

Self Defense

Why did Jesus say, "**he that hath no sword, let him sell his garment, and buy one...**" ([Lk22:36](#))?

Good question! Among gun-toting Christians, this is a commonly-used text. So, let's look at it in context to see what we can find...

When **Jesus said**, "he that hath no sword, let him... buy one"([Lk22:36](#)), He was leading His 11 remaining disciples from the upper room to Gethsemane. In [Luke 22:38](#), we find that among the, at least 12, men there were only two swords. But Jesus said, "It is enough." **If Jesus wanted them to have swords for self-defense, do you think that two swords would be enough to defend 12(or more) people?**

After Jesus' temptations in the garden, Judas shows up with **the angry mob who also had swords**([Lk22:52](#)). Then, in [Luke 22:49](#), one of the disciples says, "**Lord, shall we smite[fight] with the sword?**". That's when Peter takes out a sword and cuts off an ear ([Jn18:10](#)). Jesus heals the ear. "Then said Jesus unto him, **Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?**" ([Matthew 26:52-53](#)). Jesus seems to be asking Peter, **why are you trusting in weapons, when our heavenly Father can send angels to protect us?** If it is God's will that we should die for our faith, then so be it. We must not go against the Father's will. "**For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.**([Mt16:25](#)). Previously, Jesus said "... **resist not evil:** but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."([Mt5:39](#)). What did Jesus do when tortured during the time He was arrested till the time He was dead on the cross? Did He resist and/or retaliate, like Peter? No.

In [Deuteronomy 33:29](#), we see that Christ's Father, our adopted **Father, Jehovah, is our "shield" and "sword"** => "Happy art thou, O Israel: Who is like unto thee, a people saved by **Jehovah, The shield of thy help, And the sword of thy excellency!** ..."

"The Father's presence encircled Christ, and nothing befell Him but that which infinite love permitted for the blessing of the world. Here was His source of comfort, and [so] it is for us. He who is imbued (permeated or saturated) with the Spirit of Christ, abides (dwells, rests, continues, stands firm) in Christ. The blow that is aimed at him falls upon the Savior, who surrounds him with His presence (hugged by Jesus). **Whatever comes to him comes from Christ. He has no need to resist evil,** for Christ is his defense. **Nothing can touch him except by our Lord's permission,** and **'all things' that are permitted 'work together for good to them that love God.'** [Romans 8:28](#)."-Ellen White, ([Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing p71](#)). (Parenthetical comments added by Sid)

[1 Peter 4:1](#) Forasmuch then as Christ suffered in the flesh, arm ye yourselves also with the same mind; for **he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin;**

[Jeremiah 17:5-7](#) Thus saith Jehovah: **Cursed is the man that trusteth in man,** and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from Jehovah.... 7 **Blessed is the man that trusteth in Jehovah,** and whose trust Jehovah is.

[Psalm 91:11-15](#) **For [Jehovah] will give his angels charge over thee, To keep thee in all thy ways. 12 They shall bear thee up in their hands,** Lest thou dash thy foot against a stone. 13 Thou shalt tread upon the lion and adder: The young lion and the serpent shalt thou trample under foot. 14 Because he hath set his love upon me, therefore will I deliver him: I will set him on high, because he hath known my name. 15 **He shall call upon me, and I will answer him; I will be with him in trouble:** I will deliver him, and honor him.

More Bible promises of protection for God's servants at <http://sidnash.org/b/dd6>

So, **why did Jesus want at least one sword** with them([Lk22:36](#)) before they went to Gethsemane? As far as I know, the inspired writers have not revealed this. But let's think about it some more...

When we think of a sword, we tend think of a very long knife, used mostly as a weapon. And it certainly can be a weapon, especially since Peter used it that way. However, in the New Testament of the Bible, the word "knife" is not to be found. So, I'm pretty sure that the Greek word(G3162) translated to the English word "sword" is used to refer to other types of knives, in addition to a sword.

Let's consider the Gethsemane setting. According to [Luke 21:37](#), Jesus and His disciples often spent time there -- possibly for the entire night. Ask anyone who spends time outside, away from town and you'll find that the most important tool to take with you is a knife. Why? Food processing, fire building, shelter/furniture construction, etc...

So, based on all the evidence here-provided, I would think that the reason Jesus wanted to make sure they had a "sword" with them was for the purposes a knife is mostly used for in the country, but not for self-defense. This is emphasized by Jesus Himself, when He said, "**Put up again thy sword into his place: for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to my Father, and he shall presently give me more than twelve legions of angels?**" ([Matthew 26:52-53](#)).

By the way, I do support the US Constitution and all the amendments, including the 2nd. Why? Because without the protection of Christ's angels, people need defensive tools...

But, what about Christians who use weapons for self-defense? I have a theory(meaning I could be wrong) about that: God honors our freedom of choice. So, if we choose to take on the protection of ourselves and our families, then I think He lets us do that -- possibly without the otherwise-provided protection that His angels provide. This is why I am not comfortable attending a church with gun-toting Deacons and/or Elders. I would much-prefer the protection of God's Holy angels.

However, the laws of the land do need to be enforced and those that do this need to be armed. Also, we see in the Old Testament of the Bible, that Father Jehovah told Israel multiple times to destroy evil around them and this they did with much violence. So, could it be today that many of God's people are used of God to thwart evil in this world? I think this is true. So, does that make of none effect the teachings of Jesus? God forbid! I believe that we, as individuals, must each seek wisdom([James1:2-8](#)) as to what God would have us to do([Acts9:6](#)). Should we arm ourselves with Earthly weapons or **only** depend on God to protect us with His Holy angels? In my opinion, that choice should be made between you and God. No one else should make that decision for you.

Desiring to live by every word that comes from the mouth of Jehovah ([Deut8:3; Matt4:4](#))

-[Sid Nash](#): 11/24/2023. Latest version: <http://sidnash.org/docs/SelfDefense.html>