

Biblical Principles for Self-Defense

One – Humans are made in the Image of God

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(This is the first installment of several presenting biblical principles for Self-Defense. As Christian Warriors we must not only know the How? of our Martial Arts but also the Why?. This is the essential connection that Christian Budo makes between Bujutsu (technique) and Bushido (philosophy). Your training is never complete without both elements.)

One of the great ironies presented by traditional Asian martial arts (e.g. Ju Jitsu, Kung Fu, Karate, etc.) is the contradiction between their fundamental philosophical commitment to deny or seek to suppress the existence of The Self (i.e. The Individual) and their martial commitment to learn to defend that same Self. Put another way, they teach the defense of an Individual they believe either does not or should not exist.

By contrast, Christian philosophy, which is the application of Scripture to all of life, teaches that humanity is made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). As such, The Individual (i.e. The Self) has intrinsic and immeasurable worth. True Self-Defense, rightly understood, is one way among many to honor the image of God in humanity and to affirm the worth of God's special creation. When we defend ourselves we are honoring God's image in us. When we

defend another, we are honoring God's image in them.

The irony for the Christian is that the defense of God's image in one person may require bringing harm to another person made in that same image. We may have to efface the image of God in one to protect the image of God in another. Even more difficult, sometimes the image that is effaced is the one in us. We may become injured or even killed when defending another. This, however, is exactly what Christ's sacrificial death is all about. He gave himself over to destruction that He might save others from destruction. Christ's death on the cross was, in a sense, the greatest example of sacrificial Self-Defense. He gave His life that others might live.

Thus, looking to Christ as our example, we see both the justification and necessity of Self-Defense. When we learn to defend others and to defend ourselves (always remembering that the defense of another may require the sacrifice of ourselves), we bring honor to the One who made us in his image and for his glory. Osu!

(The next installment will explore the role of faith for Self-Defense.)