



STATEMENT DM067

**Enter the Dragon? Wrestling with the Martial Arts Phenomenon
Part Two: A Christian Assessment
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In Part One of this series we looked at the philosophical and religious elements that have helped shape the martial arts, and briefly discussed some of the most widely known styles practiced today. In this second and final installment we will consider the key issues faced by Christians contemplating participation in the martial arts.¹

EASTERN DANGER ZONE?

One of the most serious concerns regarding the Christian's possible involvement with the martial arts stems from the fact that a good majority of them originated in Asian cultures permeated by a variety of Eastern religions. As we saw in Part One, Taoism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Shinto, and various folk myths and traditions have, in varying degrees, contributed to the development of many Asian-based systems of fighting.

As researchers involved in a discernment ministry (the Christian Research Institute), one of our greatest concerns is that Christians who participate in the martial arts — especially Christian children — might be contaminated to some extent by harmful aspects of Eastern thought. This, of course, must be avoided. There can be no compromise when it comes to one's relationship with Christ.

The question is, must one *necessarily* compromise his or her relationship with Christ and endanger his or her spiritual life in order to participate in the martial arts? In what follows we shall consider a number of key issues that will help us answer this important question.

The Religious Root of the Problem

The charge is sometimes made that the martial arts are little more than an expression of Eastern religious thought and are therefore wholly incompatible with orthodox Christianity. While concerns about Eastern influences are legitimate and should be seriously considered, we believe this type of reasoning is simplistic. It ignores the complexity of the situation by dismissing altogether every facet of the martial arts simply due to the nature of their Eastern origin.

This type of reasoning is an example of the generic fallacy. Such thinking demands that "something (or someone) should be rejected because it (or he) comes from a bad source."² It attempts "to reduce the significance of an idea, person, practice, or institution merely to an account of its origin (genesis) or its earlier forms, thereby overlooking the development, regression, or difference to be found in it in the present situation."³

There are many ways we could illustrate the genetic fallacy. For example, when Philip (in the Bible) told Nathanael about Jesus of Nazareth, Nathanael committed the genetic fallacy by asking, "Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?" (John 1:46).

Another example relates to wedding rings. A person might argue, "You're not going to wear a wedding ring, are you? Don't you know that the wedding ring originally symbolized the ankle chains worn by women to prevent them from running away from their husbands? I would not have thought you would be a party to such a sexist practice."⁴

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Still another example is found in the science of astronomy. One might attempt to condemn astronomy simply because it originated from astrology, an occultic art condemned by God (Isa. 47:13-15). But such reasoning is clearly faulty.

Now, we must emphasize that the martial arts have undergone vast changes since their early beginnings and continue to do so even today. To dismiss all martial arts as anti-Christian simply because of the initial religious context from which they arose is to ignore the dynamic character of the arts themselves. It has been our finding that the degree to which any form of Eastern religion finds its way into regular training regimens has more to do with the approach of the individual instructors themselves, whose opinions are as varied as the arts they teach.

To be sure, there *are* teachers today who see the martial arts as part of a larger, comprehensive package that involves religious elements. Yozan Dirk Mosig, 8th-degree black belt and chairman of the regional directors for the United States Karate Association (USKA), makes no qualms that Eastern philosophy should be the focal point of all martial arts curricula: “Karatedo, aikido, kyudo...and many others are ways of...extending the meditative experience of zazen [Zen meditation] to daily life.” Indeed, Mosig says, “he who practices martial arts without the mental discipline of zazen is...like a fool who comes to eat without a chopstick.”⁵

Yet, many disagree with Mosig. Louis Casamassa, head of the Red Dragon Karate System, is representative in saying that today “the martial arts and religion are as far apart in ideology as Albert Schweitzer is from Adolph Hitler.”⁶ Likewise, keichu-do karate founder Karl Marx, a 50-year veteran of the martial arts and an avowed Christian, says that “the average American [martial arts] instructor doesn’t even bother with the mental/spiritual aspect of his art.”⁷

Christian pastors and kung fu veterans, Raul and Xavier Ries, affirm that a number of martial arts practitioners do become entrenched in religious and mystical practices. However, the brothers are quick to point out, “We do not condone that. We do not believe that is necessary.”⁸ The martial arts, they contend, are just like other forms of art that can either be used to bring glory to God or abused to bring glory to oneself. Such Christian practitioners of the martial arts completely divorce the physical aspect of the arts from the Eastern religions from which they emerged. (More on this shortly.)

The Broad Spectrum of Martial Arts

Given the great diversity of the Asian martial arts, it is hardly surprising that some styles tend to emphasize Eastern philosophical and religious beliefs more so than others. In fact, a broad spectrum of the various arts can be projected today, ranging from those that are purely physical and sportive in character to those steeped in mysticism. For this reason, Christians considering participation in the martial arts must be extremely discerning and select an art located only on the purely physical/sportive side of the spectrum. Here is a good rule of thumb: generally speaking, the “internal” or “soft” martial arts — such as t’ai-chi ch’uan and aikido — tend to emphasize Eastern philosophical and religious concepts more so than the “external” or “hard” martial arts, such as kung fu and judo. Put another way, most “internal/soft” martial arts fall on the mystical side of the spectrum while most “external/hard” arts fall on the physical/sportive side of the spectrum.

The “internal/soft” arts generally focus on inner spiritual development, balance, form, and mental awareness. Besides emphasizing Taoist and Buddhist philosophical principles, stress is also placed on utilizing the chi (ki) force. By contrast, the “external/hard” martial arts typically involve an intense regimen of body conditioning, stress powerful foot and hand strikes, respond to force with force, and tend to avoid Eastern mystical elements. Hence, on the whole, the Christian should avoid participating in “internal/soft” martial arts and select an art from the “external/hard” category.

Having said this, however, we must make a few important qualifications. On the one hand, while “internal/soft” martial arts generally involve Eastern philosophical/religious elements, in some cases the physical aspect of the art *may be isolated* from the philosophical/religious context. This is the case with the so-called Koga method employed by several law enforcement agencies. “Drawing heavily on the [‘internal/soft’] martial art aikido, the method stresses minimal force during confrontations to reduce the likelihood of injury to police officers and suspects.”⁹ However, common aikido concerns — such as learning to utilize the chi force, and attuning one’s spirit and body with the universe — are not part of Koga, which focuses strictly on physical techniques and their proper application.

On the other hand, while most “external/hard” martial arts avoid or minimize Eastern religious elements, in some cases an “external/hard” art retains some religious trappings. The Indonesian-based style pentjak-silat, for example, is oftentimes colored by an eclectic blend of animism, shamanism, occultism, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Sufism.¹⁰ What, then, can we conclude? The “internal/soft” and “external/hard” designations can be helpful in choosing an art as a *general* rule, but in select cases the designations may prove problematic since elements of one occasionally overlap into the other. More often than not, the instructor of a given school — whether “external/hard” or “internal/soft” — becomes the deciding factor. The instructor might present a martial art to students as a strictly physical activity for fitness and protection, or as an all-encompassing world view that involves religious elements. Choosing the right instructor, then, becomes a critical issue in relation to the Christian’s possible involvement in the martial arts.

Issues of Discernment

Two areas of concern for the Christian considering participation in the martial arts — both related to the Eastern origins of the arts — are meditation and the use of the so-called chi force. Because these elements surface in some martial arts today, it is critical to have a proper perspective on them.

Meditation. Within the context of the martial arts, meditation has generally referred to those practices that involve “the focusing of attention non-analytically in either a concentrated or expansive fashion, the outcome of which can lead to an alteration in consciousness, an increase in awareness and insight, or a combination of such psychological factors.”¹¹ It is said that diligent practice of meditation “leads to a non-dualistic state of mind in which, the distinction between subject and object having disappeared and the practitioner having become one with ‘god’ or ‘the absolute,’ conventions like time and space are transcended...[until] finally that stage is reached which religions refer to as salvation, liberation, or complete enlightenment.”¹²

The Christian, of course, must not participate in such forms of meditation — for at least three reasons. First, its goal is to provide the practitioner a way (if not the way) to ultimate truth and freedom through sheer human effort, thus advocating a form of self-salvation over and against what the Bible explicitly teaches (Eph. 2:8-9). In so doing, it ignores man’s fallen nature (Rom. 3:10-12) and denies Christ’s exclusive claim as the way to salvation (John 14:6). Second, Eastern meditation’s stated goal of transforming one’s state of mind into a monistic (“all is one”), if not an outright pantheistic (“all is God”), outlook lies in direct contradiction to biblical theism. The latter recognizes an eternal distinction between a personal Creator-God and His creation (Isa. 44:6-8; Heb. 2:6-8).

Third, such altered states of consciousness can open one up to spiritual affliction and deception by the powers of darkness. This alone should serve to dissuade any Christian from participating in Eastern forms of meditation. Fortunately, not all martial arts schools utilize such meditation. One scholar has noted that “within various schools of fighting arts, particularly in America, a very small number of practitioners value the role of formal meditation as an adjunctive method of realizing one’s essential nature or attaining optimal psychological development (enlightenment).”¹³ This underscores our point that choosing the right instructor is absolutely critical.

Additionally, we must note that not all martial arts instructors interpret meditation in the same way. For some, meditation involves nothing more than putting aside passing thoughts and other distractions that would otherwise cause personal disruption during practice sessions. “Meditation” of this variety is generally devoid of mysticism and differs little from the focused concentration of an athlete getting ready to shoot a basketball from the free-throw line or a golfer preparing to putt on the green.

While this latter form of “meditation” is not necessarily harmful or antibiblical, it nevertheless should be distinguished from biblical meditation. Scripture defines meditation in terms of the believer objectively contemplating and reflecting on God and His Word (Josh. 1:8; Ps. 1:2).

The Chi (Ki) Force. Various martial artists assert that learning to develop and use chi — an alleged mystical force that pervades the universe — is the ultimate means of attaining high proficiency in the fighting arts. Some believe that “in the Asian system of Martial Arts, chi is directed by will power to specific points of the body, resulting in apparently paranormal feats of strength and control.”¹⁴

Practically everyone acknowledges that the traditional concept of chi is deeply rooted in Eastern religion and philosophy. “In the Orient we apply the word ki (‘chi’) to the state which is also the real nature of the universe,” wrote leading aikido authority Koichi Tohei. “Ki has no beginning and no end; its absolute value neither increases

nor decreases. We are one with the universal, and our lives are part of the life of the universal.”¹⁵ Tohei’s understanding of *chi*, in line with traditional views of other martial artists, strongly suggests a monistic and pantheistic world view. As stated above, this is incompatible with historic Christianity.

Still, there remains the issue of explaining superhuman acts typically attributed to *chi*, such as the smashing of multiple slabs of ice with a single blow. Some insist that the only explanation possible is the power of *chi*. Those on the opposite side of the spectrum, however, believe such exhibitions are accomplished by rigorous conditioning, simple physics, and good technique which, at times, is aided with a dash of trickery (as in the case of thawing the slabs of ice with hot wire). Some have suggested that perhaps certain biochemical reactions — such as an adrenaline surge — may also be involved.¹⁶

Christian martial artist Keith Yates has suggested that because such phenomenal skills developed over the centuries within Oriental cultures, “the explanation of the phenomenon is often couched in mystical, theologically pantheistic terms.” In reality, Yates argues, these skills are “merely the God-given capabilities of the human mind and body harnessed.”¹⁷

Despite such alternative explanations, we believe Christians should avoid all *chi*-related activities that supposedly enhance one’s ability to harness, circulate, and unleash this mystical power. Ancient esoteric practices, especially those designed to improve alleged mystical powers, have no place in the Christian life. Moreover, there remains a possibility that in at least some cases, supernatural capabilities can be attributed to demonic power.

Now, we recognize that there have been attempts by some Christian martial artists to redefine *chi* to make it compatible with the Christian world view. (Some, for example, have claimed that *chi* is the Holy Spirit.) At best, however, such attempts only serve to cloud the issue. Utilizing an Eastern religious term while changing its historically understood meaning is not unlike the practice of non-Christian religions when they employ Christian terminology and pour different meanings into the words. (New Agers, for instance, redefine the Christian term “born again” to mean reincarnation.) Such semantical manipulation only serves to mask the real and present danger of involvement with *chi*.

THE MARTIAL ARTS AND SELF-DEFENSE

Besides concerns related to Eastern religion and philosophy, another issue the Christian must grapple with is, Should Christians use physical force to defend themselves? Christians have different opinions on this issue.

The Path of Nonresistance

Christian pacifists believe it is always wrong to injure other humans, no matter what the circumstances. And the same principles supporting pacifism carry over to *nonresistance* — the belief that *any* form of self-defense is wrong. This view is usually based on the exemplary life and teachings of Jesus Christ.

According to Christian pacifist John Yoder, Jesus rejected the existing political state of affairs and taught a form of radical nonviolence. Central to Christ’s teaching, Yoder says, is His biblical mandate to “turn the other cheek” when encountering violence (Matt. 5:38-48).

In Yoder’s view, the way to victorious living is to refrain from the game of sociopolitical control. Jesus exposed the futility of the violence engrafted in the present world system by resisting its inclinations even to the point of death. Hence, Christians are to refuse the world’s violent methods and follow their Savior to the cross (Matt. 26:47-52).¹⁸

“Turn the Other Cheek” Always?

We do not believe pacifism (or nonresistance) is the essential point of Christ’s teaching in Matthew 5:38-42. Nor do we believe Christ was teaching to “turn the other cheek” in virtually all circumstances. Even Christ did not literally turn the other cheek when smitten by a member of the Sanhedrin (John 18:22-23).

The backdrop to this teaching is that the Jews considered it an *insult* to be hit in the face, much in the same way that we would interpret someone spitting in our face. The principle taught in the Sermon on the Mount would seem to be that Christians should not retaliate when insulted or slandered (cf. Rom. 12:17-21). Such insults do not threaten a Christian’s personal safety. The question of rendering insult for insult, however, is a far cry from defending oneself against a mugger, or a woman using the martial arts against a rapist.

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In terms of following Christ's example, one must remember that His personal nonresistance at the cross was intertwined with His unique calling. He did not evade His arrest because it was God's will for Him to fulfill His prophetic role as the redemptive Lamb of God (Matt. 26:52-56). During His ministry, however, He *refused* to be arrested because God's timing for His death had not yet come (John 8:59). Thus, Christ's unique nonresistance during the Passion does not mandate against self-protection.

The Biblical Case for Self-Defense

Though the Bible is silent regarding the Asian martial arts, it nonetheless records many accounts of fighting and warfare. The providence of God in war is exemplified by His name *YHWH Sabaoth* ("The LORD of hosts" — Exod. 12:41). God is portrayed as the omnipotent Warrior-Leader of the Israelites. God, the LORD of hosts, raised up warriors among the Israelites called the *shophetim* (savior-deliverers). Samson, Deborah, Gideon, and others were anointed by the Spirit of God to conduct war. The New Testament commends Old Testament warriors for their military acts of faith (Heb. 11:30-40). Moreover, it is significant that although given the opportunity to do so, none of the New Testament saints — nor even Jesus — are ever seen informing a military convert that he needed to resign from his line of work (Mart. 8:5-13; Luke 3:14).

Prior to His crucifixion, Jesus revealed to His disciples the future hostility they would face and encouraged them to sell their outer garments in order to purchase a sword (Luke 22:36-38; cf. 2 Cor. 11:26-27). Here the "sword" (*maxairan*) is a "dagger or short sword [that] belonged to the Jewish traveler's equipment as protection against robbers and wild animals,"¹⁹ It is perfectly clear from this passage that *Jesus approved of self-defense*.

Self-defense may actually result in one of the greatest examples of human love. Christ said, "Greater love has no one than this, that he *lay down his life for his friends*" (John 15:14). When protecting one's family or neighbor, a Christian is unselfishly risking his or her life for the sake of others.

The late Francis Schaeffer put it this way:

The Bible is clear here: I am to love my neighbor as myself, in the manner needed, in a practical way, in the midst of the fallen world, at my particular point of history. This is why I am not a pacifist. Pacifism in this poor world in which we live — this lost world — means that we desert the people who need our greatest help...I come upon a big, burly man beating a tiny tot to death...I plead with him to stop. Suppose he refuses? What does love mean now? Love means that I stop him in any way I can, including hitting him. To me this is not only necessary for humanitarian reasons: it is loyalty to Christ's commands concerning Christian love in a fallen world. What about the little girl? If I desert her to the bully, I have deserted the true meaning of Christian love — responsibility to my neighbor.²⁰

J. P. Moreland and Norman Geisler likewise say that "to permit murder when one could have prevented it is morally wrong. To allow a rape when one could have hindered it is an evil. To watch an act of cruelty to children without trying to intervene is morally inexcusable. In brief, not resisting evil is an evil of omission, and an evil of omission can be just as evil as an evil of commission. Any man who refuses to protect his wife and children against a violent intruder fails them morally" (emphases added).²¹

We affirm, then, that Scripture allows Christians to use force for self-defense against crime and injustice. If self-defense is scripturally justifiable so long as it is conducted without unnecessary violence, then so are the martial arts (the *physical* aspect only).²²

GUIDELINES FOR DISCERNMENT

Because the question of whether a Christian should participate in the martial arts involves gray areas, we believe it is worthwhile to consider some guidelines for discernment. These guidelines, while not exhaustive, can help one decide whether to get involved with a martial art in the first place. If that decision turns out in the affirmative, the guidelines will then steer one away from those instructors who teach an Eastern world view and/or incorporate excessive violence.

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Examine Your Motives

Christians must be honest with themselves, evaluating *why* they desire to participate in the martial arts. Negatively, some reasons might be to become “a tough guy,” to get revenge against someone, or perhaps to pridefully “show off.” Positively, some reasons might relate to staying in shape physically, practicing self-discipline, or perhaps training for self-defense against muggers or rapists. The Christian should not get involved in the martial arts with unworthy motives.

Examine Your Conscience

Christians must realize that practicing the martial arts will teach them maneuvers, blows, and kicks that could severely injure a person when actually used in a hostile confrontation. For this reason, they must examine their consciences regarding the potential use of force against another human being.

Consider the Commitment

Not only is a commitment of time required to practice the martial arts, but Christians must also decide whether they will be able to endure the discipline needed to be an effective student. Such arts are generally very strenuous and demanding.

Like other sports, the martial arts can produce surprise setbacks through injuries. Breaking boards and bricks, punching, kicking, grappling, and so forth can cause arthritis, injured limbs, and other health problems in the long run. Is it worth it?

Certainly Christians should not allow a martial art to overshadow or detract from their religious commitments (Heb. 10:25). They should weigh whether they can afford to spend the time and money needed each week in practicing the martial arts. Could these resources be better spent in another endeavor?

Consider the Instructor

The Christian should ascertain whether the instructor under consideration is himself (or herself) a Christian, a professing Christian with an Eastern world view, a nonreligious non-Christian, or a religious non-Christian. If the trainer subscribes to an Eastern world view, this will likely carry over into his teaching of the martial arts. One should seek to discover whether the instructor encourages an Eastern concept of meditation, chi, or Eastern philosophies. Also, one should seek to ascertain whether the instructor teaches and exemplifies good sportsmanship, respect for others, humility, and avoids altercations whenever possible. We believe that the choice of the right instructor is probably the single most important consideration.

Consider the Classroom of a Prospective School

The Christian should keep an eye out for Eastern religious books, symbols, and the like, that might be in the training hall. This may help one discern what practices and beliefs are being espoused during training.

Many schools start new students on a trial basis. Such a trial could help the Christian solidify his or her decision. It may also be prudent to observe an advanced class. This will help the prospective student determine whether Eastern philosophy is taught only as the practitioner progresses.

Consider Your Testimony Before Others

Because this is a controversial area, the Christian must be careful not to cause a weaker Christian to stumble by practicing a martial art (Rom. 14:21). A younger Christian might become disillusioned seeing a respected brother or sister practicing the martial arts, thinking that such involvement is a compromise of the faith. Or perhaps a weaker Christian might conclude (for example) that it's okay to practice Zen meditation since his more mature brother practices the martial arts, thereby (apparently) giving approval for all that is involved in the martial arts.

In view of such possibilities, if one becomes involved in the martial arts one should be discrete as to how one exhibits his or her involvement before one's circle of friends. One must be especially careful to guard against inadvertently communicating an endorsement of more than just the physical sport aspect of the martial arts.

In the event a brother or sister becomes stumbled, one must determine specifically what issue has become the point of offense (e.g., the use of physical force, the "chi" force, or meditation). One must then address the issue, clarifying any misconceptions the person may have (e.g., physical force is to be used for self-defense only; there should be no use of "chi"; Eastern meditation is off limits). Such clarifications may sufficiently relieve the brother or sister's concern.

Pray for Wisdom

Scripture tells us, "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault, and it will be given to him" (James 1:5). Christians considering participation in the martial arts should pray for wisdom regarding the specific concerns raised in this article.

THE BIG "IF"

We have noted some of the dangers of involvement in the martial arts — particularly as related to Eastern mysticism. But we have also drawn attention to the genetic fallacy, the dynamic nature of the martial arts, and the possibility of completely divorcing the physical aspect of individual martial art styles from Eastern influences (such as Eastern meditation and use of the chi force). Further, we have set forth a biblical case for self-defense and provided guidelines for discernment. What can we conclude? Our studied opinion is that if precautions are taken — if one studies under an instructor (preferably a Christian) who completely divorces the physical art from faith-destroying Eastern influences — one maintains a proper Christian perspective regarding violence and the use of force— if the purpose of the instruction is primarily to learn self-defense and/or engage in physical conditioning — if one is careful not to cause a weaker brother to stumble — then it is possible for the discerning Christian to participate in the martial arts. Such Christians would be wise to make the apostle Paul's words to the Thessalonians a permanent part of their life philosophy: "Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil" (1 Thess. 5:21-22).

NOTES

¹ The authors wish to thank Richard Bustillo, Scot Conway, and Wesley Tetsuji Kan for their insights.

² Norman L Geisler and Ronald M. Brooks, *Come Let Us Reason* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1990), 107.

³ T. Edward Darner, *Attacking Faulty Reasoning*, 2d ed. (Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1987), 101.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ Yonzan Dirk Mosig, "Zen Meditation and the Act of Kobudo," *United States Karate Association, Forum*, 1 December 1990, n.p.

⁶ James William Holzer, "Martial Arts in the Name of GOD?" *Inside Kung-Fu*, March 1987, 71.

⁷ Personal interview with Karl Marx, 11 January 1994.

⁸ Personal interview with Raul and Xavier Ries (pastors — respectively, of Calvary Chapel of Diamond Bar, California and Calvary Chapel of Pasadena, California who hold 8th-degree black belts in kung fu, which they have been teaching for over 20 years), 29 December 1993.

⁹ Eric Young, "Irvine Police Learning Zen of Suspect Control," *Los Angeles Times*, B4, B10.

¹⁰ See James Wilson, "Chasing the Magic: Mysticism and Martial Arts on the Islands of Java," *Journal of Asian Martial Arts* 2 (1993): 10-43.

¹¹ Michael Maliszewski, "Meditative-Religious Traditions of Fighting Arts and Martial Ways," *Journal of Asian Martial Arts*, July 1992, 8.

¹² Stephan Schuhmacher and Gert Woerner, eds. *The Encyclopedia of Eastern Philosophy and Religion* (Boston: Shambhala Publications, 1989), 224.

¹³ Maliszewski, 35.

¹⁴ Leslie A. Shepard, *Encyclopedia of Occultism and Parapsychology*, 3 vols. (Detroit: Gale Research Company, 1984), 1:224.

¹⁵ Koichi Tohei, *Aikido in Daily Life* (Tokyo: Rikugei Publishing House, 1966), 87.

¹⁶ See, for example, Keith D. Yates, "The Demystification of Ki," *Inside Karate*, March 1985, 6-7.

¹⁷ Keith D. Yates. *The Demystification of Ki*, master's thesis submitted to Dallas Theological Seminary, May 1983, 3.

¹⁸ John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972), ch. 2, 5, 8.

¹⁹ Myrtle Langley, *The New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology*, ed. Colin Brown (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1978), 3:978.

²⁰ Francis Schaeffer, *The Great Evangelical Disaster*, reprinted in *The Complete Works of Francis Schaeffer: A Christian Worldview*, vol. 4 (Westchester: Crossway Books, 1982), 391.

²¹ J. P. Moreland and Normans Geisler, *The Life and Death Debate: Moral Issues of Our Time* (New York: Praeger, 1990), 135.

²² Some have claimed that the martial arts inevitably lead to violence. This viewpoint is enflamed by the violent martial arts caricatures portrayed on the silver screen. In real life, however, the martial arts are not nearly so violent. If some students become violent, it is usually not the martial arts *qua* martial arts that are to blame. Most trainers teach students self-control, respect for others and oneself, and the necessity of avoiding altercations whenever possible. Moreover, some studies have suggested that individuals who practice the arts for a prolonged period are actually *less* aggressive than the general population (*see* Michael E. Trulson, Chong W. Kim, and Vernon R. Padgett, "That Mild-Mannered Bruce Lee," *Psychology Today*, January 1985, 79).

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