

Dying for the Cause / Church of the Open Bible / 05.29.16

Introduction: Remembering and honoring those who _____ while serving in the military is the purpose of Memorial Day.

Self Defense: Jesus wants us to swallow our _____ for the sake of the gospel mission, and to have love even for our enemies [Matthew 5.39, 44-45].

Jesus told his disciples to prepare to defend themselves once he was _____ [Luke 22.35-36]. Force should be our last resort [Matthew 5.9].

National Defense: A purpose of government is to _____ justice and righteousness. We see that in the vision for Christ's government that is to come [Isaiah 9.6-7].

Government must use _____ to do this and to protect its citizens in this day when sin and evil are rampant [Romans 13.4-5].

We have _____ responsibilities as citizens of this country under a government and as God's image bearers who represent him by helping the helpless, protecting the weak, resisting those who abuse the rights of others [Romans 13.4-5; Genesis 1.26-29].

John the Baptist, Jesus, and the disciples _____ in scripture told soldiers they should not be soldiers, even when the soldiers asked what they should do to honor God [Luke 3.14]. Jesus and Paul referred to Christian workers as soldiers, implying being a soldier was not a bad thing [Matthew 8.9; Luke 7.8; Philippians 2.25; Timothy 2.3; Philemon 1.2].

God had Israel _____ as an army to defend themselves [Judges 6.34-35].

God sent an army of _____ to fight for Israel [Joshua 5.13-15].

God's plan is for Christ to go to _____ against all the evil nations when he returns [Isaiah 40.10; Revelation 19.11-21].

We still have reservations about war, because it has a terrible _____. We must ensure it is necessary and worthwhile, with pure goals, and requires our soldiers to perform only ethical actions.

Martyrs: Martyrs gave their lives in the cause of _____, so we and people everywhere could experience freedom and spiritual life.

_____ is the first recorded martyr of the church. The Old Testament prophets and Jesus died to fulfill God's purposes before the church began [Acts 7.52].

The early church apologist, Tertullian, called the martyrs the "_____ of the church." The history of the church and its mission includes thousands of martyrs, who were willing to stand and die for their faith and for the gospel mission. As Christian martyrs are the ultimate example of faithful believers, willing to die for the cause of Christ and his gospel, so our fallen soldiers are the ultimate example of faithful citizens, willing to die for the cause of this country and what it represents. Today we honor both, inspired by their example to aspire to their example.