describes Jesus as God, and as existing prior to the
creation of the world. The argument over the full deity and full humanity of Christ is a
point dealt with throughout Church history, though my tradition and most orthodox
theology accepts the tension of this truth: fully God and fully man. The point remains
that though Jesus was one of them, he was radically not one of them. In this sense he was
called out from the Trinity, living in eternity, to the temporary world of humanity. He
was sent, in the truest sense of the world, as a missionary.

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26 Johnson, The Purpose of the Biblical Genealogies, 186.

27 Ibid.
In Jesus is a beautiful example of the relationship between the chaplain and the military. Jesus identified himself with those he was ministering to by participating in annual rituals, attending religious services, and using the language and vocabulary of his people when communicating with them. They in turn identified him as a part of the community, not an outsider intruding upon their culture.\textsuperscript{28} At the same time he was an outsider, which allowed him the perspective to comment on the culture and give advice that not only benefited individuals, but the Jewish nation as a whole. This incarnational ministry that Christ modeled is what many in the Chaplain Corps call a “ministry of presence.”

The greatest example of this ministry of presence is in Jesus’ work with his disciples. Very few church congregations get to know their pastors the way a military community gets to know its chaplain. The relationship between a military community and a chaplain is similar to Jesus’ relationship with his disciples, as they literally slept and ate together. In the days before his death, Jesus looked on in disbelief as the men and women into whom he had poured his life for three years still did not understand who he was. In John 14:8-9, the author writes, “Philip said, ‘Lord, show us the Father and that will be enough for us.’ Jesus answered: ‘Don’t you know me, Philip, even after I have been among you such a long time?’” Clearly there was a depth of relationship between Jesus and his disciples.

For three years Jesus poured himself into the lives of his disciples, teaching and living with them. No other vocational ministry so mirrors this example as the military

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\textsuperscript{28} The book of Hebrews elaborates on Christ’s identification with humanity, that through this identification with his creation and by virtue of his status as God he and he alone was and is capable of being our eternal sacrifice.
chaplain. The chaplain’s average assignment is between two and three years at any given billet. Depending on the billet the chaplain will experience at least one deployment, perhaps two. Like Jesus, chaplains have a limited amount of time to make a difference in the lives of those to whom they minister. In Jesus’ short time with his disciples, he was able to give them a foundation from which the early Church would reproduce and flourish, a foundation from which he was able to then pour into for forty more days before ascending to heaven. In Acts 1:4 Luke states, “He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the Kingdom of God.” Luke explains that Jesus opened their minds to the Scriptures during this time. Paul too, like the disciples, was poured into by the savior for a short period of time, out of which the greatest missionary expedition into the Gentile world was completed.

This was a part of a larger strategic plan for spreading his message of the Kingdom, which revolved around this core of believers in whom he invested so much time. Working from the inside out, Jesus invested in a group of twelve committed disciples (Luke 6:13), three of whom were his core leaders (Luke 9:28). From there he had a larger group of followers who pursued him as he traveled the highways and byways of early Palestine (Luke 10:1). These followers all were gathered from large crowds that were attracted to his teaching (Mark 10:1), within the larger community of Israel and Samaria where Jesus traveled (Luke 24:46-47).

Jesus himself is a model, which Paul and the other apostles followed, of short-term missionary work that left behind healthy and growing disciples who in turn planted healthy and growing churches. Allen contends that this is possible through contextualization of the message and by developing indigenous believers to operate on
Military chaplains will achieve this by praying for and investing in a small group of leaders within their given units who will carry on the message long after they are gone. This is best achieved by connecting those leaders to a local church where they will receive continued support and training. The model is a combination of intentional disciple-making, increased credibility within the command through effective institutional advisement, and programs connected to the local church that create the natural avenues on which military members can connect to these churches. Unlike Paul, chaplains are not planting churches. They are evangelizing those who have not received the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and connecting them to local churches.

**Concluding Thoughts**

The work of connecting military members and their families through the military evangelist is akin to the work of the short-term missionary who is working in a complex culture with very specific guidelines for how ministry may be done. The chaplain earns credibility by knowing these guidelines well and performing the military requirements of the job with excellence. These guidelines also provide a means for the chaplain to institutionalize the ministry strategy, some of which have already been written into policy. Unlike the short-term missionary, the chaplain’s job is not to plant new churches but connect believers both new and old to local churches. This is the most efficient means of disciple-making given that most will be assigned for terms of two to three years at any given command. Through a strategic plan of crowd gathering from the community of the command, the chaplain connects those seeking and those who are disciples to the

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congregation of a local church. Then the evangelist works both within the congregation and within the command to develop those who are attending as a part of the congregation, and help them become committed members, growing and serving within the congregation. From there the evangelist needs to have an intentional process for developing a core of committed military members who will partner with the next chaplain to continue the evangelistic mission within the command. At the heart of this strategic mission are relationships. Joseph, Daniel, Jesus, and those he entrusted with the mission loved people. They loved God first and most, but they loved people with the love of the living God.
CHAPTER 6
CONNECTING NEW SONG COMMUNITY CHURCH TO CAMP PENDLETON

Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.

—Ephesians 4:14

This chapter will seek to translate a strategy for connecting local churches through the missionary to the military, which involves the evangelist in building bridges quickly, due to the transitory nature of the assignments in the military. Specifically, as chaplain at Camp Pendleton I am seeking to make these connections with New Song Community Church (hereafter, New Song) in Oceanside, California. The chaplain is not a parachurch organization unto himself or herself, therefore the military evangelist should approach ministry with a strategic approach to ministry that involves a “five circles” strategy while pursuing his or her tactical obligations on the relational level.¹

As a part of a strategic approach the military evangelist must endeavor to teach churches how to be focused and friendly to the military, which involves more than just

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¹ A “five circles” strategy is a strategy made popular by Rick Warren in his book, The Purpose Driven Life. The term “five circles” refers to various groups of people both inside and outside of the church: community, crowd, congregation, committed, core.
having military members in the congregation. In this regard it is vital for senior pastors of local congregations to be involved with chaplains to build trust and maintain relationships. On the tactical level the chaplain must pursue a plan for seeking out key members of the institution who will continue to grow in their faith long after the chaplain has moved to the next billet.

**The Strategic Level of Ministry**

A “five circles” strategy for leading people into service for the Kingdom was made popular at Saddleback Church and Pastor Rick Warren’s book, *The Purpose Driven Life*. This strategy for drawing people from the outside of the Church to become fully devoted followers of Christ, serving in various ministries in the church, will be used for connecting members of Camp Pendleton with local churches. As Jesus developed an inner core of believers from the crowds he taught through discipleship, this ministry focus paper suggests using an adaptation of Thom Wolf’s “Universal Discipleship Model” as a part of that plan, along with a number of other resources to develop mature and growing believers.

Jesus attracted crowds wherever he went, though he focused on the twelve disciples and Peter, James, and John in particular. The number of Jesus’ followers grew and so did the message of the Kingdom. These crowds were drawn from the communities that Jesus visited. The community for this project is both Camp Pendleton and the area of North San Diego County known as Oceanside. There are areas in Orange County that are having similar success in connecting military members to the church, but the focus here is Oceanside, which is south of Camp Pendleton. The “crowds,” by
necessity, will be created through events at the church. There are several means by which the chaplain can create crowds for religious development within the command, but they cannot substitute for a plan that will connect these military members to the local church.

Introducing Military Members to Faith Communities

In recent years there has been an attempt by some Christian organizations to make connections with members of the military through attacking the problem of PTSD. Though an admirable pursuit, in a culture where PTSD has become a political and financial tool, this is the wrong focus for faith communities. The focus should not be on curing PTSD, but on helping all warriors cope with their experiences by connecting them and their families to the local church. This is needed pre-combat, during combat, and post-combat. By focusing on connecting warriors and their families to the local church, environments will be created where the natural healing process can take place. U. S. warriors already receive training during each of these phases, but this training does not include a focus on the spiritual. Nor do they receive an inoculation from the opinions of the “spokespeople” which were mentioned in Chapter 4.

Referring back to Harrison’s four values—(a) focus on future progress, (b) trust in society, (c) decentralization of authority, and (d) human participation in destiny’s outcome rather than fate—chaplains are provided with a ready-made structure for stress

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2 As discussed above, it is appropriate and necessary for the military and particularly chaplains to address PTSD and make it a focus. Local churches, however, should focus instead on caring for service members and their families. In the midst of these acts of caring, healing will be a natural byproduct.

3 Chapter 4 discussed at length the issues of how veterans have perceived public opinion from the press, who are the spokespeople for the nation, and how that has affected their notion of how legitimate the cause was.
healing and for growing communities.  This happens in a Christian venue, for example, through the coordination of corporate worship, small group meetings, and social times with members of the congregation. Decentralization of authority means empowering the “laity” to understand their role as leaders in God’s Kingdom. Taking control of the outcome means taking control of the messages one hears as much as it means believing in hard work. It is difficult to ignore the constant bombardment of negative information while trying to find the more subdued voices, but it should be pursued by chaplains for the health of the warriors.

**Pre-combat**

In their pre-combat training, troops should be introduced to faith communities in an organized way. For instance, during pre-deployment training units could have the event at a religious establishment, and invite religious leaders from the community to participate. “Community is often the beginning of true comfort,” writes Rabbi Naomi Levy in his book, *To Begin Again: The Journey toward Comfort, Strength, and Faith in Difficult Times*. In combat, warriors find this within their “band of brothers,” which is in large part why Shay recommends that returning veterans get involved in unit organizations upon their return home. Researchers agree that for transition to happen when warriors return, they need a safe place to do it.

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4 Harrison, *Underdevelopment*, 171.


If the goal is for warriors to seek help within religious communities, then a relationship must be established between warriors and these communities prior to combat. Churches must also show commitment to them by caring for their loved ones while they are away. Religious communities need to be places where the experiences of warriors are not dramatized, judged, or under-valued. Trauma damages the ability of an individual to connect with others, how much more so with a deity whom they cannot see or touch. By connecting warriors and their families with a spiritual network, they and their families can be better prepared for the eventuality that they could die, and that they may take the life of another. Bruce Siddle, in his book, *Sharpening the Warrior’s Edge*, discusses the necessity of this spiritual preparation in the tradition of the Japanese Samurai, and the peace it brings to the warrior in the middle of the firestorm.\(^7\) Like the instructions to the nation of Israel in Deuteronomy, this will help the warrior prepare his or her home for these eventualities as well. This is true spiritual readiness, and religious leaders need to be at the forefront of making this happen.

The problem the Church and the military evangelist will find in doing this is American culture (or the perceived American culture). David Platt, in his book, *Radical*, believes that as Christians, “Each of us tends toward either intellectual or practical universalism.”\(^8\) In other words, Christians do not share their faith with others because in working out an understanding of Christianity, in one way or another Christians convince themselves that there is no need to do so. Unfortunately, he does not expand on this idea. David Kinnaman and Gabe Lyons believe they have discovered the reasons for a lack of

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\(^7\) Bruce K. Siddle, *Sharpening the Warrior’s Edge* (Belleville, IL: PPCT Research Publications, 1995), 138-139.

\(^8\) David Platt, *Radical* (Colorado Springs: Multnomah Books, 2010), 127.
zeal on the part of Christians in sharing their faith in their book, Unchurched: What a New Generation Really Thinks About Christianity . . . and Why It Matters.⁹ They assert on their website, “Christianity has an image problem.”¹⁰ The authors claim that churches are not focused on members’ sharing their faith at all, but on better marketing of the church to improve its image. Christians desire to be better liked by the culture rather than to convert others.

Platt’s book focuses on the unchristian message of the “American dream,” as he interprets John Adams’s quote on the subject.¹¹ Platt argues that a small group of Christians believe that Americans are currently in a post-Christian country, and these individuals try to provide evidence for why that is. In truth, they represent the slippery slope of a social gospel that condemns capitalism and war as the greatest evil in the land, and who themselves (despite their protests against getting involved politically) do in fact take political sides. Wright provides an important counter-balance to how statistics are used to shade the argument in favor of an interpretation that benefits their political-theological view.¹²

The real victim in this is the free exercise of dialogue amongst differing beliefs, and for U. S. military members the belief that any talk about spiritual matters is more

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¹¹ Platt’s book focuses on the fact that the “American dream,” coined as a phrase in the early nineteenth century, carries the potential to have people worship themselves. In chapter eight of his book, he also contends that Franklin Roosevelt’s call to sacrifice for the good of the government could lead to the worship of government.

¹² Wright, Christians are Hate-Filled Hypocrites . . . and Other Lies You’ve Been Told.
than taboo—it is illegal. This has already been discussed to some degree in previous chapters, but it bears repeating that the military evangelist will run into roadblocks with military leaders as well as churches in fostering this spiritual emphasis. Not every church will be suitable for this, nor will every military leader be an advocate. The military evangelist can meet this obstacle within the institution by enacting policy that will require spiritual dialogue within the unit, and there is already a wealth of instructions that the chaplain can use as foundation. In finding churches to partner with the chaplain will need to query his fellow chaplains and spend time getting to know the pastors he or she wants to partner with.

**During Combat**

While deployed, combat leaders need to foster the spiritual lives of their warriors, regardless of their faith traditions. Most combat leaders avoid this issue because of the mythical separation of church and state issue, thus they will more than likely need coaxing and coaching from their local religious expert—the chaplain. This is an element that should begin with the Combatant Commander, and work its way down to the Sergeant, Corporal, and Lance-Corporal. Small unit leadership is where the rubber meets the road and to whom young warriors look for an example. If a rifle team leader does not encourage spiritual exploration or show the importance of it in the character of the warrior, there is a good chance the warrior will not make it a priority either. Leaders

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13 Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, *Instruction 3405.01, Chairman’s Total Force Fitness Framework* (Washington DC: Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, 1 September 2011). This document is an attempt by the Department of Defense to foster religion and spirituality within the military as part of a resiliency strategy.
should involve their unit chaplain at every opportunity in prayer and spiritual activities, no matter how insignificant it may seem.

Additionally, when operational tempo allows it, warriors should be given the opportunity to mourn their losses. The decision as to when to do this is very important, and depending on the situation it may need to wait until post-deployment. However, I have witnessed the power of memorial services in theater for healing, including actually seeing the body of one’s comrade and having the opportunity to goodbye. In 2005, near the end of my first deployment to Iraq, one of my Military Policemen was killed while on a patrol. The Mortuary Affairs Commander allowed his company to come and pay their respects one platoon at a time, and then escort his body onto the C-130 for transportation back to the states. These events bring closure, establishing for the troops the reality that their comrade was there with them, and is now dead. There is no chance for a surreal experience to occur, where warriors question the reality of their buddy having ever been there with them in the first place, or wonder if he or she really died at all.

Post-combat

Finally, warriors must intersect with a religious community during post-deployment as well. The United States Marine Corps provides a Return and Reunion program for the families of deployed individuals, as well as Warrior Transition for the troops. A religious venue is not only a useful tool in this process for the families, but in creating a bridge for the warriors when they return as well. These trainings already emphasize much of what experts recommend for transition training, even a word about how they will be received by some of the public. In the right religious community a
focus on future progress can be developed, trust can be established, and healthy spiritual beliefs can be established.

As mentioned above, part of the difficulty in applying this strategy will be finding a suitable church. The local church must at once be open to the prospect, and provide the right atmosphere in which the ministry will prosper. New Song was one such church that provided not only a perfect location within miles of both the back and front gates of Camp Pendleton, but members of the church had a heart for Marines and Sailors on the base. From early on in the life of the church, Pastor Hal Seed had a desire to reach into the base to support military members and their families. The church began to provide special events and invited those at the base to attend, which garnered some fruit. Pastor Hal took an interest in loving the Marines and Sailors, and he worked very hard to speak their “language.” Additionally, it became a regular event at worship services to ask if there were any military members back from a deployment. These service members were then honored by the congregation in a simple act of clapping, after which Pastor Hal would let them know how much the church loved them and appreciated their service. These are the seeds of a church that is a good place to start a military centered ministry.

Another church in the area that showed this kind of promise, but that was not as closely situated, was North Coast Calvary Chapel (hereafter, North Coast) in Carlsbad. I partnered with them between 2005 and 2007 in helping Camp Pendleton families with needs as simple as clothing, diapers, and furniture. With the partnership of the Commanding Officer, his wife, North Coast, and New Song, we began holding pre-deployment briefs and return and reunion events in connection with these churches. New Song provided the venue, and the congregation provided childcare workers and
volunteers to serve food and run media. North Coast provided almost everything else in
the way of door prizes, food, volunteers, and setup. Perhaps the most amazing event that
showed the power of this relationship occurred during deployment when a service
member’s house burned down on base. In most cases the command would need to send
the deployed soldier home to help the family pick up the pieces, but it was not needed
this time. The Commanding Officer’s wife, along with members of North Coast, helped
the family move into a new house and was able to provide them with all the furnishings
needed to move in. These kinds of ministries take a church from being military-friendly
to being military-centered. These are the kinds of churches that are best prepared by God
to begin to take on this kind of partnership with a chaplain.

Once the chaplain has identified a suitable church through prayer and testing, he
or she needs to begin to develop relationships with the pastors and begin to connect them
to chaplains on the base. Key spiritual leaders on the base, such as the primary
Command Chaplains of the units, will be important strategic links for further ministry.
The Base Chaplain, The 1 Marine Expeditionary Force Chaplain, the 1st Marine Division
Chaplain, the 1st Marine Logistics Group Chaplain, and the 3rd Marine Air Wing
Chaplain, and the Camp Pendleton Hospital Command Chaplain are the major players
that should be sought out for relationships. A military chaplain is in the best position to
make these liaisons between the base chaplains and the local pastors because he or she is
already a part of both institutions. This will open the door for future relationships as
various chaplains move.

Once military members and their families have connected with a local church in
some way, it is hoped that exposure to the church at these events will inspire them to
attend the congregation’s regular meetings on Sundays or throughout the week. For those warriors who join the church, the chaplain needs to help these service members grow in their faith and service both within the unit and within the local church. This may require education the church regarding how temporary the tenure of the service member may be, so that the church might create opportunities for service and growth in the short term.

This will be another point of concern in choosing a church to partner with; it will depend somewhat upon what kind of discipleship program the church has in place. As much as possible the chaplain should seek to teach and serve in the church, not just as an example to those he or she is trying to lead, but in order to facilitate his or her own spiritual health.

Tactical Concerns

The chaplain should take advantage of every opportunity to facilitate the strategic level mission by tactical means. According to the Secretary of the Navy Instruction 1730.7D, chaplains are to care for service members and their families, advise commanders, provide ministry where appropriate, and facilitate where a soldier’s beliefs differ from those of the chaplain. The chaplain will always be a staff officer in the military; therefore, he or she should be the expert on what being a good staff officer entails. Combined with the areas mentioned by the instruction, the chaplain will gain credibility with the command, which will be important in pressing the need for spiritual resiliency and faith-based programs.

14 United States Navy, “Religious Ministry Support within Department of the Navy,” Secretary of the Navy Instruction 1730.7D, August 8, 2008, 5. “Facilitation” is the word used to describe the support that a chaplain provides for religious services that he or she does not conduct personally. This will include providing training materials, appointment of lay leadership, and meeting space as required.
On the topic of faith-based programs, there is some debate over the meaning of *Navy Warfare Publication 1-05* (NWP 1-05), which states,

[Navy Warfare Publication 1-05(NWP 1-05)](https://www.navy.mil/newsite/infopages/library/1-05.html), which states,

> [Chaplains provide] command-wide education and training from a religious perspective on the topics listed. The issues related to these topics influence the performance and professional competency of personnel, which has a reciprocal effect on operational performance and mission accomplishment. Inclusion of such education and training cultivates the internal development of the Navy's core values.  

In Mendes's understanding of the instruction, there is no violation of a chaplain's mandate as faith-specific ministry in providing a non-sectarian discussion.  

I do agree with his assessment that in the end the Gospel message will win out in a discussion of differing faiths, or as Chaplain Mendes states, "diminished worldviews." And to his credit he does provide that religious discussions can be had if done with discretion and sensitivity. But I disagree with him that chaplains do not violate their mandate. Chaplains have been called from specific religious traditions to represent those traditions as well as to care for all. By the same token, U. S. service members represent specific religious traditions, and by denying them faith-specific training chaplains violate their 1st Amendment rights.

The complexity of the religious environment in the military has been discussed, but chaplains should engage this argument through point papers and after action reports.

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17 This is a difficult topic because chaplains do need to be sensitive to the religious traditions of others. However, there is a common misunderstanding these days that a chaplain who is praying from a specific religious tradition or who is teaching values from that tradition is somehow impressing upon others that religious tradition. When 90 percent of a unit is Christian, for example, it doesn’t make sense that they be denied faith-specific training, or worse, forced into faith-specific training that only one or two adhere to.

18 Point papers and after action reports are documents that are submitted to Commanders in an official format that are used to justify expenditures, aid in future planning, and provide the impetus for change to policy or training.
NWP 1-05 instructs training from a religious perspective, and chaplains are called from their respective denominations to do just that. Chaplains are not guilty of violating the Establishment Clause when they minister according to their own faith tradition. Chaplains should be careful in approaching this, but the Navy instructions are specific in this case that education should be from a religious perspective. A chaplain should therefore encourage service members to approach the subject from their unique faith perspectives, introduce his or her own faith perspective, and then invite the group to engage in conversation about how their beliefs might be different.

Training opportunities, counseling, and email communications are the keys to the tactical means of fulfilling this project. "Spiritual resiliency" is the latest buzz word being used within the military, supported by the Navy’s publication of the "Spiritual Fitness Guide" and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff’s instruction on Total Force Fitness. These give the chaplain the firepower to introduce training that can include membership in a local house of worship as a part of the program. In addition, it gives the chaplain an opportunity to creatively employ any number of instructions within the command to facilitate spiritual fitness. Marriage policies, new join briefs and documents, marriage and family seminars, as well as general religious ministry instructions all allow chaplains to shape the spiritual battlefield to provide creative ministry to service members and their families. Every opportunity should be taken to engage in this aspect of the staff officer position. The exercise also increases the chaplain’s professional expertise.

In counseling, chaplains have carte blanche regarding introducing a house of worship.

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19 U. S. Navy, “Spiritual Fitness Resources,” https://www.a.nko.navy.mil/portal/chaplaincorps/chcrpreligiousministryneeds/home/spiritualfitness (accessed 03 September 2011). See also Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Instruction 3405.01, Chairman’s Total Force Fitness Framework.
worship in their plan for helping a service member or family. They cannot recommend a wholly different religious tradition from the one to which the service member ascribes, but they can encourage an overall strategy of congregational participation of some kind. In advance of this, chaplains should be able to name some military-friendly establishments which the family may attend. Larry Crabb, author of Connecting: Healing for Ourselves and Our Relationships, is a huge proponent of the local congregation, not simply as an aid for the spiritually sick, but as a replacement for the professional therapist. He writes, "The greatest need in modern civilization is the development of communities—true communities where the heart of God is home, where the humble and wise learn to shepherd those on the path behind them, where trusting strugglers lock arms with others as together they journey on." Chaplains should incorporate a plan to recommend a local congregation as a part of their counseling program, as a means of providing for them this type of community.

Additionally, email communications, newsletters and blogs done well can provide an added means of connection to the local church. Regular communication from the chaplain, whether weekly, monthly, or quarterly, should encourage service members to attend their local house of worship as a means of spiritual health and resiliency. Combined with messages related to ethics, morals, and marriage helps, the chaplain can provide a large synchronized message that will benefit the entire command and further his or her credentials within the unit.

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Training events such as General Military Trainings (hereafter, GMTs), and the like, are golden opportunities for a chaplain to further the message and his mission, and benefit the command. Whether the subject is suicide prevention, ethics, marriage, or new join briefs, the chaplain should take every opportunity to be in front of the troops. In combat units like the Marines, there is the additional opportunity to provide PTSD, combat, and operational stress briefs. These provide unique trainings where the subject of spiritual resiliency can be introduced along with other methods of coping with the stress of combat and deployment. Much has already been noted about the growing understanding by stress specialists of the unique place that faith has in dealing with combat and stress. Chaplains should make use of this research and the many training sessions that already exist to facilitate religious discussion.

Creating a Core

In fulfilling the mission of connecting military members and their families to the local church, the final piece of the puzzle is seeing to it that the work continues after the chaplain has moved to his or her next billet. Chaplains should be intentional about reaching a core of individuals with whom he or she can disciple in the short term. Early on chaplains should be praying about who those individuals will be, and then they should begin to pour into them. A simple plan for doing this incorporates the warrior mentality of the Marines with their own doctrine and instructions, and a biblical process for developing them as leaders.

There are many models that one could use, but chaplains should seek something which can be easily replicated and quickly passed on. One tool that chaplains could use
for discipleship is a small booklet that can be placed inside one’s cargo pocket titled, *Martial Spirit for Christians: A User’s Guide for Applying Christian Values to Combat Training.* The intent of the booklet was for Marines to use the booklet while in the field or deployed, and to share the principles with other Christians or non-believers. The booklet describes one’s faith in the context of combat arms, explains what it means to be a Christian, and provides leadership training, basic discipleship training, maturity training, and basic guidance on Christian habits for spiritual growth. The booklet tells the story of David’s mighty men, which appeals to the Marines’ sense of the warrior. This passage in 2 Samuel 23:8-12 states,

> These are the names of David’s mighty warriors: Josheb-Basshebeth, a Takkemonite, was chief of the Three; he raised his spear against eight hundred men, whom he killed in one encounter. Next to him was Eleazar son of Dodai the Ahohite. As one of the three mighty warriors, he was with David when they taunted the Philistines gathered at Pas Dammim for battle. Then the Israelites retreated, but Eleazar stood his ground and struck down the Philistines till his hand grew tired and froze to the sword. The LORD brought about a great victory that day. The troops returned to Eleazar, but only to strip the dead. Next to him was Shammah son of Agee the Hararite. When the Philistines banded together at a place where there was a field full of lentils, Israel’s troops fled from them. But Shammah took his stand in the middle of the field. He defended it and struck the Philistines down, and the LORD brought about a great victory.

The booklet also cites the biblical existence of mighty fighters, which encourages the warriors.

The leadership portion of the booklet borrows from J. Robert Clinton’s work on focused leadership as a means to develop the warriors’ understanding of Christian leadership as well as their role as leaders. In his book, *Strategic Concepts That Clarify a Focused Life,* Clinton writes, “A leader, from a Biblical perspective, is a person with

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God-given capacity and with God-given responsibility who is influencing a specific group of God’s people toward God’s purposes for the group.”

The “basics of the Christian faith” portion of the booklet is based upon the simple model of Thom Wolf called “The Universal Discipleship Model.” The focal verse for this section of the booklet is 1 Peter 2:5: “You also, like living stones, are being built into a spiritual house to be a holy priesthood, offering spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.” The Universal Discipleship Model follows the parallel verses in the New Testament that reveal a pattern of teaching consistent in the Pauline letters as well as Peter and John.

This is the tactical plan for connecting military members to the local church. It embodies basic concepts of discipleship, leadership, and evangelism worded in a military context for combatants, many of whom have seen violent combat and have killed in combat. If the plan is successful in converting people, but fails in connecting them to the local church, then it will have failed. The Bride of Christ is where these warriors need to be, as they continue to serve their country and their fellow warriors.

Closing Thoughts

The building block of this strategy is relationships: between chaplains, between pastors, between pastors and chaplains, and between service members and the local church. Chaplains need to invest in the local church, invest in their units, and invest in a

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select core of individuals who God is already preparing for them to invest in. Certainly, chaplains must first invest in their relationship with God, out of which all the rest flows. From these relationships the chaplain will be able to see more families come to a saving knowledge of Christ and service in the Kingdom. A part of that investment is also in becoming a staff professional, the military excellence of the job. With that investment he or she will build the credibility needed to sometimes convince the proverbial "king of the realm" regarding a specific decision. Without it, the chaplain is not much more than a nice good luck charm who delivers prayers and services from time to time.
CHAPTER 7
IMPLEMENTATION AND ASSESSMENT

Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever.

—Daniel 12:3

In the fall of 2005, after returning from a combat deployment in Iraq to Camp Pendleton, I was introduced to the good people of North Coast, and specifically Nina and Jack Baugh. There were a number of other churches talking about reaching the military at Camp Pendleton, but much of their conversation revolved around having military in leadership; however, their language was not conducive to connecting with the military and they had no programs that met the needs of military families. These other churches had some connections with military families (including a relationship between my family and a pacifist family from Canada), but these churches were not destined to produce tangible results in connecting with military families. North Coast provided the beginnings of a means for introducing people to the local church through events and services that the church is in a unique position to offer.

At North Coast there was a small group of wonderful Christians who had a special desire to help military families by offering goods and services, especially for those with

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Marines and Sailors deployed. In meetings with that small group, the plan was hatched to provide things like furniture/clothing lockers for families, and to make connections during pre-deployment briefs and return and reunion events. There were other connections that involved ministries onboard Camp Pendleton to provide food, diapers, and the like, but North Coast provided a unique service beyond our expectations through their members.

**Desired Outcome**

The success of this strategy will be marked by service members and their families connecting to local churches in the area for support, to engage in discipleship in their walk with Christ, and to serve in the church. As a part of this strategy Marines and Sailors will recognize their adoption as members of God’s family through faith in Christ, as well as their unique calling to the mission field, whether that is the military or another. Large-scale events that center on the required training of Marines and Sailors will appeal more to families if they are held in a friendly environment, like a church with childcare and comfortable rooms. Additionally, the strategy will gain credibility when instructions and directives from commanders are given that focus resources and energy on helping service members connect to a faith community.

Helping Marines and Sailors find their calling to Christ and to a mission field will require intentional instruction in leadership and discipleship. There are many off-the-shelf programs that can facilitate this; the program mentioned in the preceding chapter is only one example. As Jesus prayed and found disciples, the chaplain should focus similar energy on discovering a small core of believers who can carry on the message.
after he or she has gone on to the next assignment. The hope is that a chaplain could return to a unit and find members attending church and seeking out others to minister to.

At the macro level (which will be more difficult to measure), the success of the strategy will be a decrease in stress-related issues and illness. If the right churches and the right chaplains are making connections, issues of PTSD should decrease as church communities minister to these warriors, and as warriors minister to other warriors. The impact of negative stories and research will have less of an impact through the inoculation of the Holy Spirit, which will also provide an altogether different outlook on what service members see and hear. Families will be less fragmented by the stress of operational tempos, and better able to handle the return of their warriors from combat.

Finding a Church (2006-2007)

North Coast planted a seed, but a church in closer proximity was needed in order to make the program work. Our family had been looking for a place to connect, and New Song was convenient to our location in the Del Mar housing of Camp Pendleton; New Song also offered opportunities to serve. In the spring of 2006 I approached Steve Foster, the Executive Pastor at the time, with a proposition in line with the church’s philosophy of being “the church next door.” I proposed that Camp Pendleton use New Song facilities for its training events (such as pre-deployment briefs and return and reunion events). I also asked whether New Song would be able to assist with childcare and the like. Pastor Steve’s answer was a resounding yes.

In the days leading up to the first pre-deployment brief, New Song made available all of their resources, provided childcare workers, and even prayed to open the event.
North Coast also participated by helping with childcare, providing door prizes, and serving dinner. Overall the event was a success.

One important chaplain on the base disagreed with the idea of military events being held at a religious institution. This chaplain warned repeatedly that future events should not be held in such venues. He felt that doing so would send the message that Camp Pendleton was endorsing one particular religion by using a church’s facilities. The senior chaplains onboard the base, including my Commanding Officer, were unmoved by the warnings. We continued to hold events of this nature at various churches, particularly in cooperation with New Song and North Coast, as well as with several other organizations.

In 2007, upon my return from Iraq, work began to intentionally build bridges between New Song and the community of Camp Pendleton. Prior to my departure for Iraq I had introduced the new Command Chaplain for 1st Marine Logistics Group (hereafter, 1st MLG) to New Song. Upon my return he and his family had already joined and were serving in the church.

I also learned that the Executive Officer from 1st Medical Battalion, one of three battalions under the 1st MLG command, had given her life to Christ and joined New Song as a result of a return and reunion brief. In the days leading up to deployment I was covering her battalion as the chaplain. I encouraged her that they needed to do a return and reunion brief regardless of the number in attendance, and I offered to share with her my model for such an event. Following the event at New Song, the battalion wanted to give the church a letter of commendation for their support. The Executive Officer and several others attended a worship service where they delivered the certificate, which
resulted in her hearing the Gospel and attending the church until her departure from the command. This affirmed for me the importance of doing these events, which Pastor Hal confirmed for me in a private meeting we had on the subject of military ministry.

In this particular conversation with Pastor Hal, he shared his heart for the military with me, which is when I knew that New Song was the place where God could connect people. It also confirmed that this was not just my vision, but God’s vision for glorifying himself through growing the kingdom by reaching families. It also confirmed that chaplains must be instruments of the local church, not stand-alone ministers in the military.

There is often disagreement amongst chaplains regarding whether ministry should take place exclusively on base or whether ministry should involve local churches. In the early days following my first deployment to Iraq, the Command Chaplain admonished me for not holding a Bible study on base. I told him that did in fact lead a Bible study at my church. He insisted that leading a Bible study at the command was an important aspect of chaplaincy. My feeling was and is, however, that chaplains reach more people by visitation to their work space than by an on-base Bible study. Additionally, there is at times an issue with service members confusing Bible study for church; many will attend a Bible study in lieu of joining a church. I have found that by inviting them to my church for a Bible study, and pointing people to other Bible studies going on at different churches, this problem can be avoided.

At the time of my meeting with Pastor Hal, he had recently attended a ministry service meeting in Norfolk, Virginia where he had met Gary Sanders of Military Missions Network. At that event he had met a number of pastors and leaders from
Campus Crusade for Christ who were looking to begin military ministries. Pastor Hal shared this vision for a military pastor with me, as well as the resources of Campus Crusade for Christ to fund this position.1 After our discussion Pastor Hal asked me to speak to a group at New Song about the potential for a ministry to the base, which I was happy to do. At that time Pastor Hal and I discussed how the church might proceed on a track to become more intentional about reaching the base. Many of the pieces were already in place for them to begin: a growing relationship with a major Command’s Chaplain in 1st MLG, focused events for units that were sponsored by the church, small groups targeted at military spouses, and a plan to bring a military chaplain onboard as a pastor at the church. The primary missing piece was a focused effort on my part to leave strategic Christians within the unit to carry on evangelizing and pointing individuals to the local church, an issue that would have to be addressed after serving new orders to the East Coast.

**Changes from 2007 to 2009**

In the spring of 2009, after spending two years on the USS BATAAN in Norfolk, Virginia, I received orders back to Camp Pendleton and 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion (hereafter, 1st MSOB). During the two years that I was gone, several changes took place: at New Song, at North Coast, and within the military itself. The two churches expanded their ministries to the military and were blessed with fruit, while changes within the military caused unanticipated problems for churches in making connections at Camp Pendleton.

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1 Campus Crusade for Christ had also developed a PTSD curriculum which was made available. I cautioned Pastor Hal about the use of materials, based upon cautions which were mentioned in Chapter 6.
Changes at New Song

Upon hearing the news that I would be returning to Camp Pendleton, I quickly made contact with Pastor Hal to let him know that my family and I would be returning. We were looking forward to plugging back into the work there. Some things had changed at the church, but the work of reaching into Camp Pendleton was continuing.

One change was that New Song had expanded their programs to connecting with the Marines while they were still recruits. A unique aspect of ministry to Camp Pendleton is that a portion of boot camp for Marines is held on the base at a location called Edson Range. Here members of New Song participate twice monthly in supporting the chapel services, where fully 90 percent of all recruits will attend when they travel through Edson Range on their way toward becoming Marines. Volunteers assist in praying with them at services, offering Bible studies and discipleship, and then continuing to correspond with them after they graduate and go to the fleet. The hope is that some of those 90 percent who end up stationed at Camp Pendleton will continue to attend a local church or chapel. I had the opportunity to preach and teach one Sunday and experience the event firsthand.

Another change was that New Song had hired a Pastor to the Military, which unfortunately had met with some less than desirable results. One problem was with the pastor’s salary; Campus Crusade for Christ had provided a year’s salary for the position, after which time the Military Pastor was going to have to fundraise to keep a salary. In addition, the individual the church hired was of a different denominational flavor, and

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2 Marines are called recruits until the day of graduation from boot camp, even referring to themselves in the third person as “this recruit.”
New Song required him to be re-ordained in accordance with their statements of faith. It was also discovered that the military pastor was not prepared to work within a staff organization, and found himself at odds with the senior and executive pastors on several occasions. Finally, the military pastor did not endeavor to make connections with chaplains on the base to further the vision that had been planted prior to his coming. In short, the calling of this pastor resulted in many lessons learned, the most important one being that perhaps the church was not ready to bring on a military pastor at the time.

On a positive note, several of the families from my prior command had joined the church after I left in direct response to the training events that were held at the church. As if to confirm the need for this strategy, three of the families were in the process of moving to new stations when I arrived, and told me how much the events had meant to them for this reason. The church had also had some luck with social events for military families as well as small group Bible studies for spouses, which were steadily growing.\(^3\) With the little effort we exerted to make these connections, there was some fruit. There was also fruit at other churches in the area, including at North Coast.

Changes at North Coast

At North Coast, what began as a needs-based ministry to families in 2005 blossomed into a full-blown program, complete with an Outreach Pastor to the Military and a program called the Military Support Network.\(^4\) In 2009 Nina and Jack Baugh were

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\(^3\) Some of this could also have been attributed to the movie which New Song had just made and was preparing to release, which was well publicized in the North San Diego area. More information on the movie, called “To Save a Life,” is available at tosavealifemovie.com.

honored by the Marine Corps with the Spirit of Hope award for their service through this ministry, and their network is working with churches all over the North Bay to minister to the military and connect them to the local church. In 2010 the network partnered with the City of San Diego to support San Diego CityFest with Luis Palau, further establishing itself within the military community.5 Bear Trillizio, the Outreach Pastor, is a regular figure at the Edson Range services. As a former Reconnaissance Marine during Vietnam, his colorful past provides an amazing testimony to which the Marines can relate. Their success is a direct result of intentional intrusion into the community of Camp Pendleton through relationships with chaplains.

The Marine Corps Community Services

The Marine Corps Community Services (hereafter, MCCS) is an organization that, at the time of my first tour at Camp Pendleton, was beginning to offer many of the programs that chaplains had been offering prior to their existence. A government-contracted entity, MCCS grew during the two years that I was gone and became much more powerful and all-inclusive. A quick look at their website reveals the number of programs they now offer, including counseling, marriage seminars, and pre-deployment briefs.6 The MCCS also established the creation of civilian contracted positions within the commands called Family Readiness Officers (FRO), whose duties are those formerly handled by an officer within the command. Depending upon the religious preference of


the FRO and the MCCS representative the chaplain might be dealing with, getting connected with these individuals and their programs could prove extremely difficult.

Such was the case when I first returned to base in 2009. I deployed right away upon arrival, but when I returned from deployment we had a new FRO who was not open to my involvement. Unfortunately, MCCS dollars which were used to fund events prohibited the command from holding such events at churches or other religious establishments; this was based upon an interpretation of the 1st Amendment that made such mingling a violation of the separation of church and state. To this problem I involved the volunteers of Armor of Light ministries from Calvary Chapel in Costa Mesa, who provided food for these events on base, as well as cakes and other special items for commands in and around Camp Pendleton.\(^7\) Volunteers of Armor of Light helped with putting on these events as well as advertising base religious services and community religious services.

**Moving Forward at Camp Pendleton (2009-present)**

Since my return in 2009, my focus has been twofold. My first focus has been identifying and discipling a small group of service members who can carry on the work after I am gone. My second focus has been using the Performance and Resiliency Program as a means of assessing the strategy proposed in this ministry focus paper. In combination, these two tasks will ensure continued spiritual growth and connection with local churches for service members at Camp Pendleton for years to come.

\(^7\) Calvary Chapel of Costa Mesa website, “Armor of Light” page, armoroflightcc.com (accessed March 1, 2012).
Coming back to Camp Pendleton provided the opportunity for me to focus on developing a core of men who could carry on the ministry strategy after I left. It became apparent that three men with whom I had been dealing on a regular basis were possible candidates. All of them were graduates of the Basic Reconnaissance Course and two of them had sought me out for counseling as they dealt with marriage issues. The third Marine was happily married to his first wife and had been leading Bible studies on his last deployment. After prayer, I decided to invest in the opportunity to disciple these men, as they would be at the command long after I had left.

They were the impetus for the writing of *Martial Spirit for Christians*, and I decided to use the booklet as a discipleship tool. They were immediately excited about the concept, believing innately that their role as warriors was integral to how God had made them, not antithetical. The study on David’s Mighty Men, which became the title of our gatherings (1st MSOB’s Mighty Men), was integral to their understanding of how they were to be Christians and men of focused violence. This began with a weekly prayer time for mutual support, and blossomed into outside times of conversation and reflection. Two of the three men attended a Restored Warrior retreat, which contributed to their understanding of their warrior hearts.

For the “focused lives” studies, the group looked at the life of Lieutenant General William G. Boykin, one of the founding members of Delta Force, and a fairly maligned
Christian character in the news recently. We discussed the life of Medal of Honor recipient Desmond T. Doss, an avowed pacifist and conscientious objector who served as a hospital corpsman in World War II, and how his focused life allowed him to not only serve with valor but allowed him to stay true to his beliefs. We also looked at the lives of the three men themselves, considering how God was shaping them for their current jobs as more than Marines in Marine Special Operations Command (hereafter, MARSOC). One of the more exciting events that this created was an opportunity for these men to share their experiences with the congregation at New Song in coordination with a sermon I preached there. The connection to the local church that meant a great deal to them, and while not all three attend New Song, each of them currently attends a church in the San Diego Country area.

Performance and Resiliency Program (PERRES): A Vehicle for Church Connection and Project Assessment

In the fall of 2010, General LeFavre, the MARSOC Commander, announced a new initiative for the Marines called the Performance Resiliency Program (hereafter, PERRES) in response to the needs of Marines and Sailors. The program’s intent is to focus resiliency training on three vital areas of the warrior: spiritual, physical, and mental. Camp Pendleton was already offering marriage retreats and other programs through Chaplain Religious Education Development Operation (CREDO). MARSOC had partnered with Joni and Friends to execute a faith-based Family Getaway (family

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8 Jerry Boykin and Lynn Vincent, Never Surrender: A Soldier’s Journey to the Crossroads of Faith and Freedom (Nashville: Faithwords, 2008). He is also the founder of Kingdom Warriors, information which can be found at www.kingdomwarriors.net.

retreat) program, in the style of their Wounded Warrior Retreats, which met with a
phenomenal response. The MARSOC chaplains were providing combat stress
awareness briefs, suicide prevention briefs, and ethics briefs, all with an emphasis on the
need for some kind of spiritual development in the life of the service member. From my
first deployment I had been producing an email blog titled, “Chaplain on the Edge,”
which provided a venue to discuss religious, moral, and ethical issues. I also wrote
quarterly newsletters within the command that covered the same issues. PERRES gave
the command the freedom to create a spiritual resiliency program along with physical and
mental programs.

Two documents were produced out of PERRES, along with instructions: a pre-
screening packet and a spiritual balance packet. The pre-screening packet became a
mandatory part of the “Welcome Aboard” packet for all Marines and Sailors checking
into the command. The pre-screening packet is a tool that was created to assess any
particular issues or problems an individual might be encountering, which includes
questions on one’s education, family, physical goals, and spiritual goals. The intent is to
identify issues prior to an incident, and more importantly to help the individual to create a
plan for his or her own personal development while in the command. Each Marine and

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10 Joni and Friends is an organization committed to providing assistance for the disabled; see

11 This prescreening packet was developed by the Human Factors Council, which is a program by
which various subject matter experts (“SMEs”) come together to address issues and concerns about
individual members of the unit, and how to get those in need of help back on track.
Sailor reviews the packet with various subject matter experts (hereafter, SMEs), such as chaplains, physical therapists, psychologists, and doctors, within the battalion.\textsuperscript{12}

Based on answers provided in this packet, service members are then given a questionnaire called “Spiritual Balance,” and they meet with chaplains to assess their spiritual development goals.\textsuperscript{13} From this meeting, any number of suggestions about books, studies, and houses of worship could be made to help the Marines or Sailors in their development. This is also a strategy for finding a core through whom God can carry on the work of evangelism and ministry.

Measuring Effectiveness

There are three areas that will be used to determine how effective this strategy is in connecting families and their service members to New Song. The first is the growth of “a spiritual remnant” within each individual command. The second is the growth of attendance at New Song by military members. And the third is the growth of involvement by local churches in reaching Camp Pendleton.

As each chaplain begins his or her tenure at a command at Camp Pendleton, the chaplain should develop a core of believers. This group should number between three and five individuals who will be discovered through application of the pre-screening packet and spiritual balance packet. After thirty months, the typical length for a unit assignment to the Marines, the chaplain will re-evaluate the members of this core to

\textsuperscript{12} Found in Appendix B, this packet is based upon the Ohio Buckeyes’ screening packet created by John Maxwell and Jim Tressel, \textit{The Winner’s Manual for the Game of Life} (Carol Stream, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, 2009).

\textsuperscript{13} Found in Appendix C, this packet is based upon John Ortberg’s \textit{The Me I Want to Be} (Nashville: Zondervan, 2009).
determine how their answers have changed and how involved they are in their local churches. There should be a measurable growth in their involvement in their local churches, a measurable growth in their spiritual maturity in exercise of the basic disciplines of the faith, and a measurable growth in their confidence in sharing with and discipling others.

Secondly, an assessment will be made of growth in military membership at New Song Church from the beginning of a chaplain’s assignment to his or her departure. There are two ways to assess this growth: the first is through statistics kept by New Song and the other is through the spiritual balance packet. As the core is reevaluated, the spiritual balance packet will be offered upon the transition of one chaplain to another. This will provide the oncoming chaplain an assessment tool for determining the needs of the unit, and provide the new chaplain with a convenient introduction into the program. At New Song, the chaplain would need to measure not only growth in military attendance at worship services and small group meetings, but growth in ministry participation as well as growth in programmatic emphasis related to the military.

Finally, the effectiveness of the program necessitates the interest and growth of participation by other churches. In 2005, for example, many churches were interested in reaching the military at Camp Pendleton, but only one had a concrete plan. By 2009, that number had grown to at least five, with one being in Orange County. This assessment will be facilitated by the chaplain interviewing local churches upon his or her arrival to the unit. The interview questions would include: 1) Does the church have a strategy for reaching the military at Camp Pendleton? 2) What is that strategy? 3) When did the church begin this ministry/strategy? 4) How much growth has the church seen in military
attendance? 5) Is the church interested in hearing about a strategy that could be implemented?

**Summary Thoughts**

Institutionalizing a plan is the most powerful way to see that the strategy carries on past a chaplain’s tenure. Even in the face of growing pluralism and antagonistic forces that are arrayed against the evangelical faith, there is ample law and direction for creating these programs. Chaplain Mendes once again offers hope in this regard:

“Pluralism offers the opportunity for an Aeropagus kind of encounter, where Christian ideals can be introduced in a non-patronizing manner (Acts 17:16-34). Despite such diversity, the military community is still relatively receptive of Judeo-Christian ideals which give the chaplain a stable starting point.”

Chaplains need to boldly enter this dialogue in their units, and create opportunities for dialogue using any and all means at their disposal to share the faith. Religion benefits the combatant commander with a more stable and mission-ready fighter; it benefits the warfighter for the same reason; it benefits the family members of the warfighter by giving them a more balanced human being to enjoy their lives with; it benefits all concerned because eternity hangs in the balance; and above all it glorifies God.

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SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

The primary purpose of humanity is to glorify God by loving him first and loving him most. The purpose of this project has been to glorify God by presenting a strategy for connecting the military families of Camp Pendleton to the local church, specifically New Song Community Church, through the evangelical work of the military chaplain in order to help others fulfill this primary purpose. By focusing on the future, developing beliefs that encourage a realistic optimism, decentralizing evangelistic responsibility, and engendering trust in a local community, Camp Pendleton’s warriors and their families will be better prepared to deal with combat stress reactions, and chaplains will leave behind growing believers and churches. Religious dialogue should be encouraged by military leaders and a healthy skepticism of any media message should be adopted. The movement away from positive and healthy beliefs is responsible for continued misunderstanding of what warriors do as well as what Christianity is. This movement is due to false media messages as well as forces at work within the culture to set up a secular humanist religion.

Chaplains do not have much time to make an impact on their respective commands; they generally have between two and three years depending on the nature of the unit. This strategy provides the means through which chaplains may educate congregations, assess their suitability for partnership, and then focus energy to connect service members to these congregations. Marriage seminars, budget planning, and weight loss are just three types of training that churches could offer in addition to the spiritual leadership and discipleship they provide to reach families on the base. New
Song and North Coast in North San Diego County have made use of all three for this very reason. Chaplains partnering with them to advertise and make these trainings available to service members make eternal connections. Chaplains need to be active in their local churches—teaching, preaching when called upon, and serving within the community of believers. Local congregations have no impetus to trust chaplains who never participate in the community of faith. Great theologians have all been church men and women, and chaplains should pursue the same kind of participation in their own churches.

Chaplains need to provide a unified front in their programming to reach service members. Through email, blogs, newsletters, trainings, and within their counseling models, chaplains need to highlight the need for connections to local bodies of believers. Chaplains are the spiritual and moral voices of their units, a role they have by instruction. It is a mandate to exercise their faith and raise the level of intelligent conversation about religion and faith within the military.

There is a war going on, but it is not just in the deserts and mountains of the Middle East. Ephesians 6:12 clearly states, “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” It is a struggle for the souls of U. S. military members who each and every day engage in risky training, not to mention combat operations. Chaplains and churches need to enter the battle better informed and better equipped theologically and academically. War is not the great evil of our time, nor is the “greed” of capitalism, but every word and work that ignores the need for a savior of our eternal souls. John Quincy Adams said as much in a letter to his son:

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There are three points of doctrine the belief of which forms the foundation of all morality. The first is the existence of God; the second is the immorality of the human soul; and the third is a future state of rewards and punishments. Suppose it possible for a man to disbelieve either of these three articles of faith and that man will have no conscience, he will have no other law than that of the tiger or the shark. The laws of man may bind him in chains or may put him to death, but they never can make him wise, virtuous, or happy.\footnote{1}

Chaplains need to understand their First Amendment mandate in this regard, and not be intimidated.

U. S. military leaders who advise the policymakers need to be proactive in advocating for spiritual readiness against the prevailing climate, which wishes to silence religion in the government. John Adams warned against such attacks when he said, “We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. . . . Our constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.”\footnote{2} These leaders also need to be more strategic and aggressive in shaping public opinion, and creative in its implementation. U. S. warriors and their families need military leaders to be advocates in the public dialogue, putting studies like divorce rates among military members in the context of the larger population.

Combatant Commanders know the power of spirituality on the ground, and the importance for those who face life and death on the battlefield to know what they believe about the eternal. Thomas Jefferson understood the importance of this dialogue and search for understanding as he established the University of Virginia:

\footnote{1}{John Quincy Adams, \textit{Letters of John Quincy Adams to His Son on the Bible and Its Teachings} (Auburn, AL: James M. Alden, 1850), 22-23.}

\footnote{2}{John Adams, \textit{The Works of John Adams, Second President of the United States}, ed. by Charles Francis Adams (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1854), 229.}
It was not, however, to be understood that instruction in religious opinions and duties was meant to be precluded by the public authorities as indifferent to the interests of society. On the contrary, the relations which exist between man and his Maker – and the duties resulting from those relations – are the most interesting and important to every human being and the most incumbent on his study and investigation.³

Military leaders also understand the impact that negative messages can have for warriors in the fight. Homer understood the impact of negative opinions as well, as he depicts a conversation between Hector and the seer Polydamas after the appearance of an omen:

I don’t like the way you’re talking now.
You know how to speak better than this…
One omen is best: to fight for your country.
Why should you be afraid of combat?
But if I catch you holding back from battle
Or talking anybody else out of fighting,
You lose your life on the point of my spear.⁴

This event is made more important because Hector’s troops had seen the omen as well, so that if Polydamas did not join the ship it would have sent a clear message about what he believed the omen meant. Michael Attyah, in his book, Seer in Ancient Greece, discusses the conflict between the Seers of the Iliad and their military employers, which was not typical of seers in Greek culture.⁵ Military leaders like Hector understood that morale and stress reactions are largely a leadership issue, and so they take these factors personally. Since for the Marine Corps these issues are also by instruction a leadership issue, every Commanding Officer should be a public advocate for religious and spiritual health within his or her command.


⁴ Homer, Iliad, 12.238ff.

⁵ Michael Attyah, Seer in Ancient Greece, Princeton: University of California, 2008, 94.
Churches too need to be more vocal advocates on these issues and not succumb to the pressure to be less political or vocal in the public arena. There is ample precedence for this from the founding of the United States. Benjamin Franklin Morris, in his book, *Christian Life and Character of the Civil Institutions of the United States*, writes, “The Ministers of the Revolution were, like their Puritan predecessors, bold and fearless in the cause of their country. No class of men contributed more to carry forward the Revolution and to achieve our independence than did the ministers.” Many Christians today say that the Church has been too involved, and some Christian pollsters would have Americans believe the same. Churches need to vocalize publicly what their chaplains in the military are constrained to by virtue of their commission, that the foundation of our liberty in this country is biblical. As stated by Daniel Webster in his *Address Delivered at Bunker Hill, June 17, 1843 on the Completion of the Monument*, “To the free and universal reading of the Bible in that age men were much indebted for rights views of civil liberty.” The free and universal reading of the word is what U. S. service members and their families need, not just for spiritual health but for their eternal souls. 1 Timothy 4:13 reads, “Until I come, devote yourself to the public reading of Scripture, to preaching and to teaching.”

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APPENDIX A

A Day in the Life of a Navy Chaplain with Marines

Chaplain Jones reflected on the death of the army chaplain by the IED blast as he and the Religious Program Specialist (RP) sat huddled for warmth in the back of the Army 46 helicopter. It was the first death of a chaplain in combat since Vietnam, the reporters had written. Somehow the press had forgotten about the priest who had been mortally wounded by a suicide bomber some six years before in Iraq. That chaplain had just succumbed to his injuries not too long ago, but apparently that did not count as a combat death, even though his injuries sustained in combat had been the cause. As the helicopter bobbed in and around the mountains of Northwest Afghanistan on its way back to Herat, Jones reflected on the day that the priest had been injured.

It was Thanksgiving Day in 2004, and the convoy was pulling into al Taqqadam (TQ) at daylight. An IED had disabled the vehicle Jones had been in, which delayed their arrival back from Fallujah. Fortunately no one had been injured, but everyone was shaken. It was one of the colder mornings in Iraq, below freezing, and Jones could not feel his legs for the cold. He stumbled into the chow hall for breakfast. It seemed colder in there than outside, as he watched the wind blowing the tent sides. “Sir, could you remove your watch cap?” asked the 1st Sergeant.1 “I have a hard enough time getting the Marines to follow the regulation.” He shivered. There would be no going to sleep until tonight. He wolfed down some eggs, bacon, and coffee and headed up the hill for the morning meeting.

1 A watch cap is a cold-weather hat, like a beanie.
Al Fajr was still going on in Fallujah, and there were three platoons of Marines and Sailors augmenting the Mortuary Affairs team in the city. “It’s gross work Sir, but your Marines and Sailors are holding up well,” Jones reported at the meeting. “We took them some cigars to cover the smell while they examine and move the bodies, some morale and welfare items, and clean uniforms.” The visit to the city with the guys had involved moving between blocks as the infantry units cleared them, sometimes with the buildings and bodies still smoking. The Marines made short work of snipers, though the building clearing took its toll. Jones’s RP was still at medical, trying to figure out why he could not get out of the truck to provide force protection for the chaplain. The Chief Warrant Officer had filled-in, for which Jones and him shared a cigar.

After the morning meeting, Jones headed back for the chapel, which also doubled as his room. He spent the next hour or so responding to emails and writing his weekly blog for those stuck at a desk in the unit, “Chaplain on the Edge.” Then he went and visited the Battalion Aid Station where he drank some coffee and visited with the doctor and the Corpsmen. After that he went over to Supply, and then paid a brief visit to the dentist, which ultimately resulted in the smoking of cigars. Jones changed into his physical training gear, put on his flack and kevlar and headed to the gym. He then took a shower, shaved, and changed into a clean uniform. He then prepared his prayer for the

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2 “Al Fajr” is the code name for the “Second Battle of Fallujah,” about which Wikipedia provides the following information: “The Second Battle of Fallujah (code-named Operation Al-Fajr (Arabic, ‘the dawn’) and Operation Phantom Fury) was a joint U.S., Iraqi, and British offensive in November and December 2004, considered the highest point of conflict in Fallujah during the Iraq War. It was led by the U.S. Marine Corps against the Iraqi insurgency stronghold in the city of Fallujah and was authorized by the U.S.-appointed Iraqi Interim Government.” See Wikipedia, s.v. “Second Battle of Fallujah,” http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Battle_of_Fallujah (March 21, 2012).

3 “Flack and Kevlar” refers to a protective vest and helmet.
Thanksgiving meal, and headed over to the chow hall.

After the prayer, Jones sat down to eat. As he ate there came the familiar sound, “poom, poom, poom . . . poom, poom, poom.” It was the base counter battery, and everyone paused in anticipation. “Whoomp . . . whoomp”; these sounds indicated impact over on Mainside. A month ago those sounds had been outside the chapel on our side of the base, as one impacted a tent near the chapel and the other killed two Marines outside the chapel and sent another two Marines back to the States with serious injuries. Everyone went back to eat; it was our Thanksgiving dinner after all. Then the condition red alarm sounded, and Jones and everyone else began to file out.

“Sir,” a Marine called to Chaplain Jones, “the chapel on Mainside was hit.”

“Was anyone hurt?” Jones responded emphatically.

“No word, Sir.” Jones got into his gator and headed over to Mainside, praying that no one had been hurt. When he arrived there were EOD technicians coming out of the chapel with the fins of a rocket. It had not detonated, and had not hit anyone. Two other rockets had impacted near the chapel, right during the mealtime as troops were lined up outside the chow hall. Jones headed back to his side of the base, just in time to attend the evening combat update brief.

A suicide bomber had gone into the chow hall in Mosul and killed and injured many more, including a chaplain. The report was made on the impacts of the indirect fire attack from earlier in the day; the insurgents responsible had been gone by the time the counter battery had sent rounds down range.

After the meeting, Jones went to the chapel to retrieve his jacket and headed up to the Command Officer’s quarters, where staff was gathering for the weekly movie, cigars,
and non-alcoholic beer. A projector showed Patton on the back of a small building that had not been destroyed in the initial invasion of Iraq. Cigars were blazing, as the lights of battle in Fallujah lit up the night sky. Jones returned to the chapel and responded to a few more emails. He wrote a note to his wife, placed his flak and kevlar next to the cot, and turned in for the evening.
APPENDIX B

Personal Resiliency
A Personal Plan for Living a Resilient Life

Pre-Screening Packet for New Joins

Becoming Balanced

Sofrosyneh is a Greek concept for healthy mindedness, self-control guided by knowledge. It was one of the ideals that Spartans aspired to as a part of the training in the agoge.

Miyamoto Musashi, a devotee of Shinto Buddhism and arguably the greatest swordsman who ever lived, understood this concept as spirituality.

In strategy your spiritual bearing must not be any different from normal. Both in fighting and in everyday life you should be determined though calm. Meet the situation without tenseness yet not recklessly, your spirit settled yet unbiased. Even when your spirit is calm do not let your body relax, and when your body is relaxed do not let your spirit slacken. Do not let your spirit be influenced by your body, or your body influenced by your spirit. Be neither insufficiently spirited nor over spirited. An elevated spirit is weak and a low spirit is weak. Do not let the enemy see your spirit.” — Miyamoto Musashi

The Christian scriptures refer to the need for a balance between truth and spirit in the Gospel of John.

For Marines and Sailors, this balance is also found in the Core Values of Honor, Courage, and Commitment.

“Spiritual Readiness is the bedrock upon which the concepts of Honor, Courage, and Commitment are built.”
MCRP 6-12C The Commander’s Handbook for Religious Ministry Support

The concept of our person as being three is based in the concept of dualism. Dualism is the belief two distinct parts to existence: a higher level of existence (spirit and mind) and a lower (physical), which death ultimately separates. But rather than three separate realities, modern thinkers understand these to be one existence with three facets, interwoven into one another, affecting the countenance and performance of the others.

“Suppose that a tool, e.g., an axe, were a natural body, then being an axe would have been its essence, and so its soul; if this dissipated from it, it would have ceased to be an axe, except in name.” — Aristotle
New Join Pre-Screening Questionnaire

In the pages that follow you will answer questions to assist you and your leadership in making a plan for your personal development at 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion. Part of becoming resilient is recognizing the difference between the purpose for your existence and the roles we often inhabit on the road to fulfilling our existence.

For example, the role of a father. There is not a more noble role to fulfill than to raise the next generation; however, being a father is a role that is a part of a larger purpose, but as mentioned an extremely important one. Knowing your purpose will actually make you a better father in the long run.

Likewise, stress is often created when what we do with our lives is not consistent with what we say is important—or is incompatible with what our purpose is. I say my family is important, but any spare time I have I spend doing something else.

Life in the military does not always afford us the choice of choosing our priorities, that in itself is a choice that must be reconciled. Chances are this is not an issue for you, since you have chosen this command to be a part of; however, it may be an issue with your family. This questionnaire has been designed in part to help make a plan to mitigate these problems, and help you and your family operate in SOCOM for many years to come.

Use the pre-screening questions in this packet as a tool to work with the FRO, the Fitness Coaches, the Medical personnel, the Chaplain, your leaders, and most importantly your family to design a program for continued professional, personal and/or family development.

**Personal/Family**
General Thoughts: The family is the basic social unit of our society.
1. What are your goals?
2. What is keeping you from achieving them?
3. How do you plan to overcome them and what services should be in place to facilitate this?

**Spiritual/Moral**
General Thoughts: Above all else, I realize that my spiritual beliefs and my moral values will shape my life. I will do what is right!
1. What are your goals?
2. What is keeping you from achieving them?
3. How do you plan to overcome them and what services should be in place to facilitate this?
Caring/Giving
General Thoughts: How I function as a total person in society is important. I will give back to my community.
1. What are your goals?

2. What is keeping you from achieving them?

3. How do you plan to overcome them and what services should be in place to facilitate this?

Health/Fitness
General Thoughts: One of the greatest gifts we have is our health. My physical conditioning is a controllable commodity. I will develop lifetime fitness habits.
1. What are your goals?

2. What is keeping you from achieving them?

3. How do you plan to overcome them and what services should be in place to facilitate this?

The Team
General Thoughts: I am a part of a great team. I count on my teammates, and they are counting on me. I will achieve great things.
1. What are your goals?

2. What is keeping you from achieving them?

3. How do you plan to overcome them and what services should be in place to facilitate this?

Academics/Career
General Thoughts: I am in school to achieve academically and obtain a valuable degree. I want to grow both productively and profitably in my career.
1. What are your goals?

2. What is keeping you from achieving them?

3. How do you plan to overcome them and what services should be in place to facilitate this?
APPENDIX C

Achieving Balance
A Personal Plan for Spiritual Resiliency

Spiritual Resiliency is one part of 1st Marine Special Operations Battalion’s Performance and Resiliency Program.

_Spiritual Resiliency:_ From NAVMC DIR 1500.58

“This is when the Marine has a sense of meaning and _purpose_, a sense of self, and ‘that which is greater than self’. Spirituality also involves a ‘sense of the other’ and is expressed in issues such as ‘belonging’ (identification with), esprit-de-corps, and active commitment to the collective identity and purpose of the small unit and the United States Marine Corps in general.”

This is important to the Marine because spirituality defines our values which provide the guiding principles for our moral compass and are the foundation from which we derive our purpose.

In the following pages you will answer some specific questions about your spirituality. This is a private matter, but there are people around to help you on the journey. The Chaplain, your faith’s religious leaders, and others of like faith who can provide sound guidance.

The only way to make this tool useful is to be honest in the answering of the questions. Once answered, then you can make a plan to put them into action.

_Honor, Courage, and Commitment_

The United States Marine Corps and the United States Navy are made-up of many different religious adherents, who worship in many different and unique ways. But the place where our varying faiths converge, the starting point from which a conversation on spirituality can take place, is our Core Values.

Spiritual Readiness is the bedrock upon which the concepts of Honor, Courage, and Commitment are built.

--MCRP 6-12C _The Commander’s Handbook for Religious Ministry Support_


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