

Christianity and Just War Snider and Patterson

This conference will now be recorded. I know sometimes the ethics kind of has a a very challenging situation to some of our cultural norms, you know.

if christians if there are more christians open to this or experience open to these um teachings or education i think the understanding will be much deeper And the willingness to kind of apply those will be greater.

And I think people will try to live out those ethical lives.

in conjunction with what the Bible requires of us.

Yeah. No doubt there are clashes somewhere.

It's always easier to do when you're with fellow Christians.

Sorry, can you repeat your question again? It's always easier to live the Christian life when you're with fellow Christians. Oh, absolutely. Absolutely. Absolutely.

you know yeah but then again then again you know in a wider in a wider kind of congregation that some are not Christian, you know,It is the consistency of what you say and what you do that can appeal to people because If you believe in those ethics and you don't make it a habit or a lifestyle to apply to each and every day in every circumstances,I mean, people can think that you are misleading, that you are talking on one side and doing something else.

So if you are talking about it, leave it, leave by example, let people see, you know,Yes. If you're not authentic, they will know very quickly. Fortunately,We have the Holy Spirit to help us and they don't. Yes. Yes. Yes.

and i think for us who kind of listen to these presentations and you know love to listen to We have to do diligence to these teachers. Take it faithfully and apply it well in our lives. Because if we don't do that,we're not giving validity to what we are we are being taught or listening to Because if we listen to all these ethics things and then we go and In the secret of our life or our normal life, we live something contrary to that.

There is no validity in what we want to talk about.

You know, there's no, yeah, it's, it's, that's the nature of the military profession. Leadership is always visible.

You can always see it. And if it's not authentic, then you tend not, the followers tend not to listen. They've already seen what,has convinced them of the character of the leader. So walking the talk every day, that's the process. Mm-hmm. Mm-hmm.

So we're starting to get folks come on now.

This is Bob Collins joining us. He's been involved with this project quite a long time.

And Eric Jackson, I see his mic's off, but he's on, from Colorado Springs.

Hmm.

And Carl, I think the other thing is that, you know, as much as you invite people to be part of this training, you know I think the owners of some people to be true disciples of these things it's not just kind of going through the training or coming to listening and not make good use of it we have to be true disciples who believes in what, you know, we are hearing and to live by it, do it.

and the way to share that across. The way we're sort of approaching that, Eddie, is mainly through the interns.

These are young leaders that are with us and we build a very strong relationship with.

As you build a relationship, you get to people who become more excited about whatever the topic is that you're working with. It's not just information transfer, but it's It's relational learning. It's over the shoulder through the heart is the way we like to say.

say it, which is different than just the average person that is listening to the presentation.

The ones that we particularly are going through this material with are the interns. And we're up to we have as many as We have nominations of seven interns from the countries of Uganda, Kenya, South Africa and Nigeria. And those are the ones that we are trusting to actually get excited about the project, about the material, And then not only that, but they'll be able to teach it within their MCF.

teach and this has happened particularly in Uganda where they've gone out to multiple groups with this this information to different locations. Jude's just coming on right now, who is our intern from Uganda.

as well. And so we're happy to have him, Sam Nakano, the head of the Military Christian Fellowship of Japan is with us as well.

and so we welcome them to us to this time together. We'll wait a little bit longer till we get a few more. We should have a few more from particularly, hopefully from West Africa. We'll see how that works out.

depends on people's schedules. This particular project that we're doing really only it's on a not to interfere basis with anything else because that's the only way that we have found that we can effectively, even though it's not as efficient a way to do it. But it has been able to be effective, whereas When we ask too much of young officers, and that's what we have done in the past

sometimes with our ethics training, We asked too much and we were also too academic. And we also have another of our interns now from from Uganda, that's Ivan, has joined us. Both are two interns in Uganda are army captains and both strong leaders in the military Christian fellowship of their country.

as well. I think more will join us as we go along. I'm still going to wait a few more minutes.

And I'm going to ask, though, in a moment, if when we start, if Bob Collins, if you'd say an opening prayer for us.

That would be great. So we'll just see who else we get here.

you Okay.

We have Art Lees joining us. Art is our advocate who is on the team and our expert in international law as a former JAG officer. Welcome to have Art with us. He's also the founder of Advocates Asia.

uh, Okay. I tell you what, we're going to go ahead and start. Hopefully people will be joining us as we go, which is the normal case.

And I'm going to ask if Bob Collins, if you would open us with a prayer today. Can I ask a question first? I don't think I've met Eddie. Where is Eddie from? Eddie represents two different ministries, MMI, as well as CRU.

for West Africa and he has been involved with us and using some of the materials and trying to work with us to uh help uh the uh mcfs with the ethics uh ethics ministry nice to meet you eddie okay Let's pray. Father, we come to you this afternoon thanking you for what you've done in our personal lives, the salvation that you brought to your son, Jesus Christ. And Father, as we meet as a group, to think about the training that's needed for our brothers and sisters in West Africa and really other places in this world.

we just come in humility, understanding that we don't have the answers. But among us, through collaboration and discussion and prayer.

we will come to some conclusions that hopefully glorify you in what we do. So Father, as we continue, to discuss and to pray and to plan. We pray that you will be involved in all of this, that you will bless each of us.

You cause us to be a blessing to one another. And we'd give you all the praise in Jesus name. Amen. Amen. Amen.

By the way, this whole hour and the following hour will be recorded.

And particularly like in West Africa, the ones that are not able to join us today will have the ability to have this presentation at their leisure and to be able to watch it and see the discussion that we have.

So with that, I'd like to go ahead and just I've already sent out an introduction of our of our presenter who's had has had such a wonderful career and wonderful. He has been used wonderfully by the Lord.

in terms of ethics and developing an army ethic and, and the changing of some of the ideas about the profession, the Army profession in the US. It's our pleasure to have Dr. Snyder, Colonel, retired as our presenter, and we'll start with the recording.

It's a half hour recording and then we will go to a discussion with Dr. Snyder concerning the topic. So here we go.

Good. Let me go ahead. I appreciate this opportunity. I want to thank you. Some familiar faces, people I haven't seen in decades.

Hopefully we're still recognizable to each other, but that may not be the case.

I want to present a theme to you today that I've discussed with Cal before, but the theme is very simple to state.

I believe that you need to consider in your developmental program that military and police leaders as Christians have a potential leg up on their peers. Now that may sound like I'm being Just making a bold assertion. I assure you that's not the case. This is a heartfelt conclusion from and I'm going to go into my experiences. I'm going to develop this idea of why Christian leaders have opposed I want to address the meaning and power of their personal callings, their calling to faith and to service.

Second, I want to address the very compatible nature of the two ethics that they're following. It's a big benefit to be following ethics that are compatible.

And lastly, I wanna look at the Christian style of leadership that flows naturally and effectively from who Christian leaders are.

And in fact, it's the type of leadership, the style of leadership that is most needed create cohesive teams at the lower levels. So I want to treat each of those aspects in turn for two or three minutes, that's all.

So first, let's go to personal callings.

Young officers in the professions today, as we did when we were serving, are serving dual callings, one sacred and one secular. And the Christian's challenge is we call that integrating

faith, family, and profession. Notice the verb, integrating faith, family, and professions. It's not an option for the Christian.

into separate roles. Easy to do. I'm one person at work and another person at home and another person in church, et cetera. That's not an option.

Paul's message to the church at Colossus, whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all.

in the name of the lord Jesus Christ giving thanks to God the Father through him so the challenge dual callings integration let's look at the first calling From God to salvation and discipleship in Christ's church, by grace, the power of grace through faith.

Galatians 2, 8-10 for those who want to read the scriptural reference. So what are we called to as Christians in this Christian We're called to obey Christ, to become like him. That's a process of sanctification for the individual, the edification in the church, And we are to abide with him and in him now and eternally. And if we do the latter, then we are not compartments of our lives.

Obviously included in this call also under the Great Commission is the mandate to make disciples wherever we go and in whatever role we're fulfilling.

So the Christian calling most of us understand is pretty straightforward as we have developed in our Christian faith. What's the second calling? The second calling is to vocation.

For those under oath in a military and police profession, they are called to their vocation, called to their vocation.

and provides the logic and motivation for personal and family sacrifice when it's necessary for mission accomplishment.

Calling, in the Latin vocato. What does it mean? In one sentence. A calling means my work is more important than I am. And notice what I just said.

If you really believe your work is more important than you are, then for the person who is only going to have a job, just having a job, a job to take home a paycheck every month, In my experience, the motivational leg up from viewing their work as a calling rather than a job is potentially a major factor in the success of Christian leaders.

What did Christ tell us about this? On a rather enigmatic statement in Matthew 22, he's, When challenged about divided loyalties to God and the country, the church and the state, All he replied to the Pharisees was, give to Caesar what's Caesar, and to God's what is God's.

That's a rather enigmatic statement. There was not a lot of detail to flesh it out. And yet, that is the commandment on our life and on those that we are developing for future roles. How best might they follow that mandate? The second thing I want to talk about is the compatible nature

of the two ethics. Very compatible. And what happens when you're following two ethics in your life, that are very compatible. The nice thing about it is you are not put into position very often, if at all, to have to operate under divided loyalties. It's much easier for a leader in that situation for their walk to match their talk.

and yet for all of their walk and talk to be fully consonant with their personal beliefs, which eliminates most all cases of cognitive dissonance. So it is important that we help young people understand that these two ethics are compatible. Let's look briefly at the Christian ethic.

Generally, it's revealed in God's will, particularly as revealed in Scripture. It's an absolute prescriptive ethic. It's more deontological or duty-centered.

Witness the 10 commandments. The rule is the basis for the action. The rule is good, regardless of perceived consequences. Think of Abraham with Isaac.

Service doctors do generally agree that a leader's actions do accurately reflect their moral character. Doing flows naturally from being.

And for the Christian, that being is in Christ. So the content of one's moral character develops in consonance with what the individual and the institution, the two ethics, what they believe this is a much more integrated framework.

So what is, as we understand very briefly, the spiritual development of Christian officers? Salvation is the basis. Christlikeness is the goal.

Spiritual conflict is the context, love is the manner, self-abnegation is the means, and the Holy Spirit is the agent.

And then we have along in scripture several places of norms that we are to follow in this developmental process of developing our Christian moral character.

The Beatitudes, the Sermon on the Mount, the Great Commandment, Micah 6.8.

So if that is very roughly, and I went through that very quickly, normally I would do this in much more detail.

but I went through that rather quickly what is there in that ethic that is incompatible with the ethic of a military profession. And to discuss this, let's just posit the Army's seven values as the ethic that we want to compare to that Christian ethic.

The Army 7 values loyalty, duty, respect, service, honor, integrity, personal courage. Is there any way that those two are incompatible? In contrast, in fact, the commonality and mutual reinforcement of these two ethics provides a leg up for the leader's walk and talk. Simply

stated, closely and reinforcing ethics, few produce far fewer conflicting loyalties. So I talked about calling.

I talked about compatible ethics and the third way I want to reinforce this idea that Christian leaders have a leg up is to talk about the unique leadership style of the Christian leader and I want to talk up here about servant leadership. Based upon the leader's obvious desire to serve those led, there can be no more clear statement than Jesus' teachings Matthew 20, 28, I came not to serve, to be served, but to serve and to die.

So the standard for servant leadership, notice servant goes far beyond commanding. To be a servant leader, of course you command.

but it's far more than commanding. It's the other aspects that go into this style of leadership.

So if the challenge is to develop cultures and climates of trust in which you can develop cohesive teams. How does servant leadership give the Christian leader a leg up? It allows them, and here's the answer, to lead in the inspirational transformational techniques rather than transactional and autocratic techniques.

I don't have time to go into those two, but this has been the major debate in service leadership doctrine for the last 30 years.

Are leaders more transactional or more transformational? Are they more autocratic? Carrots and sticks, quid pro quo.

or can they actually be empathetic, caring, inspirational, and motivate the follower to fulfill the follower's own aspirations at the same time that they're fulfilling mission accomplishment for the institution.

That's the summary. Those are the three things that I believe make it possible. Possible, potential, nothing is assured.

Every leader is responsible for their own development. This is another place where I disagree with most service doctrines.

Services do not develop leaders. Leaders develop themselves, and the wise ones use their services to develop themselves. They own their own and as a profession. So summary, I believe Christian officers have three aspects of their being.

who they are in Christ that gives them a potential leg up. They're following a calling with one's life rather than having a job, immense motivational leg up they're living by two very compatible ethics which minimize divided loyalties and they're leading as a service which will provide the transactional leadership so needed today in the military professions. To create trust.

No trust, no culture of trust, no climate of trust, no cohesive teams, particularly with Generation C and the generation that's following it.

So that's my take. I'm open to questions. Okay, I'm muting.

all so you can come back uh on uh particularly when you're going to speak Okay, I think what we'll do is I'm going to continue on with the Q&A that followed this.

because we still have time to listen to the Q&A. And then as it was given at that time, And then we'll come back to our own Q&A in about 15 minutes. So here we go again.

I'm going to put up a slide. I've just taken the conclusions and put them in just another format. for our discussion. Just trying to bring the ethical part of leadership into this.

difficult sometimes to parse out these two different aspects of because ethical being ethical is part of leadership and as well. So first off, I'd like to have any comments about the thesis that the a biblical ethic or being a Christian reinforces the professional ethic.

Uh, and I've just taken the, the, uh, military academy, uh, honor code is just one aspect of this, but, uh, Is there any comment about that particular conclusion of Don's? I think the second one, yeah, and hi, sorry for the sunglasses, but because of the cataract surgery.

I sure agree, Don, that the biblical ethic and professional military ethic are very compatible, even though it's challenged in the past several years, I think of just the value of integrity that when we used to be able to say probably 10 years ago or more that that there's nothing in the military that violates Christian principles.

We can't say that now, now that we have actively serving homosexual, gay marriage, et cetera.

Even though I agree with that statement, it has had some challenges of late. It's true.

But that's why it's important to help young officers understand they're following two callings. One calling is sacred from God. It has an ethic.

The other is to a secular institution of the military, Republic and frankly Yes, Christians coming into the military have to accept the fact that this secular institution, which provides their work, which to them is a calling, that institution does not agree with everything on our end, and we do not agree with everything on their end. That's a choice. Positively, he should leave the profession. That's the only way to avoid the cognitive dissonance in his own life.

Let me raise the issue of the young military MCF leader who is in a country where their professional military ethic is not the same.



For example, in one country, we had a young officer come to the Air Force Academy, see that honor code on it, and he said that's the opposite of the ethics.

of my country. We lie, we cheat, we steal, we're not with tradition.

So we have to deal with that situation as well. Any comments, Don? And it's not just for junior officers. We experienced the same thing with the foreign officers coming into the program at the Army War College.

One of the fellows from an African country, I won't name it, was in our Bible study. And the more we got to know him, the more he understood that And yet, so what do we do? Christians are challenged many places that they work in the secular world.

reinforce each other in fellowship so that they can go back and be authentic. And we understand that in many cases they're taking risks.

You know, this is why you are called to service and sacrifice. They go together as Christ taught his disciples.

Okay, any other further discussion of that conclusion? about reinforcing the professional ethic. By being a believer, you have that leg up. The second one is that there's a better motivation for the Christian because of his concept of calling.

and Jesus' kind of emphasis. And so we're, as Don said, called not just an occupation but or a job but it's not just a job it is a calling any Anyone would want to comment about the motivation aspect of being a Christian in this way? This one particularly is important. I'm talking with the young officers now on the basic officer course here, of course, in Houston.

just about this issue. Why is it so vital for them to see it as a calling and not just a job? yeah you're right ron this is all the difference in the world genera generation z I was down at Benning lecturing to about 450 captains. I can assure you that two thirds of them in that lecture had never in their short time in the service considered their work calling. It was purely job oriented. And so what you have to do is you just have to build a different framework and say, look, this a purpose in God's plan and in his providence he has a plan for you and your work And it's not just going to work, getting a paycheck and coming home. If that is what you really believe, then you have no theology whatsoever of work.

And that's not so hard to teach them. That's, you know, two hours with the right scriptures.

frankly, the American church, as plural, the parachurches, and certainly Because it is the basis for sacrifice. How in the world can these young people go home and tell their families, well, I'm going to have to go on another hardship tour.

And everybody in the family thinks, well, you know, mom's just got a job. That's all. She's just leaving again. Well, We can do better than that. Any other comments about this subject? of calling and its motivational advantage for the Christian. Could I say something? This is Bob Collins. Sure, go ahead, Bob.

I was the endorser for chaplains for the Christian Missionary Alliance for about 18 years. Kevin Pies is now doing that for us.

lunch with two retired chaplains here in waco scott borderwood and bob widow one air force one army And we all discussed this issue. It was amazing how basically chaplains deal with the changing environment that they're called to serve. And as a prior endorser, my thought was this.

You come into the chaplaincy by the call of God.

And you stay in the chaplaincy as long as you feel that call is valid for you.

But you represent you as a Christian and also your faith group, which is Christian Mission Alliance, an evangelical group.

As you do your ministry, whatever decisions or ethical decisions or whatever you need to make, You're making those decisions based on who you are in Christ and What you say you believe and what your denomination says they believe, you have to live up to those things. So even though it's going to be more difficult, It's your preaching of Christ and living the Christian life that really makes the difference. And that's what we discussed. Good.

I mean, it's no different.

Well, I guess in some senses it is different for a chaplain because their denominations more in some cases more specifically defined or more narrowly defined As a Protestant Christian without a strong denominational leading, I frankly, you know, until I got to Did I ever feel that there were really cogent conflicts that I was a part of? So I, you know, And frankly, as I said earlier, service in the military professions is not for the faint of heart. That's right.

If you can't accept the conflict, if you cannot deal with the conflict, then you don't belong there.

And I'm not saying that to be pejorative, I'm saying it's better for you if you're not there, not just the institution. That's correct. Yes, thank you.

Okay, I'd like to move to the third conclusion that the Christian servant leadership will build a more cohesive unit to our team of trust. Any comments about that one? Because I think Most unit commanders want to have performance their team a cohesive team together and I think this is a very very positive way to present some of what we're doing. Other comments on this? When I look back on all the commanders I had the privilege of serving, and I've served both the very autocratic style versus, and I also observed some have been tremendous servant

leaders. Yes, you obviously, I much more enjoyed being in units that had a servant leader for a commander and also created a much better command climate.

than the autocratic leader. Yeah, there's an immense amount of literature on this in the study of by trust, not by profit.

a totally different logic, the currency of professions. If they are professions, and not all the military are professions, but the currency is trust.

And now as we're going into multi-domain operations, we're decentralizing command and control. We're moving people out to the edge of the battlefield.

You've got to have cohesion in all these small units. And that's harder for Generation Z because they have been lived in cultures where trust in many cases has been absent in their lives up to the time they're in the military. Fractured families, urban settings, not everywhere.

But I can assure you after 13 years of teaching, you know, developing cadets at West Point, every year the academy's mission got harder.

The people coming into the academy might be smart as a whip, but morally they were further away from the standards we wanted when they arrived.

and that's continuing to this day and it's continuing in the armed forces now we can bemoan it We can say, my God, isn't this awful? Or we can roll up our sleeves and get busy and get with it.

I think the other aspect of transformational leadership is it aligns with the way we look at our tasks and our task and purpose.

And purpose is so important to help people understand, and especially as Don was describing with our more decentralized operations, when you have leaders that understand purpose, then they can accomplish so much more because the task might change, but the purpose doesn't. And so helping to align that I think it's very important. And I think the other thing, there's a lot of literature out there on like the speed of trust there's a really good book about that and especially in operations now where you're trying to build a team quickly you're very networked with a bunch a bunch of other organizations potentially um how do we create that trust quickly and I think the transformational leadership definitely is the way to go and you know this is as simple as simply making young leaders understand first off how essential trust is And then ask him the simple question, well, what produces trust? Why are you trustworthy? Why do you think someone would look at you and listen to you and watch you and think you are trustworthy and help them understand, you know, trust is an immensely psychologically complex thing. Part of it's cognitive, part of it's affective, part of it is gut. I mean, pure intuition.

And so human interactions, immensely complex.

But we don't teach this that much. We don't talk about this that much. We're still, in most of the service developmental programs, they still talk about, you know, they even use the wrong language. We're going to train them in trust. Excuse me? You can't produce trust from training. It's a human developmental task.

It involves many domains, training being the least of it.

I think another thing that's important about that is, and this comes from a lot from where Christianity and your profession intersect, And that's the idea of earning the right to be heard. Like a lot of our Christian organizations talk about earning the right to be heard. And I think that that's one of the things as a servant leader is by establishing those relationships and earning the right to lead them, that that's another way that I think Christian leaders have an advantage.

You know, the reason I framed this discussion the way I did is I firmly believe in the potential of most young leaders. They're not bad people.

They want to be good leaders. They don't know the techniques. They don't know how. They don't know how to frame it. They don't know how to think about it.

And that's where you folks have an immense opportunity.

You're trying to open their mind, open their mind's eye to what potential they have and how they can use it. That's an immensely appealing proposition.

All right, I'd like to just focus on one verse that Don has submitted for his presentation that sums up things. One of the most important things And it's this last area of servant leadership. And he gave us Matthew 20, 28, just as a son of man did not come to be served, but to serve.

and to give his life as a ransom for many. All right, we're trying to collect some memory verses, and I think that's a great one to add to our potential list. I'm going to ask if Nestor, if you're able to come on and pray for us as we try to incorporate in the lives young leaders, ethical leaders, some of these concepts of not only ethics, but of leadership, All right, I think we're going to close off there. And if you want to come on with your mics as you have a question or want to participate with us and I'm going to ask if If Carson, if you would watch for any problems, as well, I made you an organizer.

This is a repeat, as you saw, of a previous the previous presentation of this material. We think it is really important and so I want to Just do a moment of interview, though, first with Don, and then we'll go to asking questions, fielding questions you have.

And if not, we'll raise some ourselves. So, Don, would you just start with just a word of your faith journey? Just tell us a short version of that. Yeah. Can you hear me? Is this appropriate volume? Yes. Good. I was a nominal Christian through high school, through the academy.

and into my first combat tour. And after the first combat tour, I contemplated becoming a chaplain and decided that I knew enough about the infantry that I was probably already better prepared to continue the war, so I served two more combat tours in Vietnam. At the end of three combat tours, on short times back in the States in between.

I had a wife, I had a daughter that I had seen, and I had a second daughter I'd never seen. She was born while I was gone. And I arrived back at West Point to teach.

and it suddenly struck me that I did not know well how to be a Christian man I did not know how to be a Christian husband and I did not know how to be a Christian father.

And all of a sudden I had at least two new roles and probably three new roles in my life that needed attention.

And fortunately, for those three years, we were part of OCF Bible studies consistently.

and just The Lord provided what we needed at the time we needed it. And that was the launching point of our life together.

having sorted out what the two callings were in my life, how they fit together, how I could do them, how they reinforced each other.

and so we continued that for another 46 years and finally wound up with um 50 some years of service to the government to the republic and obviously today still continuing to serve in the church and teach in the church So that's kind of how I got to where we are. My reaction to listening to myself, that lecture was in 2021.

My reaction to listening to myself is that I may have been a little bit hard edged on a couple of cases, particularly in the Q&A.

But I still believe absolutely everything I said in that presentation.

I think it is the case that the Christian in all three of the areas I pointed out potentially has an immense leg up.

particularly in the latter one, the concept of servant leadership where servanthood and sacrifice come together.

so essential for both the Christian living and walking today in the cultures in which we live, as well as those serving, still following the second calling in the military or the police profession.

so essential that those two concepts be well understood and inculcated and how we live our lives if we serve we are going to sacrifice and we willingly sacrifice because that is the nature of service So I'm a, you know, I stand where I was four years ago when we gave the lecture. I still

think it's I think those potential advantages are still there. If you care to add any more to it, feel free before we go into it.

more discussion. No, not at this point. I'd rather hear the questions and focus on them. All right.

Let's I'd like to go first. I had a short conversation with Eddie earlier.

before we started and I sort of asked him what questions are they really dealing with in West Africa, which is one of our areas of interest, particularly in this presentation. We'll get to Igwe and see if we can talk with Sunday.

also in a moment, but would you come on then, Eddie, and just comment about what you've heard?and its application to, say, West Africa.

uh okay thank you so much um so i i just got to make a comment and also ask a question in regards to um dance presentation.

So obviously, in the military, they do have some form of ethics. We can call it a secular ethics.

As Christians, we are encouraged to live a biblical, ethnic lifestyle.

which obviously sometimes will have contentions or I mean, disagreement with what the military probably features.

But as he was saying, if we can't deal with it, we need to get out of the way in some aspect.

but my question is should we really get out of the way or we should press on with those biblical ethics values that we know Cal, can you rephrase for me? I'm hearing impaired and I didn't get all of that.

Okay, I think he is asking, is there a you know god could uh could possibly lead you to stay in even if you are having lots of difficulty uh with uh the uh merging of the two two uh uh ethics uh as they really Go ahead. Yeah, I got it. Absolutely. Eddie, you're correct.

As I recall, when I said only when you get to the level that there is fundamental disagreement and you are personally involved in the decision making process.

then you have to step to the side. But that, as I said, also that never happened in my case. And I went all the way to the White House making decisions.

It just never became that stark of an example that there was great incompatibility.

Yeah, every day there's going to be incompatibility.

And every day you got to work your way through it, particularly at junior levels of rank, particularly in troop leading situations where you are, you know, day by day, hour by hour,

mixing it up with the culture, both the military culture and the societal culture from which you were military or police.

people come from and there were in spiritual warfare and we are you know we are called and we are empowered to take up our armor and fight every day. No, we don't leave there. You only leave when it comes to a very high-level point, clearly.

requiring you to take a stance that you cannot otherwise take.

I mean, it sounds good for that, but I'm also trying to draw a parallel to Unfortunately, one of the contentious issues that our world is dealing with, LGBTQ, whatever it is, Even though They might be on the minority. They have a strong agenda. They don't want to be pushed back. They want to press on.

Whatever it is. And we as Christians, we believe that this is what God wants us to do.

So, you know, looking at how forceful they are, Is that the way as Christians we need to be forceful, press on? What do you think? resourceful yes in the spirit you know asking the spirit to give you the resources um but in america we have a little different way of approaching this is that we make sure our officers understand that they do not necessarily have to agree with everything that our government holds particularly the not the government but the culture holds uh... we serve We serve in America a secular state. America's government is not a Christian government. We are not a theocracy.

And we have taken an oath to support the Constitution of that secular state.

So we know there will be some cases in which secular ethics and values on behalf of the institution or it can be placed seemingly at a higher level than ours. That's where the individual problem occurs and that's where we have to consider how serious is this? Am I being violated? Am I required to not follow one of my callings simply because my government is moving this direction as when we allowed gay soldiers to serve in the army.

that's an individual choice of conscience i i had no difficulty with it whatsoever I did not agree of their behavior. I loved them the same way Christ loved them, even those I was commanding.

All right, if you have a question, one way too is to put it on the chat and Kirsten is sort of watching the chat.

as well and will highlight to me if there's a question there. I'd like to go next to to Sundi Igwe in Nigeria. Are you able to come on, Igwe? I think your mic is off. I sent a message to to mute. Okay.

Anyhow, sometimes we have difficulty with the communications to Africa and sometimes they're only hearing.

what the presentation and the discussion uh i'll go uh go next though to uh i'd like to go to to uh i to uh let's say to jude in uh in Uganda. With regards to this topic that we've been discussing, you had to teach this And if I remember correctly, you had at one of the MCF groups that you taught on this, It was a new revelation to particularly some of the wives, I believe.

that were in attendance there at the Ugandan MCF meeting, sub-meeting.

And they responded that this was a totally new concept to them. You want to comment on that, Jude? Can you come on? Okay, we are having difficulty in getting to Uganda also. Ivan, are you able to come on? All right. Looks like we're having difficulty on our communications.

But in any event, let's go to others with regards to this discussion.

I'll go to Art Lees, if you can come on.

And I'll ask you the question, do you see that in your legal profession, the parallels to what we've been talking about.

I'm having some difficulty here with not being able to communicate Russ Hammerud, are you able to come on? Yeah.

Okay, just wanted to double check to make sure we had some connections. We have it in the US, but we're having some difficulty here with Oh, overseas. All right. Other.

questions that you would like to ask of Don and of those that are with us.

How about Sam from Japan? Could you comment on what you've heard? Are you able to come up? Thank you.

All right. There you go.

uh thank you very much for allowing me to uh some comment 100 i understand what you said however and our military christian fellowship is a small group However, we have a key person involved who are involved in the academy.

of the Engineer Academy. And tonight I'm going to conducting for a monthly meeting Through this ethics training, and this is a very high level to do so.

but we have to break down to the some of the idea we can discuss in our other unit and I don't know much about our Japanese spirit or Japanese-minded characteristics. Kind of like a more...

uh uh you say uh uh uh a shame like a shame shaming country we are apology for everything if i made a mistake we don't do apology to the person If you made a mistake with the ethics, break the rule, And we always, oh, you have to apologize to not the right person. We have to, Japanese people, we have to apologize to in public.



The people say that God is an above level. They are watching for everybody. Children, students, soldiers, you have to behave.

and other than that that's the Japanese brand I said I think there's a lot of things attractive about that. The fact is I wouldn't be upset if we had a little bit more of a shame culture in America.

That is a very interesting thing, the guilt culture versus the shame culture and some of the implications with ethics. I see Ivan has come back on and I see his mic is on. Ivan, are you able to comment on what you've heard? Hello, are you hearing me? Yes. Greetings from Uganda. Actually, when we first taught the lesson, the first lesson of the calling of a soldier, we were sharing it with the sponsors.

of the military families We realized that actually in Ugandan culture, the families of a soldier had a negative perspective about the soldiers. They thought that soldiers, they were seeing them more of a profession of killers than a service to the nation.

So there was that negative perspective.

of the profession of a soldier because of our historical background of the armies within the country.

But by the moment we shared the calling of Esodia together with the families, the families learn to appreciate that a soldier has been called by God and it's a profession which is according from above.

So they realized that a soldier's calling, since it's in the calling of God, it should be ethically upright.

as it is also uh it is a must it is an obligation of a soldier to be ethically upright. So it helped even the families to begin supporting the profession of their husbands.

into the profession of a soldier and that one it made him to appreciate the profession but in the beginning there was that negativity but right now the families will see them they are more supportive and at the same time prayerful for the husbands to be upright and to follow the call of God within the profession yeah We thought that was a wonderful sidelight to ethics presentations where you're reaching into the families even, and where they're actually responding to some of the some of the training materials. So thank you for that comment, Ivan, and how it has worked out in Uganda.

Also, I would like to see again, I don't know if Igwe is able to come on or not.

from West Africa. Okay.

seem to think that's working all right uh i i would uh like to uh now say can i ask a question certainly yeah sure so don i mean just a basic question you know how do you how do you bring this conversation to people on ethics in your perspective john If I interpreted the question correctly, how do we bring this conversation to the people? Frankly, you do it best one on one.

One on one, the same way that you spread the gospel as a disciple for Christ.

professional brothers work together of course there are many opportunities institutional opportunities formally, you know, developmental opportunities, some educational training, But the essence of creating cultures of trust in the military profession is largely done at the micro level of Leader-Follower Relationships And that may be colonel to lieutenant colonel, or it may be sergeant to private. Rank is irrelevant. It's the closeness of the two people.

and the relationship that they have with each other.

As I said, trust is the issue of profession. The glue that holds professions together is trust.

They're not bureaucracies. They're not businesses. And so that is a very...

As I said, cognitive, affective, developmental. There are a lot of aspects to how trust between two human beings is created and maintained. It's not just the process of creating, it's the process of maintaining.

But no, start at the micro level is my answer to your question.

Okay. I have a second question. My second question is what sort of sacrifice do we expect by doing that? And how do we deal with the outcome of those sacrifices? Yeah, what a superb question.

So I will answer your question and I'd like you to come back then and tell me what you had in your mind when you asked the question.

But I can tell you that in our military, the biggest sacrifice to all of this is time.

Time is only 24 hours in a day. How much time do I want to spend on relationships with the people with whom I'm working? If I can be an autocratic authoritarian leader, walk in, give a bunch of orders and walk out.

Boy, do I have a lot of time I've saved. But you haven't built trust at all.

So the principal sacrifice is time. And then you have to measure time for whom and from whom.

And in many cases in the military, you're taking time from your own schedule. But equally important, you're taking time from your family schedule, your time with them.

long hours, deployments, etc.

No, it's a very real sacrifice. And as I said earlier, if you understand that that is inherent in your calling, by knowing that your work is more important than you personally are, if you really believe that, now you have a moral basis to sacrifice.

I must sacrifice that the work is done well, effectively and on time because this is a calling. It's not a job. It's not the paycheck. I'm getting it at the end of the month.

So time is the big, when I get to heaven, I'm going to ask the Lord why he only put 24 hours in a day. Why didn't he let us change it a little? But he doesn't. So that's what we get to live with. So now back to you. What were you thinking? Well, personally, I was thinking that relationships you know it's it's going to impart a relationship that you do have with people a lot. And you also always need good relationships to be able to make progress in whatever you want to do.

you know without good relationship you cannot make progress and you know bringing this type of conversation to people There's only two ways it can go. Either you get them or you lose them.

All right. I want to thank Don for coming on for the Q&A particularly and for allowing us to use an older presentation and So it's been a privilege to have you, Don, with us. And we thank you for your many, many years of service to our country and The wonderful things that have happened as you and others have worked on, particularly the Army ethic and the concept of profession versus bureaucracy, which is another topic of real interest to us.

So thanks again for coming with us.

And anything in closing from your end that you want to say before we have a prayer and go on to our next topic? Yeah, I'd like to say one thing. I'd like to encourage all of you and each of you in what you were doing. This is not trivial.

This is the essence of expanding the kingdom. And so I find it encouraging that you're still doing it.

and doing it so consistently, thank you.

All right. Well, that's that's thank you so much for those comments. Also, Russ Hammer, could you come on? uh and uh and just offer a prayer up for what we've heard and now as we go and change topics and introduce our next presenter. Would you go ahead and do that for us? Yeah, sure, Father. Heavenly Father, we do thank you for the good stuff that has been shared with us by Don and others.

Pray that you'd speak to our hearts individually and corporately as to what to emphasize in our thinking, in our mentoring, in our relationships, in our lives, in our families.

I pray, Father, that we would be a very effective team in helping godly ethics flourish in the militaries of the world. And as we go on, Father, continue to be our teacher. We pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. Thanks so much. We are now going to shift and we're welcoming our next presenter.

And that's Dr. Eric Patterson, who has spoken for us several times in the past and it's a delight to have him back. He's changing jobs. Maybe he'll comment about that as well. So we caught him right in sort of the transition.

but he's agreed to come and particularly we're interested in his uh he and and Mark Lavecki, who have co-edited a book that just came out in 2024.

And the topic was so intriguing to me because of the question then would be somewhat of How does this apply to us as we look at the full picture of of military ethics, of just war, but then getting down to the practical application to the young military Christian leadership, fellowship leader particularly. And so it's a joy to have Eric with us.

And his picture is on here. This is back when he was a lieutenant colonel and I'm going to start by asking him a question.

to get started. And that is, would you just tell us just a brief thing about your faith journey? just so that we can get a better feel for who you are. And I know God has done wonderful things through you in so many different fields.

of service and that should have come out in the bios that we sent out and everything else. But welcome, Eric, and would you just give us a short snippet on that. Sure. And Cal, can you hear me okay? Yes, I hear you fine.

Wonderful. Well, first, it's a pleasure and an honor to be with you today and talk a little bit about this book and this concept.

And it's nice to see friends like Art and Bruce and others. And I have a lot of respect for the career of Colonel Snyder who have seen kind of from afar over the years and was a real leader in And helping the Army think about itself as a profession and then bringing the ethical and the faith dimensions in.

to the to the life of the warrior so with that uh my name is Eric Patterson and I had the blessing of growing up in a Christian home And I'd say that so much of the foundation of my life is a godly mother and father who loved each other and who centered their life first around church and then around family. Not everyone has that.

My dad said to me multiple times when I was growing up, you know, Eric, you think that Some of the choices that we make to do or not do things seem a little unusual or abnormal compared to what the rest of the world is doing.

And then he would say, but I assure you, we are the normal ones. We are trying to live a biblical, godly family life.

and uh and with with christ at the center of it and i'll tell you that just the older i get the more and more i realize just um that that's really, really true. My grandmother, my mom's mom, celebrated her 102nd birthday yesterday.

And she is a godly woman, a woman of prayer. And I think that the prayer and her making sure that her family was in church all the years is what made her four children and their spouses all be serving the Lord today and essentially all of her grandchildren my generation and and her great-grandchildren, the next generation, all serving the Lord today with one exception.

if there's anything that's at the root of having a, you know, a godly centered church, it's, it's a godly centered family. I thought, As a young man that I was called to go into full-time ministry as a pastor or as a missionary.

and about halfway through my education in biblical studies and music at Evangel University and Assemblies of God College in Missouri.

I really felt like the Lord said, you know, Patterson, you're finally surrendering to me. Now you're useful.

And my path changed a bit because of that. We all know that whether you are a pastor or you're a layman, you really are in full-time ministry, right? There's not really a sacred secular distinction for the Christian.

who lives all parts of life as worship as unto the Lord and trying to be salt and light, whether it's in church, or it's on the ball field or it's in the barracks or it's in the office, it's in the grocery store or wherever. And that's really, really been true in my life. And for the past, Uh, really for the past 25 years, I've been mostly an educator of one sort or another.

either as a university professor or dean or in a think tank or educational nonprofit. And a major focus for me is how to think about religion and ethics when it comes to national security.

For the past five years until literally last Sunday, I was a senior leader at a group here in DC called the Religious Freedom Institute.

I'm still working with them on our chaplains and student programs. But on Monday of this week, I took over as president and CEO of the Victims of Communism.

Memorial Foundation in Washington, D.C. And for those of you who come through Washington, I invite you to our beautiful small museum.

and to learn more about that work. But for today, I'm thrilled to talk to you just a little bit about this concept, about military necessity as a moral principle not just a pragmatic one. How's that question other questions? No, it's fine. I'm going to launch you out as you feel led with regards to the topic. Sure. So here's what I'll do.

I'll talk for 12, 15 minutes and then just open it for Q&A. And if it's okay, I'm going to try to share my screen.

Okay. And that way I'll put a few slides up.

Okay. I think we need to make you presenter then. Let's try that. Yes, please. Carson, can you do that? Let's see. I can.

Eric, you are presenter. Okay. Let's see if I can find my...

There may be some difficulty. It depends on your system. Yeah. I see the box on here that says share screen.

And let's go like this. And I'm going to unshare. No, let's see. I'm off mine, I guess.

Let's see if this works. No. Oh, no, that's working. That's working. It's just you need to pick a different window.

Yep, there we go. Can you see that, military necessity? It's perhaps adjusting. We don't see it yet.

It's still a black screen. Okay. Hold on for just a sec. When you click up the share, how about, yep.

If I'm looking to see interaction, you want to click on the tab that says applications.

When you click screen there's a tab instead of screens. Click applications and then you can click this chrome tab window or entire screen window. Click a window. And then you should have, well, where is your presentation window? You know what? I'm going to...

I'm going to do this. Do you have it again? Is it a PowerPoint file? It's a PowerPoint, yeah.

All right, so your PowerPoint is open? Yep. When you click on share, you should get in the window, tab choices of screens and applications? All I get is when I hit window, it says go to Google Chrome or it has canceled down at the bottom.

Perhaps you are running this in Chrome instead of in the application of GoToMeeting. All right. You know, that may be the case.

Let's see here. So if you share your screen again so I could see what you were doing.

Share screen. Window.

and then click now click it again so we can see what your options are Because now I can see your GoToMeeting tab, and it's cascading. Yeah, so if I hit, say, for instance, share something else.

I can see that you got Chrome tab, window, and entire screen.

All right. Then what I would suggest you do is you share your entire screen, but then go to PowerPoint and make it your entire screen.

Gotcha. Gotcha. Okay. You got it. Okay.

and then you will lose your controls yes there you go now if you hit presentation we should only see there we go very good okay can you see that black says military necessity yes yes this is very good presentation So here's what I'm going to do is I'm going to talk through a few slides for about 12 minutes.

And I can't see you right now, so you can always speak up. But what I'll do is I'm going to try to go kind of through them, and then we can – and I'll pause.

I'll pause and ask for questions between say every two, and there's only four or five slides. So it's designed to give particularly for our for our friends in the training module, lots of chances to talk. Let me just set the stage. I just lost it.

Let me set the stage just a little bit. Let me first say where this came from.

And I think Colonel Snyder and others, you'll recognize the problem. So often when we're talking about war, and we're talking about security, and we're talking about the use of force, there's a certain language that makes it sound only pragmatic.

only a cost benefit ratio and a certain suspicion in the church among philosophers and others that somehow doing a cost benefit analysis is somehow immoral. That there's some sort of higher, deontological, to use a philosophical term, some sort of higher value set of ethics And that the decisions, the practical decisions of battlefield warfare are somehow dirty. They're just pragmatic.

There's not a moral ethic for how we fight on the battlefield. And that's what drove this project.

And this edited volume that has some people that many of you know, J. Darrell Charles, Amos Giora, the law professor from the University of State University, Pauline Curran and others, all examining how to think about this idea of military necessity on the battlefield.

We'll get there. Let's take a step back. And I'm thinking about this in terms of a training module for Jude and for others. The classic just war tradition.

both in particular and its Christian form.

typically is asked three questions. Now the historic two big questions are first, when is it moral to go to war? And how can war be fought justly? And over time, we've assumed but recently explicated more about the moral basis for war's end.

and the post-conflict scenario with an eye towards peace. Now, that first question, when is it moral to go to war? is typically answered with three preliminary criteria. It's proper government authorities who make the decision based on a just cause and a right intention.

And by just cause, we mean things according to Augustine like preventing future wrongs, punishing wrongdoers, or righting past wrongs.

You could think about those as principles of self-defense and political order and justice. And the decision by authorities to go to war should be made with right intentions. Right intentions are not things like greed, lust, hate, the desire for revenge, but rather The right intentions are things such as protection, public order, justice, love of neighbor.

And there are other additional criteria, but those are really the principal ones about leaders acting on a just cause with right intention.

And so when the decision to use force has been made, Then we get to the question about how war can be fought morally. And this is a set of questions about what happens on the battlefield.

Now, for the specialists with us, if you read the legal textbooks on the law of armed conflict, Or if you go through the kinds of training that we do for PME for our own troops in the West, you'll find that we always start with military necessity.

and then talk about proportionality and then distinction or discrimination or noncombatant immunity.

But if you read the philosophical, theological, and social science literature of the past 50 years, Walzer, Johnson, and others, they almost never talk about military necessity.

it's been dropped by almost entirely by that literature.

And I know because I sat down and went through every single Just War book that I own and looked in the index.

And it was amazing how few of us, including Eric Patterson, ever talked about military necessity. We had dropped it while our warriors And our Jags still talk about it.



So what I'd like to do is talk very specifically about what we're talking about with legitimate military necessity, military necessity, And what we're talking about is this principle on the battlefield.

We're not talking about what happens in the White House. We're not talking about what happens at the Pentagon. We're talking about battlefield ethics.

What happens when commanders are making decisions in the field? Necessity, proportionality, discrimination. So I asked James Turner Johnson, who many of you know, about this and he said, Eric, the one guy who's written on this is William V. O'Brien in *The Conduct of Just and Limited War*.

And O'Brien has a great definition of military necessity. Military necessity consists of the measures immediately indispensable and proportionate to a legitimate military end, provided that they're not prohibited by the laws of war or natural law, when taken on the decision of a responsible commander, and of course subject to review.

And the real key here is military necessity is taking all immediate measures to win.

Yeah, indispensable proportionate to legitimate military and that means to win in this battlefield encounter at this time.

That's what military necessity is. And military necessity, of course, is informed by the principle of proportionality.

that we shouldn't have significantly greater destruction than is necessary in this case.

And of course, by the principle of discrimination, taking reasonable steps to prevent, protect, uh, non-combatants, private property, houses of worship, etc. from military attack.

but military necessity is this principle commanders should take every measure immediately indispensable to winning on this battlefield at this time.

Now, military necessity has been derided as just a pragmatic cost calculus. It has been derided as being a fig leaf.

for destruction, but it's really not the case. And so what I'd like to do is remind us.

First of all, at the just war tradition, and when we think about political and military leadership, that the Bible has a lot to say about the principle of stewardship.

Kings are called upon to have many counselors, whether they're building a tower or going to war.

Jesus talks about this. If you're going to build a tower, don't you sit down first and calculate the cost? The king is going to go to war.

Why don't you sit down first and consider the cost and if he has the resources necessary to fight the war.

And here's the question.

Is that some sort of Machiavellian realpolitik? And what I mean by that is the idea that the ends justify the means.

Is that all we're talking about? And the answer is no. Political leaders and military leaders are supposed to be stewards.

They're supposed to count the cost.

How do you do that? Well, it's thinking about what are the resources we have and what's the best way to deploy them in the situation that's right in front of us.

with an eye towards meeting our objective but conserving or husbanding or preserving or shepherding the limited resources necessary at our disposal. And let me just talk very practically about some of the ways that we teach military doctrine to our military officers.

such as at the command and staff college and how some of the principles within military necessity are stewardship principles.

First, the idea of troop protection. When a battlefield commander is deciding which men to send, what to do, how much firepower to use. One of the things that we want our commanders to be thinking about is troop protection.

In other words, we're going to use an amount of force, both offensive and defensive with an eye towards protecting our men and women as much as possible.

Troop protection is a principle that's very, very important, particularly in a democracy. Every soldier, sailor, airman, marine is a citizen.

They are the children of citizens. Those are taxpayers, their husbands and wives, daughters and sons. And so it's incumbent on the battlefield for commanders to do the best that they can to protect their troops. That's a principle of stewardship. Tied to that is that it's not just scarce lives, But there are other scarce resources. There are only so many bullets. There's only so many guns. There's only so many aircraft.

There's only so big of a tax basis at home that's going to fund this battle and how this battle is tied to this issue.

campaign, how this campaign is tied to theaters in the overall grand strategic plan that we have for victory.

But right there at the local level, there are resource constraints.

And thinking about them is what good stewards do. They don't just burn through all their ammunition.

They don't just throw their men into battle and waste their lives, say, for instance, in the First World War.

that they think about stewarding and conserving those precious resources. Third, when we teach military strategy, we often talk about things like the concentration, firepower, not splitting up your troops, thinking about logistics and the direction of resources. All of these are stewardship principles.

it's not just, hey, if we've got it, we're going to spend it, right? That's a very adolescent way of thinking about things. It's a very wasteful way. And the people who should be the least wasteful, frankly, are militaries, right? Because we're talking about life and death. We're talking about cost.

Finally, the principle of military necessity helps us to be taking the war aims that political leaders have given to us and thinking about them in terms of the here and now tactical and operational objectives about how winning here. How much resources do we put here? How much does this battlefield, how much does this part of it, matter when we tie it to other strategic objectives. And we think carefully, well, you know what, this is worth a lot of cost.

This objective is a tertiary objective, a third order objective. It's not worth so much cost. And being clear about what it is going to cost to achieve victory is again a stewardship principle. So just in closing, the argument I'm making is that when our battlefield commanders are making the decisions about how to spend, in a sense, the resources of the human life of their troops, the taxpayer funded resources that are at their command, when they're making decisions on a battlefield about how aggressive to be or how to take such and such salient when they put their troops at risk because it's a very, very important battlefield objective that must be reached.

And then they're thinking about proportionality and discrimination. These are moral principles. It is not some sort of craven, ugly, evil bean counting. It really does matter. And it makes our battlefield commanders stewards of our most precious resources.

making decisions about the life and death of our troops and how we expend the scarce resources of taxpayer funds in terms of military material. So with that I'm going to stop sharing my screen and open it up for comments and questions.

All right, feel free to use the chat function also to add a question If you want to put up your hand, at least those that have their video on, we can perhaps see that or there's a little reaction button that you can push to put your hand up also if you so desire.

To get us started, Eric, I'd like to just take it into our perspective, how far down I mean, you can talk about battle planning and you can talk about higher ranked decisions. But as we get down into the younger officer, the infantry officer at captain level, How do you see this applying there? I think it does, but go ahead.

Well, I think that you're exactly right, Cal. I mean, you're hinting, I think, that actually this is a principle that our master sergeants and our lieutenants are intimately tied to. The when political authorities way up the chain of command delegate responsibilities down and generals and colonels tell majors and captains what to do out in the field. And then those platoon elements or their equivalents are out there at the front line.

then decisions are being made at that, O2, O3, O4 or that E6, E7, E8 level about what's happening right now. We were told to take that hill.

We were told to pacify this part of this village.

we are told to do in this operational encounter, that's the objective.

And it's often the people who are right there on the ground or one step back in this time of electronic warfare, in other words, eyes from a drone or something, that they're making decisions about how hard to press, which way to press, which weapons to use.

That's happening often at a very, very junior level when it comes to the actual engagement on the ground.

And so that's actually driven this work is it's a reminder to us that these lives are precious.

And they're expending, even the wealthy United States only has so many resources.

and so these decisions that are being made are they're moral decisions does that does that answer your question cal yes i think it's a good a good start It'd be nice to be able to parse it out in an example at the lower level of applying stewardship in addition to sort of the rules of engagement and other aspects of it that are covered more in training than stewardship is.

I'll give you a real example about why I'm doing this.

Um, this isn't really for junior officers. I mean, I'm gonna, you know, I'm, I'm talking to those of you who've spent a lot of time around this type of stuff.

the, I'm going to, I'm going to reveal my hands. The thing that has made me angry and nauseated is over the past 20 years is philosophers in particular who want to create a new style

of just war thinking that essentially ties the hands of our troops in the field fighting to such a point when it comes to protecting civilian lives of the communities of our enemies, that basically they see our own troops, our own soldiers as third class citizens who have zero rights But they're in uniform. This is the type of perspective of the Oxford philosopher Henry Shue.

This is the type of stuff that we see in very well-known philosophers like Jeff McMahan and David Rutan and others.

And it's the type of criticism that we've gotten all the way back to trying to save US troops' lives in the Pacific.

when Truman made the decision to drop the atomic bomb all the way up to America and coalition forces in Iraq and Afghanistan. In other words, There's a strong sentiment in some quarters, particularly among some theologians and philosophers who claim to be writing this just war.

that the enemy's civilians have a lot more worth than our own troops. I don't, I do not disagree about the moral value of every human being yes but a president and the general officers below him and the officers down the chain of command also have a responsibility to be thinking about preserving the life of their own troops. And, and it's that, yeah.

Eric, I was just waiting for that thought to conclude. This might be a good time just to let you know that we appear to have two questions. You can continue. I believe Eddie's been raising his hand.

And Bruce has written his question. So when you're ready, I just want to let you know.

Good. And so just to close it, that, so that, that is what has in part driven this is, is, is where in the just war tradition do we think about the moral value of the individual soldier fighting? And actually it's in military necessities.

That's where leaders have to be thinking about protecting not just noncombatant life, but also the life of our troops. So maybe we could start with Eddie and then go to Bruce. Eddie? Thanks, Henry. I just wanted to share a little bit of my own story. In 2007, I was deployed to Iraq. And I remember very well that part of my duty was to be part of a convoy You know, and obviously, no matter when there's this combo assignment, you know, you do get attacks from his agents and stuff like that.

Thank you.

And that was a big dilemma for me every time. I mean, you know, the kind of how to put people together to be on this convoy.

One of the dilemmas for me was that even though I've been trained So the rules of engagement, how to engage, always trying to eliminate the danger. That's the key thing, eliminate the danger.

But then I also have this moral thought that, I mean, what is the best way to deal with a situation or scenario that, you know, The person might be in danger, but may not be committing danger at that moment. What do I do? you know and um and i have to really pray through those those thoughts every now and then So I resolved to the point that, you know, the best thing that I can do is not necessarily to kill the person, but to maybe Mim.

shoot the legs or something like that. Not necessarily. The idea of shooting to kill was really, really heavy on my heart.

I didn't know how to deal with it. Even though the whole kind of thing of even going through that is another thing.

Do I agree with it? I didn't agree with you. But I think in such situations, and we pray about it, God is able to help you to do the right thing in an environment that I mean, you are there to do the wrong thing, probably. I don't know. I mean, that's my little thought that I just wanted to put after I share.

No, I would just say, Eddie, that I agree with you, that every life is precious. And so something for the warrior to be thinking about is And so crucial to that is not falling into a pattern of hate. And I think we do actually have a lot of work to do.

Mark Lavecki and others have talked about this. I've written about this.

We actually kind of tell our kids up until age 18, be nice, don't kill anybody, don't hate.

And then we and then then we send them to boot camp. By the way, we don't train them to hate or anything at boot camp.

What we haven't done though is really prepare them as a society first about the beauty of being a just warrior.

And then second, we haven't because we've become a very self-indulgent, narcissistic society.

And then what we, and then, and we sent them to bootcamp and at bootcamp, they get a lot of good training, but what we need more of throughout our military career is the full development of character, including preparing warriors for, you know what? A part of this is that as a warrior, you may be responsible for causing harm But you're doing that out of, excuse me, self-defense. You're doing that out of protection. You're doing that as a guardian.

of your fellow citizens or your allies. In other words, we need to be inculcating the value of warrior, protector, guardian, defender, a framework, a moral framework that helps people as they come to those moments, not just the tactical aspect of firing the gun.

That's an element. And then on the back end of combat, in the way that we release people, whether it's to leave or back into society, we do not have good programming to reinforce the value of the sacrifice that they've made. What it means to have done – to have defended their comrades and to fought and perhaps to have killed.

So you've hit on something and there's a role for organizations like this to try to help to do better to help our warriors. Bruce, over to you.

Yeah, thanks. That really kind of dovetails into my question, and you maybe have answered it. The question is, You talked about how there's not a lot of attention given to the moral component of this concept of necessity.

And my question is, does that avoiding that moral component, that moral discussion, that discussion about morality, in necessity contribute to moral injury? Well, yes, you've hit it right on the head.

My own view, and it's informed in part by Mark and by the writings of others, but it's also informed by what I know historically.

about what I'd call rights of passage for sending and receiving military personnel.

Think about kind of how we ended World War I, for instance, or World War II. Troops came home and they often came home to a parade or something of that nature.

Now, we know that many of these guys had shell shock or PTSD.

But we also had a set of informal mechanisms for them.

Informal mechanisms such as American Legion and VFW posts where people could get together ceremonies where communities used to go out for Memorial Day ceremonies, for Veterans Day ceremonies, for civic functions around the 4th of July.

And there was a social infrastructure of sending and receiving warriors that even though it was very imperfect, is radically different than for instance and particularly say in the air force where we literally will send one warrior from 15 different units, create a composite unit. These guys don't even know each other, they go.

and then they turn around and they come back on a commercial aircraft and they fade back into the wider Air Force. That's when the Air Force concept for 20 years and no, no sending, no receiving anything.

no mechanisms for kind of that, for dealing with, if things go wrong. And of course, moral injury is the idea of, and Mark Levick uses the term, a moral bruising.

that can happen when we see something that violates kind of our sense of what's right and wrong or we participate in it, right? And the most obvious example would be, for instance, a soldier killing a child.

even if the child was about to, you know, had a hand grenade in hand, it was about to harm the soldier. Um, nonetheless the idea that I killed a child can be very can be a grievous blow for many many soldiers. Getting ahead of that with some training and then handling that on the back end.

That you're right, Bruce. I mean, this is crucial. I know that the kind of work that you do and others do is trying to get at some of those types of things for the warriors of our wars of the past 20 years.

How does that sound to you, Bruce? Yeah, no, that resonates with my thinking. And I think the work you're doing here is really outstanding, will contribute really heavily into preparing warriors for and convincing leaders that they need to address the moral component as well as the technical component.

and how we prepare and then reintegrate soldiers.

Now, I don't want to give the wrong impression that what I'm doing is that I think that we ought to take 18 year olds, try to make them The guy who just enlisted in the Marine Corps from Oklahoma, he's at Camp Pendleton.

and that what we're trying to do is like take him through an anxiety, you know, a 12-hour course on the just war tradition, and I want him deciding which orders he's going to take. That's not what I mean.

I'm proud of the infrastructure of the US military that trains the higher levels to restrain and then give lawful tight orders to the younger people. That's the way we should do it. We don't want a 19 year old questioning every single thing he's doing every single time that he's in the operational context.

And that's why we have those layers of the rules of engagement. And that's why we have, we want well-trained officers and senior NCOs directing that.

But also what I hear you saying is we want the rules of engagement that are constrained or whatever connected to a moral framework.

And that's all framework is what's missing. That's right. And, you know, I see Carson's point here about these kind of first person shooter games and things like this.



Go ahead. I'm sorry to stop you on that one. I appreciate that you just saw that, but Dean's been waiting to ask questions. Okay. Yeah, Dean, go ahead.

And I'm happy with the discussion, the way it was going. It was dovetailing with some of my thoughts. Number one, I have a son who was a Marine who went to Afghanistan who who came back with PTSD. And again, a focus on, for instance, Marine training. I saw a video recently that epitomized some of that.

where the training for the young Marine is not focused so much on the enemy, it's focused on serving your brother.

making sure that the thing that will cause you to go on and to take the right action as commanded by your NCOs and your officers is the fact that you're doing it to protect the brother on your left and on your right.

and so on. So I think, yeah, that's a great direction to go. By the way, Some of your thought really had me thinking about it. I don't know if any of you have been watching Masters of the Air.

And the things that come out in that, there were a couple of things that struck me. Number one, asking young, you know, aircraft commanders pilot in charge to make sound decisions when those guys were 20 and 21 years old, if that.

To make sound decisions, I remember seeing in one section where the target area was clouded over and so they didn't drop bombs because they couldn't have a reasonable assurance of hitting the target and or not doing harm. And so they brought, they fought their way in, fought their way back to dump their bombs off in the ocean.

and that sort of stuff. Asking a 21 year old to make those sorts of wise decisions about what is just and to hold it together for a crew of 10 you know, is tremendous. And when the big push came in the war where they knew they had to kill the Luftwaffe, they had to get the Luftwaffe on the ground to allow the invasion of Europe to occur, which was going to save the free world sort of thing.

And those bomber crews knew that they were being sacrificed to make that happen. They were being put at a higher risk to make that happen to achieve the greater aim. And talk about having to wrestle with, you know, it being the right thing or not, and those sorts of decisions being made really struck me as I've watched those shows.

And that's consistent with the books that I've read on all of those as well with the strategic bombing campaign.

Yeah, and I would just say thank you. Thank you for raising that, Dean. And I would recommend that that.

I've watched the series up to the next episode, which comes out tonight, which introduces the Tuskegee Airmen. And I would say just last week I was asked by someone, about Gaza. I was asked about strategic bombing campaigns from World War II. I was asked about, you know, dropping of the atomic bomb.

And I was able to point the guy, hey, would you watch a few of these episodes and we can have a conversation about this so we can have an informed conversation.

Because one of the things that comes out masters of the air and it ties to this question about moral injury The British are flying bombing raids at night. This is historically accurate. And why? Well, they had already lost so many men. They'd been fighting for two years. They'd had the Battle of Britain, et cetera, et cetera.

And they didn't care if they missed at that point. The Americans get there.

They have better technology with the Norton gun site. But it's not just that. The Americans come over with a commitment to at first trying not to hit civilian targets. And so the Americans are flying by day and they're sitting ducks.

The Brits are flying largely at night.

And so there's a real distinction there about a command decision that's made to protect the lives of civilians on the ground.

And that's where this necessity, proportionality, et cetera, this is where commanders are making real life decisions.

And it's historically shown in a hot new series. Sure. Thanks for bringing it.

That one I thought did a good job of bringing the decisions all the way through and carrying that through from the strategic to the operational to the tactical level.

where again, individual aircraft were having to make those kinds of decisions about what was just to do and what actions to take and not take. Yeah.

Question? Go ahead, Don, did you have something you wanted to add? Yeah, I'm delighted to hear that someone has raised renewed the study of the tradition in ways that go against what our European colleagues have been telling us for decades.

In today's world, it strikes me that this is not something that just needs to be worked in the military, but it also needs to be worked among political leaders in military departments, ministries of defense who are stating political objectives without really understanding the corresponding military objective and creating enough capability that necessity has a possibility.

Is that part of the dialogue that you and your colleagues are working on? Well, we'd sure like for it to be, of course. I just don't know that we're there yet.

Part of the reason is because the way that people make it, when we're talking about civilian leadership, the way that many, many people who end up advising senior people So people in suits at the Pentagon.

are often advised by younger civilian people who are appointees or coming from the outside with very little military experience.

And so whether it's those people who have a good sense for – the media and for the political ramifications of things, which is important, right? That's an important limit in a democracy.

on warmongering or things of that nature. And second, JAGs, who are so incredibly restrictive, there's a lot of restraint institutionally I'm arguing in a sense, I don't want to say of loosening things, but I want to bring military necessity back in.

so that we're caring for, we're seeing our limits. We only have so many guns, bombs, et cetera.

And that also has to do with the limits of the lives of our own troops. And we all know that the rules of engagement in Afghanistan got more and more and more restrictive really to the loss of some of some American life.

and that the changing battlescape of Iraq, including rules of engagement that were all over the place. These things were not thought out with an eye towards military necessity a lot of the time.

they were thought of as what are foreign public seen on television and how do we protect the enemies, women and children, without thinking so often about our own troops as citizens themselves. So that's a motivating factor.

Are you finding that service JAG Corps are willing to reconsider their previous conceptions of military necessity? You know, this project is very new. It took us a while to get it off the ground.

And I would just say more generally, the good thing about JAGs is that they take military necessity as a principle, unlike – academics. The challenge is that they're risk adverse.

and far more willing to, not every JAG, but many, many JAGs are very risk adverse towards things like negative publicity.

Should we bring Art Lees into this conversation right now because he has served as a JAG and has more of a legal bent to it. Are you able to come on, Art? Okay, maybe not.

I see that there's Carson's flagging us to a question that Eddie asked. Okay. I've got the chat up to Carson. I'm so glad that you kept pointing it out because I was having a hard time I'd

forgotten how go-to works and where the chat is. And I see it's morally wrong to enlist young people who have just turned 18 instead of waiting to be 21.

I don't really have a dog in this fight. These are kind of historical and they are also tied to culture and things of that nature.

And I don't think that there's an answer that says that there's a perfect age for this. I would say that if your country was attacked, and the enemy was rolling over you. That's perfectly illicit to fight at a younger age than 18. I think sometimes we, we, uh, I would prefer that we don't have to have any children or young people fighting. I'd prefer we didn't have to go to war. But I'm cautious about those distinctions.

And in the US case, we've said 18. We changed our voting requirements in the United States to allow 18-year-olds to vote rather than 21-year-olds.

Um, and I don't see us going back anytime soon. So Eddie, for me, it's kind of a moot point, but it's important to ask because you're asking about, you know, particularly young men, their brains are still maturing until about age 25.

And so there's less restraint for that young Oklahoman Marine that I was talking about at 18 than there is at 21.

I don't see our society changing on that anytime soon, but I'm open to other thoughts. It just makes it incumbent on us.

to prepare them well, mentally, physically, socially, spiritually. All the forms of army resilience, or whatever you think about the multidimensionality of the human person, the younger they are, the more we should be investing in their wholeness and in toughening them.

Can we go to Art? Art's driving, so I don't know if he wants to comment at this time or not. So I don't want to put him in a dangerous situation.

Meanwhile, Bruce has a question. Go ahead, Bruce. Yeah, Bruce, I see your question here.

Yeah, I mean I need lessons to be learned. Yeah, wow. So I'm staying in contact with friends on the ground in Israel, including a retired JAG whose son has been called up.

And is not a believer. They are secular atheist family and others. And I would say this is that.

The things that the security and police forces saw when they arrived on scene were searing and traumatizing.

to people who saw the absolute brutality firsthand.

And there was immediate reports and the reports over a period of time about these, you know, so many of these younger Israeli military personnel who are who are called up or who are doing their two years of national service duty and just how hard all of this has been for them.

All I can say is that the Israelis, they recognize this and that this was a particularly shocking and grieving, grievous set of injury. I do think that I would just say because they've all seen the footage or seen it live, they have a greater resolve towards defeating this enemy than I think the world realizes.

And every time I'm in front of a student group or others and they ask me about this, I just say, you know, I grew up in San Diego. And if we would have had an army, say, of a drug cartel come across the border in San Diego and kill, rape, and plunder 42,000 Americans. 42,000 San Diegans. And then keep hostages for six months.

I mean, we would naturally want to have a high level of justice. We'd want to deter similar attacks from our north which Hezbollah or others could have attacked right away or at any time.

we would want to punish the wrongdoers and we'd want to demonstrate our resolve that we can never have this terrorist organization living next to us. And, and, uh, And in doing that, we'd be wondering, how do we protect kind of the moral sanity of our frontline troops as they're fighting this entrenched horrific enemy. This is going to be very, very difficult for Israel as a society.

And there are no platitudinous answers on this.

I'd be open to what any of you think, but I think Israel's going to have to invest a huge amount of money into trauma recovery.

as a society and as Christians, as a Christian, I only believe that that full healing in those things, full, you know, full human flourishing is possible through Jesus Christ, although we have a lot of principles for psychology and psychiatry and things.

These people on both sides of that line, including Palestinians, they're going to need spiritual healing.

Yeah, thanks. That's great. Very good. Well, I guess we're about out of time here, but it's been a wonderful discussion. I thank you.

so much, Eric, for joining us. Wish you well in your new job and look forward to continuing a relationship because you have such a broad and wonderful background and you've been so gracious to us.

to participate with us and we appreciate that. I don't know, is Lindsey, Arnold, are you still there? Are you able to come on close this with a prayer. Let me announce first that Dean and I will just be on for a few more minutes.

We're starting a conversation on a workshop or a conference perhaps later in the year, and we're just starting this conversation. So it'll be an ongoing conversation, but we'll start it here for Anybody that wants to stick around for a few minutes to be a part of that discussion, most likely it would be in Colorado.

and later in the year, but we'll see what God says about that, how the Spirit leads us.

into our next thing. And then of course, we're focusing on the World Conference in Brazil coming up in October, mid-October.

where I'm sure over 100 countries will be represented there in the military christian fellowships and once every 10-year conference so We're trying to prepare for that in different ways for the ethics training part of that conference as well.

So having said that, I don't see Lindsay on, so I'm going to ask, I wonder if Robert Johnson Could you come on and just close this session? Thank the Lord for what we've heard. I'd be happy to, Cal.

Father, we just come before you, Lord, just to say thank you. Thank you for the ethics Ethics Ministry and the guests that we've had through several of these different events and the discussion today, Lord, to just encourage all of us into thinking about how we steward our resources and care for others in a military environment as well as just fellow Christians looking after our brothers and sisters, Lord. We just thank you for this time together.

praise you for your son, and just ask that you protect everyone here until we can come together again. In Jesus' name, amen.

Amen. Thank you, everyone, for joining us. And again, thanks, Eric and Don.

I'd love to just continue the dialogue when you're available.

See if we have any Coloradoans stay on with us or not.

Robert, I was again thrilled that you had the time with the Mongolian MCF leaders there in Alabama.

It was really neat to continue to follow what they do with the ethics training that they connect with with evangelism and that has been part of what the Ugandan's Military Christian Fellowship is doing, too, of trying to merged some of this together in their professional military

ethic where evangelism was linked to to sort of discipleship and to ethics training. So thank you for doing that.

Looks like Art Lees is traveling somewhere with his family, and we're glad to have him even be in listening.

Dean, I thought since we have a pretty long session here that it would be better just to make this a short introduction to the to the discussion on things. I don't know how far along you are on that. I do have a couple of thoughts, too, I'd like to just bounce off you with regards to the question that you were asked about the conference and speakers.

this last week, and I think maybe you have already responded to that. I don't know that you have, In any event, that's a short topic as well. Do you want to just start with maybe an introduction to this? What are some thoughts that you're thinking about? I know you're right in the middle of getting ready for your next trip to with cadets and all, so probably not a lot of time to work on this, but your thoughts at this stage.

Thanks, Cal. Certainly, I'm trying to reserve a little bit of a portion of my brain cells to keep thinking about the what we'd like to do for a workshop potentially as early as June. And then also as you pointed out, Andy pinged me about the thoughts for breakout sessions on ethics at the World Conference that I need to respond to him.

You and I had at least talked about that.

of the potential, and let's see, Jude and Ivan are on. If Jude and Ivan are able to be there at the World Conference, as we hope, that in fact, one of the four potential breakout sessions may be involved with them as sort of a panel discussion of the internship process and ongoing ambassador process.

and so on, I think that's a good idea. And I'll be proposing that to Andy.

along with I think the discussion on just war we had said was one of the things that potentially we would do as a breakout session.

I think what we just had with Eric helps inform that sort of discussion very well.

and so on. I think that's a real, a real player.

And the others that, you know, Andy had sort of suggested based on other inputs, ethics in uniform, as well as ethics as a ministry, an outreach ministry, lead in for evangelism. I like those ideas. I think, again, we can flesh those out. And again, as Andy pointed out in his last email, We're not tied down to these, just having a good proposal I think four is a good number that we'll propose for breakout sessions. If they've got room for all four, want to use all four,

then we'll move forward with trying to assign those to particular people to take the lead on them and so on.

But I think it's helpful that I'll get back to him immediately by this weekend.

because he said that next meeting they're having is the 13th. So that's next week. And we'll give him something to work with.

So I think that's good for the World Conference stuff. Any thoughts on that, Cal? Yes, I just I was just thinking, you know, one of the things they like to have is different different parts of the world represented.

So you don't have all the speakers from one country or something like that.

and have a diversity of inputs. And so as I thought about that, I just wanted to mention a couple of names, some thoughts.

you know, consider, uh, uh, one is, uh, is Herman and not Herman. Um, uh, is it Herman in, uh, in Germany. They have been doing, you know, doing ethics work, as you know, That would give a sort of European part to this. I see Eddie's still with us too, that's great.

That was one thought. That would get MMI involved a little bit more.

as well. There is also the crew aspect of things.

We could think about that, although most of the speakers, I guess Eddie would be a better one to comment on that than me, but I think, you know, we have... Eddie, are you planning on trying to go to the World Conference? Okay, good. I agree. I mean, again, you...

You've already used some of the materials and spoken and so on.

Would you be interested in helping out and being involved in a workshop, a breakout workshop sort of thing at the World Conference? you're muted right now yeah most likely i will yeah i will okay the the other aspect of that too is um You know, the vice presidents are important.

uh the vice president so uh uh david wakala in Uganda is a vice president, acting still one, and he's extremely involved. He has taken the vision to his MCFs and they're including it in almost every conference that they have now as part of it.

Uh, as, uh, as well. And then, uh, uh, West Africa is coming along, uh, too, in terms of vice president, I don't know.

I assume that the vice president from West Africa would be there. I don't know if Igwe is going to be able to come or not, but he was a former Vice president and as well is leading sort of leading the West African ethics training group so So I think there, you know, and the other one



is South Africa, and that is Peter Lawrence has raised some issues along with, you know, in terms of different approaches and the The vice president for South Africa region really jumped on that as well and wanting to do much more in South Africa with regards to ethics training. So that would bring another uh another part of africa but uh be nice to have some and and then having europe having if somehow that uh uh Reinhardt is available. And then it would be nice to have somebody from I'm just trying to think though who who else, you know, it'd be nice to have somebody from Asia or from some other. Sure, you and I could take that discussion offline and start reaching out specifically.

to some different people to gauge their interests and their comfort level with, again, with that we can be suggesting what some of the topics are that would give them the opportunity to see. So I'd suggest you and I take that one offline.

Let me also mention that Rick Riles would be a good one to be involved because he's been He has a vision for the ethics training throughout the 40 countries that he deals with in Asia.

And he's been on the scene at military academies in Indonesia and in Thailand, for example, and so places where They're more attuned to ethics training than some other parts of militaries.

so we can talk more about that but uh let me jump over to the other topic the workshop, again, you and I talked back, it's been probably a month now, but for everybody else involved and certainly I did see by the way that when we mentioned this and the possibility of doing it in Colorado, Bruce was nodding his head and smiling. So I think probably Bruce would be interested in being involved and so on.

But for the rest of you, our vision for this was the idea of focusing on the practical application and teaching the teachers teaching the trainers and communicate, teach, and interact regarding that, as well as doing some of the intern training with Emmanuel.

And so on. And the idea being we've had some great.

um workshop type of things uh at various levels on the on the uh Cal ran one of those at FCMM last spring that had some great discussion. And again, some of those are at the at the level of what we were just experiencing with Eric and so on and Mark Lubecki and whatnot.

My thought is to take this now and move it down almost to the operational and tactical level to let people who are involved and interested in this, many of the people who come to these Friday meetings, and others that are involved in sort of Bible study level and conference level work in Colorado and elsewhere to start seeing, getting them into the discussion about what is it they can do to be putting together materials and using materials that we've already put together to use in teaching ethics.

And so in other words, spread it beyond just us, start getting it into the hands of other people to start teaching it.

So that's my thought, our initial working thought on what this conference potentially in late June in Colorado Springs would be.

And I've not had much time to go beyond that. I am getting ready to leave two weeks from today to take the cadets to Romania.

My wife and I'll be taking them over there and visiting with Mihaly Bruma and Alexandra and a bunch of people from the Romanian MCF. But when I get back from that, then I'll shift focus and try and get a bit more specific on what we'll do in June.

Okay, great, great. And I'll talk with you offline too a little bit more sometime about...

sort of curriculum that we've been thinking about that matches our lesson plans and our presentations.

our training together so which is sort of the application you know of training trainers as I as well so um and art it's just great to have you even as you're driving you're listening to us I needed to ask you anything because I didn't want to cause an accident. Yeah. Can you hear me? Yes. Okay. For some reason, I turned the mic on, but it wasn't working in the car.

So I'm thinking it might have been as I was switching cell towers and things like that.

And I would keep getting things telling me that this conference was restarting. So I just – I had to pick up my son from school, so I wasn't able to kiss the end.

And so I did have some comments regarding JAG approach from my being deployed for about 12 years.

And one of the things I found was that the services oftentimes – Um, would just deploy, especially like the Air Force will only deploy somebody for like six months. But the learning curve in theater is so sharp that you barely get going at six months and then you're gone and somebody else comes in.

and so um eric's comment regarding people being conservative the jags being conservative um a lot of that uh is something that I saw with the big turnover of JAGs throughout Iraq and Afghanistan.

They're just coming in, and they don't want to make a mistake, and they're not familiar with everything, and they don't know the lay of the land and all. So they do get very conservative.

and oftentimes they feel safer saying no.

But I was at the highest headquarters in theater as the chief of contracts and fiscal law.

And so there were many times where there were projects down in the grassroots that were trying to go forward And JAGs were saying no because they just didn't understand how everything fit out. And they would say, no, you're violating this, you're violating that, you can't do it. And so oftentimes it would be appealed up to my level And I would be able to say, yes, you can do it. But, again, one of the other comments on JAGS.

is I found that people's political perspectives often influence their legal advice and so I clashed with one Air Force JAG in particular, who was of the opinion that we needed to draw down the war.

And we would do that by closing this up.

It was at a time when the Democrats wanted to draw down the war and they were cutting off the funding for the war and things. And this person was trying to block construction projects that were crucial to what we were doing. And they would come up to my level and I would approve the projects. And and they would try to appeal mine all the way up to the Department of the DA.

or Department of the Army, and they would get their staff judge advocate involved.

But the Department of the Army would always side with me. But they saw the big picture like I saw the big picture, and I had been there for a long time, and I knew how everything fit together.

And so their arguments just weren't solved enough, but, uh, I don't think I ever saw anybody that might have come in where Eric was discussing issues such as the value of a mother and a child as opposed to our military forces or what the um israelis are facing right now i didn't see jags from that perspective where their particular philosophy was entering in. Everybody was pretty much, let's protect the forces, but I saw other political things about drying down the You know, trying to wind up the combat and things early by cutting off logistics and stopping construction projects, things like that.

like that. Okay. Well, thank you for that. I mean, uh, be good maybe just to, this is being recorded, maybe send the clip to both you and And Eric, if you wanted to have any further discussion. Good. Okay.

And also Jeff's Zest is going to be more available after April.

uh and as well and he and i i'm really wanting him to be able to go to the world conference i don't know if art is able to go or not but that would be great as well. Yeah, I would like to go. So, I mean, they bring also, you know, a different aspect of this uh into into play uh that uh you

don't have a i don't think amcf has a lot of legal folks that are in i mean i'm sure they do have them some somewhere but i don't know of them at least that have been involved in ethics and also have real interest in the subject.

And at the same time with Jeff, Jeff has led on putting together the inductive Bible studies.

And so he's going to be a resource. He and his wife, I think, are going to go, are planning to go and are encouraged to go.

as well, so just for info. Okay, any other things you want to talk about at this time, Dean, or do we get a good start on some of the thoughts? Oh, you're off. Your mic's off.

Sorry about that. No, I'm good. Thanks for this. This was helpful. I will get back to Andy. We'll keep this discussion going forward and keep tweaking this.

All right. Okay. Well, I wonder, Eddie, would you pray for us as we just close up? yeah so before i pray i was just going to pass a little comment you know Just like the World Conference in 2014, you know they train a lot of people to kind of help with especially the inductive bible studies running some of your sessions And I think this BiblicaFHB is something that is going to be introduced in the World Conference.

I think that, I mean, as you are putting together people to do help with things like that, I think they would need some few training days to be able to brace themselves with.

what exactly they need to present and to allow people to have that conversation And also to bring out voices, you know. So just want to pass that comment in a minute.

Dean will be the leader of the delegation, the ethics team for the conference and he's as you can see, intimately involved and now working on the program parts of it as well.

Glad to have you assisting Dean, too, in this whole thing.

And you might even pass up for Dean, what do you think? Should Eddie be in communication now because he's with crew and also MMI about this? Or what's your thought there? Well, certainly, I think I welcome the communication certainly with both of those, within those organizations that you intend to be there and that We would love for you to be involved in, again, an ethics discussion because you've been so faithful and already done so much doing this so just sure just keep that discussion going with them and dialogue within those ministries so that they're aware of that Well, let me pray us off. Heavenly Father, every good and perfect thing comes from you.

And we are so privileged that you have made us part of this conversation.

And this is the pain of your heart that we share this gospel in this manner.

to introduce and to share this gospel that people may come to know you and know your ways, which is true and which is perfect.

Father, I just pray, Father, with all this ongoing conversation, that by your Holy Spirit, you lead us, Father, through this conversation.

and all the hurdles that may be involved in this conversation. For your way says that when those moment comes, you will show us and you will teach us what to say.

so lord we offer a willing heart to you and for your will to be done we thank you father for Carl and the team that are working so while on these these issues lord and we pray the father for your continuous wisdom um direction discernment lord and favor lord so that wherever father these um everything's father is being mentioned people are curious people are willing to to listen first and to decide And Lord, we just want to thank you for these continuous monthly meetings and we pray, Father, for availability and affordability father to be able to have this meeting and to continue to learn in these times father we pray you for giving us the life, the breath, the strength to be gathered all the time.

And we look forward to our next gathering where we all can gather in healthy manner. And we pray all this in Jesus' name. Amen.

Amen. Thanks, everyone. Thank you. Bye.

Thank you.