

Ethical Challenges of Military Service

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INTRODUCTION

Should Seventh-day Adventists voluntarily serve in the military? Should you consider pursuing a military career? Increasingly, Adventist youth are facing these challenging questions. The issue is made even more complex because one's attitude toward the military and participation in war are significantly shaped by the culture in which a person is raised. While national contexts vary, and individual situations are unique, decisions about military service should be carefully examined from a biblical perspective.

OUR ULTIMATE ALLIGIENCE

Before deciding whether to serve voluntarily in the military, one should prayerfully reflect on these questions: Which loyalty comes first: my loyalty to a particular nation and its political and military leaders or my loyalty to God and His written Word? To whom am I willing to pledge my full allegiance: to a nation, to the military, or to God? Are the interests of God and the values of Christ identical with the interests of my nation and the values of the military?

THE CHURCH AND MILITARY SERVICE

- Christians, including Adventists, choosing to serve the military of their countries of citizenship might be forced to shoot and kill fellow Christians and fellow Seventh-day Adventists.
- How can the message and the mission of the Christian Church be compatible with violence and death involved in war?

SACREDNESS OF HUMAN LIFE

Serving in the military confronts Christians with a serious ethical problem connected with the sanctity and dignity of all human life. If all human beings reflect the image of God and, hence, carry special dignity, how can someone train to become skillful in taking human life? How can a Christian engage in injuring and killing men and women who are loved by God?

CONCLUSION

- Seventh-day Adventist Christians should be aware that joining the military poses ethical challenges.
- Church members should not seek voluntarily to be placed in circumstances that would put their moral values in peril.
- Instead, we should seek every opportunity to engage in Christlike behavior and bring justice, and actively foster peace.
- In light of the immense ethical problems, Seventh-day Adventist Christians should take a decisive stand in favor of conscientious objection to military service.

Jesus calls us to express and exercise His spirit and be His agents of peace, reconciliation, and healing.



LINK TO REFERENCES

[Ethical challenges of military service – Dialogue \(adventist.org\)](https://www.adventist.org/dialogue/ethical-challenges-of-military-service)



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