

Do Christians Have the Right to Defend Themselves?

Questions Christians Ask

8 December 2023

What does the bible say you should do if you are in a physically dangerous situation like a home break-in?

Disclaimer: The bible is absolutely true and entirely correct. However, your government is not going to recognize the bible as a lawful authority to dictate your actions. If you hurt or kill someone, when you go to court, you will not be able to say, "The bible gives me the right to do what I did."

OPTION 1: AVOID THE CONFLICT

Proverbs 22:3 and 27:12 "A prudent *man* foreseeth the evil, and hideth himself..."

- Escape from danger.
- Remove yourself from areas of danger.
- Situate yourself and your family in a safe location.
- Being prudent involves foreseeing evil ahead and taking steps to avoid it.

OPTION 2: FLEE FROM DANGER

Matthew 10:22-23 Jesus said, "When they persecute you in this city, flee ye into another."

- Fleeing from danger doesn't make you a coward.

Matthew 24:15-18 "...flee into the mountains."

- If you have a way to escape a dangerous situation, leave your belongings behind and flee.

OPTION 3: PREVENT THE BAD GUYS FROM COMING IN YOUR HOUSE/BUSINESS.

Luke 12:37-39 Jesus instructs us to watch and not allow our house to be broken through.

Luke 22:35-36 "He that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one."

- The purpose of this weapon is not to force others to convert to Christianity.
- The purpose is to protect your life or your belongings.

1 Timothy 5:8 A man is expected to provide for his own house.

- This includes their financial welfare, fulfilling their physical needs and comforts.
- This includes the safety of his family.

"If any man provide not...he hath denied the faith." That means you're not practicing biblical Christianity.

GOD'S LAW CONCERNING KILLING:

Exodus 21:12-14 The penalty for **murder** is death (vs 12 and 14).

- Failure to obey God's law on this will result in more murders.
- Executing a murderer prevents them from committing more murders.

The penalty for **manslaughter** (accidental death) is a life sentence (confinement) in a place prepared for such cases (vs 13).

Exodus 22:2-4 If you kill a thief who breaks into your house, there is no punishment for you (vs 2).

- The thief is to blame for his own death.

If you track down the thief the next day and kill him, it is murder. Your blood will be shed. You will be executed for murder (vs 3).

If the thief is caught, he'll be required to restore what he sold with interest (3-4).

Romans 13:1-4 Rulers are powers that are ordained of God (vs 1) to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil (vs 4).

1 Timothy 3:5 a man is the ruler of his household. He is the higher power that can execute wrath upon any evil person who enters his domain and endangers his family.

- This is limited to inside your house. It does not apply to public places.

ANSWERING OBJECTIONS FROM PACIFISTS AND VEGANS

Many people believe that all killing is wrong.

Exodus 20:13 “Thou shalt not kill.” Jesus explained this for us in Matthew 19.

Matthew 19:17-19 When Jesus quotes the Ten Commandments, he replaces the word “kill” with “murder,” clarifying the true intention of the command. “Thou shalt do no murder.”

- God doesn't forbid all killing. He forbids premeditated murder.

Acts 10:11-12 God commanded Peter, “Rise, Peter; kill, and eat.”

- The Lord allows men to kill animals for food.

Many Christians believe that we should never defend ourselves from evildoers.

Matthew 5:38-39 Jesus said, “...whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also.”

Acts 23:1-5 Paul objected to being smitten on the mouth contrary to the law.

When Jesus instructed His followers to turn the other cheek, it was for the purpose of maintaining their testimony so they could continue to witness.

- It's very difficult to witness after you lose your cool or punch somebody in the nose. Remember that you represent Jesus Christ.
- Killing someone who smites you is not equal payback.

Exodus 12:12, 15 If you smite a man and he dies, you will be put to death (vs 12).

If you smite your father or mother, you will be put to death (vs 15).

- Turning the other cheek is connected with your witness and your relationship with Jesus Christ. It does not pertain to somebody breaking into your house and endangering your family.
- Don't rely only on the police to rescue you from the bad guys. They probably won't get to you in time.
- One thing to consider before killing a man: —it will affect you emotionally for the rest of your life.