THE BIBLE IN THEIR SIGHTS

Posted on January 20, 2010 by Eddie

Category: Observations

I'm grateful (sort of) to Andrew Jones and Bishop Nick Baines for drawing my attention to this rather depressing bit of news.

> ***Coded references to biblical passages are inscribed on gunsights widely used by the US and British military in Iraq and Afghanistan, it has emerged.***
>
> *The markings include "2COR4:6" and "JN8:12", relating to verses in the books of Corinthians II and John.*
>
> *Trijicon, the US-based manufacturer, was founded by a devout Christian, and says it runs to "Biblical standards".*
>
> *But military officials in the US and UK have expressed concern over the way the markings will be perceived.*
>
> *The company has added the references to its sights for many years, but the issue surfaced only recently when soldiers complained to an advocacy group.*

Leaving aside the question of whether a company run to Biblical standards should be manufacturing gunsights in the first place, this is a very problematic use of the Bible. At first it might seem great to have John 8:12 engraved on a piece of equipment.

> *When Jesus spoke again to the people, he said, "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life."*

What could be better than to point out to people that Jesus is the light of the world? Of course, the person on the wrong end of the gun won't have a great deal of time or opportunity to meditate upon what it means to have the light of life. And what impression does this create for the soldier carrying and firing the gun. There is the clear impression that Jesus, the light of the world, is supporting the guys with the Tricorn gunsight. Who was it said that God is on the side of the big battalions? Even worse, it may give the impression that while Jesus has the power to give life, the guy with the gun is more powerful, because he can take it away!

There are at least a couple of other problems with putting verses from the Bible on the gunsights. Quoting first Andrew and then Nick.

> *... Michael "Mikey" Weinstein of the Military Religious Freedom Foundation claims "It allows the Mujahedeen, the Taliban, al Qaeda and the insurrectionists and jihadists to claim they're being shot by Jesus rifles". He said coded biblical inscriptions play into the hands of "those who are calling this a Crusade." I think he has a point. What do you think?*

> *... Worse still, this makes the Christian faith, the Christian Church and the Bible itself an easy target for ignorant atheists who find in it their own ammunition for simplistic targeting of a book they havenâ€™t read and canâ€™t be bothered to try to understand.*

I'm not a great one for throwing around isolated Bible verses, but if Tricorn are looking for another Scripture passage to engrave on their weapons, can I respectfully suggest that Psalm 11:5 might be appropriate in the context.