

I was a post-grad helicopter pilot, as was my father.

about 50, 300 hours with a bunch of different planes. Entitled my modest memoir, it was grand fun while it lasted.

Could you speak a little louder, Pete? I can try. Thanks.

Nice to have you here. A few months ago, Cal asked me the question, What do you think is the best way of explaining ethics to people? off the top of my head. I said, well, I have a church for me that personal evangelism approach is probably the best because then you can share the ethical failures you've had and the ethical successes that you've had. And through that, it's kind of like evangelism.

or explain the situation. So some years ago, we put together a series of lesson plans This particular one was actually done by Ron Huggler. He's part of our X team. Retired chaplain. He used to teach ethics for the army.

And he notes that there are 10 common ethical problems that we will face in uniformed service. And they are, in no particular order of pride. Sort of the basis for all problems that we encounter when we let pride get ahead of our allegiance to the Lord. Striving to fit in and or become number one at the expense of others.

And then when we finally reach a position of power, we are prone as human beings to use it. Another one is lying.

lying in any form. I learned the other day that in the state of Virginia and North Carolina, if you're one mile an hour over the speed limit, you're in violation of the law and can legally receive a ticket.

lying by omission outright not telling the truth you can do it by omission by failing to tell the whole story to someone. So lying is a problem. Regulations.

It's part of life in the military. It's often the case that they get in the way of getting the job that they're written for using.

And so we have to know when we can disregard the regulation.

that honors God, but for the most part, we can't. Do not tolerate disrespect for a fellow service member.

Regardless, it's just not something that should be done. It is very easy in the military to misuse government resources.

In this country, it's as little thing as taking home a government pin for personal use. Nobody's going to miss it. It didn't cost very much.

But ethically speaking, it's not ours to do that with, so we need to be thinking about that. In the earlier discussion, there were less examples of unethical orders from superiors, and what do you do about that? And the thing to remember about that situation is that if you give your commander the best possible advice you can give, which is ethical, if he's got a problem with that and he's going to have to deal with it later on. Don't let it become your problem. As Harry Potter was mentioning there, cultural differences all around the world. And yet if we want to live as ethical Christians, we need to be able to reconcile our cultural beliefs as well as our typical beliefs and if we ever do get in a position of authority we need to know how to communicate to our subordinates the fact that we are an ethical leader. We are Christian.

what we would expect. Not that we expect them all to become Christians, not that we expect that they're always going to be ethical, but that your personal perspective is that that's the way to do it. So the definitions from Ron's teachings.

Ethics are the rules and the principles that govern our behavior and our conduct.

So that's sort of an overarching title for all of this. For Christians, the Bible provides our ethical standards.

It's our primary guide. It's our number one reg. It's the master regulation, if you will, of all our life as a Christian.

Our ethics will help us decide what is the right action to take in any situation. Our ethics will help us know that we have taken the right action in any situation. And our right course of action It should always be this way, even if nobody else knows that we did it. We can also be confident.

that we took the right course of action to solve an ethical problem, and we can know that we did take the right course of action.

more definitions responsibility we are responsible for our obedience to God and for our own conduct as we are serving them. Beliefs are assumptions or convictions that we hold as true about something. Norms are the rules or laws normally based on agreed-upon beliefs and values that members of a group follow live in harmony.

Beliefs are personal. Norms are community. We got pictures on top of pictures.

I'm on slide four at this point. Character describes our inner strength and its link between our beliefs and our behaviors. Character is the result of our upbringing, of our experience, about faith and a whole other bunch of situations that have guided us.

to become the person that we are. The soldier of character does what he or she believes is right in every situation regardless of what is unethical conduct by others. I'm going to slide forward now. Okay, I'm just trying to get there.

having some problems. The term ethical means that we're living in accordance the beliefs and norms for right conduct or practice that we hold dear, especially in the standards of our profession as military people.

Now the heart of the matter. An ethical dilemma is what happens when two or more of our beliefs, or norms, alive. When we have, as Gary was pointing out, prejudice among nations in trying to do the NATO mission, which is supposed to be we're all in it together, attack on ones and attack on all.

And when those things collide, we have to resolve a situation like that with the greatest that results in the greatest moral good. So slide next.

Slide five. OK, there are four temptations. I mentioned them at the beginning.

but we'll go into them in some detail here. We're all going to face these, I think, throughout a career, and they need to know how to deal with them.

Pride, as we know from the Bible, is sort of the basis for all sin. It's the basis of original sin. It's what happens when we think in our minds that I know better than God, I know better than my boss, I know better than my buddies. And that's the first long step. Driven by pride, we really try to fit in, especially early in a military career.

We may be asked to go out for a night on the town. Not something we would normally do, but because we want to fit in, we do it.

From my time at White Sulphur Springs, I'll never forget the devotion given by a college student who was a Christian.

who noted that he had been at a fraternity party in university, had a drink in his hand and a cigarette in the other.

And somebody came up to him and said, I thought you were a Christian. He said, well, I am. He said, it doesn't appear to me that you're a very good one. So that's something to think about.

We can't let ourselves go under the prince of this world, Satan.

in order for us to fit in. It's just not something we have to do. Trying to be number one.

As we move up the rank, the pyramid, if you will, and get to positions where We're competing against our peers and our buddies for next position.

It's very easy to kiss up and kick down, as this question was often heard in the Coast Guard, because we're trying to please our superiors and become number one, but at the expense, of our subordinates and our equals. This is especially true in mid-career. And I had a senior officer

with me icebreaker deployment early in my career, he was doing exactly that. He was taking credit for everything his troops did.

and making it appear as though if it hadn't been for him, the icebreaker would be unable to fly helicopters.

I didn't think that was a very good thing. I got passed over 404s that, as a result, later made it back. So it's something to watch out for.

If God wants us to be number one, we're going to be number one. If that's not part of God's plan right now, we're not going to be number one. We're going to be number 24.

When I retired, I was number 72 in the Coast Guard. Not because of anything I did, just because a lot of other people have retired.

You make it up the ladder, you're at the top of the pyramid in a leadership position, and abuse of power becomes an issue.

You start thinking, well, I'm the boss. I can pretty much do what I want. I can disregard some stuff.

is sort of get away with it, because who's going to question the boss? I've known a number of commanding officers and others who took that attitude, they were not Christians, and everybody below them took note of it, saying, well, how does he get away with that? That's just not right. Because he's not putting the common good ahead of himself. But the bottom line in all of this is, as was mentioned I think earlier, The humble servant attitude is key to ethical military Christian service. And a couple of questions that come to mind are, what would Jesus do? And when I like to say, before you do anything, ask yourself this question, how am I going to glorify God? by my contemplated course of action. I'm thinking I'm going to do something. How will this glorify the Lord? And if you can't answer that question positively and then you ought not to be doing it. So next slide.

Our first responsibility is to obey God. We know from Romans 13, 1 through 5, that we're to obey the orders of those appointed over us. And in so doing, we honor God.

One example of how this might work out, your boss says, do this even though I know it violates the regulation. I just want to get it done.

You tell them about, you explain the background, the purpose of the regulation, what you know about it.

and suggest some ethical options to accomplish whatever it is they're trying to accomplish. But if they persist in the unethical actions, You obey because you have obeyed God and you're

secure in the knowledge that that senior will ultimately be held accountable to God for that action.

So don't let it become your problem. You do your job, you obey God, and let the boss fend for himself.

I think it's often helpful for seniors to realize that they have forgotten a lot of the rules of engagement service and they just get used to doing stuff that isn't in accordance with the regulations and that's why they even consider these requests.

Our responsibility is to know that regulations exist for a purpose and that they should be obeyed.

unless to do so is going to create an unlawful or unsafe or unethical situation.

My last assignment in the Coast Guard was commanding officer of the Coast Guard headquarters, which sounds like a brand title and position, but the reason they have an O6 as the commanding officer post guard headquarters is because none of the flag officers want to deal with Non-judicial punishment, courts martial, running the store, commissary, exchange, all that kind of stuff.

So they appointed O6 to be the plucky. Soon after I came in that position, I had a flag officer who wanted to order a day timer schedule because you've always been able to do it.

My predecessors had always ordered it for them, and I had to explain to them that that's not available through the government supply system, which is what we're bound to observe.

But here's one that is very much like it. I'll be happy to order it for you and have them expedite the shipment so that you don't miss Mr. B. Next slide.

Number seven. There we go. So our governing regulation, if you will, is scripture for military Christians.

for our ethical conduct, for the actions we take, for the way we speak, for the way we deal with other people. The Bible is our guide.

And we do our duty with obedience to everything that we should, including the ethical standards.

Now, when you come up against an ethical problem, there's a process that is helpful in trying to solve it.

First is to interpret the situation. Is there an ethical problem? And if so, what is it? My last assignment, the total quality management guru for the Coast Guard. And I think the main thing I learned out of that assignment was that we spend endless amounts of effort and money solving

the wrong problem because we don't interpret and analyze what the actual problem is before you go about to solve it. So you interpret, first, is there an ethical problem? Then we analyze and we look at the Bible. We look at the U.S. law. We look at orders and regulations, our national values, our professional values.

norms and institutional pressures. Concerning all of these things, we can then choose a course of action that is consistent with our beliefs and it will resolve the problem. Then implement, start down the path you've selected, but do so in constant prayer for God to give you rudder orders as you go along because you may not have hit on exactly the right solution.

And that's often been the case. So remember those four steps, and they'll help you in resolving ethical problems.

So how do we know that we did the right thing? Next slide.

What was the outcome of the course of action that we selected? Did it seem to resolve the ethical problem? Was it honoring God? Would we do it again? Here's an example from my Coast Guard career.

Before headquarters, I was the training officer of Coast Guard Group and Air Station, Cape May, New Jersey, where I had Three Coast Guard cutters, six small boat stations, three helicopters, 500 and some people.

a base navigation team and one or two others. Well, there was a regulation that said Coast Guard cutters are supposed to be underway so many hours per year.

And I was getting complaints from the crews on the ships saying, all we do to fulfill that requirement is go out on the ocean go fishing, we go around in circles, we waste fuel. It doesn't really serve any purpose. It's an all right.

I will explain to higher headquarters what we're going to do. And so what we did was say, go out and get underway.

as often as you feel necessary to keep a good train and spend the time that you're at the dock making sure that your ship is ready to go at a moment's notice because a lot of stuff doesn't get done at sea when you're groaning around making holes in the water.

So the result was that the outcome honored God because I told the powers that be what we're going to do.

and that we would do the same thing again. They said, that's a great idea. I don't know why we even have that recommendation. And so we kept everybody happy.

Here's some questions from situations that came up during my Coast Guard career that we'll have some discussion about.

I arrived at Cape May and discovered that some things were maybe getting the job done but were not in accordance with governing regulations. So the question is, what would you do? Would you leave things that way because it's always been done like that? Would you require that everything be done by the book? Or would you ask why things are done that way and determine if there's not a better way to do it? So what do you think? Any thoughts? Go ahead.

That's all raised hand, I thought. Not to worry, then. I'll give you the answer.

This particular situation had to do with the helicopters. And in the late 80s, The H65 was fairly new to the Coast Guard. It was only five years old. And we're having lots and lots of engine problems.

There's hard maintenance, having to replace engines for small parts and pieces that weren't being provided, and so on and so forth.

My predecessor's solution had been the flight crew is also required to get four hours of flight time a month in order to qualify for flight time.

So what they were doing, instead of having people double up and go flying four or five at a time to get their flight hours, it was simply what I call pencil-whipping the files and giving them credit for hours they had not flown. The engineer board had burned my own happiness with that.

and we got it sorted out and we got the airplanes working better which was the basic problem and we got crews to double up and triple up. It wasn't that much room. I made 65, but you could take four at a time, I think. And that way they'd log the flight hours and be in accordance with their with the regulations. So that's one way to do it. Next slide, please.

Here's one from another, I think this is from one of the early stories that Cal had been collecting.

You're the unit safety officer and you're going around on an inspection and you see that there are several fire extinguisher tags that haven't been signed off for several months.

even though all the gauges are in the green and the extinguishers appear serviceable. So what do you do? Report it and cause trouble for your predecessor who hadn't been keeping them signed off, initial and back date inspection time, or is this a case where you decide there's no ethical dilemma? and you take those things down to the fire station to get them inspected and get new tags drawn. Any thoughts? Message, chat, chat, chat. Go ahead.

You don't get what you expect, you get what you inspect. Correct. Was this an ethical dilemma or was it not? I'd say it's not an ethical dilemma. I think there is some worth in holding that other person accountable enough to make them see what needs to be corrected. But you may,

at least in the US military, you may not have any say over that whatsoever. The predecessor might be gone and moved on to the next base.

And you write that up in some form somewhere, nobody's going to care. It's just not going to get followed up on. Right.

That was the decision, I think, in that case. This is a case where when you interpret, analyze, choose, follow through that there's not really an ethical dilemma here, it's just something should have been done, wasn't done, but no harm, no foul. And so let's just make it bright and start from scratch. Here's another one from Kay May when I put it in.

I was offered membership in the local yacht club, over which I had regulatory authority because they had yacht princes and so forth, which we proposed.

But my predecessors had accepted such a membership. So should we accept a membership because our predecessors had done so? degree decline, because to do so would be an unethical conflict of interest.

would incline because it would also violate organizational regulations against that.

Any thoughts? Bob? I think I'd go with the third one and just decline and explain to the person that offered this to you that this would violate regulations and you are not able to do that. I think they would understand.

In this case, it was actually two and three. I said, well, it would be unethical of me to accept this because of Coast Guard regulations against this very sort of thing.

I guess the reason I stayed away from the unethical one was you're sort of charging him as being unethical. Well, he really is, and maybe that's what God wants you to do.

I think it's the Holy Spirit that makes the decision for you whether you use two and three or just one or the other. But the iClub guy had no concept of conflicts of interest, of ethics, of post-grad regulations.

Basically, I used both to explain to him that, personally, it would be unethical for me to do it because it's a conflict of interest and also against the regulations, so it's another reason.

understand. Yeah, the rule was to avoid the appearance of unethical conduct because sometimes even if you do not do something from an inherently unethical heart that you can create the impression in someone else.

that it's okay to do those things which they think are unethical. It is sort of like eating meat offered to idols. So you want to avoid all appearance of evil as well as evil itself. For sure.



were to avoid the appearance of evil because to do so is basically dishonoring God, like the example of the university student and our hearts representing God and what we're doing, then we ought not to be appearing to do things that might be interpreted by others as being evil.

or unethical. So next slide.

A group of people are talking disrespectfully about a female member of the unit. Why don't you allow the talk to continue because she wasn't there? wait until a later opportunity to sign or publicly admonish the group for disrespecting a fellow service member. Any thoughts? I go with number two.

Anybody else? I personally don't believe in Chewing people out and go ahead. You have something, you had your hand up.

Can't hear you. I see your mouth moving, but no, I'm not hearing sound.

could also go with number three, depending on the situation.

And that's what I did. This was one of the few situations where I felt it was worth it for the group to hear that their toleration of this sort of talk about a fellow pilot who happened to be quite cheaply and was also a good pilot, was not to be allowed in my command.

And the junior lieutenant, the lieutenant junior grade maybe, who had done it, had that black mark on his next fitness report because of the way he was talking. He never did that again.

Okay, another one from, I think this was another one of Cal's stories. In an assignment where you have oversight of some money and material, it has been culturally customary to take the money for personal use when you're relieved, when you hand over the assignment, what do you do? Take the money and material? hand it over to your replacement, ask your superior what to do.

By the way, the person that experienced this particular one is on this call. Okay. Maybe he can tell us what he did. Another country.

If you want to hear what he did, go to Ivan. Ivan, what did you do in this situation? because everyone's not talking. Sometimes it's difficult on some of these places that they can respond in chat but not Not in person. He just chatted that the situation could have resulted in an injury of someone else.

I think turned it over to his replacement, if I recall. Correct. That's correct.

And let me just say that there were generals that heard about this and were amazed at this because this hardly ever would happen. And his, uh, his, his ethical reputation went way up with the higher command.

He may even have gotten another job because of his stand on this, because it was so out of the ordinary. Okay, next slide.

I think this is another one from the stories, but he deployed, told to collect weapons and ammo for redeployment.

One unit does not come up with the documentation for the weapons, but the superior says disregard because it's too complicated to get it done. We'll do it when you get home.

So what do you do? Obey the orders? Do your own investigation to account for all the weapons? Or wait until your unit's back home to report discrepancies? This is from a young officer deployed in, I think in Afghanistan.

not from the U.S., but from another country, who is a Rocky Mountain High interaction graduate.

If I recall the outcome of the story, he did his own investigation and accounted for everything, even though the unit who was supposed to hadn't done it.

That is correct. In fact, it's a she in this particular case. She did continue the investigation.

and knew that she was responsible for all those weapons and ammunition, that eventually it would be found when they were back home and she would be the one held responsible because she did not take action.

but she did and that led to some hard situations but she came out of it okay so you're Moving up the ranks and becoming ethical. Get a command and you want to make sure that your people know that you're an ethical spiritual leader.

How do you do that? Hold a commander's call, announce how you want things done. Deal with situations, hoping people will notice.

or assess unit performance before explaining that safe mission performance is your top priority, that regulation should be preferred obeyed unless they prevent effective mission performance, and that when necessary, you will work to change such regulations.

Any hands raised? We have one of our training presentations that will be in this series.

uh where the option shows that you've got to establish a a climate, an ethical climate by letting them know how you want things done, what is right for your command and your command.

So we'll go into that in a little more detail with one of our future presentations.

But he would say, I think he would say, hold a commander's call to announce how you want things done.

I'd just like to add something on this too. At least in the US Air Force, in a flying unit, a lot of times, your second in command is the one who then becomes the commander a few years later.

So there's a real opportunity there to establish yourself as an ethical spiritual leader before you're ever actually in that command. So instead of having to come out and show to people that you are that person by doing a commander's call or something like that, you can show it through your character and your conduct.

as a member of that unit before you're ever raised to that position of command? Well, here's what I did.

Um, assess, well, the first thing is just, uh, instinctive, but Changing Command was on a hot August day, even though it was inside the aircraft hangar. The rest of the uniforms, people and the outgoing CO, went on and on and on with the speech. And you can see the troops were about to fall out. So my first official act without thinking what the repercussions would be was to fill the XO, put the scoops at ease. And about a two-minute, all orders remain in effect, et cetera.

have a good rest of the day. Then in various that we had periodic officer meetings, So I saw how things were going and made it clear to them, one, that I was there to be servant leader. My job was to make it possible for them to do their jobs. I did not want, under any circumstance, to have to tell a family that because they were not trained or hadn't been focused on their flying duties that they had wrecked up and I'd have to go into a casualty visit, but don't worry about the paperwork. I can make sure all that gets done. Be the best possible pilots and boat drivers you can be.

And when you find regulations that are interfering with that, then tell me and I will work to get them changed.

So we did a number of things. Well, not the least, I guess the rest of the story is that I went subsequently to, I think, three, changes of command from some of my subordinates, and they all mentioned that they had learned servant leadership from me. And I hadn't really intended that they would do that.

the way it turned out because god was with me and keeping my feet but um There's a lot of stuff in the military that is not always very cut and dry. On two occasions I had to Tell higher-ups that this small boat station is out of business because you won't fix the heating plan. It's 30 degrees in the building.

the dead of winter, they're all going downtown to motels until you fix the furnace. Never saw so many civil engineers in your life. And they do the same thing with another unit where they had ignored the repairs to the seawall that was holding the building up. And same thing.

do what's within your power to do to make sure that the troops are getting what they need that we had a we had a uh product week on the bridge of one of the programs.

One dark and stormy night resulted in them being unable to start the engines for the fishing boat sank and lives were lost. And so I put that boat It's called a CASRA, casualty report, and it's basically saying it's out of service until you fix it. And I got chewed out by the admiral, but I told the admiral, I said, It's been on the books for like three years. They haven't taken action to fix it. So it's time to get it done. And I never saw so many label engineers show up to do it.

I don't think I ever came out to an all hands gathering, commander's call type of thing, and said, I'm a Christian. Here's what I expect.

I would come out and say, there's no place I'd rather be than right here. You're doing a good job here, doing a good job there, but not so good at the aircraft ramp.

really means to have a fog rock because the concrete is falling and it's liable to damage a helicopter. Stuff like that.

People seemed to think it was okay. I mean, not that I was any great prize, but they responded and we did well.

I think that's the end of my story. Any other questions? That's the way I'm sticking to it.