

# RELIGION AND PEACE



Is there a place where we can meet?  
You and me  
The place in the middle  
The no man's land  
Where we straddle the line  
Where you are right  
And I am right to  
And both of us are wrong and wronged?  
Can we meet there?  
And look for the place where the path begins  
The path that ends when we forgive

Desmond Tutu | The Book of Forgiving | 2014

# The Content

The whole study is to be completed within the same TWO religious traditions.

*Students learn to:*

*Plan, investigate and  
draw conclusions*

- investigate the understanding of peace and how it is informed through significant writings within sacred texts for TWO religious traditions drawn from:

Buddhism – Sutta Pitaka, Dhammapada  
Christianity – the New Testament  
Hinduism – Bhagavad Gita  
Islam – Qur'an and Hadith  
Judaism – Nevi'im

*Indicate the main  
features of*

- outline the principal teachings about peace in TWO religious traditions

*Show by example*

- demonstrate how TWO religious traditions guide the individual in achieving inner peace

*Identify issues and  
provide points*

- discuss how TWO religious traditions are contributing to world peace

# KEEP IN MIND!

- This topic ALWAYS requires one extended response worth 20 marks on the HSC.
- Is often used by NESA to determine Band 6 results as it is one of the 'common' sections attempted by ALL students.
- It may ask you to look at one religious tradition or two.
- The question may cover one, two and/or all three syllabus dot points.
- Significant texts / writings and the teachings about peace OVERLAP significantly.

Introduction

Sacred texts –  
quotes and  
references

Principal  
teachings

Writings

Inner Peace

and/or

Individual and/or  
Individuals

World Peace

Practices

Organisations

Conclusion

“TO REACH PEACE,  
TEACH PEACE”

SAINT JOHN PAUL II | *FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE DAY OF PEACE* |  
1979

## SACRED TEXTS

Authoritative and esteemed writings define the origins and source of the tradition. These provide the foundation for religious interpretations of peace,

## INNER PEACE

How sacred texts, principal teachings and structures assist the quest for inner peace for the individual. Specific examples of the means provided by traditions to enhance personal peace.

More than an absence of war. Religions foster justice and compassion with a goal of global peace. Within each tradition there are differences in interpretation. People fall short of ideals. All traditions seek peace.

Writings  
Organisations  
Individuals  
Practices

## WORLD PEACE

How the teachings of the tradition grounded in the sacred texts guide the adherents to contribute to world peace. Specific examples and applications in the global arena. These may begin at the local level

## SIGNIFICANT CONCEPTS/PRINCIPAL TEACHINGS

Just War Theory Pacifism Peace is foundational Prayer  
The reign of God Trust in God brings peace Forgiveness  
Be an advocate for peace Peace-making Non violence  
The example of Jesus Agape Commandment of love



# What is Peace?

**peace** \_ pis/ [pees] *noun, interjection, verb*, peaced, peac·ing. *noun*

1. the normal, non-warring condition of a nation, group of nations, or the world.
2. ( *often initial capital letter* ) an agreement or treaty between warring or antagonistic nations, groups, etc., to end hostilities and abstain from further fighting or antagonism
3. a state of mutual harmony between people or groups, esp. in personal relations:  
*Try to live in peace with your neighbours.*
4. the normal freedom from civil commotion and violence of a community; public order and security
5. cessation of or freedom from any strife or dissension.
6. freedom of the mind from annoyance, distraction, anxiety, an obsession, etc.; tranquillity; serenity.
7. a state or condition conducive to or characterised by tranquillity
9. silence; stillness



THE UNDERSTANDING OF PEACE  
AND  
HOW IT IS INFORMED  
THROUGH  
THE NEW TESTAMENT

The Bible is the sacred text used by Christians to formulate their teachings, doctrines, their ideas of peace and their theology of war. This is further supplemented by Christian VARIANTS with various decisions; reflections; suggestions; regulations; etc; that have arisen since the time of Christ.

The New Testament part of the Bible is the ONLY designated text for this topic in the syllabus.

Gospels | Acts | Letters | Revelation

# Christianity – The New Testament

- The Greek word for peace used in the New Testament means “to be in harmony with another”
- the word “peace” is used in all but one of the New Testament books.
- The ultimate expression of peace in the New Testament is the peace that is achieved in the relationship between God and human beings in the forgiveness of sins. Thus peace is ultimately a reference to the death of Jesus, the most significant work of Christ. This is the ultimate expression of ‘inner peace’, peace with God. The strong inference here is that the peace of Jesus will come to all who follow him. Under this premise peace and peace making is not an optional extra!

# Christianity – The New Testament

- In the New Testament, peace is a personal quality to be developed and shown in relationships with others. In the Gospels, peace is a recurrent theme in the teachings of Jesus. Major references include the Beatitude: 'Blessed are the peacemakers, for they are the children of God' (Matthew 5:9). Jesus developed this in what is possibly the most radical thing he said: he told his followers to 'love your enemies' (Matthew 5:38–40). He also linked the idea of peace with universal love.
- The New Testament is primarily focused on the idea of inner peace, but the idea of world peace underlies many of the teachings of the Bible.

# Christianity – The New Testament

**Note down the references the following NT quotes, but remember; you can't learn all of them. Choose three or four that can also be used as/for:**

- **principal teachings**
- **peace in the world**
- **peace for the individual**

- He said to him, “You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself.” (Matt 22:37-39)
- I give you a new commandment: love one another. As I have loved you, so you also should love one another. This is how all will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. (John 13:34-35)
- Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. (Matt 5:9)

- Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward all people. (Luke 2:14)
- You have heard that it was said, 'An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.' But I say to you, offer no resistance to one who is evil. When someone strikes you on (your) right cheek, turn the other one to him as well. If anyone wants to go to law with you over your tunic, hand him your cloak as well. Should anyone press you into service for one mile, go with him for two miles. Give to the one who asks of you, and do not turn your back on one who wants to borrow, You have heard that it was said, 'You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, love your enemies, and pray for those who persecute you. (Matt 5:38-44)

- Come to me, all you who labour and are burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am meek and humble of heart; and you will find rest for your selves. For my yoke is easy, and my burden light. (Matt 11:29-30)
- Jesus replied, "You shall not kill; you shall not commit adultery; you shall not steal; you shall not bear false witness; honour your father and your mother"; and 'you shall love your neighbour as yourself." (Matt 19:18-19)
- And behold, one of those who accompanied Jesus put his hand to his sword, drew it, and struck the high priest's servant, cutting off his ear. Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its sheath, for all who take the sword will perish by the sword." (*Matt 26:51-52*)



- Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift. (*Matt. 5:23*)
- Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give it to you. (*John 14:27*)
- For the kingdom of God is not a matter of food and drink, but of righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Spirit; whoever serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by others. Let us then pursue what leads to peace and to building up one another. (Paul's Letter to the Romans 14:17-19)

- ...bearing with one another through love, striving to preserve the unity of the spirit through the bond of peace. (Ephesians 4:3)
- And let the peace of Christ control your hearts, the peace into which you were also called in one body. And be thankful. (Colossians 3:15)
- Be at peace among yourselves. (1 Thessalonian 5:13)
- 'May the God of peace himself give you peace always in every way.' (2 Thessalonians 3:16)
- Strive for peace with everyone. (Hebrews 12:14)
- And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for those who cultivate peace. (James 3:18)

# PRINCIPAL TEACHINGS ABOUT PEACE

## A lot of confusion in recent years regarding his particular syllabus dot point!

In the past most text books determined that the main “teachings about peace” in ADDITION to those from the NT were:

The Just War Theory/Doctrine

Pacifism / non-violence

Pax Christi

The following slides are examples of the most popular sources about this syllabus dot point AND HIGHLIGHT HOW DIVERSE THIS POINT IS (and by the way they are all correct/acceptable in a response):

# Source: Living Religion (PDF text book)

https://netbook.nelsonnet.com.au/netbook/FlexReader/FlexReader.aspx?bookId=154&StartPageId=page362#orientation=pageflip;currentPage=page360

This set of Christian writings also makes clear that all spiritual blessings, including peace, are from God. God is a God of peace (Rom 15:33; Phil 4:9). The peace that God brings is associated with righteousness, grace, mercy, love, joy and life (Rom 14:17; Phil 1:2). The long-term aim of the Christian is to receive the peace of God (Phil 4:7) or the peace of Christ (Gal 3:15). If the Christian mind is focused on the Spirit, this in turn leads to life and peace (Rom 8:6), and the God of hope then fills the Christian with joy and peace (Rom 15:13).

The idea of peace within the community and in the wider world underlies many New Testament teachings. As we shall see, Christian teachings about peace developed with the need to understand how to apply these biblical principles to specific situations in a vastly changing and challenging world.

## REVIEW

- 1 Identify one quotation from the New Testament discussed in this section which, for you, best expresses the Christian understanding of peace. Justify your response.
- 2 Investigate significant writings in the New Testament that refer to peace. Construct a chart or a mind map to outline the ways peace is described.
- 3 Prepare a summary of how the Christian understanding of peace is informed by the writings of the New Testament.

## PRINCIPAL TEACHINGS ABOUT PEACE

The Christian understanding of peace has been developed over centuries of thought and practice. The early Church (the first 300 years) was strongly pacifist (supportive of nonviolence and disarmament), but this began to change in the time of Constantine. The Council of Arles in 314 CE said that to forbid 'the state the right to go to war was to condemn it to extinction', and not long after this Christian philosophers began to formulate the doctrine of the 'just war'.

We do not seek peace in order to be at war, but we go to war that we may have peace. Be peaceful, therefore, in warring, so that you may vanquish those whom you war against, and bring them to the prosperity of peace.

Augustine's letter to Boniface, Letter 189, 418 CE

The divisions within Christianity brought with them different attitudes to war and peace. The stance of pacifism had its modern origins in the early years of the twentieth century. Its proponents included Dorothy Day, Martin Luther King Jr and Christian Churches such as the Mennonites, Quakers, Jehovah's Witnesses and the Amish.



FIGURE 16.12 German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer was one of the voices of the German anti-Nazi resistance, which cost him his life. He has been described as one of the 'Heroes for a Culture of Peace' and is commemorated as a theologian and martyr by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in the United States, the Church of England and the Church in Wales.

The German theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1906–1945) said that peace is 'not only to enjoy but to do', and this has always been the principal Christian teaching about peace. The Jewish vision of *shalom* (Isa 54:10, 65:17–25) implies a call to become peacemakers and build communities of peace. This vision is reinforced in the gospels, with the peace that Christ teaches – *pax Christi* (Mk 10:42–44; Mt 5:9–10, 44–47).

## The doctrine of the 'just war'

At a time when the mostly Christian Roman Empire was being attacked from the north and the fall of Rome was imminent, Augustine (354–430 CE), one of the great thinkers of the early Church, proposed the idea of a morally just war.

The Christian theory of the just war began with Augustine and, although he did not lay out the conditions necessary for a war to be just, it is from his work *The City of God* that the phrase originates:

But, say they, the wise man will wage just wars. As if he would not all the rather lament the necessity of just wars, if he remembers that he is a man; for if they were not just he would not wage them, and would therefore be delivered from all wars.

St Augustine, *The City of God*, Book XIX, Ch 7

Nine hundred years later, Thomas Aquinas (d. 1274 CE) used the authority of Augustine's arguments to lay out the conditions under which a war could be just.

There are two parts to the theory of 'just war':

- *Jus ad bellum* – the conditions under which the use of military force is justified

- *Jus in bello* – how to conduct a war in an ethical manner.
- The just war theory attempts to reconcile three things:
- Taking human life is seriously wrong.
- States have a duty to defend their citizens and defend justice.
- Protecting innocent human life and defending important moral values sometimes require willingness to use force and violence.

The just war theory really has no biblical basis to its elements. It is premised on the belief that war is undesirable but sometimes may be necessary to prevent a greater evil. These elements are that the war in question must:

- have a just cause and not be a matter of retribution
- be used as a last resort
- be waged by a legitimate authority
- use proportionate means and target only combatants
- have a reasonable chance of success.

The phrase 'a just war' has been a source of confusion through the centuries. Since the norm for love for one's neighbour is central to the moral teaching of Jesus – and, indeed, to that of St Paul – how can there be any Christian theory of a just war? It has also been horribly misused. Oxford theologian Nigel Biggar helps deal with this confusion:

By 'just war' I do not refer to a war that is simply or perfectly just; and I certainly do not refer to a war that is holy. 'Just' here means 'justified' – on balance and all things considered. No human action or enterprise is pure and unblemished; but that is not to say that no human action can ever be right. No war waged by human beings will ever be simply just; but that is not to say that no war can ever be justified. What is more, even when it is justified – even when it is therefore considered to be commanded by God – war is always waged by one set of sinners against another, and never by the simply righteous against the simply unrighteous. For that reason justified war can never be holy in the sense that it carries with it a divine *corte blanche*. Such a view is not universal, but it is certainly (Augustinian) Christian. To say that a war can be right is not to deny it causes very terrible evils.

Nigel Biggar, Introduction 'Against the virus of useful thinking', in *Defence of War*, Oxford University Press, 2012

## A different response

The Church in the East developed a different approach. The East did not seek to deal with just war themes such as the correct conditions for entering

war, and the correct conduct of war on the basis of the possibility of the existence of a 'just war', precisely because it did not hold to such a view of war. The East treated it as a necessary evil; for example, the 13th Canon of St Basil (c. 330–378) struggles to free killing during war from the ethical judgement of being equivalent to murder, while concurrently refusing to call the act good or just.

## Christian pacifism

Christians have a long history of refusing to take part in war.

- Within the Christian tradition, the almost universal commitment to pacifism and nonviolence lasted almost three centuries.
- Christians resisted early Roman laws requiring them to renounce their faith, and many were executed for this.
- For the first three centuries, Christians almost universally refused to serve in the Roman army. Again, many were executed for this.

Groups of Christians embraced nonviolence during and after the Reformation. Some, such as the Anabaptists, would not take part in government because they didn't want to be associated in any way with the exercise of violence. The Quakers, however, were often directly involved in the politics of the day.

May we look upon our treasures, and the furniture of our houses, and the garments in which we array ourselves, and try whether the seeds of war have any nourishment in these our possessions.

John Woolman, Quaker, eighteenth century

There are different sorts of pacifism; for example, selective pacifism where the opposition is to a particular war or to wars involving weapons of mass destruction. During a war, many pacifists will refuse to fight, but some will take part in activities that seek to reduce the harm of war – by driving ambulances. Other pacifists will refuse to take part in any activity that might support the war.

Today many Christians are pacifists of various types, ranging from peace activists to those who need a great deal to convince them that war is justified. The Christian argument for pacifism is based on the example that Jesus sets Christians through his life and on his teachings in the Sermon on the Mount and other passages.

NEALS

# Source: Understanding Faith

Unit 18  
Religion and Peace - Christianity

HOME CONTENTS CHAPTERS SEARCH

## Part Two: Peace in the Christian Scripture

### Principal Teachings in Christianity about Peace

The source of Christian teachings is the Bible consisting of the Old Testament which is a translation from the Hebrew Scriptures and the New Testament. The New Testament does not cancel the Old Testament writings, but extends them:

*I have come not to abolish but to complete them.*

- Matthew 5:17

Jesus became the new covenant for his followers. On the night before his death, Jesus blessed the cup of wine:

*Drink from this, all of you, for this is my blood, the blood of the covenant poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins.*

- Matthew 26:28

There are many references to peace and conflict in the Old Testament and to the vision of peace when people are faithful to God.

*Then he (God) will judge between the nations and arbitrate between many peoples. They will hammer their swords into ploughshares and their spears into sickles. Nation will not lift sword against nation, no longer will they learn how to make war.*

- Isaiah 2:4-5

The principal teachings about peace in Christianity begin with the teachings and life of Jesus written in the gospels and reaffirmed by the writers of the New Testament letters.

### Peace in the Gospels

In Matthew's gospel many sayings of Jesus were collected to summarise his message and were presented as the sermon on the Mount. The sermon begins with the Beatitudes which taught that, instead of admiring the rich, powerful and famous, it is the poor, the gentle and the merciful who are blessed. They are open to receive the blessings of God's peace. Those with the moral attitudes of mercy, purity of heart, seeking for justice and peacemaking are in unity with God because:

*Blessed are the peacemakers: they shall be recognised as children of God.*

- Matthew 5:9

The teachings continue to show how to be peacemakers. They emphasise that a peacemaker has to accept some difficult challenges.

*You have heard how it was said: Love for eye and tooth for tooth. But I say this to you. On the contrary, if anyone hits you on the right cheek, offer him the other as well and pray for those who persecute you so that you may be children of your Father who sends his angels to your love just as your heavenly Father sent sons to his.*





# Source: Cambridge Studies of Religion

## The principal teachings about peace in Christianity

Additional to the information relating to the understanding of peace from the Christian sacred texts above, there are several key additional teachings that have been developed by Christians. These include the concepts of 'just war' and pacifism.

### St Augustine's doctrine for 'just war'

By the fifth century CE, the Roman Empire had become mostly Christian. At that time, however, forces from northern Europe began attacking Italy and the fall of Rome was close at hand. Against this background St Augustine, one of the great thinkers of the early Catholic Church, came up with the idea of the morally just war, in his substantial and

#### CONSIDER

Try to think of a recent war where forces that are predominantly Christian have adhered to these principles. Do you think St Augustine was being too optimistic? What rules of war would you institute? Is it similar to international covenants on war such as the Geneva Convention? Is it possible to have a 'just war'?

influential work *Civitas Dei* (The City of God). Augustine divided his theory into *Jus ad Bellum* (The Right to Go to War) and *Jus in Bello* (Correct Behaviour while at War). Augustine's ideas became known as the 'just war' theory.

Taking a practical approach, Augustine suggested that certain conditions must be met before a war is started. It must have a justifiable cause, that is, it cannot be aggressive – for more land or power – but must right a serious injustice. In fact, the grounds for a war have to be obvious to all. War must be carried out by a legitimate government, not just any rebellious group. The right intention must be held throughout the war; that is, all efforts must be directed at correcting the injustice that caused the war. A war should only be started if the killing of people is not futile and there will be a clear outcome. Finally, war should only be entered into as the last resort.

There are three main directives as to how war should be waged by Christians. It should be directed against those who caused the wrong – that is, a government or an army – and not against civilians. The use of force should be in relation to the wrong caused and, finally, the minimum amount of force needed to win should be used. Many would argue that 'just war' has not been experienced since the mid-twentieth century.

#### Christian pacifism: the Quakers

St Augustine devised his theory to mediate between the message of Jesus (in many respects a pacifist approach) and the practical need to defend the Roman Empire (which was turning Christian and seriously under threat from forces to the north). His theory of the just war was only haphazardly applied by the Christians who came after him, but there are other interpretations of Jesus' message for peace.

From the 1500s, many Protestant Christian groups emerged. One of these was the Society of Friends, founded by George Fox in 1648 in the light of the protracted English Civil War.



This group underlines its approach to personal peace in its worship. Quiet contemplation is the basis of its ritual. Friends mainly sit in quiet groups waiting for the 'inner light' of Jesus to move them. Some members may occasionally shudder or quake in these peaceful meetings and so their nickname arose: Quakers. This group has no priests and manages its organisation through the consensus of members. The peace of worship transfers to the Quaker attitude to war. Quakers hold to a 'Testimony to Peace' and refuse to participate in war.

Quakers have refused to fight and have sometimes been imprisoned by governments for refusing military service. Many Quakers have also died on battlefields when they have served in conflict situations, working in non-combatant positions. In World War I, many Quakers lost their lives serving as ambulance drivers and medical officers. Quakers worked tirelessly throughout the twentieth century to promote non-violent means of conflict resolution. In 1947 two charity organisations through which the Quakers operate were awarded the Nobel Peace prize.

Source 15.6 A member of the Friends Ambulance Unit in World War I. This service was founded by a number of Quakers at the start of World War I, although independent of the main organisation and open to non-Quaker volunteers. Its work was referred to during the 1947 Nobel Peace Prize award.

#### INVESTIGATE

See if you can find a Quaker meeting house near you. Most congregations organise open days for visitors, so why not visit them, speak with them and discover what their attitude to peace is? Also, access Quaker websites (go to <http://cambridge.edu.au/redirect?id=5774> for an online link).

# Source: Oxford Studies of Religion

## Principal teachings about peace

Further New Testament texts highlight some of the principal teachings of Christianity in relation to peace. These include the values of justice, mercy, compassion and respect for the dignity of the human person.

**TABLE 15.2 Christian understanding of peace**

FOUNDATIONAL PRINCIPLES	EXAMPLE FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT	LINK TO PRINCIPAL BELIEFS
Peace was established by God as the instigator of creation	For God is not a God of disorder but of peace. (1 Corinthians 14:33)	Christians acknowledge that they are called to be stewards of creation (Genesis 1) and that this demands respect and care for all aspects of life.
The teachings of Jesus emphasise respect, unity and reconciliation	Aim for perfection, listen to my appeal, be of one mind, live in peace. And the God of love and peace will be with you. (2 Corinthians 13:11)	Christians are required to be people who seek reconciliation over retaliation. The death of Jesus was the ultimate symbol of this belief.
The peace of God is beyond the peace of this world	I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world. (John 16:33)	Christians believe that salvation was achieved as a result of the death and resurrection of Jesus. As a result they have gained access to eternal life with God where they will live in perfect peace.
Jesus provided a new and radical interpretation of the Mosaic Law	You have heard it said, 'You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.' But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you ... for [God] makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the righteous and on the unrighteous. (Matthew 5:43–45)	The ultimate teaching in respect to peace for Christians. It reflects the Christian belief in the equality of all people created in God's image and evidenced in the life and teachings of Jesus.



# Principal Teachings about Peace



**Peace was established by God as the instigator of creation.**

**Jesus' teaching emphasise respect, unity and reconciliation**

**The peace of God is beyond the peace of this world.**

**Jesus provided a new and radical interpretation of the Mosaic law e.g. no longer 'an eye for eye' rather 'love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you'**



- Christians are meant to be stewards of creation (Gen. 1). This means respect and care for all aspects of life.
- Jesus' death is the ultimate symbol of peace: Christians are meant to seek reconciliation over retaliation.
- "A firm determination to respect the dignity of other people along with the deliberate practice of fraternal love are absolutely necessary for the achievement of peace"
- Christians are meant reflect Jesus' teachings in their life, therefore people who seek reconciliation over retaliation.
- St Thomas a Kempis said 'first be peaceful yourself, and you will be able to bring peace to others'.
- The greatest reflection of Christian teaching is the belief in the equality of all people as created in the image of God (Genesis 1)

- ... true peacemaking is never merely a matter of policy or document, but first a matter of heart..... repentance and forgiveness... charity and justice, peace and peacemakers isn't something that emerges as an option when war raises its head it is fundamental commitment to way Christians live their lives and the values they hear.
- Clearly the first Christians were pacifists in their own right. However, the fear of extinction allowed early philosophers to develop the idea of a 'Just War Cause' hence people like St Augustine suggested that one was allowed to defend himself and to attack someone before they attacked you and still uphold his Christian principles
- A very important element of Christianity is Pax Christi (the peace of Christ). These include 1. a way of life; 2. reverence for life; 3. the role of sacramental/saintly life; and 4. non-violent action. Therefore Christian peace firstly an internal change of the heart. This includes repentance, reconciliation and forgiveness. This is then reflected in an external way which includes seeking justice for all. e.g. recognising the dignity of the human person and their inalienable rights.

# SO... WHAT ARE THE PRINCIPAL TEACHINGS ON PEACE?

- The principal teachings about peace in Christianity begin with the teachings and life of Jesus Christ! They are based on what is written in the Gospels and are reaffirmed by the writers of the New Testament letters.
- The main ones being:

**The Beatitudes**

**Golden Rule**

**The Great Commandment**

- The idea of peace within the Christian community and the wider world are underpinned by NT writings. The following 'teachings' developed over time with need to understand how to apply these major biblical principles to an ever changing world!

# GENERAL INFORMATION ON PACIFISM

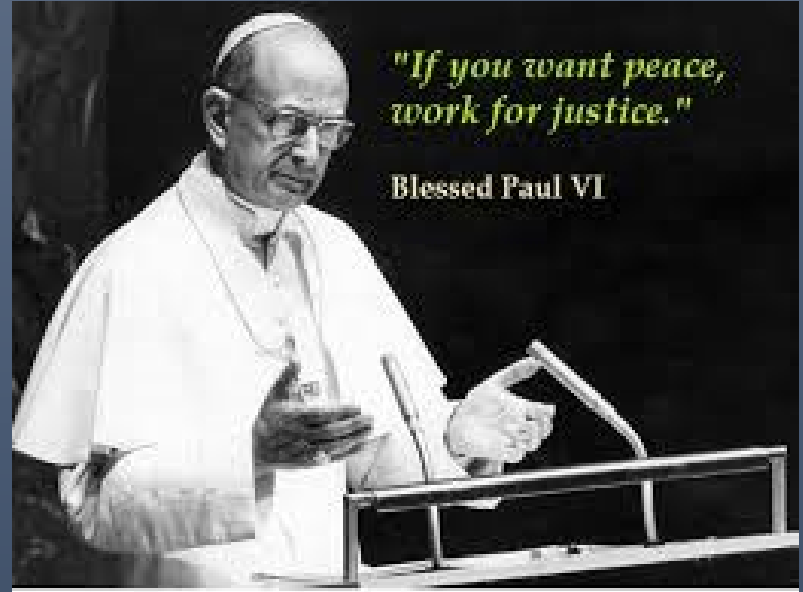
**Out of the three often mentioned ‘teachings’ that developed over time, pacifism is best link to the New Testament writings/teachings. More importantly, it is an actual specific teaching for a number of small Christian variants around the world!**

- Christians have a long history of refusing to take part in wars. This argument is based largely on Jesus’ teaching in the Sermon of the Mount and in the example that he set through his life. i.e. “Blessed are the peacemakers for they will be called the children of God” (Matthew 5:9)
- There are those who say that Jesus’ pacifist nature were part of his unique role as redeemer of humanity.
- “Peace Churches” are Christian variants/denominations that explicitly advocate pacifism - the Church of the Brethren, the Mennonites/Anabaptists, Amish, Hutterites, and the Quakers (Religious Society of Friends).

- These “Peace Churches” have always taken the position that Jesus was himself a pacifist who explicitly taught and practiced pacifism, and that his followers must do likewise.
- Pacifist churches vary on whether physical force can ever be justified in self-defense or protecting others but most adhere strictly to non-resistance even when confronted by violence. **All agree that violence on behalf of a country or a government is prohibited for Christians!**
- The Quakers (Religious Society of Friends) is a Christian variant totally committed to non-violence. In 1660 the Quakers declared “the spirit of Christ which leads us into all Truth will never move us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons, neither for the kingdom of Christ, nor for the kingdoms of the world”

- **TWO major Christian variants (Catholic & Anglican) have tried to develop the idea of “pacifism”. For example:**
  - The Peace Pledge Union was a pacifist organisation from which the Anglican Pacifist Fellowship (APF) later emerged within the Anglican Church.
  - South African Bishop Desmond Tutu is the most prominent Anglican pacifist – especially during the ‘Truth and Reconciliation Commission’
  - Rowan Williams led an almost united Anglican Church in Britain in opposition to the 2003 Iraq War.
  - Prominent Catholics working towards pacifism and social justice include individuals such as Dorothy Day.
  - Murdered Salvadoran Bishop Oscar Romero was notable for using non-violent resistance tactics and wrote meditative sermons focusing on the power of prayer and peace.

“If you  
want  
Peace,  
work for  
Justice”



# GENERAL INFORMATION ON JUST WAR THEORY

- The "Just War" theory sought to establish guidelines under which it was morally acceptable for Christians to engage in warfare.





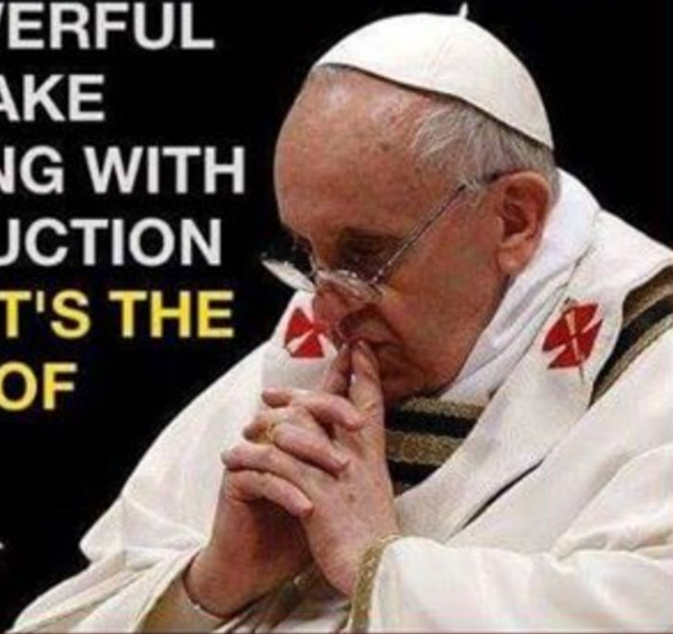
## CONTEXTUAL EXAMPLE:

- Pope Francis gave "very strong recognition" to a landmark conference held at the Vatican in 2016 that called on the global Catholic church to reject its long-held teachings on 'just war theory'.
- Participants in the April 4-5, 2019 meeting, co-hosted by Pax Christi International and the Vatican said the reflections shared by the about 80 attendees provided ample material for Pope Francis to consider for a possible encyclical.

**"MANY POWERFUL  
PEOPLE DON'T WANT  
PEACE BECAUSE  
THEY LIVE OFF WAR.**

**SOME POWERFUL  
PEOPLE MAKE  
THEIR LIVING WITH  
THE PRODUCTION  
OF ARMS. IT'S THE  
INDUSTRY OF  
DEATH."**

*- Pope Francis*

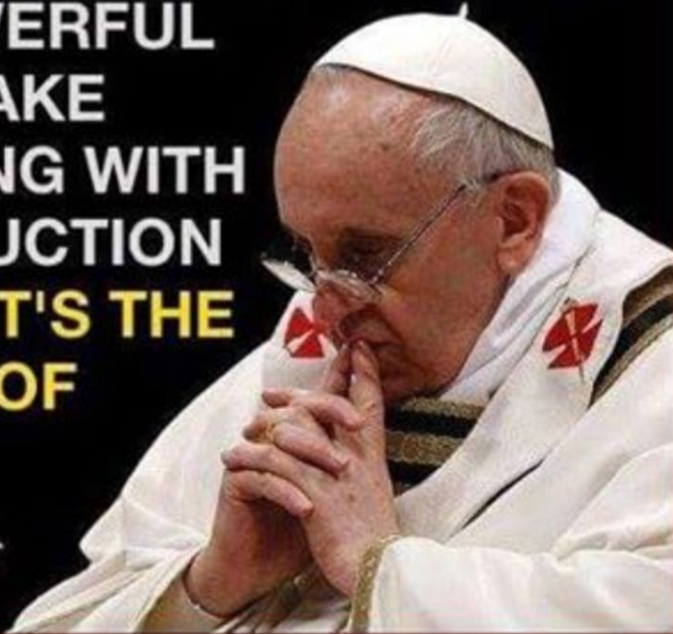


"Countries that sell arms, he said, "have no right to talk about peace. They are encouraging war in another country, and then they want peace in their own land. There's always a price to pay when taking a life. If you start war over there, you're going to have it at home."

**"MANY POWERFUL  
PEOPLE DON'T WANT  
PEACE BECAUSE  
THEY LIVE OFF WAR.**

**SOME POWERFUL  
PEOPLE MAKE  
THEIR LIVING WITH  
THE PRODUCTION  
OF ARMS. IT'S THE  
INDUSTRY OF  
DEATH."**

*- Pope Francis*



"Europe's biggest problem is that they have forgotten. They forgot that after the war, their children went knocking on the doors of America, they forgot". The Pope was asked what he thought about US President Donald Trump's proposal for a wall along the Mexican border. "Those who build walls end up becoming prisoners of the walls they built," he replied. "If you build a wall within yourself, you end up becoming a prisoner of the wall you built".

# GENERAL INFORMATION ON PAX CHRISTI

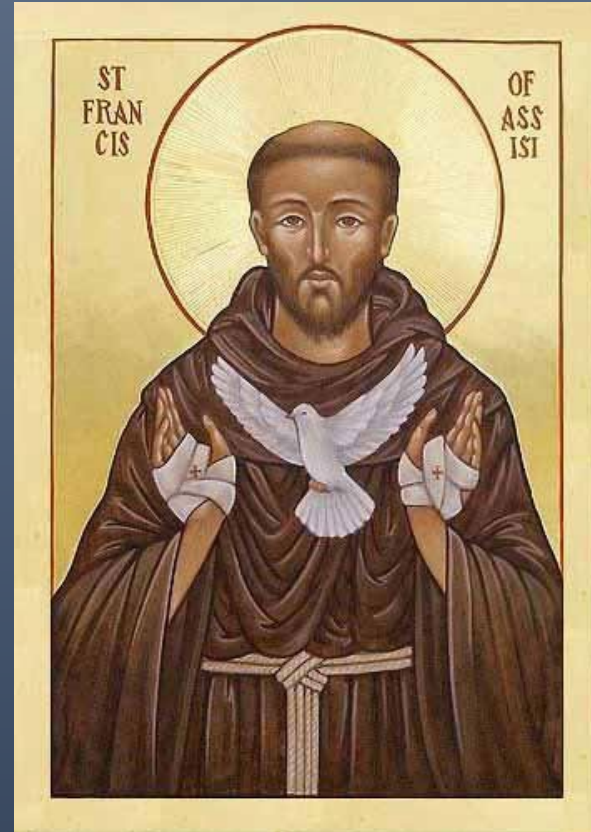
**Again, Pax Christi is a good example within the context of the New Testament teachings/writings and past/recent religious/historical developments.**

- The Pax Christi tradition (Peace of Christ) is about peace given by God to humanity. It is about earthly peace. It implies that peace is intrinsic to all humans.
- John's gospel in Jn 14:27 sums up Jesus' position on peace: "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives". Thus, Pax Christi is seen as a way of life for Christians.
- Pax Christi is also peacemaking movement founded in the Catholic Church after WW II.
- Its membership is open to individuals, groups and organisations of all faiths who are in sympathy with its aims and values.
- Pax Christi strives to help the Christian Churches and the wider community to proclaim and to make peace, through its experience and ideas, and especially through the witness and action of its members.

# INNER PEACE



“Make me  
a channel  
of your  
peace”



# Christianity Guides the Individual to Achieve Inner Peace

- Christians can expect to find inner peace in and through living out their vocation as disciples of Jesus Christ and directing their lives towards the following of his teaching.
- Jesus is regarded as the bringer of peace and to live in close relationship to him and his teaching will allow the follower to experience this peace.
- Jesus' life is seen as a model of living in peace - Christians are thus encouraged to model their lives on his example and in doing so they will be able to find peace.
- Christianity guides the individual to inner peace through TWO main precepts:
  - This first is “Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind and with all your strength”. - Mark 29-31
  - The second is... “You must love your neighbour as yourself.” - Mark 29-31

- The **first precept** asserts that inner peace from “loving God” is achieved by:
  - knowing God through Jesus.
  - studying the Scriptures
  - prayer
  - communal worship.
- The **second precept** asserts that inner peace from from “loving your neighbour as yourself” is achieved by:
  - forgiving yourself and expressing gratitude.
  - loving your neighbour as part of the kingdom of God.



# Knowing God through Jesus

- In order to love God, that is, to develop a real relationship with God which answers the deepest human longings for inner peace, Christians accept that Jesus is the way, the truth and the life (John 14: 6).
- To hope for and to find inner peace, requires a commitment to Christ who is the 'light of the world' (John 8: 12).
- Belief in Jesus leads the Christian to follow the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes to live a life of virtue which, in turn, brings inner peace.

# Studying the Scriptures

- The Scriptures are a way for Christians to love God with heart, soul, mind and strength.
- The contribution of Christianity to the inner peace of the individual and to world peace is contained in the Bible.
- It is the record of the religious experiences which are at the heart of Christian culture.
- For centuries, Christians have been inspired by the writings in the Bible and especially the four gospels.
- From their study of the scriptures, Christians hope and pray this sacred literature will draw them closer to God.

# Prayer

- Prayer gives Christians a sense of the presence of God and creates a peaceful space and time for adherents to reflect on their lives, to consider that worry can disturb their peace of mind and that trust in God is what really matters.
- When the disciples asked Jesus to teach them how to pray, his reply was the prayer known to Christians of all denominations – The Our Father.
- Christians pray for inner peace, a relationship with God and with others, a relationship that will be part of every day, as sustaining as 'daily bread'.
- Within Christianity, there are many forms of prayer including meditation, Taize prayer, Lectio Divina etc

# Communal Worship

- Christians are able to find acceptance, identity and purpose in a faith community that worships and prays together.
- Gathering together, to remember, to offer prayers of thanksgiving and petition, is a time for the blessings of inner peace for Christians as disciples of Jesus.
- Although the forms of communal worship vary in the different denominations of Christianity, many use: prayers (like the Lord's Prayer and the Nicene Creed), readings from the Bible, sermons/homilies and hymns.
- The Mass/Eucharist/Divine Liturgy/Holy Communion is the centre of worship and the most important communal celebration for most Christian variants.

# Forgiving yourself and Expressing Gratitude.

- A person who is angry, resentful, vengeful and bitter will be unable to extend peace and love to others.
- There are many situations that disrupt a person's inner peace. Christianity acknowledges that God offers forgiveness in all situations which means peace of mind is restored when an individual asks for and accepts forgiveness. (Luke 15:11-32).
- Gratitude helps people not to take one another or earthly resources for granted.
- True gratitude is seeing each other and everything as a gift. Living a life of gratitude is integral to being a Christian.
- To be grateful is to grow in holiness.

# WORLD PEACE

# Loving Your Neighbour

- The inner peace that comes from a loving relationship with God, expressed in prayer and communal worship, also leads to peace in relationships with other people.
- If the Christian does not continue the mission of Jesus to serve others, then there is conflict because their prayers and worship are simply words with no action.
- A Christian is called to be a peacemaker, a bridge builder between people, a good neighbour and a genuinely good person.
- Christians promote peace within the church community and the wider community through organisations such as St Vincent de Paul, Anglicare and Salvation Army.
- Individuals and agencies reach out to lonely people, refugees, the poor, homeless and disadvantaged, especially women and children



# #TheyAreUs



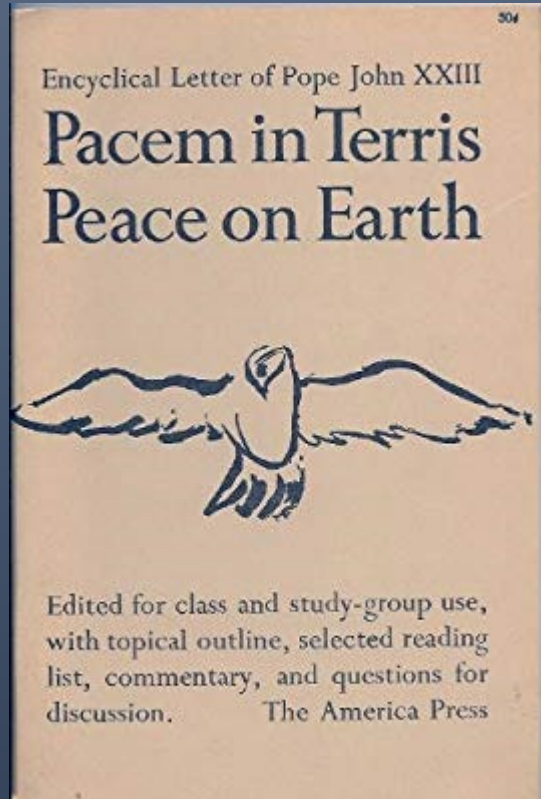


# Christianity Contributing to World Peace

- The essential requirement of Christianity in relation to peace is to follow Jesus' example as the source of strength in the long struggle to achieve the peace of God. Jesus' response to violence was not more violence but the radical invitation to 'love your enemies, do good to those who hate you' (Luke 6:27).
- **Christianity is contributing to world peace through:**
  - public statements and the example of church leaders or church representatives
  - the work of organisations to achieve world peace
  - efforts of individuals dedicated to world peace
  - participation in celebrations and days to commemorate world peace.

Recycling your 'Significant Figure'? Yes!

## Saint John 23



- **Public Statements**

- Leaders of Christian Churches have made appeals for peace in times of conflict and have made statements to show that it is a Christian responsibility to challenge systems and structures of oppression in society.
- Examples are presented from the Catholic and Anglican Churches, Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), World Council of Churches, Uniting Church of Australia and the Australian Catholic Bishops' Conference.

- **Work of Organisations to Achieve World Peace**

- Groups within Christian Churches and ecumenical organisations are working in many countries to contribute to world peace. Examples are presented from the Anglican, Catholic, Uniting, Seventh-day Adventist, Religious Society of Friends, Mennonite and Orthodox Churches and from the World Council of Churches, the Australian Council of Churches, @actforpeace, Pax Christi

- **Individuals Who Contribute to World Peace**

- Many individuals of the Christian faith have worked for and continue to promote national and international peace.
- The achievements of influential world figures, Pope Francis, Saint John Paul II, Dorothy Day and Nelson Mandela, are presented as examples of those who have contributed to world peace.

- **Celebrations and Special Days to Commemorate World Peace**

- World Day of Peace
- World Day of Prayer for Peace
- International Day of Prayer for Peace
- Global Day of Prayer
- World Day of Prayer
- Day of Prayer For the Peace of Jerusalem