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The Importance of Ritual in Helping Heal Veterans Who Suffer with PTSD/Moral Injury: A Chaplain's Role in the Body of the Church

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To my friend Chris (Major, USMC) and those sheepdogs like him

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To God Almighty, the ultimate healer, be all honor and glory now and forever. Amen.

ABBREVIATIONS

<i>3/7</i>	3 rd Battalion 7 th Marines
CVPR	Combat Veteran Purification Rite
D.Min.	Doctor of Ministry
<i>LW</i>	Luther's Works (American Edition)
PTSD	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
OSCAR	(O.S.C.A.R.) Operational Stress Control and Readiness

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

“You can reach into the well of courage only so many times before the well runs dry.”
Ardant Du Picq

The Problem Identified

In 2007, after a seven month deployment to Ramadi, Iraq¹ with 3rd Battalion 7th Marines,² an infantry battalion of approximately 1200 Marines, I began my search in the Holy Scriptures and in Church tradition to find a “purification rite” that I might use to help those military combat veterans coming to me seeking help. I had heard secondhand about various cultures, such as the Native Americans and the Spartans, who had ceremonies to help their warriors return to *normal* life after battle. So I began to read and study about these various warrior cultures and learn about their purification rites.

As an active duty Navy chaplain, endorsed by the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, I wondered where did these purification rites from these societies have their roots. Had some of their ideas come from the purification rituals in the Pentateuch? Did the early or medieval church have any purification rites? Had the early church fathers written concerning this issue?

In 2010, a pastor from The Parish Church of St. Helena, in Beaufort, South Carolina called me and asked me to visit a WWII Marine Corps veteran in hospice care. The man, whom I will call John, specifically requested to talk with a Navy Chaplain. So I went. At the time I was in the Doctor of Ministry Program at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri taking a course entitled

¹ Mark Kukis, “The Most Dangerous Place in Iraq.” *Time Magazine*, December 11, 2006.

² Commonly called 3/7 (Three Seven).

the *Gospel of Mark*. When I arrived the man's son greeted me. After a quick introduction John asked his son to leave the room. What followed was amazing and powerful.

John began by saying, "I have never told anyone what I am about to share." He then proceeded to tell me about his experiences during WWII. He told me about his actions as a young Marine and how he had done his duty and killed the enemy in battle. I simply sat and listened. When he was almost finished he said to me that he felt "unclean." So, I asked him if he wanted to be clean. To which he replied a resounding "yes."

Knowing already that he was a Christian man, I began where I normally begin, that is, with Confession and Absolution, reciting the words of 1 John 1:8–9. Yet before I could finish saying, "If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us..." John interrupted me and asked if I thought that he had sinned in taking the life of an enemy.³ I was not prepared for the interruption or the question. In that moment, I struggled with what to say or do. Many thoughts raced through my head.

Indeed, Christians can do their duty serving in the military and even kill the enemy. There is a distinction between killing and murder. So perhaps John had not sinned. But I also thought silently, what was in his heart when he did his duty? Was there anger or revenge when he took the life of the enemy? If so, then perhaps John had sinned. If he did not sin by commission, did he sin by omission? Although he served honorably according to man's standard, had John served honorably according to God's perfect standards?

Suddenly, I realized John had struggled with that question most of his adult life. After hearing more of his story, I became convinced that John had done his duty. He had served honorably in the Marine Corps according to humanity's standards of what is honorable. In this

³ I had asked and he shared that he had not killed civilians. John was convinced that for this particular event in the war he did not act out of anger, rage, or any other ungodly emotion.

particular case, I believed that John had not sinned when he took physical action and killed the enemy in battle. As John continued to talk, I was also convinced that John had served honorably according to God's standards. John shared how he was praying to God while he physically took the life of the enemy. With that information, I believed that he had not sinned in his heart.

Yet, John had told me that he felt "unclean." How was this possible? To me "unclean" meant that a particular sin had been committed. The solution to a particular sin was Confession and Absolution. But if no particular sin was committed, then what was the issue causing John to feel unclean? Furthermore, if no particular sin was committed, was Confession and Absolution the answer to John's uncleanness? If it was not the answer, what was?

I was in uncharted territory. I knew what to do when a person told me "I have done something wrong." John was not saying that though. He was convinced that for this particular event in his life he had acted honorably according to military standards as well as honorably according to God's standards. I agreed with him.⁴ Yet, John still felt burdened and unclean. I was completely intrigued. Perhaps, it was because I had felt somewhat similar to John after returning home from a combat deployment myself. So if Confession and Absolution was not the medicine his soul needed, what was his need and how could I be of help?

I was ill-prepared at the time and was completely unsure what to do. In that moment, God the Holy Spirit led me to share with John what I had been studying in the D.Min. Program in the class entitled the *Gospel of Mark*. I shared about the various people that Jesus encountered who were in a state of being unclean: the woman with the issue of blood, the demon possessed man, and the man with leprosy. I told John how they had not sinned. Now to clarify, they indeed were all sinners with original and actual sin, but what is meant by saying "they had not sinned" is that

⁴ Of course, only Almighty God knows if people have sinned or not in their hearts. From all the evidence gathered during the pastoral call, John had not committed actual sin.

their disease or demon possession was not a punishment for a particular sin they had committed. Their community considered them unclean. Perhaps more importantly, they considered themselves unclean and felt unclean as well.

I further explained to John, how all three people were something, namely, unclean not because of their own sin but rather because of the state in which they found themselves. John seemed extremely interested in what I was sharing. He even stated how he should have been on the list of unclean people. He shared how he knew that he was a sinner. He shared how he knew that he needed a Savior. In this particular case, he was not convinced that he had committed actual sin. In fact, he thought that he had not sinned. One thing for sure that he knew was that he felt unclean. Confused, John did not know how that was the case. To be honest, at the time, nor did I. Doesn't there have to be sin for one to be rendered unclean? Or can a person be unclean and not have actually sinned?

It was a powerful moment. John and I began to think what if he was like the people in the Gospel of Mark. What if this uncleanness was not because of an actual sin he had committed? What if he was unclean because war is a result of a sinful, fallen world? What if, even if that war is just, war renders those who participate, unclean? What if John was something, namely, unclean not because of his own sin but rather because of the state in which he found himself after being in a combat environment?

When Jesus encountered the people in the Gospel of Mark who were something, namely unclean, he made them clean. Jesus did not leave them as they were. He healed them. He cleansed them. He changed their state or their condition from being unclean to being clean. Jesus did this without a confession of actual sin from those people. In his grace and mercy, Jesus had compassion and then applied the word of God on an individual basis into the lives of each person

he encountered.

As I shared what Jesus did to those in the Gospel of Mark, John became emotional, broke down, and cried. Later, I came to realize that in that moment, and without words, John was saying, “I am something too, namely unclean.” John wanted Jesus not to leave him as he was. John wanted Jesus to heal him. John wanted Jesus to cleanse him. John wanted his condition to be changed from unclean to clean.

So right then and there I took hold of John and told him that I believed that he had served honorably by the standards of men and by the standards of God. I offered how it might be possible that he was in this state of uncleanness not because of a particular sin that he had committed. I noted how Jesus desired, just as he had done so with those who were unclean in the Gospel of Mark, to make him clean. Then I shared essentially an absolution without a confession of sin. I said to John how the perfect life, the death, and the resurrection of Jesus cleanses that which is unclean. Looking directly into his eyes, I told John that because of Jesus, he was completely clean.

We sat in silence for what seemed like a long time. In reality, it was just a few minutes. In those brief moments, John seemed different. He seemed relieved. His demeanor seemed to have changed. He seemed as if he had finally gotten an answer to a question that he had struggled with most of his adult life. As I got up to leave, John grabbed my arm and said how he had longed for years to hear those words. He thanked me and told me how now in this moment he truly felt clean.

Unfortunately, I never had the opportunity to talk with John again. He died shortly after my visit to the hospice. Later, I heard from his pastor how appreciative John and his entire family was of the visit. Indeed, that visit was life changing for John.

That hospice visit also changed my life. It set me on a path towards this Major Applied Project (MAP). This MAP seeks to understand John, answer his question, as well as mine, and provide pastoral care to him and those like him. Why did he ask for a Navy chaplain to come? Why had he not shared this internal struggle for so many years? Why did he feel unclean even though there was no actual sin for this particular event? What was it that God, the Holy Spirit, had done using me as a tool in John's hospice care room? Could I replicate what happened using some sort of formal rite?

The visit also made me realize how, like John, I too felt "unclean" from my combat experiences. That statement may seem ironic coming from a Navy chaplain, who by definition is a non-combatant.⁵ But that was the truth. What John said about serving honorably yet feeling unclean resonated with me. The more I thought about John and how God had helped him via me the more I was forced to look into the mirror. I began to wonder if God the Holy Spirit had designed the encounter with John for both of us. Similar questions that John had arose in my own life. Why had I not shared with others? Why did I feel unclean even though there was no actual sin? What was it that I, by the power of the Holy Spirit, needed in my own "hospice" room? Who would be my chaplain to come visit? So began my journey to help heal combat veterans and along the way, in doing so, to help heal, by the grace of God, myself.

Because I felt unprepared in my interaction with John, in 2011, I met with the Dean of the Chapel⁶ at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, MO to see if he knew of any church rites for Christian combat veterans. He suggested a book entitled *Speaking to Silence*. In the book, Janet Peterman talks about how the church can speak to tragedy using rites and rituals. For example, to reclaim a

⁵ According to U.S. military policy and the Geneva Convention, chaplains are non-combatants and may not carry firearms.

⁶ Rev. Dr. Kent Burreson.

particular location after an accident that took life or another horrific event, pastors can speak to this “silence” by writing their own rite to reclaim a particular location as holy ground.

As I started thinking about the book and about John, I reasoned if one can write a rite to reclaim a location where a tragedy occurred, why not compose a rite to “reclaim” or purify the Christian combat veteran who feels unclean? Why not write a rite for people like John? After all, Peterman further says, “...when we think about creating new rituals, we must pay attention as we ask, ‘What is the need?’ ”⁷ From what I had experienced with John, there certainly was need for a new ritual or at least a need for an old ritual to be rediscovered.

The more I read and researched rituals outside the Christian church I saw how one of the main focuses was on re-entry into a society. There was a realization from societies that the soldier had been sent, had served, and a realization that before they re-entered the world which sent them they needed to be re-integrated. As I read and researched rituals in the church, the focus seemed more on confession and absolution types of rituals. While I believe this is extremely important, that was not my focus.

My focus was towards the combat veteran who has served honorably before men *and* before God and who was or felt unclean. My MAP needed to address this specific issue of why some veterans are or feel unclean. Can a person be in a state or condition of uncleanness? And if so how does that occur? Does it occur simply because we live in a fallen world and that fallen world rubs off on humanity? Or do some veterans feel unclean because of a particular experience that made them feel that way?

My hope with this MAP is that the next time a pastor or chaplain encounters a “John” they may be a bit more prepared than I was because they have given thought to some of these

⁷ Janet Peterman, *Speaking to Silence* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox, 2007), 14.

questions. In addition, they will have worked through the theology behind the questions. Doing so will help pastors to be better prepared to give answers to “John.” This MAP is my exploration for answers to those questions. It eventually led me to writing and performing a purification rite - a tool that the church could use as a template in order to speak justification personally into the life of the combat veteran.

The Purpose

This experience with John led me to read and study more about Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and moral injury. What I discovered is that PTSD is nothing new to the military and the war fighter. It has been around as long as there have been wars and it has been called by many names. For example, during the American Civil War, a significant number of soldiers were treated for insanity, “soldier’s heart,” overexertion, and nostalgia.⁸ In the early years of WWI, “alarming reports reached the War Office in London that large numbers of soldiers were being evacuated from the British Expeditionary Force in Europe with ‘nervous and mental shock.’”⁹

Later, commonly referred to as “shell shock” in WWI, “phrases like ‘wounds of consciousness’ or ‘the wounded mind’ filled newspapers...” in England.¹⁰ By WWII psychiatrists called PTSD “battle exhaustion” and worked to see “how ‘battle inoculation’ could be used to build up response to stress.”¹¹ In the 1970’s it was called “Post-Vietnam Syndrome.”¹² By 1980, “Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder first came into existence as an officially recognized

⁸ Eric T. Dean Jr., *Shook Over Hell: Post-Traumatic Stress, Vietnam, And the Civil War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1997), 26.

⁹ B. Shephard, *A War of Nerves* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2001), 21.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, 28.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, 248–49.

¹² *Ibid.*, 357.

psychiatric syndrome... when the American Psychiatric Association adopted it as a disorder contained in its *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual (DSM-III)*.¹³ Whatever the name, PTSD “occurs when a person has experienced, witnessed, or has been confronted with a traumatic event, which involved actual or threatened death or serious physical injury to themselves or others.”¹⁴

Many US troops who served in Iraq and Afghanistan suffer from the effects of having participated in war and surviving a combat zone. Multiple deployments and extended tours of duty add to the already extreme stress of being in harm’s way. Some veterans return with not only physical, but also psychological, and emotional wounds. Many in the military world, especially the medical field, would say that what I am attempting to address in this MAP is the spiritual aspect of PTSD or at the very least moral injury.

According to Rita Nakashima Brock and Gabriella Lettini, both theological and ethics professors respectively, “Moral injury is not PTSD. Many books on veteran healing confuse and conflate them into one thing. It is possible, though, to have moral injury without PTSD. The difference between them is partly physical.”¹⁵ They define moral injury as “the violation of core moral beliefs.”¹⁶ Using a Marine veteran and philosopher’s war journals as a guide, Brock and Lettini further say that moral injury “is the result of reflection on memories of war or other extreme traumatic conditions. It comes from having transgressed one’s basic moral identity and violated core moral beliefs.”¹⁷

PTSD and moral injury are being addressed at the highest levels of the United States

¹³ Dean, *Shook Over Hell*, 27.

¹⁴ Bridget Cantrell and Chuck Dean, *Down Range: To Iraq and Back* (Seattle, WA: WordSmith, 2005), 35.

¹⁵ Rita Nakashima Brock and Gabriella Lettini, *Soul Repair* (Boston: Beacon, 2012), xiii.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, xiv.

military. The U.S. Navy and Marine Corps are so concerned about caring for their Sailors and Marines that they have developed the Operational Stress Control and Readiness (OSCAR) program to bridge the gap between mental health science and the art of military operations. Prevention, early identification, and effective treatment of PTSD are the goals of the OSCAR program. The job of these mental health professionals in the program is to be combat and/or operational stress control specialists who educate and are educated by their Marines and Sailors through repeated contact in the field before deployment, during deployment, and after deployment.¹⁸ In other words, the goal is to live with those they seek to help. As one Marine infantry battalion commander said to his newly assigned OSCAR psychiatrist, “I am never going to live in *your* world, so it’s a good thing that you are here to learn about mine.”

The idea of living in and among war fighters in order to care for them and treat them is not new. Psychiatrists were in a limited capacity already trying to do this in WWI by going to or near the frontlines of combat. They were brought in “because they seemed to have ways of alleviating the sufferings of war; because the military could no longer cope; or because, in an age of total war, they offered a way of reassuring civilian society that everything possible was being done for the soldier.”¹⁹ Psychiatrists and other medical professionals are the experts in helping our wounded veterans heal physically and mentally. The knowledge of their medical profession combined with the OSCAR program’s idea of being embedded with troops in order to experience and understand their world is advantageous to psychiatrists in the prevention, early identification, and effective treatment of PTSD.

The spiritual element is vital to the healing process of our veterans as well. Chaplains have

¹⁸ Dr. William P. Nash, CAPT, USN, *Operation Stress Control and Readiness* (Headquarters Marine Corps, 2006), 25–1.

¹⁹ Shephard, *War of Nerves*, xvii.

in many ways been doing work similar to the OSCAR program for years. Since June 1775²⁰ and the inception of the American military chaplains have been vital to our military. Standing before the Continental Congress, General George Washington requested that one chaplain be assigned to every two regiments of the US Army. Chaplains know the world of the veteran. They have been consistently living in this world alongside warriors just as long, and perhaps longer than any other healing profession.²¹ Their professional knowledge combined with their vast knowledge of the military world cannot be overlooked in the prevention, early identification, and effective treatment of PTSD and moral injury.

The OSCAR program works on the theory that a psychiatrist is more effective because she understands the world of the warfighter by living pre, during, and post deployment with the troops. Similarly, chaplains are effective because of their vast knowledge and because they live in the military world with the troops. How does the church apply a similar theory when it comes to her pastors? In other words, the church is in the business of spiritual care for all people.

In our churches there are veterans. Many of our pastors have never served in the military. We have chaplains in the church with vast knowledge and understanding of the military world. Is there a way that chaplains might transfer some of their knowledge and understanding to the parish pastor so that the parish pastor might be more effective and better care for veterans in his congregation? If so, how?

More and more via workshops and counseling, the Christian church is becoming involved in the care and treatment of veterans with PTSD and moral injury. Statistics report that the majority of our veterans will serve, usually four years, and then get out of the military. Some of

²⁰ The Army Chaplain Corps was established by the 2nd Continental Congress in June 1775. The Navy Chaplain Corps was later established in November 1775.

²¹ Martin of Tours, a Roman Catholic Bishop, served as a chaplain with the Roman army AD 334.

those veterans are Christians who will return a local congregation. Some, who are not Christians, may become Christians who will make their way to a local congregation. There they may seek the help of a priest or pastor to help them with their PTSD and moral injury. Thus, more and more parish pastors will be leading, guiding, and bringing spiritual healing to Christian veterans. But could that civilian pastor be even more effective if a military chaplain had taken time to share and download into that pastor their military insight and knowledge?

Some may ask, “Does it matter that the local parish pastor has never served in the military or lived in the war fighter’s world?” The OSCAR program seems to think that it matters if the psychiatrist has never lived there. Eric Greitens, a former Navy SEAL, in his book entitled *Resilience* gives a good Lutheran answer— “Yes” and “No.”

No, it does not matter that a pastor has never worn a uniform because the parish pastor is well trained and fully competent. Greitens offers to his friend who is struggling with PTSD that civilians have much to offer the warfighter because pain is universal. The pastor knows pain, fear, and suffering. He already deals with people suffering from PTSD. He comes with experience. From Scripture, he has answers to pain, fear, and suffering despite the fact that he himself has never worn a uniform. Greitens states in a letter to his veteran friend, “You can be tough on civilians, on people who ‘don’t understand’ what you’ve been through. But the battlefield isn’t the only place where people suffer. Hardship hits a million places.”²² With these words Greitens urges his friend to put aside the fact the civilian has never worn the uniform and the idea that he or she does not understand because of that reason. Instead, he wants his friend to see that the civilian has dealt with pain and suffering elsewhere and thus is fully qualified to help.

²² Eric Greitens, *Resilience* (New York: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2015), 3.

Sometimes though, despite the fact that the pastor is well trained and fully competent, yes, it does seem to matter that a local parish pastor has never served in the military or lived in the war fighter's world. Greitens shares how the words of a person who has "been there, done that" resonate more powerfully to other warfighters. To illustrate this Greitens shares about Will Guild, a Navy SEAL for over thirty years. "When Will stands in front of a class of SEAL candidates and talks about ethics in combat, they *listen*. His words resonate not just because of the quality of his thinking, but because of the quality of his life. A very capable professor of ethics from Harvard could stand in front of the very same class. He could speak the very same words. And yet they'd have a fraction of the effect of Will's words on that audience."²³

Will's "been there, done that" life brings several things. First, his audience says this is a man from whom I can and should learn. Second, his life brings instant credibility because Will is speaking from experience. Finally, Will's words resonate and have the impact they have because there is no gap between his world and that of his audience.

William Shakespeare in his play entitled *Henry V* describes this gap or disconnect between the civilian and the military world. In the famous St. Crispin's Day speech the King says:

This story shall the good man teach his son;
And Crispin Crispian shall ne'er go by,
From this day to the ending of the world,
But we in it shall be remembered-
We few, we happy few, we band of brothers;
For he to-day that sheds his blood with me
Shall be my brother; be he ne'er so vile,
This day shall gentle his condition;
And gentlemen in England now-a-bed
Shall think themselves accurs'd they were not here,
And hold their manhoods cheap whiles any speaks
That fought with us upon Saint Crispin's day.

²³ Ibid., 229.

The gap between the military and the civilian is shown when the King talks of those who were not present. These, whom I understand to be civilians, “shall think themselves accurs’d... And hold their manhoods cheap while any speaks.” The civilians were not there. They did not experience what those who fought experienced. Thus, a disconnection occurred because a special bond was forged between those who fought. This bond makes all those who fought family. The civilian never experienced this bond and is an outsider.

Reflecting upon the American context after ten years of war, a country song entitled *In Color*²⁴ sung by Jamey Johnson puts Shakespeare’s words into contemporary language. In the song, a grandson and grandfather are looking at black and white photographs of the grandfather’s life. One photo was of the grandfather and his tail gunner Johnny McGee in 1943 when they were stationed overseas serving on a bomber during WWII. The song seems to imply that grandson doesn’t understand the “hell” of war. Perhaps because of youth and inexperience he sees war in “black and white” seemingly glorifying it and even desiring to be like his grandfather and do what he did. In response, the grandfather says, “If it looks like we were scared to death, like a couple of kids just trying to save each other, you should have seen it in color.”

The gap between civilians and the military world, while difficult, is not impossible to cross. And the gap between the church and the military is not impossible to cross either. By living the military experience “in color” chaplains immerse themselves in the clothing, language, culture, and difficulties of the military world. This helps them gain credibility with the troops, have access into many lives, and bring spiritual healing as needed. Before living this military experience most chaplains were also civilian pastors. Due to this unique position, chaplains may bridge the gap between the military world and the church.

²⁴ Jamey Johnson, *That Lonesome Song* Album, 2008.

Chaplains have one foot in the world of the military and one foot in the world of the church even while they serve. They are ordained and endorsed by a Religious Organization (RO). If while serving they would happen to lose that endorsement from their RO for whatever reason they could no longer serve in the military. Christian chaplains are well versed in the culture and language of the church. Chaplains are also military officers. As staff officers, they are aware that they work not in the church but in the pluralistic environment of the military. This means that they must be well versed in the language and culture of the military.

By sharing “in color” experiences of serving in the military, chaplains can help teach local pastors the military culture and the personal struggles of our military veterans as it pertains to PTSD and moral injury. Like the OSCAR program desires with psychiatrists, this modified exposure of attending a workshop and learning from a military chaplain may allow a parish pastor greater insight into the military world and thus may allow the pastor to better care for a veteran.

Why did John wait so long to share? Was he searching for someone who could understand in a very deep way both his military and his spiritual experience? Perhaps John asked for me, a Navy Chaplain, and not his own pastor because he believed that I would understand. I have been there and done that. I have tasted what he has tasted, smelled what he has smelled, seen what he has seen. Perhaps more importantly, as it relates to the treatment of PTSD and moral injury, I had formed that bond with the troops that the OSCAR program desires to produce. I was a bridge person.

“Bridge People”²⁵ as Rev. Chris Adsit discusses in his book *The Combat Trauma Healing Manual* are people who help alter the environment so healing can occur. For example in Mark 2,

²⁵ Chris Adsit, *The Combat Trauma Healing Manual: Christ Centered Solutions for Combat Trauma* (Newport News, VA: Military Ministry Press, 2007), 121.

the four men who carried the paralyzed man changed the environment by lowering him through the roof so Jesus could heal the man. Military chaplains are bridge people in various aspects.

As discussed a bit earlier, due to their multi-disciplinary environment they have had to learn the secular language of the military and even the language of psychology as it pertains to PTSD and moral injury. These same chaplains speak the language of theology and the church. Thus, chaplains have much to offer to help bridge the gap between the parish pastor and the military veteran. This unique viewpoint that chaplains bring may help the church and the parish pastor better address the issue of PTSD and moral injury for the Christian combat veteran.

In October 2010, several Christian churches co-hosted a free dinner for wounded combat veterans at The Parish Church of St. Helena in Beaufort, S.C.²⁶ in conjunction with a concert afterwards by the *Lt. Dan Band*.²⁷ The parish hall of the church was filled with mostly Marine Corps and Navy veterans and their families. None of the veterans had come in uniform. Multiple clergy from several denominations attended the event. Several of them wore their clerical collars. Everyone ate and had a nice time. It was a wonderful gesture of appreciation by the churches to the veterans. I did notice, though, a disconnect or gap between the church and the military.

It seemed that the veterans interacted with other veterans and it seemed as if the clergy while cordial, nice, and talkative could have related better to their guests. I was the only chaplain that attended the dinner and did so in uniform.²⁸ As I walked from table to table, the veterans did what veterans do. They “read” my uniform. They saw the ribbons²⁹ on my chest, saw that I had deployed, how many times I had deployed, and to where I had deployed. With one particular

²⁶ Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island (MCRD PI) is located in Beaufort, SC.

²⁷ Lt. Dan Band is a band founded by Kimo Williams and Gary Sinese which performs for many charities and non-profit organizations such as the United Service Organization (USO). The band is named for the character Lt. Dan Taylor, whom Sinese portrayed in the movie *Forest Gump*.

²⁸ As I was assigned at the time to MCRD PI, I wore the Marine Corps Service “A” or Alpha Uniform.

veteran, I sat down and his first question was where had I been in Iraq. When I told him Ramadi, he shared that he was injured there in 2006. As he spoke of the place, I knew exactly where he was when he was injured. Then, after a brief time of reminiscing, I asked him and his wife if their young son had been baptized. They informed me that he had not and I encouraged him to think about doing so in the near future. He promised that he would. I moved on to another table.

While I mingled, I noticed that the clergy watched my interactions with the veterans. Later, we had a chance to talk together and several expressed to me how comfortable I seemed and how comfortable the veterans seemed in interacting with me. Then I shared some insights about the military world with them. None of the clergy had ever served in the military and were quite interested in learning about it. I told them about how the veterans (and active duty in the room) were “reading” my uniform. I shared about how the *bond* of just being there had opened doors for me and had brought credibility to me. I also talked about how the military culture is direct and on point so that is why I broached the subject of baptism with the couple. It was from that experience that I began to think that I had much to offer my brothers in the civilian parish. I began to think of myself as a bridge person.

My idea of teaching workshops to the parish pastor was born. If I could expose them and teach them about the military world could I make them as comfortable as I was in that world? Could I apply the OSCAR theory at least in a limited capacity to the parish pastor who could not “live” in the military world but could be exposed to it in a secondhand way? How would this workshop benefit the church at large? What if next time there is a John, he asks for his parish pastor to come because he knows his pastor, even though he has never served in the military, has studied and learned about the military world and now is that bridge person that he was waiting

²⁹ Military awards and decorations usually come in the form of medals and ribbons.

for who could understand in a very deep way both his military and his spiritual experience.

Process and Parameters

The process to construct bridges between the world of the church and the world of the military is via a workshop answering some of the questions already raised, via sharing the military chaplain perspective, and via other specialty tools with the parish pastor. The workshops (or trainings) attempt to introduce parish pastors and seminarians who have not experienced a war environment and who have not lived in the war fighters' world, to experience the military world. In a limited sense, having this simulated experience, helps parish pastors think about the unique struggles of veterans, perhaps see in "color," and provide better pastoral care to those in the military or veterans in their local congregations or who may come to them in the future for help.

The research essentially has four parts: a questionnaire, the workshop (which I sometimes refer to as training), the workshop evaluated, and finally the assessment of the questionnaire. Five groups of people were involved in the workshop: LCMS parish pastors with no military experience, LCMS parish pastors with some military experience, LCMS seminarians with no military experience, LCMS seminarians with some military experience and Stephen Ministers³⁰ with no military experience. It is from these five groups of people that I gathered my data via questionnaire before training and after training.³¹

To begin, three groups of pastors and two groups of seminarians responded to a

³⁰ Stephen Ministers are lay members who serve in the congregation in a special caring capacity. In this context and paper it is towards military service men and women.

³¹ 2 Stephen Ministers attended my last workshop so I have included that data only in Chapter 5. Please note the workshop was designed for the parish pastor and seminarians. Thus, throughout the paper I will refer only to pastors and seminarians.

questionnaire. I mistitled it “Interview sheets.”³² It is better described as a questionnaire than an interview. Five different groups gave information about their age, the number of years they have served in the ministry, if they have served in the military and if so for how long. They also answered if they have military veterans in their local parish and how many they have counseled who have been dealing with PTSD/moral injury.

Before the workshop, two key questions were answered via this questionnaire: “After this training, do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans? Why/Why not?” And “After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans? Why/Why not?” From these questions I gauged how much the pastors/seminarians were exposed to the military world and whether or not they felt prepared or ill prepared in counseling a person in the military setting. These two same questions were asked after the training (or the workshop) was completed to assess the effectiveness of the training.

Since the parish pastor and seminarian are limited physically in the ability to enter the combat veterans’ world, the workshop sought to bring that world, or at least a slice of it, to them. First, as the workshop began, an off Broadway play entitled *ReEntry*³³ was shown. Written by Emily Ackerman and KJ Sanchez, this drama is constructed from interviews with Marines returning from Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan and their families. These dramatized verbatims show the struggles that veterans have in their reentry to “normal” life after a combat deployment. It also gives insight into their thoughts and behaviors. With PTSD and moral injuries, the veterans in the drama portray a real life picture of the difficulties many veterans face as they reenter the society that sent them to war. The purpose of the video was to expose the parish pastor to the military world so the parish pastor can more effectively minister to those who have

³² A Sample Questionnaire is in Chapter 4 in the Implementation of the Project.

participated in “the most toxic, corrosive, destructive” environment of combat.³⁴

Secondly, I presented a PowerPoint presentation in the workshop on moral injury, possible PTSD cases in the Bible, the role of the conscience, historic re-entry rites in various cultures, and the need a veteran may have to be purified after returning from war were discussed. The idea of a veteran being unclean after doing his duty was also discussed. The theme of clean and unclean in the Gospel of Mark guided our discussion as we discussed the cases of the leper, the demoniac, the dead girl, and the woman with the issue of blood. The paralytic, little ones, and the Roman Centurion concluded our discussion and helped us focus on the theme of applying subjective justification to those who struggle with PTSD and moral injury.

Thirdly, in the workshop, the parish pastor was exposed to the Combat Veteran Purification Rite (CVPR),³⁵ developed based on my experiences with combat veterans (two veterans in particular). Various warrior cultures had purification rites. Did these rites have their origins in Holy Scripture? What can the book of Numbers, the Psalms, and the Gospel of Mark bring to the discussion? In the workshop, the CVPR sought to give parish pastors a template and tangible starting place. It was presented as a potential bridge in their pastoral care of the military and veterans.

When there is an accident and someone is injured or killed, weeks later, people gather for a candlelight vigil (a ritual) in the place where that accident (a tragedy) occurred. The hope is to reclaim that space for good. The CVPR attempts to not reclaim a location but rather a person. The hope is to reclaim a person’s entire body (mind included) and soul as holy. This liturgical

³³ The drama *ReEntry* in its entirety is found in Appendix Two.

³⁴ Dave Grossman, *On Combat: The Psychology and Physiology of Deadly Conflict in War and in Peace*, 3rd ed. (Warrior Science Publications, 2008), 7.

³⁵ The CVPR in a more generic template can be found in Appendix One.

CVPR,³⁶ which was developed based upon the Psalms and the Gospel of Mark, is meant for the Christian combat veteran and may serve as a template and starting point to help the pastor think about and then counsel a combat veteran who says that they have served honorably and still feels unclean.

Via the purification ritual, that which was once defiled is cleansed and returns to normal. Perhaps this change is not to a pre-deployment normal but at least to a new normal before God and all humanity. This process is one of cleansing that which is unclean. In his book *The Combat Healing Manual*, Adsit helps us consider the five vital elements to producing a healing environment for the veteran: the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, Prayer, the Christian Community, and the mindset of the veteran.³⁷ My CVPR used all five elements.

Finally, I sought to evaluate the workshop. Parish pastors and seminarians evaluated the usefulness of the workshop via questionnaires.³⁸ I returned to the key questions asked before training but after training I took out “do you think” and asked “do you better understand” military veterans? With this better understanding, are you better prepared and do you think you will be able to better counsel military veterans? I asked the pastors and seminarians if they have ever seen or heard of a combat veteran purification rite. What did they like or dislike about the rite and if they might use it in the future. My hope with the workshop and CVPR was to present to the parish pastor a Christ-filled battle plan that may help him return to “normal” the Christian wounded warrior in his local parish.

³⁶ This rite is not one-size-fits-all but may serve as a template for parish pastors who have had little to no exposure to the military world so that they may better be equipped to help Christian veterans who sit or will sit in their church pews who struggle with being unclean, especially due to combat.

³⁷ Adsit, *Combat Trauma Healing Manual*, 34.

³⁸ Completed questionnaires are found in Appendix Three.

Conclusion

In theory, this Major Applied Project is similar to the Navy and Marine Corps Operational Stress Control and Readiness (OSCAR) program. Yet, instead of exposing psychiatrists to the military world pre, post, and during deployments so they can better treat combat veterans with PTSD, the goal is to expose, at least in a limited sense, civilian clergy to this military world via a workshop presented by a military chaplain. In addition this MAP seeks to better equip the parish pastor and the church so that they can better provide pastoral care especially to Christian combat veterans. As a Navy chaplain and a bridge person myself, I desire to aid in the construction of as many bridges as I can between the civilian parish pastor and military veterans.

CHAPTER TWO

THE PROJECT IN THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

“Justification is that forensic (judicial) act of God, by which He, on the basis of the perfect vicarious atonement wrought by Christ, declared the whole world to be justified in His sight (objective justification), and transmits and imputes the effect of this declaration to all whom He brings to faith by the work of the Holy Ghost through the means of grace (subjective justification).”

Rev. Dr. E.W.A. Koehler

Subjective Justification

In my almost ten years of counseling the military, only a few Christian combat veterans have shared in sessions that they believe they have served honorably before men and before God and believe they have not committed actual sin. Yet, somehow they still feel unclean.³⁹ So what does the church do to help these that feel unclean? Initially, few answers and many questions come to mind. How do we define honorably? Even if the soldier served honorably according to men, has he in fact served honorably before God? Is there sin he is not aware of and thus is he in need of confessing it? What if the war is not a just war? Does this add to the ambiguity involved with a soldier as now his presence is not clearly and ethically defined? Does that ambiguity render him unclean? What does the church do if the soldier has served honorably before men *and* before God? Is confession and absolution the proper approach? What should the soldier confess? Is war ultimately a sin? Does a soldier’s participation in war even if he serves honorably before God render him unclean? Should the church consider a reaffirmation of the baptismal covenant

³⁹ Some might argue that whether a war is just or unjust may come into play here. Others might even argue that all war is sin. Others may say honorable depends upon in what kingdom it is defined. The question is if a soldier serves honorably and does not individually sin: Does mere participation in the war taint him or her?

to make the person clean? How would subjective justification and the applying of God's Word on an individual, personal level help make a person clean?

The church and parish pastors should address the deepest spiritual needs of military veterans personally; that is, the church needs to provide pastoral care individually to our veterans. Sometimes with veterans the need is that a sin issue must be addressed. Sometimes this may be a guilt issue. Sometimes it may be a survivor's guilt issue. Sometimes this may be a lack of a relationship with God issue. While all these issues certainly deserve attention, this MAP's focus is about providing pastoral care to the Christian combat veteran who may (or may not) have served honorably in combat. It is designed for the person who took the life of the enemy and who does not believe that he sinned. The person has a relationship with Jesus. Yet, this person is or feels unclean.

This chapter asks two questions: Could that uncleanness be a result of his experience and he thus feels unclean? Or could the uncleanness of war simply have rubbed off? In other words, is moral injury an experience or a state or condition? To help us in this task, we will discuss the authority given by God to the church and the government, honorable service in the military, just war, PTSD in the Bible, and how the theme of clean and unclean in the Gospel of Mark may help us understand this theological problem better.

If a veteran has a sin issue, confession of that sin and absolution is appropriate. Perhaps the veteran did not serve honorably according to humanity's standard and did something wrong. Perhaps, the honorable service in the military according to humanity's standard was not honorable service according to God. For example, a soldier who killed the enemy, an act that is considered honorable service according to man's definition, may have had hatred or revenge in

his heart when the deed was done. Using Matthew 5:44⁴⁰ and Leviticus 19:18⁴¹ as our standard, one might conclude that the soldier may have sinned. Thus, Confession and Absolution and Word and Sacrament Ministry are the spiritual tools the church has to forgive and restore returning veterans with a sin issue. The loving, caring, and accepting communion of saints also gives a safe environment for a veteran to be cared for especially as they struggle with their war experiences.

Another veteran may not have a relationship with God at all. His need is conversion. For example, Saul persecuted the church of God with a good conscience.⁴² After his conversion and name was changed, Paul's sin weighed heavily upon him.⁴³ What happened? Paul's norm or standard changed. One moment, Saul's conscience was following a standard of right and wrong determined by the Jewish leadership which allowed him to approve of the killing of Christians and to imprison them.⁴⁴ In the next moment, Paul's conscience was following a standard that said to persecute and have Christians killed was wrong. Paul's conscience did not change. Rather, after he was converted, the standard or norm of right and wrong, which informed his conscience, changed.

The conscience is a universal gift of God to all humanity.⁴⁵ There is "no man on earth without a conscience."⁴⁶ God's law is written on the hearts of humanity. The conscience is not the norm and source of right and wrong but rather it urges a man to comply with a standard and

⁴⁰ "But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

⁴¹ "Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against anyone among your people, but love your neighbor as yourself."

⁴² Acts 8; Acts 23:1.

⁴³ 1 Tim. 1:13–15.

⁴⁴ Acts 8:1, 3.

⁴⁵ Rom. 2:14–15.

⁴⁶ E. W. A. Koehler, "Conscience" *Concordia Theological Monthly* 13, no. 5 (May 1942), 349.

then judges his actions according to compliance. The veteran that does not have God's word as his standard because he is an unbeliever is in need of conversion just like Saul so that his conscience can be normed by God's word.

With some veterans returning from combat the issue may be one of guilt rather than sin. Why did they survive when a friend was killed? From this guilt can come all kinds of moral injuries that may "paralyze" the combat veteran: feeling of being alone, unworthy, thoughts of meaninglessness, and issues of PTSD. Isaiah 6:7 says, "Your guilt is taken away and your sin atoned for." The order is of guilt being removed and then sin atoned for may be helpful. Often in the church we hear: God forgives you, now do not worry about it. So sin is atoned for and then guilt removed. But the issue of guilt may remain. It is also important to note the distinction between "being guilty" of sin and "feeling guilty." Survivor's guilt is different than guilt from actual sin but the order stressed in Isaiah 6 shows how powerful guilt is and how the solution to it is applying God's word.

This MAP does not intend to address all of the spiritual needs of our combat veterans. For the non-Christian veteran, conversion (via the Holy Spirit) is the best solution. For the removal of sin, Confession and Absolution is the best course of action. For guilt and peace with conflicted conscience applying Scripture personally may be helpful. This MAP and the CVPR was intended to address the Christian combat veteran whose deepest spiritual need is that he or she is unclean or that he or she feels unclean. Sometimes this may have occurred because he took life of the enemy but there are also a number of other ways people are rendered unclean.

Two Realms⁴⁷ of God's Kingdom

Sin and evil abound in our fallen world. The evidence is all around us. From the first moment when Adam and Eve submitted to Satan's temptation to "be like God," evil and the consequences of evil have impacted human life. War is one such consequence of that fallen world which is under the sway of sin and is in constant rebellion against the Creator.

War has plagued humanity ever since the first sin in the Garden of Eden. Brother has risen up against brother. Cain killed Abel. It started with people not listening to God's Word and not controlling their anger. The Lord said to Cain, "Why are you angry? Sin is crouching at your door and desires to have you."⁴⁸ From this first murder, full-blown war has emerged. War is present all throughout the Scriptures. Abraham went to war to rescue Lot. The pharaoh of Egypt suppressed the children of Israel and made them slaves because he was afraid of war. Joshua sent spies into the Promised Land to prepare for war. Saul fought for his throne against David. Foreign nations such as Babylon and Assyria fought against Israel. In the time of Jesus, the Romans ruled the world by the sword. Jesus himself said that there would be wars and rumors of war until the end. There was even a war in heaven. Michael and his angels fought against the devil and his demons. And they overcame by the blood of the Lamb.⁴⁹

The Lord God rules the two realms of his Kingdom: the church with the Gospel and the state with the Law. He has given the "power of the sword" to the governing authorities, as Paul clearly maintains in Romans 13, to thwart the surging evil of humanity and to ensure that the innocent and defenseless are enabled to lead a peace filled life. The power of the sword or the "authority" placed in God's creation is demonstrated in judges, lawyers, police, and courts in our

⁴⁷ The Kingdom of God has two realms. God rules via those he puts in positions of civil authority (Romans 13) and via the church (Matthew 28).

⁴⁸ Gen. 4:6-7.

society. The American military exists with divinely derived authority under the civilian government to keep America safe and strong in a world that is filled with evil.

St. Thomas Aquinas made the point that service in the military to defend the defenseless is a loving act. In fact, in his *Summa Theologica* he does not deal with war in the section on justice, but in the section on love (charity), especially the love of God.⁵⁰ The Christian warrior is concerned about right conduct in this world, especially in the fulfillment of duty and obligation in their vocation as servants of the order and peace in a just society. If love is to govern the action of a Christian in the military vocation, then lethal force in the execution of his duties to protect and defend the innocent and defenseless, and to establish and preserve a just peace is not evil, but is good, and may be the most loving choice.

Historically, the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod, according to Scripture and tradition, has affirmed that a soldier may serve honorably before men and God, even killing another person or persons, and not sin. According to 1 Peter 2 the temporal government, which is ordained by God himself, has the power to punish evil, protect the good, and preserve the peace. In addition, Rev. Dr. Martin Luther affirms in *Whether Soldiers Too Can Be Saved* that Christians may serve in the vocation of soldier.⁵¹ It is the Roman Centurion, at the end of the Gospel of Mark, after seeing the manner in which Jesus died, who confesses correctly, “This man truly was the Son of God.”⁵²

The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod also follows the just war tradition that acknowledges the conduct of war to thwart evil in the world. Luther in *On Temporal Authority*

⁴⁹ Rev. 12:7–11.

⁵⁰ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*: “Charity,” accessed February 10, 2004, <http://www.newadvent.org/summa/304001.htm>.

⁵¹ Martin Luther, *Whether Soldiers Too Can Be Saved* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg, 1962).

⁵² Mark 15:39. Whether or not the Centurion was a Christian is debatable. I think he was.

states:

No Christians shall wield or invoke the sword for himself and his cause. In behalf of another, however, he may and should wield it and invoke it to restrain wickedness and to defend holiness. And, it is affirmed that a person in the military vocation can be in a state of salvation: If the governing authority and its sword are a divine service, as was proved above, then everything that is essential for the authority's bearing of the sword must also be divine service. There must be those who arrest, acquit, defend, and save the good. Therefore, when they perform their duties, not with the intention of seeking their own ends but only of helping the law and governing authority function to coerce the wicked, there is not peril in that; they may use their office like anybody else would use his trade, as a means of livelihood.⁵³

The Augsburg Confession states:

It is taught among us that all government in the world and all established rule and laws were instituted and ordained by God for the sake of good order, and that Christians may without sin occupy civil offices or serve as princes and judges, render decisions and pass sentence according to imperial and other existing laws, punish evildoers with the sword, engage in just wars, serve as soldiers, buy and sell, take required oaths, possess property, be married, etc. Condemned here are the Anabaptists who teach that none of the things indicated above is Christian. Also condemned are those who teach that Christian perfection requires the forsaking of house and home, wife and child, and the renunciation of such activities as are mentioned above. Actually, true perfection consists alone of proper fear of God and real faith in God, for the Gospel does not teach an outward and temporal but an inward and eternal mode of existence and righteousness of the heart. The Gospel does not overthrow civil authority, the state, and marriage but requires that all these be kept as true orders of God and that everyone, each according to his own calling, manifest Christian love and genuine good works in his station of life. Accordingly, Christians are obliged to be subject to civil authority and obey its commands and laws in all that can be without sin. But when command of civil authority cannot be obeyed without sin, we must obey God rather than man (Acts 5:29).⁵⁴

Just War Theory

The principle known as the just war tradition is divided into two categories: justification to go to war (*Jus ad Bellum*), and how to conduct war in a just manner (*Jus in Bello*). Traditionally, the decision to go to war and whether or not a war is considered to be just, is evaluated on the

⁵³ LW 45: 103.

⁵⁴ Augsburg Confession, XVI, Civil Government. *The Book of Concord* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1959), 37–38.

basis of seven principles. According to Rev. David Wollenburg and Chaplain Timothy Demy in their respective papers the first 5 principles of *Jus ad Bellum* category are:

1. **Just cause.** Any and all aggression is condemned in the just war framework. Defense of one's nation, allies, or other vital interests for the maintenance of a harmonious society over against unjust hostility is the only moral reason for the conduct of war.
2. **Just intention.** The goal of the war must be to establish a just peace for all, respecting the human rights of others, even the enemy. The ultimate greater good must be the intent of the war. Rejected is all aggression for economic, vengeful, or ideological supremacy reasons.
3. **Last resort.** All other means to achieve peace have been exhausted, including diplomatic and economic leverage.
4. **Formal declaration.** Properly constituted authority must initiate the actions leading to war. Only governments (Romans 13) can declare war. No individuals can declare war.
5. **Limited objectives.** Peace is the ultimate goal of any war. The cost of going to war must be outweighed by the ultimate goal of a just peace. This goal must be attainable. (Luther approved of and quoted Emperor Augustus "that war was like fishing with a golden net."⁵⁵ The cost of war may be greater than the gains.)

The remaining 2 principles in the second category (*Jus in Bello*) deal with conduct in war:

6. **Proportionate means.** Combatant forces of the enemy forces must not be subjected to greater harm than is necessary to secure victory and peace. This takes into account the selection of weapons needed to repel force, deter future attacks, and secure a just peace. For example, one does not detonate a nuclear weapon over Fallujah, Iraq, to roust out terrorists.
7. **Noncombatant immunity.** This respects human rights and dignity. When combatants lay down their arms they become noncombatants and lethal force against them is not authorized. Civilians, prisoners of war, and casualties are immune from intentional attacks. Mercy must reign supreme.⁵⁶

⁵⁵ Roland Bainton, *Christian Attitudes toward War and Peace: A Historical Survey and Critical Re-Evaluation* (New York: Abingdon, 1960), 140.

⁵⁶ David Wollenburg, "Is There a God-Pleasing Purpose to War?: An Introduction to *Just War* Concepts," *Concordia Journal* 29, no. 1 (January, 2003), 65; Timothy J. Demy, CDR, CHC, USN, "Onward Christian Soldiers? Christian Perspectives on War." Paper, US Naval War College, Newport, RI. <http://www.leaderu.com/humanities/demy.html>. (October 2014).

Participation in war, even a just war, is destructive to both noncombatants and combatants. The physical scars are only part of the story. Returning veterans may have psychological, emotional, and spiritual scars that last a lifetime.⁵⁷

In the Middle Ages, Christian knights who had participated in war “were required to do penance for acts committed during wartime that were seen as ‘sinful’ (including injuring and killing other humans), even if the war had been judged to be a just war by the Church.”⁵⁸ The penance was seen as a way to transition the warrior back into society. Some like me might ask, if the war was just, and the killing was done only to the enemy who was trying to take the Christian knight’s life then is penance needed? Indeed when there is sin, 1 John says to confess and receive absolution. But can a Christian soldier serve honorably before men and God? Can he not sin and still be unclean? Perhaps. Can he not sin and still be or experience himself as unclean? Perhaps. Is this particular soldier in need of a purification rite before reentering society? Perhaps.

Insights from Numbers 31

Numbers 31 seems to present a scenario similar to the one mentioned above. Soldiers in a relationship with the one, true God are ordered to go to war. The war is just. The soldiers serve honorably before God and before men. As commanded, they take lives of the enemy. They do not sin. Are they unclean or do they feel unclean? They are told by the LORD himself to undergo ritual purification. Numbers 31:19–24 details the LORD’s instructions to the Israelites on how to purify a warrior who has returned home from the battle and also his weapons and other equipment:

⁵⁷ Iasiello, “Jus Post Bellum: The Moral Responsibilities of Victors in War.” *Naval War College Review* 74 (Summer 2004), 49.

⁵⁸ Shannon French, “Warrior Transitions: From Combat to Social Contract,” (US Naval Academy: 2005), 1.

All of you who have killed anyone or touched anyone who was killed must stay outside the camp for seven days. On the third and seventh days you must purify yourselves and your captives. Purify every garment as well as everything made of leather, goat hair or wood. Then Eleazar the priest said to the soldiers who had gone into battle, “This is the requirement of the law that the LORD gave Moses: Gold, silver, bronze, iron, tin, lead and anything else that can withstand fire must be put through the fire, and then it will be clean. But it must also be purified with the water of cleansing. And what cannot withstand fire must be put through water. On the seventh day wash your clothes and you will be clean. Then you may come into the camp.”⁵⁹

The LORD is the one sending the Israelites into battle. He is in effect declaring a “Holy War”⁶⁰ and says that the battle is good. We can further deduce that in this particular case it is acceptable to the LORD to take life in this particular circumstance. This suggests that the battle is not sin and the participation in the battle and taking the enemy’s life is not sinful. I will proceed cautiously here as we derive principles from this episode as Israel was also ordered to kill women who most likely were non-combatants. Yet, after life has been taken the LORD through Eleazar the prophet states that those who have killed must be purified. Why?

Was it because the Israelites had sinned in their hearts? Perhaps some did; God only knows. But many followed God’s orders and may have not sinned, even in their hearts. The text says this was because they were unclean. This is more than ceremonial uncleanness. According to Numbers 19:11, “All those who touch a dead human body will be unclean for seven days.” Here the Hebrew word is ta-may, the usual word for unclean. If an Israelite took the life of an enemy, he came into contact with or at least was in very close proximity of the dead body. Thus, he rendered himself unclean.

The story of Numbers 31 and the battle with the Midianites actually begins in Numbers 25. Women from Moab invited the Israelite men to feast with them and to worship the gods of

⁵⁹ The Battle with the Midianites was ordered by the LORD and therefore considered to be holy. Yet, those soldiers who had killed needed to be purified.

⁶⁰ In Joshua 1 God also ordered Israel to battle.

Moab, namely Baal. The Israelite men had sexual relations with the Moabite women. In doing this the Israelites violated God's command in Deuteronomy 7:3–4, "You must not intermarry with them [other nations]. Do not let your daughters and sons marry their sons and daughters for they will lead your children away from me to worship other gods."

The LORD was extremely angry at Israel and told Moses to "Seize all the ringleaders and execute them before the LORD in broad daylight."⁶¹ Before this occurs an Israelite man was caught in the act of adultery inside the purity of the Israelite camp and Phinehas, son of Eleazar and grandson of Aaron the high priest killed the man and woman.⁶² Later Moses tells the Israelites to send one thousand men from each of the twelve tribes into battle to defeat Midian⁶³ because the Midianites led the Israelites into idolatry. Phinehas led the twelve thousand men in battle. After the army kills the Midianites who had sexual relations with the Israelites, Moses says that all Israelites who have killed anyone or touched a dead body must stay outside the camp for seven days and then purify themselves.

Did Israelite soldiers serve honorably before men *and* God? Yes. Considering Holy God ordered the battle, did they sin in taking the lives of the enemies? No. Yet, according to God, they were rendered unclean from being in contact with dead bodies. After this contact, God orders a purification ritual.

Combat back then was much more hand-to-hand than today, so the men and their equipment were bloody. Contact with blood made them unclean. Perhaps that is the key factor: war makes unclean, because it sheds blood, even if one doesn't come into direct contact in a more technological prosecution of war. So, warriors and their equipment are at some level

⁶¹ Num. 25:4.

⁶² Num. 25:7–8.

⁶³ Moab and Midian were allies against Israel.

unclean, even without direct contact with blood.

Is there a difference between being ceremonially unclean, a state of being unclean, and a feeling of being unclean? What is going on with Christian soldier today? He was ordered to go. He has taken the life of the enemy, served honorably according to humanity and according to God. He feels as if he has not sinned. Is he ceremonially unclean, in a state/condition of being unclean, or does he feel unclean? May a soldier be rendered unclean or ceremonially unclean due to contact with or being in close proximity to a dead body? Did part of the ugliness of war rub off on the soldier and make him unclean? Or is he unclean because of certain experiences in war? Can moral injury occur when the condition of war rubs off or does it occur because of experiences? And whatever answer is given, what is the church to do? Before I answer, King David and his experiences offer a bit of wisdom on PTSD and moral injury.

Insights from King David and the Psalms

King David was a man of great courage, a brilliant military leader, a powerful king and a “man after God’s own heart.”⁶⁴ David may have suffered from symptoms of PTSD and even moral injury. How could one think otherwise when one reads passages like Psalm 31:9–13?⁶⁵

Be gracious to me, O Lord, for I am in distress; my eye is wasted away from grief, my soul and my body also. For my life is spent with sorrow, and my years with sighing; my strength has failed because of my iniquity, and my body has wasted away. Because of all my adversaries, I have become reproach, especially to my neighbors, and an object of dread to my acquaintances; those who see me in the street flee from me. I am forgotten as a dead man, out of mind, I am like a broken vessel. For I have heard the slander of many, terror is on every side; while they took counsel together against me, they schemed to take away my life.

David struggled with the ugliness of war. He experienced many feelings related to a sense of being unclean: guilt, depression, fear, anger, and despair. What was normal to David was

⁶⁴ Acts 13:22.

being a shepherd. However, he fought a giant, was almost killed twice by his own king, was pursued by thousands of soldiers, was betrayed by his own son, was punished for his adultery and murder, and saw his own son die. David's remedy for his spiritual problems was to take refuge in God and meditate upon his word.⁶⁶

Indeed, Confession and Absolution was the solution to when David had sinned.⁶⁷ But there were times he did not sin in battle. But perhaps the composing and praying of the Psalms in a ritualistic manner helped him to heal from his experiences that may have made him feel unclean. Psalm 16:1 says, "Preserve me, O God, for I take refuge in You. I said to the Lord, You are my Lord; I have no good besides You." David recognized God as his Healer. And David relied upon God for healing.

The CVPR is for the Christian combat veteran who also recognizes God as his Healer and relies upon him for specific healing. This veteran struggles with the consequences and feelings of war: guilt, depression, fear, anger, and despair. He no longer feels normal. Perhaps he even feels unclean. He knows that God is his answer. This rite may be the beginning of the healing process. It can also be an effective way for combat veterans to get what is inside out and give it to God.

Insights from the Gospel of Mark

What is the church to do? Perhaps the simplest thing the church should do is to learn from what Jesus did in the Gospel of Mark.⁶⁸ When he encountered several different people who had not sinned, yet were unclean, Jesus engages them, talks with them, touches them, and then declares them by the power of God Almighty to be clean.

⁶⁵ Adsit, *Combat Trauma Healing Manual*, 165.

⁶⁶ Psalm 34; Psalm 46; Psalm 1.

⁶⁷ Although Psalm 51 never absolves his sin, David does confess. I assume God forgave him.

⁶⁸ The Gospel of Mark's clean and unclean theology forms the foundation for the CVPR.

One major theme in the Gospel of Mark is that of being clean or unclean. From his baptism to his death, Jesus of Nazareth can be found standing where only sinners stand. Quite odd behavior some would say for the Son of God. Yet, if we understand the Gospel of Mark and Jesus' mission therein it makes perfect sense. Jesus has come to make the unclean clean. He has not come to save himself or to be served but rather he came to serve.⁶⁹ Ultimately, he does this work through his passion and death on a cross.⁷⁰ Jesus, the perfect Son of God,⁷¹ became unclean so that humanity might be released from that which is unclean, namely, the bondage of sin, death, and the devil.

Even before the cross, Jesus is depicted as one who makes people clean. The leper,⁷² the demoniac,⁷³ the dead girl,⁷⁴ and the woman with the issue of blood⁷⁵ all are unclean. Yet, when Jesus encounters them he does not leave them unclean but rather makes them clean. By touching them Jesus, according to the Old Testament law, renders himself unclean. And in fact, he sets his course to the cross. Jesus becomes unclean for the cleansing of the unclean. He becomes the substitute, the scapegoat⁷⁶ driven out into the wilderness and those who repent and believe the gospel⁷⁷ are declared by God to be both internally and externally clean.

Significance of Jesus' Baptism

At his baptism Jesus begins his preparation for ministry. Here he stands where sinners

⁶⁹ Mark 10:45; 15:29–30.

⁷⁰ Mark 8:31; 9:30–31; 10:32–34.

⁷¹ Mark 1:11.

⁷² Mark 1:40–45.

⁷³ Mark 5:1–15.

⁷⁴ Mark 5:21–23; 35–43.

⁷⁵ Mark 5:24–34.

⁷⁶ Lev. 16:10.

⁷⁷ Mark 1:15.

stand. After all, John's baptism was "a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins."⁷⁸ So one might ask as John the Baptist does in the Gospel of Matthew what is Jesus doing here. Jesus' answer recorded by the Gospel of Matthew is "to fulfill all righteousness."⁷⁹ In the Gospel of Mark, no answer is specifically given. We are told Jesus received a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins from John. There the Spirit descended upon him and God the Father was well pleased with him. At his baptism, Jesus completely and totally identifies himself with humanity's sin. In other words, sinners are going out to John to repent, have their sins washed clean, and to escape the coming judgment. Jesus goes out to John in the water to have sin put on him and to commit himself to be condemned on humanity's behalf.

That the Son of God who is perfect and holy has exchanged places with sinners is a radical idea, but one that combat veterans need to know and understand. Jesus has stooped down to humanity in order to raise humanity up to God. Only Jesus fully knows sin and the consequences of sin because he became sin. He who was clean became unclean. He who was without sin was condemned to die with the sin of the world upon him. And for that sin he was cursed on a tree. Therefore the use of water for the CVPR seems appropriate as that is where sinners are found and where Jesus stands as the Gospel of Mark begins. However, with that being said this rite is not a baptism or rebaptism. It is also not a confession and absolution. Although, confession and absolution may be in the rite if desired and if there is a particular need.

The Christian understands that only the Triune God is the one who washes and purifies humanity. Indeed this is done in the waters of baptism. For the non-Christian warrior who is unclean or who feels unclean, baptism would ultimately be the proper course of action and where the pastor wants to take him. For the Christian warrior who has sinned, confession of sin and

⁷⁸ Mark 1:4.

receiving absolution is a correct pastoral response. It might also be helpful to point the Christian warrior to his or her baptism. Perhaps the church needs to further address this idea of clean and unclean. This purification rite based on the Gospel of Mark where Jesus via the pastor washes the head, the feet and the hands of a combat veteran so that he can completely be and feel clean and thus reenter society clean, without blood on his hands, is my proposed starting point for the church.

The Leper, the Demoniac, the Dead Girl, and the Woman With the Issue of Blood

The leper, the demoniac, the dead girl, and the woman with the issue of blood in the Gospel of Mark are all unclean. Are they in a state of being unclean simply because they live in a fallen world? Or are they unclean because of an actual experience and thus feel unclean? In examination of the text, it does not seem as if they have committed actual sin. The disease, demon possession, and even death they experience are not the consequences of their actual sin but rather because of a fallen, sinful world. Thus the leper and the woman with the issue of blood were shunned by people and declared by God to be ceremonial unclean.⁸⁰ From the consequences of sin, unclean evil spirits demonized human bodies. And from the consequences of sin, those who touch a dead body are unclean.⁸¹ Jesus, in his mercy, undoes the consequences of sin.

When the man with leprosy comes to Jesus, and begs him on his knees, Jesus was indignant.⁸² “Mark certainly wants us to understand that Jesus was emotionally affected by the encounter, but does not explain why. The most likely explanation is, perhaps, that the suffering caused by the disease, both physically and socially, moved Jesus not only to compassion but to

⁷⁹ Matt. 3:15.

⁸⁰ Lev. 13:1–3; 15:25–33.

⁸¹ Num. 19:11–13.

⁸² Some texts read Jesus “had compassion” on him. James Voelz, *Mark: Concordia Commentary* (St. Louis:

anger at the presence of such evil in the world.”⁸³ And when the woman with the issue of blood touches Jesus’ cloak because she thought, “If I just touch his clothes, I will be healed,”⁸⁴ Jesus has every right to be angry with her. In fact, the woman knows that she has rendered him unclean. So she falls at his feet and trembles with fear and tells him the whole truth.⁸⁵ Instead of sending them away or shunning them, Jesus is compassionate. Jesus touches the leper. When she touches him, Jesus heals the woman with the issue of blood. Jesus even touches the dead girl.⁸⁶ He takes her by the hand and says, “Get up.” In all three cases, by touch Jesus is rendered unclean⁸⁷ and those whom he touches (or the one who touched him) become clean. The leper and the woman leave from his feet completely and totally clean. The little girl stands up alive and clean.

Jesus even has power over unclean evil spirits as he demonstrated by healing the demoniac. The man had been living in the tombs in the region of the Gerasenes, an area largely inhabited by Gentiles as indicated by the presence of a herd of pigs. So this man was unclean because of who he was (most likely a Gentile), where he lived (in the tombs), what lived by him (and perhaps of what he ate),⁸⁸ and because he had an unclean evil spirit inside him. When Jesus got out of the boat, this man came running to meet him.⁸⁹ He fell on his knees and said, “What do you want with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God?”⁹⁰ Jesus then tells him exactly what he wants, “Come

Concordia, 2013), 173, argues this is the more correct translation.

⁸³ R. T. France, *The Gospel of Mark* (Grand Rapids: Paternoster, 2002), 117.

⁸⁴ Mark 5:28.

⁸⁵ Mark 5:33.

⁸⁶ Mark 5:41.

⁸⁷ Lev. 5:2–3.

⁸⁸ According to Deut.14:8, pigs were considered unclean animals and unfit to eat.

⁸⁹ Mark 5:2.

⁹⁰ Mark 5:7.

out of this man, you unclean spirit.” And the unclean spirit does come out. The man becomes clean, dressed and in his right mind.⁹¹

Everything is backward with Jesus. Everyone else gets baptized to remove sin. Jesus gets baptized to put sin on. With a touch, the leper and the woman with the issue of blood become clean. Jesus touches to become unclean. Jesus undoes not only sin but also the consequences of sin. So although the leper, the demoniac, the dead girl, and the woman with the issue of blood in the Gospel of Mark are all unclean, Jesus undoes those consequences.

Earlier the theology behind a just war and the theology supporting a Christian’s right to serve as a soldier was discussed. Yet, the consequences of war are ugly and unclean. So the question then is: why does a soldier or Marine, who also is Christian, who has served honorably and who has obeyed orders feel unclean? Could it be that they are in the same place as the leper, the demoniac, the dead girl, and the woman with the issue of blood in the Gospel of Mark? That is to say that this soldier has experienced something and because of that he feels unclean.

Or is it that the soldier is in a state of being unclean because he lives in a fallen world? The leper, the demoniac, the dead girl, and the woman with the issue of blood not because of their own sin but rather simply because of the consequences of a fallen world were unclean. War is a consequence of sin. And the consequences of war affect all who participate. Thus, a soldier or Marine, who serves honorably cannot not be affected by war. He has touched, tasted, and smelled the ugliness of war and that uncleanness has rendered him unclean as well.

Like the demoniac or the woman with the issue of blood the combat veteran may feel unclean simply because of where he has lived (in the tombs) or feel afraid from the aftermath of war. The purification rite should remind the Christian combat veteran that Jesus has walked

⁹¹ Mark 5:15.

beside him and lives with him. It should also remind the veteran that a house cannot be divided.⁹² So where the Holy One of God dwells, no unclean spirit can remain.

In the Gospel of Mark, Jesus touches and restores completely those who are unclean and who suffer from the consequences of sin. He can do the same for the warrior. Jesus removes that which is unclean and will undo all the consequences of war. Jesus is bigger and more powerful than PTSD and moral injury.

In the physical stead of Jesus, the pastor should participate in the CVPR. As Jesus did, the pastor touches those who are unclean and via the power of the Holy Spirit renders them clean. He should wash the forehead and wash the feet of the combat veteran. More importantly, the rite should emphasize that Jesus in his mercy seeks to undo all the consequences of war, in our minds, in our spirit, and even in our bodies.

The Paralytic

When Jesus healed the paralytic in Mark 2, he did so first by forgiving his sins and then by saying to him, “Get up, take your mat and walk.”⁹³ Here Jesus shows the authority that he has. The Son of Man can and does forgive sins. In fact, to him it is as easy as giving the ability to walk back to a paralytic.

The paralytic and his friends all have faith in Jesus.⁹⁴ All want the same thing from Jesus. The friends want their friend to be able to walk. The paralytic wants to walk. Yet, when Jesus sees their faith he does not address that physical need. Rather, Jesus addresses a spiritual need, the paralytic’s deepest need: to be forgiven.

When Jesus forgave his sin some teachers of the law said, “Why does this man talk like

⁹² Mark 3:25.

⁹³ Mark 2:9.

that? He is blaspheming! Who can forgive sins but God alone?”⁹⁵ Jesus knew their thoughts. To show them his authority and that he could say such words of forgiveness to the paralytic, he healed the man physically. Afterwards, the once lame man walked away carrying his mat.

In providing care to those suffering with PTSD and moral injury there is great value in addressing the spiritual need, which may be the deepest need, even before addressing the physical need.

Little Ones

In Mark 9 the disciples of Jesus were arguing on the road to Capernaum about who was the greatest among them. Jesus said, “If anyone wants to be first, he must be the very last, and the servant of all. So Jesus took a child and had him stand among the disciples and said, “Whoever welcomes one of these little ones in my name welcomes me.”⁹⁶ Here Jesus “redefines greatness in terms of dependence and neediness.”⁹⁷ Little Ones⁹⁸ are great because they are needy. Literally, little children are dependent on their parents to provide. Figuratively, those who are little ones are ones who depend on God for everything. In a state of being needy, little ones are great. Little ones are those who have nothing to offer God, those who fall helpless at his feet and those who look to his saving grace. In doing so, they receive the greatness of God.

In his commentary on the Gospel of Matthew, Jeffrey Gibbs says that to an extent “there is a sense in which all disciples (indeed, all people, whether or not they follow Jesus) are equally needy and dependent on God all of the time, even if they are ignorant of their dependence.”⁹⁹

⁹⁴ Mark 2:5.

⁹⁵ Mark 2:6–7; Isa. 43:25.

⁹⁶ Mark 9:35–37.

⁹⁷ Jeffrey Gibbs, *Matthew 11:2–20:34 Concordia Commentary* (St. Louis: Concordia, 2010), 890.

⁹⁸ Mark 9:37, 42.

⁹⁹ Gibbs, 901.

There is also truth that at times certain disciples will be strong in the faith and certain disciples will find themselves beaten down and in a time of need. It is at these times that the little ones are most vulnerable and subject to sin.¹⁰⁰ They are in fact so important to God that Jesus “calls his disciples to regard such needy fellow disciples as the most important people of all and worthy of virtually unlimited care and forgiveness.”¹⁰¹ Gibbs defines these little ones as

The newest and least informed believers, those subject to the gravest of life’s crises, and those who are struggling with temptation and fear. To receive such and to care for them is the most important work of all; it is to receive and care for the Christ himself.¹⁰²

War is one of life’s gravest crises. The consequences of war create great struggles. The church should note Gibbs’s definition and care for Christian Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, and Coastguardsmen as the little ones of whom Jesus speaks. The care for such “little ones” who struggle with PTSD or moral injury is extremely important work. Ultimately, the church succeeds when these little ones realize that they have nothing to offer God and look solely to his saving grace.

The Roman Centurion’s Confession at the Foot of the Cross

Throughout the Gospel of Mark no one confesses Jesus as accurately and completely as the soldier. At the foot of the cross, the Roman Centurion confesses correctly Jesus as the Son of God. However, that confession comes only after the centurion hears Jesus’ loud cry and observes the manner in which he died. So standing in front of Jesus, looking to the cross, this soldier of the Roman army confesses Jesus accurately and completely.

What was it about the manner in which Jesus died? Why was the Roman Centurion

¹⁰⁰ Mark 9:42.

¹⁰¹ Gibbs, 895.

¹⁰² Ibid., 902.

impressed? Most likely, he had seen men die before. Why was the manner in which Jesus died different? Was it Jesus' unwillingness to fight back? Was it his humility? Was it his words of forgiveness said to those who took his life? Whatever it was, it impressed the Roman Centurion. Jesus had the sin of the entire world upon him, was mocked, beaten, and then nailed to a cross to die. The Romans had the art of executions down to a science. The manner in which Jesus faced all those trials, the manner in which he did not verbally lash out against the Romans or the Jews, and the way in which he died impressed this military man. Perhaps, having seen many executions, it was because the centurion thought that Jesus died well.¹⁰³

In the military world to give your life for another person is perhaps the most honorable act. The CVPR should have this idea of exchange or substitution as a foremost guiding principle. This is why for the rite the combat veteran should stand, kneel, and sit before the altar of God. On the altar should be a cross, for it is there Christ exchanges places with sinners.

Jesus' whole purpose in life was to come and to die on a cross.¹⁰⁴ Keeping Jesus from the cross or to confess Jesus without the cross is inaccurate and of Satan.¹⁰⁵ Jesus must suffer. Jesus must be rejected. Jesus must be killed. In order to save people from sin and the consequences of sin, God the Father sent his Son Jesus on a mission. A Holy God could not simply wink or not punish sin. So he sent his Son, born of a woman to pay for humanity's sin. By his passion and death, Jesus accomplished the mission. When a person is at the foot of the cross, the blood and water, which flowed from Jesus' side, covers sin and the effects of war, washing a person clean.

¹⁰³ Mark 7:37.

¹⁰⁴ Mark 8:31.

¹⁰⁵ Mark 8:33.

Conclusion

Combat veterans have many spiritual needs. Some are non-Christians and conversion via the Holy Spirit is the best solution. Some veterans need the forgiveness of sins, so Confession and Absolution is the best solution. For those veterans who have guilt, applying Scripture may be helpful. This chapter intended to address the theology behind a Christian combat veteran who has taken the life of the enemy, believes he has not sinned, and is unclean or feels unclean. We discussed subjective justification, the two spheres of the Right Hand Kingdom, the Just War Theory, and insights from various books of the Bible such as Numbers, Psalms, and Mark. The project in theoretical perspective will be discussed in the next chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

THE PROJECT IN THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

“You know ancient cultures required their warriors to conduct a purifying ritual before reentry into society. There was an acknowledgement that for the warriors things were different and the society that sent them to fight understood and acknowledged this openly. For us it’s half the battle, I think. What would my reentry ritual be? You know when you asked me how I feel when people thank me, well, my hands are dirty. No one likes to be thanked for having dirty hands. So I guess my ritual would be me having my hands washed. Someone from...someone would wash my hands; wash away the blood. I’d be bathed. Washed.”¹⁰⁶

ReEntry

Historical Context

In 1980 the American Psychiatric Association formally identified, named, and defined Posttraumatic Stress Disorder. Since that time PTSD has been in every official medical diagnostic manual and has been studied extensively. As in previous wars, after the 1990 – 1991 Gulf War, many veterans struggled with PTSD. In 1996, the Office of the Inspector General, U.S. Department of Defense published their *Evaluation Report on the Management of Combat Stress Control in the Department of Defense*. Then in 2003, with the invasion of Iraq, the U.S. Army produced the *US Army Combat Stress Control Handbook*. It was intended to help those returning from war and their families cope with PTSD. In 2006, the US Navy and US Marine Corps developed their OSCAR program to help deal with the shortcomings of previous treatment plans. By 2008, the implementation of the OSCAR program took effect.

Dr. Jonathan Shay, a pioneer in the field of treatment for PTSD, in two books, *Odysseus in*

¹⁰⁶ KJ Sanchez and Emily Ackerman, *ReEntry*. Actual quote from Lt. Col. Bryan McCoy, former Commanding Officer of 3rd Battalion 4th Marines. The entire drama by KJ Sanchez and Emily Ackerman was based upon

America: Combat Trauma and the Trials of Homecoming and Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character addresses combat trauma. In Achilles in Vietnam he compares literature such as Homer's Iliad to Vietnam veterans suffering from PTSD. Shay, a psychiatrist, emphasizes the importance of trust in competent moral leadership in the military chain of command and the mutual support arising from a unit's cohesion. Shay also discusses a soldiers' need for 'purification' after the shedding of blood for re-integration into society. Shay believes that the society which sent the young man to war bears responsibility for the acts of the individuals who have fought and killed in their stead.

What I have in mind is a communal ritual with religious force that recognizes that everyone who has shed blood, no matter how blamelessly is in need of purification. Those who have done something blameworthy require additional purification and penance, if their religious tradition provides for it.¹⁰⁷

It is this re-integration process, especially the use of church ritual that intrigues me.

Some therapists who have worked with Vietnam veterans have rediscovered the historical role of ritual in spiritually cleansing warriors. Ben Shepherd shares how "a Boston psychiatrist compared the way Homeric warriors used ceremonies of public grief and catharsis to channel and control the emotions aroused by war...."¹⁰⁸ Dr. Dave Grossman's (Lt. Col, US Army, Ret.), *On Killing* and Shannon French's *The Warrior's Code* also emphasize the importance of rituals for the returning veteran of war.¹⁰⁹ Rituals allow the cleansing and the acceptance needed for re-entry into society. They reassure the veteran that what they did was what was asked of them and that the community welcomes them back. Rituals help set the framework for the continuation of life in a peaceful society.

interviews with Marines.

¹⁰⁷ Jonathan Shay, *Odysseus in America: Combat Trauma and the Trial of Homecoming* (New York: Scribner, 2002), 245.

¹⁰⁸ Shephard, *War of Nerves*, 375.

The absence of ritual presents a societal problem. In fact, Edward Tick, a psychotherapist and director of *Soldier's Heart: Veteran's Safe Return Initiatives*, believes that "the absence of these rituals in modern society helps explain why suicide, homicide, and other destructive acts are common among veterans."¹¹⁰ Tick further writes:

We cannot heal from war without involving the entire community and society, and without invoking transpersonal help. We must develop modern rituals that acknowledge the additional wounds caused by war fought for non-defense reasons. Much as we might disagree with a war, our rituals must include purification, public storytelling, and community acceptance of responsibility for what a soldier has done.¹¹¹

Military leaders have the moral obligation to explain to their warriors the moral justification for killing in combat before, during and after combat operations. "A combat leader who instills the skill and the will to kill has the moral obligation to ensure his subordinates are prepared to deal with the guilt associated with killing."¹¹² Grossman says that 98% of human beings have to be psychologically conditioned to kill through combat training and will feel deep remorse or regret. Grossman says there is a 2% segment of the population with the mental disposition to feel no remorse for killing.¹¹³

Why is the soldier unclean if the service was honorable and the war just? Perhaps this is simply a consequence of war. Reinhold Niebuhr reminds us of the horror of war:

It is a terrible thing to take a human life. The conflict between man and man and nation and nation is tragic. If men who declare that, no matter what the consequences, they cannot bring themselves to participate in this slaughter, the Church ought to be able to say to the general community: We quite understand this scruple and we

¹⁰⁹ Cf. Chapter Three, 65.

¹¹⁰ "Heal the Warrior, Heal the Country," *YES*, accessed May 19, 2008, <http://www.yesmagazine.org/issues/a-just-foreign-policy/heal-the-warrior-heal-the-country>.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹¹² Michael R. Nakonieczny, "Preparing for the Realities of Killing the Enemy and Taking Ground." *Armor* 114, no. 2. (Fort Knox: Mar/Apr 2005), 5, accessed March 23, 2006, <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb>.

¹¹³ Grossman, *On Killing*, 50, 180.

respect it. It proceeds from the conviction that the true end of man is brotherhood, and that love is the law of life. We who allow ourselves to become engaged in war need this testimony of the absolutist against it, lest we accept the warfare of the world as normative, lest we become callous to the horror of war, and lest we forget the ambiguity of our own actions and motives and risk we run of achieving no permanent good from this momentary anarchy in which we are involved. ¹¹⁴

If the horror of war does rub off even on the veteran who has served honorably before God and men, the church must out of love engage and help remove the uncleanness.

In *On Killing*, Grossman makes an insightful comment that opens the door for the role of spirituality, religion, and ritual in helping the returning soldiers deal with the rationalization or justification of responsibility in the act of killing. He says,

Even the field of psychology seems to be ill prepared to address the guilt caused by war and the attendant moral issues. Peter Marin condemns the “inadequacy” of our psychological terminology in describing the magnitude and reality of the “pain of human conscience.” As a society, he says, we seem unable to deal with moral pain or guilt. Instead it is treated as a neurosis or a pathology. ¹¹⁵

According to Grossman psychology is ill prepared to treat PTSD and moral injury. Is the church in America better prepared? Indeed, the LCMS emphasizes God’s powerful word, his sacraments, and even confession and absolution of sins. But what has been done for veterans like John? Have we thought about all the issues? Have we applied God’s word in a personal manner using appropriate terminology? The church can better prepare. Perhaps by studying ritual in other societies the church can learn insights that would better prepare it.

Purification Rituals in Various Cultures

Many societies and cultures in the past were prepared to help their warriors reenter society. Some even had purification rites for their returning soldiers. For example, the Cherokee

¹¹⁴ Reinhold Niebuhr, “Idealism and Realism” in *Christianity and Power Politics* (1948), chapter 1. Arthur F. Homes, ed. Reprinted in *War and Christian Ethics: Classic and Contemporary Readings on the Morality of War* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2005), 312–13.

¹¹⁵ Grossman, *On Killing*, 96.

people believed that warriors needed to rid themselves of that which was unclean:

On their return home from a battle, the warriors stayed at their own town council houses for twenty-four days, where before returning to their wives and families, they underwent extensive purification rituals to rid themselves of uncleanness that was contacted during the fighting. It was taboo for them to touch women during this time, and the purification included seven immersions in water each evening and morning.¹¹⁶

Romans required their soldiers to be bathed by Vestal Virgins “to purge them of the corruption of war.”¹¹⁷ In Africa, Mozambique warriors “were purified and cleansed by means of spiritually-centered rituals that both the warrior’s family members and the broader community attended.”¹¹⁸

According to David Chrisinger, a friend of a Marine and a supporter of *The Mission Continues*,¹¹⁹ the ritual had various steps:

1. First, the returning warrior must use a pestle pole to reenact the fights and killings he participated in during battle. The pole is a symbol of the family.
2. Next, the healer diagnoses the warrior and cleansing treatments may begin.

The healing treatments:

1. The healer burns incense around the warrior, bathing him in smoke.
2. Next the warrior is placed in a makeshift sauna in which plants and medicines are boiled and the healer recites prayers over the warrior’s body.
3. After the body is washed, the healer then sends out his spirits to search for and catch the evil spirits that may be afflicting the warrior.
4. Once the spirits are caught, the healer will fall into a deep trance, acting as a medium for the enemy spirits to voice their complaints and demands. The warriors must fulfill these demands if he is ever to know peace.
5. Next, the warrior is ritualistically bathed in a river. As the warrior stands near the bank of the river, the healer butchers a young goat over the warrior’s head in such a way that the blood of the goat covers the warrior’s body. The blood is then washed off the warrior’s body by the current of the river. It is believed that the rushing water carries away not only the blood and entrails of the goat, but also the warrior’s guilt and grief.

¹¹⁶ Thomas Mails, *The Cherokee People: The Story of the Cherokees from Earliest Origins to Contemporary Times* (Tulsa, OK: Council Oak, 1992), 105.

¹¹⁷ French, “Warrior Transitions,” 2.

¹¹⁸ David Chrisinger, “Religion, War, and Finding a Way to Purify Our Warriors,” accessed July 24, 2013, <http://running50.com/religion-war-and-finding-a-way-to-purify-our-warriors/>, 2.

¹¹⁹ An organization that provides military veterans a challenge and an opportunity to help them build meaningful lives.

6. Finally, once the warrior's bath is finished, his external cleansing is complete. Only then can the warrior be cleansed internally: First, the warrior is administered two medicines, one of which actually induces diarrhea. The second medicine is a vaccine paste that is applied over several incisions that were made in the skin around the warrior's chest, crotch, arms and legs (places where harmful spirits are believed to enter the body).¹²⁰

For thousands of years, warriors have undergone rituals after combat. These rituals were designed to purge that which was unclean from them. The rituals seemed to be performed if the warrior felt unclean because of an experience or if a warrior was unclean because of the state in which he found himself due to the dirtiness of war rubbing off on him. Either way, societies required their soldiers to undergo these rituals.

Waving lighters in the air at concerts or placing shrines of stuffed animals at a location after a death occurs are among the few societal rituals in the United States of America. But do we have societal rituals specifically for military members returning from war? It seems as a society we have few. Unfortunately, I am not aware of an American societal ritual designed specifically for our soldiers to deal with purging the uncleanness caused by war.

However, the military has rituals. Some even deal with reentry after being at war. For example, some WWII veterans may have gathered together to share "what happened" on slow moving troop ships as they returned to the USA. Today, troops move to and from combat areas in days. Thus, the time to process what happened before returning home has diminished. Those gatherings of the WWII veterans to share their stories were "internal rituals" in that no one from outside the group participated. Their gathering together to share those stories shows a need soldiers have to process what happened. The church must look at these military internal rituals and the veteran's need to process so as to provide better individual pastoral care. In doing so, the

¹²⁰ David Chrisinger, "Religion, War, and Finding a Way to Purify Our Warriors," accessed July 24, 2013, <http://running50.com/religion-war-and-finding-a-way-to-purify-our-warriors/>, 3.

church could lead society.

Literature Review

Dave Grossman, a former soldier, in his books *On Killing* and *On Combat* lead the way for those outside the military who want to understand better the military world, human aggression, as well as the psychology and after effects of combat. Rita Nakashima Brock and Gabriella Lettini, both college/seminary professors share great insight into PTSD and moral injury in *Soul Repair*. In *Reclaiming Your Life From a Traumatic Experience*, Dr. Barbara Rothbaum, Dr. Edna Foa, and Dr. Elizabeth Hembree promote Prolonged Exposure Therapy, a relatively new treatment to help victims overcome PTSD. In their various books, Dr. Scott Floyd, Rev. Chris Adsit, and Rev. N. Duncan Sinclair give insight into the spiritual aspects of PTSD and moral injury and set some foundational framework with regards to pastoral care.

In this next section with the exception of *On Killing*, I will discuss these various books one by one, review their content, and then offer a personal reflection.

On Combat by Dave Grossman

In his book *On Combat*, Dave Grossman, a former Army Ranger and West Point psychology professor writes about the reality of combat, the effects it has on the human body, the warrior mindset, and the price of combat on the individual and on the society. Having been there himself, Grossman is clear that combat is not glorious. “Many people have a vision of combat based on thousands of hours of viewing television and movies.”¹²¹ When have you ever seen the “hero” crap his pants though? “Most of the individuals who have been in combat will tell you that it is simply indescribable. There are no words to depict it. It is like trying to describe a vivid

¹²¹ Grossman, *On Combat*, 124.

painting without having words for colors and hues.”¹²²

Combat is a “toxic realm”¹²³ in which people are just trying to survive. He even says that after combat to re-experience the event “can be a normal reaction to an abnormal event.”¹²⁴

According to Grossman, there is a universal human phobia: interpersonal human aggression.¹²⁵ In other words, no one wants to get hurt or harmed. A true warrior, whether that is a soldier, a Marine, or a police officer, “goes to the sound of the guns”¹²⁶ and wants to get in the game. This is not a natural response and comes with much training.

Grossman compares today’s warriors with the knights of old who administered justice¹²⁷ and with “good football players who scrimmage and practice endlessly.”¹²⁸ This endless practice brings about the “unconscious competence”¹²⁹ or autopilot that helps the warrior to function and remain calm when his/her body is experiencing the “parasympathetic backlash.”¹³⁰ The great paradox of combat is, “If you are truly prepared to kill someone, you are less likely to have to do it.”¹³¹

According to Grossman, societies have three types of people: sheep, wolves, and sheepdogs.¹³² Sheep are civilians. Wolves are those who would harm the sheep. Sheepdogs are those men and women who serve and protect. For Grossman soldiers who constantly train are

¹²² Ibid., 51.

¹²³ Ibid., 309.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 282.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 3.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 4.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 191.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 139.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 88.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 21.

¹³¹ Ibid., 150.

¹³² Ibid., 181.

sheepdogs who protect civilians from terrorists.¹³³ Sheepdogs though are not natural but rather made. Once a sheepdog is “made,” he or she looks a lot like the wolf. The mission of the two is quite different. The sheepdog’s mission is to protect the sheep from the wolf that comes to kill them. In that service soldiers have to kill the enemy. However, when that military service has ended, the sheepdog once again must become a sheep.

Reentry may be difficult for the soldier. It may be an even more difficult task for the soldier who has PTSD and/or moral injury. To help the soldier process and cope as he reenters society, Grossman offers the example of fighter pilots after flying a mission. For them, debriefing is critical. In this capacity, fighter pilots are great models for all warriors that struggle with surviving a trauma. After every flight, pilots get together and talk. They share what went well. They share what went wrong. They share ways to improve. Militaries have always “debriefed.” Usually, it was done “every night around the campfire, and the ‘Old Sarge’ always led them.”¹³⁴ In modern warfare though, with technological advancements in such things as night vision goggles and airplanes to get soldiers to and from the fight quickly, the time to debrief has diminished. After all, “fighting all day and night for months on end is a twentieth century phenomenon.”¹³⁵

Grossman theorizes that when a society understands their warriors, healing for the warriors may occur. To understand the returning veteran, society must comprehend the combat truths learned by these men and women. Namely, that their perspective and personal experiences not only shape them, but shape and will shape society for many years to come. Affirmation to the veteran is of great importance. Whether one is personally for or against the war, Grossman urges

¹³³ Ibid., 181.

¹³⁴ Ibid., 307.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 12.

society to remember that it sent these warriors to places like Iraq and Afghanistan. With that decision, society has a responsibility to those it sent. A sincere handshake and words like “You did the right thing, you did what we asked you to do and we are proud of you”¹³⁶ mean a great deal to veterans. Support may also mean offering a veteran a job or saying thank you.

Finally, Grossman helps us understand the mindset of some veterans especially as they reenter society. First, combat veterans may be guarded. Entering into their world is difficult but not impossible. Only via building and maintaining a relationship with them will veterans open up. Secondly, combat veterans may lie. It is for this reason Grossman warns the counselor to keep the BS meter on. In one study, Dr. Klinger reported, “Several officers ...reported that they lied to the mental health professionals who interviewed them after their shootings, because they did not wish to divulge their thoughts, feelings, and experiences to a stranger.” Finally, combat veterans may be injured. “Pain shared is pain divided.”¹³⁷ If a pastor is genuinely willing to share in that pain, healing may occur for the veteran.

Personal Reflection on Grossman

Grossman’s metaphor of sheep, wolves, and sheepdogs for a society, enemies of that society, and protectors/defenders of society is great. If wolves are the enemies of the U.S.A. and the sheep are citizens of the U.S.A., then most certainly military service members are in fact sheepdogs. But what if the wolves are sin, death, and the devil? What if the wolves are PTSD or moral injury? Are not then military service members sheep? So who will protect them? Who will defend them? Who is the *Sheepdog* that will rescue them? Jesus.

Chaplains are sheep living among sheepdogs. They fully understand the world of the sheep.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 342.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 317.

But they live and function in the world of the sheepdog. This makes them bridge people. My call sign when I was with 3/7 was *Blade Shepherd*. As the battalion's symbol was a knife and the motto was "The Cutting Edge," *Blade* referred to the entire battalion of one thousand-plus Marines. *Shepherd* referred to me, the chaplain, the one who cared for them. As a Christian chaplain, I want to point them to the *Good Shepherd* Jesus who rescues, defends, protects, and heals even the military from such enemies as sin, death, the devil, PTSD, and moral injury.

Soul Repair by Rita Nakashima Brock and Gabriella Lettini

In their book *Soul Repair*, Professors Rita Nakashima Brock and Gabriella Lettini tell the stories of four war veterans. Focusing on the veteran's "moral injury," the intent of the book is to help clergy understand the impact of war upon the men and women who go to fight. According to Brock and Lettini, moral injury and PTSD are not the same. Moral injury "comes from having transgressed one's basic moral identity and violated core moral beliefs."¹³⁸

In chapter two, Brock and Lettini ask the question, "Can there ever be adequate preparation for the psychological and spiritual consequences of killing?"¹³⁹ Their answer is no. The consequences are so devastating that some veterans have a "hard time re-entering civilian society."¹⁴⁰ One veteran in fact when asked if war was hell responded, "I say coming home is hell."¹⁴¹ So if coming home is hell, what can society do? Or more specifically what can the Christian church do to help veterans in this perilous journey after the war?

Soul Repair suggests that the answer to the veteran's hell lies in facing the "fierce angel."¹⁴²

¹³⁸ Rita Nakashima Brock and Gabriella Lettini, *Soul Repair: Recovering from Moral Injury after War* (Boston: Beacon, 2012), xiii.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 46.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 65.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 127.

After the fall, God placed an angel with a flaming sword to prohibit Adam and Eve's return to the Garden of Eden. Brock and Lettini believe healing comes in the struggle back to the garden.

When we violate our core moral values and fail to take responsibility, our moral conscience takes up that fierce flaming sword and guards what is left of our moral identity. To reenter the Garden, humanity must face that fierce angel. Unless the struggle is attempted, there is no way back and no way to know what remains in the garden behind the gate. The attempt to regain entry requires accepting responsibility for what we have done, but doing so may cost people their lives if they have to go back alone.... We should not expect those who return [from combat] to have to face that angel alone.¹⁴³

Brock and Lettini deduce that other veterans and civilians must walk alongside the veteran who is struggling. This helps them face the "fierce angel of moral injury together."¹⁴⁴

Soul Repair begins and concludes by asking, "How do we bring them home to peace?"¹⁴⁵

The answer is *not* having soldiers receive a twenty or even hour-long briefing (on their way home) on readjusting to home and on suicide prevention.¹⁴⁶ This type of briefing is really designed to protect the Army, Navy, or Marine Corps. Rather a great example of what might be done is that of US Army Chaplain Herman Keizer Jr. and his ministry to soldiers in Vietnam.

Keizer "struggled with how to address the moral struggles of those he served."¹⁴⁷ But in his struggles he already knew that ritual was a key element to bring healing. Brock and Lettini describe two different events. The first is when he gave communion to four soldiers. Chaplain Keizer writes, "It was a wonderful experience for those four young men and me. I could feel the ritual grounding them.... The eloquence of the Sacrament brought healing."¹⁴⁸ The second event was after his command had gone through a major crisis. It was then that Chaplain Keizer had his

¹⁴³ Ibid.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., 128.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., xi.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 60. I gave these types of briefs to 3/7 on our way home from Iraq.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 23.

soldiers read Psalm 51 and asked, “How did it feel for you to read Psalm 51?”¹⁴⁹

Brock and Lettini mention two other rituals of purification that helped bring healing to warriors. The Navajo people had a ceremonial process called “The Enemy Way” which was used to cure ... participation in war.¹⁵⁰ And in the first millennium, the early church had a requirement for a person who had shed human blood to spend a year among the order of penitents.¹⁵¹

Personal Reflection on Brock and Lettini

With no specific mention of Christ in the book, Brock and Lettini seem as if they would have the veteran face the angel by his own strength or with the strength of other veterans and civilians by their side. Indeed, Adam and Eve sinned and were thrown out of the garden—and rightly so. If Adam and Eve faced that angel on their own or even with the help of others, they would have no chance to get back in the garden. Jesus, after his death and resurrection, in a way, orders that angel to stand down and opens up the paradise that sin lost.

Reclaiming Your Life From a Traumatic Experience

In *Reclaiming Your Life From a Traumatic Experience*, Dr. Barbara Olasov Rothbaum, Dr. Edna Foa, and Dr. Elizabeth Hembree promote Prolonged Exposure Therapy, a treatment to help overcome PTSD. “PE is a way to help trauma survivors to *emotionally process* their traumatic experiences.”¹⁵² This therapy focuses upon education about common reactions to trauma, how to properly breath, and revisiting the trauma in your imagination. “Sometimes, people also have

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 24.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 27.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., xviii.

¹⁵¹ Ibid., xviii.

¹⁵² Barbara Olasov Rothbaum, Edna Foa, and Elizabeth Hembree, *Reclaiming Your Life from a Traumatic Experience* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 2.

thoughts that if they confront what they are scared of their anxiety will be so high that they will ‘lose control’ or ‘go crazy.’ But research has shown that when they confront what they are scared of in a therapeutic manner, it helps these thoughts go away as well.”¹⁵³ Complete with homework for the trauma victim this book and therapeutic method helps people confront what happened and helps them to begin to think differently about it.

Personal Reflection on Rothbaum, Foa, and Hembree

Rothbaum, Foa, and Hembree use a person’s imagination and a person’s breath to help them process the trauma experienced. I love the connection between the physical and the emotional. I would simply add the spiritual element to complete this book.

The Combat Trauma Healing Manual by Chris Adsit

In his book *The Combat Trauma Healing Manual: Christ-centered Solutions for Combat Trauma*, Rev. Chris Adsit, an Evangelical Church Alliance pastor and Campus Crusade’s Military Ministry staff member, with input from doctors, nurses, and chaplains, provides a Christian resource to the civilian pastor to better understand and better counsel the combat veteran. Adsit begins his manual by having the veteran consider the questions, “Where was God?” and “Why didn’t He prevent this?” He reminds the reader that Jesus even asked a similar question on the cross, “My God, My God, why have you forsaken me?” Briefly, he then explores suffering and sinful humanity and then turns his attention to describing how PTSD occurs and the physiology, psychology, and theology behind it.

The meat and potatoes of Adsit’s manual is that he provides a step-by-step program that

¹⁵³ Ibid., 4.

“offers spiritual solutions”¹⁵⁴ for the combat veteran struggling with PTSD. Adsit suggests the key to healing for the veteran is that an environment must be constructed using five vital elements: the Holy Spirit, the Word of God, Prayer, the Christian Community and your mindset.¹⁵⁵

In the next few chapters, Adsit helps the veteran better understand loss and grief. He shares how it is a process and then he defines and shares about forgiveness. A helpful tool Adsit offers is to have the veteran “undertake a journaling project about [the] traumatic experience.”¹⁵⁶ He does so suggesting that certain “rules” are kept in mind while journaling: Pray beforehand and ask God to direct it. Do it over time. And consider using or touching objects that were present with you in combat.

To conclude, Adsit’s manual reminds the veteran of how real Satan is and how important it is to prepare against the enemy. It introduces the veterans to the idea of finding “Bridge People”¹⁵⁷ who can help. In Mark 2, four men were “bridges” or “roof demolishers” that helped alter the paralyzed man’s environment so Jesus could heal him. Finally, it reminds the veteran that the pre-deployment “normal” no longer exists but rather a “new normal” does and that normal may be better than before.¹⁵⁸

Personal Reflection on Adsit

Adsit’s manual blurs the lines and seems to be written for non-Christians and Christians alike. Thus, his approach to healing seems to be the same. His answer is simple – have a

¹⁵⁴ Chris Adsit, *Combat Trauma Healing Manual*, 5.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 34.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 54.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 121.

¹⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, 131.

relationship with Jesus and invite him into your pain and you'll be healed.¹⁵⁹ While I do want all people to have a relationship with Jesus, I don't think healing from PTSD and moral injury is that simple. Adsit's approach sounds like theology of glory than theology of the cross.¹⁶⁰ Take for instance chapter seven on rebuilding identity. If a Christian goes to war and then suffers from PTSD, to remind that soldier of his identity in Christ is most appropriate. However, there is nothing to remind a non-Christian as the relationship with Christ has never existed. Also, Adsit never considers that soldiers may serve honorably and kill and not sin against God.

Crisis Counseling: A Guide For Pastors And Professionals by Scott Floyd

In his book *Crisis Counseling: A Guide For Pastors And Professionals*, Dr. Scott Floyd offers a definition and Biblical examples of crisis, trauma, loss, and grief. His ministry model provides the caregiver a map on how to help hurting people. Floyd, an associate professor of psychology and counseling at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary, believes that the body of Christ must care for those who have experienced trauma. In fact, caring for these "is a reflection of God's character." He further explains that "it imitates Christ's work, and it carries out specific scriptural injunctions."¹⁶¹

For Floyd caregivers are essential to recovery. "Those who provide crisis ministry function in much the same manner as white blood cells."¹⁶² He cautions though that the Christian caregiver "must be careful...when working with those in trying circumstances to avoid viewing

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., 62.

¹⁶⁰ Theology of glory says that after the fall in Genesis human beings still have the ability to choose the good which is inside them. Theology of the cross says that human beings are dead in sin and only by the redemptive power of Jesus are people saved from their enemies.

¹⁶¹ Scott Floyd, *Crisis Counseling: A Guide for Pastors And Professionals* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 2008), 18.

¹⁶² Ibid., 21.

crises from a purely human perspective.”¹⁶³ For example, he argues that depression may be at times good and may be used by God. “God might use brief depression as an opportunity for a person to look to Him and hear from Him.”¹⁶⁴ In Luke 13:1–5 when tragedy occurs, Jesus himself uses these events to point the people to God and to “His larger purposes.”¹⁶⁵ This pointing is ultimately the job of the Christian caretaker.

A basic thesis Floyd adds to this discussion is that the caregiver helps to bring the person who experienced the trauma back to “normal.” Floyd says, “Another central feature of dealing with trauma survivors is normalizing the experience, the symptoms, and how the survivor is responding to the extreme events.”¹⁶⁶ The Bible is full of many people who dealt with crisis, trauma, loss, and grief. Caregivers must remind hurting people that their reactions are not signs of weakness, lack of faith, or even mental instability.¹⁶⁷ Rather, they are normal.

Finally, Floyd offers some good insight for caregivers who work with those in crises. First, be prepared instead of reacting when possible. This means continue to learn and be trained. Second, be aware of expectations – yours and those to whom you minister. Know your limits. And lastly, realize that healing is a process that takes time. The long-term pastoral relationship is more important than the one-time purification rite.

Personal Reflection on Floyd

Floyd was helpful because I too have to remind Marines, Sailors, Soldiers, and Coastguardsmen to whom I provide pastoral care that war is not normal. It is in fact abnormal.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 38.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 104.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 16.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 138.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 144.

They, though, are normal. Their reactions to war are normal as well.

Horrific Traumata: A Pastoral Response to the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder by N. D. Sinclair

In *Horrific Traumata: A Pastoral Response to the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder*, Rev. N. Duncan Sinclair, an Episcopal priest, suggests that “horrific traumata destroy spiritual well-being” and that PTSD “is spiritual at the deepest levels.”¹⁶⁸ Sinclair, writing from his own experience as an active duty Army chaplain who served two tours in Vietnam, shares his own trauma in the TET offensive as well as stories from counselees while he was on staff at the Bradley Center and Pastoral Institute in Columbus, GA.

Sinclair explains, “PTSD is a spiritual disorder not because the ‘person is not right with God’ or that ‘God is not right with the person.’ It is spiritual disorder because the person who experiences the full impact of PTSD has been impoverished by the loss of a series of vital spiritual attributes that are essential to living a full life.”¹⁶⁹ Restoring these ten attributes (hope, intimacy, future, peacefulness, healing memory, spontaneity, wholeness, innocence, trust and awe) is key to restoring the person who suffers from the traumatic injury.

To begin the healing process Sinclair offers to pastors and counselors seven steps to help survivors of trauma in the healing process. This process includes becoming known, telling and being heard, sharing secrets, validating of self, sharing rage, hope, and going beyond the group.¹⁷⁰ “Becoming known” is to get that which is hidden inside out. “Telling and being heard” is when the victim bares one’s soul and the process by which a caretaker hears and believes it. “Sharing secrets” is the most vulnerable period between a therapist or minister and the victim of

¹⁶⁸ N. Duncan Sinclair, *Horrific Traumata: A Pastoral Response to the Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder* (New York: Haworth Pastoral, 1993), 65.

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 66.

¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 85–87.

PTSD. During this phase “the pastoral and therapeutic task is to be ‘lovingly present.’”¹⁷¹ The “validating of self” occurs where the victim of PTSD becomes aware that they are bigger than their trauma. The fifth step is called, *Sharing of the Rage*. “It is only in the sure knowledge of grace that the victims can confront the reality that, within their rage, they are powerful as the horrific trauma that victimized them.”¹⁷² *Hope of Restoration* means restoration to self, others, and community. To conclude, *Going Beyond the Group* means that healing has occurred so a victim can “leave that process [of healing] and claim their rightful place within society.”¹⁷³

Finally, Sinclair reminds us to take evil seriously, of the importance of belonging for a PTSD victim, and that grace abounds. Sinclair believes, “As a society, and even as a religious community, we have great difficulty taking evil seriously. We want to pretend that the wolf is in fact toothless and Little Red Riding Hood never was in danger.”¹⁷⁴ Evil is real and it has affected the PTSD victim. They do not feel as if they belong. Belonging “makes all the difference in the world.”¹⁷⁵ The Vietnam memorial helped many who suppressed their pain to have a place where they belong. Perhaps Sinclair’s most important message is the following. “The pastoral message is that grace is operative within the confines of the horrific and of the ordinary.”¹⁷⁶ Grace is God healing the complete person – spiritually, mentally, physically.

Personal Reflection on Sinclair

More and more time, energy, and effort are being given to the spiritual aspects of PTSD and moral injury. In my own experience though when I have attended trainings on these topics

¹⁷¹ Ibid., 86.

¹⁷² Ibid., 87.

¹⁷³ Ibid.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 19.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 62.

the spiritual focus is usually a footnote. The medical world acknowledges the spiritual dimension but few doctors have ever referred their patients to me. Like Jesus does with the paralytic, I very much appreciated Sinclair's focus on addressing the spiritual need before the physical one.

Conclusion

African tribes, Cherokee Indians, and the Romans are among societies that required a warrior to undergo a purification of some sort before that warrior reentered normal life. The absence of ritual is a problem for the American society. Shay, Grossman, Tick, and others are indeed right that much more can be learned from the study of ancient societies and their rituals. Those insights may help America better treat those soldiers who have PTSD and moral injury. The church today has an opportunity to not only help society with this problem but also lead society in this arena of ritual purification. Brock, Lettini, Adsit, Floyd, Sinclair, and others urge the Christian church to become more involved, draw upon her vast resources, and provide pastoral care to veterans.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 85.

CHAPTER FOUR THE PROJECT DEVELOPED

“The newest and least informed believers, those subject to the gravest of life’s crises, and those who are struggling with temptation and fear. To receive such and to care for them is the most important work of all; it is to receive and care for Christ Himself.”

Rev. Dr. Jeffrey Gibbs

Background

In chapter three I addressed the current literature concerning the spiritual issues of PTSD and the moral injury from which a soldier may suffer. In this chapter I will describe the development of the project, the actual presentation (or workshop), the *ReEntry* video, the combat veteran purification rite, and the questionnaires (or interviews) that occurred before training and after the training was completed. It is my contention that although the medical field has taken the lead in the treatment of these patients that the church of Jesus Christ has much to offer. It is also my contention that many veterans will seek the help of civilian clergy in the future to help them with PTSD and moral injury.

The Design of the Study

This project was designed to help the local parish pastor who has no military experience better understand that particular culture and to expose them to a liturgical purification rite based on the Psalms and the Gospel of Mark. The chief component of this MAP is a workshop offered to parish pastors¹⁷⁷ on how to effectively counsel the veteran war fighter. The goal of the workshop is to help pastors to understand the mindset of the warrior. Using verbatims in the form of a drama entitled *ReEntry* and by sharing a few case studies as examples of warriors

¹⁷⁷ Although the workshop was designed for the LCMS parish pastor, seminarians and other church workers

returning home from combat may help the pastor think about the unique world of the veteran. In addition, I hope to present a liturgical combat veteran purification rite that will help pastors minister to their veterans. This CVPR could be used as a template for helping to heal or at least to start the healing process for those who suffer with PTSD and moral injury. Through the teaching of this workshop, I will attempt to measure any change in the parish pastors' ability to better serve our veterans.

1. Before the workshop, I met with other US Navy Chaplains to discuss their experiences with counseling combat veterans. I discussed the case studies that were used for the workshop.
2. Before the workshop, I developed and wrote a liturgical (combat veteran) purification rite (CVPR) for the returning Christian combat veteran.
3. Before the workshop, pastors described via questionnaires¹⁷⁸ their prior experience and knowledge with counseling combat veterans.
4. During the workshop, the pastors watched the *ReEntry* drama video that hopefully helped the pastors better understand the combat veteran's perspective.
5. During the workshop, civilian pastors were taught about the veteran's war fighting experience and about the role of subjective justification in the pastoral care of those who are or feel unclean.
6. During the workshop, the pastors were taught the CVPR. Pastors also heard how the CVPR in its various stages of development was performed on two different veterans.
7. To conclude the workshop, the pastors evaluated the usefulness of the workshop via questionnaire and commented about the skills learned from the training.
8. Finally, pastors were encouraged to apply the lessons learned in the workshop to their ministry with veterans in their own congregations.

Presuppositions

The workshop was designed to help the local parish pastor better counsel a war veteran who has returned from battle. With that in mind, there are some presuppositions to consider:

1. War is a reflection of a sinful world. In war, people are damaged physically, mentally, and spiritually. The church knows all too well about the condition of humanity. Ash Wednesday reminds humanity of the fleetingness of life.

participated. I will refer just to the pastors as it was intended originally for them.

¹⁷⁸ Called *Pre-Survey* in PowerPoint Presentation.

2. Parish pastors are well trained and knowledgeable. However, many have not been exposed to the world of the war fighter. Exposure, if even secondhand via a chaplain, is beneficial to the care of veterans.
3. The confession and absolution of sin is powerful and efficacious.¹⁷⁹ Many veterans have told me afterwards they feel a huge weight lifted off of their shoulders. Solely by the grace of God veterans can and will be forgiven and restored. Some veterans may not need to confess because they have not sinned. Some veterans though still are in a state or feel unclean.
4. The Sacraments are powerful means by which God brings that forgiveness to his people. The church needs to understand better the theology behind why these veterans are or feel unclean and address the need subjectively to help heal each person.
5. My workshop and CVPR is just a beginning in the process of helping veterans with PTSD and moral injury.

Implementation of the Project

In this part of chapter four I will describe the development of this Major Applied Project.

This will detail the order in which I implemented the various stages of the project and the methodology used at each stage. To begin please note a timeline of when events occurred. I will also present a thorough narrative of the project's execution as I share the questionnaires (or training interviews) that occurred before training and after the training was completed, the actual presentation (or workshop), a brief summary of the *ReEntry* video, and the CVPR.

Timeline

The following is a timeline for this Major Applied Project:

1. Summer 2008 – Wrote draft Major Applied Project Proposal.
2. Winter 2011 – Developed and wrote the Combat Veteran Purification Rite (CVPR).
3. All 2012 – Developed and wrote the workshop based upon the Navy OSCAR Program.
4. December 11, 2012 – Presented workshop # 1 to ten pastors at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Seymour, IN.
5. January 15, 2013 – Presented workshop # 2 to seventeen seminary students at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, MO.
6. January 15, 2013 – Presented workshop # 3 to ten pastors in D.Min. Program at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, MO.
7. January 16, 2014 – Presented workshop # 4 via skype to seventeen seminary students at

¹⁷⁹ 1 John 1:8-9; Isaiah 55:11.

Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, MO.

8. Summer 2014 – Performed the CVPR on a Marine combat veteran. He is intentionally not named and will be referred to as a friend.
9. April 14, 2015 – Presented workshop # 5 to 9 pastors and 2 Stephen Ministers at Christ the King Lutheran Church in Williamsburg, VA.
10. Fall 2014 – Began to write this MAP.
11. Fall 2015 – Submitted MAP and defended MAP at oral board.

Research Tools and Methodology

Questionnaires

Below is the workshop (or training) interview sheets (questionnaires) in the actual form as given to all the participants. With these I measured a person's exposure to the military world and if the workshop that I gave helped them better understand the military world, and if in understanding that world whether they thought that they would be better able to help or counsel those suffering from PTSD and/or moral injury.

Training Interview Sheets

Before Training:

- ____ Age ____ # of years in ministry
- ____ Have you ever served in the military?
- ____ If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served ____ MOS¹⁸⁰ _____
- ____ Do you have military veterans in your church?
- ____ Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?
Why/Why not?

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?
Why/Why not?

¹⁸⁰ Military Occupation Specialties = the job you do in the military.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the *ReEntry* video?

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a Combat Veteran Purification Rite before this training?

What do you like about the purification rite?

What do you dislike about the rite?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Workshop (Training)

The next pages are the actual MAP workshop which consisted of 24 power point slides used during 5 different trainings. Unfortunately, some slides contain spelling errors but are corrected in the footnotes. The reason that they are presented in this MAP uncorrected on the actual slides is because these slides are the ones used in the actual workshops.

LCMS Parish Pastor, Seminarian, (and Stephen Minister) Workshop

Power Point Presentation

Slide #1

The Problem

- “You can reach into the well of courage only so many times before the well runs dry.”
Ardant Du Picq
- US troops returning from war w/physical, emotional and psychological wounds

Slide #2

PTSD

- Post Traumatic Stress Disorder “occurs when a person has experienced, witnessed, or has been confronted w/a traumatic event, which involved actual or threatened death or serious physical injury to themselves or others.”
- American Civil War - soldiers treated for insanity, “soldier’s heart” and nostalgia
- WWI - “shell shock”
- Vietnam - “Vietnam Veteran’s Syndrome

Slide #3

OSCAR Program

- Operational Stress Control and Readiness
- Placing psychiatrists with forward deployed combat units to help prevent, early identify and effectively treat PTSD
- Marine LtCol - Infantry Battalion CO on his new OSCAR psychiatrist - "I am never going to live in your world, so it is a good thing that you are here to learn about mine."

Slide #4

"Go see the Chaplain"

- Chaplains live in this world.
- "The condition of PTSD is spiritual at its deepest level." - Duncan Sinclair
- Office of the Keys - bind and forgive sins
- Objective and subjective justification

Slide #5

Purpose of workshop

- Expose the local parish pastor to the world of the veteran - “ReEntry” - Case Study - discussion
- Discuss moral injury, theological perspectives of PTSD and the conflicted conscience
- Discuss subjective justification and how it restores the veteran and his conflicted conscience to normality
- Present and discuss purification rite for returning combat veterans

Slide #6¹⁸¹

Survey

- Pre-survey
- Questions



¹⁸¹ Picture on slide from the movie *The Last Samurai*. The main character, U.S. Army Captain Nathan Algren struggles with PTSD and moral injury.

Slide #7¹⁸²

“ReEntry”

- Written by Emily Ackerman and KJ Sanchez
- Constructed from interviews with Marines and their families
- Gives insight into the thoughts and behaviors of veterans returning from combat
- 85 minutes

Slide #8

Moral Injury

- “Damage or harm received to one’s moral center as a result of things experienced, seen or done in a war zone.”
- Change or loss of spirituality
- Guilt, shame
- Reduced trust

¹⁸² More information on *ReEntry* can be found at <http://www.amrec.us/reentry/>.

Slide #9¹⁸³

Problem in Theological Perspective

- War is a reflection of a sinful war
- Christians may serve honorably in the military
- Distinction between authority given to government and that given to the church
- God's law written on human beings' consciences
- Objective and subjective justification

Slide #10

David and PTSD?

- King David may have suffered from symptoms of PTSD
- Fought a giant, was almost killed twice by his own king, pursued by thousands of soldiers, was betrayed by his son, punished for adultery and saw his own son die
- Consider Psalm 31:9-13
- Depression, guilt, fear, anger, despair
- Took refuge in God, revealed all secrets and was healed by God's holy word - Psalm 16:1; Ps 51

¹⁸³ First bullet point in Slide #9 should read, "War is a reflection of a sinful *world*."

Slide #11

The Conscience

- Universal gift by God to all humanity (Romans 2:14-15)
- Not the norm and source of right and wrong but urges a person to comply with that standard and then judges according to it.
- Holy Scripture norms the human conscience

Slide #12

The Apostle Paul

- Persecuted the church w/a good conscience - Acts 23:1
- After his conversion, his sin weighed heavily upon him - 1 Timothy 1:13-15
- Did his conscience change?
- Or did the norm which informs his conscience change?

Slide #13

Justification

- Justification - “Act of God, by which He, on the basis of the perfect vicarious atonement wrought by Christ, declared the whole world to be justified in His sight (objective justification), and transmits and imputes the effect of this declaration to all whom He brings to faith by the work of the Holy Ghost through the means of grace (subjective justification).” E. W. A. Koehler

Slide #14

Jonathan Shay

- Psychiatrist
- *Odysseus in America: Combat Trauma and the Trials of Homecoming*
- *Achilles in Vietnam: Combat Trauma and the Undoing of Character*
- Soldier’s need for purification after the shedding of blood for re-integration into society

Slide #15

Odysseus in America

- “What I have in mind is a communal ritual with religious force that recognizes that everyone who has shed blood, no matter how blamelessly is in need of purification. Those who have done something blameworthy require additional purification and penance, if their religious tradition provides for it.”

Slide #16

Re-Integration

- Rituals for re-entry into society:
 - Rome - Vestal Virgins would bathe soldiers
 - Spartan - Retrieving the broken stick
 - Maasai tribe (Africa) - mixing ashes/clay in hair
 - Sierra Leone - bath w/ash soap
 - Native Americans/First Nations - sweat lodge ceremonies

Slide #17

Re-Integration

- Confession and Absolution
- Reaffirmation of baptism service
- Is there foundation for a Lutheran liturgical purification rite?
- Can the Psalms and the Gospel of Mark provide this foundation?

Slide #18¹⁸⁴

Purification Rite Theology in the Gospel of Mark

- Clean/Unclean theme - Jesus standing where only sinners stand
- Being unclean not because of own sin but due to the fact of a fallen world
- Jesus passion, death and resurrection cleanses humanity from that which is unclean - sin - certainly but here war

¹⁸⁴ Last bullet point in Slide #18 should read “Jesus’ passion....”

Slide #19

The leper, the demoniac, the dead girl, and the woman w/the issue of blood

- Shunned and misunderstood by people
- Unclean - but did not sin
- By Jesus' touch he renders himself unclean and them clean
- Jesus undoes not only sin but the consequences of sin

Slide #20

The Paralytic

- Jesus first addresses a spiritual need before a physical need
- Moral injuries or conflicted conscience may paralyze veterans
- Paul - Acts 23:1 then Romans 2:14-15
- Pastors must address spiritual issues
- Pastors help re-norm conscience

Slide #21¹⁸⁵

Little Ones

- Gibbs Matthew Commentary, “The newest and least informed believers, those subject to the gravest of life’s crises, and those who are struggling with temptation and fear. To receive such and to care for them is the most important work of all; it is to receive and care for Christ himself.”
- War veterans struggling w/PTSD are “little ones”

Slide #22¹⁸⁶

Roman Centurion

- Accurately and completely confesses Jesus as the Gospel author would have us see and know Jesus - the “Son of God”
- Confesses after seeing the manner in which Jesus died
- Giving of a life for another

¹⁸⁵ First bullet point in Slide #21 should read, “Gibbs’s....”

¹⁸⁶ Last bullet point in Slide #22 should read, “Giving of one’s life for another.”

Slide #23¹⁸⁷

Purification Rite for Returning Veteran

- The veteran should choose who participates
- Encourage family members and friends participation
- The rite itself
- Discussion

Slide #24

Wrap up

- Post survey
- Questions?

¹⁸⁷ Second bullet point in Slide #23 should read, "...family members' and friends' participation."

Summary of *ReEntry* video

KJ Sanchez and Emily Ackerman wrote *ReEntry*, an off Broadway documentary drama based upon actual interviews with Marines who had served in Vietnam, Iraq, and Afghanistan. Having family members themselves who have served, Sanchez and Ackerman wanted to portray the real lives of Marines (and their families) living in the USA after the Marines had been to combat. For this reason, the language is at times raw, abrasive, and even offensive. I first saw the drama in San Diego at a U.S. Navy PTSD training. Over time, I befriended KJ Sanchez and worked with my command (at the time) to later bring the drama to Marine Corps Recruit Depot Paris Island, South Carolina. Many Marines confirmed that it was an accurate portrayal of life after experiencing a combat environment. The entire documentary play script is in Appendix One. Permission was granted by KJ Sanchez to include it in this MAP only in its original format. In the MAP workshop the participants watched the *ReEntry* video.¹⁸⁸

Combat Veteran Purification Rite

The following is the Combat Veteran Purification Rite as it was performed on a Marine combat veteran in the summer of 2014. A more generic version (see Appendix One) may serve as a template for pastors wishing to perform this rite in a personal way on other veterans in their congregations. The CVPR has as its end state a desire to take or wash away all uncleanness and the feeling or perception of uncleanness from the Christian combat veteran. It is based upon the Gospel of Mark.

¹⁸⁸ A video copy of *ReEntry* is submitted with this MAP.

Liturgical Combat Veteran Purification Rite (CVPR): Based on The Gospel of Mark

Background of the Person on Whom the CVPR Was Performed

Pastor: This man has served his country in combat 5 times in Iraq and Afghanistan. He was ordered to deploy, ordered to do battle and ordered to redeploy. We are here today to apply the Word of God personally to him and his family to rebuild him, to restore him to full health, to reconcile his thoughts with what he has seen, heard, smelled, and done. We are here today to reconnect him completely and fully with his family, his community, and most especially with God. This rite has been designed with his input and has 4 parts – feet, hands, head, and breath. We will focus upon his feet to begin to rebuild him and reclaim holy ground. We will focus upon his hands to restore him. We will focus upon his head to reconcile him. Finally, we will focus upon breath to reconnect him with his wife and his family. (Please note the man’s response to the CVPR is in the form of a letter to me from “Your Friend” in Chapter 6.)

Preparation

A bowl of water, anointing oil and a white alb (robe) is placed on the altar. A cross or crucifix is also on the altar in the center. The congregation can be the combat veteran as well as his family. The pastor stands at the altar and the combat veteran stands before a kneeler which is placed close to the altar. His family may gather around him. One chair is also in front of the altar next to the kneeler. (Copies of the rite are available for all present).

The Combat Veteran Purification Rite Begins

Pastor: In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Veteran: Amen.

Pastor: Blessed be God the Father, for with him all things are possible.¹⁸⁹

Veteran: Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.¹⁹⁰

Pastor: Blessed is Christ who stands with and where sinners stand.¹⁹¹

Veteran: Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.

Pastor: Blessed be God the Holy Spirit for the place where you dwell is pure.

Veteran: Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.

Pastor: Let us pray. (The pastor places his hand upon the combat veteran's head for the prayer.)

Son of God, we indeed are not worthy to stoop down and untie your sandals. This man is unclean with blood on his hands. Touch him Lord, exchange places with him. Give to him your purity and take away all that is unclean. In your precious name we pray.

Veteran: Amen.

Rebuilding and Reunification

(The combat veteran sits in the chair next to the kneeler. The pastor asks the combat veteran to remove his shoes and socks.)

Pastor: Hear these words from the holy Gospel of Mark. A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. They gathered in such large

¹⁸⁹ Mark 14:36.

¹⁹⁰ Mark 1:40.

¹⁹¹ Mark 1:9.

numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, “Son, your sins are forgiven.”¹⁹²

Veteran: Lord Jesus, I am paralyzed by memories and thoughts of war. I know that I have served honorably yet the consequences of where I have walked still plague me. Lord, if you are willing, make me clean.

Pastor: The Lord Jesus is willing and removes all that is unclean. For those who have gone to war and have returned and still struggle even now with where their feet have walked Jesus says to you, “Be clean.” Like he did the disciples, He washes your feet.

(The pastor washes his feet and makes the sign of the cross on each foot.)

Pastor: The Lord Jesus is here, this is holy ground and the LORD says simply, “Walk.”

Veteran: Amen.

(The combat veteran walks bare foot clockwise around the altar signifying his order to deploy and his order to return. The combat veteran sits in the chair and puts shoes back on.)

Restoring

(The combat veteran sits in the chair near the altar.)

Pastor: Hear these words from the holy Gospel of Mark. When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his

¹⁹² Mark 2:1–5.

feet. He pleaded earnestly with him, “My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live.” While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. “Your daughter is dead,” they said. “Why bother the teacher anymore?” Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, “Don’t be afraid; just believe.” He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James, and John the brother of James. When they came to the home of the synagogue leader, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. He went in and said to them, “Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep.” But they laughed at him. After he put them all out, he took the child’s father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. He took her by the hand and said to her, “*Talitha koum!*” (which means “Little girl, I say to you, get up!”). Immediately the girl stood up and began to walk around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.¹⁹³

Veteran: Lord Jesus, I know all too well war and death. My hands have blood on them. I cry and wail to you Lord to place your hands on me and remove from me this uncleanness and death. Lord, if you are willing, make me clean.

(Pastor washes the hands of the combat veteran at the altar. The hands are dried. If spouse is present the couple holds hands at the altar. A white cloth may be placed around them. The pastor makes the sign of the cross and blesses the hands.)

Pastor: *Come* Lord Jesus and put your hands on these hands so that they will be healed and have abundant life. Thank you LORD for conquering death and for restoring life. Lord Jesus give life

¹⁹³ Mark 5:21–24, 35–43.

abundantly even to those who have taken life. Help us not be afraid; to just believe.

Veteran: Amen.

Reconciling

(Combat veteran kneels.)

Pastor: Hear these words from the holy Gospel of Mark. A man with leprosy came to [Jesus] and begged him on his knees, “If you are willing, you can make me clean.” Jesus was indignant¹⁹⁴.

He reached out his hand and touched the man. “I am willing,” he said. “Be clean!” Immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.¹⁹⁵

Veteran: Lord Jesus, on my knees I beg you to touch me, to make me clean. Cleanse my head – my eyes and all I have seen, my ears and all I have heard, my nose and all I have smelled, my mouth and all I have tasted and spoken. Lord, if you are willing, make me clean.

(Anointing oil¹⁹⁶ is placed on the forehead of the combat veteran in the sign of the cross. It might be helpful to have the veteran smell the oil. Anointing the ears, eyelids and mouth are optional.)

Pastor: The Lord Jesus is willing and removes all that is unclean. For those who have gone to war and have returned and still struggle even now with what they have seen, heard, tasted, and smelled, and spoken, Jesus says to you, “Be clean.”

Veteran: Amen.

¹⁹⁴ One might substitute the translation “had compassion” here.

¹⁹⁵ Mark 1:40–42.

¹⁹⁶ Mark 6:13.

Reconnecting

(Combat veteran may stand with spouse, family, and friends at the altar.)

Pastor: Hear these words from the holy Gospel of Mark. “How can Satan drive out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end has come. In fact, no one can enter a strong man’s house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can rob his house.”¹⁹⁷

Veteran: Lord Jesus, I feel divided internally (and even with my family) and I don’t want to be.

(Family members present may at this time hold hands before the altar of the Lord).

Veteran: (May say whatever he wants to family/friends at this time). **Lord, if you are willing, make me clean.**

Pastor: The Lord Jesus is willing and removes all that is unclean. The Lord Jesus has come and has tied up the strong man. Satan has been driven out. Jesus rescues you and makes you his own possession. You, your house and your family are completely and totally under Jesus’ kingdom. You stand united, loved by God. God breathes into you and all your relationships his breath of life, the Holy Spirit. Receive the sign of the holy cross over you as a reminder that you are right with God and connected to each other.

(Sign of the Holy Cross made over the family.)

Veteran: Amen.

¹⁹⁷ Mark 3:23–27.

Conclusion

Pastor: Let us pray: Lord Jesus, truly you are the Son of God. Thank you for accomplishing your mission, for living a perfect life, for going to the cross. Thank you for giving to this veteran your righteousness, your holiness, and your cleanness. Thank you for removing from him the effects and consequences of war and therein that which is unclean. Be with him now and always and let him remain at the foot of your cross as the Roman Centurion did for it is there that your blood covers him and makes clean.

Lord's Prayer

Pastor: God has washed you. God has sealed you in the blood of Jesus. You are pure, holy, and forgiven. You are clean.

Veteran: I am clean.

ALL: Amen.

Pastor: Go in peace.

Conclusion

In the CVPR above, only in the final prayer was the Gospel proclaimed. If I were to redo it for this particular time, I would have proclaimed it and then pray. I would also be sure to mention Christ Jesus' resurrection. It was assumed in the rite performed above when perhaps it should not have been. I have made these changes in the generic CVPR found in Appendix One. Also, when possible and if invited to do so by the veteran, the family members of the combat veteran are encouraged be present and participate in the CVPR. They, too, struggle with the consequences of sin and the pastor may as needed or requested consider doing the purification rite on them. The wife of the Marine on whom this CVPR was performed was invited but

decided not come on the day it was done. Finally, a copy of the purification rite should be given to the veteran and those who participate so that in the months and years to come they can refer back to it and be assured that because of Jesus Christ and his passion, death, and resurrection, they are indeed clean.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE PROJECT EVALUATED

“I think I will have a beginning foundation to set spiritual care in motion for our veterans.”
LCMS Pastor who attended my workshop

Field Research

In chapter four I described the development of this project. This included the actual presentation (or workshop), the *ReEntry* video, the CVPR, and the questionnaires (or interviews) that occurred before training and after the training was finished. In this chapter I will present the findings of my field research and analyze these findings in light of the project's hypothesis.

From 2012 to 2015, I gave five different workshops to LCMS pastors, seminarians and Stephen Ministers. On December 11, 2012 I presented the workshop and Combat Veteran Purification Rite at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Seymour, IN to ten pastors at a local winkel.¹⁹⁸ On January 15, 2013, I presented twice: first, at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis in Rev. Dr. Bruce Hartung's *Pastoral Care and Human Experience* class to a group of seventeen seminarians and then at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis to a group of ten pastors who were enrolled in the Doctor of Ministry program. On January 16, 2014, I presented (via Skype) to another group of seventeen seminarians (1 of which was a female M.A.¹⁹⁹ student) in Hartung's *Pastoral Care and Human Experience* class at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. The final workshop was on April 14, 2015 at

¹⁹⁸ A circuit is local grouping of congregations within the LCMS's 35 districts. A winkel is a gathering of circuit pastors. In German, winkel means “corner” as in a carpenter's square.

¹⁹⁹ Masters of Arts (in Deaconess Studies).

Christ the King Lutheran Church in Williamsburg, VA to a group of nine pastors and two Stephen Ministers.²⁰⁰ In all, I presented this workshop and combat veteran purification rite to twenty-nine LCMS parish pastors, thirty-four seminarians, and two Stephen Ministers.

Findings of the Study

To report the findings of the study I will summarize each of the five workshops separately in chronological order calling them workshops #1, #2, #3, #4, and #5. I will conclude putting all the data from the 5 workshops together. I will follow my questionnaire as an outline to this section.

Findings for Workshop #1

On December 11, 2012, I presented the workshop and CVPR to ten pastors at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Seymour, IN. Eight of these pastors had no prior military service. Two of these pastors did. Of these two with military service, one had served for eight years in the Army and one had served in the Coast Guard and Army for fourteen years. This person also had served as a chaplain. All ten pastors said that they had military veterans in their church and five pastors of the ten said that they counsel a lot of military. Five pastors said they did not counsel a lot of veterans.

The age and ministry experience of these ten pastors was:

25–35 years old – 3 pastors with 1–5 years in ministry

36–45 years old – 0 pastors

46–55 years old – 5 pastors; three had twenty-plus years in ministry and two had five to ten years in ministry

²⁰⁰ Stephen Ministers are lay members who serve in the congregation in a special caring capacity. In this context their ministry effort is towards military service men and women.

56–61 years old – two pastors with over thirty years in ministry.

All ten pastors answered “Yes” to the first question: “After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?” Their answers varied as to why. Several said that they believed the workshop would give them better insight into the military world. Pastors wrote, that they would be able “to see into a window of the warrior’s world” and that they will have “better insight into their mind.” Some pastors also believed that a chaplain sharing his experiences would be of benefit. One pastor wrote, “Sharing another CH [chaplain’s] experience is a blessing and that it was beneficial “to hear/see the way a chaplain sees/understands what is wounding the soldier’s soul.”

Nine of the ten pastors answered “Yes” to the next question: “After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?” One pastor did not answer the question. Five pastors said that after the training they would have a better understanding of issues that military men and women face. They wrote that they would understand better “how military men/women are thinking/feeling post war” and “soldier’s struggles” as well as “PTSD.” 4 pastors believed that after the training they would have more tools in their toolbox to better provide pastoral care to veterans.

All ten pastors liked the *ReEntry* video. Four pastors said that the video helped them to enter the world of the veteran or that it allowed them to see “how different [life] is for our military.” Two pastors liked the honesty and rawness of the video. Two pastors commented that they like how the video shared “what not to do” when talking with a veteran. One pastor disliked a certain characteristic of the video as he thought at times there was some confusion about what characters the actors were playing.

When I asked the pastors “Have you ever seen or heard of a Combat Veteran Purification

Rite before this training?” all ten pastors said “No.” Also, all ten wrote about why they liked it. Three pastors said that they saw the need for such a rite and that it offered “a transition from military to civilian life.” Three wrote that they liked the theology and that it was Biblically rooted. One of these pastors appreciated the cleansing work of Christ in the rite. Two pastors like that the rite included all five senses (“the parts that are used in combat”). And 1 pastor who had served in the Army for eight years said, “I wish it [the rite] had been available to me.” Eight of the ten pastors said they might use the rite in the future. One of the ten said that maybe he might use it and one pastor did not answer this question. About the rite, one pastor who also serves as reserve chaplain wrote, “I would like to share it with other chaplains.”

Nine of the ten pastors answered “Yes” to the question: “After training, do you better understand military veterans?” One did not answer the question. Four pastors said that after the training that they have more understanding into the world of the military. One pastor said that he was more sensitive to veterans after the training. One pastor said that from the training he better understood “why [his] father never wanted to talk about all he saw.”

To the final question: “After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better?” Nine of the ten pastors answered “Yes.” One did not answer. Three pastors said that the workshop provided them with good resources and books. One pastor said that he was more comfortable and better prepared to dialogue with veterans. One said that he was more sensitive and had better understanding into their world. One final comment was that one pastor suggested that I publish the CVPR.

Data Analysis of Workshop #1

As I analyze the data from the workshop done on December 11, 2012 at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Seymour, IN this is what I conclude:

First, before the training all ten pastors said that they *thought* that they would be able to understand the military world after training was completed. After training was completed, 9 of the ten said that they *did* better understand the military world. This leads me to conclude that the workshop was 90% effective in allowing the parish pastor to enter into the military world. The *ReEntry* video was key to transporting the pastor to this world. Before training 9 of ten pastors *thought* that they would be able to help/counsel better. After training was completed, 9 of ten said that they *would be* able to help/counsel better.

Secondly, pastors were exposed to the CVPR. Before the training, none of the ten pastors had heard or seen such a rite. All ten liked the rite. 8 of the ten said that they might use it in future ministry.

Findings for Workshop #2

On January 15, 2013, I presented the workshop and CVPR to seventeen seminarians in Hartung's *Pastoral Care and Human Experience* class at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Fourteen of seventeen seminarians had no prior military service. Three seminarians had prior military service. Of these three with military service, one had served for five years in the Army, one had served for four years in the Navy and one had served one year as a Navy chaplain candidate. Fourteen seminarians said that they had military veterans in their church. One said that they did not have military veterans in their church. One seminarian put "N/A" and one put a "?" Thirteen seminarians said that they do not counsel a lot of military. Two seminarians said they counsel "some" and two put "N/A."

The age and ministry experience of these seventeen seminarians was:

24–30 years old – 13 seminarians – eight of the thirteen had one year in ministry (vicarage)

31–35 years old – 2 seminarians – one had five years in ministry as a DCE²⁰¹

36–40 years old – 1 seminarian

41–45 years old – 0 seminarians

46–50 years old – 1 seminarian with six years in ministry as a church Deacon/Elder

Twelve seminarians answered “Yes” to the first question: “After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?” Answers varied as to why. Six seminarians said that they had little to no experience with veterans. Two seminarians wrote that to learn from someone with firsthand knowledge would give them a better understanding. And two said that via the workshop they would better understand the veteran’s world and the struggles that veterans have gone through. One seminarian said, “Hopefully I can empathize [with them].” Five seminarians answered the first question with a maybe or “I hope so.”

Twelve of seventeen seminarians answered “Yes” to the next question: “After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?” Four seminarians answered “maybe.” One seminarian said “no” because he thought that the class was too short (ninety minutes). Of those seminarians that said yes, three said that they thought they’d have better understanding/insight into this world. Two said that they would better understand the issues involved. One said that he might be able to empathize better and one said that he had never dealt with this topic before so “any training is better than none.”

Most seminarians liked the *ReEntry* video. Two said that it was very helpful. One said that he “appreciated the mindset of those who have been in combat.” Another seminarian commented that it was beneficial to experience things from the veteran’s point of view.

When I asked the seminarians “Have you ever seen or heard of a Combat Veteran

²⁰¹ Director of Christian Education

Purification Rite before this training?” all seventeen seminarians said “No.” All seventeen also wrote about what they liked about the rite. Three seminarians said they like how it was a public ritual. Two liked that the focus was on Christ cleansing the unclean. Four liked that it was applying God’s word to a specific situation or need. Two liked the physical aspect or that it was multisensory. 1 liked the emphasis on “brokenness” and not on sin. One liked the repetition of the phrase, “Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.” One said he liked the wholeness of the rite. And one said that the rite “answers a different problem than guilt.”

A few dislikes about the CVPR were also expressed by the seminarians. Two said that the rite seemed a bit long and might be shortened in the scripture readings. One did not like the translation of “indignant” and preferred instead “compassionate.” And finally two seminarians expressed two different concerns. The first concern was that one seminarian thought that the rite would be difficult to perform and complete without getting emotional. The other concern was in the section on “divided kingdom” and that the veteran not see himself as part of Satan’s kingdom.

Thirteen seminarians said “Yes” to the question “Do you think you might use the rite in the future?” three said maybe to this question and one said, “If I need it.”

Fourteen of the seventeen seminarians answered “Yes” to the question: “After training, do you better understand military veterans?” One answered “Perhaps.” One answered “to a degree.” And one said “Yes and No.” The later seemed unsure because he “probably will not fully grasp their experience.” Of the fourteen that said “Yes” most wrote why they understood better. Three said that the *ReEntry* video made empathizing easier. One said that the idea of feeling “unclean” was completely new to him. And one said that he better understood why veterans in his family do not speak about their experiences.

To the final question: “After taking this training will you be able to help or counsel better military veterans?” Thirteen of the seventeen seminarians answered “Yes.” One said “perhaps.” two said that this was a good beginning and that they needed more insight. One really did not answer the question but said he would “seek to offer [the veteran] re-entry and acceptance.”

Data Analysis of Workshop #2

An analysis of the data from the workshop done on January 15, 2013 at Concordia Seminary with seventeen seminarians in Hartung’s class leads me to conclude the following:

First, before the training twelve of seventeen seminarians said that they *thought* that they would be able to understand the military world after training was completed. After training was completed, fourteen of the seventeen said that they *did* better understand the military world. This leads me to conclude that the workshop was effective in allowing the seminarian to enter into the military world. Before training twelve of seventeen seminarians *thought* that they would be able to help/counsel better. After training was completed, thirteen of seventeen said that they *would be* able to help/counsel better.

Secondly, seventeen seminarians with years and years of ministry ahead of them were exposed to the CVPR. Before the training, none of the seventeen seminarians had heard or seen such a rite. All seventeen liked the rite. Thirteen of the seventeen said that they might use it in future ministry.

Findings for Workshop #3

On January 15, 2013, I presented the workshop and CVPR to ten pastors enrolled in the D.Min. Program at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. Nine of these pastors had no prior military service. One pastor had prior military service serving for four years in the US Air Force. Eight pastors said that they had military veterans in their church, one pastor said no, they did not have

military veterans and one pastor left that question blank. Seven said that they do not counsel a lot of military. One pastor left this question blank, one said that he counseled some and one said he counseled one to two veterans per year.

The age and ministry experience of these ten pastors was:

25–35 years old – 0 pastors

36–45 years old – 5 pastors with three, nine, twelve, thirteen and seventeen years in ministry

46–55 years old – two pastors with eight and twenty-one years in ministry

56–57 years old – 3 pastors with eleven, twenty-five and thirty years in ministry

All ten pastors answered “Yes” to the first question: “After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?” Answers varied as to why. Two reported that they did not have much experience with veterans. Two said they thought the workshop “will help give them awareness of what soldiers feel and experience.” One said he saw the great need—especially the spiritual healing. One said he thought he would have a better context.

Nine of ten pastors answered “Yes” to the next question: “After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?” One said, “I hope so.” Two thought that they would be better at counseling because they would have “better reservoirs of compassion” and better understanding “as knowledge increases.” Three said things like they would be “better equipped,” that this is a “good tool” and that he would “understand moral conflict better.”

All the pastors liked the ReEntry video. Four said that their reason they liked it was due to the realism portrayed. They said words like “raw” and “plain truth.” One appreciated how it gave “perspective from family members and how they are affected.” And one said it was interesting

how veterans may hear differently what the public says.

When I asked the pastors “Have you ever seen or heard of a Combat Veteran Purification Rite before this training?” Eight of ten pastors said “No.” One put “only from class” so I take that as a “No.” Therefore nine of ten pastors said “No” to this question. One pastor said “only from history.” All pastors wrote about why they liked the rite. Two said they appreciated that it was Biblical and Christ centered. Three said they like the sensory experience. One liked the corporate nature of including the family. One liked the “therapeutic nature – treatment of whole man.” I liked the formality which he thought strengthened the message “Be clean.”

There were several dislikes about the rite with this group. One said that he struggled with the language of clean/unclean and purification, as it still seems overladen with sin/guilt meanings for me. One did not like the blending of formal and informal language and wanted it to be more consistent. One thought the rite was too short and one thought that at times only the soldier should be speaking and not the whole congregation. There was one suggestion to add something about original sin vs. actual sin – not necessarily in the rite but in the presentation. Seven of the ten pastors said they would use the rite in the future. One said yes “with some modification.” One said “possibly” with WWII and Korean Veterans and One left that question blank.

All of the ten pastors answered “Yes” to the question: “After training, do you better understand military veterans?” Two commented how they saw the need and the issues that the veterans face more clearly. One said he saw PTSD as a spiritual problem. One said that the information presented was helpful.

To the final question: “After taking this training will you be able to help or counsel military veterans better?” Eight of the ten pastors answered “Yes.” Two left this question blank. One said that he had tools and resources. One said that he understood better the spiritual side. And one

said that he was “more sensitive to spiritual needs/aspects of PTSD.”

Data Analysis of Workshop #3

As I analyze the data from my workshop presented on January 15, 2013 at Concordia Seminary with pastors in the D.Min. Program this is what I conclude:

First, before the training all ten pastors said that they *thought* that they would be able to understand the military world after training was completed. After training was completed, ten of the ten said that they *did* better understand the military world. This leads me to conclude that the workshop was 100% effective in allowing the parish pastor to enter into the military world. Before training nine of ten pastors *thought* that they would be able to help/counsel better. After training was completed, eight of ten said that they *would be* able to help/counsel better.

Secondly, all the pastors were exposed to the CVPR. Before the training, none of the ten pastors had heard or seen such a rite. All liked the rite. Nine of the ten said that they might use it in future ministry.

Findings for Workshop #4

On January 16, 2014, I presented the workshop and CVPR via Skype to another group of seventeen seminarians in Hartung’s *Pastoral Care and Human Experience* class at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis. I was in Guam at the time and unable to present the material in person. One of the seventeen seminarians was a female M.A. student. Fifteen of these seminarians had no prior military service. Two of these seminarians did. Of these two with military service, one had served for twenty years in the U.S. Air Force and one had served for thirty-one years as a Department of Defense civilian employee. Sixteen seminarians said that they had military veterans in their church and one left this question blank. Sixteen seminarians said that they do not counsel a lot of military. One left this question blank.

The age and ministry experience of these seventeen seminarians was:

23–30 years old – 8 seminarians; one of eight had three years in ministry as a DCE

31–35 years old – 2 seminarians

36–40 years old – 1 seminarian who said he had ten years in ministry (unclear as to what capacity)

41–45 years old – 1 seminarian

46–50 years old – 2 seminarians

51–58 years old – 3 seminarians

Twelve seminarians answered “Yes” to the first question: “After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?” Four said “not sure and “somewhat” and “that is my hope” so I’ll count them as “yes.” Sixteen seminarians said “yes.” One left this answer blank. Answers varied as to why. Seven seminarians thought that they would better understand because the presenter had inside, real life experience and knowledge about the topic. Two said they knew very little about the spiritual wounds of military personnel. Two said that any opportunity to learn more about the military would allow better understanding. One said he saw a need for the cleansing rite.

Fifteen of seventeen seminarians answered “Yes” to the next question: “After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?” One said, “I hope so.” One said “not sure.” Three answered that the reason why was that they would better understand what struggles and issues veterans face. Two said it was because the presenter had first-hand experience. One said that “insight to their experience allows me to start to meet them where they are.” One said that he would be “better in theory but not in experience.”

Most seminarians liked the *ReEntry* video. Due to time constraints not all the video was

shown. Several commented about their appreciation of seeing a “glimpse into the human experience of veterans. Two saw the need for purification. One realized how guilt/spiritual weight might be associated with military service.

When I asked the seminarians “Have you ever seen or heard of a Combat Veteran Purification Rite before this training?” all seventeen seminarians said “No.” 2 commented how they liked that the rite was subjective, personal and that it could be modified. 2 liked the physical aspect of the rite and actual cleansing in it. One liked the kinesthetic components of the rite. Another liked the sense of stability that it gave a veteran. And One liked the responsorial, “Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.”

There were also several things that an occasional seminarian did not like about the rite. One said that the pastor parts were too long. One said that there was no Biblical mandate to do this. One said he disagreed with my translation of Mark 1:41. One was confused as to why words of forgiveness were used when there was no sin. And one did not like dressing the veteran in a white alb²⁰² as eventually it requires taking off. 14 of seventeen said “yes” that they would use the rite in the future. One said “perhaps” and one said “maybe w/adaptations.” Since those answers are all affirmative, I will count them as yes. So sixteen of seventeen said yes. The female M.A. student said “No.”

Fifteen of the seventeen seminarians answered “Yes” to the question: “After training, do you better understand military veterans?” One answered, “I am a military vet.” And one left this question blank. Their answers as to why varied. 3 said that they better understood the issues that veterans face. One said he learned some about PTSD. One said that the training helped him get into the mind of the veteran. One said that he had a “greater understanding of [the] need for [the]

²⁰² An alb is a pastoral robe. It is usually white to symbolize purity.

spiritual side of healing.” And one said that he had a perspective that he did not have before.

To the final question: “After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better?” Sixteen of the seventeen seminarians answered “Yes.” One left it blank. Two said they knew better where veterans were coming from. 2 said that they now had new resources and tools to do so. One said he knew more about how to talk with veterans. One said he had a “beginning foundation.” And one said that he had a better understanding of the “distinction between doing something wrong and not doing something wrong.”

Data Analysis of Workshop #4

An analysis of the data from those seventeen seminarians in Hartung’s class who attended the workshop done on January 16, 2014 at Concordia Seminary leads one to conclude the following:

First, before the training sixteen of seventeen seminarians said that they *thought* that they would be able to understand the military world after training was completed. After training was completed, fifteen of the seventeen said that they *did* better understand the military world. This leads me to conclude that the workshop was effective in allowing the seminarian to enter into the military world. Before training fifteen of seventeen seminarians *thought* that they would be able to help/counsel better. After training was completed, sixteen of seventeen said that they *would be* able to help/counsel better.

Secondly, seventeen seminarians with years and years of ministry ahead of them were exposed to the CVPR. Before the training, none of the seventeen seminarians had heard or seen such a rite. All seventeen liked the rite. Fourteen of the seventeen said that they might use it in future ministry.

Findings for Workshop #5

On April 14, 2015, I presented the workshop and CVPR to nine pastors and two Stephen Ministers at Christ the King Lutheran Church in Williamsburg, VA. Nine of these pastors had no prior military service. Both Stephen Ministers did not have military service although one was married to a veteran. All eleven pastors/Stephen Ministers said that they had military veterans in their church. Five pastors said that they do not counsel a lot of military. Three said “yes” to the question “Do you counsel a lot of military veterans.” One put “some.” And the two Stephen Ministers put “N/A.”

The age and ministry experience of these nine pastors was:

25–35 years old – 1 pastor with seven years in ministry

36–45 years old – 1 pastor with Sixteen years in ministry

46–55 years old – 2 pastors with six years and twenty-two years in ministry

56–65 years old – 3 pastors with thirty-four years, thirty-five years and thirty-six years in ministry

66 plus – 2 pastors with over forty years in ministry

The age and ministry experience of the two Stephen Ministers was: 51 years old with six years and 68 years old with unknown years in ministry²⁰³.

Eight of eleven in the group answered “Yes” to the first question: “After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?” One answered “I hope so” and two said “probably” or “maybe.” Answers varied as to why. One said because he was learning from a military chaplain. One said that he would have better tools to engage in conversation. One said that he would have the most current information. One said that he would understand their

²⁰³ I think this Stephen Minister had 3 years serving in this ministry capacity.

culture and experience better. And one said “the more we interact w/people the more we understand.”

All 11 people answered “Yes” to the next question: “After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?” One wrote that he had “never received training counseling veterans.” One said that the training would help give perspective. 3 said that they would have more understanding and knowledge about the needs of veterans.

Everyone in the group liked the *ReEntry* video. Four liked the authenticity, transparency, realism, and rawness of it. One liked that it was not politically correct. One commented how the video moved PTSD from an academic topic to a first person experience. One liked how it included the family. One liked how it was a glimpse of what veterans experienced in the raw. And 2 liked how it gave insights into feeling and how it opened eyes to a “piece of their world.” One person did not like that actors were used and thought that real veterans would have been better.²⁰⁴

When I asked the group “Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?” Eight of eleven said “No.” One left this answer blank. Two said, “Yes.” One of these two said, “Yes, or similar. Emmanuel Prayer is a compliment to this.” The other person said, “Yes – from a pastor who served in Nam [Vietnam] as a LURP.”²⁰⁵ Three liked the physical, tangible parts of the rite and that they accompanied the spiritual elements. Two liked that the rite could include family. Two liked how the rite was tied to scripture. One liked how personal the rite seemed. One liked that the rite had the ability to help veterans feel cleansed. And one said he appreciated “the authority of Christ exercised for healing and wholeness.” One

²⁰⁴ One of the actors was a Marine veteran and Drill Instructor. To prepare for their roles he made the other actors attend a mini “Boot Camp.”

²⁰⁵ LRRPs or Long-Range Reconnaissance Patrols go into enemy territory to gather intelligence.

person did not like the usage of 1 John 1:8–9. When asked “Do you think you might use the rite in the future” all eleven people said, “Yes.”

All eleven people answered “Yes” to the question: “After training, do you better understand military veterans?” The responses as to why were as follows. It “allowed me to see a life that I will never be a part of personally.” Two really appreciated the video and liked its “transparent exposure.” Finally, the one Stephen Minister wrote that she would share with her veteran husband.

To the final question: “After taking this training will you be better able to help or counsel military veteran?” Eleven of the eleven pastors/Stephen Ministers answered “Yes.” One said that he had more knowledge and thus was “better equipped to serve.” One said he had a better understanding of the pain that veterans have and the sacrifices they make. One said how he was now aware of the need. And finally, one said that he had “never considered before the concept of cleansing in specific ways.”

Data Analysis of Workshop #5

An analysis of the data from the workshop done on April 14, 2015 at Christ the King Lutheran Church in Williamsburg, VA with nine pastors and two Stephen Ministers in the local winkel allows the following conclusions:

First, before the training eight of the eleven pastors/Stephen Ministers said that they *thought* that they would be able to understand the military world after training was completed. After training was completed, eleven of the eleven said that they *did* better understand the military world. This leads me to conclude that the workshop was 100% effective in allowing the parish pastor and Stephen Minister to enter into the military world. Before training, eleven of eleven people *thought* that they would be able to help/counsel better. After training was

completed, eleven of eleven people said that they *would be* able to help/counsel better.

Secondly, all eleven pastors/Stephen Ministers were exposed to the CVPR. Before the training, only two of the eleven people had heard of or seen such a rite. All liked the rite. Eleven of the eleven said that they might use it in future ministry.

Findings for *All* Workshops

Earlier in this chapter I gave separate findings of the five different workshops presented to LCMS pastors, seminarians and Stephen Ministers. In this section I put the findings together of all five workshops. This includes data from sixty-five people: twenty-nine LCMS parish pastors, thirty-four seminarians, and two Stephen Ministers.

57 of 65 people answered “No” to the question: “Have you ever served in the military?”

8 of 65 people answered “Yes” to the question: “Have you ever served in the military?”

Two people had served in the Army, two in the Navy, two in the Air Force, One in both the Army and Coast Guard and one had served as a DOD²⁰⁶ employee. With the exception of two people who had served twenty years and thirty-one years, the average number of years that this group served in the military was six years.

Fifty-nine of sixty-five answered “Yes” to the question: “Do you have military veterans in your church?” Two of sixty-five answered “No” to this question. Four of sixty-five left this question blank or put “N/A.”

Forty-six of sixty-five answered “No” to the question: “Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?” Eight of sixty-five answered “Yes” to this question. Five of sixty-five said “some” and six of sixty-five left this question blank or put “N/A.”

The ages of all individuals involved in the five different workshops was:

²⁰⁶ Department of Defense.

25–35 years old – 29 people

36–45 years old – 9 people

46–55 years old – 14 people

56–65 years old – 10 people

66 plus years old – 3 people

The average ministry experience of all pastors involved was: nineteen years in ministry.

The average ministry experience of the five seminarians who said they had some years ministry in the church as a DCE, church elder, deacon or in youth ministry was: five years in ministry.

The average ministry experience of the two Stephen Ministers was: three years in ministry.

Fifty-six of sixty-five answered “Yes” to the question: “After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?” Eight of sixty-five said “maybe.” One person left it blank.

Fifty-six of sixty-five people answered “Yes” to the question: “After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?” One person answered “No” to this question. Seven people answered “maybe” to this question. One person left this question blank.

Twenty-six of the twenty-nine people who were asked: “What did you like/find of value in the *ReEntry* video?”²⁰⁷ wrote something that they liked. Of those who were asked: “What did you dislike?” only four people indicated dislike by responding.

Sixty-one of sixty-five people answered “No” to the question: “Have you ever seen or heard of a Combat Veteran Purification Rite before this training?” Three of sixty-five people answered “yes” to this question and one person left this question blank.

²⁰⁷ Due to time constraints in the 2 workshops with the seminarian groups, not all the *ReEntry* video was shared. I also changed this question to “What did you like/find of value in class?”

Answers varied as to the two questions: “What do you like about the Purification Rite?” and “What do you dislike about the rite?” Those answers are already stated above in each individual workshop findings and will not be repeated here.

Fifty-five of sixty-five people answered “Yes” to the question: “Do you think you might use the rite in the future?” Seven of sixty-five people answered “Maybe” to this question. One of sixty-five people said “no” to this question. Two people left this question blank.

Sixty-one of sixty-five people answered “Yes” to the question: “After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans?” One of sixty-five answered “No.” One of sixty-five answered “perhaps.” Two people left this question blank.

Sixty of sixty-five people answered “Yes” to the question: “After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help/counsel military veterans better?” One of sixty-five answered “perhaps.” Four people left this question blank.

Data Analysis of *All Workshops*

As I analyze the data from all five of the workshops: to ten pastors on December 11, 2012 at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Seymour, IN; to seventeen seminarians in the *Pastoral Care and Human Experience* class on January 15, 2013 at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, MO, to ten pastors enrolled in the D.Min. Program on January 15, 2013 at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, MO; to seventeen seminarians in the *Pastoral Care and Human Experience* class on January 16, 2014 at Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, MO; and to nine pastors and two Stephen Ministers at Christ the King Lutheran Church in Williamsburg, VA on April 14, 2015, this is what I conclude.

First, a majority of the people involved in the workshops who had no prior military experience were exposed to the military world. Almost all of them reported that there were

military veterans attending their churches. Very few of the sixty-five people had counseled military veterans. There could be several reasons for this. Perhaps the veterans are not in need of counseling. Perhaps they go elsewhere or go as needed. I believe that more veterans would come to the people involved in the workshops if these same people had more experience or knowledge about the military world.

Thirty-eight of the sixty-five people were fairly young, new to the ministry and limited in ministry experiences.

Before the training sixty-four of the sixty-five people reported that they *thought* that they would be able to understand the military world after training was completed. After training was completed, sixty-two of the sixty-five said that they *did* better understand the military world. This leads me to conclude that the workshop was 96% effective in allowing the parish pastor, seminarian, and Stephen Minister to enter into the military world. Before training sixty-one of sixty-four people *thought* that they would be able to help/counsel better military veterans. After training was completed, sixty-three of sixty-four people said that they *would be* able to help/counsel better military veterans. Therefore, I conclude that this part was 100% effective.

Secondly, all sixty-five people were exposed to the Combat Veteran Purification Rite. Before the training, only three of the sixty-five people had heard of or seen such a rite. All sixty-five liked the rite. Sixty-two of the sixty-five said that they might use it in future ministry. The person who said “no” to using the rite was a female M.A. student. It is uncertain why some left this question blank.

In the next chapter, I will reflect upon the implications of this study's findings. I will share how this MAP contributes to ministry and how knowing what we know now from this MAP can help the parish pastor and local congregations better provide pastoral care to veterans.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

“God has washed you. God has sealed you in the blood of Jesus. You are pure, holy, and forgiven. You are clean.”

CVPR

Contributions to Ministry

In this final chapter I will summarize the outcome of my Major Applied Project. I will share how this MAP has already contributed to the ministry of those who attended the workshops and how it might contribute to their future ministry. The CVPR has already impacted the lives of at least three people and has the potential to help many more. To conclude I will make recommendations on where this MAP might have further implications for others in the ministry. I will also share how I have grown personally and professionally because of this Major Applied Project.

There is a well-known story about a man on a beach with thousands of stranded starfish. The starfish are alive but time is of the essence. As the man on the beach throws one back into the sea another person comments that the task is futile. It is impossible to get all the starfish back into the water. The other person urges the man on the beach to give up. The person says something like, “It doesn’t really matter.” To that comment, the man on the beach picks up another starfish, throws it into the water, and says, “It matters to that one.”

I do know for a fact that this MAP and CVPR mattered in the life of one Marine combat veteran. He wrote me a few months after I led him in the CVPR:

Letter from a Christian Marine

Matt,

First, let me say thank you for serving in this capacity. The nagging weight and dark spot on my soul is gone. The clarity in my family, my family life, my relationships, thoughts, prayers, feelings, is literally like a light going on all around me. This brilliant (and vibrant!) clarity was something I was only beginning to touch on in 2010 when my luminous/soul injuries began in earnest to take their toll. Once [I] survived the onslaught of pain, confusion, and the anger that goes with hurting SO MUCH for SO LONG and I got used to the pain it was incredibly hard to remember what it was like walking with God before. The sound of His voice was muted though still present. The feel of the nudge of the Spirit was fuzzy and hard to detect. The peace that surpasses all understanding was relegated to a place in my memory; faith claimed that it was still there to be had but it sure was elusive.

Now...

I walk as though born anew (having already been born again as a child). I see colors, feel nudges, make connections, build relationships, speak words, more impeccably in His way. The shackles have been undone and I am once again free—and feel it!

I am blessed to call you my friend. May it be so forever.

Love in Him,

Your friend (intentionally unnamed)

For four years this combat veteran had struggled with his “soul injuries.” They were “a nagging weight and dark spot on [his] soul.” He was hurt and angry. And it had been going on so long that he was getting use to the pain. All the while though, he wanted to return to the way it was walking with God before his combat experience. Nothing seemed to help him heal. Then the CVPR was done to him and according to his own words healing occurred. Today, he feels “free,” walks as if “born anew,” and feels like the “shackles have been undone.”

From Chapter 5 it can already be concluded that this MAP has contributed (at least in a small way) to the ministry of sixty-five people. Twenty-nine pastors, thirty-four seminarians and two Stephen Ministers attended my workshops and were exposed to the struggles of veterans and

those in the military. The *ReEntry* drama brought up issues that these people may never have given any thought towards. If the theory of exposure behind the OSCAR program does really work, then sixty-three pastors/seminarians and two Stephen Ministers are better prepared to offer pastoral care to those military veterans in their congregations who have PTSD and/or moral injury.

But the number keeps growing. A few weeks after one of my workshops, a pastor who was in attendance contacted me. He had a couple in his parish whose veteran son was struggling with similar issues that I had presented in the workshop. The pastor asked me if he could share my workshop with the couple so they could then share with their son. I said he most certainly could. The pastor shared with the couple and two more people gained the knowledge in this MAP. It was reported to me later that after they had the information from the workshop that they felt they better understood the world of their son. From that understanding they thought they would be able to provide care for him. The couple then shared the information from the workshop with their son. He appreciated the Biblical perspective on his struggles. So sixty-eight people have been helped via this MAP.

Make that sixty-nine people with John. And what about his three pastors that I shared this information with in a twenty-minute conversation. Since that evening, they have studied more about what I shared in my workshop. And what about the one Marine combat veteran mentioned earlier in this chapter. The CVPR definitely changed his life. So make that seventy-three people. And just a few weeks ago I shared the workshop with one more pastor and five seminarians. So the total is at least seventy-nine people.

So what difference does all this make? This MAP and CVPR remind the church to apply the Word of God personally in pastoral care. If a person is hungry you give him bread. If he is

drowning you throw him a life ring. Christ Jesus comforts on a personal, individual level. John was comforted as I shared some of the theology in the Gospel of Mark which led to the development of the CVPR. He died in peace and his family was relieved that an issue that plagued him his adult life was resolved.

Jesus gives life abundantly. My friend on whom I performed the CVPR feels as if he is living a fuller life. And the pastor who attended my workshop was comfortable and had a tool that he might not have had to help the couple that called concerning their veteran son who was struggling. This MAP has allowed many pastors, seminarians, and Stephen Ministers to be more effectively trained. Because of it they will give better pastoral care to those “Johns” who may come to them.

Recommendations

So where does this MAP go from here? I suggest that the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod’s Ministry to the Armed Forces and its program entitled Operation Barnabas adopt my CVPR. Operation Barnabas already has the goal to provide training and guidance to local congregations to provide care and support to our military members, their families, and veterans in local communities. What if all Operation Barnabas congregations had the knowledge in this MAP? What if the pastors of those Operation Barnabas congregations offered the CVPR or something similar to their veterans?

Speaking of which, I could see the CVPR done in a congregational setting or perhaps even in a divine worship. Churches have sending services when they send short-term missionaries to various places in the world and sometimes when they return churches have a service where the missionaries share what was accomplished. The idea would be something similar for the veteran. Although not sent by the church, a church still might choose to have a service to welcome them

home, acknowledge the service given, and help with the reentry process.

This MAP and CVPR might also be beneficial in group therapy sessions at Veteran's hospitals or perhaps even in hospital Clinical Pastoral Education (CPE) programs. After my workshops were completed and most of this Major Applied Project was written, my friend introduced me to Uwe Siemon-Netto's books *The Acquittal of God* and *Triumph of the Absurd*. Both books could have been included in the literature review section of this MAP. They fit nicely with my conclusion. Siemon-Netto is German and was a journalist who spent years in Vietnam during the war. After the war, Siemon-Netto discovered Dietrich Bonhoeffer's theology which helped him in his own struggles. That theology was also the catalyst that led him to become a Lutheran chaplain and therapist for veterans. Most of his work is done with veterans in hospital group sessions. Perhaps a person like Siemon-Netto could use the CVPR as a basis for group therapy. What kind of impact might he have with those veterans?

This MAP may benefit already established programs like the *Immanuel Prayer* which one pastor mentioned in his survey. Margaret Webb defines Immanuel Prayer Ministry as a "process of connecting personally and interactively with the LORD and removing barriers and hindrances to an intimate, interactive lifestyle of connection with Him."²⁰⁸

This MAP and CVPR have many potential implications outside the military as well since PTSD and moral injury happen often in the civilian world. For example, this MAP, its theology, and the CVPR might benefit parish pastors if they slightly modified it and used it for sick calls, after accidents, or after a tragic death. If someone wanted to use this MAP as a basis for further study I would suggest considering further study and ritual development to provide healing for people after a school shooting or a bombing like the ones that occurred recently in Paris.

²⁰⁸ Accessed 10/10/2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GkMdh-UQmvM>.

Finally, I would suggest that throughout this MAP I ask the question: is moral injury an experience or a state/condition? I presented a real person who was a Christian soldier. He was ordered to war. He took the life of the enemy. He did not believe he sinned. Somehow he was unclean. Was that uncleanness the result of his experience and thus he felt unclean? What I have shared in this MAP from the Psalms and the Gospel of Mark seems to favor that it was a result of experiences. Or was the uncleanness a condition or state because the ugliness of war simply rubbed off? The passage from Numbers seems to support this. After all this work, I believe the answer is both.

Pastors learn and care about their people. But there is much more work that the church could do to develop the spiritual toolbox especially in the area of pastoral care for veterans. I'd like to see more work done exploring the theme of clean and unclean. More study in the church should occur in the area of moral injury as well. And the church might develop and use more formal rituals to speak the Gospel of Jesus into the lives of those who suffer with PTSD and moral injury. These individualistic rituals might better re-integrate Christian combat veterans not only back into society as productive citizens but also in the church as fully alive disciples.

Contributions to Personal and Professional Growth

This MAP has greatly contributed to my personal growth as a man, father, and husband as well as to my professional growth as an active duty Navy chaplain. Being deployed to Ramadi, Iraq with 3/7 changed me. It was the most rewarding and at the same time most challenging time of my life.²⁰⁹ When I came home perhaps I suffered from PTSD and moral injury. Enrolling in the D.Min. Program was beneficial to my sanity. Taking the classes allowed a refuge where I

²⁰⁹ 3/7 was the "surge battalion" in 2007 and was in Ramadi when it went from bad to good. For further information about Marine Corps deployments in Iraq read the books *Senator's Son* or *The Gift Of Valor*. The former depicts futuristic events but portrays 3/7's time in Ramadi, Iraq right before I became their chaplain. The later shares the story of a 3/7 Medal of Honor recipient.

could ask hard questions about the Iraq war, struggle with the effects of war on my personal life, and find some healing.

When I met John his life was changed but so was mine. That hospice experience was the catalyst for my MAP proposal. In researching my MAP and how to help him, I began the process to help myself. Along the way, God brought people into my life who showed me I was on the right path to recovery. KJ Sanchez and her *ReEntry* drama helped me immensely, and perhaps many others,²¹⁰ to get what was going on inside, out. As a bridge person, the drama challenged me to think about a ritual to wash the blood off the hands of warriors. Studying about the purification rituals of many cultures was quite enjoyable, intriguing, and made me begin to think about the origins of these rituals and what rituals the church had in this area. Having the belief that all good things come from God, I tried to connect these rituals of many cultures to the Holy Scriptures.

For a long time the research and work I put into researching this MAP and writing the CVPR was a ritualistic healing for me. Teaching the five workshops, forced me to take a hard look at myself – at my beliefs about war, at how I provided, or failed to provide good pastoral care to veterans, at my own injuries, and at how I, a Navy chaplain and bridge person, shared what I had learned from my experiences with the church.

Recently, I had the CVPR done to me in the Chapel of the Holy Apostles at Concordia Seminary. I suffered with PTSD. I had moral injury. These of course came from my own personal experiences with war, death, and trauma, but they also came from secondary exposure as I had walked with people like John and my Marine friend. Some of their trauma rubbed off on me. So I wanted – no, I needed to be clean. Thanks be to Jesus that I am.

²¹⁰ Hundreds of Marines saw the drama at MCRD, PI when I helped bring it there.

Conclusion

This MAP began with a story about John. Since any good story should be an inclusio, I will conclude there as well and then give a word of caution to all those who provide pastoral care to sheepdogs. What if the story was rewritten? In this version, John has his family call his parish pastor. The pastor visits the hospice room. John shares exactly what he said with me. Before the call on John, the pastor, who is a good pastor, has learned about his people, especially his military veterans. He had attended my MAP workshop and saw the CVPR. He is better prepared for John and his question. When asked by John, he turns to the Gospel of Mark, to King David, to the Book of Numbers and shares. The pastor asks John if he wants to have the CVPR performed on him. John answers, “Yes.” The pastor individualizes the CVPR for John. He invites his family into the room. And right then and there, the parish pastor as a bridge person – understanding John’s spiritual needs as well as understanding his military experience – performs it. The rite concludes when the pastor says “John, in the name of Jesus you are clean.” John responds, “I am clean. Amen.”

APPENDIX ONE

COMBAT VETERAN PURIFICATION RITE (CVPR)

Generic Template

Preparation: A bowl of water, anointing oil, and a white alb is placed on the altar. A cross or crucifix is on the altar in the center. The congregation may consist of the combat veteran as well as his/her family, and friends but it also may refer just to the combat veteran. The pastor stands at the altar and the combat veteran stands before a kneeler which is placed close to the altar. Those participating may gather around him/her. One chair is in front of the altar next to the kneeler.

The CVPR Begins:

Pastor: In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Congregation: Amen.

Pastor: Blessed be God the Father for with him all things are possible.¹

Combat Veteran: Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.²

Pastor: Blessed be God the Son who stands with and where sinners stand.³

Combat Veteran: Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.

Pastor: Blessed be God the Holy Spirit for the place where you dwell is pure.

Combat Veteran: Lord, if you are willing, you can make me clean.

(Combat veteran kneels. The Pastor places his hand upon the combat veterans head for prayer.)

Pastor: Let us pray. Son of God, we indeed are not worthy to stoop down and untie your sandals. We are unclean with blood on our hands. Touch us Lord, exchange places with us. Give to us your purity and take away all that is unclean. In your precious name we pray.

Congregation: Amen.

Pastor: Hear these words from the holy Gospel of Mark. A man with leprosy came to [Jesus] and begged him on his knees, "If you are willing, you can make me clean." Jesus was indignant. He reached out his hand and touched the man. "I am willing," he said. "Be clean!" Immediately the

¹ Mark 14:36

² Mark 1:40

³ Mark 1:9

leprosy left him and he was cleansed.⁴

Combat Veteran: Lord Jesus, on my knees I beg you to touch me, to make me clean.

(The pastor dips his hand in the water on the altar and makes the sign of the cross upon the combat veteran's forehead when he says "Be clean." Pastor may also make the sign of the cross over the eyes, ears, and nose.)

Pastor: The Lord Jesus is willing and removes all that is unclean. For those who have gone to war and have returned and still struggle even now with what they have heard, smelled, tasted, seen, and touched Jesus says to you, "Be clean."

(The pastor may also do the same for family members of the combat veteran who are present.)

Others: Lord Jesus, I beg you to touch me, to make me clean.

Pastor says same as above.

Congregation: Amen.

(The combat veteran arises and sits in the chair next to the kneeler. The pastor asks the combat veteran to remove his/her shoes.)

Pastor: Hear these words from the holy Gospel of Mark. A few days later, when Jesus again entered Capernaum, the people heard that he had come home. They gathered in such large numbers that there was no room left, not even outside the door, and he preached the word to them. Some men came, bringing to him a paralyzed man, carried by four of them. Since they could not get him to Jesus because of the crowd, they made an opening in the roof above Jesus by digging through it and then lowered the mat the man was lying on. When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralyzed man, "Son, your sins are forgiven."⁵

Combat Veteran: Lord Jesus, I am paralyzed by memories and thoughts of war. I believe that I have served honorably yet the consequences of where I have walked still plague me.

(The pastor washes his/her feet.)

Pastor: The Lord Jesus has forgiven you of all of your sins. He removes all uncleanness that paralyzes you. He says simply, "Walk."

(The combat veteran puts shoes back on and arises.)

Congregation: Amen.

Pastor: Hear these words from the holy Gospel of Mark. "How can Satan drive out Satan? If a kingdom is divided against itself, that kingdom cannot stand. If a house is divided against itself, that house cannot stand. And if Satan opposes himself and is divided, he cannot stand; his end

⁴ Mark 1:40-42

⁵ Mark 2:1-5

has come. In fact, no one can enter a strong man's house and carry off his possessions unless he first ties up the strong man. Then he can rob his house."⁶

Combat Veteran: Lord Jesus, I feel divided internally (and even with my family) and I don't want to be.

(Family members/friends present may at this time hold hands before the altar of the Lord.)

Pastor: The Lord Jesus has come and he has tied up the strong man. Satan has been driven out. Jesus rescues you and makes you his own possession. You, your house, and your family are completely and totally under Jesus' kingdom. You stand united, loved by God.

Congregation: Amen.

Pastor: Hear these words from the holy Gospel of Mark. When Jesus had again crossed over by boat to the other side of the lake, a large crowd gathered around him while he was by the lake. Then one of the synagogue leaders, named Jairus, came, and when he saw Jesus, he fell at his feet. He pleaded earnestly with him, "My little daughter is dying. Please come and put your hands on her so that she will be healed and live." While Jesus was still speaking, some people came from the house of Jairus, the synagogue leader. "Your daughter is dead," they said. "Why bother the teacher anymore?" Overhearing what they said, Jesus told him, "Don't be afraid; just believe." He did not let anyone follow him except Peter, James and John the brother of James. When they came to the home of the synagogue leader, Jesus saw a commotion, with people crying and wailing loudly. He went in and said to them, "Why all this commotion and wailing? The child is not dead but asleep." But they laughed at him. After he put them all out, he took the child's father and mother and the disciples who were with him, and went in where the child was. He took her by the hand and said to her, "*Talitha kum!*" (which means "Little girl, I say to you, get up!"). Immediately the girl stood up and began to walk around (she was twelve years old). At this they were completely astonished. He gave strict orders not to let anyone know about this, and told them to give her something to eat.⁷

Combat Veteran: Lord Jesus, I know all too well war and death. I cry and wail to you Lord to remove from me this uncleanness.

(The pastor washes the hands of the combat veteran at the altar. The spouse's hands might also be washed. The hands are dried and the couple may hold hands at the altar. A white cloth may be placed around them.)

Pastor: The Lord Jesus has conquered death and has risen from the grave. Jesus restores life. Lord Jesus give life abundantly even to those who have taken life. Do not be afraid; just believe.

(If the combat veteran wishes the pastor may dress him/her in a white robe.)

⁶ Mark 3:23-27

⁷ Mark 5:21-24, 35-43

Pastor: Let us pray: Lord Jesus, truly you are the Son of God. Thank you for accomplishing your mission, for living a perfect life, for going to the cross. Thank you for giving me your righteousness, your holiness, your cleanness. Thank you for removing from me the effects and consequences of war and therein that is unclean. Be with me now and always and let me remain at the foot of your cross where those in white robes are for it is there that your blood covers me.

Lord's Prayer

(Combat veteran kneels. Anointing oil⁸ is placed on the forehead of the combat veteran in the sign of the cross.)

Combat Veteran: Lord Jesus, if you are willing, you can make me clean.

Pastor: (Anointing the combat veteran's head) God has washed you. God has sealed you in the blood of Jesus. You are pure, holy, and forgiven. You are clean. Go in peace.

Combat Veteran: I am clean.

Congregation: Amen.

(A suggested hymn like one below may be sung.)

Hymn #435 "Come to Calvary's Holy Mountain"⁹ By: James Montgomery

1. Come to Calvary's holy mountain,
Sinners, ruined by the fall;
Here a pure and healing fountain
Flows for you, for me, for all,
In a full perpetual tide,
Opened when our Savior died.

2. Come in poverty and meanness,
Come defiled, without, within;
From infection and uncleanness,
From the leprosy of sin,
Wash your robes and make them white;
Ye shall walk with God in light.

3. Come in sorrow and contrition,
Wounded, impotent, and blind;
Here the guilty, free remission,
Here the troubled, peace may find.
Health this fountain will restore;
They that drink shall thirst no more.

⁸ Mark 6:13

⁹ *Lutheran Service Book*. St. Louis: CPH, 2006

4. They that drink shall live forever;
'Tis a soul renewing flood.
God is faithful; God will never
Break His covenant of blood,
Signed when our Redeemer died,
Sealed when He was glorified.

APPENDIX TWO

DOCUMENTARY PLAY SCRIPT

ReEntry by Emily Ackerman and KJ Sanchez

(Permission granted by KJ Sanchez to include in MAP only in this format.)

Revised September 20, 2010

Contact:

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ReEntry September 20, 2010

Production History

ReEntry was commissioned by Two River Theater Company, Red Bank, NJ (Aaron Posner, Artistic Director; Guy Gsell, Managing Director; Robert M. Rechnitz, Executive Producer). *ReEntry* received its world premiere on January 24, 2009 at Two River Theater Company, Red Bank, NJ (Aaron Posner, Artistic Director; Tom Werder, Managing Director; Robert M. Rechnitz, Executive Producer; Joan Rechnitz, Associate Producer). The production was directed by KJ Sanchez, with scenic and costume design by Marion Williams, lighting design by Thom Weaver, sound design by Zachary Williamson, video design by Kevin Camoosa, dramaturgy by Ken Cerniglia, and stage management by Denise Cardarelli. The cast was as follows:

Joseph HarrellMan 1 (*C.O. and others*)

Sameerah Luqmaan-HarrisWoman 2 (*Mom, Maria, Lisa and others*)

Bobby MorenoMan 3 (*Charlie, Tommy and others*)

PJ Sosko.....Man 2 (*John, Pete and others*)

Sheila TapiaWoman 1 (*Liz, Suzanne, Rebecca and others*)

ReEntry received its New York Premiere on January 11, 2010 at Urban Stages, New York, NY (Frances Hill, Founder/Artistic Director; Lauren Schmiedel, Managing Director). The production was directed by KJ Sanchez, with scenic and costume design by Marion Williams, lighting design by Thom Weaver, sound design by Zachary Williamson, video design by Alex Koch, dramaturgy by Ken Cerniglia, and stage management by Denise Cardarelli. Publicity by Joe Trentacosta at Springer Associates, PR. The cast remained the same as above.

Sources

ReEntry comprises interviews with members of the United States Marine Corps and their families. All names have been changed to respect confidentiality.

Cast and Characters

Each *ReEntry* actor plays at least one principal and multiple supporting roles as follows:

Man 1, mid-40s – plays C.O. and others

Man 2, early 30s – plays John, Pete and others

Man 3, early 20s – plays Charlie, Tommy and others

Woman 1, late 20s – plays Liz, Suzanne, Rebecca and others

Woman 2, 40s – plays Mom, Maria, Lisa and others

The major characters in order of appearance:

C.O. (M1): *High-ranking Marine Corps officer (Commanding Officer); a mature, commanding, compassionate, natural leader.*

John (M2): *Marine Corps officer early in his career; hot-headed and charismatic.*

Tommy (M3): *Mid-level enlisted Marine and Charlie’s superior; married, with children; acts as a father-figure to Charlie.*

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Charlie (M3): *Young, early-career enlisted Marine; conflicted.*

Mom (W2): *Mother to John, Charlie and Liz; trying to be supportive of her grown children.*

Liz (W1): *Liberal leaning; trying to understand the Marine Corps and her brothers.*

Pete (M2): *Gunnery sergeant who was badly wounded and as a result is now retired.*

Maria (W2): *Pete’s wife; strong, compassionate and sweet.*

These supporting characters appear briefly:

Rebecca (W1): *Marine officer who is conflicted about her service.*

Lisa (W2): *Professional, career Marine, currently a captain.*

Suzanne (W1): *Ex-wife of a Marine who has been deployed multiple times; comes from a military family.*

Frank (V.O.): *Father of a deceased Marine who shows news footage of the battle that killed his son to anyone who will watch it; appears only through voiceover.*

NOTES ON PRODUCTION AND PERFORMANCE:

As an actor-driven documentary play, *ReEntry* requires minimal props, scenery, and costumes so that the five actors can fully execute all costume and scene changes. Shifts in lighting can aid transitions. Text, image, and video projections may be employed to introduce characters, suggest scene locations, and illustrate themes that reflect our 21st-century media culture.

Actor transformations between characters should be indicated with posture and voice but may be supported with a slight shift in costume (e.g., taking off Mom’s sweatshirt and tying it around the waist to create Maria; adding an eye patch and paralyzed arm to John to create Pete; putting sunglasses on Charlie to create Tommy, etc.).

Because the text is taken from interviews – with the interviewer’s questions omitted – question marks on declarative sentences indicate a solicitation of comprehension from the interviewer, i.e., “You understand what I’m talking about here?” Addresses to the “interviewer” should be taken out to the audience.

The culture of the Marine Corps is full of strength, pride and humor. Self-pity and sentimentality should be avoided while performing *ReEntry*, even when discussing difficult subject matter.

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ReEntry

(The audience enters an empty space. At curtain, a projection appears.)

PROJECTION: The dialogue in this play was taken directly from interviews with real people. Names and details have been changed to respect confidentiality.

(The sound of a recorder clicking on.)

(Lights. C.O. enters.)

PROJECTION: A conference room in Washington, D.C.

C.O., a high-ranking officer.

C.O.

(addresses theatre/conference audience) Good evening. Can everyone hear me all right?

First, thank you for inviting me here to speak to you today. I'm truly honored.

Now, as each of you prepare yourself for your child's return, I think it's important to take into account how we prepare them before they go, so as to better understand who they are when they come back. What I want to do is engage you for a few seconds and ask that you suspend your disbelief. Put yourselves in the boots of your son or daughter, eighteen years old, last year's high school senior that's going into combat for the very first time. The brief I'm gonna give you is very similar to the brief I give Second Lieutenants coming into the Marine Corps. And out of respect for who you are, the mothers and fathers of those serving, I'm not going to pull any punches. I think it's important for you to hear exactly how we are training your children. I'll talk about how we prepare – the mental, moral, spiritual, emotional aspects of our preparation. So we can take Marines into the cauldron of war and have them fight to survive, and more importantly to come out on the other side whole.

And we do so not because there is some mythical American warrior culture. I'm here to tell you it doesn't exist. Believing America possesses a warrior culture reflects more wishful thinking than reality. Much has been said about Americans being desensitized to violence, via Hollywood and video games. But there is no correlation between watching two-dimensional, third-party violence and having the faculties to face and kill an armed opponent while doing so inside the intensity of fear for one's own life. We fear interpersonal violence to our core. Even though we've seen hundreds of killings and car crashes on television, our alleged comfort with interpersonal violence is an illusion. We have to shatter these illusions because there's a severe hazard when the expectations of combat are based on wishful thinking and dreaming of Ramboesque achievements rather than harsh, cold reality and rigorous drill.

So when I prepare your children, I do so first through classic behavioral conditioning, to create unshakeable habits. Next, I prepare their bodies and minds to recognize and accept the stress of combat, the seeming chaos of combat as being normal.

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(C.O. exits. VIDEO PROJECTION: a montage of Marine Corps might and glory.

MUSIC: The Raconteurs' "Salute Your Solution." Three upright gear lockers on wheels help frame the space. The four other actors create a "military" physical interlude. We see the cast is strong and working as a well-oiled machine. Then a blast of light and sound as everyone hits the deck. One-by-one the actors playing the FAMILY rise.)

PROJECTION: The Family:

John, a USMC Captain, age 32.

Charlie, a Lance-Corporal, age 21.

Liz, their sister, age 29.

Phyllis, their mom, age 58.

LIZ

Which one, John or Charlie? Yeah, both of my brothers have been. Yeah, both are Marines... I know. You should see the looks I get when I tell my liberal New York artist friends I have two brothers who are Marines. I usually don't tell people.

I remember some woman, the wife of a guy I was working with – the subject of the war came up and I said I had two brothers in. She gave me this look and then was like, “Ooooh” – you know, all knowing or something. And then she asked me where I was from. People always ask me that when they find out. Where I'm from – like it is going to hold the key to why in God's name anyone would join the military. We're from right near Portland, Oregon. And then they go “Ooooh” – like that means something. I don't know what it's supposed to mean. Like Portland is some conservative military hotbed or something? Portland is known for its pro-military attitude? That doesn't even make any sense. Portland is known for like, roses. And rain. Oh hey though – when you interview John and Charlie... don't go out drinking with them. They will fuck you up.

CHARLIE

Wait, what is this about? You want to know what it's like to come home? Uh, you want the good side or the dark side?

JOHN

Well, when you come back they tell us, you know, the usual fuckin' stuff: “Don't drink and drive.” “Don't kill your neighborhood.”

CHARLIE

What? You're gonna have to form that into a question. Or maybe you did, and I just wasn't paying attention. Uh... how do they... de-program you from being all tensed out? Is that what you were asking me?

JOHN

What did I miss the most? Uh... vagina.

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CHARLIE

Everything. Be more specific.

JOHN

Being able to take a shit and no one comes in.

CHARLIE

(like the interviewer is an idiot:) Uh, comfort?

JOHN

Basically anything you do for fun, I missed.

MOM

Now you're going to take what we say and put it in your play? Oh! Oooh! Okay! Well, that's fun! And you're talking to all sorts of people who've just gotten back? Just Marines? Why is that? Oh, well, huh. So you want me to talk about my boys... about John and Charlie? Oh, you've met them. Were they nice to you? Oh good. Did they swear a lot? Oh, I know.

(LIZ and CHARLIE exit. Man 2 and Woman 2 transform into PETE and MARIA.)

PROJECTION: A restaurant in southern California.

Pete and Maria.

PETE

When I first got back, they sent me to this boxing match – Don King, you know – and everybody cheered when they introduced me. A lot of people came up to me: “Thank you for your service.” I had a *lot* of really nice things done for me – but very public, you know. And I used to be a little bit embarrassed, thinking, “The only reason you're doing this is because I got wounded.” And to

me getting wounded doesn't make you a hero – you know, that's the one gun fight I lost! Getting shot doesn't make me anything.

MARIA

They mean so well.

PETE

I know, they mean so well. It's very genuine I'm sure. The problem's all mine – the way I'm taking it, I know. I guess it's just— I think— now there's what I know and what I think and I'll try to stick to what I know and stay away from what I think! (*laughs*) And what I know... is that no one's gonna tell you the truth. They're never gonna tell you the way things really are over there. They're only gonna exhibit chest-thumping, the “we were in the shit” drunken bar talk. I was right there. We were leading the invasion and what I read in these books is utter nonsense.

MARIA

And it's always— out of all the books that are picked, that are made into movies, it's always those kind. For instance, *Generation Kill*. *Jarhead*— that was not endorsed by the military, by the way.

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PETE

When I was wounded, this was Fallujah, 7 April 2004, when I came to in the hospital, I didn't know which way was up. But all of us on the ward, we did what we usually do: we formed ourselves into a unit. We got up out of our beds and would meet, our little makeshift unit, and we did something they don't do now: we talked about it. “How'd you get hit?” And we'd *laugh* about it. We'd tease each other about being stupid enough to get hit. Oh man, they teased me mercilessly – you can imagine – getting shot in the head with an RPG! You know what I mean when I say RPG? Yeah, a rocket-propelled grenade! Exploded on my head! I was perfect fodder for their teasing!

MARIA

They do, they tease each other all the time. Sure, I laugh about it too – I mean I never want to laugh, what I really wanted to do was cry – especially seeing all those boys, seeing all those boys when Pete was in the hospital. But no, I never did, I never cried.

Well, getting through that time... all my strength, believe it or not, came from belonging to something bigger than yourself. I don't know if it sounds cliché, but when you're a Gunny's wife, and there are so many other wives looking up to you, you have to be strong. You have to be a model for the others. He wasn't gonna show how hard this was, so I wouldn't show it. And when Pete first got back, your family, your friends, they were always around. They never let you be alone!

(*PETE and MARIA exit. Lights change. The conference room. C.O. enters.*)

PROJECTION: Emotion

Energy

Fear

Mental fatigue

Sleep loss

Stress

Surprise

Uncertainty

C.O.

It takes seven pounds of pressure from my index finger to pull the trigger on an M16 service rifle. When I pull that trigger and I initiate that cycle functioning, I send a sixty-two-grain bullet down range at 32 hundred feet per second. And when it reaches its target, it pierces flesh, it bursts internal organs, and it shatters bone. And in that second, you take everything from that person that they were ever gonna have, or ever did have. You think back to the number of times that his mother changed his diapers, when he learned to walk, went to school, fell in love, and had a family. We are naturally conditioned to *not* pull the trigger – we can't have that in the Marine Corps.

Now just as you and I medically inoculate ourselves against diseases by introducing a small dose of the pathogen to our body, the same holds true for the viruses of fear, exhaustion, uncertainty and sleep deprivation. In short, we give ourselves “inoculations” to the viruses of combat. And then we prepare for the act of killing, the essence of war.

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C.O. (cont'd)

We do not dehumanize the enemy. We do not need to create emotional distance from the fellow human beings we would be killing. Back in training – not in the battlefield – we had imaged our way through the act of killing. We already had made the decision to pull the trigger. We had already asked God to forgive us for what we were about to do.

I tell my men: “When we kill, we kill as a unit, we kill as a team, we kill as a pack. We don't kill as an individual.” For that reason, those deaths are on me. And I'll answer to my maker. It's important for leaders to do that. As a forty-something-year-old Commanding Officer, I should be able to do that. I should have more emotional shock absorbers, more inoculations in my system, than an eighteen-year-old – last year's high school senior.

(C.O. exits. Lights change. The FAMILY enters.)

CHARLIE

Why did I join? I dunno, I wanted some, some life experience. And not to mention we were at war and a bunch of my friends were doing it too.

And, it was, you know, like reading the paper – the thing like, what happened, like... oh, so many people were killed today, da, dit, dit, da... And a lot of people were like, “Oh, God, that's so sad!” – blah, blah... It pissed me off! Like I get really mad about it.

And you kinda— I don't know, if you get a chance to do something and then know... know people, like peers of yours that have done it and returned, you know, so it was...

That's kinda how it came about.

JOHN

Why is being a Marine awesome? Uh... because, we get to blow stuff up and break stuff and then build shit and save people and girls like to sleep with us.

MOM

John is... intense. That's the first word that comes to mind when you think about John. He enlisted in the Marines right out of high school, and I'll tell you, I was furious with him. I was devastated. And I was so anti-Marines? Anti-military? I was absolutely furious with him.

Because I always saw John as straight college.

LIZ

John went in first. And I remember at the time – I remember thinking when he went in, “Oh this is a mistake. Why would you ever want to do that?” Because I still— even though our father had been in the Navy, but you know, that was way before we were born... and anyway, my parents are divorced... he was pretty much out of the picture... But no, I still had no concept what it was

like to be a “military family” because it’s this huge other thing. And I was really pissed off – just from the “I’m in college, I’m very liberal, the military is bad” sort of way? So John was enlisted for four years, then he got out and he worked as a mortician – I know – then finished college and he went back in as an officer. My younger brother, Charlie – he enlisted like two years ago. Oh, and I was totally pissed when Charlie went in! ‘Cause there was a war! I mean, come on! You are going to join during a war? On purpose?

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MOM

I think Charlie joined— hm... I think – looking back, of course – it was that his brother had joined and he has... I think he’s got a lot of admiration for John? I think that may have been part of it?

(MOM exits.)

JOHN

I never felt like I fit in on the outside. That’s why I went back in and became an officer. After I got out of the Marine Corps when I was in the first time I worked for a funeral home. People are fucking stupid. That’s why I couldn’t handle it. Not the death – that’s no big deal. That shit doesn’t bother me at all – never did. It’s the worthless trash you have to deal with. Grandpa died and the whole family is screaming at each other. He only died a few days ago but Grandma is already shacking up with someone else. His worthless kids are fighting over money and the grandkids just want a nice funeral for him. I remember one time a fireman died and there was a fucking parade for him because it was after 9/11. But the thing is he didn’t die fighting a fire or rescuing anybody – he died on his goddamned day off crashing a snow-mobile into a tree. And I have to go to a parade a mile long because everyone has a hard-on for firemen. But then an hour or so later I have to go pick up a dead four-year-old and no one’s throwing a parade for him, so what the fuck?

LIZ

John’s making me read this book... it’s called *Gates of Fire*? He’s like, “Here’s a book. I love it. You need to read it.”

JOHN

And you know what? This is the only job where not only do I get to just be myself, but actually me being me gets the job done better. There is no other job that I could do.

LIZ

And so I’m reading it— or, uh, I’m *trying* to read it. It’s hard to get through. It’s total gore porn, super bloody and violent. I think he read it in officer candidate school? Anyway, it’s about the battle of Thermopylae – the three hundred Spartan warriors that held off the Persian Empire? Yeah, *The 300*! But don’t tell John you learned about Thermopylae from that movie ‘cause he gets really pissed off. He’s all like, “We’ve been fighting wars for 5000 years! Nobody knows anything until they see it in some fucking movie. Hasn’t anybody ever read a goddamned history book?”

(JOHN and LIZ exit. Lights. Music. TOMMY enters.)

PROJECTION: A Bar in Oceanside, CA.

Tommy, a USMC Staff Sergeant.

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TOMMY

Around here people don’t treat you differently when they find out you’re in the Marine Corps.

Northern California some lady called me a baby-killer. I was like in a bar and some lady asked me what I did. “I’m in the Marine Corps.” “Oh, you kill people.” And I’m like, “I don’t like to talk about that.” “Oh, you’re a baby killer.” And I kinda got offended at first. And then I was like, I’m not gonna let her ignorance get to me – not gonna let it ruin my day. So she’s, “You’re a baby killer.” (*shifts strategy*) “Yeah, got any kids?” “AAAAH!” She went off. I’m like, “Look, I’m not a baby killer, okay? I just do what I gotta do.”

People will bitch about us, you know? We drink a lot. We party. Work hard, party hard. Party like rock-stars, fuck like porn-stars type of thing. ‘Cause you know you are going to be in some shit-hole desert, it’s going to be hot, it’s going to be boring, it’s going to be dangerous, so why not have a good time while we are here, you know?

I deployed five times. *Cinco*. I came back single two times, and after that I was either engaged or married. The first time I came back, I bought a car. I came back, my buddy picked me up, surprised my parents, and then we just went out and drank. I had just turned twenty-one. The second time, you know, you just appreciate life a little bit more, but you’re still kinda edgy. A lot of guys who go into big cities get flustered – don’t want to be around big crowds. They’d go to bars, but small bars like this, not big “excuse me, excuse me” kinda bars. They’d stay away from that as much as possible – because you can’t control that environment. When I was out there, I had full control of everything, like a ring master: I’d radio in, “Hey we got these guys here, these guys there...” And you come back and you’re like, “This guy keeps looking at me weird.” The third time I came back, I was a little conceited – whatever. The fourth time I came back, my wife was pregnant. I just laid in bed with her and rubbed her tummy all night. I rubbed her tummy and just tried to catch up to what I missed. That time I was more mellow, ‘cause my son was being born, so I was just focused on that. This time coming back *sucked*.

(*TOMMY exits. PETE and MARIA enter.*)

PROJECTION: Pete and Maria.

PETE

Best thing for me was to get that uniform back on and get back to work. All I could think about was getting fixed up and getting back to my unit. I felt so bad, you know? Here I am going to boxing matches, and my guys are still there, still fighting. I needed to get back to work, get back into the fight. And you realize you can’t keep up anymore? Like in my case, I’ll never be able to fire a rifle again. And if you can’t fight, then you can’t be a Marine anymore.

MARIA

Well, some can find another job. There are wounded guys who are still— you don’t have to be—
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PETE

Yeah, you don’t have to be a trigger puller. But for me, even if the offer were on the table, I wouldn’t have taken it. I was there to fight, I was there to deploy.

MARIA

Pete fought in the Gulf War and then Iraqi Freedom, and right after the invasion he signed up to go right back – which I was not thrilled about. He had just gotten home from one deployment and turned right around and signed up for another, Fallujah... and then he got wounded.

PETE

I remember— I knew what the paper work was gonna say. I got out of the hospital— I mean, I was still seeing doctors, but I was back on base and showing up for work every day. But all the time, I knew what the paperwork was gonna say. I knew when I got it— but even still... it just

stung. When you see it says: “Unfit for Service” – that stings. No matter how much you’re ready for it, it stings. There... *(laughs)* That’s my whining for the day.

MARIA

I remember in a weird way thinking, “Maybe it’s gonna come back and it’s gonna say that you’re not unfit!” He didn’t even want to admit that he was wounded in the way he was.

PETE

It was weird, you know, still being on base, and everybody who went through what you went through... they’re gone. You feel really isolated – everybody’s over there, or getting ready to go fight, and you feel really bad about that, like a guy on the outside looking in. Agh! The days that would *kill* me were when units would leave, or units would come back. I used to— I *loved* those days. Getting ready to go – it was so exciting! And coming back home, it was so much fun!

(PETE and MARIA exit. CHARLIE packs gear at locker while leaving a voicemail.)

CHARLIE

Hellloooo Lizzy! It is your broth-ah Charlie. I’m waiting to get on the bus to go down to San Diego cause today is the big day of deployment! So, you need to call me back – I’d like to talk to you before I leave. Um, I’m gonna have my phone tonight so hopefully I’ll talk to you tonight. If not, I’ll definitely email, I have everyone’s addresses and stuff. Okay, I love you.

(CHARLIE exits. Lights. LIZ and MOM enter.)

LIZ

When I found out that Charlie was deploying, the thing that I was most scared of— well actually, I was scared about this with John, too. But the thing I was the most scared of wasn’t that they would die or get hurt even. It was that they would see something or have to do something that would fuck them up for the rest of their lives.

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MOM

When I think of my sons being in harm’s way, that’s— that’s kind of incomprehensible. Because it’s one thing to talk objectively about my kids’ goals in life, but I *hate* this part of it. But it’s a harsh reality, you know? I’m supporting my sons’ decisions, and yet to them I would never show this part of me. I feel that’s my responsibility to them – my service to them – to keep them from worrying about me.

LIZ

While they’re there? You know, you send them packages, you write them. But it’s a strange thing – I actively try not to think about them getting hurt. I just won’t let myself? Because if you allow yourself to think about it, you’ll go crazy. You’ll go insane wondering, worrying. But I do... do things like, save all their phone messages. ‘Cause it does cross your mind that something might happen, and that would be the last time you would hear their voice.

(JOHN enters and packs gear at locker while leaving a voicemail.)

JOHN

Hey Liz, it’s John. I’m ah, calling from Kuwait right now, just calling to see what’s going on. We’re heading to Iraq in a few days here, and I’m not sure if I’ll be able to call again. Just wanted to call and talk to ya. Love you. Bye.

(MOM enters.)

MOM

I hate the fact that war is included with all the other things about the Marines, you know? All the other great stuff – with managing people, learning skills... And, you know, John’s an engineer,

and building things and blowing things up – that’s great! I just don’t like people shooting at them. I just don’t like the fact that they’re getting shot at while they’re working.

(MOM exits. Lights.)

JOHN

So you get to where you’re going, and you’re like, “Now what do I do”? And you’re all amped up, and then nothing happens right away. Or maybe it does – you just don’t know. You’re on constant, like, high alert all the time. Like, “Flail Level 10.” And you’re still trying to do your job. ‘Cause I’ve got thirty or forty people that are under me that I’m trying to take care of and trying to make sure that they don’t get fucked up. You know, if they trip and fall – I’ll run over there to pick them up, like they are my own kid. But they’re not kids – they’re like in the nineteen or twentyish year-old range – but they are still like your little children and you fuckin’ worry about them! ‘Cause not only is this little girl like, pretty with big boobs and nice, but she’s also like a small child – and she’s *also* your machine gunner!

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JOHN (cont’d)

And I’ve got a kid sitting on a Mark-19, which is a 40-millimeter automatic grenade launcher, which has the capability to just light up a neighborhood and kill everyone in it, okay? If you know how to use it— and he does, and it’s his third time there. And he’s disgruntled, he’s pissed, he’s had enough of this bullshit. He got a freakin’ haircut by an RPG and he’s like, “You know what, sir? I can’t fuckin’ do it anymore!” And so the doctors put him on medication and they don’t tell me about it because of “patient confidentiality.” And he’s still ridin’ the gun! And I’m like, “I think I should fuckin’ know that my gunner is medicated, he’s takin’ Prozac, and he’s fuckin’ ... he’s riding a Mark-19! It’s a big fuckin’ deal. Not only that, he’s twenty-five percent of security for the whole group while we’re going out and doin’ shit.” And I’m like, “You should fuckin’ tell me before he kills a village full of people and I’m in prison for thirty years!” And the doctor is all, “I can’t tell you because of ‘whatever,’ and he has to tell you...” And I’m like, “He *did* tell me and I’m glad he did!” Well, I took him off the fuckin’ gun and put him in the tool room. And he even had a problem with the tool room. “Cause, see – the first tour, you’re lucky. The second one, God’s on your side. The third one, you’re fucked. This was his third one, and he’s like, “No, no, no...” So it’s kinda— a lot of things going on at once!

(JOHN exits. Lights change, revealing C.O. at the conference.)

C.O.

We do ourselves a disservice sometimes, when we show these iconic legends in our war history: George Washington crossing the Delaware... these stoic, sphinx-like figures, impervious to the suffering around them, impervious to the cauldron of stressors. That’s just a facade, it’s not true. My own story... We passed by a boy on the side of the road – his nose and his jaw shot away. And he was gurgling this bloody pink froth as he lay in his mother’s arms. She was pleading with us to, uh, to stop, in a language you didn’t need to understand. And I looked at this woman, this scene, and I walked right by – and didn’t feel a single thing. The only thing I felt was a little bit of shock at my own indifference. And, uh, I was not the person I thought I was.

There are two percent of the population that are psychopaths, that can kill and not— not have any remorse. So you start to doubt who you really are, doubt why you came into the Marine Corps. What I realized later was I had developed inadvertently what I call the “stone mask.” By that day my well of fortitude was about dry, and I had nothing left.

When I was home with my wife, in between deployments, we were at the kitchen table one Sunday morning, reading the Washington Post. And there was an op-ed piece called “The Boy

by the Side of the Road,” written by another commander, a friend of mine, on a different highway. And he describes coming across a shot-up vehicle on the side of the road. And when they investigated it, there was a small child inside, in the backseat. He thought he was dead, but when he touched the boy’s face, his eyes fluttered open. So he stood on the side of the road, next to the boy’s vehicle, and he started to call for help from this armored column that was driving by. And nobody would stop. And he was infuriated. Then he realized why they wouldn’t stop, they were under attack, they had a mission to do. So, he— he went back to the car and he stayed with the boy. There was nothing he could do, but he stayed with the child until he was gone. It was getting dark, and the packs of wild dogs were coming out, so he, uh, he dug a small grave beside the road and buried the boy. And then he, too, had to keep moving forward.

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C.O. (cont’d)

And when I read that, the stone mask I had been wearing... came off all at once.
(C.O. exits. Music. Man 1, 2 and 3 perform a physical interlude throughout and behind this scene. A voicemail beep. MOM and LIZ enter.)

MOM (V.O.)

Liz, it’s Mom. I need you to call me back right away, honey. Charlie’s okay. He’s been hurt, but he’s okay. He’s going to be okay. But call me back as soon as you can.

LIZ

It was like, I dunno, midnight. Late. And my mom called. And I could tell from the tone of her voice that something was wrong. She was totally in damage-control mode, not crying or freaking out or anything. She’s a nurse and she totally gets this “I’m talking to a patient” voice? That is what she was using. And the first thing she said was, “Liz, Charlie’s okay.” Which immediately— I mean, my heart just... She told me that Charlie had called her because he had been in an IED attack – had been blown up.

MOM

Charlie called home himself. They do, yeah, they have the Marine call his family himself, if he can. It’s very reassuring when you hear their voice, rather than someone else calling to tell you about your son. Oh gosh, that would be terrifying. I could tell by his voice that something was very wrong. Just by the silences in the call, I could tell this was more than people just getting hurt.

LIZ

He was with two other guys and they were on patrol – Charlie was in the middle, and two IEDs went off. Tommy, the guy on Charlie’s right, was very seriously injured. And Jay, who was on Charlie’s left – and was Charlie’s good friend – he died right there. He died in Charlie’s arms....

MOM

They tell the Marine to not say anything about anyone else. They really try to control the information that gets out because they don’t want rumors to start and all that. But he kept asking about his friend Tommy. He wanted to find out what happened to Tommy, because he didn’t know. Tommy had been terribly hurt and had been taken away, and Charlie didn’t know if he was alive.

LIZ

Everything was very unclear. We didn’t know what was going on, really. We knew that Charlie was hurt: that he had some hearing loss, that one of his eyes was damaged, and that he had shrapnel – uh, a lot of shrapnel – in his face.

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MOM

It's such a— not being able to do anything. Not being able to go to my son. I just felt like I had to do something. So I became just obsessed with finding out what had happened to Tommy, because that was tormenting Charlie terribly, not knowing what had happened to his buddy. And I did – it took me a while, but I was just compelled to find him and I finally did. I found Tommy through, um, I had been in contact with Marine Parents – it's a website? I had posted something and someone posted a reply, "My son was there also, with your son"? And I called Tommy at Bethesda, and when he answered the phone he said, "Oh yeah. You're my son's Mom. He's my kid." Charlie was under his command and he considered Charlie a son.

LIZ

My mom talks to Tommy all the time now. And she calls Jay's family, too – the family of the boy who was killed? She calls them a lot. I don't know. I just can't imagine... I just can't imagine that if your son was killed you'd want to talk to the family of the one who wasn't. I was, like, "Just leave those poor people alone. Stop bothering them. You're making it worse."

MOM

Yes, I do – I talk to Jay's family. That first phone call – it was one of the hardest things I've ever had to do. But I had to – I don't know – I just felt compelled. I needed to talk to them, to tell them how very, very sorry I was. And that my son was with him when he died. They were very glad to hear that – that he wasn't alone, because they didn't know that.

LIZ

She kept wanting *me* to call them? And I was like, "Oh my God – what am I going to say?" And she kept sending me articles about Jay: his obituaries and articles from his hometown newspaper. And she does things now... like, she reads all of the lists of the people who die.

MOM

I think that Liz... she has a lot of *opinions* about things. And I think it's hard for her. She gets angry at me. But it's just... I read those names now because if it were my son... I would want everyone to know. I would want everyone to read his name. But yes, Jay's family – we're still in contact. In fact, Jay's little sister – we've been talking on the phone a lot. Tommy, too... Tommy and I visit all the time.

(LIZ and MOM exit. Lights change. TOMMY enters.)

PROJECTION: **Tommy.**

TOMMY

I thought I got shot in the head! I was yelling, "Charlie! I got shot in the head, help me!" He was like, "No dude, it's a bomb. It's a bomb." I was like, "Huh? What the...?" Then I tried to get up, you know, walk it off. And he was like, "Dude, no. Lie down, stay down." Then he grabbed the radio from me and called it in, "We need a med-evac in here right now!" Charlie did a pretty good job. He did everything right. Yeah, Charlie's mom calls me. She's cool. I talk to her a lot. Or, I listen. She can talk your ear off! But no, she's cool. My wife loves her.

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TOMMY (cont'd)

I don't remember anything after the bombs, really. I died three times. When I finally woke up I was like, "Honey? Am I dead? What the—?" She was like, "No, and don't you ever try to leave me again," and then she hit me. I was like, "Shit!" Oh, she is something – you don't want to mess with her. When I was in the hospital, she told them not to wake me up if I was sleeping, right? So she goes to the hotel next door where she was staying and then gets this call from the nurses' station. They were like, "We are having a problem with your husband." They woke me

up and I just started pulling all my tubes out and walking around, trying to leave. I guess it took like six of them to get me back in bed. My wife was just like, “Yeah. I told you not to wake him up! That’s on you!” My wife don’t take no shit. You can see why we like each other.

(TOMMY exits. Lights. PETE and MARIA enter.)

PROJECTION: Pete and Maria.

PETE

I go into the hospitals a lot. I go in to visit these guys, speak to them, and I’ll tell you what....what they’re doing to these kids is all wrong. They’re trying to transition these guys into civilian life and I don’t know why they’re trying to do that! They’re trying to take the Marine *out* of them. They have these guys laying around in the hospital – some of these guys have been there for years! “What are you doing in the hospital?” Take these kids and get them back to their units, if they could just get back to their units, there’d be a lot less...

MARIA

They take away all their will and all their strength. That’s all connected to being a Marine.

PETE

When you’re wounded, the thing you have to turn to is your strength of character and *all* of that is derived from being a Marine. In my case it was.

I just went to this thing, this thing on “transition.” Transition to what? Why would you make yourself a civilian? We didn’t train you wrong, we didn’t put those core values in you because they only work on the battlefield! There are too many victims in that hospital and too many flakes on that staff. Bethesda’s *ridiculous* – it’s about everything *but* fixing these guys. There’s a slew of entertainers coming in, offering them tickets: baseball tickets, concert tickets...

MARIA

Plasma TV’s!

ReEntry September 20, 2010 **13b**

Updated 10-23-10

PETE

Agh— it’s turned into something I just don’t like. I hear the briefs. They tell these guys, “You *should* feel bad. This is not normal, what you’ve been through.” Actually, it *is* normal! It’s very normal! This is what we expected. This is what we trained for. You stood up and you fought for something you believe in. That’s very normal for a man. Don’t treat these guys like it’s taboo. Why should I be treated like I’m damaged? Look. If you want to hear some story about how I jump at loud noises, have a drinking problem, yell at my kids and all that, you are talking to the wrong guy. I’m sorry to tell you – and maybe the therapists and social workers don’t want to believe this - but I sleep very soundly at night. No flashbacks, no begging God for forgiveness, none of that. And believe me, I was in the thick of things. Modern warfare is still warfare. You’ve got a guy on a Navy destroyer pushing a button and launching a missile that kills 100 people 100 miles away. You’ve got the guy sitting on the ground who called in an air strike, he’s watching it through binoculars, he’s a little closer, he’s seeing what’s happening now. You may be a tank gunner, blowing a hole in a building, and guys are dying that way. And at this point you can hear the screams. You move in closer, and now you are in people’s houses, you are shooting them up close and watching them die. It’s not a detached thing, you are no longer far away. You see this with your own eyes. You pull the trigger and you see someone’s chest explode. And then you get up close and personal.

I have three combat deployments under my belt. I have killed hundreds of enemy combatants, and I didn't do it by pushing a button and them watching them die on a screen. I saw and brought my fair share of death and destruction. Were there bad days? Did non-combatants die too? Yes. That's what happens in war, and to think otherwise is just plain naïve. That's the reality. Do I wish those things didn't happen? Of course I do. But do I torture myself? Do I feel guilty? No. I trained to be a warrior. I trained to fight, I wanted to fight, I did my job and I came home. And if I could fire my rifle? I'd go right back. Excuse me for a sec...

ReEntry September 20, 2010 14

MARIA

(to PETE) It's the hallway behind the hostess. There are two steps down.

(PETE exits. MARIA makes sure he is gone before speaking.)

When I talk to a civilian, they always ask me what it's like to be married to someone in the Marine Corps, and I just laugh. I'm not married to a Marine – *we're a Marine family*. And I chose this life. We're a team and, yeah, I was angry when he signed up to go back, but what else was he going to do? That's who he is. And I love him for, well, more than who he is. I love him for what he believes in – what we both believe in – and I'm as responsible for this life of ours. He did it for his own sense of what is right, but – and, I really believe this – he did it for me. But here's something. I, uh, lied to you, when I said I never cried? Yeah, that's not true. I do. It's the secret all Marine wives keep. I go into the bathroom – I let it all out. Then I fix my makeup and come back out again, the strong Gunny's wife.

(MARIA exits. A physical interlude: USMC close-order drills. Music and lights change. C.O. appears, watches them, then talks to us. The physical interlude continues behind the C.O. Lights. C.O. sits in a quiet bar.)

C.O.

Hey. No, this is good, we can talk right here. It's nice and quiet. I'm not fan of big bars, so this is perfect. I do these lectures... well, because I think people need to know the whole – the whole piece of it. But I want them to know that there's actual thought. There's rigor – intellectual rigor – that goes into this. It's not just the Hollywood, chest-thumping “follow me.” But we are – we are very very methodical. We are very emotionally disciplined. And guys pride on that, that poise.

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C.O. (cont'd)

When I do these conferences, when I talk to these parents, you see their level of commitment.

And you see the hope in their eyes, when you talk about what you're doing with their sons and daughters. And you really— that's when you feel a weight...

I remember just having knots in my stomach, you know, watching my guys. I mean, you're with them, too. But watching your guys go into the fight, and just knots in your stomach going, “Oh, go. Go faster. Dodge a little lower.” It's, like, sometimes like being a parent at a little league soccer game. And your inner monologue going – you're hoping you won't see him go down.

And when you see one of your guys go down... you watch men die doing what you told them to do. I can't say it's all on me, their deaths. That would be disingenuous. They're grown men.

They knew what they were getting into. But that said, I think if you— if you're doing it right, it ought to bother you. I mean, you look these guys in the eyes and you see all this, all this belief in you and what you're telling them to do. When you take your dog, you know, to hunt, and he's looking at you, “You're gonna take me to the right place and you're gonna ask me to do the right thing and I'm gonna knock myself out, trying to please you.” It's that same look. And you can

see the faces of their families behind them, with exactly the opposite look – this, this, uh, hope, mixed with fear, and dread. Have you heard the phrase “throwing in your ticket”? It’s from *Gates of Fire*. Boy, I love that book. I tell you, I was born 2500 years too late. Yes, I do know they all died in that battle. But you know what? Those who weren’t there? They’re dead too. We’re all going to die – it’s just a matter of when and why and if it counts for anything. But anyway, these Spartan Warriors had a very important ritual as they prepared for battle. Each warrior would take a twig, and on each end of this twig he would carve his name. He’d then snap the twig in two, one end he tied to a string on his wrist; the other, called a ticket, he’d throw into a basket. By throwing in your ticket, you were ritualizing your willingness to die that day. Then after the battle, one by one each warrior went back to the basket to reclaim their ticket. And, of course, it was by those tickets unclaimed that they were able to account for their dead. But you know, that act – of pulling your ticket back out of that basket – was also a ritual. It was an act of regaining one’s humanity. And in the book, these warriors who had shown no sign of injury or fatigue up to this point, now, upon retrieval of their ticket – suddenly became overcome with fatigue. And it was only then that knees would buckle, limbs would shake. *(a little laugh)* I’m not suggesting that I would have rather died in battle, by the way.

(C.O. exits. Sound and lights – bright and fun – a big celebration. The Company hangs home-made “Welcome Home” signs. Music’s blaring. Huge monitors play music videos. Everyone’s got a beer in hand.)

PROJECTION: Many different Marines in many different bars.

(PROJECTIONS: Throughout the scene, Man 2 is taking snapshots of various Marines. Their images, names and titles are projected to help further differentiate characters throughout the “montage.”)

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THANK YOU 1 (MICHELLE, USMC 1ST LIEUTENANT)

When you get back? It’s weird. A lot of people will just come right up to you and thank you. Yeah, people will just come up to you and thank you, or say, “I’m glad you’re home” or “You’re not going again, are you?”

THANK YOU 2 (JASON, USMC LT. COLONEL)

I wish we were a *country* at war, and not just the military at war. But I do think you see the gratitude, and I appreciate that. I was at a ball game and there was a moment of silence for the guys who’ve died. Everyone stands up and there was this one guy who didn’t take his hat off, and like a dozen people around him were like, “Hey! Take off your hat!” until he finally did. I think people are expressing their gratitude in the way they know how.

THANK YOU 3 (NICK, USMC LANCE-CORPORAL)

I don’t know... when people thank you it’s like they feel like they’ve done their job. They are like, “Thank you.” And I’m like, “Don’t thank me, do something.” I mean, I know the legend of troops getting spit on when they came home from Vietnam, and it is a radically different environment today. I would rather be thanked than spit on. It’s nicer!

THANK YOU 4 (KERI, USMC CORPORAL)

How do I really feel when people say thank you? What I want to say is, “You don’t even fucking know... but you’re welcome.”

THANK YOU 5 (TOMMY USMC, STAFF SERGEANT)

Thank you for what? For getting blown up? For being in the wrong place at the wrong time? Or for doing what *you* wouldn’t go and do? Whatever. Just buy me a beer and we’ll call it even.

THANK YOU 6 (USMC, GUNNERY SERGEANT)

No, I don't mind it when people thank me. There are a lot of things that piss me off, but I like it when people say thank you. Because they are thanking the uniform, they aren't thanking me. And they should thank the uniform.

THANK YOU 7 REBECCA (USMC 2ND LIEUTENANT)

I guess one of the reasons I get so uncomfortable when people thank me is that... I guess I feel guilty. I didn't see the worst and I feel guilty about that. The only stuff I had to deal with was, well, I had to identify an officer who shot himself in the head. In the porta-potty. Yeah. And then I had a stalker. A *stalker*. Someone would come into my tent at night and steal my underwear. And my tent— I mean, it was a little pup tent, you know? – and one night I wake up and I see this hand sticking into my tent and I jump up, run out of the tent. I have my weapon out, but he has a weapon, too – we all have weapons. It's dark and I just see this figure, and he drops something. I thought it was a grenade... but it was my bra.

LISA (USMC CAPTAIN)

I will be at a table with all Marines, guys, at a bar. And people will go up and buy every single one of them a shot. You know, "Thanks for your service, let me buy you a shot"? But not me. Because people just don't even stop to think that I could be a Marine, too? And I don't know if that's 'cause I look like a girl when I'm out? But it cracks me up just 'cause, you know, like it's just not a logical thought that a girl could be a Marine as well.

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LISA (cont'd)

I'm a captain. My first tour I was a convoy commander. I was responsible for the lives of every single individual in my entire convoy. And that was probably one of the best things that I will ever do in my entire life. Yes, I found myself in combat situations. I performed very well. Yeah, so at the bar, you know – the first time it happened that someone didn't buy me a shot, too – I was just like, "Oh, okay." But now I'm like, "Um, excuse me. You missed one."

(*VIDEO PROJECTION: Shakira's "Hips Don't Lie."*)

CHARLIE

Man, one of the first things I saw when I got back was this Shakira video? Man, I fell in love with her. That video is so hot. It's just... it's so hot. She's really hot. We hadn't been around that many girls, right? Ahh. It was nice. She's really, really hot. Here, watch it. And I was like, "Aaaah, man!" It was sooo nice to see an American girl— well, she's not American, but it was really nice just to see a white— okay, she's not white, but *dude* I was sooo glad to be home!

LIZ

When John got back from Iraq, he was really happy. Oh my God. When he first came back from Iraq, he was... he was the happiest I ever seen him. He was like – calling me – was like, "I love you. How are you? I'm so proud of you." And I commented on it. I said, "Jesus Christ, you are the happiest I've ever— what's going on?" He was like, "I'm so fucking happy I'm not dead. And I'm so happy that I'm in a place in my life where me being me makes me good at my job. I feel great." And that lasted for a little while...

When Charlie got back, he was... well, he *looked* fine. But he was jumpy and kind of weird and dark and easily pissed off... except when he's on his motorcycle, which I hate, but when he's on his motorcycle he's completely happy. But you know, he's still very sweet, and kind of the same guy, really – the same Charlie, but maybe a little bit more on edge.

CHARLIE

Ah, I bought my motorcycle, got a little drunk... uh, that was about it, hung out with the family. My motorcycle? Well that's kinda like, man, I've wanted one ever since, ah, shit, I think when I was like ten or twelve? And I could never afford it until I came home from deployment, and had like, \$11,000. So I bought one. So, probably, 'cause, I don't know, like... why do I like it so much? I guess you could say, I could— I could answer that question with another question: Why do you— why do you like my motorcycle so much? Exactly.

(The bar abates. Music changes.)

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LIZ

When Charlie and John are around each other – oh my God – when they are around each other, they are just, “fuckin’ this” and “fuckin’ that.” It’s truly too much to take. Like, after two days of that? We were all home together for Christmas, which was right after Charlie got home. John had already been back for like six months or something. And the two of them, and the drinking, and the swearing, it was just— you couldn’t even... Oh, we got in a *huge* fight – about *The Nanny Diaries*! Which is a shitty movie, granted. But I was watching it. I was watching the fucking movie. And they come in and they’re like, “What the fuck is this bullshit?” And I’m like, “Hey. It’s *The Nanny Diaries*.” And they sat there and watched it with me and screamed and bitched and yelled about it the whole time. To the point where we got into a huge fight about my right to watch *The Nanny Diaries*.

CHARLIE

When I got back, I found out my fucking girlfriend had been cheating on me the whole time. At least we weren’t married. Buddy of mine, his wife spent all of his combat pay, and was fucking some other dude. That shit happens all the time. Fuckin’ bitches.

C.O.

I think we all come back with some amount of Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. You can’t not. I have all the usual things. Can’t sit with my back to a door. We go into a restaurant and my wife, she teases me: “Okay honey, which way are the terrorists coming in?”

JOHN

Ah, man... I freaked the fuck out on the fourth of July. I was at my friend’s house – he was having a party. And there were all these firecrackers going off, big ones, you know (*makes missile sound*), and I started getting real jumpy. And my buddy goes, “you know, when the firecrackers start going off the dog gets real freaked out so I have to put her in the garage.” And I was like, “Yeah, that’s not a bad idea.” So I fuckin’ went in the garage. Crazy.

TOMMY

I remember one time I was driving on the right-hand side of the freeway after I got back the first time... and if I saw something on the side of the road – an old box or a tire or something – I wouldn’t care, I would swerve over *three lanes* to go around it. I got pulled over one time, and I told the cop, “I’m not drunk. There was something on the side of the road, and – you don’t understand – I don’t want to get blown up.” And he was like, “Oh, you just got back from Iraq. I’ve had three other guys that I pulled over for the same thing.”

C.O.

I remember sitting— catching myself sitting at a stop sign, back home, in between deployments. And I don’t know how long I was there. I don’t know how long I was at that stop sign, you know, white knuckled, playing this one fight over and over again... and not the way it went, the way I wanted it to go... the way it could have gone.

Yes, when you get back you always get “the talk”: get your tempers under control. And you’re given a form to fill out. Everyone lies on that form – of course you do. They ask, “What did you see?” And you give them the bare minimum. They ask you, “Did it effect you?” And you say, “No, absolutely not.” Because it would be the end of my career, of course, at this level? No, you lie through your teeth. If I had seen a therapist, I wouldn’t be where I am now. I know that.

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C.O. (cont’d)

I never raised a hand to my wife, never raised my voice. I was full of self loathing and that’s when the insomnia really kicked in, but I took care of it all myself. I’m very disciplined about my vitamin A... Ambien? Oh yeah, time for bed, I take my Ambien, and I put myself to bed.

PROJECTION: **Suzanne.**

SUZANNE

Well, when they get back from Iraq, we have post-deployment briefs about what to expect. They get all the wives together. They are like, “Okay, when they come home, they are going to be jumpy. They are going to need time to adjust. Be careful about throwing a party. Maybe don’t have too many people around at first. The noises kids make might upset them.” The first two times he came back, I understood it fine. I made sure I sent him a picture of my new haircut. I made sure the house looked the same as when he left, ‘cause surprises are not a good thing when they come back. I would wake him up, you know, really gently. (*demonstrates*) “Jess, wake up... wake up.” And I would make noises in my sleep so he would know I was there. But one of the last times, I just wasn’t thinking. And my father and uncle were both Marines – I come from a military family. So, this one night Jess had already gone to sleep, and I was up and messing around on the computer and I wanted to tell Jess something. And I went into the room and jumped on the bed and was like, “Jess! Jess!” And he turned and (*demonstrates*) – sckwwk – latched on to my neck. And started throttling me. And he’s completely asleep. I’m like – (*breathing hard*) – and grabbing his arm and am like, “Baby please, please. It’s me, it’s me. Baby, I’m sorry.” And he woke up and was like, “Omigod, I’m so sorry, I’m so sorry. Are you okay, are you okay?” And I’m like, “It’s not your fault, it’s not your fault. It’s my fault. I forgot. I’m so sorry, baby. I’m so sorry.” Like, I just forgot. I had been so detached from it this time, ‘cause I had been through it so many times already and was like, “Whatever.” It was definitely *interesting*. No, we’re not together now. Actually, our divorce was final a few months ago. A lot of reasons, but one of the main ones was that after he got back from his fourth deployment, he didn’t want kids anymore. Now, I catch a lot of shit from my friends for dating only military guys. But honestly, I don’t know how to relate to other people. I mean, I spent seven years of the Marine Corps being my life. It was everything. And I was a good Marine Corps wife. I guess I just always knew that – I don’t know – that I would marry someone who had been in the military. ‘Cause I thought that it showed selflessness. Like, there is this guy that I work with, Mike. I’m like, “Dude, you are able-bodied. What the fuck are you doing? Why didn’t you join the military? Why aren’t you serving the county? You work at a bank – yay.” I don’t know...

(*SUZANNE exits. Lights shift. CHARLIE and JOHN enter.*)

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CHARLIE

My medals? Yeah, I’ll mount ‘em I guess. But I haven’t even bought dress blues yet, so I don’t have anywhere to put them. I’ve thought about getting the Purple Heart license plate thing?

Sometimes it gets you out of tickets. I don't know. I might. Yeah, there's an announcement. There's this certificate? That they read out loud. No. Well, nobody wants to get it. It's the one medal you don't actually want to get. So, getting it— the whole thing's... not something you feel good about. Um, how do they— how do they deprogram you from being all tensed out? Is that what you are asking me? Okay, you— they pretty much— they attempt to do that, but the classes are really— it's— you can't really deprogram that. You know, you can— you can— say, like this is the shit they tell us. They're like, "When you go home, don't get mad at your wife and your kids and beat them because they are being stupid and you're irritated."

JOHN

Oh, man, when I first got home? The skateboarders? Those stupid little faggy skater shitheads wearing girl's pants? Not that fags are bad... it's just the way I talk. But have you seen these kids with these fucking pants? They were probably maybe thirteen or fourteen. They were skateboarding in a brand new development that was just built, and they were basically trying to grind on the curb, which was a freshly painted, like, brand new, like, thing. And I ask them – I go, "What are you doin'?" They're like, (*in whiny, lispy kid voice*) "Yeah, well we heard this is a good place to skate."

CHARLIE

"Don't have road rage. Don't fuckin'— don't go drive real fast on your motorcycle. Blah, blah, blah." I mean, that's the shit they really say. "Don't—" ah, you know, "Don't—" ah, what, you know, "Don't fuckin'—" I don't know, whatever kinda crazy shit...

JOHN

"You live here?"

"No."

"What the fuck are you doing?"

"We're skatin' dude. We heard it was a good place."

"It's not. So, you don't live here, and you're here fuckin' up my brand new, freshly painted sidewalk. You pay for that shit?"

"No."

"Get the fuck out."

"Dude! You don't have to, like— You don't have to, like, swear at us."

"You don't have to do anything but leave, right fuckin' now."

You know, just a punk kid that doesn't do, like, anything.

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CHARLIE

You know, "Don't go fuckin' drink excessively for days, and days, and days, and days on end." That kinda thing. I mean— and then— and then they say like, "Okay, if you— if you," ah, "if you need help and you know it, then go ahead and, you know, talk to someone." So, that's all they do. I mean, there's not a whole lot they can do.

JOHN

And the kid is like: "Oh yeah, dude, like, whatever." And I'm like, "Don't come back. If you come back... see that cliff over there? I'm gonna launch you. I will stop your heart, son."

CHARLIE

You know, they're— I mean, if you're really fucked up and they know it, they'll get you a counselor, you know, or whatever. They'll keep an eye on you, so to say. You can't— it's not like a switch you can turn – flip on and off – by talking to someone.

JOHN

It was really, like, it was kinda intense. It went from, like, zero to fuckin' homicidal in about three seconds.

CHARLIE

Which is why it takes time. Everyone— which is why everyone responds to it – coming home, you know, – either similar or different, depending on, you know, certain things.

JOHN

What can people actually do to support the troops? Quit bitchin'. I like the, uh, flag waving that happens for about a month. And then nothing. "If I don't get my three-dollar Starbucks, and get to work on time, and pay less than whatever for a gallon of gas, then I am going to bitch and moan and cry." Everybody is so fuckin' spoiled. I think the majority of Americans are a bunch of whining pussies. People watch too much fuckin' TV – like, ridiculous amounts. Like, do I even care who is on *Dancing with the Stars*? I didn't even know that was a fucking show. People are like, "Oh! On *Dancing with the*—" I'm like, "Are you fucking retarded? What did you have for dinner

yesterday? A Big Mac? Go fuck yourself."

So when the kid that's grinding my sidewalk is like, "Dude, that's not cool," it's easier for me to launch him over a cliff and not even worry about it. He's worthless at this point to me. And when you've pulled one of your Marines, who just got his legs blown off, out of the shit, and he's only a few years older than that douche with his skateboard that is never going to do anything with his life, it kinda makes you not give a fuck about hurting that retard's "feelings."

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CHARLIE

Yeah, my sister doesn't like some of the shit I say. Well, they're thinking of sending me back, and I'm like, "If I fucking go back, shit's going to be different. Like, I'm going to fucking kill some people. I don't care. I'm not going to be doing shit the same way we did before if I go back. 'Cause there are people that need to be shot. And there's all these rules and shit, stuff that we can't do. So if I have to go back over there, and get fucking shot at and get blown up, I am going to get the job done." Liz doesn't like it when I say that stuff. And going fast on my motorcycle. She says that I am living like I'm already dead. Whatever. I need to get a weapon. I would feel better. Seriously, if I had a gun I would feel better. Like, I would be able to protect myself if something happened or something.

(CHARLIE recedes but doesn't exit.)

JOHN

Everything you people get so excited about is fucking pointless. Like, fucking recycling. Go anywhere else on earth and there is so much shit burning in the streets. There's so much crap just burning everywhere. You look at, like, an old car just burning in the streets and the smoke it generates and you're like, "Yeah, I'm glad I recycled that mother-fuckin' milk bottle!" You know? It's pointless. If you're so bored with yourself that you get excited about recycling, then you need to get a hobby. One person recycling some fuckin' soda cans makes about as much sense as a Tyrannosaurus Rex trying to take a shit on a napkin so as not to make a mess! What should we do? You want my honest opinion? Everyone that is pissing us off, we should nuke the shit out of them and turn their country into glass and then build it in our own fashion! Right now, I'm just happy that I'm not being shot at. But at the same time, I'm kinda upset that I don't have anyone to shoot. It's like, yeah, I do wish I had a relationship, a girlfriend. I do. But how do we marry these two extremes? Like, back in the day all the women wanted to be with a gladiator, right? Well, try to take a gladiator to god-damned dinner! Cause for the most part it's,

like, you are trained to be a certain way – to do certain things – and then you are just supposed to turn that off and go back into society with the rest of you fuckin’ pussies?!?

(JOHN slams and lays a locker down horizontal on the ground then recedes but doesn’t exit. A small shift. LIZ and MOM have been in the background of this scene and now come forward).

LIZ

Have you seen their tattoos? I have some of them on my phone. Here, let me show you.

(PROJECTION: a black band tattoo wrapping around a bicep.)

This is John’s. It’s a mourning band. He said it hurt like hell to get it. And here, these are Charlie’s...

(PROJECTION: a tattoo across the shoulder is a skeleton Grim Reaper wrapped in the American flag.)

This is on one arm, and this is on the other...

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(PROJECTION: A tattoo across the other shoulder of boots, an upside-down rifle, and helmet with the words “BROTHERS IN ARMS, NEVER FORGOTTEN” – the memorial of a fallen Marine.)

LIZ (cont’d)

It says, “Brothers in arms, never forgotten.”

(pauses, then decides to continue) A few weeks ago... Charlie had a flashback. It started with him not feeling right. He said that he wasn’t feeling like himself. He was angry and couldn’t control his emotions. And he did go to someone in his command. I don’t know who – probably like a lower-ranking guy. And the guy was like, “Suck it up, you’re a Marine.” And I’m sure Charlie was like, “It’s not a big deal. I lived.” I’m making that up, but I feel that that’s probably what happened. So he was back on the base and in a training op and he – you know, big loud noises, explosions... – and he had a flashback. He just froze. And that’s a very big fucking deal when you’re a Marine – when they’re like “go, go, go” and you don’t do anything – you just freeze.

MOM

He was out in the field, and he was just incapacitated. He was in the middle of the flashback, and he couldn’t get himself out of it, so they took him out and took him to medical.

LIZ

Whoever it was, whatever douche told him to suck it up – it makes me furious, all this toughguy, “PTSD is for pussies.” I know, I know, it’s not all like that – a lot of them do take it very seriously. Charlie’s commanding officer did pull him out, and he’s getting help. But Jesus, Charlie wouldn’t even go to the doctor after the IED, when his eye was all fucked up...

MOM

He was clearly having some problems with his vision. Symptoms of what I thought was a detached retina. But he wouldn’t go. And I really thought it was because he was comparing what had happened to him to what had happened to his friends, and he just felt like a wuss even saying anything about himself at all. He would not go.

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LIZ

The very same week Charlie gets taken out of the field? John fell apart... He was home alone, and he said he had been drinking by himself. And he drinks... he drinks a lot. And he was sitting out on his balcony, and he realized how exposed he was out there. You know, he saw all the

positions where a sniper could be. He's sitting on his balcony in San Diego, California, and he's looking around for snipers. And he became absolutely convinced that someone was gonna come into his house and kill him. So he got his guns out. He had a shotgun pointed at the door. Thank God his roommate didn't come home. But he knew he was losing it. He knew it wasn't real. But it seemed and felt so real that he then knew that the only way to stop it... was to kill himself.

MOM

John texted Charlie something to the effect of, "I'm having a hard time here. Can you come over?" And when Charlie got there, John was very drunk, had all of his guns out, and was talking about how he was going to blow his head off and how life wasn't worth living and all that. And Charlie just stayed with him until John fell asleep, finally, because he was so drunk. And that was when Charlie called me to tell me what was going on. When I first saw John, when I first got there... he was like a zombie. I don't think I even said anything to him. I just held him and patted him, and... he really didn't talk about all of that. He really didn't talk, at all. I just said, "I'm here." And he said, "Thanks." Yes, I was furious when it happened. I was furious that anybody would be in that position to become so emotionally harmed by what they have been through. I felt helpless as well because I didn't know what to do except let my mothering instincts take over. And that's what I did. That is what I had to offer them. There's no way I can be his psychiatrist, and I can't patronize him or tell him that things are going to be fine and get over it. All I could do was take care of him. I just wrapped my arms around him. I held him tight, let him know I was there, that I had him. You know, if they want to talk about it? I'm here. But I'm—you know, how do they say, on a need-to-know basis? If they had something they thought I needed to know, they would tell me. But I have to tell you, that weekend? I was more terrified for my sons' lives than any of the times that they were deployed.

LIZ

When they're deployed, you try not to think about it, but you do. You prepare yourself for the possibility – that they could get hurt, they could die. But you know... if they get hurt or whatever
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LIZ (cont'd)

over there, well, at least it's the bad guy's fault. But if something happens *here*? Who's fault is that? I don't know what to do. I mean, really, what am I supposed to do? (*gives up; can't talk anymore*)

MOM

You know, the thing about John, I know that he isn't just this big, bad Marine, but a sensitive, caring person. I think I told you, he did an internship at a funeral home before he became an officer. And he would be the one to go when they got a call to go pick up the body. And one of the calls he had was to a four year old boy who had been sick, and they had planned for this boy to die at home. And when he went to pick up the little guy, John— John wasn't going to put him in the back— in the back of the hearse. He held him in his arms. And that's a big, bad Marine. He didn't tell me any of this – the mother of the boy did. Now that John and Charlie are facing difficult things, I just feel very grateful that they have each other. To keep each other going. And I know that Tommy— When I called Charlie the other day, you know, to see if he was taking his meds – basically, "I'm watching you!" – Tommy was there. Tommy was there to take care of Charlie. I was glad for that.

(*LIZ and MOM exit. Lights. TOMMY enters.*)

TOMMY

Yeah, I'm looking out for Charlie. But I can't do nothing about his *World of Warcraft* addiction. Can't do nothin' about that. I hate that game. He got help though. Yeah, I knew he had PTSD. He's like, "How do you know I've got it?" And I'm like, "I know you've got it." The scenario we were in, and after I talked to him a couple times, and he started drinking more, too. And I was like, "Dude... you were in between Jay and I." We were in a little like triangle thing. He got shrapnel from the both of us – probably got shrapnel from my body parts and from Jay's body parts, too. All of a sudden you see your friend, like, blown up and your other friend, like, bleeding to death. We were in the middle of nowhere. I was like, "You saw two of your colleagues just get mutilated." Yeah, he freaked out. Um, yeah, I'm getting out. I don't know what I'm going to do— something. No, I don't want to, but I don't have a choice. Well... *(takes off glasses)* see how my eyes are all brown with blue in the center? Yeah, I'm blind for the rest of my life. It sucks ass, but it could be worse.

(TOMMY exits. Lights and sound.)

PROJECTION: A conference hotel room after hours. Frank.

(VIDEO PROJECTION: footage of several explosions played, then re-wound over and over.)

FRANK (V.O.)

See that? Right there, that explosion right there! Yeah, that was probably Ryan. That was probably my son. It was either him or another Corporal – the two of them were killed that day. Yeah, they got it all on tape. It was on CNN that that— oh hang on... let me rewind it... Yeah, see that? That first explosion? Yeah, that was probably the explosion that killed him. That was probably him. That was probably Ryan. Let me rewind it.

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(Near the end of the V.O., the cast ceremoniously carries the locker John has set in the previous scene as if it were a coffin. Man 1 enters in full dress uniform and performs funeral salute, while MUSIC: Nine-Inch Nails' "Right Where You Belong" plays. Man 1 exits. PETE and MARIA enter.)

PROJECTION: Pete and Maria.

MARIA

When you're on base, and with the families and watching your husbands leave, we really didn't watch the news. We really didn't follow, you know, the political stuff that was out there. It was just a real shock. We really had no idea how angry people were. And it wasn't until we got out that we saw that. And, you know, being out in the civilian world was— we— we... Well, inside there was no color, you know? There was no color. It was such a neat world, because we were Marines. There was no black, no white, no this, no that – we're Marine families, and that's all. And that's all we knew – that safe, beautiful world. We definitely had no idea how sad, and, well, *lonely* civilian life was.

PETE

You know, the way, in the movies— the way you always see this is— you always see a guy coming back to his home town, trying to adjust to his hometown. Um, and the part – at least for us – our home *was* the military. Our home *was* the base. And so the re-entry was not so much going to your hometown and trying to adjust – feeling like a stranger in your home town. But for us it was leaving, having to leave your home – really for the first time. People would say— after I was wounded, they'd say, "Oh, I bet you're so glad to be getting out." And they never got... that was a very sad thing. I wanted to stay there. That's the world I knew. That's the world I love, and I didn't want to leave. That was our home.

(PETE and MARIA exit. Lights. C.O. enters.)

C.O.

I'm not the man I once was. I look at pictures of myself, before and after, and, it— it sucked the life out of me. You know, I had plans, I had stuff I wanted to do – typical-type stuff. Get out of the Marine Corps before I'm completely broken. I don't know what that jump-off point is, because it ain't about us, particularly the higher rank you get. We're always taught, "It ain't about you." But at this level, the big-boy talk you get is, "You'll get out when we're done with you." That's the big-boy talk. "You're here to serve."

It's not what I'm doing – it's who I am. It's not an occupation. It's in my DNA. I love the concept of service. Duty. I don't want to hearken back to the golden age. I don't know if there ever was a golden age... but the golden age to me is what we strive to be, not what we are. And we all raised our little paws in the air and swore to defend and support the Constitution. And now try coming home – you've got metal in your leg, you didn't sleep for weeks on end, your body's broken, your will is all used up, you lead men so tired you had to kick them to keep them going. You gave everything you had, and you come home and you have to hear about the country having war fatigue. "Oh, you're fatigued, huh? Yeah, it was exhausting for you..." I'm whining. Does it ring?

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C.O. (cont'd)

What'll I do now? Prepare for the next one. I tell guys, "I mean, who's got a crystal ball up your ass, raise your hand. If you don't, then you don't know what's coming next." So, uh, we got five-thousand years of recorded military history... "What's in your wallet?" And that's kinda where I am. If I stay in the game, and we really are in this war for fifty years... you know, someone's gotta get ready for the next one. I'd like to say one more thing before you turn the recorder off... Ancient cultures required their warriors to conduct a purifying ritual before re-entry into society? There, uh, was an acknowledgment that for the warriors, things were different, and the society that sent them to fight understood and acknowledged this openly. For us, it's half the battle, I think. What would my reentry ritual be? You know, when you asked me how I feel when people thank me... well, my hands are dirty. No one likes to be thanked for having dirty hands. So I guess my ritual would be... me having my hands washed... Someone from— someone would wash my hands, wash away the blood. I'd be bathed... washed...

(C.O. exits. Lights. The FAMILY steps forward, together.)

JOHN

You know when you asked me why I joined? I can honestly say I think the reason I'm not dead is because of the Marine Corps. If it wasn't for the Marine Corps I'd probably be some stoner back home or some drunk-driver dead guy like a lot of my friends. At least here you have people looking out for you. But Marines, we're so fuckin' proud. If someone was like, "Dude! Your arm is, like, chopped off!" We'd be like, "Fuck you, it's not! It's a flesh-wound! It's fine!" You can't really make anybody get help. We're a proud people. Go tell Aunt Jemima, "You can't make syrup no more, bitch." And she's going to tell you, "Go fuck yourself!" and keep makin' syrup. Like my random analogies? But no, I do – I tell my guys, "You know, if you've got anything going on – things you are having a hard time dealing with – you go straight to see the wizard. We're not going to think any less of you." It's like if you broke your leg, you wouldn't not go to the hospital... eventually.

LIZ

John's going back. He deploys next week. And Charlie, he's supposed to go back in a few months.

CHARLIE

Getting deployed again? It's probably going to suck a lot.

JOHN

I don't give a shit about going back. Whatever.

CHARLIE

That's about it. I'm not excited. I'm not eager to go. But, shoot, if I'm gonna go – if I have to go – then that's it, whatever. And at least when I go, that means that someone else gets to come home, so...

ReEntry September 20, 2010 **28**

JOHN

Honestly, I could give a shit what this war is about. And, you know, our boss changes every four years. I'm gonna keep doing my job. We are the arm of the people. You elect in the people who tell us what to do, and we go and do it. You don't like it? Don't elect retards who don't know what the fuck they're doing.

CHARLIE

I mean, it's not anything we can— you know, you kinda lose your ability to get really opinionated over things that you don't have any control over because it doesn't make any sense.

LIZ

But this'll be his last deployment. Yeah, Charlie's getting out next summer. He's gonna go to nursing school. Can you imagine? (*teasing Charlie*) He's gonna be (*in tough-guy voice*) a big, bad... uh... nurse!

CHARLIE

Shut up. Nursing's totally bad-ass.

LIZ

No, it's awesome, really. I think it's super cute.

CHARLIE

(*scoffing*) Cute, yeah, whatever.

JOHN

Anyway. This girl I'm seeing is driving me crazy.

CHARLIE

Now I've been thinking about this lately – the perfect girl. I have.

JOHN

I must really like her 'cause I am trying to put up with her shit. 'Cause I know I'm an impatient mother fucker, and I can't tell if she's just annoying as fuck or if I'm just an asshole.

MOM

Language.

JOHN

So I'm trying to chill out and see.

(*JOHN and CHARLIE slowly exit as they speak.*)

CHARLIE

She's gotta be shorter than me. Five-two to five... four. Like a little thing. 'Cause then you can just wrap your whole self around them just (*gesture of a big enveloping hug*). It makes it much better for cuddling when they're tiny.

ReEntry September 20, 2010 **29**

JOHN

(gives Charlie a “wow” look) Yeah, people ask me why I’m not married, and I’m like, “‘Cause I have to leave all the time and work all the time doing stupid shit that should be handled. And that doesn’t leave a whole lot of time to go to bars and find someone much less try to actually have a relationship.” So that’s fuckin’ awesome. But this new girl—

CHARLIE

And girls with big sunglasses? Ah, man, those bitches. I always say, “The bigger the glasses, the snobbier the chick.” Fuckin’ Paris-Hilton “Oh I’m too good for you” fuckin’ snobbishness. But, you know, I’m— I’m uh— the big— no, the big glasses thing is just like a theory. If they— if they have them, I’m not going to have a fit about it, but it’s... Like this one girl I’m about to hang out with? Really, big, sunglasses. But she’s probably one of the hottest girls that I’ve come across in a long time.

(JOHN and CHARLIE are gone. MOM shakes her head and follows them out, leaving LIZ alone.)

LIZ

Have I told you the sweetest thing John ever said to me? Really. Okay, so I live in New York City, and shit happens here – planes fly into buildings and whatnot. Everyone is scared about “when the shit goes down,” and people talk about it, right? So one night, I was with some friends, and we were talking about what we would do if “the shit went down.” And this friend or that friend was saying that they would start walking north or they would ride their bike upstate or, you know, whatever. And I talked to John the next day and told him about this conversation – you know, what I’m going to do if “the shit goes down.” And he says, “I’ll tell you what you are going to fucking do. You are going to go home. And you will stay there. You are going to lock the door. You will not let anyone in and you will not leave. You will sit there and you will wait. And I will cut a

mother-fucking path of destruction and come and get you and evac you out of there.”

I mean... *(shakes head, can’t continue)*

(LIZ exits. An empty stage. The sound of a tape recorder clicking off. Lights.)

END OF PLAY.

APPENDIX THREE
WRITTEN RESPONSES
Training Interview Sheets

Workshop #1 Questionnaires

December 11, 2012

10 pastors

Immanuel Lutheran Church in Seymour, IN.

December 11, 2012

Interview sheets

Before training:

25 Age 0-1 # of years in ministry

No Have you ever served in the military?

If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

YES Do you have military veterans in your church?

No Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

YES, I will be prepared + trained how to appropriately + accurately counsel the needs of a soldier who has been conflicted/inflited.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

YES, I may have a better understanding of how military men/women are thinking + feeling post war.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

Yes honesty the struggle between two vocations two worlds

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

like this

I think that we need something

What do you dislike about the rite?

Are we dangerously close to the fringe of what Composes the whole of Holy Baptism?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Possibly

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Sure

The guilty sor/anguish that a Soldier carries

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes, better able to open a better dialogue + get at the heart of the matter

Interview sheets

Before training:

33 Age 5 # of years in ministry

No Have you ever served in the military?

NA If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

YES Do you have military veterans in your church?

No Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not? YES - A window into the warrior's world which I have never been a part of.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not? YES - some understanding of issues veterans deal with + how to apply word of God to their situation in soul-care.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video? Well produced + very enlightening

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

Seems to offer a transition from military to civilian life like sensory aspects.

What do you dislike about the rite?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Yes

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes. It is a foreign world we need to be able to minister to people in it.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes

Interview sheets

Before training:

47 Age 21 # of years in ministry

No Have you ever served in the military?

If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

No Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans? Why/ why not?

Yes, to talk with and hear testimony + explanation. Should be helpful to help me to be sensitive.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes, As I said before I hope to be more sensitive and knowledgeable about the hurts + fears of those who have served.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video? *"Real Life!"*

What did you dislike? *needed to remind myself about characters they were playing.*

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training? *No*

What do you like about the Purification Rite? *Good theology and leads us all back to Christ and His "cleansing" work for us.*

What do you dislike about the rite?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future? *Absolutely!*

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not? *Yes. The input + sharing of knowledge, great!*

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not? *Yes, ~~the~~ much more sensitive + understanding about "entering" their world.*

Puzzle Piece -> Never been apart, but don't want to talk past.

Centurion's Faith
↓
Matt. 8:5-13

Interview sheets

Before training:

49 Age 22 # of years in ministry
X Have you ever served in the military?
If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____
Y Do you have military veterans in your church?
Y Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not? *Yes. Having an active Chaplain share helpful insights in equipping us to minister to returning soldiers.*

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not? *Yes. The presenter has awesome ideas!*

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

Better understanding of a veterans/family world. What not to do.

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No.

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

Much needed as many bear shame & guilt of war.

What do you dislike about the rite?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Yes.

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes. You brought us into "their world"

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes. Appreciate the resources, books, and counsel.

Interview sheets

Before training:

52 Age 5 # of years in ministry

NO Have you ever served in the military?

If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

YES Do you have military veterans in your church?

NO Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not? YES

NEVER BEEN IN THE MILITARY, I THINK HAVING THE OPPORTUNITY TO HEAR FIRST HAND WHAT THEY HAVE AND ARE GOING THROUGH

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not? YES

WILL HAVE A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF PTSD

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

I NEVER REALIZED HOW DIFF. IT IS FOR SOME OF OUR MILITARY FOLKS

What did you dislike?

NOTHING IT WAS WELL DONE

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

NO

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

IT INCLUDES THE FAMILY

What do you dislike about the rite?

MIGHT WANT TO ADD SOME EASTER 'BLOOD NEWS'

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

YES

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

YES I ALSO UNDERSTAND WHY MY FATHER NEVER WANTED TO TALK ABOUT ALL HE SAW

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

YES, BUT STILL NEED MORE TRAINING

Interview sheets

Before training:

54 Age 9 1/2 # of years in ministry

Have you ever served in the military?

If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

Do you have military veterans in your church?

Do you counsel a lot of military veterans? *Not a lot, but a couple over the years*

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not? *I hope to have a better insight to their mind. I am slowly getting that insight from a son-in-law who is active duty USMC.*

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not? *That is my desire. I have had conversations with a couple of soldiers who have deployed and returned and I really couldn't grasp their struggles.*

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video? ^① *How warriors perceive the public and their view of them offering thanks when they return.*

② *The public perception of not really being at war when the soldiers*

What did you dislike? *#2 above*

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No.

What do you like about the Purification Rite? *It is powerful. I like how it encompasses all the body parts that are used in combat.*

What do you dislike about the rite?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future? *Yes*

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

I see this as a good introduction to the military psyche.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

This time has given me good insight with how to deal with returning warriors. Thank You.

Lots to ponder.

Interview sheets

Before training:

57 Age 32 # of years in ministry

No Have you ever served in the military?

No If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

Yes Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/why not? Yes. I believe hearing one who works with far more veterans than I do will give me insight.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

Yes. I hope to gain tools that will help clarify and heal wounds of the conscience.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

Carver - helped me to enter their world.

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

Biblically rooted; distinguishes between sin - would for personal guilt from associative guilt.

What do you dislike about the rite?

I believe it is helpful

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Yes

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes - but there is much yet to learn.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes - with keys to understanding & tools to use.

See other side.

There could be a connection with Mark 3 -
Where soldiers ask Jesus what they should do,
and Jesus does not say "quit soldiering," but
stop doing what is wrong. Their work
may include difficult things, but is not
dishonorable.

Also note in the ~~rite~~ rite, replace
"Here" with "Hear" as it relates to the
Pastor introducing God's word.

News!

Interview sheets

Before training:

61 Age 34 # of years in ministry

No Have you ever served in the military?

____ If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

Yes Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?
Why/ why not? Yes - Benefit from line experience of Chaplain Lense.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

That our country doesn't believe it's at war.

What did you dislike? Nothing - We need the reality in spite of how raw it is!

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

Getting to forgiveness - cleansing.

What do you dislike about the rite?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Psalm 32:1-5 - Keeping silent one wastes away
Forgiveness is healing.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes - specific tools - application of Scripture

Interview sheets

Before training:

52 Age 20 # of years in ministry

YES Have you ever served in the military?

If yes, which branch? CG + Army # of years served 14 MOS AE / CH

YES Do you have military veterans in your church?

YES Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not? *yes. I work with soldiers now. But, sharing another CH experience is a blessing*

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not? *yes. Training will provide idea + tools to help serve.*

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

ReEntry video was good. Postdeployment briefs dont do it

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No.

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

It is a blessing to applied Word to the need and be in prayer.

What do you dislike about the rite?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

yes. I would like to share it with other Chaplains

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Interview sheets

Before training:

34 Age 5 # of years in ministry

Yes Have you ever served in the military?

Yes If yes, which branch? Army # of years served 8 MOS 38A Civil Affairs

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

Some Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not? Yes. I am very interested to hear/see the way a chaplain sees/understands what is wounding the soldier's soul.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not? Yes. It is always helpful to learn about the different struggles that are faced.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

A very good look into how a soldier thinks / feels.

What did you dislike?

N/A

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No.

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

I love it. I wish it had been available to me.

What do you dislike about the rite?

—

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Yes.

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

I am reminded of how fellow vets. think.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes. Please publish this rite.

Workshop #2 Questionnaires

January 15, 2013

17 seminary students

Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, MO.

January 15, 2013

Interview sheets

Before training:

24 Age 2 # of years in ministry ^{Seminary}

NO Have you ever served in the military?

— If yes, which branch? — # of years served — MOS —

? Do you have military veterans in your church?

NO Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?
Why/ why not?

Yes, I have little contact with them now.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?
Why/Why not?

Yes, understanding

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

The play was very helpful, as was your perspective

What did you dislike?

While I haven't thought of a better term, subjective justification was a strange way of describing what we try to do for combat veterans

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

no

What do you like about the Purification Rite? I know you're using Mark, but I might draw the statement in Acts 11, what God has called "clean, do not call unclean"

What do you dislike about the rite?

some sections seemed long and the pastor sections seemed pastor-centric at times

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

perhaps. I'd probably make it my own, a bit

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes, empathy was easier in light of your & the play's experience

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes ↑

Interview sheets

Before training:

31 Age 5 # of years in ministry As a DCO

No Have you ever served in the military?

 If yes, which branch? # of years served MOS

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

No Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

Yes. At this point I know very little about the subject at hand.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

Yes. " " " "

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

The purification rite.

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No.

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

It's subjective.

What do you dislike about the rite?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Maybe.

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Perhaps... but probably not much.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Perhaps.

Interview sheets

Before training:

29 Age 5 # of years in ministry (4 yrs. seminary)

No Have you ever served in the military?

If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

No Do you have military veterans in your church?

No Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

Maybe. I imagine it's hard to relate. Hopefully I can empathize?

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

Probably? I imagine relationship has much to do with it.

Stories shared might help me to empathize + have compassion

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

Powerful. "youth ministry with weapons" wow.

What did you dislike?

Don't spend so much time justifying your theology. You're spot on.

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No.

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

Answers a different problem than guilt. Sometimes confession + absolution isn't what's

What do you dislike about the rite? Specific, appropriate! needed. (Clean vs. Unclean)

One prayer at the end is confusing: says "Me" when I would think the vet should be praying?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Yes. Absolutely.

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

A little. The verbatims in Re-entry were insightful + revealing

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

I promise not to try to grant them forgiveness when they have done nothing wrong. I will seek to offer re-entry + acceptance.

(right before Lord's Prayer)

Interview sheets

Before training:

28 Age 5 # of years in ministry 2 years in school, 3 years youth ministry
NO Have you ever served in the military?
N/A If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____
YES Do you have military veterans in your church?
NO Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not? YES, BECAUSE MY UNDERSTANDING IS LIMITED AND I SEEK TO GAIN MORE.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not? YES, BECAUSE I THINK THE TRAINING IS AIMED AT THAT, AND I HAVE A WILLING MIND AND HEART.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

I HIGHLY VALUED THE RITE THAT WAS SHARED, AS WELL AS THE VIDEO, AND COMMENTS SHARED. THIS IS A SERIOUS ISSUE THAT NEEDS SPIRITUAL ATTENTION.

What did you dislike?

I COULDN'T POINT TO THINGS I FOUND UNVALUABLE. I LIKED AND APPRECIATED THE CONTENT.

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

NO.

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

THE FOCUS ON CLEANSING THE UNCLEAN FEELINGS.

What do you dislike about the rite?

NOTHING.

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

IF I NEEDED IT. I WILL SAVE IT.

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

YES, I STILL FEEL LIKE I COULD UNDERSTAND MORE BUT THIS GIVES A FIRM FOUNDATION.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

I BELIEVE THIS IS A BEGINNING AND I'LL SEEK MORE INSIGHT, BUT I COULD START COUNSELLING BY OFFERING A LISTENING EAR WITH THE PROPER CONTEXT.

Interview sheets

Before training:

26 Age 0 # of years in ministry

No Have you ever served in the military?

— If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

No Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/why not? Yes, It helps me understand the world of Veterans.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not? Yes. I have more clarity in some of the many issues both mentally + physically that veterans deal with.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

The rich amount of information

What did you dislike?

Couldn't find anything I disliked.

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

The constant references to scripture

What do you dislike about the rite?

A little on the longer sides

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

I think I might

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes, Because hearing some of the testimonials from the video.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

In some ways yes but in many ways there is still alot I need to understand about PTSD.

Interview sheets

Before training:

25 Age 3 ^{→ in Seminary} # of years in ministry

No Have you ever served in the military?

If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

No Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not? Yes, I have little to no experience with military veterans so I think the gain of experience will help.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not? Yes. Same as above.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

The "ReEntry" clip was helpful; as well as David and PTSD.

What did you dislike?

Nothing

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

The wholeness of it and how specific it is to the issues.

What do you dislike about the rite?

I was a little ^{concerned} ~~confused~~ about section of "divided Kingdom" so that the individual or those hearing do not see themselves as satanic or part of his Kingdom. This is minor, but it came to mind.

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Yes.

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes. Simply learning about what veterans experience through your experience and example helped.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes. Same as above.

Thank you.

Interview sheets

Before training:

25 Age 4 # of years in ministry - in sem

No Have you ever served in the military?

If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

No Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

Yes since it is a topic I know relatively little about

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

Yes since I will be better able to hone what I already know & apply it to new knowledge

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

I appreciated the mindset presented of those who

What did you dislike?

have been in combat

Could use more question time

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

It is a good public way in which God can touch

What do you dislike about the rite?

an individual without simply touting patriotism to cover for our inability to help veterans

could be shortened in the readings.

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Yes

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes, I have veterans in my family but they do not speak about it - nice intro into it.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes, with the rite this will be a huge help.

Interview sheets

Before training:

25 Age 4<sup>-3 to chad
-1 vicarage</sup> # of years in ministry
no Have you ever served in the military?
 If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____
yes Do you have military veterans in your church?
no Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?
Why/ why not? yes

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?
Why/Why not? yes

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

Gives a means for helping with people suffering from trauma,

What did you dislike?

∅

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

Repetition of "Lord if you are willing you can make me clean"

What do you dislike about the rite?

∅

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Definitely

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

yes, we aren't trained to help

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

yes, we aren't prepared other than this.

Interview sheets

Before training:

37 Age 0 # of years in ministry (student-semminarian) ^{4th yr}
NO Have you ever served in the military?
If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____
YES Do you have military veterans in your church?
NO Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?
Why/ why not?

Yes, having learned from someone who has first hand experience, I expect to ~~be~~ have more knowledge than before.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?
Why/Why not?

Yes, I've never really dealt with the topic until now, so any training is surely better than none.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class? I appreciate the application of the Psalm and David's situation and symptoms (PTSD-like). Verbatims were helpful. Knowing the presenter speaks from first-hand knowledge was important.
What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training? No

What do you like about the Purification Rite? It is very powerful - it applies the Word of God in a specific situation

What do you dislike about the rite? Nothing really, however it could be difficult to get through without becoming emotional

Do you think you might use the rite in the future? Yes

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Absolutely. I had never really thought through what re-entry must be like now had I looked at applying the Word of God directly to such situations.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not? Yes. Perhaps I have a better understanding

of a veteran's response regarding "...my hands are dirty" and the need for purification and not merely saying "thank you."

Interview sheets

Before training:

26 Age 1 # of years in ministry

yes Have you ever served in the military?

 If yes, which branch? Navy Reserve # of years served 1 MOS chaplain candidate

yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

no Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not? yes; there is nothing like experience; this gentleman has "been there and done that" and can teach from his experience

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not? yes; any insight will help and this seems like it is going to offer significant insight

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

resources; video, books, most especially experience and the purification ritual

What did you dislike?

n/a

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

no

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

that it is personal and physical (hands laid on, water, oil)

What do you dislike about the rite?

n/a

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

YES!

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

yes; combat vets need purification, not necessarily confession and absolution

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

yes; this is an excellent tool and the information, resources, and experience are invaluable

Outstanding

Interview sheets

Before training:

30 Age 0 # of years in ministry

No Have you ever served in the military? Civil Air Patrol - plan on serving as a chaplain

NA If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

N/A Do you have military veterans in your church?

N/A Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

Yes, mainly because with the exception of this course (Pastoral Care, Human Experience w/ Dr. Hartog) this topic hasn't been addressed.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

Yes, because I will have a better understanding than I do now.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class? The whole overview & the rite.

What did you dislike? Nothing.

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No.

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

The ability to bring the congregation into the healing sequence

What do you dislike about the rite?

Nothing.

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

~~Yes~~ Absolutely

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes, but I have much to still learn. This was a good start.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes, but as above, I have much to still learn.

Interview sheets

Before training:

47 Age 6 # of years in ministry Deacon/Elder

Yes Have you ever served in the military?

 If yes, which branch? USN # of years served 4 MOS E-4 Torpedoman

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

Some Do you counsel a lot of military veterans? Plan to do more

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not? I hope so, already feel pretty comfortable with veterans.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not? Yes, always open to different perspective

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

great tool

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

- NO -

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

includes familiar ways to offer God's peace

What do you dislike about the rite?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

yes

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

yes

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

yes

would love to involve this in my ministry -

Interview sheets

Before training:

26 Age 0 # of years in ministry

No Have you ever served in the military?

 If yes, which branch? # of years served MOS

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

N/A Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?
Why/ why not?

I think so. Maybe not entirely, but I expect I will have at least a little better idea what military veterans have gone through.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?
Why/Why not?

I hope so. Mainly because I have heard good things about the speaker.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

The foundation in Scripture + examples; recommended resources; the rite itself.

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No.

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

The emphasis on Christ taking on our uncleanness. I really like that. Also, the prominence of Holy Scripture / the Gospel. And especially, the physical act of washing.

What do you dislike about the rite?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Yes.

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes, because I understand the need better, which is spiritual.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes. It was helpful to learn more about the problem, as well as the very practical solution of the application of God's Word and forgiveness to a returning ~~veteran~~ veteran Exercity.

Interview sheets

Before training:

31 Age 3 # of years in ministry

Yes Have you ever served in the military?

Army If yes, which branch? Army # of years served 5 MOS 11B1P

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

Somewhat Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not? I hope so

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not? IBID

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

Love the Purification Rite

What did you dislike?

N/A

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

its emphasis on brokenness and not sin

What do you dislike about the rite?

N/A

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Absolutely

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

I understand that civilians need to understand them better

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes

Interview sheets

Before training:

28 Age 0 # of years in ministry

No Have you ever served in the military?

If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

No Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?
Why/ why not?

*I hope so! Military Veterans make up an important
Section of Many Congregations*

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?
Why/Why not?

I hope so!

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

Experiencing things from the Veterans point - of - View.

What did you dislike?

Nothing

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

I have not.

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

That it ~~is~~ addresses a specific felt need of Veterans.

What do you dislike about the rite?

*Nothing I dislike. This should be discussed and
taught before the actual use.*

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

I would absolutely be willing to use this.

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

*Yes. The idea of feeling "Unclean" had not really
occurred to me.*

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

*Yes. I now have a model I could possibly use for
a rite of purification.*

Interview sheets

Before training:

25 Age 0 # of years in ministry (4 Counting Seminary)
N Have you ever served in the military?
- If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____
Y Do you have military veterans in your church?
N Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?
Why/ why not?

Yes, because that seems to be your goal and I know you have experience with veterans.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?
Why/Why not?

Probably not, only because this session is only 1-5 hours.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

It was all beneficial, especially the rite

What did you dislike?

All good!

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No.

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

It is multisensory + biblically based

What do you dislike about the rite?

The Bible translation - Jesus is "indignant" instead of "compassionate" w/ the leper

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

YES

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes, and no. I understand that they relate best w/ other veterans and that I probably will not fully grasp their experience - but I will try!

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

At least I will be able to ~~share~~ be of spiritual counsel and direct them to appropriate help for other needs.

Interview sheets

Before training:

26 Age 1 # of years in ministry (vicarage)
NO Have you ever served in the military?
If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____
YES Do you have military veterans in your church?
NO Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?
Why/ why not?

Yes, because I ~~haven't~~ haven't spent a lot of time

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?
Why/Why not?

Yes, I have heard good things about Chaplain Prince
in relationship w/ veterans

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

The discussion of unclean was helpful. I also appreciated that Matt stressed not doing confession/absolution unless the vet has done something wrong

What did you dislike?

Some ^{personal} stories would have helped connecting this to home.

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No.

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

I like the communal aspect. I also appreciate the baptism/foot washing/annointing. The three fold plea w/ 3 separate rights in answer.

What do you dislike about the rite?

It would require ~~more~~ teaching for the congregation/vet to follow the ~~the~~ mark connections. This isn't a dislike. Just a concern

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Yes, I would ~~use it~~ if a vet showed a need. *A study guide or sermon of teaching might help to accompany the rite.*

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

To a degree. It was only 90min so more time/stories would have helped.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes, the unclean ~~point~~ points ~~will~~ will be helpful in my thinking and framing of conversation. I also liked the 'normed' conscience.

Workshop #3 Questionnaires

January 15, 2013

10 pastors in D.Min. program

Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, MO.

January 15, 2013

Interview sheets

Before training:

36 Age 9 # of years in ministry

No Have you ever served in the military?

____ If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

No Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not? Yes because I do not have much experience with military.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not? Same as above

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

Realism. Quotes

What did you dislike?

Could show more.

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

Only in classes with you

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

Sensory experience

What do you dislike about the rite?

perhaps add something about originals in vs. actual not necessarily in the rite but the presentation.

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Yes

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes, seeing a need for reaching to some of my vets.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes, I now have a tool and resource.

Interview sheets

Before training:

38 Age 13 # of years in ministry

No Have you ever served in the military?

— If yes, which branch? — # of years served — MOS —

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

1-2 per year Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

Yes - because the presenter has 15+ - hand knowledge + experience

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

Yes - for the same reason - I'll have better ~~the~~ reservoirs of compassion/understanding

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

The raw, real insight in military families

What did you dislike?

Other than some bad acting - nothing! :)

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

Only from history

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

It's therapeutic nature - it treats the whole man - mind/feet/family - physical/spiritual/relational

What do you dislike about the rite?

I struggle w/ the language of clean/unclean + purification - It still seems overlaid w/ sin/guilt meaning for me. In Mark - those leprose/demonic-possessed people, etc. were outside

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

With some modifications

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes - this was very illuminating for me, in just an hour - helped me sort through some of the issues I'd never considered.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes - for the same reason

Did you consult healing liturgies from other churches? The aren LBW has one that may help.

God's old covenant - these still may, "sinful" But honorable veterans are not - they are justified - just hard for me.

Interview sheets

Before training:

39 Age 12 # of years in ministry

No Have you ever served in the military?

 If yes, which branch? # of years served MOS

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church? + Near Great Lakes Naval/VA Facility

Some Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

Yes, because I do not have military experience but see a great need in our area with active, reserve, retired & Veteran's Administration patients. more than just

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

See above

being a "military friendly congregation" this helps me see the true need for spiritual healing beyond just thanking them for their service

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

A formal rite to deepen & strengthen the pastoral message of "be clean."

What do you dislike about the rite?

Blending of informal & formal language. Needs consistency

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

I would very much like to have a finalized version of this rite.

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

oops! answered above

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Interview sheets

Before training:

41 Age 3 # of years in ministry

NO Have you ever served in the military?

X If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

YES Do you have military veterans in your church?

NO Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

yes - a better context

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

will certainly have more compassion as my knowledge increased

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

n/a

What did you dislike?

n/a

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No - never

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

Biblical and helpful

What do you dislike about the rite?

nothing

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

might - yes

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

yes

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

yes

Interview sheets

Before training:

42 Age 17 # of years in ministry

no Have you ever served in the military?

_____ If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

no Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?
Why/ why not?

yes. This really helped give ~~me~~ awareness of some of what soldiers feel + experience in coming here

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?
Why/Why not?

Yes - I really appreciate the careful distinction between actual sin and feelings of guilt that may remain even if one has served faithfully

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

It made me think about times I have said "thank you" to a veteran and how they might hear that well meaning word.

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

The physical nature of it - not only soul but body are cleansed

What do you dislike about the rite?

There are times when maybe only the ~~soldier~~ soldier should speak and not him with the "congregation".

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

yes I think it could be very transformative + meaningful

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes see above

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

see above

Interview sheets

Before training:

49 Age B # of years in ministry

Yes Have you ever served in the military?

Yes If yes, which branch? USAF # of years served 4 MOS Electronics

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

No Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

Yes - know a little more of what they might have experienced

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

yes - understanding of military veterans w/ God's Word

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

Gives perspective from family members and how they are affected

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

Touches spiritual & physical (hands, feet)

Family can be included

What do you dislike about the rite?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Yes

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes - although I've been exposed somewhat as a veteran

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

yes - understand spiritual side
- use of Rite

Interview sheets

Before training:

50 Age 21 # of years in ministry
Have you ever served in the military? No
If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____
Do you have military veterans in your church?
Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not? Because it promises to be an Informed Presentation

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not? Yes I will be better Equipped to serve

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

I Liked the Plain Truth of what was shown

What did you dislike?

The Language was not Pleasant But Necessary to show Veterans in a realistic manner

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

The Corporate Nature of the Rite, and the Individual's Place in the Rite,

What do you dislike about the rite? and Family Participation

It is too short and the Veterans participation should be more

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Yes

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes, the Information was helpful

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes, because I may Refer difficult cases

Interview sheets

Before training:

56 ~~26~~ Age 25 # of years in ministry
No Have you ever served in the military?
Yes If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____
No Do you have military veterans in your church?
No Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?
Why/ why not?

A bit

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?
Why/Why not?

I can provide some comfort.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

It provides assurance to the victim

What do you dislike about the rite?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

A bit. Some have guilty conscience

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Interview sheets

Before training:

56 Age 30 # of years in ministry

NO Have you ever served in the military?

____ If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

YES Do you have military veterans in your church?

NO Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?
Why/ why not?

YES, IT WAS HELPFUL TO GAIN A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF HOW VETERANS FEEL

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?
Why/Why not?

YES, IT'S HELPFUL TO KNOW MORE ABOUT THEM & THAT IT'S NOT GUILT, BUT NEED FOR PURIFICATION THIS IS A GOOD TOOL.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

IT WAS HELPFUL TO HEAR THAT MARINES ARE TOLD THEY ~~SHOULD~~ AS A GROUP RATHER THAN AS AN INDIVIDUAL

What did you dislike?

I APPRECIATED IT

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

NO

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

IT IS SENSORY.

What do you dislike about the rite?

NOT SURE.

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

YES

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

YES - CAN SEE PTSD AS A SPIRITUAL PROBLEM

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

YES - THERE IS HELPFUL INFO

A QUESTION - IS THEIR "GUILT" BASED ON THEIR "SHEDDING BLOOD" - I.E. TAKING OR ~~BLOOD AS A SAC~~ SOMEONE'S LIFE? IT COULD HAVE BEEN THEM?

Interview sheets

Before training:

57 Age 11 # of years in ministry

no Have you ever served in the military?

____ If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

no Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?
Why/ why not?

Yes. Most veterans are reluctant to talk about their most troubling experiences.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?
Why/Why not?

I hope so. The most recent conflicts that our military have been involved in seem to present them with

After Training: many moral conflicts as well

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

The ring of authenticity

What did you dislike?

- are the experiences of veterans uniform?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

It's scriptural + Christ-centered

What do you dislike about the rite?

nothing

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

possibly - and maybe even with WWII + Korean war veterans

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

yes - most of my previous knowledge was 2nd hand

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes - it makes me more sensitive to the spiritual needs / aspects of PTSD

Workshop #4 Questionnaires

January 16, 2014

17 seminary students

Concordia Seminary in St. Louis, MO.

January 16, 2014

Interview sheets

Before training:

23 Age 0 # of years in ministry

No Have you ever served in the military?

_____ If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

No Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

Yes, any opportunity to learn more about the military will allow me to better understand veterans

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

Yes

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

the realization that guilt/spiritual weight is associated w/ military service

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

it is subjective, personal, & can be modified

What do you dislike about the rite?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

No (I am a female MA student)

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes - learning about PTSD opened up a new line of understanding

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes

Interview sheets

Before training:

23 Age 0 # of years in ministry

No Have you ever served in the military?

_____ If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

No Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?
Why/ why not?

Yes ; shared experiences

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?
Why/Why not?

Yes ; shared experiences

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

experiencing the rite

What did you dislike?

assumed a unified theological stance on warfare

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

no

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

kinesthetic components

What do you dislike about the rite?

unclear connection between certain bible passages and their situational use

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

maybe - with adaptations

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

yes - hearing stories of military experience

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

yes - learned points to improve listening & understanding

Interview sheets

Before training:

24 Age 0 # of years in ministry
No Have you ever served in the military?
 If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____
Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?
No Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?
 Why/ why not?

Yes because he's had experience.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?
 Why/Why not?

Yes for the same reason.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

Very thorough, organized and thought-provoking

What did you dislike?

I can't think of anything.

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No.

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

It's closeness with Scripture; it would give the veteran a sense of stability.

What do you dislike about the rite?

I can't think of anything.

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Most likely, yes.

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes- he was very good at helping me get into the mind of a veteran.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes- I think I know a little better where they're coming from.

Interview sheets

Before training:

25 Age 0 # of years in ministry

NO Have you ever served in the military?

____ If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

no Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

Yes, inside experience is extremely beneficial.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

Yes, I will understand more what the struggles are like and how I will be able to help them.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

I like the discussion about not feeling guilty but unclean. That's a good way of describing it.

What do you dislike about the rite?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Yes

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

I do to an extent. I feel like there is much more we could have talked about but it is such a large topic.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes, I think I got enough information and awareness to start.

Interview sheets

Before training:

25 Age 3 # of years in ministry
N Have you ever served in the military?
N/A If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____
Y Do you have military veterans in your church?
N Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

yes, b/c I'm hearing from one who has ^{been} served.

His insight will help me to understand fellow soldiers

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

Learning to understand & listen to their experience will allow greater connection & rapport important for counseling

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

Purification rite, ^{healing/spiritual} Need for ^{glimpse into} the human experience of veterans ^{actual}

What did you dislike?

Aside from skype issues, felt like needed more time to go over rite and possible methods of incorporation.

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

only in the classes

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

Purification from guilt that tries to trap us, and weigh us, ^{personally}

What do you dislike about the rite?

How does this incorporate with a Sunday morning Service, if done then, which is to also ask when can the rite be performed ~~the~~ such that the congregation is present & supportive?
Given Veterans consent & need, Absolutely

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes b/c I have a greater understanding of the guilt that may haunt them despite honorable service & the need for spiritual side of healing to enable

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes, especially through the resources & encouragement assimilate back into Society to work with Medical side of things along with spiritual in order to counsel, meet the need, and help Veterans adopt a "new norm" that informs the conscience

Questions to think about in terms of implementation

Interview sheets

Before training:

26 Age 0 # of years in ministry

N Have you ever served in the military?

____ If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

Y Do you have military veterans in your church?

N Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?
Why/ why not?

Yes because I know very little personally about the spiritual wounds of military personnel

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?
Why/Why not?

Yes, because I'll know more than I do now.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

The ritual of purification

What did you dislike?

Technology glitches made it hard to concentrate

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

The Scripture passages selected? the washings

What do you dislike about the rite?

The dressing in a white robe. It eventually requires taking it off.

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Yes

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

a little better. I can't find an emotional connection

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

see above

Interview sheets

Before training:

27 Age 0 # of years in ministry

No Have you ever served in the military?

NA If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

No Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not? yes, has plenty to share about the topic I didnt know before

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not? yes, matt seems knowledgable & practical concerning the issue

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class? The distinction of purification & justification

What did you dislike? Nothing, liked the whole thing

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

It addresses the issue of soldiers who have fought honorably & done nothing wrong

What do you dislike about the rite?

I liked the rite. If I used it I dont think I would vary it

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

yes

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

yes, matt has given me another perspective I didnt have before. I would say my military friends also have given me an understanding

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

yes, Matt accounted for many things helpful to military counseling, especially listening and using the tools God has given us to heal

Interview sheets

Before training:

32 Age Seminary student # of years in ministry

NO Have you ever served in the military?

If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

NO Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

Yes, because I am getting a perspective from a guy that ~~is~~ ~~was~~ ^{is} in the military, and has a diverse background associated with many different branches + experiences.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

Yes. I will be better in theory, but not experience.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

Very beneficial, and I'm thankful to have this rite as an option for the future.

What did you dislike? Nothing

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training? No

What do you like about the Purification Rite? The thoughtfulness + applicability of the rite.

What do you dislike about the rite? Some of the pastor's parts get a little long, but it is necessary. I'm only thinking from a presentation standpoint.

Do you think you might use the rite in the future? Yes

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not? With this tool yes.

Interview sheets

Before training:

38 Age 10 # of years in ministry

NO Have you ever served in the military?

 If yes, which branch? # of years served MOS

YES Do you have military veterans in your church?

NO Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

YES, BECAUSE TO BEGIN I HAVE LITTLE OR NONE KNOWLEDGE ABOUT MILITARY VETERANS, AND WILL ONLY GAIN SOME KNOWLEDGE TO BEGIN WITH.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

YES, I WILL BE MORE COGNIZANT OF WHAT ISSUES THEY FACE.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

I LIKE THE FACT THAT THERE ARE

What did you dislike?

NONE

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

NO

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

IT GIVE PARISH PASTORS A RITE TO HELP VETERANS

What do you dislike about the rite?

NONE

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

YES

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

YES, I SEE AND UNDERSTAND HOW TO HELP THEM BY BETTER ASSESSMENT OF THEIR CONDITIONS AND HOW I CAN GIVE THEM SPIRITUAL SUPPORT.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

YES, BECAUSE I WOULD KNOW WHAT SOLUTIONS TO USE TO HELP THEM.

Interview sheets

Before training:

- 52 Age 0 # of years in ministry
- 0 Have you ever served in the military?
- 0 If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____
- 0 Do you have military veterans in your church?
- 0 Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not? *Yes. Because Clayton Bivins is in the mil & has real life experience to share w/ us.*

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not? *Yes. If I have insight to their experiences, then I can start to meet them where they are -*

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

*The insight to need for purification } The need can also arise }
in civilian context.*

What did you dislike?

It was slow going. Need stronger &/or clear theological grounding.

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No.

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

the responsorial, food, if you are cutting, you can use me clean -

What do you dislike about the rite?

Need to be able to perform for multiple vets at once - in a corporate setting.

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

yes -

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes. However, there was little discussion of military life, training, point of view, or of battle experience (even in general) ~~which~~

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes. The need to understand pain/hurt/guilt while offering their service as just and honorable.

Families involved in the ritual. I don't want my wife's family near

Interview sheets

Before training:

27 Age 3 # of years in ministry DCE

no Have you ever served in the military?

____ If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

no Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

Not sure. The experience that veterans have gone through is pretty extreme. This lack of experience on my part is going to keep a pretty large crevasse between veterans and myself.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

It would seem to me that I will learn a great deal.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

To hear a fresh perspective of a culture that has a deep need for cleansing.

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

The best thing to me is the bringing back into community.

What do you dislike about the rite?

I am not sure how I feel about the two distinct "feet" and "hand" washing times. I wonder if a single movement would be better but I am not sure.

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Absolutely

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

It still seems to me that it will always be case to case when dealing with veterans, however in terms of big picture I think I have a better understanding.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

To at least focus better on the distinction between "doing something wrong" and not "doing something wrong."

Interview sheets

Before training:

31 Age 0 # of years in ministry

NO Have you ever served in the military?

NO If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

YES Do you have military veterans in your church?

NO Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

SOME WHAT - MORE KNOWLEDGE OF WHAT THEY ARE GOING THROUGH

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

A LITTLE

STILL DON'T KNOW ABOUT THEIR BACKGROUND AS MUCH AS I COULD

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

MODERN PROBLEMS TIED TO SCRIPTURE

What did you dislike?

—

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

NO

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

THE ACT OF CLEANSING THOSE WHO HAVE DONE/WITNESSED WAR.

What do you dislike about the rite?

NO SPECIFIC BIBLICAL MANDATE

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

YES

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

YES - KNOW MORE ABOUT WHAT THEY ARE GOING THROUGH

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

YES - I KNOW MORE ABOUT HOW TO TALK TO THEM & WHAT ELSE CAN BE DONE FOR THEM

Interview sheets

Before training:

45 Age 0 # of years in ministry
no Have you ever served in the military?
 _____ If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____
yes Do you have military veterans in your church?
no Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?
 Why/ why not?

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?
 Why/Why not? *yes, ~~the~~ understanding "why" we do things we do in the purification rite helped understand deeper why some of the issues they are going through.*

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

no

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

Scriptural, as well as based on theology & brother culture,

What do you dislike about the rite?

- Can be adapted to non military use. Very helpful!

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

yes

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

I grew up in a military culture, father & friends are all military so probably no.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Interview sheets

Before training:

48 Age ^{4th year seminarian} # of years in ministry

Yes Have you ever served in the military?

If yes, which branch? AF # of years served 20 MOS SAC/STRATCOM/space

yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

Do you counsel a lot of military veterans? N/A

nuclear ICBM operator, maintainer
cryptographer

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not? Not sure, probably. I have known & been military for a while but you have had experience counseling & thinking about this issue

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

same

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class?

Skype is always challenging - thanks

What did you dislike?

for taking the time to share w/ this class

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

Dr Hartung gave us a basic background on it

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

I really like the distinction between sin that someone commits vs serving honorably in the military -- especially if they might need to CONTINUE to do so.

What do you dislike about the rite?

I disagree with your translation of Mk 1:41 😊

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

I would love to do so if it was appropriate

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

I am a military vet

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

I think this is a very helpful perspective

Interview sheets

Before training:

47 Age 0 # of years in ministry 2nd YEAR CERT ROUTE (CONCLUSION SEMINAR)
NO Have you ever served in the military?
NO If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____
_____ Do you have military veterans in your church?
_____ Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

THAT IS MY HOPE

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

I HOPE TO... I WISH THAT I HAD GONE INTO
MILITARY WHEN I GRADUATED HIGH SCHOOL. I WOULD LOVE
TO DO WHAT YOU DO.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class? YES! I WISH WE HAD OPPORTUNITY
FOR MORE EXPOSURE TO THIS TYPE OF TRAINING.

What did you dislike? - VOICE ONLY..... WOULD BE NICE TO HAVE IN
CLASS SPEAKER.

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

NO.

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

1.) IT IS SUBJECTIVE

2.) IT IS ADAPTABLE TO THE COMBAT VET.

What do you dislike about the rite?

NOT OFFERED IN CURRENT AGENDA... I MUST TRY TO KEEP
THIS HANDOUT DURING MY ENTIRE MINISTRY

Do you think you might use the rite in the future? PERHAPS..... I WOULD LIKE TO
THINK I WOULD IF THE SITUATION WAS CORRECT

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not? YES.

Interview sheets

Before training:

56 Age 0 # of years in ministry

No Have you ever served in the military?

If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

No Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

Field Ed.

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

Yes, when given a personal perspective from Rev. Prince it helps to better understand what the soldiers are confronting when they are going through re-entry.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

Yes, I know that it will be through listening and connecting with the veteran that I can bring the love of Christ to their lives.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class? The up front open and honest presentation by Rev. Prince as he shared with us his work and his desires to help soldiers.

What did you dislike? Nothing

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite? I believe it is a God-pleasing way to minister to the spiritual needs of the veteran and their family.

What do you dislike about the rite? Nothing

Do you think you might use the rite in the future? Definitely in some capacity or another.

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes, because I have a more realistic and valid understanding of what military veterans are subjected to in returning to civilization at home.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes, I think I will have a beginning foundation to set spiritual care in motion for our veterans.

Interview sheets

Before training:

58 Age 35 # of years in ministry (lay)
NO Have you ever served in the military? *but I was a civilian in the Dept of Army for 31 years!*
- If yes, which branch? See above # of years served _____ MOS _____
yes Do you have military veterans in your church?
None Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

yes. you laid things out well and I understand the need for cleansing

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

yes. Again, I understand better where they are coming from and how to deal with them.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in class? *Better understanding and I can apply/use it for military.*

What did you dislike?

I was good with everything

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training? NO

What do you like about the Purification Rite? *Very powerful, very thorough and effective.*

What do you dislike about the rite?

No dislikes - but I'm a little confused about the words of forgiveness when there was no sin

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Absolutely

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

yes. Similar response to first questions

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

yes. Better able to understand and sort through their trauma.

Very Well Done. Great Work. How Valuable. Thanks for all you do!

Workshop #5 Questionnaires

April 14, 2015

9 pastors and 2 Stephen Ministers

Christ the King Lutheran Church in Williamsburg, VA.

April 14, 2015

Interview sheets

Before training:

33 Age 7 # of years in ministry

NO Have you ever served in the military?

If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

NO Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not? yes, because the more we interact with people the more we will understand one another.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

Yes, because I have never received training in counseling veterans.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video? The video really opened my eyes to a piece of a marines world.

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

NO

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

I loved how there was something tangible, some physical along with the spiritual in the actual washing.

What do you dislike about the rite?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Yes!

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

absolutely, because it allowed me to see a life that I will never be a part of personally.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

absolutely, for the same reasons as above, the more we know about the communities, the better we are equipped to serve.

Interview sheets

Before training:

42 Age 16 # of years in ministry

NO Have you ever served in the military?

____ If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

Yes Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not? Yes. Not having served myself in the military to understand their culture & experience is important.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

Yes. What they have been through is unimaginable. This helps give perspective & truth.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

Gave insight to thoughts & feelings that may never be heard otherwise.

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

Very powerful. Personal. Physical.

What do you dislike about the rite?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Yes.

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes. See above.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes. Reconnected my heart to their journey. Helps me understand their pain & sacrifice.

Interview sheets

Before training:

51 Age 6 # of years in ministry

No Have you ever served in the military?

_____ If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

No Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not? Yes, better understand how to comfort vets

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not? Yes, because Matt said so

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

Gave us a glimpse of what they experienced in the raw!

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

Powerful work

What do you dislike about the rite?

1Jv 1:8-9

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Yes

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

I understand that I can never fully understand what a vet has experienced.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Sure know the great need for this

Interview sheets

Before training:

53 Age 22 # of years in ministry

No Have you ever served in the military?

_____ If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

some Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

probably. Because I'm learning from a military chaplain.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

yes. see above.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

It's authenticity/transparency.

What did you dislike?

Nothing.

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

yes, or similar. Emmanuel Prayer is a compliment to this.

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

The authority of Christ exercised for healing's

What do you dislike about the rite?

wholeness.

Nothing.

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

yes.

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

yes. Because of the transparent exposure from the video

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

yes. seek first to understand, then to be understood

Interview sheets

Before training:

58 Age 35 # of years in ministry

No Have you ever served in the military?

____ If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

Yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

Yes Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

Yes - the training will give me better tools to be able to engage in conversation and listen with understanding

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

Yes - I will have more understanding

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video? *The video was powerful in its authenticity and rawness... The actors were powerful in their sharing.*

What did you dislike?

—

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

The Rite is tied to scripture - and includes powerful physical elements (use of water, cleansing, etc.).

What do you dislike about the rite?

—

It's also powerful to include family in helping w/ the Rite.

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Yes

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes - especially the realization of the "compartmentalization" that takes place by the Marine as they live life. Also -

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes - I would like more training as well...

The concept of "being a Marine" is important.

Interview sheets

Before training:

60 Age 35 # of years in ministry

NO Have you ever served in the military?

If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

YES Do you have military veterans in your church?

NO Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

Yes. The most current info.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

Yes.

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video? *Very real.*

What did you dislike? *Nothing stands out.*

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

What do you like about the Purification Rite? *an guy [Excellent re The Lord] has come + has tied up the strong man*

What do you dislike about the rite? *Nothing stands out.*

Do you think you might use the rite in the future? *Yes.*

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes. The verbatim drama + the chaplain's earnest presentation.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes. I will keep these things in mind as I experience people as individuals, both verbally and non-verbally. BTW, I have 5 units of CPR and earned a ^{CCMS} Eccl. — for VA Chaplain.

Interview sheets

Before training:

61 Age 34 # of years in ministry

NO Have you ever served in the military?

____ If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

YES Do you have military veterans in your church?

NO Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not? *Maybe - I hope so well - I have had some time with individuals moving back into civilian life - now were sent me*

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not? *Yes*

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

Realism
What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

NO
What do you like about the Purification Rite?

Cleansing made physical
What do you dislike about the rite?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

possibly
After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes - reinforces things & conversations I had.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

The concept of cleansing I had not considered in this specific way.

Interview sheets

Before training:

66 Age 45 # of years in ministry

NO Have you ever served in the military?

- If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

YES Do you have military veterans in your church?

YES Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?
Why/ why not?

YES - it is always good -

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?
Why/Why not?

Yes I do - I'd love to!

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

Very real - honest - gritty. I like that its NOT P.C.

What did you dislike?

Should/could use real vets - not actors.

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

~~NO~~ *Yes - from a pastor who served in Nam as a
LURP...*

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

*Involves elements of faith/like - involves family
(or can -)*

What do you dislike about the rite?

None!

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

YES if the opp arises -

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Yes -

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Yes - again - if I have the opportunity

Interview sheets

Before training:

74 Age _____ # of years in ministry

NO Have you ever served in the military?

_____ If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

YES Do you have military veterans in your church?

NO Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?
Why/ why not?

yes - will have some knowledge.

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?
Why/Why not?

yes - knowledge is very valuable for counseling

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

*Sad and makes me ashamed that we don't treat our
veterans better. Really trying to connect
the friends.*

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

no

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

*It may be the ability to help them feel cleansed
of their works that bother
them.*

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Hope that we do it in our church

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

Somewhat. Need more info about military life

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

*Would like to assist our pastor in some way to
let these vets know of our love and sincerity.*

Interview sheets

Before training:

68 Age _____ # of years in ministry

NO Have you ever served in the military?

— If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

YES Do you have military veterans in your church?

N/A Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not? yes - also PTS applies in non-military careg. situations with which I am involved - Stephen Ministry (Even though military PTSD is so unbelievably complicated) vs Civilian Church care team
Gret Staw

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

- Took the PTSD topic from academic to 1st-person experiential
- Included families who were also touched deeply by their loved ones' service + distress

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

No

What do you like about the Purification Rite? Powerful, based on Scripture

Yes actual rite which focuses the soldier on Christ's desire + ability to reconcile, rebuild, restore, heal him

What do you dislike about the rite?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

Would love our church to offer this!

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

- yes
- 1st person expressions of their experiences bring it up close, personal + real

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Interview sheets

Before training:

51 Age 6 # of years in ministry

Stephen Minister / ^{church worker} Director of Operations

NO Have you ever served in the military?

If yes, which branch? _____ # of years served _____ MOS _____

yes Do you have military veterans in your church?

No Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?

Why/ why not?

yes, because I am sure I'll learn from all of the information that will be presented

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?

Why/Why not?

Yes because I will understand needs better

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

Different aspects / points of view of PTSD - very real

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

NO

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

I never thought about this topic this way and the need for purification and feeling "right" with God

What do you dislike about the rite?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

I would hope so.

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

yes - I can share this with my husband - VA doesn't care & the resources that you provided will be used.

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

Interview sheets

Before training:

75 Age 0 # of years in ministry

YES Have you ever served in the military?

____ If yes, which branch? NAVY # of years served 33 MOS RADM, CEC, USN

Y Do you have military veterans in your church?

N/A Do you counsel a lot of military veterans?

1960-1992

(Retired)

After this training do you think you will be better able to understand military veterans?
Why/ why not?

After this training do you think you will be able to help/counsel better military veterans?
Why/Why not?

After Training:

What did you like/find of value in the ReEntry video?

What did you dislike?

Have you ever seen or heard of a combat veteran Purification Rite before this training?

What do you like about the Purification Rite?

What do you dislike about the rite?

Do you think you might use the rite in the future?

After taking this training, do you better understand military veterans? Why/Why not?

After taking this training, do you think you will be able to help or counsel military veterans better? Why/Why not?

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