

# **THE CHRISTIAN ETHIC OF WAR**

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The Christian ethic of War by P. T. Forsyth

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**P. T. FORSYTH**

**THE CHRISTIAN  
ETHIC OF WAR**




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CHRISTIAN ETHIC  
OF WAR

BY  
P. T. FORSYTH, M.A., D.D.

*'Righteousness is applied holiness'*

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## PREFACE

THIS book turns on the centrality of a real Atonement for the Christian Revelation of moral Redemption and public Regeneration. The Grace of God in Christ's Cross is not a forensic device, but the moral focus of the Universe—if all centre in the conscience, and morality is the nature of things. By a real Atonement I mean one not *shown* but *done* on the Cross, as the consummation of Christ's holy personality and its work. I do not aim here at expounding that Atonement, but at working out some of its moral implicates and results on the public and national side—a side on which a Christianity based only on Christ's teaching has been criticised as defective. An antithesis is discussed between the teaching of Jesus and the work of Christ which is none of my making. Is it necessary to say that the stress I place on the latter is not at the cost of the former, but only against the value given it by some (as others treat the Sacraments) as the thing most precious in the Grand Legacy. None ever spoke like Christ. There are no words so authoritative, so profound, so lovely. But the power, depth, and beauty of such words is ultimately due to their place in the perspective of the supreme and complete Word of Grace; which lifts

them, fixes and eternalises them all in the Cross and what was *done* by the Holy there, when all saying or showing (even His) was in vain. The Kingdom of God is the great moral International. And it was set up in the Cross with the only Omnipotence—that of His Grace ‘Who showeth His Almighty power most chiefly in showing mercy and pity.’ His public judgments, from the Cross downwards, are gifts and blessings unto public salvation. By terrible things in righteousness are we answered by the God of our salvation. Also He is *merciful*, who giveth to every one according to his *works*—to every soul, society, and civilisation, always in mercy, entire and judicious.

At the same time I am not indisposed to find some help in a difficult situation from the notion of a standing ideal but of an *Interims-ethik* for the use of the community while it awaited the consummation of the age. That consummation, however, turned out to be the Cross; and the community became the Church that the Cross founded—with an ethic drawn (as the Apostles drew it) not from Christ’s early teaching but from the more world-compelling crisis of the Saviour’s ‘finished work’ for the Kingdom and its righteousness.

P. T. FORSYTH.

HAMPSTEAD,  
June 1916.

[I have to thank my former pupil, Rev. F. W. Camford, M.A., B.D., for valuable help with proofs.]

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