

Being a Peacemaker

Sermon at Agape Fellowship

March 13, 2022

Paul D. Leichty

Praying for peace



Praying for peace response



How do we respond
as Christians?

What can we do?



Matthew 5:9

- Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. (NRSV)
- Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. (ESV, NASB)
- Happy are people who make peace, because they will be called God's children. (CEB)

Peacemaker: What does it mean?

- Peacemaker = peace + maker
- Peace = εἰρήνη eirēnē; perhaps. from εἶρω eirō (*to join*): *peace, welfare*
- Maker = ποιέω poieō; *to make, do*
- Peacemaker = peace doer

Robert L. Thomas, [New American Standard Hebrew-Aramaic and Greek Dictionaries : Updated Edition \(Anaheim: Foundation Publications, Inc., 1998\).](#)

Peacemaker Visions

- **Peacekeeper**

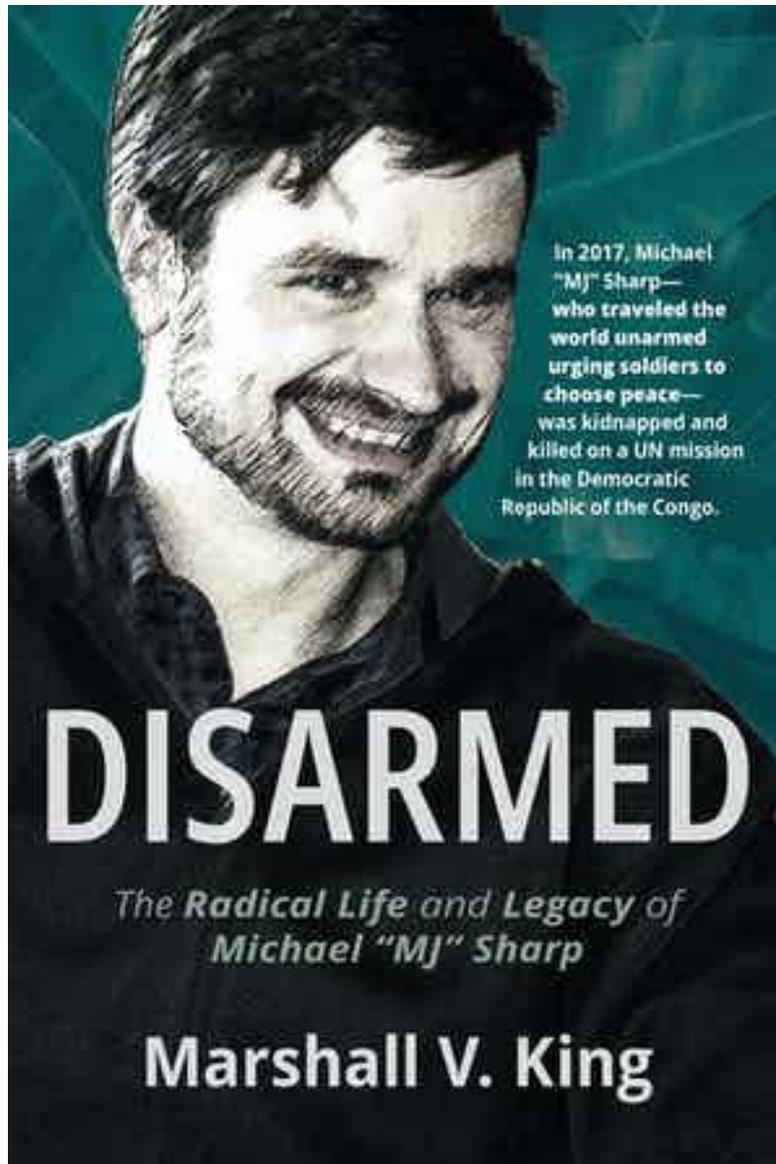
- Those who have **power** and want to **keep** it.
- Those who want **power** in order to **keep** it for themselves.

- **Peace doer**

- Those who want **shalom** for the community.
- Those who give up power as Jesus did to serve others.



Michael
Jesse (MJ)
Sharp

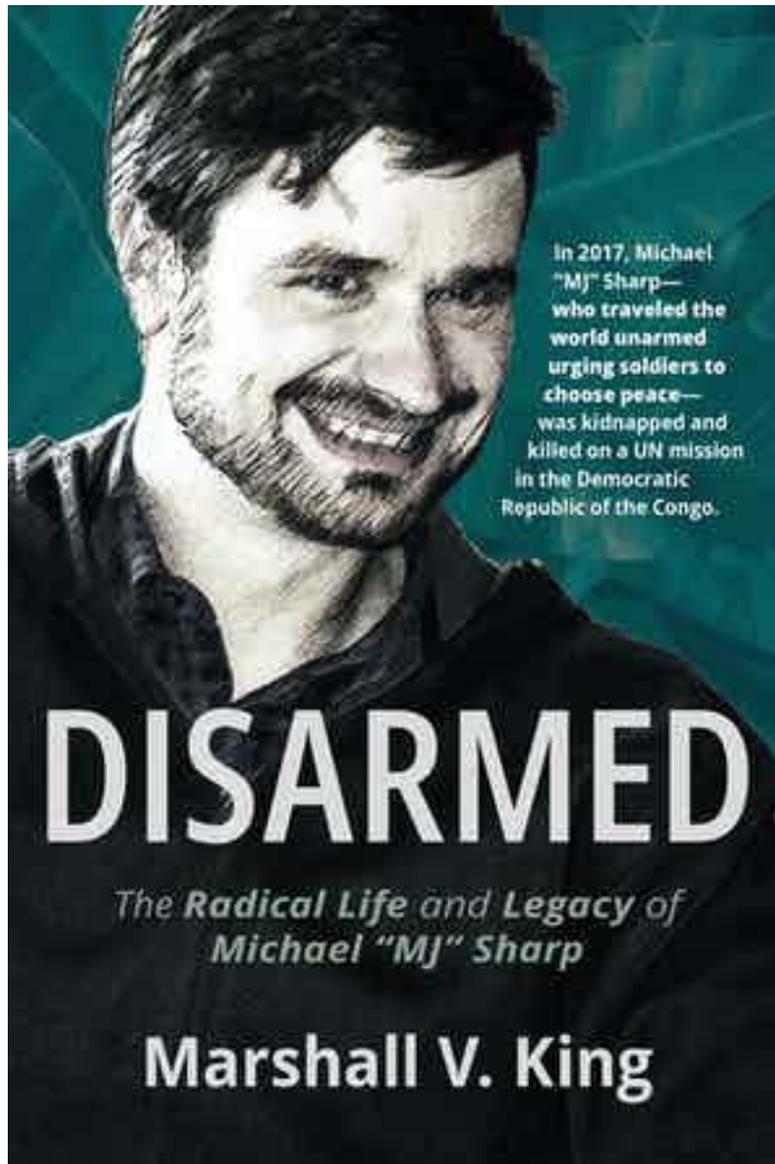


Disarmed

The Radical Life and Legacy of Michael "MJ" Sharp

John & Michele Sharp

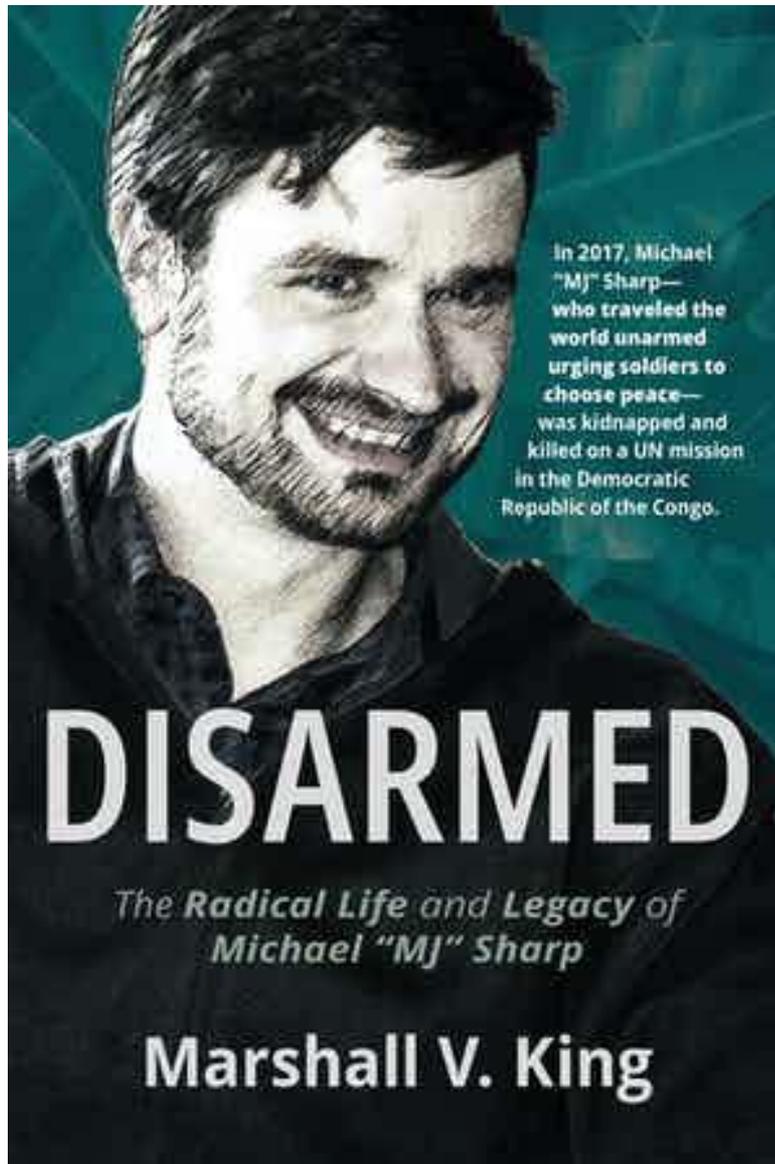




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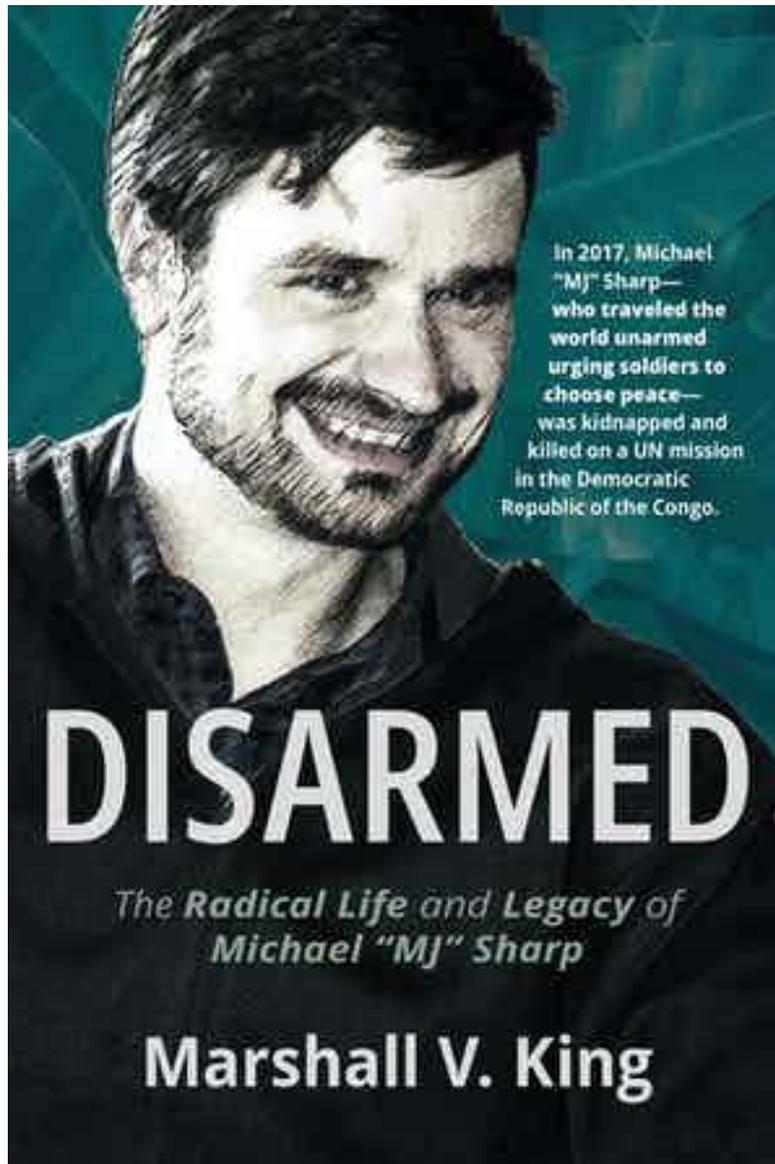
[Mennonite Mission Network \(Germany\)](#)



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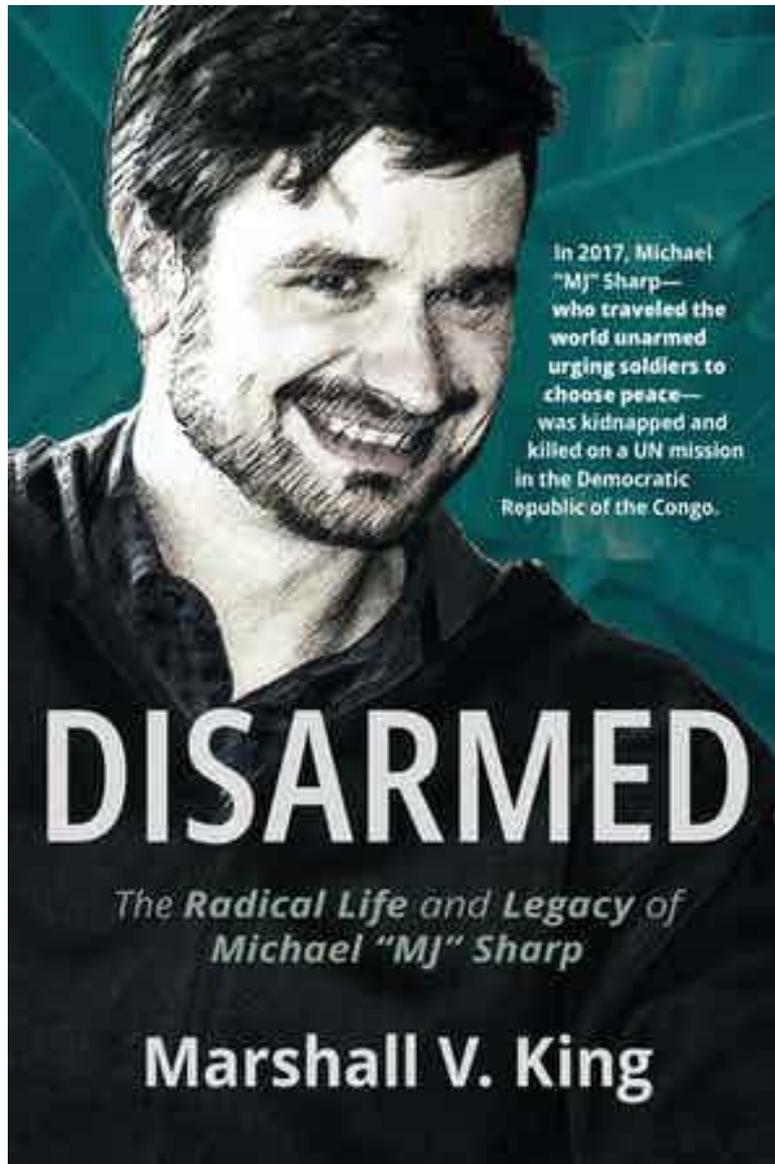
Mennonite Mission Network (Germany)
[Housemate and traveler \(Indiana\)](#)



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Sons in Spanish

- Masculine
 - **Hijo = Son**
 - **Hijos = Sons**
 - **Hijos = Sons and daughters = Children**
- Feminine
 - **Hija = Daughter**
 - **Hijas = Daughters**

Biblical Greek: **huios** functions the same way.

- In singular, it means “son” (male offspring)
- In plural, it can mean either “sons” or “sons and daughters” (children)

“Son of...” in the ancient world

Indicates **origin**.

- Where did you come from?
- What is it that proves where you came from?
- Biological
- Adoptive
- Great ancestor
- Class, type, tribe
- Having the traits or characteristics

Son of God

- **In the world**
 - Someone mighty
 - Someone admired and worshiped
 - Powerful like God
 - Title of kings and emperors

Son of God

- **In the world**

- Someone mighty
- Someone admired and worshiped
- Powerful like God
- Title of kings and emperors

- **In God's realm**

- Gives up power
- Serves everyone
- Absorbs evil instead of fighting back.
- Title of Jesus who died on the cross.

Jesus as **Son of God**

- Jesus **avoided** the term, **Son of God**.
- Not associated with power-grabbing militarism.
- Jesus **used** the term, **Son of Man**.

Jesus as **Son of God**

- Jesus **avoided** the term, **Son of God**.
- Not associated with power-grabbing militarism.
- Jesus **used** the term, **Son of Man**.
- The devil used the term **Son of God**.
- **If you are the Son of God...** was the greatest temptation for Jesus.

Peacemakers – Sons of God

- Jesus avoids the term **“Son of God.”**
- Jesus calls his disciples **“sons of God.”**
- Jesus turns **Son of God** upside down.
 - Not a power-grabbing Messiah.
 - But a self-emptying suffering servant
- Shows who God is
 - Not a tyrant emperor
 - But a God who loves

War today

- I want power
- My story
 - I have been harmed
 - I am oppressed
 - I am hurt
- I am justified to attack.
- I will keep power
- My story
 - They threaten me
 - I am attacked
 - I will lose control
- I am justified to fight back.



Listen
to my
story

Listen for peace

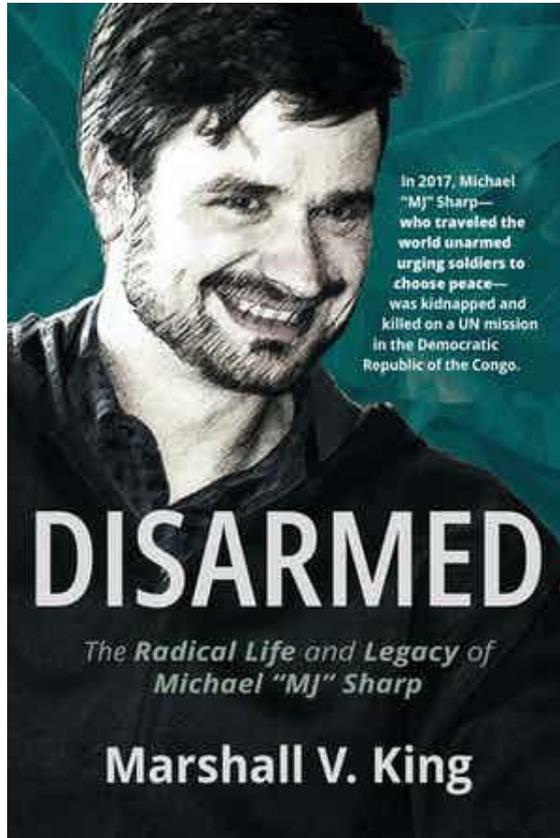
- Listen to the stories of the “other”
- Listen to the Spirit of God
- Listen to the vision of **shalom** for the whole community.



The consequences

- Listen to one side; the other is offended.
- Tell an inconvenient truth for one side and they will respond with a story about the other side.
- It's hard to be peacemaker (peace doer) in a world of competing peacekeepers.

Disarmed



March 12, 2017

MJ & Zaida missing

March 26, 2017

Bodies found

April 15, 2017

MJ's funeral in Kansas.

April 24, 2017

DRC government shows video of the killing to journalists

Being a peacemaker (doer)

- Listen
 - To the stories of others, their pain
 - To underlying need for shalom (peace)
 - To the Holy Spirit
- Tell the truth
- Be children of (a loving) God

2 Visions of a Peacemaker

Peacekeepers

- Grab power
- Forceful superiority
- Peace = my way
- Sons of (a false) god

Peace Doers

- Give up power
- Serve by listening
- Peace = God's shalom
- Children of the one true God of love.

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