

WEAVER STUDY GUIDES

The Sin of Refusing to Fight

Study Guide

Covenant Theology

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A lesson-by-lesson companion for reading, discussion, and written responses.

Downloadable classroom edition | 8.5 x 11 inches

Name / group

Date

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Using this guide

Read the corresponding chapter, then work through the themes, arguments, and Scripture references.

Write your responses before discussing the questions with others. Use the application pages to identify a practical next step.

The study material is retained from the existing lecture study guides. Added writing prompts provide space for your own response.

Print at Actual Size / 100% on US Letter paper. Single-sided and double-sided printing are both suitable. Lessons begin on the next available page; no blank pages are inserted.

Reading assignments refer to the September 30, 2026 edition of the companion book. Online lecture links and QR codes are collected at the end.

LESSON 1

The Sin of Refusing to Fight

January 14, 2015

Read Chapter 1 in the companion book, pages 5-30.

Major Themes

Obedience to God's Commands

Refusing to fight when God commands is sin; obedience requires action, not passivity.

Lecture support: Moses said, 'But if you will not do so, behold, you have sinned against the Lord' (Numbers 32:23).

God as the Determiner of Right and Wrong

God's Word, not situation ethics, defines when fighting is righteous or sinful.

Lecture support: The truth is, God is the one that determines right and wrong, and He does so by His word and His law.

The Necessity of Fighting in Various Arenas

Christians must fight spiritually, culturally, and politically; failure leads to physical conflict.

Lecture support: If we refuse to fight in the areas that do not require physical fighting, then eventually our refusal to fight spiritually, culturally, politically, will ultimately involve physical fighting.

Preservation of Life as a Duty

The command against murder implies a positive duty to preserve life, including through defensive force.

Lecture support: When God said thou shalt not kill, the positive is thou shalt preserve life.

God as Warrior and Defender

God fights for His people and takes life in defense; emulating Him is not sinful.

Lecture support: God defended Jerusalem and killed 185,000 Assyrians; 'it is never wrong to emulate our Heavenly Father.'

Condemnation of Passivity

Those at ease in Zion, trusting in government rather than fighting, are under God's woe.

Lecture support: Amos 6:1: 'Woe to them that are at ease in Zion and trust in the mountain of Samaria.'

Key Arguments

Refusing to fight when God commands is sin

Numbers 32:23 specifically addresses the sin of not fighting; the context is Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh's duty to help conquer Canaan.

Lecture support: Moses said, 'But if ye will not do so, behold, ye have sinned against the Lord, and your sin shall find you out.'

Fighting is sinful when contrary to God's Word

Israel sinned by fighting when God forbade it (Numbers 14) or by fighting for unbiblical reasons like coveting resources.

Lecture support: God told them to fight, and they wouldn't fight... Now God tells them not to fight, and they say, we're going to fight. And so they're disobedient again.

Spiritual failure leads to physical war

Asa's reliance on Syria instead of God brought wars; obedience brings peace, disobedience brings war.

Lecture support: Hanani said, 'Herein thou hast done foolishly. Therefore, from henceforth thou shalt have wars.'

Prayer is not a substitute for fighting

Phinehas stopped praying and acted to stop a plague; God blessed his zeal, showing action is required.

Lecture support: Phinehas stopped praying, stopped weeping, and got up and went and killed both of them. And God said, he stopped the plague.

God preserves those who fight His battles

David fought and God preserved him wherever he went; God is mighty in battle.

Lecture support: The Lord preserved David, whithersoever he went... David acknowledged and confessed that it was God that sustained and helped him in all the battles.

Self-defense and defense of others is lawful

Moses' killing of the Egyptian to defend a Hebrew was not condemned; flight is also legitimate self-defense.

Lecture support: Moses is not condemned in the Old Testament, nor in the New Testament, for killing this Egyptian and defending the Hebrew.

The wicked devour the righteous without remorse

Psalms 14:4 shows the wicked consume God's people like bread; this necessitates defensive fighting.

Lecture support: Have all the workers of iniquity no knowledge? Who eat up my people as they eat bread.

Trusting in government instead of God is condemned

Amos 6:1 warns those at ease who trust in Samaria's government; modern parallel is trusting 911 or state protection.

Lecture support: Woe to them that are at ease in Zion that trust in the government of Samaria.

Scripture References

Numbers 32:23

Moses warns Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh that refusing to fight is sin and their sin will find them out.

Ecclesiastes 3:1-8

There is a time for everything, including a time to kill and a time of war.

2 Samuel 11:1

At the time when kings go forth to battle, David tarried; indicates seasonal warfare.

Numbers 32:20-23

Moses tells the tribes if they go armed and fight they will be guiltless; if not, they sin.

Numbers 32:1-6

Reuben and Gad request land east of Jordan; Moses asks if they will let others fight alone.

Numbers 14:40-45

Israel sinned by fighting after God told them not to; they were defeated.

Deuteronomy 2:3-9

God forbade Israel to fight against Edom, Moab, and Ammon.

Numbers 31:1-7

God commanded Moses to arm Israel and war against Midian.

1 Samuel 15:1-3

God commanded Saul to utterly destroy Amalek.

1 Chronicles 5:18-22

The war was of God; they cried to God and were helped.

Psalms 94:16

Who will rise up for me against the evildoers?

2 Chronicles 16:7-9

Asa relied on Syria instead of God; therefore he would have wars.

Jeremiah 12:5

If you have run with footmen and they wearied you, how can you contend with horses?

Isaiah 1:7

Your country is desolate, strangers devour it; judgment for unfaithfulness.

Numbers 33:51-56

Drive out inhabitants or they will be thorns; failure to preserve culture brings destruction.

Numbers 25:1-13

Phinehas killed the immoral couple and stopped the plague; God gave him a covenant of peace.

Jeremiah 48:10

Cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood.

Isaiah 37:36

The angel of the Lord killed 185,000 Assyrians defending Jerusalem.

Deuteronomy 22:23-27

Law implies duty to preserve life; the woman in the field cried but none saved her.

Acts 7:22-29

Moses defended the Hebrew and killed the Egyptian; not condemned.

Discussion Questions

1. In what areas of life (spiritual, cultural, political) are you tempted to refuse to fight, and what would obedience look like?

Consider: Weaver argues that refusing to fight in non-physical arenas leads to physical conflict.

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2. How do we discern when God is commanding us to fight versus when fighting would be sinful rebellion?

Consider: The sermon distinguishes between fighting in obedience and fighting contrary to God's Word.

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3. What does it mean to 'preserve life' as a positive duty, and how might that apply to self-defense or defending others?

Consider: Weaver says the command not to kill implies a duty to preserve life.

4. How should Christians respond to the erosion of Christian culture through immigration and secularism?

Consider: Weaver discusses the loss of Christian culture and the threat of Islam.

5. Why is prayer alone insufficient when action is required, according to the example of Phinehas?

Consider: Phinehas stopped praying and acted to stop the plague; God blessed his zeal.

6. In what ways do modern Christians 'trust in the mountain of Samaria' (government) instead of God?

Consider: Amos 6:1 is applied to reliance on government for protection and provision.

7. How does the example of David, a warrior after God's own heart, challenge pacifist assumptions?

Consider: David fought the Lord's battles and was preserved by God.

8. What does it mean to have a 'warrior spirit' as a Christian, and how can we cultivate it?

Consider: Weaver laments the loss of a fighting spirit in churches and individuals.

Applications

Reject passivity and obey God's call to fight

Christians must not be at ease in Zion but actively engage in spiritual, cultural, and political battles.

Lecture support: Woe to them that are at ease in Zion... We have lost a warrior spirit and a fighting spirit.

Prepare to defend life and biblical principles

Self-defense and defense of others is a duty; failure to prepare is sin.

Lecture support: When God said thou shalt not kill, the positive is thou shalt preserve life.

Do not trust in government for protection

Relying on government instead of God and personal responsibility is condemned.

Lecture support: Woe to them that are at ease in Zion that trust in the government of Samaria.

Fight spiritually before physical conflict is necessary

Engage in spiritual warfare now to avoid physical war later.

Lecture support: If we refuse to fight in the areas that do not require physical fighting, then eventually... will ultimately involve physical fighting.

Emulate God as defender

Since God defends His people and takes life in judgment, it is not sinful for Christians to do likewise in obedience.

Lecture support: It is never wrong to emulate our Heavenly Father.

Preserve Christian culture and resist its destruction

Christians must actively work to maintain a biblical culture against hostile influences.

Lecture support: If ye will not drive out the inhabitants... they shall be pricks in your eyes and thorns in your sides.

Recognize the wickedness of the wicked and act accordingly

The wicked devour the righteous without remorse; this reality necessitates defensive action.

Lecture support: Who eat up my people as they eat bread... with as much ease, delight, and pleasure... as constantly as a man eats bread.

Do not substitute prayer for obedient action

Prayer is good, but when God commands fighting, prayer alone is disobedience.

Lecture support: Praying is absolutely useless when you're supposed to be fighting and you're refusing to fight.

Study notes

Personal Application and Notes

Which application will you work on, and what specific step will you take?

What Scripture or teaching will you return to as you put this into practice?

Additional notes or questions to discuss

LESSON 2

The Sin of Refusing to Fight - 2

August 31, 2014

Read Chapter 2 in the companion book, pages 31-46.

Major Themes

Sin of refusing to fight when lives are in danger

It is a sin to refuse to fight when your life, your family's lives, or others' lives are in jeopardy, as exemplified by the tribes who would have sinned by not helping their brethren in battle.

Lecture support: What would be one of the sins of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh? And here's the answer. It would be the sin of failing to protect and fight for the lives of their brethren.

Prayer is insufficient without action when fighting is required

Prayer and good wishes are not enough when physical fighting is necessary; Phinehas stopped praying and took violent action to stop sin and plague.

Lecture support: Prayer without fighting when it's absolutely necessary is useless. ... Phinehas, who was also there, ceased praying, took a spear or javelin, went in and slew both of them.

God as the defender who takes life

God defends His people and His honor, and He takes lives in their defense, demonstrating that killing in defense is not murder but righteous action.

Lecture support: Could God have delivered Jerusalem without killing these 185,000? Yes. But He did not choose to do so. ... When lives must be taken in self-defense or in the defense of others, it is not murder, it is not wrong, it is not wicked, it is not sin.

Curse upon those who refuse to fight

Jeremiah 48:10 pronounces a curse on those who do God's work deceitfully or hold back from bloodshed when God commands war; modern bystanders who fail to intervene are under this curse.

Lecture support: Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood.

Loss of warrior spirit in the church and nation

The church and nation have lost the willingness to face and engage enemies, leading to cowardice and sin.

Lecture support: We have lost our warrior spirit. We have lost our fighting spirit. Do you realize we are unwilling to face our enemies? We're unwilling to engage our enemies and just plain scared and unwilling to fight.

Duty to preserve life as the positive side of the sixth commandment

The sixth commandment's negative 'Thou shalt not kill' implies the positive duty to preserve life, obligating intervention when lives are threatened.

Lecture support: The sixth commandment is a negative, but every negative has a positive. So the positive side of the sixth commandment is 'Thou shalt preserve life.'

Key Arguments

Refusing to fight when lives are in danger is sin

The tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Manasseh would have sinned by not fighting alongside their brethren, showing that failure to protect lives is sin.

Lecture support: What would be one of the sins of the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and the half-tribe of Manasseh? ... It would be the sin of failing to protect and fight for the lives of their brethren.

Prayer cannot replace fighting when fighting is commanded

Phinehas's action in Numbers 25 proves that there are times when prayer must cease and physical fighting must begin to stop evil.

Lecture support: Phinehas, who was also there, ceased praying, took a spear or javelin, went in and slew both of them. In other words, there was a time to quit praying and quit weeping and do the fighting.

God's curse is on those who hold back from necessary violence

Jeremiah 48:10 explicitly curses those who keep back their sword from blood when God has ordained judgment, applying to modern failures to defend the helpless.

Lecture support: Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully, and cursed be he that keepeth back his sword from blood.

God's example of taking life in defense justifies self-defense

God's killing of 185,000 Assyrians to defend Jerusalem shows that taking life in defense is not murder; emulating God is never wrong.

Lecture support: When lives must be taken in self-defense or in the defense of others, it is not murder, it is not wrong, it is not wicked, it is not sin.

Scripture commands intervention to save lives

Deuteronomy 22 distinguishes between cases where help was possible and where it was not, implying a duty to intervene when one hears a cry of distress.

Lecture support: If you hear the cry of distress, if you hear the cry of danger, if someone's life is in danger, according to Deuteronomy 22, you're duty bound, you're obligated to do whatever is necessary to save that life.

Moses' killing of the Egyptian was righteous defense

Moses killed an Egyptian to defend an Israelite and is never condemned for it; his flight was to preserve his own life, not because he sinned.

Lecture support: Moses is never condemned, either in the Old Testament or in the New Testament, for killing the Egyptian. In fact, you could say that Moses was commended for doing that because he is listed in Hebrews chapter 11 as one of the heroes of faith.

Scripture References

Numbers 32:23

The key verse of the sermon: 'But if you will not do so, behold, you have sinned against the Lord and be sure your sin will find you out.'

Numbers 32:20-23

Moses' condition for the tribes: they must go armed to war or sin; prayer and good wishes are not mentioned as sufficient.

Numbers 25:1-13

Phinehas stops praying and kills the sinful couple, turning away God's wrath; illustrates that action, not just prayer, is sometimes required.

Psalms 94:16

God asks, 'Who will rise up for me against the evildoers?' showing God seeks fighters.

1 Samuel 25:28

Abigail says David fights the battles of the Lord, indicating physical fighting for God's cause.

1 Samuel 17:47

David declares the battle is the Lord's, showing reliance on God in physical combat.

2 Samuel 8:6, 14; 1 Chronicles 18:6, 13

Four times the Bible says the Lord preserved David wherever he went in battle.

Psalms 24:8

David asks, 'Who is this King of glory? The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in battle.'

2 Samuel 22:40

David acknowledges God girded him with strength for battle.

Jeremiah 48:10

Cursed is he who does the Lord's work deceitfully and who keeps back his sword from blood.

2 Kings 19:34; 20:6; Isaiah 31:5; 37:35; 38:6

God repeatedly promises to defend Jerusalem for His own sake and David's sake.

Isaiah 37:36

The angel of the Lord kills 185,000 Assyrians in defense of Jerusalem.

2 Kings 7:3-7

God previously delivered Jerusalem without bloodshed by causing the Syrians to hear a noise and flee.

Psalms 7:10; 59:9, 16-17; 62:2, 6; 94:2, 22; 89:18

David repeatedly claims God as his defense.

1 Samuel 14:11-15, 23

Jonathan and his armor-bearer kill about 20 men; God sends an earthquake and causes the enemy to fight each other, defending Israel.

1 Chronicles 14:14-16

David inquires of God and obeys His battle strategy; God goes before him to smite the Philistines.

1 Samuel 23:1-2

David asks God if he should fight to save Keilah from looters; God commands him to go and save the city.

Psalm 14:4

The wicked eat up God's people as they eat bread, showing their casual cruelty.

Deuteronomy 22:23-27

Law distinguishes between a woman who could have been saved in the city and one who could not in the field, implying a duty to rescue.

Acts 7:22-29

Moses defends an Israelite by killing an Egyptian; he is not condemned and is listed in Hebrews 11 as a hero of faith.

Study notes

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Discussion Questions

1. In what situations today might God be commanding us to fight, and how can we discern those from situations where fighting would be sinful?

Consider: Weaver distinguishes between fights for resources/control (sinful) and fights for faith, truth, and defense of lives (commanded).

2. How do we balance the call to prayer with the call to physical action in defending others?

Consider: Weaver says prayer is necessary but useless without fighting when fighting is mandatory, using Phinehas as an example.

3. What does it mean to have a 'warrior spirit' as a Christian, and how can we cultivate it without becoming un-Christlike?

Consider: Weaver laments the loss of warrior spirit and points to David and God Himself as models of righteous fighting.

4. How should Jeremiah 48:10 shape our understanding of God's judgment on inaction in the face of evil?

Consider: Weaver applies the curse on those who keep back from bloodshed to modern bystanders who fail to help victims.

5. In what ways does God's defense of Jerusalem (killing 185,000) inform our ethics of self-defense and defense of others?

Consider: Weaver argues that since God takes life in defense, it is not murder for us to do so in similar circumstances.

6. What practical steps can we take to fulfill the positive duty of the sixth commandment to preserve life in our communities?

Consider: Weaver teaches that the sixth commandment implies a duty to preserve life, citing Deuteronomy 22 and Acts 7.

7. How do we avoid the condemnation of being 'at ease in Zion' while trusting in government to handle all threats?

Consider: Weaver warns against trusting in 'the mountain of Samaria' (government) instead of taking personal responsibility to defend.

Applications

Be willing to physically defend yourself and others when lives are in danger

When you or others are under attack, it is a sin to stand by and do nothing; you must be prepared to fight to preserve life.

Lecture support: It is a sin to sit by and allow your life or the lives of your loved ones or the lives of your friends to be taken. And you do absolutely nothing.

Do not substitute prayer for action when fighting is required

Prayer is essential but cannot replace physical intervention when someone's life is in immediate danger; follow Phinehas's example of acting decisively.

Lecture support: Prayer without fighting when it's absolutely necessary is useless. ... Phinehas, who was also there, ceased praying, took a spear or javelin, went in and slew both of them.

Recover a biblical warrior spirit

Christians must overcome fear and passivity, emulating David and God Himself who fight for righteousness and defend the helpless.

Lecture support: We have lost our warrior spirit. ... Do you realize we are unwilling to face our enemies?

Understand that taking life in defense is not murder

When necessary to save life, killing an attacker is biblically justified and not a sin; God's own actions confirm this.

Lecture support: When lives must be taken in self-defense or in the defense of others, it is not murder, it is not wrong, it is not wicked, it is not sin.

Intervene when you hear cries of distress

Deuteronomy 22 teaches that if you are in a position to help someone in danger, you are obligated to do whatever is necessary to save them.

Lecture support: If you hear the cry of distress, if you hear the cry of danger, if someone's life is in danger, according to Deuteronomy 22, you're duty bound, you're obligated to do whatever is necessary to save that life.

Do not trust in government to be your sole defender

God pronounces woe on those who are at ease and trust in human institutions instead of taking personal responsibility to protect lives.

Lecture support: Woe to them that are at ease in Zion, and trust in the mountain of Samaria.

Personal Application and Notes

Which application will you work on, and what specific step will you take?

What Scripture or teaching will you return to as you put this into practice?

Additional notes or questions to discuss

Online Lecture Resources

Scan a code or select the lecture link in the PDF. The original lecture identifiers and destinations are preserved.

Lesson 1: The Sin of Refusing to Fight

Lecture JW00559

[Open the formatted lecture online](https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW00559&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted)



https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW00559&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted

Lesson 2: The Sin of Refusing to Fight - 2

Lecture JW00567

[Open the formatted lecture online](https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW00567&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted)



https://weaverbiblecollege.com/transcript.php?library=weaverbiblecollege&lecture=JW00567&transcript=ai&pc_view=formatted

Source information

Study material: existing Major Themes, Key Arguments, Scripture References, Discussion Questions, and Applications from the corresponding Weaver Bible College lecture records. Original lecture titles and provenance are retained in those source records.

Layout upgraded September 30, 2026. Original manuscripts, study-guide data, and previous PDFs have not been changed.