

**A. GENERAL APPLICANT INFORMATION**

1. FULL NAME: (Deleted)
2. SOCIAL SECURITY NUMBER: (Deleted)
3. SELECTIVE SERVICE NUMBER: (Deleted)
4. SERVICE ADDRESS: (Deleted)
5. HOME ADDRESS: (Deleted)
6. SCHOOLS ATTENDED:

<u>NAME AND ADDRESS</u>	<u>YEARS ATTENDED</u>	<u>TYPE OF SCHOOL</u>
(Deleted)		

7. JOBS HELD:  
(Deleted)
8. FORMER ADDRESSES  
(Deleted)

9. PARENT'S NAMES AND ADDRESS

Father: (Deleted)

Mother: (Deleted)

10. PARENTS RELIGIOUS DENOMINATION

Father: Christian/Baptist

Mother: Agnostic

11. SELECTIVE SERVICE CLASSIFICATION

When I first enlisted, I was not a conscientious objector nor did I apply at a selective service board as such.

12. PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

No previous applications for conscientious objector have been made

13. SERVING LESS THAN 180 DAYS IN MILITARY SERVICE

I have served for more than 180 days

## **B. TRAINING AND BELIEF:**

**(1) An express, specific statement as to whether the person requests classification as a conscientious objector 1-0, or as a conscientious objector 1-A-0.**

I, Jason Webb, am requesting classification as a conscientious objector 1-0.

**(2) What is the nature of your belief that requires that you seek separation from the Military Service or assignment to non-combatant training and duty for reasons of conscience?**

My heart and mind were created by God. I am to honor Him by living a life worthy of the Gospel. "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ" (Philippians 1:27) If I as a Christian am asked to take a life, I am no longer living a consistent Christian life. I would, at that point, have the blood of the person that I killed on my hands. I, as a Christian do not believe that Christ ever taught that we should kill our enemies; instead, he taught in the Sermon on the Mount that "You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, do not resist the one who is evil. But if anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if anyone would sue you and take your tunic, let him have your cloak as well. And if anyone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles." (Matt. 5:38-41)

My goal is to follow Christ's example to the best of my ability. "Therefore, be imitators of God as beloved Children." (Ephesians 5:1) and "You therefore must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect". (Matt 5:48) I do not want to dishonor the name of Christ by killing another human being, or even becoming a willing accessory to such killing. It is not right, and is sin. My actions are to reflect the changes wrought in my life by the Holy Spirit of God and the things that He has taught me. He has taught me to become more loving of my enemies and love even more the people around me. God's unconditional love shown on the cross for me and all the people who believe in the name of the Lord compels me to oppose armed conflict against other human beings. Being a Christian, in my opinion, implies that I love all human life, including my enemies. Although many Christians would say otherwise, Christ did not teach that I am to love one person and hate another. To say otherwise would contradict the core of Christ's teachings.

The nature of war is violent. War is the manifestation of man's inability to solve conflict through peaceful methods. Jesus Himself preached peace to all men. When He died on the cross, He asked God the Father to forgive His enemies. Why would someone with the power of the universe ask God for such a thing? He could have easily wiped those men off the face of the earth; but he chose not to. I believe, that even in Christ's death, we are to follow His example. I believe that if I have the power over someone's life, should I necessarily exercise it; or should I exercise restraint? The Army teaches me that I should exercise my power over another's life. I do not agree.

Killing at any time is a permanent action. I could not live with myself if I were forced to kill someone. Neither I, nor any other human being can go back in time and undo that kind of act. Once a life is extinguished, it never returns. It is the only time fire extinguishes something, in this case human life. In a combat zone, if I were to shoot at a vehicle and kill its occupants and later find that I had killed anyone, whether a family or a soldier, there would be no way that I could live with myself. "They were the collateral damage," some might say, but to me they are people with parents, brothers, and sisters, who all grieve as I would at the death of a loved one.

I cannot take God's place and decide who lives and dies. Only God can do that. God has determined the course of life on this earth and it is not my place, nor my decision to play God. It is solely His prerogative. God never asks a person to take vengeance against one's enemies, instead He asks us to allow Him to avenge the injustice inflicted.

God has given me a conscience for a reason. The reason God has given man a conscience is to be a moral compass, to serve as a guide as to what is right and what is wrong. It is for that reason I cannot kill, participate in warfare, or support any organization that does, whether through violent or non-violent means. The military is asking me to ignore my conscience and continue the mission. I cannot violate my conscience, lest I sin against God. This is the basis of the nature of my beliefs that compel me to seek conscientious objector status 1-0.

**(3) An explanation as to how beliefs changed or developed, to include an explanation as to what factors caused the change in or development of conscientious objection beliefs.**

In the fall of 2000, I moved to Israel and lived on a kibbutz and attended college classes there. I took classes on the modern conflict in Israel. I have seen first hand the violence of war. In September and October of 2000, the intifada broke out. There was a fellow student who was traveling to Jerusalem that day and witnessed people getting shot in conflicts with the authorities. He was so disturbed that he could not speak of what he saw. I have seen cafes that I used to frequent while I was in Jerusalem blown up by suicide bombers. One of the experiences that impacted me the most was when I went to a Jewish outdoor market. I went one evening to get some souvenirs to send home. The next day, I found out that the market that I had been to had become a target of a Palestinian suicide bomber. These instances always remained in the back of my mind.

When the events of September 11, 2001 occurred, I realized that the United States had real, formidable enemies. These enemies wanted every American dead. I felt a sense of dread and disgust to see such a blatant act of inhumanity. I could not fathom the minds of the attackers or comprehend the fear of the victims. In the weeks and months that followed I felt a growing sense of patriotism and a need to protect that which I regarded with such high esteem. In 2003, my brother joined the United States Marine Corps. My father had so much respect for my brother I thought I could earn that same respect as well.

When I joined the military in 2004, I firmly believed it to be in my own best interest. Not only was I to serve my nation honorably out of patriotism, but also gain the respect that I had seen given to so many service members. I never, at that time had any objections to war or conflict. Even though I was a Christian, I justified my decision by telling myself that God would honor my service to a greater cause than me.

However, the thought of killing was an issue that I had not faced in my life. When I arrived to BCT at Fort Jackson, I was expecting a level of military training that would teach me discipline and respect for authority. While I did indeed receive that training, I also found that my job was not what I thought it would be. My job is to be a soldier 24/7. In basic training, I was taught that I am a “Warrior and member of a team.” I accepted that as fact, and did not question that. In retrospect, I did not have clarity and understanding of my own convictions to which I now hold to.

During our bayonet training, we had to stab and butt-stroke the “enemy” by shouting “kill!” as we were doing it. We also had to yell “Red red blood makes that green grass grow, drill sergeant!” I realized then, that a soldier’s job is to kill the enemy, regardless of what MOS you chose. I began to wonder whether such violence was actually justified against the enemy. I began to realize that if I was ordered to, I would have to do those things to other people. At that point, I questioned whether it was an honorable thing to kill someone.

I arrived in Germany at the end of December. In May of this year, I started having serious objections to the use of war to achieve peace and a growing discontent for what I was going to be asked to do. I started to have a lot of internal conflict. I started asking why? I decided to place my objections on the back burner because I wanted to be a good soldier and do as I was told. But as time went by, my conscience bothered me more and more. I realized then I was a conscientious objector. I have come to the conclusion this year that violence begets violence. World War I was the underlying reason for World War II, for example. My objection to war in any form is not a result of a spontaneous desire to become an objector, but rather the result of the events that have made a permanent impact in my mind.

When I joined the U.S. Army, I thought that my job would mostly consist of working on technical systems. I thought that I would be sitting behind a desk working on a network or some other classified systems. I never realized that I would be assisting in maintaining the systems that help the commanders and the infantrymen decide the fate of many people. I believe that if I violated my conscience by killing or supporting killing, whether in the line of fire, or behind a desk at Headquarters I would also be sinning against the God of the universe and myself (Romans 13). Our conscience is a reflection of God’s creative power. God has instilled in all men an aversity to killing. Most people cannot injure, let alone kill another person without feeling guilt. Why do people feel guilty and remorseful when they have hurt or killed someone? Because they violated their God-given conscience and now they live with the consequences.

Through my exposure to war and experience in the military, I could not reconcile my actions with my beliefs. I cannot, and will not raise my weapon against my enemy or another human being; We learn to kill. That is what has been a struggle in the past months. I am expected to kill for my government. I have realized that my loyalty is first to God. Jesus taught that we are to love one another. Because of my beliefs about the current conflict and all wars in general, I am forced to come the point where I cannot complete the balance of my enlistment. My job is to kill. I have come to terms with this. I have also come to terms with my conscience. Therefore, I am fundamentally opposed to participation in war and killing in war.

**(4) An explanation as to when these beliefs became incompatible with military service and why.**

I grew up primarily in a conservative Christian home. I attended church regularly. Church and Christianity were and still are an important aspect of my life. Growing up in a conservative home and supporting the military became inseparable. I saw the current conflict as a war against non-Christians. I believed that if I had to kill someone, they would be the enemies of God. I had never been faced with the possibility of killing or being killed, so it was easy to believe. I now believe that any type of warfare is defined by the socio-political constructs of man and that we often justify our embracing of warfare as being synonymous with God and His wishes. I cannot be so arrogant as to believe that I know and understand all of God's plans, yet I do believe that He has given us free will and conscience for a reason. While the world and mortal existence may become increasingly more nebulous, my conscience is very clear in that warfare is something that I cannot be apart of in any capacity.

When my brother enlisted in the U.S. Marines, I saw how proud my father was of him. I sought that recognition from my father. Even though I had a college education, I felt it necessary to prove myself. That, in addition to patriotism and love for my country compelled me to join the U.S. Army.

Growing up Christian meant that I was to emulate Christ in my conduct and my own personal life. As a Christian I felt that I was to be an example to others. I respected members of the military and held them in high regard. I always tied being in the military to selflessness. Those were ideal qualities that I sought to attain as a Christian. I had grown up learning to serve others above myself and place the needs of others above my own.

While I recognize the selfless service of many members of the military, I have grown in my faith. I am not perfect, yet I want to hold to the biblical standard life and godliness. I had always associated the Christian life with an internal change. Christ has worked in me to produce a change that is not only internal but external as well. The way that I relate to others has changed, how to work for good, how to see my fellow human beings, how I follow Jesus, thereby changing my views on war and killing.

I have come to understand the relationship between Christ's teaching and my role as a soldier. As a soldier, I have been forced to compare my beliefs before and after I joined the military. Before I joined, I viewed the military as a source discipline and strength. Now I see my role in the military as a soldier trained to kill and destroy the enemy by any means. Although I used to believe that the Americans were fighting against the enemies of Christianity, I have realized that it is not my place to fight or kill.

In reevaluating my beliefs, I have found that service in the military is not conducive to discipleship. As I read the gospels I have come to the conclusion that Christ was focused on personal, ongoing relationships with the people that followed Him. Their spiritual health was of the utmost importance to Him. He focused on the principle of discipleship. He commanded His followers to go and make disciples of the nations. The purpose of this kind of relationship is to have a mentoring mentality. Christ is my mentor. I have been called to be a disciple of Christ, and encourage that relationship with others. I would be hypocritical if I kill someone and then tell them about Jesus. It comes to this: I am a Christian. Being a Christian means taking tough stands. I do not believe that I can kill or encourage killing and be a disciple of Christ at the same time. I know that God would forgive me if I ever did kill anyone, but I also realize I would never be able to forgive myself.

Being a Christian requires that I obey Christ and his teachings. My call as a Christian is to forgive my enemy and love thy neighbor as myself. When I fire my weapon, I fail to achieve anything honorable. Since I have joined the Army, I realized that being a soldier and encouraging discipleship to Christ is completely inconsistent.

During Advanced Individual Training, I believed in the war and accepted the fact that casualties would occur. I returned home on leave during Christmastime, I attended the funeral of a Marine soldier who had been killed in action in Fallujah. This Marine, Lcpl. Philip West, was my brother's best friend. As I stood in my brother's place, I could not have been prouder to wear my uniform; however, I also began pondering in my mind the moral and ethical dilemma that this senseless death had caused. If a solution to this conflict could have been achieved by peaceful means, many senseless deaths could have been avoided.

Of course, being at the funeral reminded me of the experiences of my brother, which in later conversations after he returned, he was still unable to speak about many of the operations he had conducted. He was unable to speak about those operations not because they were classified, but because they were so horrific and left an indelible scar upon his mind. The horrors and tragedies of war are such that people have come home with mental disorders and nightmares of what they saw in combat.

A crying mother, a grieving wife, a fatherless child; this scene has been repeated thousands of times over the years. How many lives must be lost before we win a war? The reality is that there are so many people who join the military only to lose their lives. The grim reality is that there is no bloodless war, and many more families will continue

to suffer because we choose war over non-violent resolution to conflicts. We should follow Christ's example for conflict resolution.

My fundamental beliefs as a Christian has not changed, however my perspective on the world has changed. The past 10 months have brought me to the point where I cannot continue in military service for reasons of conscience. When I found out about the conscientious objector discharge, I knew that it was something that I needed to pursue. After I found out about conscientious objection I knew that it was consistent with my moral and ethical views on the world and part of being a disciple of my journey with Christ.

**(5) An explanation as to the circumstances, if any, under which the person believes in the use of force, and to what extent, under any foreseeable circumstances.**

I believe that the word force should be defined in this context. I want to talk about four different types of force: Self-defense, restraining, military, and lethal. I believe that the use of force is justified only in the case of restraining an action (such as holding someone back from a fight) Psalm 115:11, says "Trust in the Lord! He is their help and their shield." As a Christian, I am to trust the Lord. I am to trust the Lord in every circumstance, not just favorable ones. I will trust that the Lord Himself will protect me, my family and my nation from any outside threats.

The use of lethal and military force during wartime is often unnecessary and excessive. I do not believe that this force should ever be applied to another human being. Lethal and Military force often cause more casualties and property damage. If as stated before, I am a follower of Christ, I believe that it would be immoral to exercise military and lethal force. The reason I believe this force to be wrong is because I believe that military and lethal force are often applied too hastily without the thought of the lives destroyed by such force.

**(6) An explanation as to what in the person's life most conspicuously demonstrates the consistency and depth of his or her beliefs.**

Through my personal study of the bible, I have painstakingly studied the teachings of Christ and the Christian's relationship to war. I have found that my beliefs and the fighting in war are not consistent. Christ taught forgiveness, while proponents of war teach vengeance. However, the Bible teaches: "Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord." (Rom 12:19)

After much prayer and soul-searching, I sought help from a conscientious objector support group. They helped me understand the nature of the process and what to expect. I chose not to involve myself with an overtly political organization, but rather with one that reflects more my Christian views on war and conflict. I have also spoken to veterans of various wars and found that their opinions were enlightening. I have spoken with my family who adamantly believes that I should serve the balance of my enlistment, and that war is a solution to global conflict. I have chosen to obey my conscience and the Word of

God. I am not fearful of the ostracism this may bring upon me for I know that I am never alone so long as my faith in God does not falter.

I suppose that I could give a long list of “acts” which demonstrate my determination to follow my conscience, but I am of the belief that there is only One who could ever truly know the contents of my heart and the strength of my convictions. In conclusion, I will continue to rely on my faith that the destiny which the Lord has determined for my life will be fulfilled. For God says: “Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.” (Romans 12:21) I can only express myself and my belief in the hope that people will see and follow the strength of my resolve. If anything, my faith in God has grown stronger throughout this experience. God has given me insight and wisdom through the Bible. I have gained more knowledge into the teachings of Christ and have become more resolute in my stance for non-violent solutions to conflicts and my stance against war.

**(7) An explanation as to how the applicant's daily life style has changed as a result of his or her beliefs and what future actions he or she plans to continue to support his or her beliefs.**

During the process of becoming a Conscientious Objector I have found that my daily life has gradually begun to change as a result of the way I have begun to look at the initial decisions which prompted me to join the army in the first place. Instead of simply accepting that this was a “War on Terror” I began to examine the reasons for this war which lead me to examine previous wars throughout global history. I found myself disconcerted with the manner in which man has chosen to resolve what he perceives to be threats to his existence. This examination of history has prompted me to try and understand “why” man chooses war over peaceful resolution in global conflict. I researched various philosophers such as John Locke and while I found his words to be guiding, they did not satisfy my thirst for truth. As previously mentioned, I grew up in a religious and conservative family. Over the past few months, I have found that I needed to re-examine what it meant to be Christian. I began to read the Bible and question how I had interpreted my place in this world as a Christian. I eventually came to the conclusion that being a “Christian Soldier” meant re-defining what it meant to be a “soldier.” Was I going to be a soldier who carried a gun to protect the interests of man or was I going to be a soldier who fought for the message of the Lord as written in the Bible.

I have nothing but respect for my fellow soldiers who have chosen to carry out the mission asked of them by our country. However, I have found that I no longer take the same pride in the “mission.” In an organization which encourages strong bonds within an extremely hierarchical context, I have found that I have begun to separate myself from the people within my unit. I no longer find myself eager to discuss the “good things” we hope to accomplish while in war. I have found that the frustration and sadness I once felt as a result of my beliefs while preparing for war, have changed to strong resolution against war in any form.

I understand that if I deploy I will be deploying as a conscientious objector, opposed to war in any form. I am and continue to be opposed to the carrying and use of weapons. I do not feel that I could do my job while deployed due to the fact that I would be directly or indirectly involved in killing, which goes against my ethical and moral beliefs. I cannot justify such actions. My application for conscientious objector status is based solely on my religious and moral training, and not any other reason. I have realized that I cannot in good conscience participate in war. As a husband and father to be, I do not want my child and my wife to experience the unintended consequences of war and the pain and destruction that it causes. Those consequences may be a personal change because I have violated my conscience and cannot live with myself, or my death; neither of which I find acceptable.

I used to simply feel sadness for the tragedies which had befallen my fellow countrymen in both the present conflict as well as past conflicts. However, these tragedies were and are still not limited to my fellow countrymen. War is indiscriminate. I used to believe that casualties were inevitable and that by following that train of thought, I could simply justify my participation in war at any cost. Yet, throughout my daily life I have found that there is a consequence for every action and that the creation and taking of life is far too complicated for me to take into my own hands. I would not create a life without my faith in God, nor would I take one when I know in my heart that only God can determine the course of life. My wisdom is not great enough for such complicated decisions. Hence, my daily life has changed in that I have become more conscious of how my actions affect those around me.

At one point, I even started the application process for Officer Candidate School. When I first got to my unit, I thought that rank and respect were synonymous. I was eager to get promoted downrange because I thought that I would be respected more. I sought respect by seeking rank. I have decided to stop seeking the rank and have begun seeking God more. I have come to the conclusion that at the end of the day, all one has is his own self-respect. I have begun to stop seeking respect from people around me and start looking inwardly for the source of strength and respect that I have found in my faith in Jesus Christ. Before, all that mattered was what I wore on my collar. Now what matters to me is not the material, it is the eternal.

Through my continued studying of the Bible I have found that even the way I treat my fellow soldiers has changed. I speak only when I know that I have something of value to say. At home, I have replaced my frustration with peaceful contemplation on how I may better fulfill my role as a Christian. I have even begun to think about how I may continue my journey as a Christian. While I do not claim to know all of the answers, I believe that I will take this experience to continue to develop myself as a better Christian. I am considering writing a book on peaceful resolution of conflict as a result of war and will try to find a profession which will be most compatible with my spiritual life.

### **C. PARTICIPATION IN ORGANIZATIONS**

01. PRIOR MILITARY SERVICE

None

02. RELIGIOUS AFFILIATION TO SECT OR ORGANIZATION

I have never officially been part of any religious organization

02a. NAME OF SECT OR ORGANIZATION

Not Applicable

02b. MEMBER INFORMATION

Not Applicable

02c. ATTENDANCE RECORD OF CHURCH, CONGREGATION, OR MEETINGS

Not Applicable

02d. RELIGIOUS LEADER CONTACT INFORMATION

Not Applicable

02e. CREED OR OFFICIAL STATEMENT

Not Applicable

03. REFERENCES

See Attached