



Faith and Force: A Christian Debate about War

David L. Clough

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"This book began in an argument between friends surprised to find themselves on opposite sides of the debate about whether the United States and the United Kingdom should invade Iraq in 2003. Situated on opposite sides of the Atlantic, in different churches, and on different sides of the just war/pacifist fence, we exchanged long emails that rehearsed on a small scale the great national and international debates that were taking place around us. We discovered the common ground we shared, as well as some predictable and some surprising points of difference....When the initial hostilities ended, our conversation continued, and we felt the urgency of contributing to a wider Christian debate about whether and when war could be justified."
?From the *Preface*

So began a dynamic collaboration that developed into a civil but provocative debate over matters of war and peace that is *Faith and Force*. From the ancient battles between Greek city-states to the Crusades to the World Wars of the twentieth-century to the present-day wars in Afghanistan and Iraq and the Middle East, aggressors and defenders alike have claimed the mantle of righteousness and termed their actions just. But can the carnage of war ever be morally grounded? And if so, how?

These are the questions that David L. Clough, a Methodist proponent of pacifism, and Brian Stiltner, a Catholic theologian and just war adherent, have vowed to answer?together. With one voice, Clough and Stiltner outline and clarify issues of humanitarian intervention, weapons proliferation, and preventative war against rogue states. Their writing is grounded in Christian tradition and provides a fresh and illuminating account of the complexities and nuances of the pacifist and just war positions.

In each chapter Clough and Stiltner engage in debate on the issues, demonstrating a respectful exchange of ideas absent in much contemporary political discourse?whether on television or in the classroom. The result is a well-reasoned, challenging repartee that searches for common ground within the Christian tradition and on behalf of the faithful promotion of justice?yet one that also recognizes genuine differences that cannot be bridged easily. Intended for a broad audience, *Faith and Force* is the perfect foil to the shrill screeching that surrounds partisan perspectives on military power and its use.

To help with using the book in a classroom context, the authors have provided Questions for Reflection and Discussion for each chapter. You can download these questions in PDF format at press.georgetown.edu.

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