

## TRANSCRIPT

### **Andrew Hastie:**

Let me take you back to February 28th, 2013. I was out at an Afghan patrol base and we were out visiting the Afghan soldiers there, who were surrounded. This was an area of Uruzgan Province where there'd been a lot of gun fighting, insurgent activity. Long story short, we called in an airstrike that resulted in two civilian casualties, two young boys aged eight and six, they were both killed. I remember going over with my medic and a few other soldiers and seeing their little bodies and just thinking, "What the hell are we doing here?" I think that was where I really, in my core, hated war for the first time, and was I think disabused of any notion of it being adventure or a boy's one tale, or an opportunity to pursue ambition. It's a state of disorder, it's ugly, innocent people die, and it's very, very painful. So that was the day I hated war.

### **JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL**

That's Andrew Hastie, a former commander of Australia's legendary special forces, the SAS. We'll meet him properly later in the episode. He captures well the savagery of war. As the American historian Howard Zinn put it, there is no flag large enough to cover the shame of killing innocent people. War is a horror, can there really be any place for it in a civilized society?

In just the 12 months prior to October this year, the Armed Conflict Location & Event Data Project has recorded more than 155,000 fatalities internationally, due to armed conflicts. It's not just the immediate casualties of war, of course. The consequences of violent conflict continue for decades after. The United Nations reports that prolonged conflict keeps countries poor. A civil war costs a medium sized developing country the equivalent of 30 years' GDP growth, and it takes 20 years for trade levels to return to pre-war levels. Given the amount of death and destruction involved, it has to be asked, is it possible to have anything like a just war? Or is strict pacifism, a commitment to nonviolent resistance, always the only intelligent response? Even if it were possible to justify going to war, how could anyone hope to carry out the business of war justly? Just war, an oxymoron? That's our topic for today.

I'm John Dickson, and this is Undeceptions.

Undeceptions is brought to you by Zondervan Academic's new book *Person of Interest* by J. Warner Wallace.

Every episode will be exploring some aspect of life, faith, history, culture, or ethics, that's either much misunderstood or mostly forgotten. With the help of people who know what they're talking about, we'll be trying to undeceive ourselves and let the truth out.

If you want to help us get the truth out, and don't change your mind after this episode, please consider going to [undeceptions.com](http://undeceptions.com) and clicking donate. We're about two thirds the way to covering the costs of this pod, and with your help, we're going to get there, this season or next. Or maybe the one after that, but we're going to get there, God willing. Anything you can do is appreciated.

TAPE: Winston Churchill

*We shall fight in France, we shall fight on the seas and oceans. We shall fight with growing confidence and growing strength in the air. We shall defend our island, whatever the cost may be. We will fight on the beaches, we shall fight on the landing grounds. We shall fight in the fields and in the streets. We shall fight in the hills, we shall never surrender.*

JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

That's of course Winston Churchill, the UK prime minister during World War II, delivering perhaps the most famous war speech ever. It's stirring stuff and it pulls no punches. It's actually part of a much larger speech Churchill delivered following the evacuation of British troops from Dunkirk, which he labeled a colossal military disaster. But there's no talk here of suing for peace. Instead, he talks of the necessity of war. The speech certainly buoyed British hearts in 1940, but the arguments behind Churchill's justification for more suffering and violence are part of a tradition at least 1,600 years older. The theory of just war. What do we mean when we speak of just war?

INTERVIEW BEGINS

Nigel Biggar:

Well John, the first thing we shouldn't mean is holy war, that's to say war where those waging it, imagine that they are pure and righteous and the other side are wholly unrighteous. And that therefore the righteous can treat the unrighteous just as they please.

JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

That's Nigel Biggar. He is Regius Professor of Moral and Pastoral Theology at the University of Oxford. He's the author of numerous books and scholarly articles but we're interested in talking to him about his 2014 benchmark volume, *In Defense of War*.

Nigel Biggar:

Just war is not holy war, so I prefer to talk about justified war. War that is justified, all things considered. War's not good. If we can avoid it, we should avoid it. Sometimes, however, we are morally obliged to engage in it, in all its moral ambiguities.

JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

As a leading moral philosopher of warfare, Nigel is acutely aware that at one level, every culture that goes to war thinks that their wars are justified.

Nigel Biggar:

From the beginning, people have felt the need to justify going to war, and that they'll do it simply in terms of let's say self defense, or in terms of imposing order. I run a project at the moment that that examines the views of empire from ancient China to the modern period, and empire well before the Christian period, is justified in terms of imposing peace on warring peoples. So, I've no doubt that, throughout history, perhaps even Genghis Khan felt that he could justify it in some way. But as a Christian, I take it for granted that human beings are moral and that whether we're Genghis Khan or Adolf Hitler or William Gladstone, we feel the need to justify what we do. So, there's certainly been thought about what it takes to justify war before the Christian period.

JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

So, everyone justifies their war at some level, but the theme of just war is usually associated with the Christian tradition. That's because in the late fourth and early fifth centuries, authorities within the Roman Empire started coming to church intellectuals, seeking advice. Christians had to do some fancy thinking about what it means to provide state security in a vaguely Christian way. Is that even possible?

Nigel Biggar:

In the course of the 300s, Christians found themselves in positions of political responsibility. And anyone who was in government, particularly in the ancient period, would've discovered that the maintenance of law and order was the basic duty of those in government, because there wasn't much of it. Unlike in contemporary Australia or Britain, peace was not the rule. Then the question is, well how do you maintain law and order? Do you do it by persuading

people? Well, if you can, but unfortunately not all people can be persuaded, so what do you do? That requires the use of force.

#### JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

One of the great minds of this period, Christian or secular, was Augustine of Hippo. Saint Augustine, as he came to be known, was born in the Roman province of North Africa. And after a lengthy career as a professor of rhetoric, he converted to Christianity. It's quite a cool story in its own right, for another day. Augustine was a towering intellect and he published over 5 million words. My doctorate was just over a hundred thousand words so Augustine wrote that 50 times over.

One of his monster works, perhaps his greatest intellectual achievement, was his book *The City of God*. It was written in the wake of the sacking of Rome by the Visigoths in the year 410, it was a catastrophe. He wrote this not so much trying to make sense of it as to point out that no earthly realm, not even a Christian empire, could be an eternal city. People had thought of Rome as the eternal city, but Augustine said, "Nope, we are all fallen, including Christians, and the best we can hope for is an approximation of the Kingdom of God. Until that Kingdom, the only true eternal city, comes and restores all things to their proper ends. Until then," he said, "In this fallen in between time, there is some necessity, some justification for state force to restrain evil for the sake of the good."

#### INTERVIEW CONTINUES

Nigel Biggar:

Augustine in the early 400s, finds himself being asked by Christian tribunes... And tribunes were military commanders, and in those days, there was no police. The army, the military did whatever policing there was. Christian military commanders writing to Augustine saying, "Now how can we square our public government responsibility with our Christian faith?" That's what provokes some of Augustine's reflections. And unlike later, you find Augustine's reflections on the justified use of force in a variety of different places. It's not systematic, but a couple of the classic places are in letters, in correspondence with these two tribunes, master the innocent Boniface.

#### JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

Augustine to Boniface, peace should be the object of your desire, war should be waged only as a necessity and waged only that God may buy it, deliver men from the necessity and preserve them in peace. For peace is not sought in order to be the kindling of war, but war is waged in

order that peace may be obtained. Therefore, even in waging war, cherish the spirit of a peacemaker, that by conquering those whom you attack, you may lead them back to the advantages of peace. For our Lord says, "Blessed are the peacemakers for they should be called the children of God."

It's clear that Augustine saw warfare, even just warfare, as a tragic necessity in this an earthly city, which can only ever be partially Christianized through the principles he laid down. In a moving passage toward the end of the city of God, Augustine writes, but the wise man they say will wage just wars. Surely however, if he remembers that he is a human being, it is far more true that he will grieve at being faced with the necessity of waging just wars. If they were not just, he would not have to wage them, and so there would be no wars for the wise man. In Augustine's view, in other words, even just wars are never holy and they are certainly not happy, even in victory.

#### INTERVIEW CONTINUES

Nigel Biggar:

Well, one extremely decisive move he makes is to say that what matters is motive. Is to say one can use force and yes, sometimes force will cause serious harm, [inaudible 00:13:21] what kind of force you use. You can use force, but you can use it for different motives. You can do it because you hate the other person, because you want to wipe them off the face of the earth, because you are defending some private interest. Or you can use it in the public interest, because the defense of innocent people makes it necessary.

So, what he was saying was you can do it out of love. You have threatened my neighbor, John, and you won't desist through my persuasion, so I have to intervene and force you to stop. I don't want to do that, I do it out of love, primarily for my neighbor. And Augustine goes on to say something slightly more controversial. He says, "I do it out of love for you too, because I'm stopping you from sinning." So, he talks then about the possibility of, what do you call it? I think a sort of kind harshness, or is it a kind of harsh kindness? I think it's a kind harshness. What we would call tough love. I mean love, in his view, sometimes has to be tough.

#### JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

That's the theory, the practice though, is infinitely harder. War is messier than Augustine's theorizing lets on. It's bloody, horrible, obviously deadly. My little country alone, Australia, has lost close to 103,000 defense personnel in police actions, peacekeeping and international conflicts, since the 1860s. Even if you could get your head around the morality of war, why would anyone actually want to be a soldier?

Andrew Hastie:

Well, there are a number of factors, like any decision, that shape your approach. For me there was a tradition of family service. My grandfathers had served in World War II, my uncle had been conscripted during the Vietnam War. He didn't deploy to Vietnam, but he went through Scheyville, did officer training, and I think was on the reserve list to go. The way my family always talked about military service in that context, was that it made my grandfather's men and it made my uncle a man, and it sort of transformed them, and so I'd always thought about military service in those terms.

JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

Let me reintroduce you to Andrew Hastie, the former SAS commander we heard at the top of the episode. He's since gone into federal parliament, he's the member for Canning in Western Australia, and the current assistant defense minister for Australia. That's defense secretary for my US listeners. His personal call to join the military began with a family tradition, but it very quickly morphed into a matter of the heart.

Andrew Hastie:

9/11 came along in my first year of university at UNSW in Kensington, and I felt that was a hinge of history and I wanted to be part of it. I was lacking a direction at the time and so I joined the Australian Defense Force and then went down to the Australian Defense Force Academy, and the next 13 years, served in uniform. Then there were personal reasons as well, strong protective instincts, a desire to be tested physically, mentally. I wanted to be in the SAS as soon as I joined, to do the toughest military training I could. And then the sense of adventure. You're a young guy, you want to get out, see danger, see other parts of the world. All those things came together and that's why I started in the army.

JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

Andrew deployed with the SAS to Afghanistan in 2013 as part of the special operations task group.

John Dickson:

As part of the special operations task group, did you ever struggle with an apparent clash between your Christian faith and the intrinsic violence of being in the military?

Andrew Hastie:

I didn't. I had thought about it quite a bit. I'm a Christian and I believe in the doctrine of original sin, and the government exists for a reason, to promote order. So, I felt, in the context of studying, Romans 13, that it was a proper vocation and a good one.

#### JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

Romans chapter 13 is one of those red-letter passages. When it comes to a Christian justification of war. Paul has just made clear, in, Romans 12, that Christians are to quote, "Live in harmony with one another. Do not repay anyone evil for evil. If it is possible, as far as it depends on you live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my dear friends, but leave room for God's wrath." All pretty pacifist, right? Then, in the very next chapter, chapter 13, he writes this, "The governing authorities that exist have been established by God, for the one in authority is God's servant for your good. But if you do wrong, be afraid for rulers do not bear the sword for no reason. They are God's servants, agents of wrath to bring punishment on the wrong doer." It suddenly sounds like Paul thinks governments have God's permission to use the sword, force, against evil.

So, this is a moment to phone a friend. Dr. Mike Bird is my colleague at Ridley college where he's the academic Dean lecturer in theology and probably the most published New Testament scholar in the country.

#### PHONE A FRIEND

John Dickson:

Hey, how you doing?

Mike Bird:

Not too bad, mate, not too bad. Good, mate,

John Dickson:

Mate, you were once paratrooper and now you're a biblical scholar. I'm sure there's a whole episode in that. You've also written a giant commentary on, Romans, among other things. So, I've got some technical questions for you about, Romans 13, right? So, the first is this. Is Paul contradicting Jesus, when he talks about governments using the sword to restrain evil?

Mike Bird:

No, I don't think so. Jesus deals a lot with what individual Jews and his followers have to be in order to be the people of God. But there's also this view in the Bible that government is kind of

given by God to hold back the forces of death and chaos. Okay. So, in our world, we tend to worry about out too much government, too many mandates, too many requirements, too many laws, but in the ancient world, the real danger was not enough law because anarchy was a lot closer to becoming a reality in their world than it was in ours. In that context, Paul is saying, "Look, we don't want to be against government per se. We don't want to replace one dictator with another one, and law and order, and keeping the peace is important." You can say that dovetails what Jesus says about, "Blessed are the peacemakers," you've got to come to bring peace to hostilities, and that can require different applications of persuasion depending on what you are doing at a given time.

John Dickson:

Okay. So, but let's go to, Roman's 12, just before, Romans 13, and where Paul talks about the sword. Is Paul contradicting himself, because well, it's all about not taking revenge, and in chapter 13, it's about authorities with the sword?

Mike Bird:

Well, I think there's a big difference though, between revenge, your own unbridled lust to get back at someone who's hurt you, compared to the government's ability to use levels of persuasion and degrees of force as necessary to protect the public. So, I think they're talking about slightly different topics, but I think Paul is doing two things. He's saying, "Government at its best embodies these ideals." And he's also pointing out that government is subordinated to God, even the Roman Empire. That, I think, is the real striking thing. He's saying even the most powerful government in the world at the moment is still nothing more than a servant or an instrument of God's own providential care for his people. The way I look at it is, the Bible is dealing with a world where you have various non-ideal states.

In an ideal world, there shouldn't be any swords. There shouldn't be any wars. There shouldn't be any capital punishment, or even any prisons, but because the world is not ideal, because it is messy, often cold, brutal, dark and violent, sometimes you do need measures like these. Sometimes you do need to a war on certain nations that invade others, or certain nations that start out on genocidal campaigns. So, my conviction is, I think Christians can join the military. They can work in these areas; however, you've got to be discerning, and you have to constantly ask yourself whether you're on the side of good, or are you simply becoming an instrument for other, more malevolent forces?

John Dickson:

Good on you, mate. Thanks so much for your time.

Mike Bird:

Thank you, John.

John Dickson:

Bye. Bye.

## INTERVIEW CONTINUES

Andrew Hastie:

There's no condemnation directly of soldiering in the Bible, and I always felt comfortable in that. The challenge for me was always my identity as a Christian, my identity as in, Christ first and foremost, and then as a soldier, you can get caught up in being a soldier, and that defining you. You can become quite harsh, brutal, when necessary, and I suppose the challenge was always to be charitable, and remind myself that soldiering ultimately is an act of love towards your neighbor, towards your Countryman. That was the challenge. That was more a hard issue than anything else, about what sort of a person I was going to be come as a soldier, and remain?

## JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

Saint Augustine's theory of just war wasn't just about how to decide whether going to war is just, it was also about how to conduct warfare, once you'd made that decision. He utterly rejected the usual Roman justifications for war, which enlarging the empire, protecting honor, removing iniquitous nations, and often the mere assumption that Roman subjugation of others was itself a form of peace, the Pax Romana. Augustine said, "No," to all of that.

The great Oxbridge scholar and biographer of Augustine, Henry Chadwick, summarized Augustine's thinking on just war in five points. Military force can be just when, one, its goal is to establish mutual peace between the parties. Two, it is waged only in self-defense, or to recover stolen property. Three, soldiers exercise maximum restraint in hostilities, a proportional response. Four, fighting is conducted, quote "With such a respect for humanity as to leave the opponent without the sense of being humiliated and resentful," and, five, prisoners of war are preserved, not, as so often was the case, executed.

It sounds okay in theory, but as soon as I say all that, this is where it becomes pretty troubling for any proud Australians, especially for any with a connection to our famed special forces, the SAS. In November last year, Aussie woke to discover that some of our best troop has been conducting war in a most unjust way in Afghanistan.

TAPE: News Report, ABC

*The report finds that some Special Air Service regiment commanders in Australia fostered within the SAS what Justice Burton terms a, "Self-centered warrior culture." In this context, it's alleged that some patrols took the law into their own hands. Rules were broken, stories concocted, lies told, and prisoners killed.*

#### JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

The report compiled by Justice Paul Brereton, himself a major general in the army, revealed there was credible evidence to assert that 19 Australian soldiers had illegally killed 39 people and cruelly treated another two. At the time, Andrew Hastie was fierce and frank in his condemnation of those responsible at every level for such tragedies, and yet Andrew remains confident that there is such a thing as a good warrior, one that Augustine and maybe Paul and Jesus themselves would call servants of God. In his words, "They never think of themselves as bigger than the team or the mission. They are humble. They are committed to truth."

#### INTERVIEW CONTINUES

John Dickson:

Do you mind taking me to a scene in your career, in as much or little detail as you want, okay, where you felt that there was something really noble about what you were doing?

Andrew Hastie:

There are two moments that I can think of. One is not violent, and another moment is violent. The first one was in 2009. I was over in Afghanistan with my cavalry troop, and we were out on patrol in one of the far-flung parts of Uruzgan province. Imagine a world a thousand years ago, subsistence farmers, barely any technology. As we arrived in this village, I got approached by the elders and their tractor, which looked 40 or 50 years old, had become bogged, and they couldn't get it out. There was I, with two 13 ton, eight-wheeled vehicles and a couple of Bushmasters. So, we hitched up the tractor and dragged this tractor out of the bog. Then I met with the elders and had a good old chat, and they were so appreciative that we'd help them out.

The only way they could repay me was to me a handful of seed. I remember walking back to my armored vehicle in all my combat gear with a handful of seed, getting in the turret, and turning to my gunner and saying, "What do we do with the seed?" So, but it was one of those moments where we really connected and just to be able to help people in need was great.

The second one happened in 2013. I was over there with a special operations task group, and we had intelligence that a truck bomb was going to be driven onto the base. At some point, there was a plan to hurt us. Our job, as the special forces, was to provide force protection to the base. We got intelligence, we managed to locate the truck bomber and he was removed as a threat. I still remember coming back to base, getting off the helicopters, and once it was confirmed that we'd got our man, everyone was able to take their armor off and their helmets off outside the base, and there was just a, a release of tension. I thought I was caring for my neighbor. My troop was caring for our neighbors, and that was a good thing.

#### JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

That good warrior culture is what Thomas Aquinas considered an essential component for conducting a just war. Thomas Aquinas was an Italian priest, and immensely influential theologian and philosopher, who lived during the 13th century. He wrote incredible works that are still referenced today on the nature of God, sin, creation, revelation, and much more. We'll be devoting an entire episode to Aquinas in the not-too-distant future. Anyway, Thomas is also one of the other big names in the tradition of just war theory. Nigel Biggar says, 800 years after Augustine, Thomas Aquinas took the church fathers' letters and created the first true code of just war. According to Aquinas, three conditions have to be met before a just war can be waged. First, the war has to be waged under the command of a legitimate authority. Not anyone can declare war. Secondly, the war needs to be waged for a just cause, on account of some wrong. The aggressors have committed. Thirdly, warriors must have the right intent, to promote good and to avoid evil.

Nigel Biggar:

The Thomistic tradition that he spawned then led people like Vitoria and Suárez - the Spanish scholastics in the late 1500s, early 1600s - to articulate clearly to, "In bello," criteria, that's to say, "Ad bellum," is, "What do we do when we are going to war?" that's what Aquinas dealt with. In bello is, "Now we're at war, how do we do it justly?" And they articulated two criteria. First of all, was discrimination. That's to say, you shouldn't aim to kill people who are not bearing arms, innocence in the sense of ... not harming people, people are not harming. Their second criteria was proportionality, that you shouldn't use more force than you really, really have to.

John Dickson:

Okay. So, when has this set of criteria for just war been applied positively, in your mind? When have we ever seen a war that really was justly warranted in the first place, and justly conducted?

Nigel Biggar:

Well, the obvious one and it's the one that most Anglo Saxons would regard as a justified war is. Of course, the Second World War, especially the war against Hitler, although in your neck of the woods, the war against Imperial Japan, but certainly the war against Hitler is the war that most Anglo-Saxons and most people in the west, I think would regard as morally justified. But let's be clear here, the war against Hitler was not a war that Britain wanted, and we all know about the attempts in the 1930s to appease Hitler. The First World War had been horrendous, no-one wanted to repeat it, and strenuous efforts were made to give Germany, Nazi Germany, the benefit of doubt, to persuade Hitler to accept the borders that were there, and not to transgress them, but that failed. That failed. So, when war came in 1939, it was a last resort. There was no other option. So, there was that.

Nigel Biggar:

In a sense, it was a crusade in the sense that Churchill rightly discerned the radically evil nature of the Nazi regime. At its heart, it was racist, and as we discovered, and even as some Germans discovered to their surprise, it was massively, murderously racist.

#### JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

Christian intellectuals, like Augustine and Thomas Aquinas might have taught the west when and how a war may be conducted within the bounds of justice. But of course, the fact is the Christian Church has then depended on these theories, and warped them to support all kinds of vile, bloody conflicts. I'm thinking of Charlemagne, the Christian ruler of Europe in the eighth and ninth centuries, who waged a literal jihad, forcing the Saxons up in Northern Germany to convert to Christianity or face his armies. If it wasn't for one of his advisors, Alcuin of York, who convinced Charlemagne to convert the Saxons through persuasion, this would've gone on for decades more.

Or, I'm thinking of the crusades a few centuries later. Personally, I don't mind going on the record saying that the First Crusade, in the 1090s, was a just war in its conception. It was aimed at helping the Byzantine Empire, that's the Christian remnant of the old Roman Empire, from decades of Islamic aggression. But there was nothing just about the conduct of the war. As I pointed out, back in episodes 41 and 42, all about the crusades, the Christian crusaders slaughtered Jewish villages along the way to the holy land, and when they took Jerusalem, they slaughtered thousands of non-combatants, women and children, in their frenzy.

So, the very inventors of the just war tradition in the West, the Christian Church, have sometimes been wild hypocrites in the matter of warfare. All of this demonstrates that you might have a fine justification for war at your fingertips and still engage in unjust wars. And that

raises the question; is pacifism, practically and ethically, the only viable path? That's after the break.

**SPONSOR AD: ZONDERVAN**

This episode of Undeceptions is sponsored by Zondervan's new book, Person of Interest by J. Warner Wallace. Jim is an American homicide detective, and I got to have a quick chat with him earlier this month about his new book.

John Dickson:

Hey Jim, what a wonderful idea for a book you have produced. So, in a sentence, what is your book about?

J. Warner Wallace:

So, what I try to do in this book is look at the evidence for Christianity, the evidence for Jesus, without referring to anything in the New Testament, because I was a skeptic at 35 when I first investigated Christianity, and I would not have been interested in your silly scripture. But it turns out, there's enough evidence in the fuse and fallout of history. And I was somebody who was working no body missing persons, or no body murders as an investigator, so I knew how to apply this template. So, I simply applied the template of what's the fuse leading up to that explosive moment of that murder, and what's the fallout that follows that explosive moment of the murder. That's how we solve no body murder cases. I simply applied that template to Jesus. What's the fuse of history leading up to Jesus, and what's the fallout that follows Jesus. It turns out, if you had no evidence in the crime scene, because nobody murders had no body... This is when someone kills his wife and claims that she ran off. Well, how do you solve those cases? That's exactly how I approached Jesus. I was not somebody at 35, as a skeptic, who was willing to consider the Bible. So, this is how you could actually make a case for Jesus without referencing the New Testament.

John Dickson:

I love it. It's turning my academic discipline of history into something much cooler.

J. Warner Wallace:

I can tell you, what's amazing about Jesus is this nobody who existed in the first, lived in the first century, who had no platform at all... If you compare him to all the other important figures of the first century, like say, Nero, who led an entire empire, why is it that this guy, Jesus of Nazareth, has had such an amazing impact on the things that matter most to me as an atheist? Art, music, literature, education, science. No one's had an impact on those five areas like Jesus

of Nazareth. So, what I want people to become aware of is, you have probably been taught this in school, but it turns out that no one is a person of interest like Jesus is a person of interest, and he has the least right to being that person of interest. Unless, of course, what he claimed about himself is true.

John Dickson:

I can't wait for my listeners to go out and grab your book. Jim, thank you so much for being with us.

J. Warner Wallace:

Thanks so much for having me. I appreciate you.

John Dickson:

You can get Person of Interest by J. Warner Wallace now on Amazon, or just go to [zondervan.com](http://zondervan.com) for more information.

#### SPONSOR AD: ANGLICAN AID

John Dickson:

Right now, around the world, there are 129 million girls who don't go to school. And we know that for every additional year of primary school, a girl's future wage increases by 10% to 20%. They get married later. They are less vulnerable to violence. There is no doubt then that educating girls saves lives and builds stronger families and communities.

Anglican Aid is committed to ensuring that girls are able to receive a quality education regardless of their economic circumstances. Just in the last 12 months, Anglican Aid has supported 20 projects, either schools, or vocational education initiatives around Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. These projects are providing girls with a safe space to learn and grow. They're being given a chance to create a better future. You can help Anglican Aid do more of this essential work. I really trust these guys. I hope you will as well. So, please, go to [anglicanaid.org.au](http://anglicanaid.org.au). That's [anglicanaid.org.au](http://anglicanaid.org.au) to support their wonderful work.

#### EPISODE CONTINUES

#### JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

During the occupation of Atlanta, the American Civil War general, William Tecumseh Sherman, wrote to city officials that "War is cruelty and you cannot refine it." Years later, in an address to

the Michigan Military Academy, he would shorten this sentiment to just three words. War is hell. If war is hell, then there's no redeeming it. There is no ground for a just war and no war that can be waged justly. And some people I really respect insist that this is certainly the case for those who profess to follow Christ, the prince of peace.

So, it's time to phone another friend. Jarrod McKenna is an award-winning social change educator. He's the founding CEO of Common Grace, the former nonviolent movement educator for World Vision in the Middle East and Eastern Europe, and he spent much of his adult life living with recently arrived refugees and those struggling in society. We'll link to everything in the show notes, including his podcast with Drew Heart called Inverse.

#### PHONE A FRIEND

John Dickson:

Hey Jarrod, how's your lovely family, mate?

Jarrod McKenna:

They're doing fantastic. Kat is due in January, so we've got another little Macca on the way. Yeah.

John Dickson:

Wonderful. Okay. We need to pivot to some serious topics. Can you roll out for us the Christian case for an absolute commitment to nonviolent resistance, or what people sometimes call pacifism?

Jarrod McKenna:

So, let's start with what works and I pray that the Holy Spirit will connect the dots for people for what's fatal. Where I'm going to take you is the thorough and compelling research of Harvard University political scientist, Erica Chenoweth, who's made clear that nonviolence is the most successful strategy for combating injustice and oppression, and by a long way. Chenoweth herself who has a military background collected data from every violent and nonviolent mass action from 1900 to 2006, we're talking 323 conflicts, and analyzed them in the context of 160 variables. As Harvard Kennedy School writes about her research, "Chenoweth expected that violent movements would be shown to be more successful in overthrowing the regimes that were opposing, but the data proved her wrong." So, here's the thing, nonviolent campaigns were literally twice as likely to succeed. Countries where nonviolent resistance was maintained without violence were 10 times more likely to transition

to democracies, regardless of whether their initial campaigns failed or succeeded. The empirical research shows that movements that were able to mobilize 3.5% of the population, just 3.5%, were uniformly successful.

Jarrold McKenna:

As a Christian and a historian, John, I'm sure your mind is going some of the same places mine goes when you hear those kinds of numbers; the early church. In the words of Thomas Morton, the early church converted the Roman Empire through nonviolence. Might it be that the nonviolent way of Jesus is the most effective force against evil in our world if only we convince all Christians to be faithful in dropping all weapons and taking up our cross, and allow the data of the resurrection to prove Jesus right.

John Dickson:

In a sentence, Jarrold, what do you think of the so-called just war tradition in church history.

Jarrold McKenna:

I heard that giggle, John. For us charismatic, one sentence is difficult, but I'll try and not be disciplined. The just war criteria of proportionality and protection of non-combatants has next to never been met in modern war, and the theory, instead, has functioned as a practical denial of the resurrection of Jesus and kept Christians from leading on the costly cutting edge of what it is to pursue lasting healing change in our world through the nonviolent way of Jesus.

John Dickson:

Love your work, mate. Thank you so much.

Jarrold McKenna:

Thank you, mate.

John Dickson:

Bless you.

EPISODE CONTINUES

JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

It's really strong stuff. And the fact is Jarrold's position is the position of a huge number of faithful Christians today. Of course, they would just say that's because it's the Christian

position. Nigel Biggar sees it differently. And we all need to judge which tradition fits the evidence best.

Nigel Biggar:

Contrary to what some say, when you come across those who were exercising political or public responsibility, namely Centurions... In the pages of the gospels and the act of the apostles, I think, there are at least three we come across. Not once does Jesus or Paul say to these people, "You should stop doing what you're doing." And on every occasion, the centurion is lauded for their religious faith. At one point, of course, Jesus says of one centurion, "I have not found such faith in Israel", right? So, it's a silence, but there's no rebuke of the military profession, the policing profession, even of a foreign occupier as such.

So, you could say... Well, it states other people's business, not ours, and some Christians and Anabaptists Christians do say that. I, myself, find that irresponsible. I think, God chose to become incarnate and come down and live among messy humanity in all our mess, in all our more ambiguity, and Christians should follow God incarnate into the ambiguous bits, the difficult bits, the hard choice bits of human life. And that involves taking responsibility.

John Dickson:

You go so far as to say that the absolute pacifist, the... Let's use the terminology they prefer. Those absolutely committed to active nonviolence are, and I'm going to quote you here, "prepared to perform deliberate acts of a mission, which permit innocents to die at the hands of the unjust". Them's fighting words. Did you mean them?

Nigel Biggar:

Yeah. I do have a tendency, occasionally, to get irritated. Yes, I do. I mean that, at least in the sense that... I mean, there are times, I think, when one has to, and a Christian should admit that we cannot defend the innocent. There are no moral means to do it. And let's be clear here. Although the theory of just war does justify going to war and certain ways of fighting war, it does so within moral limits. And so, if you can't fight a war justly, you may not fight. And that means, there may be some innocents, there may be a liberal democratic environment you may not defend by those means. So, just warriors and pacifists together have to face the fact that sometimes they're morally prohibited from doing what they think might be able to save the innocents, and they have to watch the innocents being abused.

JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

So, that's interesting. There is a point where pacifists and just war advocates coincide. Sometimes, they will both refuse to participate in war. And I'm happy to say Professor Biggar acknowledges he might have gone too far in his criticism of the Christian pacifist tradition.

Nigel Biggar:

But I suppose, maybe my remark was slightly unfair in the sense that hard situation is one that everyone must face, be they pacifist or non-pacifist. But I guess, I wanted to say that pacifists need to look full in the face the consequences of their passivity.

## 5 MINUTE JESUS

Let's press pause. I've got a five-minute Jesus for you. Probably Jesus' most famous speech is the one in Matthew Chapters five to seven, the so-called sermon on the mount. It opens with a kind of grammatical drum roll using seven verbs in a row to build up to the opening words of the Messiah. It literally reads, "Seeing the crowds, he ascended the mountain. And sitting down, his disciples came to him. And so, opening his mouth, he taught them saying...". The effect of this is to slow things down so that we'd concentrate on Jesus' opening words. And those opening words are about humility, meekness, peacemaking, and accepting violence, not dealing it out. The very first statement is about spiritual bankruptcy and sorrow. "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." And then, "Blessed are those who mourn for they will be comforted." It's a remarkable opening couple of lines. What's perhaps the richest ethic ever preached opens by calling on us to acknowledge that we are morally and spiritually poor. And more than that, we are to mourn the fact that we are a fallen people in a fallen world.

Despite the drum roll, leading up to the sermon on the mount, there is no triumphalism here from Jesus. In fact, much of what Jesus says next seems to be aimed against the triumphalist longings of some of his fellow Jews in the first century. Many saw the Romans as the big problem, and the big solution was violent revolution aimed at expelling the Pagan overlords and leaving the holy land in the possession of the pure. There's a text called the Psalms of Solomon. I'm sure I've quoted it on the show before. It was written just a generation before Jesus, shortly after the Romans took over Israel, and it captures perfectly this revolutionary spirit.

Goes like this: *The kingdom of our God is forever over the nations in judgment. See, oh Lord, and raise up for your people their king, the son of David. Undergird him with the strength to destroy the unrighteous rulers, to purge Jerusalem from gentiles, to smash the arrogance of sinners like a potter's jar, and their king shall be the Lord Messiah.* Psalms of Solomon, Chapter 17.

But the Lord Messiah were introduced, too, in the gospels, speaks of being poor in spirit and mourning. And then, he adds these famous words, "Blessed are the meek for they will inherit the earth. Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called children of God."

The fans of the Psalms of Solomon might have scratched their heads at this point. Jesus is saying that those who will get back the land aren't the ones willing to shed Roman blood. It's the meek. Those who refrain from brute force. And this means that when Jesus says the peacemakers are the true children of God, he isn't advocating a Roman style of peace, you know, the piece that crushes enemies into silence. He must mean avoiding conflict. And more than that, seeking to establish harmony and mutual flourishing at all costs.

So, the pacifists are right, right? At one level, yes. The goal of God's people is to enact peace in the world and they are forbidden to try to extend God's kingdom in the world through force. Charlemagne does not get a free pass.

And yet, it's also true that Jesus celebrated a military victory when he attended the temple for the Hanukkah festival in, John, chapter 10. This festival was all about the Maccabean War against the Greek tyrant, Antiochus IV epiphanies. More about that in an upcoming episode. Jesus also met Roman centurions, and just like John the Baptist before him, he didn't and hint that their role as soldiers was problematic. In, Luke, chapter 14, Jesus speaks positively of wise war preparations, as a good analogy of counting the cost of following him. In, Luke 22, just before his own arrest, he actually tells his disciples to buy a sword, not to defend him, but I take it he wanted them to be able to defend themselves.

None of this makes sense to me, if Jesus was a strict pacifist. It fits better with the teaching of the Apostle Paul in, Romans 12 and 13. In, Romans 12, he insists that Christians can never further their own cause, or the cause of God's kingdom, by violence, only by love. But then, in, Romans 13, he concedes that deadly force may be used by authorities to defend the public good and restrain public evil. None of this takes away from the central call of the Sermon on the Mount. Christians must seek peace above all else. They must never try to extend Christian influence or God's kingdom through force. The only weapons Christ has given the church, to do the work of the church, are prayer service, and persuasion.

You can press play now.

## INTERVIEW CONTINUES

John Dickson:

Some of my listeners will be Christian pacifists. There's a sense in which you are a pacifist as well, because you want peace, right?

Andrew Hastie:

Yes, absolutely.

John Dickson:

But they will be quite doctrinally committed to passivism. What do you say to them, your fellow Christians, who are absolutely committed to nonviolence? How do you, in a sense, justify your formal life as a soldier, and your current role as a decision maker?

Andrew Hastie:

Well, I'm not sure I could justify it to them, except for the reason I've already stated, but to say that I respect their position. I respect it's a position of conscience rooted in scripture. Particularly for Christian pacifists, there's a long tradition of Christian pacifism, and I respect and love them for that. We have a disagreement though, and my view is that war ultimately should be aimed towards restoring peace. As Augustan says, "We should have the spirit of a peacemaker, as a soldier," and I think within the Christian tradition, there is a legitimate position for me to be a soldier and, and be part of a government. I think we can listen to each other charitably and disagree, and sort it out one day.

John Dickson:

Yeah, and what do you say to those who aren't Christians? We have plenty of those who are listening to, Undeceptions, who are also absolutely opposed to state violence. What have you got, that isn't a theological argument for them?

Andrew Hastie:

I think evil exists in the world. There are people who will seek to hurt others, and my way of caring for my neighbor, for loving my neighbor, is to offer myself as a way of protecting them. I think there's nobility in that, and I think it is a position that can be respected. We can agree, but I think the state still has to protect the people. The reason why we form governments is because we need governments to do things that we can't do on our own. We have militaries who use controlled violence to protect the people they serve, and I'm okay with that.

#### JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

"Controlled violence." That's the key phrase here. Thomas Aquinas's summary of what constitutes just war depends on the question of proportionality. It's an issue certainly captured in some of our best dramas on warfare.

TAPE: THE WEST WING, S1 EP 3 'The Proportional Response'

President Bartlet:

We are doing nothing.

Leo:

We are not doing nothing. We destroyed four high-rated military targets.

Bartlet:

And this is good?

Leo:

Of course, it's not good. There is no good. It's what there is. It's how you behave if you're the most powerful nation in the world. It's proportional, it's reasonable, it's responsible, it's merciful. It's not nothing. Four high-rated military targets.

Bartlet:

Which they'll rebuild again in six months.

Leo:

Then we'll blow them up again in six months, we're getting really good at it. It's what our fathers taught us.

#### JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

Yes. That's, *The West Wing*, and my apologies to those of you who hate the show, you weirdos. It's the episode titled, *A Proportional Response*, where chief of staff, Leo McGarry, has to convince an enraged President Bartlet that there must be a measured response to an unprovoked Syrian attack on an American airplane. I'm not sure which fathers McGarry is referring to, but it's certainly true that the great fathers of the church, from Augustine to Aquinas, taught that, even where the cause, is just the response must be proportional.

I suppose the question is, does this ever get discussed in the real world, or is this just another, *West Wing*, fantasy? Theoretically, war is a potential tool of government. The Prussian general, Carl von Clausewitz, said, "War is merely the continuation of politics by other means," but do governments today really stop and think in terms of just war?

I put that to Professor Nigel Biggar, and to the honorable Andrew Hastie.

John Dickson:

Is this discussion of just war simply a rarefied topic for moral philosophers and theologians, or are these considerations ever taken seriously in the halls of power?

Nigel Biggar:

Yes. As, we said at the beginning, I do think human beings are moral, and one symptom of that is you'll find even very wicked people trying to justify what they're doing. So, and if they're done wrong, they'll try and hide it. So that's an indication that, somehow, we feel a deep impulse to be right, or to be seen to be right, morally. So, I think most people who make decisions about going to war and fighting war will want to think, one way or another, they're doing what's right. Certainly, in Britain in the last 25 years, I have seen the criteria of just war discussed in the press. If it's discussed in the press, you can be damn sure that people in government are also talking about it, because even if it were the case that no-one in government had a conscience, they do care about what the electorate think. So, my perception is, right now, actually, just war criteria, partly because we've had a lot of wars lately, just war criteria are in the public bloodstream.

JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

In fact, the Australian Defense Forces just issued a document all about military ethics, where just war gets six pages, largely reflecting the teachings of Augustine and Thomas Aquinas. Just cause, right intention, proportionality, last resort, and so on, and special thanks to the listener who sent me this document. It then adds a consideration that I don't remember reading in Augustine or Aquinas, "You must have a reasonable chance of winning." It says armed conflict is justified when there is a reasonable probability the intended objectives can be achieved." Huh? I don't know what I think of that. We'll put a link to the entire document in our show notes. I was particularly interested to know what Andrew Hastie thought about all this. As a former soldier, and now as Assistant Defense Minister for Australia, clearly just war is a topic that comes up, right?

Andrew Hastie:

It absolutely has influenced the culture. So, I did four years at the Australian Defense Force Academy in Duntroon, you cover these things in military ethics. In fact, when you go overseas and you get your rules of engagement, that is, I guess, the codified form of just war theory. You should only use proportionate force when necessary, when someone is captured, they are to be treated with kindness and charity, and to be treated if they are wounded. So, you see just war tradition permeating the basic rules and guidelines that govern tactical actions overseas. So, it is there, and I hate to think what our military and other militaries would be like without the just war tradition hanging over the top of everything else that we get taught. I think it's

really important that we keep revisiting it, and I'm not sure any other tradition is sufficient enough to make sure that when we send people overseas, that they act in a way that's consistent with what we believe as a country, as Australians.

#### JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

What was so interesting, coming from a military man, was the way Andrew Hastie insisted on ending our conversation on the note of the darkness of war. He quoted Shakespeare's, Henry V, to the effect that a just person, a person of peace, will take no pleasure in letting slip the dogs of war.

Andrew Hastie:

There's a scene at the Siege of Harfleur, where Henry V calls on the governor of the town to surrender, and it's a masterful piece of coercion. What he basically says is, "If you don't surrender, and I unleash my soldiers, you are going to experience hell. War is hell, and once I unleash it, I won't be able to stop it." I think it's a modern conceit to think that war is a form of policy, like any other area of government policy. War has its own locomotive, it's inherently escalatory, and policy-makers are kidding themselves if they think they can sort of keep human nature in check and everything nice and neat. I love what Henry V says. He says,

*"Therefore, you men of Harfleur, take pity of your town and of your people.*

*Whiles yet my soldiers are in my command. Whiles yet the cool and temperate wind of grace o'erblows the filthy and contagious clouds of heavy murder, spoil and villainy. If not, why, in a moment, look to see the blind and bloody soldier with foul hand defile the locks of your shrill-shrieking daughters, your fathers taken by the silver beards and their most reverend heads dashed to the walls, your naked infants spitted upon pikes whiles the mad mothers with their howls confused do break the clouds, as did the wives of Jewry at Herod's bloody-hunting slaughtermen. What say you? Will you yield, and this avoid? Or, guilty in defense, be thus destroyed?*

John Dickson:

That's powerful, mate, and I love the thought of SAS commanders reading Shakespeare.

Andrew Hastie:

We should do more of it. It's some of the most terrific passages you'll read in English, I think, the way he describes war, but it's a fundamental truth there. We should always seek peace. We should be very careful about going to war, that's the lesson I've learned.

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JOHN DICKSON EDITORIAL

Andrew recommends you check out, not just, Henry V, but in particular, the 2012 Tom Hiddleston version, The Hollow Crown. Well worth the effort.

If you still like what we are doing here, even after today, please head to Apple Podcasts and give us a review. We've got a competition going at the moment for the best written review, see the details in our show notes. And please go to undeceptions.com, pick up one of our T-shirts from the store, and if you can, click "Donate." Help us cover the costs of each episode, which is currently about \$3,000 an episode. I really appreciate it. While you're there, send us a question and I'll answer it in an upcoming Q&A episode.

Next episode, we're going to take a long, hard look at perhaps the most influential and questioned figure in Christian history, and certainly the most controversial author in the New Testament. We're looking at the life and writings of Paulos Apostolos, the Apostle Paul. See ya.

CREDITS

Undeceptions, is hosted by me, John Dickson, produced by Kaley Payne, and directed by General Mark Hadley. Editing by Richard Hamwi.

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