***Arguments in Favor of Christian Participation in War***

1. Duty to one’s country – Our country has given us freedom, wealth, opportunity, comfort, and happiness. The least we can do is fight to defend our country.

2. Protect one’s family and friends – We have a special responsibility to protect our families

3. The Israelites fought in war – In spite of the 5th commandment (Thou shalt not kill.), Israel fought many battles, even engaging in programs such as genocide. This sets a precedent for us.

4. Scriptures command to obey the government – When the government calls one to take up arms, the Christian must obey.

***Responses:***

1. What is our duty to God? Will we put our duty to country or God first?

-“whole duty of man: fear God and keep His commandments”

-“what does the Lord require of you? To do justly, love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God”

-two greatest commandments: “love God” and “love your neighbor”

2. Unspoken assumption: Family’s safety depends solely on me. (untrue)

-Christian’s responsibility is to all people (we are no more responsible for the ones to whom we are related in this room than any of the others; I am just as responsible for my “enemy’s” wife and children as my neighbor’s wife and children; if my family is Christian and my “enemy” is not, then it would be better to allow my family to go to heaven than to send him to hell without a possibility of redemption)

-Christ calls us to be willing to suffer for His sake

3. In this argument, one’s own nation has to be compared to Israel. What are the results of this comparison? Before Christ, Israel as a nation was God’s people. If you were for Israel, you were on God’s side; if you were against Israel, you were God’s enemy. God, of course, as the Creator of life, has the right to take life. As the supreme leader of the Israelites, God commanded them to destroy certain peoples. They could only take life when directly under His authority. Through Christ, God’s kingdom is now worldwide and not linked to any particular nation.

4. The Scriptures also specifically say that there are times to disobey one’s government. Using this argument for participation in war gives the government supreme moral authority—that is, whatever it decides has to be right.