

soldier enlists in the army or some other branch of the armed forces, they are now under the organization that God established, and by that under His authority. What is the purpose of this government that God created? *"For he is God's minister to you for good. But if you do evil, be afraid; for he does not bear the sword in vain; for he is God's minister, an avenger to execute wrath on him who practices evil"* (Romans 13:4). So God has ordained government to create an order of things for us as mankind, and they have the authority to execute wrath on those who do evil.

So when a soldier enlists in the armed forces, whether they are a Christian or not, they are now under the God-given government rule of this country. When a regular civilian goes and kills someone in this nation, it is murder. They have broken that law that says one cannot murder. However, when a soldier is given orders to go out on a government-mandated mission, he is God's minister, and an avenger to execute wrath on those who practice evil, and neither he nor any other soldier bears the sword in vain.

A soldier gives up many things to serve his or her nation. The Bible speaks how we need to pray for those men and women, as well as all our government authorities (1 Timothy 2:1-3). In the days of the Roman Empire, Paul encouraged Timothy to pray for those who were in ruling positions, that they may make good choices to allow those living within the empire to have a peaceful and quiet life. So is also our prayer in these modern times. Peter would write that we should be in submission to every ordinance of man, this is for the Lord's sake (1 Peter 2:13).

To answer the question posed at the beginning, yes, Christians can serve in the military, for when they do they are under the ordinance of God. They become an avenger of His wrath on those who do evil. May we always hold respect and honor toward those men and women who serve our nation in this way.

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