# Justice and War: Theological Principles on the Use of Force and the Ethics of Armed Conflict (1 hour credit)

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

Eric Patterson, Ph.D., Executive Vice President, Religious Freedom Institute

Marc LiVecche, Ph.D., McDonald Distinguished Scholar of Ethics, War, and Public Life at *Providence: A Journal of Christianity and American Foreign Policy*.

Hosted by Jennifer Marshall, Director, RTS Institute of Theology and Public Life. Please direct questions to jpatterson@rts.edu.

# Reading Assignments:

* Essential Readings (Required for Credit Students and Auditors)
  + C.S. Lewis, “Why I am Not a Pacifist”\*
  + Chapter 1, Patterson & Charles, *Just War and Christian Traditions*\*
* Required Readings for Credit Students

*Books*

* + Eric Patterson & J. Daryl Charles, *Just War and Christian Traditions* (pre-publication version available in Canvas (2022)) [pre-read chaps. 1, 5]\*
  + J. Daryl Charles & Timothy J. Demy, *War, Peace & Christianity: Questions & Answers from a Just-War Perspective* (Selections 1-40, 50-53, 61-64, 99-100)

*Articles and primary sources*

* + Augustine, “Letter to Boniface (189)” and excerpts from *Contra Faustum\**
  + Schleitheim Confession\*
  + Eric Patterson and Timothy J. Demy, eds. *Philosophers on War.* Introduction and chapters by Keith Pavlischek on John Calvin, and Marc LiVecche on Jean Bethke Elshtain\*
  + *Providence* Reader\*
  + James Turner Johnson’s “[Just War, As it Was, And Is](https://www.firstthings.com/article/2005/01/just-war-as-it-was-and-is),” *First Things*
  + U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, “The Challenge of Peace”

(1983) [http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/war-and- peace/nuclear-weapons/upload/statement-the-challenge-of-peace-1983-05- 03.pdf](http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/war-and-%20peace/nuclear-weapons/upload/statement-the-challenge-of-peace-1983-05-%2003.pdf)

* Eric Patterson, *Ethics Beyond War’s End,* “Conclusion (ch. 7): Toward a Twenty- First Century *Jus Post Bellum*”\*
  + Darrell Cole, “Good Wars.” *First Things*
  + Paul Ramsey, “The Uses of Power,” *The Just War: Force and Christian Responsibility\**
  + Reinhold Niebuhr, “Why the Christian Church is Not Pacifist”\*
  + Keith Pavlischek, "Reinhold Niebuhr, Christian Realism and Just War Theory: A Critique" in *Christianity and Power Politics Today: Christian Realism and Contemporary Political Dilemmas.\**
  + Marc LiVecche, “Reinhold Niebuhr & the Problem of Paradox”\*
  + Marc LiVecche, chapter 1 from *The Good Kill: Just War and Moral Injury\**
* Recommended Reading:
  + John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book IV, Ch. 20
  + Reinhold Niebuhr, *Children of Light and Children of Darkness*
  + Jean Bethke Elshtain, chapter on genocide in *Ethics Beyond War's End\**
  + Nigel Biggar, *In Defence of War* (chapters 1-4, 7)
  + Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, II.II.40 available at: <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/3040.htm>
  + Paul Ramsey, *Basic Christian Ethics*, ch. 5\*
  + Reinhold Niebuhr, “Theology and Political Thought in the Western World” and “The Conflict Between Personal and Social Morality”\*
  + The Catholic Bishops’ “The Challenge of Justice is Sown in Peace” (1993)available at: <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-> social-teaching/the-harvest-of-justice-is-sown-in-peace.cfm

# Grading (All assignments will be filed via Canvas)

-Book Review (25%)

* + Write a book review of approximately 1000 words using the model below of Patterson & Charles’ *Just War and Christian Tradition.* Due July 21, 2022.

Model can be found here: <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/handouts/book-reviews/>.

-Exam (55%)

* + Take-home, open-note exam; short essay format based on key concepts presented in lectures and readings. Due August 5, 2022.

-Active class participation (20%)

*^^The instructors reserve the right to modify this syllabus as needed.*