

***Faith and Force: A Christian Debate about War*, by David L. Clough and Brian Stiltner**

WASHINGTON, DC: GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY PRESS, 2007, 304 PAGES

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This book is situated within the long tradition of writings on just war and on pacifism, including material that should be familiar to anyone dealing with national security and with the theoretical debates about the morality of war. However, three things distinguish this book beyond the presentation of the usual discussion. First of all, it highlights arguments that are distinctively Christian and not just philosophical—thus showing what this religion brings to the wider political and cultural dialogue—and also shows the diversity of positions even within these Christian perspectives on either just war or pacifism. Second, it brings the arguments to bear on contemporary issues of violence that were not central concerns in the past tradition. Third, it includes in each chapter a personal conversation between the two authors that illustrates in very practical ways how diverse Christian viewpoints are applied to the contemporary issues. Brian Stiltner, a Catholic ethicist, supports a just war position, while David L. Clough, a Methodist scholar, sustains a pacifist perspective. At the end of the book, the authors discuss the limitations of each view, draw out areas of convergence as well as divergence, and bring to the fore the recent movement described as peacemaking that attempts to go beyond the differences and debates.

Sources and methods are laid out in the first chapter and then the perspectives of both viewpoints are developed in the second, including an overview of the pluralism even within each perspective. Key elements treated in these chapters are the differing views of the relation of reason to revelation and the relationship of the Old Testament to the New. Related to these is Christian eschatology (a vision of the end-time), and a recurring highlight of the book is to bring this distinctively Christian—and often unknown or overlooked—perspective into the discussion and to show how pacifism and just war thinking arise from whether Christians emphasize God's final

plan for the world as already unfolding or as not yet achieved. Further bases for the two different Christian positions are interwoven throughout the book and summarized at the end, namely, differing views of how much sin affects human beings, of how much churches should be involved in politics, and of whether government has an expansive or minimalist role in society. Other differences are based on theories familiar to ethicists, namely, whether ethics should be deontological or consequentialist.

A helpful contribution of the book is its description of the diversity within pacifism itself, from a principled to a strategic approach, from an absolute to a classical (allowing police force) form, from separatism to political engagement, and from a communal Christian obligation to a universal requirement. The description of just war theory is familiar to the readers of this journal, but the book also makes a careful distinction between just war theory and so-called Christian realism, a view often adapted by political theorists that sees war as a pragmatic necessity in the real world and becomes a kind of self-fulfilling prophecy.

The middle chapters of the book offer a thorough treatment of contemporary issues related to just war and pacifism. The chapter on humanitarian intervention shows many points of agreement between the two Christian stances, especially when the pacifist perspective allows for a policing function, but the case study of the NATO intervention in Kosovo and the dialogue between the two authors show that there can still be disagreement over the real intentions of intervention and over the facts of the matter. Even closer agreement is shown in the chapter on weapons proliferation, and good contrasts are drawn with Christian and political realism and the unchallenged assumption that weapons research and development are indispensable.

Perhaps the two chapters of most interest in the contemporary scene are those that deal with terrorism and with preventive warfare, as illustrated in the two Iraq wars. There is an excellent discussion of whether terrorism should be treated under the paradigm of war or of crime, and there are compelling arguments against preventive war when a threat is not imminent. In the aftermath of the Iraq debacle and the ongoing persistence of terrorism, both authors find peacemaking strategies and not war as the best way to bridge their differences and address the issues.

This is a well-written and well-crafted book that brings familiar Christian debates, with the subtleties of differences even within just

war theory and pacifism, and applies them to new situations, challenging the wider political and intelligence communities to focus on ethical issues.

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