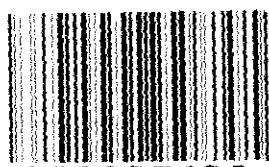


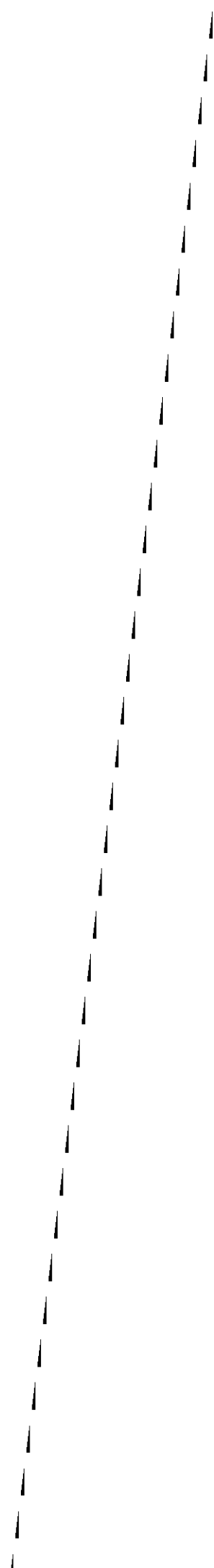
THE REVIVAL OF CHURCH TEACHINGS ON  
WAR TO A SOCIETY REACHED BY  
VIOLENCE

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**THE RELEVANCE OF CHRIST'S TEACHINGS ON PEACE TO A  
SOCIETY PLAGUED BY VIOLENCE**

by

Michele Desiree Reddy

A dissertation submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree

of

Master of Theology

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Promoter: Prof. J.A. Loubser

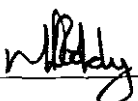
## **Abstract**

### **THE RELEVANCE OF CHRIST'S TEACHINGS ON PEACE TO A SOCIETY PLAGUED BY VIOLENCE**

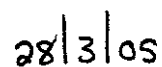
In this dissertation I explore the relevance of Christ's teachings on peace, and its effectiveness over the years, namely, through the lives of three individuals, Leo Tolstoy, Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. Special attention is paid to each one's philosophy of non-violence as well as their understanding and application of the concept resist not evil by force. Included also are current thoughts pertaining to non-violence. My conclusion is that the doctrine of non-violence requires much more than just abstinence from violence to be effective. It involves a change in mindset, emotional responses, spiritual accountability, social transformation, self-worth, discipline and most importantly restraint. This study is based on qualitative research conducted by myself. It will show that the ultimate source of peace is God, through our Lord Jesus Christ.

## DECLARATION

I, Michele Desiree Reddy, hereby declare that the work, on which this dissertation is based, is my own and that all sources that I have used and quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete reference.

  
\_\_\_\_\_

**MICHELE DESIREE REDDY**

  
\_\_\_\_\_

**DATE**

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to those individuals who know the sacrifice of true Christianity, who have mastered the art of Satyagraha (the law of love, which opposes violence) and ahimsa (the love for truth), as well as to those individuals who have found that true peace originates from within oneself, through the knowledge of God in *Christ Jesus*.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I want to thank my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ for providing me with the ability needed to complete this dissertation.

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to my supervisor Prof. J.A. Loubser for his invaluable assistance and guidance.

Special thanks goes to Rev. Brian Naidoo of Arena Park Baptist Church, for the use of his computer to complete my work.

My sincere appreciation goes to my husband Mike Reddy for editing my work.

Finally thanks to all my family members and friends for their patience and understanding during this research.

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## *Chapter 1*

### **STATEMENT OF PROBLEM AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

My study will contribute towards a better understanding of how human differences and conflict with each other can be overcome in a peaceful and amicable manner in this post apartheid South Africa. My study will also contribute to a better understanding of human resistance to violence and its demoralizing effects.

#### **HYPOTHESIS TO BE TESTED**

I am testing the following hypothesis:

The entire application of Christ's teaching on peace leaves no room for violence.

#### **PREAMBLE**

The object of my study is to document another form of resistance other than violence. There are three evils in the world today, namely, violence, poverty and war. One has only to switch on the television, read the newspapers or listen to the radio, to realise that the evil of violence has humankind in its clutches and is stripping away at the very core of our existence, which is love and respect for human life. A very wise Roman sage once said, (Kownacki, 2002:5) "What a society does to its children, its children will do to society." What then can one expect from a future, which is going to be dominated by a culture of violence?

How is violence justified? Can the loss of innocent lives or mass murder in the name of war be justified? There are various positions which one may

adopt in respect of violence, namely, that non-violence might prevail over violence, but violence could win over cowardice, also that violence might be justified where it is spontaneous and not premeditated and when it is used in self-defence rather than aggression. These are positions one is likely to find oneself in conflict over. How should one respond to provocation? Reacting would mean acting on instinct or impulse, for example, an eye for an eye or a tooth for a tooth. According to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. from a nonauthored website, (<http://www.bluesforce.com/peace-quotes.htm>), "That old law about 'an eye for an eye' leaves everybody blind. The time is always right to do the right thing."

Responding on the other hand would entail acting after careful thought and consideration for the consequences of one's actions. For instance, when a bomb was dropped at one of Gandhi's prayer meetings, he chided his frightened audience for being scared of a "mere bomb" (Microsoft Encarta 97). They reacted out of fear, but Gandhi (no doubt) after quickly assessing the situation and the extent of damage, remained calm and composed. Gandhi was quoted as saying, "A man is the sum of his actions, of what he has done, of what he can do, Nothing else" (nonauthored website, (<http://www.bluesforce.com/peace-quotes.htm>)).

I believe that socio-political and religious dispensations are contributing factors to the stability and the well being of all humankind. Individualism and universalism have contributed to a certain extent to communities losing their local character. There has been an assimilation of customs and ideas within the various cultures, which has brought about a mixing of identities in the process.

According to Marais (1985:4), "Human beings are never regarded purely as people, but are judged according to their nationality, race, rank and sex, in terms of which they are accorded certain rights." Religion plays a significant role at the levels of safety, socialisation and self-actualisation. According to Maslow's

(1954) "Theory of a Hierarchy of Needs," it shows that there is a progression from the fulfilment of needs, safety needs, to the fulfilment of self-actualisation needs in the life of the individual.

There exists a case of too much and too little. The rich are getting richer and the poor are getting poorer, an imbalance which creates the platform for disaster. Unemployment and poverty, two pet evils of humankind bring out the worst-case scenarios possible. Food and shelter are no longer necessities but privileges. Racial, economic and moral structures within communities are best described as fragmented. It has become a case of "the survival of the fittest." Almost two-thirds of the peoples of the world go to bed hungry. They are starving, shelterless and barely clothed, (nonauthored website, (<http://www.bluesforce.com/peace-quotes.htm>)).

What will it take to resume order and reinstate stronger structures in place? It is my belief that one needs to begin by searching within oneself for the answer. Tolstoy (1984) stated that all Christians should "remember that the only guide for their actions is to be found in the divine principle dwelling within them, which in no sense can be checked or governed by anyone or anything else." No individual should consider himself or herself great, unless he/she shows concern for the rest of humankind. The conviction that man/woman are made in the image of God, should be deeply etched in the fibre of one's religious tradition. Therefore every individual life should be viewed as a soul of metaphysical value as well as heir to a legacy of dignity and worth. If one assumes that life is worth living and that an individual has a right to survive, then one must find an alternative to violence.

In this respect I shall be looking at the lives of four individuals who set the pace for "non resistance to evil" also referred to as (non-violent direct action), and whose endeavours should never go unnoticed, especially at a time such as

this. They all believed in change for the betterment of humanity, but most importantly they believed that more could be accomplished through passive resistance than violence. They are as follows: Jesus Christ (Founder of Christianity), Leo Tolstoy (Russian novelist, poet and human rights promoter), Mohandas Gandhi (Lawyer and social rights leader), Martin Luther King, Jr. (Pastor and civil rights leader).

## **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEMS**

### **CRITICAL QUESTIONS THAT WILL INFORM MY STUDY**

In this dissertation, I will state my research problems in the form of three critical questions:

- ❖ What impact did Christ's teachings on peace have in the lives of freedom fighters and human rights activists from the nineteenth and twentieth century?
- ❖ What has the concept through peaceful means achieved in previous years?
- ❖ How relevant is Christ's teachings on peace for the twenty-first century?

## **AIMS**

To show that violence is not a means to an end, also to reveal the tyrannical indignity of violence and to compare the good will of peace with the indignity of violence.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The research for this dissertation will be based on a literature survey regarding the methods employed by Jesus Christ, Leo Tolstoy, Mohandas Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr, to bring about peace and morality to humankind.

## **VALUE OF RESEARCH**

My study will contribute towards a better understanding of how the “good” in humankind can overshadow and defeat the “bad,” and how disputes can be managed with a positive attitude together with the application of Biblical principles.

My study will also contribute towards a better understanding of how peace can be relevant in the lives of individuals in the twenty-first century.

## **OUTLINE OF DISSERTATION**

This study focuses on the following:

In chapter 1 I present the statement of the problems to be analysed as well as the research methodology that will be used and a brief outline of the structure of this dissertation will be provided as a road map for the reader.

Chapter 2 contains a Biblical Basis that will be fundamental for my research.

Chapter 3 will focus on the doctrine of nonviolence, its origination, impact on the state and individual and attitudes towards nonviolence and war.

Chapter 4 will focus on the leadership of four individuals: Jesus Christ, Leo Tolstoy, Karamchand Mohandas (Mahatma) Gandhi and Martin Luther King, Jr.

In chapter 5 I conclude by providing a brief retrospective summary of this dissertation, and by making recommendations regarding the relevance of Christ's teachings to a society plagued with violence.

A Bibliography of the literature that was consulted is given at the end.

## **SUMMARY**

In this chapter, I identified three critical questions that will be discussed. Also included is an outline of my dissertation that I have presented as a roadmap to the reader. The next chapter will contain relevant biblical scriptures, which I will use that will be relevant for my research.

## *Chapter 2*

### **BIBLICAL BASIS**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

In the previous chapter I identified three critical questions that will be discussed. Also included is an outline of my dissertation that I have presented as a roadmap to the reader. In this chapter I will quote (the relevant) biblical scriptures, (which I will use) which will be relevant for my research.

#### **THE CHRISTIAN BELIEF ABOUT PEACE**

In Christian belief the ultimate source of Peace is God. Christians draw their belief on peace from the Bible. The idea of peace dominates the Bible. The Bible itself witnesses to the centrality of peacemaking for Christian discipleship. The Bible begins with peace in the Garden of Eden and closes with peace in eternity. However, God's intended peace for humankind was disrupted by man's sin.

Therefore, Christ Himself became the peace of humankind at the cross. As a result of God's provision, man/woman can now enjoy this peace, through the knowledge of Christ. At the return of Christ, Christians are told that an eternal kingdom of peace will be established. The Bible contains at least four hundred references to peace and God Himself is the "God of Peace," yet there is no peace in the world. Why is this?

There are two reasons firstly, satan stands in opposition to peace and secondly, it is as a result of man/woman's disobedience. According to MacArthur, Jr. (1980:135), the world is without peace because of the fallen angels and the fall of man. It should therefore be the responsibility of every peacemaker

to restore and to experience that, which was lost since the fall. Peacemakers are therefore to restore this world to the peace that was forfeited by humankind's sinning. According to MacArthur, Jr. (1980:136), peacemakers are God's agents in the world and they are to go far beyond even those individuals who win, the Nobel Peace Prize, because the peace they offer is eternal, divine and real.

Biblical peacemakers are not quiet, easy-going people who don't believe in creating waves or confronting issues, or who lack justice and a sense of righteousness, neither are they compromisers nor appeasers. There are three requirements for peacemakers, namely, he/she must first make peace with God himself/herself and maintain that peace. Secondly, he/she must help others make peace with God. According to MacArthur, Jr. (1980:144) "The best way to be a peacemaker is to preach the gospel of peace so that an individual's alienation from God and from the body of Christ can be ended and he/she can be at peace.

Thirdly, peacemakers are to make peace with their fellow beings. Peacemakers can build bridges between individuals. This is why Matthew 5:23-24 states, "If therefore you who are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar, and go your way, first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering."

God is not impressed with an individual's worship if that individual knows that there is someone who has something against him/her and does nothing to resolve it. Matthew chapter five also calls Christians to love those who are his/her enemies and those who hate him/her. In order to understand the Christian belief about peace one first has to understand what the word peace means in the Bible.

## **The Old Testament**

In the Old Testament peace is a powerful theological term. For instance the Hebrew word for peace is “Shalom”: It signifies “wholeness,” “harmony,” *that which is complete and sound* (Evangelical Theological Dictionary, 1990:833). Besides suggesting a happy condition of health, prosperity and fulfillment, Shalom is a relational term used to describe the harmony between individuals as well as nations, which releases one to discover fulfillment without the destructive impact of strife. Besides conveying the negative, which is the absence of strife and evil, Shalom also conveys the positive, which is the presence of all good things (nonauthored website, <http://www.brfwitness.org/Articles/1986v21n5.htm>).

Peace is more than just the absence of something. According to MacArthur, Jr. (1980:137), it is the presence of God. This includes righteousness that causes right relationships. For example peace does not just stop war, it creates righteousness that brings enemies together in love. According to Larousse (1994:397) “the word ‘Shalom’ has special significance in the Psalms as well as the writings of the prophets. This concept of Shalom occupies nearly two thirds of the Bible, which expresses the fulfillment that comes to human beings as well as the nation when we experience this Shalom.

The difference between a truce and peace is simply that a truce is only a temporary cease-fire. Peace on the other hand comes when the truth is known and the issue is settled. The meaning of Biblical peace therefore is resolving conflict with the truth as one brings to bear the righteousness of God.

Greetings of peace in the Bible can be found throughout the Bible, from the book of Genesis to Revelation. It signifies mutual respect. For example in

Genesis 26:29-31, Abimelech professes sincerity in his speech to Isaac. Isaac in turn accepted this and extended a hand of friendship to Abimelech. Christianity teaches one to be neighborly and to live at peace with everyone.

Genesis 28:21 teaches one that through peace, one can also re-establish one's covenant with God; it also involves positive relationships between individuals. In this verse Jacob looks forward to a time when he can return home to his brother in peace, "So that I came again to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God."

In Genesis 34:5, the author informs the reader that Jacob on hearing about Dinah's defilement "held his peace", until his sons came home. Peace in this sense signifies silence. Jacob chose to wait for the arrival of his sons and in so doing shifted the onus of retaliation onto them. Needless to say Jacob's sons used deceit to commit what can only be termed as murder and bloodshed.

On the other hand there is Joseph in Genesis 43:23, who bids peace to his brothers. These were the same brothers who had abandoned him, and left him for dead. Joseph was in a position to take revenge and punish his brothers but instead he was led by compassion. He gave them an opportunity to redeem themselves (Genesis 44:18-31).

In Exodus 18:23 and Zechariah 8:19, judges and true judgments enable the people of Israel to live together in peace, and the fulfillment of God's purpose for creation is described as a covenant of peace in Numbers 25:12, Ezekiel 34:25-31; 37:26, and Isaiah 54:10.

In Leviticus 10:1-3 Aaron held his peace as he came to terms with his sons' death. He displayed submission to the will of God rather than becoming quarrelsome. Peace is therefore a characteristic of the strong. Leviticus 26:6

expresses God's desire for peace in the land, it is God's gift to humanity: "And I will give peace in the land, and ye shall lie down, and none shall make you afraid, and I will rid evil beasts out of the land, neither shall the sword go through your land."

God offers his divine protection to all humanity. This brings me to 2 Chronicles 7:14, which also carries a promise "and My people who are called by My name humble themselves and pray, and seek My face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

Peace wasn't just the rendering of lip service; instead it involved peace offerings and sacrifices (Numbers 15:8, Deuteronomy 27:7, Joshua 8:31). These are only a few examples of how serious the covenant of peace was in the Old Testament. In everything one does in religion, it is imperative that one approves oneself before God in one's integrity. There is no room for deception because above all things God knows the heart. Altars were erected by separate tribes, signifying their communion with each other, as well as their joint interest in the altar of the Lord, (Abraham, 1994:410).

In Judges 4:17 the account of Sisera's unsuspecting demise at the hands of a "supposed" ally, teaches the reader that there is indeed no place of safety for the wicked. What peace can there be, when there is no trust? The security of sinners often proves their ruin, and dangers are most fatal when least feared. Those who tremble at the Lord's word and who live in reverence of Him are assured of His mercy. The Lord assured Gideon of this in Judges 6:23 and pronounced upon him a blessing of peace to rid him of fear.

With peace comes reason and understanding, with fear comes restlessness and recklessness. From personal experience restlessness and recklessness have

often resulted in destruction and death, total chaos. “Go in peace: before the Lord is your way wherein ye go,” Judges 18:6. The Lord gives approval to the ways of the righteous. If one’s way meets with God’s approval then one may know peace. This verse teaches that if one chooses the way which is approved by God, then God will direct one’s path and preserve one’s going out and coming in and one will have peace.

Hannah’s response in 1 Samuel 1:17 shows the importance of displaying the right attitude toward those who approach us because of misunderstandings. The right approach can turn an enemy into a friend, and an adversary into a colleague. 1 Samuel 7:14 speaks about peace between nations. The Philistines had taken cities from Israel unjustly, which were once again restored to Israel. It was God’s influence over Israel, which gave them the courage to demand back those cities, which the Philistines stole from them and it was also God’s, influence, which brought about peace between Israel and the Amorites.

The account of King Saul’s offence in 1 Samuel 13:8-14, reveals to the reader the consequences of not pleasing God and of being hasty and impulsive in decision making. Those individuals or groups who think of themselves as a law unto themselves and who think that they do not need God, lead to their own doom and destructive end. The reader is informed in 2 Samuel 10:19 that all the princes who were servants of Hadarezer, made peace with Israel when they saw how powerful King David was. They could no longer make war with them. This is also how the Amorites lost their old allies, (Abraham, 1994:642).

1 Kings 2:5-6 informs the reader that Joab’s crime was aggravated by the fact that he showed neither shame for the sin he committed, nor fear for the punishment intended. Instead he brazenly wore the girdle and shoes that were stained with innocent blood. This kind of action was in defiance of the justice of God and the King at that time. King David had the following to say in verse 6,

“time does not wear out the guilt of any sin, particularly that of murder” (Abraham, 1994:675).

It was King Solomon’s act of justice in 1 Kings 2:33, which secured peace upon King David, his seed, his house and his throne. With the removal of the turbulent man Joab, there was to be peace. According to Abraham (1994:678), King Solomon in this blessing of peace upon his house and throne, looked upon God as the “author of peace and forward to eternity as the perfection of it.” The Lord of peace Himself gives us this peace, which is everlasting.

According to 1 Kings 4:24, King Solomon had peace over all the regions under his rulership. 2 Kings 9:22 informs the reader that there can be no peace when wickedness is prevalent. Joram asked the question, “What peace can come to that house in which there is so much wickedness unrepented of?” Isaiah also affirms in Isaiah 57:21, that the way of sin can never be the way of peace.

2 Chronicles 15:2-6 states that the consequences of forsaking God and His ordinances is to be distanced from Him and the only way to have grievances redressed is by repenting and returning to God. In verse 3, the reader discovers that Israel was overtaken by atheism, impiety and irreligion, as a result of forsaking their duty to God. They were also continually embarrassed with wars, both foreign and domestic, (verses 5-6).

2 Chronicles 18:4-26 teaches one the importance of acknowledging God in all one’s ways, as well as enquiring His word in whatever one undertakes. Jehoshaphat, king of Judah was not willing to proceed until he had enquired as to God’s word, however he did nothing to rebuke the false prophets, who prophesied peace unto Israel’s king Ahab. Nor did he intervene when the false prophet abused the faithful seer. It takes only one lying spirit to weave a web of destruction. One lying spirit made 400 lying prophets deceive king Ahab in verse

21. How many lying spirits are out there today, deceiving millions that war is condoned and genocide is justified?

In Ezra 9:12, Ezra acknowledges that there must be a separation between that, which is holy from that which is unholy. He also acknowledges that even though their punishment was great, it was not what they deserved. Nehemiah 5:8 teaches that it is a great sin to oppress the poor. In verse 9 the reader is cautioned to walk in the fear of God, so as not to incur the reproach of the heathen. He warns that the heathen will say, "These Jews, that profess so much devotion to God, see how barbarous they are to one another" (Abraham, 1994:933).

Queen Esther shows in Esther 4:14 that it is better to fear the wrath of God, rather than display cowardice and unbelief. She was prepared to risk her life for an audience with the King, rather than do nothing to save the Jews. Job 5:23 informs the reader that by living lives that are pleasing in God's sight, then one need not be fearful of danger of any kind. Even the beasts of the field shall be at peace with one.

Psalm 34:14 speaks about departing from evil and doing good, seeking peace and pursuing it. These are wise words spoken by king David, a man of many afflictions himself. According to Psalm 35:20, troublemakers do not adhere to peace, rather they devise deceit against those that are quiet and law abiding. A gospel promise of our Saviour as well as a confirmation of the blessing He pronounced upon the meek, can be found in Psalm 37:11.

This verse can be read in conjunction with Matthew 5:5, which states that the meek shall delight themselves in the abundance of peace. John 14:27 further defines this peace as the peace, which the world cannot give. It is this peace, which the meek shall delight themselves in. According to the Bible

Dictionary (1996:149), “meekness is a Christian grace and means humble serenity of spirit and submission to the divine will...”

According to Psalm 72:2, the peace of God’s kingdom shall be supported by righteousness; verse 7 informs the reader “In his days shall the righteous flourish.” The law of God which is written in the heart of men, inclines them to be honest and just and render to all their due. During this time men produced abundance of peace and beat swords into ploughshares. According to Abraham (1994:1097), “Both holiness and love shall be perpetual in Christ’s Kingdom, and shall never go to decay, for the subjects of it shall fear God as long as the sun and moon endure...”

The verse of scripture, Psalm 85:10 “Mercy and truth are met together and righteousness and peace have kissed each other” maybe understood in the following categories (Abraham, 1994:1118), namely:-

- ❖ The reformation of the people and the government,
- ❖ The return of God’s favour when the people return to God and seek his face and his will for their lives, and
- ❖ The harmony of the divine attributes in the Messiah’s undertaking.

In Psalms 119:165 David says, “Great peace have they who love your law.” This reveals to the reader that the people governed by a principle of love to the word of God have a holy serenity. They love the word of God and nothing upsets them in a hurry. They exude confidence in God’s word and even though they experience difficulties and trials they enjoy great peace within themselves. They know how to make the best of every situation. Great peace is awarded those who diligently seek Him.

There were however, individuals in Old Testament times who hated peace. King David speaks of one such individual in Psalm 120:6-7. In Psalm 122:6-8 King David calls for the people to pray for Jerusalem and to pray for peace. Peace was sought even then, through prayer. The welfare of a nation depended on peace and peace came from within an individual.

According to Psalm 147:14, the common effect of peace is a situation of plenty, of quality and of success. In Deuteronomy 32:14 Canaan abounded with the best wheat and exported it to countries abroad. Proverbs 3:17 reveal to the reader that all the enjoyments and entertainments of sense cannot be compared to the pleasure, which gracious souls have in communion with God. The way of religion is not only the right way, but also the pleasant way.

Proverbs 12:20 informs the reader that deceit stems from the heart of one who devises evil, while joy stems from the heart of one who administers peace. Two opposing forces, one brings light and hope, the other darkness and doom. Pleasing God is one of the foremost factors in attaining peace. Proverbs 16:7 informs the reader that when one's ways please God, even his/her enemies are made to be at peace with him/her. Such is the favour of God upon those who fear Him and obey His word.

Peace is a positive trait and only the strong can achieve it. In Proverbs 17:28 even a fool is counted as wise when he/she speaks not and those who do not speak impulsively are esteemed men/women of understanding. Ecclesiastes 3:8 declares that there is "A time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, a time of peace."

According to this verse, there is a time to be friendly, but not all the time, because there will come a time to hate when all forms of familiarity with those individuals, one enjoyed friendship with will be broken off. There will be a time

of war when God draws the sword for judgment and gives it commission to devour. However, there shall remain a hope for a time of peace, when the sword of God shall be sheathed and He shall make wars to cease (Abraham, 1994:1260).

In Isaiah 9:6, this child, this Son of God, this Son of Man, is invested with the highest honor and power. He shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father and Prince of Peace. He gives counsel to the children of men, he has wisdom and strength and as king, He is our peace. If God's people incurred His anger then they are required to humble themselves and pray. By seeking His face and taking hold of His strength in all sincerity, then He will be reconciled to them and all will be well (Isaiah 27:4-5).

In Isaiah 32:17, the reader once again comes to realise that inward peace comes from righteous living. The indwelling of righteousness is in itself peace. This brings with it a holy serenity as well as security of mind. Isaiah 45:7 declares that there is but one God and He alone can "...form light and create darkness: I make peace and create evil..." He is the Lord of all and nothing can be done without Him.

Isaiah 48:18-19 expresses the goodwill that God had for humankind. Having given them His law, He wishes them to be obedient to it. He assures them that had they been obedient, not only would they have been prevented from captivity, but they would have also advanced and perpetuated their prosperity. On the other hand in verse 22, there is no peace for the wicked. Although God's thoughts were thoughts of peace for those individuals who hated to be reformed there could be no peace.

In Isaiah 52:7, messengers of the gospel and of peace, have God's approval and are acceptable to Him. Isaiah 54:10 gives an assurance that God's covenant of peace is immovable and inviolable. Having been built on God's

mercy and not on one's merit it is from everlasting to everlasting. One of the few things that make up the beauty and holiness of the church is the image of God, which is knowledge, holiness and love. To profess knowledge, holiness and love, church members are required to live together in love and unity. It is only then that there shall be great peace among the children of God (Isaiah 54:13).

According to Isaiah 57:21, those who continue to sin will not be reconciled to God and will not have peace. Sin is the greatest mischief-maker. The paths of iniquity are crooked paths and those who dwell on these paths according to Isaiah 59:8, will know no peace.

Jeremiah 4:10 contains a complaint by the prophet that the people had been deceived and that there shall be peace in the land. However on closer examination it was not God who deceived the people, rather the people deceived themselves. Firstly, the people built on the promises of God, without taking heed to the conditions accompanying those promises. Therefore they cheated themselves out of the fulfillment of those promises. Secondly, they were deceived by false prophets in the promise of peace, which was made in God's name. Either way these people were greatly deceived, for they expected peace instead, "the sword reacheth unto the soul."

Jeremiah 23:17 informs the reader that those who follow after their own pleasures put contempt upon their God and the false prophets misinform them that they shall have peace and no evil shall befall them. Worst of all they informed the people that God had said so. This however is untrue, because there shall be no peace for those who pursue wickedness. It can be seen from Jeremiah 29:7 that peace can be found by praying for and promoting peace and it is God's intention for humankind to have peace (Jeremiah 29:11).

Jeremiah prophesies hope in Jeremiah 33:6. Though the disease of sin was thought mortal and incurable as in Chapter 8:22, God promises healing. God will reveal unto them the abundance of peace and truth. According to Abraham (1994:1496) peace stands for all that is good. Peace and true religion, that is the true worship of God stands in opposition to the many falsehoods and deceits, which lead people away from God.

Peace and truth are the life of the soul and Christ came that one might have that life and have it more abundantly. In Ezekiel 34:25, the Kingdom of the Messiah is founded on a covenant of peace. Those therein shall enjoy a holy security under divine protection. Christ Himself has vanquished all one's spiritual enemies. Ezekiel 37:26-27 contains a promise by God that He will dwell among His people forevermore and His tabernacle shall also be with them.

In Haggai 2:9, the reader is informed that "the glory of this latter house shall be greater than the former, saith the Lord of hosts, and in this place will I give peace, saith the Lord of hosts." Under the latter temple, the Jews had experienced much trouble therefore it can be concluded that this promise of God is to have its accomplishment in that spiritual peace which Jesus Christ bequeathed to all believers in John 14:27. God will give His Son to be the peace (Ephesians 2:14).

According to Zechariah 6:13 "... the counsel of peace shall be between them both." This means between Jehovah and the man, between the Father and the Son. This peace between God and man is through the mediation of Christ. Zechariah 8:10 refers to a time before the building of the temple of God. The discouragements experienced by the people foiled the blessings of God. Friendship and good neighborliness did not exist between them.

Sin as well as wars and fighting arose out of mans lust. Verse 16 speaks about executing the judgment of truth and peace in one's gates. There must be no malice between neighbors and great reverence must be had for an oath.

The word "peace" in the Old Testament represented by Shalom also takes on various other meanings, for example in 1 Samuel 1:17 it expresses dismissal. In Joshua 9:15 it means cessation from war, in Genesis 26:29 and Psalm 28:3 it is used to express friendship between companions and friendship with God through a covenant (Numbers 25:12, Isaiah 54:10), and in Isaiah 32:17-18 it includes contentment, safety, welfare and happiness.

The word peace is mentioned in Ecclesiastics 3:8 and in Isaiah 45:7. It refers to health and prosperity among other things. Isaiah reminds the reader in Isaiah 48:22 and 57:21 that there will be no peace for the wicked. The wicked will thus encourage themselves with a false peace (Jeremiah 6:14). According to Isaiah 26:12 peace is a condition of freedom from strife whether internal or external.

Security from outward enemies, Isaiah 26:3 and Job 22:21 informs the reader that peace comes to those who trust God. In Psalm 34:14, Zechariah 8:16,19 the godly are required to seek peace diligently. According to the Evangelical Dictionary of Theology (1990:833) "peace is a comprehensive and valued gift from God, and the promised and climaxing blessing in messianic times (Isaiah 2:4; 9:6-7; 11:6, Micah 4:1-4; 5:5)."

For example King David turns his thoughts to God and derives comfort in God when placed under life-threatening pressure, Psalms 4:8 "I will lie down and sleep in peace," David says, "for you alone, O Lord, make me dwell in safety." One of the many blessings, which God handed down to His people, is that of peace, (Leviticus 26:6). According to Psalms 34:14 "The fear of the Lord

is the beginning of all wisdom.” One of the ways in displaying this fear is departing from all evil, doing good and seeking peace and pursuing it.

Peace for individuals is portrayed as the result of a right relationship with God. Isaiah has this to say to those who reject God and His ways: “The wicked are like the tossing sea, cannot rest, whose waves cast, up mire and mud. There is no peace, says God, ‘for the wicked’ ” (Isaiah 57:20-21).

The eulogy of wisdom in the Book of Proverbs celebrates its suitability in both man and God. In Proverbs 3:17, humankind regards wisdom as the tree of life (Proverbs 3:18). A metaphor of quality and fulfillment is a symbol of growth, freshness. In everyday life sound judgment and discernment affect attitudes and actions in both intent and deed. Ultimately the outcome of which is in God’s keeping. This kind of confident living is shown in a relationship of trust and uprightness that leaves no room to envy those whose short cuts of violence, scorn or folly will end only in disgrace.

The writer in Ecclesiastes 3:8 has concluded that all man’s activity fits according to God’s pre-ordained plan, and it is wasted effort for man to try and improve his lot, since everything will continue to happen at the appointed time that God has determined. Humans cannot understand God’s ways and since God has designed each happening to fit perfectly into its appropriate setting, humans should accept whatever circumstances God sends him/her and find pleasure in them.

In the face of adverse circumstances oppression, war, and corruption, Isaiah clutches at the hope of peace and well-being. Political chaos and mayhem prevail thereby justifying Isaiah’s emphasis on the coming King who’s Kingdom is characterized by justice. In Psalms 122:6 we find Jerusalem has become the

embodiment of God's purposes for the nation, as a result of which the Psalmist David binds around it a threefold cord of peace in his prayers.

Though the reader is likely to perceive from Joshua 11:20 that the waging of war in the Old Testament is a duty from God, Isaiah 9:6 and 11:9 indicates the contrary. It shows that world peace is God's will for the nations.

Peace for the nations is also seen to depend on the presence of the Lord. For example in Isaiah 9:6-7, a day is coming when God's Prince of peace will appear and "will reign on David's throne and over his kingdom, establishing and upholding it with justice and righteousness..." verse 7 also states that, "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end."

Ultimately, shalom is not to be passively awaited but actively pursued (Psalm 34:14).

### **The New Testament**

The Greek word used for peace in the New Testament is "eirene" (Evangelical Dictionary of Theology, 1990:833). It was used in the Greek culture to describe an orderly, prosperous society. Philosophers used this concept in reference to inner, personal peace later on. It is a favourite biblical greeting, which conveys the idea of an absence of strife. According to the Beatitudes in Matthew Chapter five, Christians are called upon to: -

- ❖ Lead others (non Christians) into a peaceful relationship with God their Father, a basis for peace without which no lasting harmony can be found, and
- ❖ To establish harmonious relationships between individuals and their neighbours and attempt to lead their nations into peaceful co-existence.

However, this is not what they are primarily called for, for as long as the leaders remain hostile toward God, they will continue to be hostile in their relations with others. (nonauthored website, <http://www.brfwitness.org/Articles?1986v21n5.htm>).

At first glance Romans 12:18 would also appear to be a contradiction. However, Apostle Paul warns that all strife cannot be avoided when following Christ, yet one is to do one's level best to live at peace with each other (nonauthored website, <http://www.brfwitness.org/Articles/1986v21n5.htm>).

According to Mark 9:50 and 2 Corinthians 3:11, it is to be the characteristic of the New Testament believer to seek peace diligently. The phrase "to hold one's peace" found in Luke 14:4 simply means to be silent. According to the Evangelical Dictionary of Theology (1990:833), "the word is used many times to express the truths of the mission, character and gospel of Christ."

In John 14:27; 16:33, Romans 5:1, and Philippians 4:7 the word peace is used in reference to the gift of Christ. According to Luke 1:79; 2:14; 24:36; and Mark 5:34 and 9:50, the purpose of Christ's coming into the world was to bring spiritual peace with God. There may at first appear to be a contradiction when reading Matthew 10:34, which states that Christ came not to bring peace, but a sword. This verse however, has reference to the struggle in every form of sin.

According to MacArthur, Jr. (1980:138) Christ did not come to bring peace at any price. He understood that there had to be strife before there could be peace. In bringing true peace into this world, the sword must fall and out of the sword will come true peace because it is the sword of purity, the sword of righteousness and the sword of holiness.

The mention of the word sword, also means that Jesus warned that the cost of faithful discipleship would sometimes cause strife between loved ones. The gospel ruffles feathers, it convicts and it brings contention and strife. According to Abraham (1994) the effect of preaching the gospel is not the fault of the gospel but rather those who do not receive it.

Violent feuds have often arisen between individuals, as a result of differences in religion. New converts to Christianity have often experienced conflict with relatives over their decision to convert. Strong family ties have also been broken because of enmity against Christ and His doctrine. These difficulties that are mentioned above are a few examples of what Matthew 10:34 basically refers to. It is only when this conflict is resolved through faith in Jesus Christ that real peace can be attained.

It reads, “think not that I am come to send peace on earth, I came not to send peace, but a sword.” The reader is often placed in conflict regarding the meaning of scripture as in the case of Matthew 10:34. Abraham (1994:1809) states that Christ came to give individuals peace with God, peace in one’s conscience, and peace with one’s neighbors, but in the world one shall have tribulation.

The world stands in opposition to Christ’s peace and therefore there shall be much tribulation in the world. The difference is that those who rest in Christ’s peace can overcome the tribulation of the world. According to MacArthur, Jr. (1980:138), dealing with the truth will turn one into “a divider, a disturber and a disrupter.” It is when individuals refuse to deal with sin that they put up a barrier to peace.

On the contrary Christ’s life in the gospels is one of majestic calm and serenity (Matthew 11:28, John 14:27). According to the Evangelical Dictionary of

Theology (1990:833), “the essence of the gospel may be expressed in the term ‘peace’ (Acts 10:36, Ephesians 6:15), including the peace of reconciliation with God (Romans 5:1) and the peace of fellowship with God (Galatians 5:22, Philippians 4:7).”

The innumerable blessings of the Christians revolve around the concept of peace. In Ephesians 6:15, the gospel is the gospel of peace. Christ is our peace in Ephesians 2:14-15. According to Thessalonians 5:23 God the Father is the God of peace. In Philippians 4:9, every Christian has the guaranteed assurance of the peace of God, because of the legacy of peace left by Christ in His death (John 14:27; 16:33). These blessing are not benefits laid up in eternal glory only, but are a present possession (Romans 8:6; Colossians 3:15). Therefore, peace is a conception distinctly peculiar to Christianity (Evangelical Dictionary of Theology, 1990:833).

To hold one’s peace in the New Testament, simply means to remain silent. This can be confirmed in Mark 1:25, when Jesus addressed the demon-possessed man saying, “... Hold thy peace and come out of him.” Jesus was commanding the evil spirit in the man to be quiet!

Mark 4:39 reveals that even the wind and the storm respond in obedience to the voice of Christ. In this instance the word peace, simply means to be still or to be silent. The wind must cease from roaring and the sea from raging. In Mark 5:34 the reader learns that faith gives honor to Christ and those individuals healed through faith, have reason to go in peace. This means that their sickness can no longer bring them trouble.

The disciples of Christ are no doubt embarrassed in Mark 9:34, at their discussion about who should be the greatest among them. Disputes about

precedency and superiority are contrary to humility and love, which are the two great laws of Christ's Kingdom, which is so unlike the laws of this world.

Mark 9:50 shows that if a Christian loses his/her sense of Christianity and is no longer under the power and influence of it, then he/she becomes like salt that has lost its saltiness and is no longer good for anything. Salt in itself is a good preservative and flavourant. Therefore it is recommended that Christians have consciences so as not to offend anyone and be at peace with all.

According to Luke 2:14 there is peace on earth to people of goodwill who have goodwill to God. Luke 10:5-6 teaches that besides peace being a common form of salutation among the Jews, peace is also a way of life as intended by the word of God. However, some people's hearts are as soft wax, ready to receive the gospel in the light and love of it, whilst there are others who will neither want to hear or heed to the gospel news. In Luke 12:51 Jesus tells those around Him that they also must bear difficulties and trials. The common misconception of the gospel is that people would readily receive it and hence makes the messenger's job easy. Therefore opposition to the gospel will bring division.

Luke 14:1-4 teaches one to count the cost of discipleship. Luke 19:42 states, "...If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes." This verse points to the reader's understanding of the peace that comes from God. It brings into focus the question of securing one's spiritual and eternal peace, without which there will be ruin.

According to Luke 24:36, Christ visited His disciples after His resurrection and despite the fact that they had deserted Him in His sufferings, He comforted them, showing them compassion and love. The peace, which Christ left His disciples in John 14:27, included peace for reconciliation and love; peace

with God; peace with each other, and peace in one's own heart. Christ Himself is this peace. This peace is also not the same as the world gives. The peace that comes from the world arises from ignorance; it consists of sin and ends in endless trouble. In opposition to it Christ's peace originates in grace, consists of no allowed sin and reaches its end in everlasting peace.

In John 16:33, it is God's will for believers to have peace from within themselves. Peace in Christ is the only true peace one can experience. "...be of good cheer," rest in Christ, have courage and a good heart and all will go well. This is the message given to all believers, no matter what the tribulation, delight in Christ. Verse 33 goes on to remind one that Christ has overcome the world and all that is in it.

John 20:19 includes to some degree, the attitude of the disciples to the appearance of Jesus. They were probably a bit afraid, unsure and most of all unprepared for what stood before them. This is why Jesus probably said to them, "Peace be unto you." By this He was bringing them peace with God, peace in their consciences and peace with each other. This was peace in Christ and not with the world.

In Acts 10:36, as mediator between God and man all power is put in the hands of Jesus. He is Lord of All. He has power over all flesh. He is also the one through whom peace is brought between God and man. Most often in the Bible one reads how the disciples held their peace, that is kept silent, however in Acts 18:9, Christ appeared to the apostle Paul in a vision and implored him not to hold his peace.

In this instance, Christ was commissioning Paul to speak out without fear or reserve. He was to spread the good news and to speak out against the wrongful misconceptions of the church. Christ promised Paul that he would be

delivered out of the hands of the wicked. Romans 1:7 contains a greeting of peace, which is also common to most of the Bible.

Romans 2:10 contains a promise to the reader that he/she will find the way of peace, which they did not know before "...the way of peace have they not known." In other words the reader has not experienced peace like this before. He/she had not known it in the past when they had no knowledge of Christ. Nothing good can be expected from those who do not fear God. This can also be seen as the root cause of the general depravity and corruption of mankind.

In Romans 5:1 the reader is told "... being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Sin causes one to be distanced from God. Sin creates enmity between a holy and righteous God and an individual. It is only justification by faith, a free act of grace by God, which removes the guilt of sin and makes way for peace.

According to Romans 8:6, carnal-mindedness brings alienation from God. A carnal mind is fleshy and is in opposition to that, which is spiritual and holy (Romans 7:4, 1 Corinthians 3:3). In this verse the carnal mind is compared with the excellence and comfort of spiritual-mindedness. A carnal mind also causes spiritual death, which is a certain way to eternal death.

As opposed to a carnal mind and soul, the spiritual mind and soul means life and peace. The holiness of the law of God and the ungodliness of the carnal mind are as irreconcilable as light and darkness. As a result of a carnal mind, the corrupt will of humankind is enslaved to sin.

According to Romans 14:19, in order to edify and build up one another, individuals need to have mutual peace. There should be no quarrels and contentions between them. God is one's hope in Romans 15:13. He is the

foundation on which our hope is built. To experience this hope will fill one with joy and peace. If God were the God of peace then humankind should be at peace with each other. God is a God of peace, Romans 16:20. Victory comes from God more as a God of peace than a God of war.

1 Corinthians 14:26-33 sets out instruction, edification and comfort of the church. The author informs the reader that “God is not the author of confusion, but of peace...” as a result, divine inspiration should in no way throw Christian assemblies into confusion and break through all rules of common decency. The honor of God requires that things should be managed in such a way so as not to transgress the rules of natural decency.

1 Corinthians 16:24 encourages the greeting of one another with a holy kiss. This kind of greeting if done sincerely is a powerful incentive to mutual love. Love and respect for one’s fellow beings will result in peace and good will, as opposed to hate and war.

In 2 Corinthians 1:2, grace and peace fit jointly together. There can be no good and lasting peace without true grace, from the Lord Jesus Christ. In 2 Corinthians 13:11 there are several exhortations to every child of God, namely:-

- ❖ To be perfect,
- ❖ To be of good comfort, especially under all the sufferings and persecutions they might endure for the cause of Christ, or any calamities and disappointments they might meet in the world,
- ❖ To be of one mind, that is to share a like-mindedness,
- ❖ To live in peace and not allow difference in opinions to cause strife or discord.

Things such as debates, envying, back biting, whispering are all enemies to peace.

Galatians 5:16-23, outlines the fruit of the spirit. The fruits of the spirits are borne out of the spirit man and not the flesh. It comes as the result of being born again through the spirit of God, thereby experiencing the grace of God (Romans 5). Lets look at the fruit of the spirit as ascribed to in this verse of scripture:-

- ❖ Love: God is love and His children should love one another.
- ❖ Joy: Taking delight in and obeying God's word and enjoying cheerful conversations with friends, relatives and acquaintances.
- ❖ Peace: To be at peace with ones conscience and show peaceableness of temper and attitude towards others.
- ❖ Longsuffering: Patience to defer anger and a contentedness to bear injuries.
- ❖ Gentleness: To have an attitude that makes one approachable and courteous to others.
- ❖ Goodness: To show kindness and do good as the opportunity arises.
- ❖ Faith: To show loyalty, justice and honesty in what one professes and promises to others.
- ❖ Meekness: Not to be easily provoked and if provoked to be quickly pacified.

- ❖ Temperance: Not to be excessive in one's partaking of meat, drink and pleasures.

According to Abraham (1994:2459) these fruits when evident in one's life reveal that one is led by the spirit and therefore not subject to the flesh. The flesh is the root of carnality, from whence arise all kinds of contentions and unpleasantness. The presence of the fruits of the spirit will inevitably create an atmosphere of peace and good will.

Galatians 6:16 further states that all who walk according to the rule, (presumably the word of God as seen in verse 4) will receive peace and mercy. In Ephesians 2:15, Christ took away the binding power of the ceremonial law through His sufferings in the flesh.

In so doing He formed one church of believers, including both Jews and Gentiles. By making himself the common head for both these groups, Christ brought about peace between them. No longer was each group permitted to do their own thing. Now with Christ as the head there was to be only one way, teaching and practice. In verse 17, Christ is said to have brought together the Jews who were believed to have been close to Him and the Gentiles who were said to be afar off.

The Bible teaches in Ephesians 4:3 that believers should endeavour not to quarrel with each other or with those who quarrel with them in the first place. The seat of Christian unity is in the heart and spirit of the believer. Peace is a bond, which is the strength of society. To suggest that all individuals be at peace with each other does not imply that people should all be exactly the same, sharing the same sentiments.

Rather there are different types of people, separated by different identities and cultures. Though they may differ from each other, when they are not together in peace, with hearts and spirits in one accord, they can be stronger than at any other time. Ephesians 6:15 speaks about "... preparation of the gospel of peace."

This requires a resolved frame of heart that would adhere to the gospel. It is herein described as a gospel of peace because it brings all sorts of peace (Abraham, 1994:2480). In Ephesians 6:23 "Peace be to the Brethren," is explained by Abraham (1994:2481) as follows "peace with God, peace with conscience, peace among themselves and all outward prosperity is included in the word."

In Philippians 4:7 the word "keep" has military connotations i.e. Christ's peace will stand guard and protect one's heart and mind (Abraham; 1994.) Isaiah 26:3 also states that, "Thou wilt keep Him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee." In other words this peace herewith expressed includes knowledge of one's reconciliation to God, interest in God's favour, hope of the heavenly blessedness and enjoyment of God hereafter, which passes all human understanding.

This same peace will keep one's heart and mind through Christ Jesus and it will keep one from sinning under one's troubles as well as from sinking beneath them. One will be able to remain calm, without losing composure and inner peace. In other words one will not become easily troubled or anxious, which will lead one into impulsive and reckless behaviour.

Christ's actions aligned themselves with His word according to Philippians 4:9. This means He did just what He said; there is no contradiction in

Him. Christ expects the same from His followers, then “the God of peace shall be with you.”

According to Colossians 1:20, God by Christ reconciled all things to Himself. He is the mediator of reconciliation, peace and pardon. Colossians 3:15 simply wishes one to have a peaceable spirit that keeps the peace and makes the peace. The ungodly shall be suddenly overtaken and destroyed, in the midst of their carnal security and jollity, according to 1 Thessalonians 5:3. They shall have a false sense of peace and safety in the midst of their vain amusements.

The people of God should be at peace among themselves, doing whatever it takes to hinder any dissensions from arising or continuing among them. Peace and harmony should always be maintained (1 Thessalonians 5:13). Peace, though always desirable is often difficult. God alone is the author of and the lover of concord. It is only God’s presence with one that will guide and guard one in the way that one should go and be one’s comfort in any situation that may arise (2 Thessalonians 3:16).

According to 2 Timothy 2:22, holy love will cure impure lust. Righteousness, faith and love are excellent antidotes against youthful lusts. It is the mention of the prostitute Rahab in Hebrews 11:31, which shows that God is not a respecter of persons. Being a harlot she received the spies in peace, by faith. True faith will show itself in good works, especially toward the people of God. A true believer acts unselfishly, with no regard for his/her needs. His/her faith is completely in God. He/she finds himself/herself at peace with God and themselves.

Hebrews 12:14 informs the reader that it is one’s Christian duty to follow peace with all men, even those responsible for their sufferings. It is God’s design for His children to follow peace with all men and holiness. Peace cannot be

divorced from purity and in Psalm 85:10, peace cannot be divorced from righteousness. According to MacArthur, Jr. (1980:137), avoiding strife to the point of sacrificing truth causes one to compromise one's principles and this will not achieve true peace. Hebrews 13:20 states that the God of peace found a way for peace and reconciliation between Himself and sinners through Christ Jesus.

James 3:17 informs the reader that peace should never be sought at the expense of righteousness. There cannot be peace between two individuals until each has seen his/her sin, the error and wrongness of bitterness and hatred and have resolved to bring it before God and make it right (MacArthur, Jr. 1980:137). Peace will then be achieved through purity. According to James 3:18 "the fruit of righteousness" will be sown in peace by true wisdom and that which is sown in peace will produce a harvest of joys.

In 1 Peter 3:10-11 the reader discovers that an inoffensive and discreet tongue is a singular means by which to pass peaceably and comfortably through the world. Doing good deeds is the way to contentment and happiness. The Christian duty is not only to embrace peace when offered, but also to seek and pursue it when it is denied. "...Peace, without spot...blameless" in 2 Peter 3:14, includes peace and reconciliation with God through Christ, peace in one's own conscience and peace with all humanity. Revelation 6:4 signifies the desolating judgment of war. The sword of war is a dreadful judgment, which removes peace from the earth.

In every theologically significant passage in the New Testament, peace is rooted in the relationship that rests on restored harmony with God. The relationship with God and peace can be seen in the many greetings and farewells in the New Testament letters namely, (Romans 1:7). Peace is "from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ," (Romans 15:33; Hebrews 13:20), for God is "the God of peace," its bringer and source. While peace is an inner

experience, the wholeness suggested by shalom/eirene is visibly expressed in the believing community.

On departing from this world Jesus left His peace with His disciples (John 11:27). In the New Testament peace is a major feature of Christ's redemptive work. According to Matthew 5:9, Christians as peacemakers are duty bound to work actively and positively for peace in whatever way they can. In Matthew 5:9 He blesses the peacemakers and urges humankind to be at peace with each other in (Matthew 9:50). Christ Himself is "our peace" (Ephesians 2:11) and only in and through Him we have peace (John 16:33, Romans 5:1; Colossians 1:20; Acts 10:36). The gift of God's peace means that among Christians, hostility gives way to unity (Ephesians 2:14-17), and commitment to unity matches our commitment to holiness (also see Hebrews 12:14, 2 Timothy 2:22).

Similarly, Paul urges Christians to pursue peace (Romans 11:19; 2 Timothy 2:22; Hebrews 12:14) and describes God as the God of peace (Romans 15:33; 16:20). Colossians 3:12-15 is an example of the interpersonal peace that God brings to the community of faith: "As God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience". This simply means to be able to bear with each other and to forgive all grievances against each other. In other words to forgive as the Lord forgave each of us, and above all these virtues is love which brings about perfect unity.

In the New Testament therefore, Peace is a major feature of Christ's redemptive work. It is most often the well-being and wholeness that Jesus restores to relationship with God and others. Even when circumstances bring tension and suffering, this inner peace is ours, it is rooted in our relationship with God and not built on external conditions. This means it is not subject to circumstances and is unchanging. In John 14:27; Jesus said, "Peace I leave with

you; my peace I give you. I do not give you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” The inner presence of Jesus brings peace, fulfillment, and harmony to our lives.

Even though Christ calls for non-violence in Matthew 26:52, the New Testament itself is not without ambiguity in terms of violence. John 2:15-16 reports that Christ Himself used violence to clear the temple courtyard. With reference to Matthew 8:13 the place of soldiers in society was never questioned and in Luke 14:31 Christ tells the reader a parable about war. However, Colossians 1:19-20 etc, leaves the reader with little doubt that the final goal of Christ’s teaching and saving work, is peace among people and peace for the world.

According to Matthew 5:9, Christians as peacemakers are duty bound to work actively and positively for peace in whatever way they can. Peace is once again a major feature of Christ’s redemptive work. He blesses the peacemakers (Matthew 5:9) and urges human beings to be at peace with each other (Matthew 9:50).

Christians are duty bound to work actively and positively for peace in whatever way they can, namely, to reconcile those who are at loggerheads with each other, be it individuals, groups or nations, to prevent disputes arising and to settle them peacefully and to reconcile people to God and to bring peace to their souls.

Christ Himself is “our peace” (Ephesians 2:11) and in and through Him we have peace (John 16:33, Romans 5:1, Colossians 1:20, Acts 10:36). On departing this world he leaves His peace with his disciples (John 11:27). Similarly, Paul urges Christians to pursue peace (Romans 11:19, 2 Timothy 2:22, Hebrews 12:14) and describes God as the God of peace (Romans 15:33, 16:20). Peace is

also associated with the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22, Romans 8:6 and 11:17, Ephesians 4:3).

This peace is now a common feature in much church liturgy, often accompanied by the shaking of hands, hugging and the exchanging of a kiss. According Matthew 24:6-7, Jesus informs His audience that there will be wars and rumours of wars and that they should not be alarmed because these are to take place.

Following the teaching of Jesus Christ requires a change of attitude and behaviour. Herewith are a few Biblical guidelines as to one's attitude and behaviour:-

Matthew 5:38-39 "You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I tell you. Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also."

Matthew 5:44-45 "But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteousness."

Matthew 5:48 "Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect."

Matthew 7:1 "Do not judge, or you will be judged."

Matthew 7:12 "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and Prophets."

Mark 10:21 “Jesus looked at him and loved him. ‘One thing you lack,’ he said. ‘Go, sell everything you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.’”

Mark 12:30-31 “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.” The second is this, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” There is no commandment greater than these.

Luke 17:20-21 “Once, having been asked by the Pharisees when the kingdom of God would come, Jesus replied, “The kingdom of God does not come with your careful observation, nor will people say, Here it is, or there it is, because the kingdom of God is within you.”

John 3:17 “For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”

John 8:12 “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.’”

John 13:34 “A new command I give you; love one another as I have loved you, so you must love one another.”

John 15:12-14 “My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this that he lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command.”

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 reminds us “Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered and it keeps no record of wrong. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. It always protects, always trusts, always hopes and

always perseveres. Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.” We are urged in Matthew 5:43-48 to love our enemies “and pray for those who persecute you.”

The gospels often refer to the concept of “rebirth,” suggesting a change from within oneself. Basically the teachings found in the Gospels are about humanity overcoming violence, which characterises our present existence. They teach that humanity is capable of undergoing a definite inner development and evolution. This inner evolution requires that people become more understanding and aware of themselves, others, the world and God.

Hebrews 12:14-15 and 1Peter 3:11, challenges the reader to “pursue peace with all men and the sanctification without which no one will see the Lord.”

There are three words for *love* in the Greek New Testament; one is the word *eros* is a sort of romantic love. There is and can always be something beautiful about *eros*. Some of the most beautiful love in the entire world has been expressed this way. Then there’s *phelos*, also a word for love, a kind of intimate love between friends. This is the kind of love that you have for those that you get along well with. You simply love them on this level because you yourself are loved.

Then there’s *agape* love. It is more than romantic love, even more than friendship love. This kind of love (*agape* love) is different from both romantic love and friendship love (nonauthored website, <http://www.medev.nic.in/Gandhi/Satyagraha.htm>). It involves understanding creative, redemptive goodwill towards all humanity. It is an overflowing love that seeks nothing in return. This should be the love of God operating in the human heart. At this level one love’s

all humankind not because one simply likes them, nor that their ways appeal to one, one loves them because of the simple fact that God loves them. This is probably what Jesus' teaching about, "love your enemies" implies. This is the kind of love that being a follower of Jesus Christ requires one to have. This kind of love does not keep a score of wrongs, does not gloat over other people's sin, but rather it delights in the truth. There is nothing that it cannot face, there's no limit to its faith, hope and endurance.

According to Matthew 5:9 peace is at the very heart of Jesus' teachings, Christians have long been divided about whether or not going to war or using violence is right. Some believe that there are times when a Christian has no choice but to go to war. They believe that not going to war will lead to an outcome that is much worse. For example, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, a German theologian and pacifist (Jenkins 1995:74) sacrificed not only himself but also his principles trying to rid the world of the evils of Nazism. His involvement in the assassination attempt against Adolf Hitler failed and Bonhoeffer was executed.

## **Scriptures Dealing with War and Violence**

There are many scriptures in the Bible that mention incidents of war and violence and many individuals make use of both Old Testament and New Testament scripture to support their belief that the use of force is not opposed in Christian teachings. By including this section in my research I hope to portray an objective approach and finally draw conclusions based from my findings.

### **The Old Testament**

Genesis 9:6 "Whosoever sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed" is best described in the phrase "to live by the sword, is to die by the sword." Simply put, one's lifestyle will determine one's end from one's beginning. Man/woman was created in the image of God; God has placed

honour upon him/her. Therefore to look at contempt upon man/woman would entail dishonoring God (Abraham, 1984:27).

According to Genesis (6: 11-12) the days of Noah were corrupt and full of wickedness, "Now the earth was corrupt in God's sight and was full of violence..." The earth was filled with sin and violence, very much like present time. All kinds of sin were found among the people, which corrupted God's worship, therefore justifying His resolution to destroy the world. When wickedness becomes rife, ruin is not far off and the consequence of continuous sin is a flood of God's wrath. In other words God will only tarry with His people for a time and thereafter He will show forth His wrath. Wickedness does not go unnoticed with God.

Found in Exodus 21:12-25 is a law concerning murder. The commandment of God is "Thou shalt not murder" God provided cities of refuge for the protection of those who unintentionally caused death to others (Abraham, 1984:176). On the other hand the book of Leviticus deals with trespasses against one's neighbour. "If anyone sins and is unfaithful to the Lord by deceiving his neighbour about something entrusted to him or left in his care or stolen, or if he cheats him."

In Leviticus 6:2, trespassing against one's neighbour involves trespassing against the Lord. One may consider one's neighbour to be mean and despicable, yet the injury inflicted to one's neighbour is reflected upon the Lord Himself. How is this possible? It is for the simple fact that the reader is commanded in the word of God, to love his/her neighbour as himself/herself. Therefore all methods of doing wrong unto others, is a direct violation of the Divine law as set forth in the Bible.

There is reflected in Goliath's challenge (that the winner of the contest between champions would turn the loser's people into the winner's servants 1 Samuel 17:9), the principle of winner take all, which is typical of this violent age. The taking of spoils from the bodies and animals of the vanquished foe was an accepted and anticipated practice of the time (Judges 5:28-30). More evidence of this can be found in Judges 8:21-26, where Gideon after defeating the Midianite kings Zebah and Zalmuna, gathered to himself the golden earrings, pendants and purple garments of the enemies.

According to Matthews (1993:66) the mutilation of corpses as well as surviving enemy soldiers was an established policy for both the Israelites and the people of Canaan. 1 Samuel 18:27, attests to this "David and his men went out and killed 200 Philistines. He brought their foreskins and presented the full number to the king so that he might become the king's son-in-law."

No sooner had King Adonibezek bragged about cutting off the thumbs and big toes of 70 kings, he had defeated, the same was done to him in Judges 1:6-7. In Judges 7:19-22, the reader is given an example of how Gideon, an Israelite judge used trickery rather than the force of arms to achieve his goals in a war against the Midianites. He divided the 300 men God had allowed him to bring, into three companies. They surrounded the Midianite camp and then in the dead of night raised such a racket by smashing pitchers, shouting and blowing horns that the confused enemy soldiers began fighting among themselves.

These are a few examples of how they conducted themselves in war in Old Testament times.

According to Psalm 7:16 the wicked ways of a violent person shall be to his/her own ruin. "The trouble he causes recoils on himself, his violence comes down on his own head." Psalm 58:2 is directed at leaders, persons having

authority and influence over others. “No, in your heart you devise injustice, and your hands mete out violence on the earth.” Wrongdoings executed under the form of law are worse than any other. Especially so if carried out by those who profess to be children of God.

The effect of a violent lifestyle is shown clearly in Proverbs 28:17 “A man tormented by the guilt of murder will be a fugitive till death, let no one support him.” In this respect the wickedness of Jerusalem is likened to the corrupt hearts of the people, in its natural state (Jeremiah 6:7). Like the fountain that casts out its water, so to are the evil thoughts of the heart cast out.

Jeremiah 22:3 goes on to state that sin is the inevitable ruin of humankind. God does not destroy persons, cities, or nations, except for sin. Two kings namely, king Josiah and Jehoiakim were sentenced to death as a consequence of their wickedness in Jeremiah 22:17. Violence and injustice brings God’s judgments upon nations and families alike. What then should one’s reaction be toward widespread wickedness and senseless murder?

The attitude of the people today should be one of terror. Not for the perpetrators of sinful conducts, but for the unleashed wrath of God. In the book of Ezekiel we read “...their land will be stripped of everything in it because of the violence of all who live there.” The threatening of the word and the providence of God against sin is a certainty. However, a glimmer of hope can be found in Isaiah 60:18, which points the reader to the future kingdom of God, where everything shall be changed for the better. There shall be no more threats of violence. A description is given of the New Jerusalem.

Despite the advocating of violence herein, Christ rejects this kind of attitude in the New Testament.

## The New Testament

The reader is informed in Matthew 11:12 “From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it.” The ASV reads, “And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent men take it by force.” This text has often been misinterpreted to read that the kingdom of heaven sanctions violence. This is however untrue. The message herein is, the kingdom of heaven suffered violence in the days of John the Baptist as it does this day and the violent man uses force. Lots of people do evil, yet they cannot bear to hear of it afterward or have it charged upon them.

Regarding incidents of violence, the apostle Paul was violently set upon in Acts 21: 35 even though he should have been protected as in a place of safety. The birth of our Lord Jesus Christ was marred with violence. King Herod in fearing the upsurge of his position of power decreed that all male children under the age of two be killed.

Matthew 5:21, can be read with Exodus 20:13, with regards to the issue of murder, “not to commit murder”. What are the factors that most often lead to murder? James 3:16-18 informs the reader that jealousy and selfish ambition leads to “disorder and everything evil”. Also, in James 4:1, fights and quarrels are attributed to the desires that battle within an individual.

Although Matthew 10:34-35 appears to be a contradiction of sorts, “Do not think that I came to bring peace but a sword” the strongest bonds of love and duty have often been broken through from enmity against Christ. It stands to reason that sufferings from friends and relations cause more grief than any other. Matthew 10:21 reads, “...brother will deliver up brother to death...”

Matthew 10:28 focuses on the superiority of the spirit over the flesh. "Fear not those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul." The body is temporal but the spirit lives on. There is an indication of Jesus acting violently Himself in His expulsion of traders from the temple (Matthew 21:12). Firstly, there is a distinction between an earthly king and King Jesus. When Jesus entered Jerusalem, He proceeded to the temple first as opposed to the court or the palace. In so doing Jesus established His kingdom to be spiritual and not of this world.

Secondly, He showed His disgust and anger for the activities conducted within the temple by expelling traders from the temple. The abuse of buying and selling and money changing in the temple was done under the pretext of being for spiritual purposes (Abraham, 1994). For example, beasts were sold to enable those who found it inconvenient bringing beasts for sacrifice, to bring money instead. Money was also changed for those who wanted it, intending to be passed off as the outward business of the house of God, yet Christ would not allow it (Abraham, 1994).

In Acts 5:1-5, the punishment of Ananias and Sapphira would appear as violent to some. Simon the Sorcerer sought more the acknowledgment of man than God and met his death in Acts 8:9 and 18:21.

The word "non-resistance" is taken from the Lord's commandment in Matthew 5:39. The resisting of any ill attempt upon one is herein forbidden, at the same time however, this does not repeal the law of self-preservation, and the care one is to take of one's family. It is an expression of a Christian virtue enjoined on one by Christ. The context in which it is taken is that one should not repay evil with evil. Evil maybe avoided and resisted so far as is necessary to one's own security, but evil must not be rendered for evil.

The highest moral standard is set in the words "...if one smite thee on the right cheek, turn him the other also and if one will go to law with thee to take thy coat from thee, give him thy cloak also." One will not be justified in hurting one's brother because he struck the first blow, because it is the second blow that makes the quarrel (Abraham, 1994). It is also through injury that one has an opportunity to show oneself a true disciple of Christ, by showing forgiveness rather than insult.

One is also encouraged to turn the other cheek when slapped on one side. Not only does this physical abuse inflict hurt and pain, but it is also an affront and indignity, yet one is encouraged not to avenge such injury and indignity. Instead one is advised to bear it with patience and not to challenge or react in like manner. It is further suggested in Matthew 5:40, that should one's coat be taken then one should allow one's cloak to be taken as well (Abraham, 1994). A rather tall order wouldn't you say?

It sounds unrealistic, yet at the same time it makes perfect sense. Considering the extent of the damage or inconvenience suffered by one, it would be best to comply for the sake of peace. Retaliation of the avengeful kind would probably cost one more, physically, emotionally, spiritually and financially, than it would be to replace for example, the coat and cloak that was taken. In other words one would risk losing a lot more than one's coat and cloak, by resisting evil with force.

Matthew 5:41 "...Whosoever shall compel thee to go a mile, go with him twain" refers to having an attitude of humility. According to Abraham (1994), "The Jews taught that the disciples of the wise and the students of the law, were not to be pressed, as others might, by the king's officers, to travel upon the public service." Christ however, did not award His disciples this privilege. Instead He advised them to comply rather than offend the government. In essence

Christians should not be litigious. Small injuries must be submitted to and no notice taken thereof. However, if an injury requires reparation it should be for a good end and not for purposes of revenge.

Although injuries are not invited, they should be met cheerfully as in the way of duty and one should make the best of them. According to verse 44, the great duty of a Christians is to love his/her enemies. It is true that one cannot be complacent toward another who is openly wicked and profane, nor place confidence in another who is known to be deceitful, however, one must recognise those qualities which are commendable in the other and love that, despite the fact that, that individual is considered to be one's enemy.

The Bible says, in Matthew 5:44 "bless them" i.e. have compassion and show goodwill toward them and "pray for them...persecute you." In the fact that Christ Himself was hated, cursed and persecuted, one has the opportunity of showing one's conformity both to the precept and to the example of Christ, by praying for those who abuse one. The reader is assured that lawlessness and sin will not prevail for very long but that "the Son of Man will send out his angels, and they will weed out of his kingdom everything that causes sin and all who do evil."

## **SUMMARY**

The biblical perspective of peace helps the reader understand that Jesus Himself lived in a culture that was controlled by Roman occupation, which meant an oppressive structure of temple taxes and rules, as well as the institutionalized gender relations (nonauthored website, [http://members.tripod.com/-lutheran/peace/potential\\_approach.html](http://members.tripod.com/-lutheran/peace/potential_approach.html)). It offers insights into the nature of conflict. While the Old Testament advocates an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth principle in Exodus 21:24, implying a physical and violent reaction to

provocation, in the New Testament Jesus Christ teaches that one should turn the other cheek when provoked.

He goes further to say that if asked to go one mile, one should be prepared to go two. If one is asked for one's jacket then one should be prepared to give also the rest of one's clothing. What does this teach the reader? It teaches the reader patience, endurance, longsuffering, self-control, forgiveness, and humility. Paul informs the reader in Galatians 5:22, that these are some of the fruits of the spirit that every child of God should portray.

James 4:7 urges the reader to submit to God, "Resist the devil and he will flee from you." In other words submission to God will enable the reader to overcome the devices of the devil such as anger, pride and violence. Russian novelist Leo Tolstoy's revelation of the meaning of Matthew 5:39, "Resist not evil," corresponds with the Quakers' belief that Christ's teaching became known to men, not through violence and the sword but by means of non-resistance to evil, gentleness, meekness and peaceableness, which can only be diffused through the world by example of peace, harmony and love among its followers.

In this chapter, I highlighted the relevant biblical scriptures, which are relevant for my research. In the next chapter I will be looking at the doctrine of nonviolence, its effectiveness and impact on the state as well as individuals. I will also be introducing Russian novelist Leo Nikolaevich Tolstoy, one of the greatest writers of realistic fiction of all time as well as moral and social reformer. This chapter correlated with the chapter on Tolstoy later on, will add to the knowledge and understanding of the essence of the doctrine of nonviolence and its impact on individual lives. Later on in the chapters to follow the reader will discover that Tolstoy's works also impressed the lives of other great individuals who lived, such as Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

## *Chapter 3*

### **THE DOCTRINE OF NON-RESISTANCE TO EVIL BY FORCE**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

In the previous chapter I quoted (the relevant) biblical scriptures, (which I will use) which will be relevant for my research. In this chapter, I will be looking at the concept of non-resistance to evil by force, by looking at the doctrine of non-violence, the role of the state versus Christianity, the attitude of some individuals toward war, as well as the fact that evil cannot be suppressed with the use of force. I chose to highlight the doctrine of non-resistance to evil by force, because of its role in the quest for peace. I will show that the adoption of non-resistance to evil by force is an essential element in the establishment of eternal everlasting peace.

#### **WHERE IS IT BELIEVED TO HAVE ORIGINATED?**

According to a nonauthored website, <http://www.nonviolence.org/issues/philo-nv4.php>, the reader is informed that long before the creation of any “civil society” there were two methods employed in the face of great oppression, firstly, Buddhism which as a non-violent philosophy, despite hardship and persecution, spread throughout Asia. Through its nonviolent efforts it succeeded in subduing the Mongols, who savaged Europe and China. The second method is Christianity, which did not make an alliance with the State but rather it triumphed over the total power of Roman Emperors, and three hundred years after the death of Jesus, became the most dominant religious force in the Western world. The foundation for the doctrine of nonviolence is therefore believed to be older than the Christian era.

According to Tolstoy (1984:1), "The Doctrine of Non-Resistance to Evil By Force has been professed by a minority of men from the foundation of Christianity." One of these minority groups were the Quakers, a so-called sect that for more than two hundred years professed the teaching of Christ on non-resistance to evil by force and forbid the use of weapons in self-defence.

After reading their pamphlets, journals and books, Tolstoy discovered beyond doubt the duty for a Christian in fulfilling the command of non-resistance to evil by force (Tolstoy, 1984:2). The Quakers' maintained that war and violence remain inconsistent with a religion founded on peace and goodwill toward men. This way of thinking obviously stirred something within Tolstoy. War and violence has in fact done more to obscure Christian truth before the heathen, as well as hinder the diffusion of Christianity throughout the world.

According to Tolstoy (1984:184) through the sufferings of the pagan mode of life, men were led to seek and accept Christ's teachings with its doctrine of non-resistance to force. However this Consciousness of truth came into total contradiction with life, which became essentially obvious in compulsory military service. The methods of violence adopted by the government, blinded humanity to its inconsistency with Christianity.

Contrary to common misconception, Christianity as a religion is not a legal system, which can through the administering of violence, transform lives. There are some who only through a long course of mistakes, experiments and suffering are brought to recognise the truth of Christ's doctrine and the necessity of adopting it. Eighteen centuries ago Christianity revealed to men the truth in which they ought to live and at the same time foretold what human life would become if men would not live by it. Now eighteen centuries later and in accordance with prophecy (Matthew 7:24-27), humankind has been brought to

the inevitable destruction foretold by Christ, for those who disregard His teaching (Tolstoy, 1984:187).

Ever since the proclamation of Christianity, the question of non-resistance to evil by force is for individuals in their social life like the question a traveler is presented with when he approaches a 'Y' junction in the road. Decisions and choices have to be made. Likewise one must inevitably decide, am I, or am I not, to resist by force what I regard as evil? Before Christ, the resistance by force to what one regarded as evil was not noticeable, simply because one thinks evil what the other thinks good. Therefore the use of force was the only solution in resolving conflict.

However, the longer humankind lived, the more complex relations became and it became obvious that conflict was not successfully resolved through force. Hope was then given in the doctrine of Christ, which not only preaches the prohibition of resistance to evil by force but also gives a new conception of life as well as a means by which to end conflict. The fact that violence is not a suitable means to end dispute, lies in the fact that no external authority was able to define evil as recognized by all (Tolstoy, 1984:190).

History will have people know that those who depend on violence as a means to an end, be it socialists, communists, royalists, conservatives or even capitalists, will inevitably resort to all the existing methods of violence and even invent new ones to support its authority. Conflict it would appear only strengthens the means of oppression in the hands of those who at any given moment should be in power.

However, the decision not to resist evil by force is not a difficult one, considering it is the only viable one at present. The evidence of its success lies in the works of Christ Himself, Leo Tolstoy, Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther

King Jr. to name but a few. Therefore I am of the notion that the only salvation from a position of wretchedness is in fulfilling the doctrine of Christ in its true significance.

According to Tolstoy (1984:200), Christian ideals are the only ideals, which need to be accepted by all and regarded as binding on all. This brings me to the question, are Christians truly practicing Christianity in a sense that its followers are fulfilling all the requirements of the true Christian doctrine, or is there a contradiction between one's convictions and one's conduct?

In essence, some individuals may feel strongly that Christianity should not be judged by the lifestyles of the followers of Christ, but rather by the teachings of Christ, which should be an example of how one ought to conduct oneself. However, in reality the outside world looks at the conduct of Christians, as examples of what Christianity is all about. This was also the reason for Gandhi's decision not to convert to Christianity, because of among other things, the appalling conduct of the Christian family he lived with in London, while studying Law.

Christianity is seen as the solution to a better life on earth. According to Tolstoy (1984:204), it will take just one individual, who has mastered the Christian conception of life, to make a difference in the world. Attempts have been made in the past, to pursue the doctrine of non-resistance to evil by force, through the lives of Jesus Christ, Leo Tolstoy, Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. Each of these men were successful in their attempts at the time. Their philosophies on life continue to impact lives to this day.

One need also bear in mind that Tolstoy wrote from the perspective of nineteenth-century Russia and the way things were then. However, things are different today, in that America, Britain and South Africa do not cause military

service to be compulsory, although men and women are still trained for war, armaments are still purchased and violence remains a solution to conflict. Apart from this everything else remains pretty much the same as in the days of Tolstoy. Presently America continues its tirade of violence on Iraq to rid the place of terrorists and establish 'peace', a contradiction by any other name remains the same. Jerusalem and Palestine are in the throes of violence over land issues and here in South Africa, violence escalates everyday. It has become a way of life for some, whilst news of bloodshed ceases to have that horrifying effect it had initially, on others.

In fact it looks like every corner of the world is plagued by violence. Violence has reached its peak in the recent, televised beheading of American and British nationals in Iraq. It has also been reported over the news on television, namely, Etv (South African Television Broadcaster) that the casualties arising in Iraq are predominantly women and children. The perception is that terrorism can only be fought with terrorism. Individuals are going to war, with the intent of capturing and dealing with terrorists, to the extent of committing war crimes themselves. The question arises, are those who diligently seek out "monsters of violence" any different themselves? Does the end justify the means?

Is it then so difficult to see, that the only thing violence accomplishes is more violence. The principle of non-resistance to evil by force however, has stood the test of time. Men like Tolstoy, Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. all have ascribed to its effectiveness and success. A verse of scripture comes to mind here (Matthew 10:28), why fear the person who can destroy the body, when the one to be feared, is the one who can destroy both the body and the soul?

William Lloyd Garrison championed the emancipation of Negroes in 1838 and also concluded that "the establishment of universal peace can only be founded on the open profession of the doctrine of non-resistance to evil by

violence" (Tolstoy, 1984:3). Incidentally the Peace Convention adopted the declaration composed by Garrison. The irony is that even though this was a powerful and eloquent expression of faith, which was expected to evoke a strong impression on humankind, it remained unknown.

## **THE IMPACT OF NONVIOLENCE ON THE STATE AND THE INDIVIDUAL**

I will herein make mention of an individual named Adin Ballou, a 19<sup>th</sup> century Universalist minister who took Jesus' words literally and through his study became converted to a radical form of Christianity based solely on Jesus' teachings. He sought the root of Christianity and found therein the doctrine of non-violent resistance to evildoers (Rosi on the website, <http://rachele.rosi-kessel.org/BallouTolstoyGandhiMLK.html>). I have done this to show that it was in fact Ballou's discoveries, which set the ball rolling in Tolstoy's philosophy of resist not evil with force. Ballou highlighted issues of conflict faced by many regarding the practice of Christianity and loyalty to the state, which involved participation in war (Tolstoy, 1984:8).

In so doing, Ballou exposed the inconsistency of Christians to the doctrine of Christ, and their right of self-defense and participation in war. One of the points that Ballou raised was one's bold confession and pledge to the Lord Jesus Christ, as well as one's allegiance to one's country, to the extent of defending it's constitution with one's life. Does one's allegiance to one's country and its constitution, supersede one's obligation to one's faith and belief?

The great peace movements of the 20<sup>th</sup> century owe much to Ballou's work. Although the American Quakers and the writings of Garrison influenced Tolstoy, it was through the works of Ballou that he formed most of his opinions (Rosi on the website, <http://rachele.rosi-kessel.org/BallouTolstoyGandhiMLK>).

[html](#)). According to Ballou, Jesus' command of non-resistance to evildoers is the only foundation upon which true Christian faith should rest.

As Ballou pointed out according to Tolstoy (1984:10), "Jesus Christ forbids me to resist evil doers..." but my government demands from me the opposite. What a dilemma! Can one remain a Christian and still support war and violence? Another of Ballou's arguments is, it is recognised as murder when one individual takes the life of another, even ten individuals doing the same, are labeled murderers. How is it possible then for ten thousand individuals in battle to do the same and it becomes justified? So then exactly what number makes it permissible to break the law of God?

These are all relevant and thought provoking questions, which causes one to evaluate one's own stance on the issue of violence and its demoralizing effect on humankind. It is therefore easy to see how the works of the Quakers, Garrison and Ballou, convinced Tolstoy that the departure of the ruling form of Christianity, from the law of Christ on non-resistance by force, is an error that has long been observed and pointed out. It has been an error, which has resulted in the depravity of humankind.

Historically, the degeneration of Christianity has been attributed to the times of Constantine the Great, who was admitted into the Christian church with all his heathen morals. Divine and ecclesiastical dignitaries began to concern themselves with subduing the world to their authority, thereby inciting men to murder and plunder. According to Tolstoy (1984:20), "Helchitsky's fundamental idea is that Christianity, by allying itself with temporal power in the days of Constantine, and by continuing to develop in such conditions, has become completely distorted, and has ceased to be Christian altogether."

Force is an indispensable condition of authority and the attitude of Christianity to military service is especially crucial in a time such as we are living in. The question every Christian should ask is, how do we reconcile the duty of forgiveness, meekness, patience, and love for all, with the obligation of participating in war against our own and foreigners?

Tolstoy argues that to confess Christianity binds one to the admonitions toward humility, forgiveness, and love of enemies. The second argument is, although Christianity teaches to turn the other cheek, wicked people still exist and they sometimes need to be restrained.

Tolstoy's response to the argument that to regard any individual as intrinsically wicked and to try to use force to restrain them, is to annul Christian teaching, which renders everyone equal and leaves no room for the judging of others, is that wickedness will always be present. However, the real challenge is in one's response to it. In other words does the ends justify the means? The argument is not about the existence of wickedness, but rather the responding to it that's crucial.

The third argument is that the defending of oneself as well as one's neighbor with force still contradicts Christ's teachings, because firstly, Jesus did not allow his disciples to defend Him, as in the incident with Peter cutting off the ear of one of the guards who came to arrest Jesus and secondly, responding to violence with violence, nullifies the command of not resisting evil by force.

Fourthly, Certain theologians and defenders of the church and state see violence as justifiable under circumstances of war and executions, which leaves many individuals on the fence regarding the church's role in non-violence, and fifthly, nonresistants are often accused of being one-sided and extremists.

According to Tolstoy (1984:42), Church Christianity contradicted itself by professing its faith in Christ in words yet, denied it in life and taught others to do the same. One wonders how different it is today, with the present day church. Some critics were of the belief that Christ's teaching of "non-resistance to evil" could not be relevant for the present time, because it requires a change in human lives (Tolstoy, 1984:46). This line of thought obviously stems from individuals who do not know the power of Christ and His ability to transform lives. Their conclusions are probably based on clinical and scientific research, which remain detached from the possible existence of God.

I would not be objective in my research if I didn't include the fact that not all individuals view evil the same. How then can disputes be resolved if there is no clear definition as to what evil is? According to the Oxford Dictionary (1983:199), evil is as follows, "bad, harmful, wicked." There is no definition for the word evil in the Pocket Bible Dictionary. In other words anything, which is to one's detriment and causes one harm, should be steered away from.

However, even this definition of evil is inadequate. Needless to say, there are two ways of resolving disputes firstly, through the use of force, which has already been implemented since the beginning of the age, without much success to human dignity I might add and secondly, through the solution given by Christ, which is not to forcibly resist what one considers to be evil.

Peace comes from mutual confidence and respect, not from the latest and sophisticated armament. Governments delude themselves in their belief that the more armament they acquire it will guarantee them security. If anything the presence of sophisticated armament poses a threat to other nations and can also be seen as a weapon of intimidation. Peace requires trust and mutual confidence. Can the presence of heavy artillery achieve this?

## **THE ATTITUDE OF SOME INDIVIDUALS TOWARD NONVIOLENCE**

Although my primary focus is Tolstoy, I will also be including the responses of a few other individuals as well, for example, according to McReynolds on the website <http://www.nonviolence.org/issues/philo-nv7.php>, nonviolence does not permit one to break laws with moral impunity. Jesus also set himself against the rigid orthodoxies of the community of his day. He was brought to trial as a result. He neither denied nor evaded the charges placed against him.

The most challenging part of nonviolence according to McReynolds on the website <http://www.nonviolence.org/issues/philo-nv7.php>, is not breaking the law or going to jail, but rather the insistence that one recognizes the humanity of one's opponent. Some individuals agree that if the application of the nonviolence principle, one of which is loving one's enemies and the other, doing good to those who persecute one were easy, then it would not be such a big deal.

Then with regards to the law of the community, Gandhi made an exceptional breakthrough, with his constructive program. He recognized that in order for the successful application of nonviolence, certain social conditions had to be met. For instance according to McReynolds on the website <http://www.nonviolence.org/issues/philo-nv7.php>, Gandhi worked with peasants who lacked basic education, as well as sanitation skills.

This is therefore the reason for Gandhi's stress on education, literacy, sanitation and health measures at village level. He recognized the need to equip individuals with the adequate tools in which to better themselves and their communities. One of the aims of nonviolence then, should be to create an alternative society to the existing one that would assist in working toward the betterment of communities.

However, McReynolds on the website, <http://www.nonviolence.org/issues/philo-nv7.php>, also points out that “It is very difficult, if you live in a society where there is no foreign occupation, where control is legitimate, to organize a Constructive Program which can operate in the way Gandhi’s did.” He uses the Black Panthers’ failure as an example of this. While nonviolence may not have all the answers, it still remains a theory of the management of social conflict in order to achieve social change. In essence nonviolence is a search for the truth and not ways in which to prove one’s opponent wrong. On the contrary it is easier to do good than to define evil.

According to the nonauthored website <http://www.nonviolence.org/issues/philo-nv2.php>, the strength of nonviolence is attributed to its ability to respect the unique nature in every individual. There is however no guarantee according to McReynolds on the website <http://www.nonviolence.org/issues/philo-nv5.php>, that nonviolence will work in every case. However, judging from the experiences of the Black Panthers, and Gandhi’s son Manilal Gandhi’s failed attempt in the 1950’s, the responsibility of a pacifist would be to create conditions under which the opponent is given the choice of changed behavior.

This is therefore the reason why MacArthur (1980:136) says that peacemakers are God’s agents in the world, “and they are here to go far beyond anyone who wins the Nobel Peace Prize, because the peace they offer is eternal, divine, real.” To be a pacifist or peacemaker is therefore not an easy task. In other words in this line of service one will need to “bite the bullet,” so to speak.

## **THE ATTITUDE OF SOME INDIVIDUALS TOWARD WAR**

Some people regard war as an accidental political phenomenon, to be avoided. Some people regard war as cruel, yet inevitable, whilst others regard war as necessary and sometimes advantageous (Tolstoy, 1984:50).

The first group of individuals look at the external measures of international diplomacy to avoid war. The second group view war as an occurrence, which is fated and inevitable like illness and death. Both are neither pleasant nor desired, but it happens and hence nothing can be done to stop it. The third group sees the inevitability of war and at the same time recognise its benefits, which they view as desirable.

The absolute suppression of war maybe an illusion given to the distinct interests of major states isolated from one another. The Peace congress with its recommendations at maintaining peace and avoiding war is very commendable and may even be effective if built on the word of God, and embedded in the very center of man/woman's conscience. Then even if war was not completely obliterated, at least a good strong conscience will prevail.

War is no doubt evil. Why do I say this? One has only to look at the ravages of war, to realise that it is anything but beneficial to humanity. It results in the degeneration of humanity. For example, look at the war crimes being committed in Iraq at present. I use Iraq as an example because of its involvement in war presently, as well as the constant news coverage which keeps one updated.

In spite of the cost, strain and effort taken to raise up and maintain forces, governments have shown their confidence in their respective armies, rather than in international boards of arbitration. According to nonauthored website, (<http://nobelprize.org/peace/laurcates/1964/king-lecture.html>) nations are increasing their arsenals of weapons of mass destruction and "the proliferation of nuclear weapons has not been halted, in spite of the Limited Test Ban Treaty."

The cost of maintaining armaments must be exorbitant and threatens to reduce nations to a state of misery. However, governments will fund armaments

rather than address the issue of poverty in the land. The reason for this according to Tolstoy (1984:52) is that the government rests on the power of its army. In other words, the stronger the army, and the more sophisticated its armament, the more confident the government.

Regarding this line of thought, it has been stated that although Tolstoy makes a convincing argument against Christian support for the courts of the world, on the grounds that we should not “judge” others, he himself is guilty of judging the government of his day (nonauthored website, <http://cust.idl.net.au/fold/teach/Quakers/Anarchy%20and%20Pacifism.html>).

According to Tolstoy (1984:147), “history shows that from Caesar to Napoleon, and from Napoleon to Bismarck, government is in its essence always a force acting in violation of justice, and that it cannot be otherwise.” What effect then can justice have on rulers who keep their men and women deluded and drilled in readiness for acts of violence?

Attempts to recondition the mind of the government will remain futile until they cease from the following: -

- ❖ The pretext of educating people, when their whole existence is based on the ignorance of the people,
- ❖ Supporting constitutional freedom, when in fact, their strength rests on the absence of freedom,
- ❖ Of appearing anxious over improving the condition of the working and middle classes, when their existence depends on the oppression of these groups, and finally

- ❖ Making a show of supporting Christianity when in fact true Christianity destroys all government.

However, one must not overlook the fact that while the government remains guilty of deception, so too are those who go out to slaughter or be slaughtered (Tolstoy, 1984:148).

Violence is a force, which is in the hands of those who work their own destruction. There are individuals, for example the celebrated academician Camille Doucet, who acknowledged that it is personal honor, which requires men to fight, and in the interest of the nations they are required to ruin and exterminate each other (Tolstoy, 1984:159).

Although the word “peace” is often discussed, very few people intend or feel obligated to do anything about it. In the event of war, they find themselves compelled to participate simply because the government requires them to do so. War is not just acts of violence between nations; it confronts humanity in all forms, for example, between different race groups, cultures, and ethnic groups, different nationalities, and also within families. Disputes are inevitable. However, an individual’s response to disputes is more important than the dispute itself.

Those who view war as inevitable and advantageous remain convinced that a general disarmament throughout the world would involve a moral decadence of sorts, which could show itself in general feebleness and hinder the progressive advancement of humanity (Tolstoy, 1984:160). In defense of their stance they use history to attest to it. For example, commerce, manufacturers and literature never attained so high a point of development as when Athens and Rome were masters of the whole world, through the force of arms (Tolstoy, 1984:162).

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Therefore in light of this war is seen as a beneficial thing, and that violent struggle is a law of nature, which overrules all other laws. Those individuals who claim these things are hideous in their moral perversion. Instead of transforming their lives into harmony with their conscience, they try to stifle its voice. They obscure and deaden not just their own conscience, but also the conscience of those who dare to believe them.

One need also bear in mind that despite Tolstoy's enthusiasm to see the government of his day done away with, there are different types of government and all of them need not be the same, a few of, which are listed below: -

- ❖ Government by the people – democracy
- ❖ Government by God – theocracy
- ❖ Government by the King/Queen – monarchy, and
- ❖ Government by a dictator - autocracy

Before judging the churches and governments of this world as been counterfeit, one must be careful not to cross the line between righteous and self-righteous judgment, which is not always clear. One needs also remember that no individual is totally free from organisation and those who are disorganized are generally sad specimens of humanity. It was after all through the organisation and authority of Tolstoy, Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. that many people were led to freedom from oppression (nonauthored website, <http://cust.idl.net.au/fold/teach/Quakers/Anarchy%20and%20Pacifism.html>).

The preparation in anticipation of war is in itself a vicious cycle. An increase in the army of one state, in preparation for self-defense against its subjects, is viewed as a source of danger for neighboring states, who in turn call

for a similar increase in their own armies. There is therefore no room for mutual trust and respect, which peace is reliant on. How can there be peace, when the veil of suspicion hangs heavily between nations, states, and individuals?

The element of fear, which exists in all humankind, when aroused causes individuals and through them masses, to throw caution to the wind and conscience out the window. According to Tolstoy (1984:175), governments were meant to secure for their subjects, freedom from the cruelty of personal strife and security in the permanence of the state order of existence. Instead they expose their subjects to the same necessity of strife, substituting strife with individuals from other states, for strife with neighbors.

The government is believed to protect its citizens against the attacks of evil-disposed persons. One is led to believe that without the government, there would be no religion, culture, education, commerce, means of communication, or other social institutions. In response to this, the government is said to have been more often than not, an obstacle rather than assistance, in maintaining the high standard of education. It has been the great extension of means of communication and interchange of ideas that has made men capable of forming societies, associations, corporations, as well as congresses, for scientific, economic and political objects, without any interference from the government.

The government's claim to offer its subjects security against attacks by outside forces is in direct contrast to the greater danger faced by its subjects from exposure to such forces. If anything, it appears to be a psychological plot on the part of the government, to play on the conscience of its subjects. Not to resist evil by force would require independent thought and effort. The ever-growing abuse of government power are causing individuals to reflect on whether or not, they are able to make the ever-demanding material and moral sacrifices required

of them? This is good, because it shows that some consciences are finally being pierced.

### **EVIL CANNOT BE SUPPRESSED BY PHYSICAL FORCE**

From a Christian perspective, one's fight is not against flesh and blood; rather it is against principalities and wickedness in high places (Ephesians 6:12). This means that evil cannot be overcome with evil, nor can physical force over evil achieve victory. What is clearly visible is the incompatibility of true Christianity, which is the doctrine of meekness, forgiveness of injuries and love for humankind, with the government, which is full of pomp, acts of violence, executions and wars.

In essence, according to Tolstoy (1984:237) "The profession of true Christianity not only excludes the possibility of recognizing government, but even destroys its very foundations." Therefore the question arises, which is more beneficial for the good of humankind? The evil witnessed by all, is attributed not to the type of society in existence, but rather to its abuses, which some believe can be corrected without destroying the society itself. There is hope that humanity can develop a degree of peace.

Tolstoy (1984:245) believed that for as long as there remained unchristian and wicked men in the world, ready to do harm to others for their own gratification, the suppression of the government authority would remain unsuccessful.

What is Tolstoy's solution then?

That all individuals advance steadily and undeviatingly toward a more conscious assimilation of the Christian theory of life, and apart from a conscious spiritual life, individuals are unconsciously brought into a more Christian attitude

to life (Tolstoy, 1984:247). According to MacArthur (1980:137), the reason that there is no peace in the world today is because there is no peace in the hearts of men/women. "Peace is not just stopping war; peace is creating righteousness that brings enemies together in love."

The idyllic scenario, which Tolstoy and MacArthur allude to can be achieved, through a change in the social order of the day, a change of mindsets and attitudes, through an appeal to the spiritual side of humankind, as well as the use of discipline, restraint and commitment.

However, this situation of total peace as ascribed to by Tolstoy will remain evasive, whilst Satan remains the god of this world. It was through Satan's interference, that Adam and Eve got thrown out off the garden of Eden (Genesis 3:15), most people refer to the garden of Eden as paradise. It is also interesting that Tolstoy in his reference to Christianity makes a distinction between Christianity and true Christianity.

There is the indication that Christianity was misrepresented then as it is now. However, there remains the hope that given a chance true Christianity can and will accomplish its purpose. A great crusader of Indian rights, Mahatma Gandhi, a non-Christian, recognized the elements of true Christianity and used it to the advantage of the people. He taught his followers the art of discipline, restraint, peace, love and obedience. Gandhi embodied Christ like qualities himself, such as humility, compassion, perseverance, longsuffering, turning the other cheek and selflessness.

As opposed to violence, true Christianity cannot be imposed upon individuals. There is no force of intimidation or manipulation involved. It does not depend on others for self-betterment, growth (spiritual), and development. Instead it requires self-examination, a searching within oneself for spiritual

freedom, which releases one from all forms of outward bondage. This involves renouncing everything that is contrary to the word of God. This includes the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes and the pride of life.

With this transformation comes the conviction to do that, which is right and honorable in the sight of God. Very few people are able to surrender all and therefore do not have the conviction to do what is right. Therefore in some instances individuals prefer being instructed on what to do, rather than to do what needs to be done.

Good leadership is therefore of extreme importance. With the right individual at the helm, it is easy to see how Tolstoy's process of "unconscious softening" of individuals and through them nations can be achieved. Tolstoy champions the course of Christianity because of its softening effect on an otherwise coarse and cruel world.

Judging by the amount of progress it has made in eighteen hundred years, Tolstoy concludes (1984:249) that there is still a long while yet to go before it accomplishes the desired end. Therefore he says that to dwell on the "impracticability of the suppression of authority would be unprofitable." One can however, at present work towards placing the authority of the government in the best hands possible.

Tolstoy was correct in his prediction however, that there would be a rapid advancement in the number of individuals accepting the truth. Through television and radio ministries as well as newsletters and other correspondence, many people have accepted the truth. How do I know this without given statistics? I look at my local community (Chatsworth, Durban: 2004) as an example. The amount of people who are Christian now have increased drastically

as compared to five-six years ago and Tolstoy's book was published in the year 1984.

Tolstoy predicted that a "snowball" effect would be created until public opinion was in harmony with the new truth (i.e. True Christianity). It would appear that this has not yet taken place, because this harmony between public opinion and the new truth, was meant to establish a new social order, which no doubt would wipe out the number of criminals and criminal activity in society. This can only take place when there is a change in the existing moral standard of public opinion.

I am saying that, besides the increase in the number of Christians in the world today, as opposed to yesteryear, there still has to be a diffusion of true Christian manners and teachings in society, in order to bring about a change in the present moral standard and reversal of the current predicament of humankind. The true success of Christianity is in the effective application of its principles, one of which is the non-resistance of evil by force.

War on the other hand is a typical example of how individuals are capable of committing acts, which are in direct opposition to their principles and conscience, without them even perceiving it as such. According to Tolstoy (1984:303), those soldiers who are Christian and are placed in a dilemma over their obedience to the law of God and their duty as soldiers, which incidentally are equally binding, need to remember this, that one's Christian duty of fraternity, forgiveness of injuries and love can not be reconciled with murder.

One of the commandments of God states clearly, "Thou shalt not kill." Some individuals are of the opinion that this does not cover unintended acts of violence, because every person has the right to defend his/herself when lives are endangered. However, I disagree. If one lives by the sword then one will die by

the sword. This is what Jesus said to Peter in Matthew 26:52, when Peter struck the ear of the slave of the high priest who had come to seize Jesus, "Put your sword back into its place, for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword." (NASB). Matthew 5:38-39 states, "You have heard that it was said, 'Eye for eye, and tooth for tooth.' But I tell you. Do not resist an evil person. If someone strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also."

Matthew 5:44-45 reads, "But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteousness." There is no exception to the rule. In both the Old and New Testaments, the reader is informed that vengeance and retribution is the Lord's (Deuteronomy 32:35 and Hebrews 10:30).

Confusion and many a misconception arises as a result of the Church's role in the process of war. The church's involvement includes, offering up prayers for those individuals participating in war, thereby condoning acts of violence. These individuals going to war are going to use force to survive. They are going to be physically, emotionally, and spiritually challenged, so let's not be fooled into believing that there's anything honorable, let alone beneficial about it, yet the church condones such depravity, with their prayers for victory.

It is tragic when men and women are forced to carry out their duty to the government, to the extent of breaking the law of God. The doctrine of an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth has been annulled on the grounds of New Testament Christianity, because it is viewed as the justification of immorality (Tolstoy, 1984:326). If Christianity opposes war, what then makes individuals susceptible to war?

According to Tolstoy (1984:328), it is the issue of accountability. For as long as accountability lies at the feet of those issuing instructions that lead to war, individuals feel no responsibility for their actions. However, remove this conviction from an individual and he/she will be thinking twice before, committing those acts of violence otherwise required of them. Individuals can therefore on the basis of a strong conviction on their consciences refuse to carry out acts of violence.

A wise person once said, "Tolerance is a test to civilization." Civilization is the operative word. In a civilized world, there should be no brutish behaviour. Life is valued in all its forms. Respect and tolerance separates civilization from non-civilization. Religion also plays a vital role in the civilization of humanity. With religion one's conscience should be sharpened.

Therefore true Christianity as a predecessor of civilization works toward the betterment of humanity and the betterment of humanity involves the efforts by individuals to recognize and propagate the truth as well as the gradual improvement of the general conditions of human life.

However, some individuals disagree that the propagation of religion, in this case Christianity, is a necessary means by which to improve the condition of humanity. They are of the opinion that the improvement of external factors such as political, social and economic conditions alone are all that is required to improve the condition of humanity.

The problem with this opinion is that while it addresses external issues of humanity, it fails to address one's conscience, which is a major part of one's existence. I believe that it is only along with a spiritual awakening, that the improvement of the political, social and economic conditions of humanity, work for its betterment. MacArthur, Jr. (1980:136) reported, "People have mental and

emotional illnesses as never before.” Humankind has no peace himself/herself, therefore the world, which is merely a projection of himself/herself, is riddled with chaos.

Mahatma Gandhi believed that Christianity was possibly the one, true supernatural religion in the world. Like Tolstoy he denounced violence and cruelty, but championed nature’s cure and spiritual healing (nonauthored website, <http://www.medev.nic.in/Gandhi/nonviolence.htm>). He envisioned a truly non-violent society, federally constituted and composed of small, self-governing and relatively self-sufficient village communities, relying largely on moral and social pressure.

According to Tolstoy (1984:341), the condition of humankind then was as a result of their disunion, which resulted from their not having followed the truth, which is one, while falsehoods are many. Tolstoy recognized that the more sincerely, humankind unites in truth, the nearer they get to unity. The truth here is Christianity. In other words Christianity is seen as the key to unity and peace, the means by which people can live together under positive moral, social and political pressure. It is under this scenario that the Kingdom of God is likely to come.

According to Tolstoy there are namely, five conditions that have to be met before the kingdom of God can come (Tolstoy, 1984:361): - All humankind needs to,

- ❖ Live in peace with each other,
- ❖ Be pure
- ❖ Take no oaths

- ❖ Resist not evil, and
- ❖ Renounce national distinctions

I would like to add one more commandment, which is “Love your neighbour as yourself.”

### **SUMMARY**

Tolstoy gives the impression that Christianity is the answer to all the problems encountered in life today. He paints a happy ever after scenario for those who accept Christianity as a way of life. However he omits one essential detail, which is that the acceptance of the doctrine of Christ is a matter of individual choice. It can be either accepted or rejected. It is the latter, which concerns me. For as long as there exists those who walk in opposition to the doctrine of Christ, the end, which Tolstoy desires, will not be accomplished.

For as long as Satan remains the god of this world there will always be the presence of wickedness, out of which originates evil. There is however, hope in the fact that there are sincere and true Christians out there, who are brave and courageous enough to stand up for what is right. Both Ballou and Tolstoy reached the same conclusion that “if human beings truly seek world peace they must follow Jesus’ example of non-violence” (Rosi on the website, <http://rachele.rosi-kessel.org/BallouTolstoyGandhiMLK.html>).

Make no mistake though Christianity is no fairytale religion. There are no guarantees that everything will go smoothly for those who accept it or even that all of life’s problems will cease. On the contrary Christianity is practical, it disciplines and equips individuals for a different type of battle, not a battle that involves physical force or even resistance of evil by force, but rather a spiritual battle, which manifests itself against the flesh.

A study of Christianity teaches one the fundamentals of the Christian faith as well as the application of Christian principles. Tolstoy makes a very convincing argument regarding the pros of Christianity and its ability to transform lives. Christians should lead exemplary lives and then by their testimonies, many others would embrace Christianity as his/her faith.

I utilized Tolstoy's book, *The Kingdom of God Is Within You* (1984), as my main source. In the next chapter, I will discuss the importance of positive leadership as well as four individuals who revolutionized their communities. They are Jesus Christ, Leo Tolstoy, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and finally Martin Luther King. Jr.

## *Chapter 4*

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF LEADERSHIP**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

In the previous chapter I discussed the doctrine of nonviolence, its impact on the state as well as on individuals. In this section I will discuss the importance of positive leadership. This will help the reader understand the significance and importance of outstanding leadership qualities, as well as focus on the lives of four individuals who revolutionized the world. They are Jesus Christ, Leo Tolstoy, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi and finally Martin Luther King.

#### **LEADERSHIP**

According to Watson and Hill (1989:94) the definition of leadership is as follows, "individuals within a group or organisation who have influence, who provide focus, co-ordination and direction for the activities of the group. It may be argued that the purpose of leadership is to enable the group to function effectively and achieve its goals although in practice leadership may not always have this effect. Leadership may be and often is invested in one person but can also be shared."

#### **JESUS CHRIST (+- 4 BC – 33AD)**

According to Jenkins (1995:6) "The name Jesus was not Jesus' proper name." Christ was a title, the Greek word for messiah (the anointed one or chosen one). Therefore the title Jesus Christ means 'Jesus the Christ.' Jesus was born in Bethlehem in Judea around 6BC. He was probably the greatest exemplar and teacher of peace. He was considered by many to be the fulfillment of Jewish

prophecies concerning the Messiah, the Prince of Peace. He was taken to Egypt in his infancy and very little was recorded about his childhood and youth. He debated with the rabbis in Jerusalem at the age of twelve (nonauthored website, <http://www.san.beck.org/GPJ6-JesusandChristians.html>). At the age of thirty Jesus appeared at the Jordan River to be baptized by John the Baptist in 27CE.

At the time the Romans ruled over the Jews the atmosphere in that part of the world was tense and electric. The Jewish people therefore longed for the coming Messiah who would bring an era of peace with him. There were many speculations among the Jews regarding the office or rank of the Messiah. Some viewed him to be a king-like figure that would defeat the Romans, others saw him bringing a final battle that would shake the earth and result in him recreating everything.

There were the Zealots who saw themselves as freedom fighters and who were extremists belonging to the Pharisee party (Cavendish, 1969:7). They were actively involved in terrorist activities against the Romans and were responsible for the explosion of open rebellion and revolt that occurred in AD 66. Then there were the Essenes. They comprised those who went into the desert to pray, study and wait for the coming Messiah. It turned out however, that Jesus was in no way the kind of Messiah the Jews anticipated.

He was a man of peace instead of a mighty warrior. Jesus explained many of his ethical teachings in his Sermon on the Mount (Matthew chapter five). He taught a message of love and spoke out against injustice. He taught about forgiveness, love and peace. His teachings and lifestyle attracted huge crowds, which did not always please the authorities.

The basic Christian belief is that Jesus was the Messiah the Son of God. He explained that he had not come to do away with the old law but rather to

teach better ethics (Beck on the website, [http://www.san.beck.org /GP|6-JesusandChristians.html](http://www.san.beck.org/GP|6-JesusandChristians.html)). Through His words and deeds He has shown the way of life and set of values.

Through His life, death and resurrection He has revealed the supreme loving power of God. Jesus' words and deeds are very much alive today as they were about 2000 years ago. One may ask oneself the question how relevant is Jesus' teaching for the present time? One thing that does not change is human nature. Biblical teachings are eternal. Teaching about love, mercy, forgiveness, justice etc., are just as relevant today as they were 2000 years ago. For Christians the final authority for their beliefs and practices comes from three sources namely, the Bible, the Church and their conscience.

Jesus made continuous reference to the Kingdom of God as well as the way in which people ought to live. The assumption that society ought to be ordered according to the principles other than tradition or expediency provided the foundation for experiments such as Islam, Christendom, Liberal democracy and Communism.

Jesus himself was not a public figure. He wasn't one to be found in the limelight, or the center of attention. In the Gospel according to Mark, Jesus gave his disciples strict instructions not to reveal to anyone that he was the Messiah. Some things known about him can be found in the New Testament.

The New Testament itself gives the reader an account of the meaning of the life and teachings of Jesus Christ of Nazareth. It is not a unified document but rather a collection of short works produced by the Christian community in *different parts of the Roman Empire over a period of almost a century.*

According to the gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, Jesus of Nazareth was born in Bethlehem during the last years of King Herod the Great's reign. King Herod's character can be summoned up by his unsuccessful attempt to have Jesus, a potential rival, murdered at infancy. After Herod's own death however, his kingdom was split up. According to Cavendish (1969:6), the land east of the Jordan and Galilee were mixed areas "subject to continual communal trouble..."

Jews and Gentiles lived together in passive dislike and sometimes open hostility toward each other. Conditions were apparently not dissimilar to those existing in Cyprus in the 1950s, with the imperial power of Rome there in the background to keep the peace (Cavendish 1969:7). At this time the Jewish community was split into a number of sects, for example, the Sadducees and the Pharisees.

The Sadducees were conservative and believed that the community should make the best of things as they were. In other words change was not very welcome by them. The Pharisees on the other hand were a more aggressive group of people. They opposed foreign domination and were theologically at odds with the Sadducees.

I mentioned another group, the Zealots in a previous paragraph. According to Schaff (1996) this group is an offshoot from the Pharisee clan. Their armed resistance to the enemy arose during the lifetime of Jesus. They also became known as the guerrilla movement. As a result of this group's actions, the whole country exploded into open rebellion and revolt in A.D. 66.

It is presumed that Jesus grew up in Galilee in the Jewish rather than Gentile Communities. Most of his activities appear to have been centered on the predominantly Jewish town of Capernaum. He appears on the public scene in

Mark's gospel as the beginning of the "good news" of Jesus Christ, events of which he was still a part. With regards to John the Baptizer, he is the preacher in whom the authentic voice of the prophets of Israel were being heard, crying for social justice and proclaiming the imminent intervention of Yahweh in the history of Israel.

*Jesus recognized in John the herald of the Messianic Age and was baptized by him. Shortly thereafter, John was arrested by Herod Antipas and subsequently executed. Soon after John's arrest Jesus began preaching in the villages and countryside of Galilee, healing the sick. The substance of his proclamation was as follows: "The time has come, the Kingdom of God is upon you, repent and believe the good news" (Matthew 3:2).*

In proclaiming the Kingdom of God, he was speaking of a subject of great importance to the Jewish people. The Kingdom of God was an event to which all were looking forward to, with differing hopes and expectations. To most it probably meant the restoration of sovereignty to the Jewish people. To others, especially those succumbing to the hellenizing ways of the Herods', it probably meant the punishment of foreign invaders and collaborators within the nation.

Jesus' teaching on the Kingdom of God was not as a political state or social or economic system, but rather a certain quality of living. Jesus, unlike Plato did not present a blueprint of the ideal state and his characteristic method of description is the parable. The good life as seen by Jesus can only be expressed in concrete terms, for example, Who is my neighbour and what does it mean to love him/her? The parable of the Good Samaritan best answers this question.

Jesus taught in parables. In Matthew chapter 13, He likened the Kingdom of God to a sower sowing seeds on different pieces of land. It is a chance that the sower takes, that the soil will be fertile and that the seed, which is sown, will spring forth and germinate, in spite of hindering factors present. It invariably involves acts of discrimination, judgment and evaluation. Like the farmer who had to cope with the weeds among the wheat, it is unpredictable, mysterious in its action. Like the action of yeast in bread and yet it is worth all other things put together.

Jesus of Nazareth stands out in a world full of moral teachers, miracle workers and politicians. His manner was penetrating and questioning, cutting through the heart of the problem. He refused to be labeled rabbi, healer or even Messianic pretender. This was an attribute, which proved to be too much of a challenge to the established prejudices of many people. While many remained devoted to him, there were still some who remained hostile.

The Gospels leave an impression on the reader that the country of Galilee was, during this time clouded over with growing opposition from the authorities, both representatives from the religious Establishment as well as supporters of Herod's regime. This was possibly around the same time that He left Galilee, probably to reflect on the implications of this failure as well as the rejection he experienced in his hometown of Nazareth.

It is difficult to understand Jesus' decision not to be identified as the Messiah in the natural mind. Having already instructed his disciples in the gospel of Mark, not to reveal it to anyone, Jesus further admonished Peter for voicing his thoughts on the role of the Messiah. The reader is made aware that there are two ways in life, the natural and the supernatural. To conduct one's affairs in the natural would entail thinking and behaving like other human beings. But to think and conduct one's affairs in the supernatural, would involve seeking the

assistance of the Holy Spirit of God. Not to be conformed to the standards of this world, but rather to be transformed through the renewing of one's mind (Romans 12:12).

It is clear that Jesus thought in terms of a mission from God and not according to the office or rank, people placed him in. He challenged the people about turning the Passover into a time of festivities of all sorts. He physically attacked the commercialization of the Temple. When questioned about the right to pay Roman Taxes, he responded that the money they carried held the image of Caesar and therefore what was Caesar's belonged to Caesar and what was God's belonged to God.

The authorities could not touch him, in the event that it sparked a riot. The manner in which he met his death was so impressive that a centurion paid a tribute, to the effect that "Truly this man was a son of God" (Cavendish 1969:9). Jesus was a man who was completely self-possessed, the master and not the pawn of circumstances. A disciple called Cleopas had this to say in the gospel of Luke, "Our chief priests and rulers handed him over to be sentenced to death and crucified him. But we had hoped that he was the one who was going to redeem Israel" (Luke 24:21).

According to the gospels he was not to stay dead and his followers did not mourn a dead prophet, but hailed a risen Messiah. He embodies the divine presence and is the instrument for the divine activity in human life. With his words "love your neighbour as yourself" this man from Nazareth, reached across time and space to impose on all Christians a responsibility, which they cannot evade.

The nature of God in Jesus is love. He shows God's intention for life, which is a life of active love, with a profound concern for others and a strong

compulsion to bring about goodness and justice for all humankind. He gives to individuals the same spirit, which worked through him; thereby enabling them to become what he intended them to be. He also establishes individuals in a relationship with God in which they are able to find "forgiveness of sin."

Presently the world is full of conflict and human misery. Two thirds of the worlds' people go hungry, wars and violence rage over the entire world; pollution threatens to make the planet earth uninhabitable; psychiatric hospitals are full of lost and confused individuals; people are cruel to each other in thoughts, words and deeds. There are more family breakups and emotionally disturbed individuals presently than ever before. Teenage delinquencies have increased and schools have become anything but orderly and disciplined.

Our advancement on technology make us inclined to think that we've found the answers to most of the great mysteries of life but we have only to read the daily newspapers or switch on the television or radio to experience conflict and pain in our own lives, homes and communities. This alone is evidence that we have a lot yet to learn.

In one's quest to quench one's human desire for answers relating to life's problems, one has turned to the sacred writings of one's religious tradition. Christians for example will look at the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ, which are found in the Bible. Christians and many non-Christians believe that Jesus Christ represents the finest example of an ideal person. The qualities of an ideal person are found in the way he/she lives, his/her attitude towards others and their devotion to God.

Jesus taught the powerless and oppressed of His time how to assert their humanity and transform their society through love. Jesus offered not only a different approach to conflict, but also a radically more useful and compelling

perspective on power as well (nonauthored website, <http://members.tripod.com/-lutheranpeace/potentialapproach.html>).

The teachings of Jesus are challenging and require self-sacrifice and service. They require a change in attitude and behaviour. Peace is at the very heart of Jesus' teachings, yet Christians have long been divided about whether or not going to war or using violence is right or even justified. The Gospels presents a challenge to its readers to change from within themselves.

The next leader I will be focusing on will be Leo Nikolaevich Tolstoy.

### **LEO NIKOLAEVICH TOLSTOY (1828-1910)**

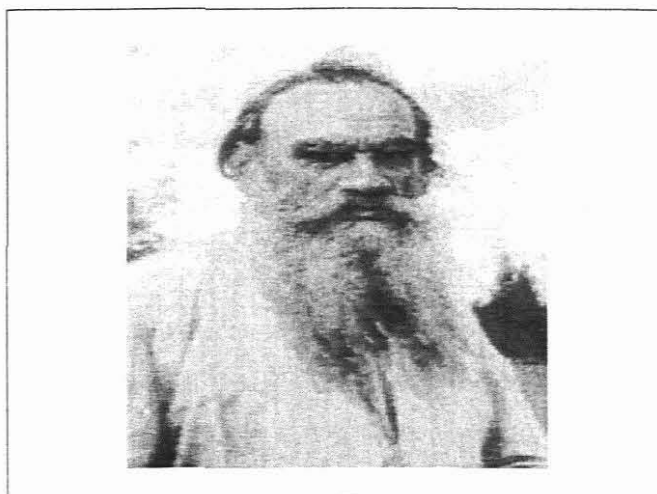


Figure 1: Photograph of Tolstoy downloaded from the website, <http://www.literature-web.net/tolstoyhttp://www.html>

Leo Nikolaevich Tolstoy was a Russian novelist, a profound social and moral thinker and one of the greatest writers of realistic fiction of all time (nonauthored website, <http://www.literature-web.net/tolstoyhttp://www.html>). At the time of his birth, the majority of Russian people lived in a condition of serfdom, similar to the Feudal System that existed in medieval England. Tolstoy

himself was born into the gentry (noble upper class.) His family owned some of the land on which the serfs worked.

It has been reported in the Oxford Junior Encyclopaedia (1964:447) that these serfs lived and worked under conditions no better than those of animals, “with no education and very little chance of bettering themselves.” This was a condition, which Tolstoy set out to improve upon coming into his inheritance.

### **Early Life**

He was born on August 28, 1828. He was born at his family estate at Yasnaya Polyana, in Tula Province. He was the fourth of five children. At the age of nine he was orphaned, brought up by relatives and educated by French and German Tutors. His father died suddenly and tragically en route to visit a relative and his grandmother passed away soon after. The loss of two close family members within a short space of time caused Tolstoy to formulate serious ideas about death and happiness (nonauthored website, <http://www.literature-web.net/tolstoyhttp://www.html>).

### **Education**

His desire for knowledge led him to study law and oriental languages at Kazan University in 1844 at the age of sixteen. However, he never anticipated university studies to be difficult and was convinced by his aunt to take the entrance examination, which he failed initially. He passed his entrance examination the second time around. In time he became more interested in the social aspects rather than the academic aspects of university life. However, his social life did not pan out any better than his grades. He never took a degree, dissatisfied with the standard of education he returned to Yasnaya Polyana in the middle of his studies.

In succumbing to a sensual indulgent lifestyle he was treated for venereal disease in 1847 (Wilson 1988). After a brief futile attempt to improve the

conditions of the serfs on his estate, he plunged into the dissipations of Moscow's high society, which he vowed to reform. Unfortunately, in the process gambling became a serious vice of his. After contracting heavy debts he joined an artillery regiment in the Caucasus in 1851, at the age of 23.

He came into contact with the Cossacks and focused on them in one of his novels, *The Cossacks* in 1863. In this novel, Tolstoy compared the effectiveness of the sophisticated young Muscovite with the vigorous and natural Cossack life. According to Wilson (1988), between battles with the hill tribes, Tolstoy completed an autobiographical novel, *Childhood* in 1852, followed by two others, *Boyhood* in 1854 and *Youth* in 1856, which without rhetoric or sentimentality draw on the psychologically significant memories common to all growing boys.

These works received instant acclaim as did *Sebastopol*, a vivid picture of war as a soldier sees it. These were three stories based on Tolstoy's participation in the Crimean War. It is a sobering exposure of false heroics of the military command as opposed to the uncomplaining bravery of common soldiers and war's grim reality. On one of his dispatches to St. Petersburg, he made the acquaintance of literary men such as Turgenev.

Tolstoy returned to St. Petersburg in 1856 and became interested in the education of the peasants. According to Wilson (1988), the social order he found in Eastern Europe, did not appeal to him. In other words, he was not convinced that it was the remedy for Russia's problems. He did however focus his attention on the problem of the peasants once again. Only this time around it was directed at the education of peasant children.

While on trips abroad he visited French and German elementary schools, after which he opened twelve schools. He himself taught personally at *Yasnaya*

Polyana, where he started a school for peasant children, which in his teaching methods foreshadowed the tenets of modern progressive education. In 1861, after the liberation of the serfs, Tolstoy sat on the commission charged with settling boundary disputes between gentry and peasants. However, as a result of his sympathetic attitude toward the peasants, he drew a great deal of police attention to himself.

According to Tolstoy (1984) Tolstoy married Sonya (Sofya) Andreyevna Bers, in 1862 and over the next 15 years he raised a large family, successfully managed his estate and wrote his two greatest novels, *War and Peace* and *Anna Karenina*. *War and Peace* is considered to be one of the greatest novels ever written, an epic of Russian history between 1805 and 1815 (Wilson, 1988).

According to Wilson (1988), it contains 559 characters, commemorates important military battles and portrays famous historical personalities, but its main theme is the chronicle of the lives of aristocratic families. Tolstoy viewed the semi-conscious movement of the mass of the people with greater importance than the 'great men' (life-like creations of his book).

Tolstoy started work on "Anna Karenina" in 1873. The book "Anna Karenina" is a tragedy of contemporary life. According to unauthored website, <http://www.literature-web.net/tolstoyhttp:www.html>, it is Tolstoy's understanding of the character Anna, which turns the novel into a masterpiece. According to Wilson (1988), the characters are brilliantly realised by the descriptions of significant physical details and by Tolstoy's penetrating psychological analysis that illuminates their inner worlds, showing how they seem to themselves and to others at different moments of their lives.

Spontaneous, unaffected Natasha Rostova, one of the most famous heroines in Russian literature, who matures from an exuberant adolescent into a

solid matron, embodies Tolstoy's ideal of womanhood. Natasha remains unchanged in character, engrossed in private concerns of love, marriage and children and symbolizes Tolstoy's own optimistic belief in the natural stages of human life. She confirms Tolstoy's iconoclastic views, expounded in separate philosophical chapters in the novel. The historical process, for him, was the result of anonymous motivations and personal happiness during these creative years of a zestful life in all its manifestations. According to Wilson (1988), it was around this time that Tolstoy began experiencing a spiritual crisis, which was to convert him into a moral reformer with a moral purpose.

In 1878 at the age of 50 he finally resolved a significant internal conflict and accepted Christianity. In a uniquely candid and powerful confession Tolstoy described his growing spiritual turmoil, castigated himself and his class for leading a selfish, empty existence, and started his long quest for moral and social certitudes. He found them in two principles of the Christian Gospels, love for all human beings and non-resistance to the forces of evil. He expanded upon and illustrated his new radical faith in eloquent essays and tracts including, *The Kingdom of God is Within You*. Hence he became a prophet of a new kind of Christianity (nonauthored website <http://education.yahoo.com/reference/encyclopedia/entry?id=25947>).

His teaching placed emphasis on the obligations of work and of non-resistance to evil. Tolstoy fearlessly attacked social inequality and coercive forms of government and church authority, urging freedom from hatreds and a purer life dictated by one's own moral conscience. It was these radical views twenty-three years later that led to his excommunication from the Russian Orthodox Church in 1901. His didactic essays were translated into numerous languages and won adherents in many countries and from all walks of life.

In 1902 he wrote a letter to the Tsar, warning him of civil war unless Russia was granted its freedom. A recluse of sorts he became an opponent of the government. His privileged birth as well as literary genius enabled him to get away with denouncing the cruelty of the army he had served in as a soldier. He also denounced the unlawfulness of war itself, the inequality of the social hierarchy, the squalor and the oppression of the urban poor, the destitution of the starving and the criminality of the censor (Wilson, 1988:06). It is therefore with no surprise that he got censored.

Tolstoy's stance against poverty and war gave hope to many Russians who had previously felt the prospect of individual liberty in the face of a cruel bureaucratic tyranny an impossibility. Tolstoy's solutions for the problems of the nineteenth century were pacifism, vegetarianism, the reading of the gospels as well as a sense of self-worth and dignity.

Ninety volumes of his work occupy the shelves of the Russian library. English and French writers rather than the Russian writers influenced him. Two of Tolstoy's greatest were, the novels "War and Peace" and "Anna Karenina" (Tolstoy, 1984). Tolstoy liked to have believed that he spoke with the authentic voice of the Russian peasant even though his vision of Christianity was due to American Quakers and French Russianists rather than Russian Orthodox spirituality.

Tolstoy viewed the movements of history as a perpetual state of contradiction and struggle (Tolstoy, 1984). Through one of his aunt Alexandra's stories about the saints and heroes of the Russian church, he came to know that torture and capital punishment had no place in a Christian kingdom. The Russian people themselves adopted Christianity as a way of life, rather than a system of doctrine or as an institution. Tolstoy's life was greatly influenced by his cousin Major-General Prince Sergey Grigoryevich Volkonsky who wrote about the

falsehood of Russian politics, while in exile. According to Wilson (1988:17) Prince Volkonsky believed that “Life’s goals shouldn’t just exist, but exist with dignity.”

According to Wilson (1988:36) French philosopher Jean-Jacques Rousseau, was the greatest single influence on the development of Tolstoy’s thought. Rousseau believed that though the dogmas of the old religion were false, the kernel of moral truth contained therein is true.

Tolstoy was a self-conscious realist. Having witnessed the priest sprinkling the soldiers with holy water and thereafter encouraging them to kill their fellow men, by going to war, Tolstoy yearned for some form of Christianity, which would cut loose from the church. At the age of 82 years, tormented by the disparity between his teachings and his personal wealth and by endless quarrels with his wife, who resisted his attempts to renounce their material possessions, Tolstoy left his home one night accompanied by his doctor and youngest daughter. He fell ill three days later and died of pneumonia in November 1910, at a remote railway station. Today Tolstoy is generally considered to be one of the most influential moralists of the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

According to Tolstoy (1984:235), “Evil cannot be suppressed by the physical Force of the Government. The moral progress of humanity is brought about not only by individual recognition of truth, but also through the establishment of public opinion.” True peace is based on mutual confidence. Herein lies Tolstoy’s dilemma, regarding how divinely appointed spiritual guides and secular leaders in the world today, can demand of others in the name of the laws of the country or even of God, that they should participate in mass murders in the case of war.

Everyone in our Christian society knows, that either by tradition or by revelation or by the voice of conscience, that murder is one of the most fearful crimes a man can commit. The Bible also reinforces that sin is sin no matter what. There are no degrees of sin. In other words, murder for instance cannot be limited to certain groups of individuals and not others. The victims of murder are no different than those of adultery, theft, or any other sin for that matter.

A soldier for instance is compelled to carry out the orders of his/her superior without exception, even if it means breaking all the laws of God. His/her fidelity and allegiance is to the person in power at that given moment. In other words the whole power of the army and the state is based on the delusive emancipation of men and women from their duty to God and their conscience.

Tolstoy goes on to conclude that it is these very same soldiers, instruments of destruction, having abandoned family and friends and renouncing everything sacred to them, who stupefy themselves with alcohol and drugs to numb themselves, in order to block out the reality of their ugly missions. The tragedy remains long after their mission is complete. The emotional and psychological effects of the perversity and brutality of war and violence remain with them for years thereafter.

According to Tolstoy (1984:5), "The history of mankind is crowded with evidences proving that physical coercion is not adapted to moral regeneration and the sinful dispositions of men can be subdued only by love..." The adherents of Christianity are gentleness, meekness, peaceableness, and forgiveness of injuries, turning the other cheek and love for enemies.

In his books, 'The Kreutzer Sonata', 'Resurrection', 'Hadji Murat' as well as others, Tolstoy describes the ideal of life as he sees it, which is the dismantling of political institutions that impose their power upon the people and an

individual's refusal to participate in institutions of violence as a result of an inner conscience (nonauthored website, <http://www.san.beck.org/GPJ18-Tolstoy.html>). His moral doctrine made converts in many countries throughout the world, namely, the likes of our own Mahatma Gandhi and America's Martin Luther King Jr, to name but a few. His former estate Yasnaya Polyana became a place of international pilgrimage.

Unfortunately, his wife and family did not share his social and religious views. As a result, his relations with them became painfully strained. It would appear that the Archbishop of Kherson denounced Tolstoy as a heretic (Wilson 1988:5). He fled from home at the age of 82, in the company of his physician and youngest daughter, and died soon after from pneumonia. His funeral gave rise to an occasion of national demonstration. He was the world's greatest known novelist and social reformer.

According to Tolstoy there is a solution to the problem of a violent society, namely, a social solution of dismantling the political institutions, which by their nature impose their power upon the people and the individual solution of refusing to participate in institutions of violence as a result of an inner conscience (nonauthored website, <http://www.san.beck.org/GPJ18-Tolstoy.html>). Tolstoy held the belief that violence will never cease due to the threat of violence. It is only when people become good and refrain from it altogether that violence will cease.

The next leader I will be focusing on will be Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi.

## MOHANDAS KARAMCHAND GANDHI (1869-1948)



Figure 2: Photograph of Gandhi  
downloaded from the website,  
<http://www.gandhiinstitute.org/index.html>

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was a statesman and nationalist leader, who was born into a political Hindu family. Both his father and grandfather were prime ministers to the rulers of two adjacent and tiny princely states. He was popularly known as Mahatma Gandhi. The name Mahatma means great soul. Presently many people still refers to him as Mahatma Gandhi instead of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi.

This great Indian political leader played a major part in his country's struggle to win independence from Britain. He was a man who was regarded as having saint-like humility, as well as unshakeable courage and determination. Gandhi was a simple yet extraordinary man, who is still emulated by many today.

## Early Life

Gandhi was born in western India on 2 October 1869, the youngest of four children. At the age of six he started his schooling career. Although books surrounded him, he was a slow learner and had difficulty with spelling and mathematics (Adams 2002:8). However, through perseverance and hard work he eventually mastered difficult subjects such as geometry and Sanskrit, which is the ancient language of India. He showed no particular brilliance at school. In stature he was smaller than his friends. He disliked sports and was very shy. As a teenager he started smoking and even stole money from his family to pay for cigarettes, a crime he was later deeply ashamed of.

As a result of the custom in India to arrange marriages, Gandhi himself by the time he was seven years old had been engaged three times without his knowledge or consent. At the age of thirteen he was engaged and married to Kasturbai Nakanji (Jenkins, 1995:6), the daughter of a Porbandar merchant. Even though they spent a considerable amount of time apart they grew to love each other and their marriage lasted sixty-two years.

Out of this union was born four sons. Gandhi having gone through the process of arranged child marriages remained opposed to arranged child marriages for the rest of his life and did much to influence public opinion against it. As a boy he made friends with a boy whose job it was to clean out the lavatories in his home, “an untouchable” according to the orthodox Hindu Caste system at the time. Later on in his life, Gandhi’s defence of the “untouchables” was considered one of his bravest and most successful campaigns. He renamed these poor outcasts “Harijan” (Sons of God). This was also the name given to the weekly paper, which he published.

## **Academic Life**

In 1888 Gandhi left India to go to London to study law. He qualified as a barrister three years later and returned to India. In 1893 he arrived in South Africa to serve as legal adviser to an Indian firm. The twenty-one years that he spent in South Africa marked a turning point in his life. The racial indignities he and his countrymen were subjected to turned him into a political activist.

Realizing that violence was evil and rational persuasion often unavailing, he developed a new method of non-violent resistance, which he called *Satyagraha*, which he used with some success to secure racial justice for his people. He also reflected deeply on his own religion, interacted with both Jewish and Christian friends and evolved a distinct view of life based on what he found valuable in his own and other religions.

He commanded a Red Cross unit in the Boer War and organised a commune near Durban based on the ideas of Leo Tolstoy. Gandhi returned to India in 1915 after the government of the Union of South Africa made important concessions to his demands, including recognition of Indian marriages and the abolition of the poll tax for the Indians.

Gandhi became the unquestioned leader of the Indian nationalist movement. Almost single-handedly he transformed the middle and upper class Indian National Congress into a powerful national organisation, bringing in large sections of excluded groups such as women, traders, merchants, the upper and middle peasantry and youth, giving it a truly national basis.

Following the Amritsar Massacre in 1919 Gandhi led a nationwide campaign of passive non-cooperation with the government of British India, including the boycott of British goods. In 1922 the British imprisoned Gandhi for two years.

## **Developments of Gandhi's Thoughts and Practice**

Gandhi is one of the few influential social and political thinkers of the twentieth century who remains unique in his thought of the concepts of Satyagraha and ahimsa. Einstein declared Gandhi to be the most enlightened statesman of the age (Beck on the website, <http://www.san.beck.org/GPJ20-Gandhi.html>). Although Gandhi was a learned individual, he never received formal instruction in moral and political philosophy and religion (Copley 1930:3).

Gandhi was a Hindu by birth and through his absorption of the ideals of Jainism (a religion of the merchant or Bania communities); he became familiar with and attracted to the concept of ahimsa. This together with the concept of Satyagraha became two of the ideals at the center of Gandhi's philosophy. Satyagraha literally means holding on to truth. The Hindu understanding of Satyagraha is more than conceptual truth; it also means being, existence, and reality.

Ultimately it is realised that the essence of truth as a reality, is greater than any concept of the mind. Hence the term "soul-force" which conveys the idea of the employment of spiritual energies (Beck on the website, <http://www.san.beck.org/GPJ20-Gandhi.html>).

For Gandhi this spiritual reality was his goal. Gandhi concludes that while the means could always be controlled, the ends thereof could not. Therefore the art of Ahimsa is to act without hurting another or causing harm to be inflicted against another spiritual being. Satyagraha on the other hand is an attempt to awaken an awareness of the truth about the injustice in the perpetrators, and by ahimsa this is done without hurting them (Beck on the website, <http://www.san.beck.org/GPJ20-Gandhi.html>).

Convinced that the independence of the Indians had no meaning without a racial, moral and social transformation, Gandhi launched a comprehensive programme of national regeneration. This involved fighting prejudices against manual labour, overcoming the urban-rural divide, developing love of indigenous languages and eradicating the caste-based discriminatory practice of Untouchables.

Gandhi also fostered among his countrymen national self-respect and confidence in their ability to overthrow British rule. He gave Hinduism an activist and social orientation, generously borrowed from other religions and cultural traditions, thus becoming an inspiring example of a genuine inter-faith and inter-civilization dialogue.

He perfected the method of Satyagraha discovered in South Africa, added new forms of action to its repertoire and developed what he called the “new science of non-violence” involving moral conversion of the opponent by a delicate “surgery of the soul,” thereby inspiring the great poet Rabindranath Tagore. According to Gandhi the rules guiding the Satyagrahis were as follows: -  
Satyagrahis should

- ❖ Harbour no anger; instead they should suffer the anger of their opponent,
- ❖ Not resist arrest by a person in authority nor resist confiscation of property,
- ❖ Not swear or curse or insult the opponent nor join cries that are contrary to the spirit of nonviolence,
- ❖ Not fast to gain conveniences,

- ❖ Trust the care of dependents to God, and
- ❖ Not cause communal quarrels.

The above information was taken from Beck on the website, <http://www.san.beck.org/GPJ20-Gandhi.html>.

While fighting simultaneously on the social, economic, religious and political fronts, Gandhi carried out an even fiercer battle at a personal level. From 1901 onward he embarked on doing experiments in sexual self-control, rejecting the “cowardly” celibacy of traditional religions. Gandhi’s moral and political thought was based on a relatively simple metaphysic.

For Gandhi the universe was regulated by a supreme Intelligence or Principle, which he termed Satya (Truth) and as a concession to conversation, God. It was embodied in all living things, above all in human beings in the form of self-conscious soul or spirit. Since all human beings partook of the divine essence, they were “ultimately one.” They were not merely equal but “identical.” As such love was the only proper form of relation between them.

It was “the law of our being” of “our species.” Positively, love implied care and concern for others and total dedication to the cause of “wiping away every tear from every eye.” Negatively, it implied ahimsa, or “non-violence.” Gandhi’s entire social and political thought including his theory of Satyagraha, was an attempt to work out the implications of the principle of love in all areas of life.

For Gandhi, the state “represented violence in a concentrated form” (Beck on the website, <http://www.san.beck.org/GPJ20Gandhi.html>). It spoke the language of compulsion and uniformity, sapped its subject’s spirit of initiative and self-help, and “unmanned” them. Since human beings were not fully

developed and capable of acting in a socially responsible manner, the state was necessary. However, if it was not to hinder their growth it had to be so organised that it used as little coercion as possible and left as large an area of human life as possible to voluntary efforts.

As Gandhi “imagined it”, a truly non-violent society was federally constituted and composed of small, self-governing and relatively self-sufficient village communities relying largely on moral and social pressure. The police were basically social workers, enjoying the confidence and support of the local community and relying on moral persuasion and public opinion to enforce the law. Crime was treated as a disease requiring not punishment but understanding and help.

The standing army was not necessary either, for a determined people could be relied upon to mount non-violent resistance against an invader. Since the majority rule violated the moral integrity of the minority and “savoured of violence”, were based on consensus, arrived at by rational discussion in which each strove to look at the subject in question from the standpoint of others.

For Gandhi, ‘rational discussion’ was not just an exchange of arguments but also a process of deepening and expanding the consciousness of the participants. When it was conducted in a proper spirit, those involved reconstituted each other’s being and were reborn as a result of the encounter. In extreme cases, when no consensus was possible, the majority decided the matter, not because it was more likely to be right but for administrative and pragmatic reasons. If a citizen felt morally troubled by a major discussion, that person was entitled to claim exemption from and even to display it (nonauthored website, <http://www.mkgandhi.org/nonviolence/index.htm>).

Civil disobedience was a “moral” right. To surrender it was to forfeit one’s self-respect and integrity. A non-violent society was committed to sarvodaya, the growth or upliftment of all its citizens. In Gandhi’s view it was a “sin against humanity” to possess superfluous wealth when others could not even meet their basic needs.

The rich should take what they needed and the rest should be held in trust for the community. He suggested this idea of trusteeship should be enforced by organised social pressure and even by law. Gandhi advocated heavy taxes and limited rights of inheritance and state ownership of a just and equal society.

Gandhi expected his followers to commit acts of non-violence with the specific purpose of setting a perfect contrast with acts of violence. He also believed that mutual toleration is the golden rule of conduct and forgiveness is the attribute of the strong. As opposed to Satyagraha, Gandhi holds that passive resistance does not necessarily involve complete adherence to truth under every circumstance (nonauthored website, <http://www.medev.nic.in/Gandhi/Satyagraha.htm>). In essence true religion has to be lived in the challenging context of political and social life.

Through most religious groups however, it has been ascertained that self-restraint is dearer to God than violence. Satyagraha is therefore the law of love, which opposes violence, and ahimsa is the love for truth. Gandhi will have one know that truth cannot be realized in human relationships except through the practice of ahimsa, which put simply is the practice of restraint.

### **Leadership to Independence**

Although Gandhi left for Southern Africa in 1893 on an intended one-year contract, he remained here for twenty-one years, becoming known as a

campaigner for Indian civil rights. Having experienced racism and harassment first hand upon arrival in this country (South Africa), Gandhi was convinced that the Indian community must organize itself to fight for its basic rights in Southern Africa. The first time Gandhi ever made a political speech was when he addressed the Indian merchants in Pretoria (nonauthored website, <http://www.gandhiinstitute.org/index.html>). Gandhi also linked up personal self-improvement with political and social struggle, which became a common theme in everyone of his campaigns.

Gandhi was also instrumental in helping to launch the Natal Indian Congress, which took up a number of important issues regarding the Indian community. Although Congress did not always win, it had considerable success in organizing the Indian people of Southern Africa. In championing the cause of the Indentured labourers he argued for full Indian equality. He recognised that a much larger black and Indian community posed a threat on the small white community, therefore he argued for Indian equality under the law. In this way Indians as subjects of the British Empire were entitled to the same equality under its laws as every other British subject, Black, White or Indian.

During the Boer War of 1899 Gandhi argued that as a result of being full and equal subjects of the British Empire Indians were to accept its obligations to fight for the Empire when asked to. Ironically Gandhi did not believe in violence. He also organised the Indian Ambulance Corps to help the wounded. More than three hundred free and eight hundred indentured labourers joined the Corps (Adams 2002:21).

In addition to being greatly influenced by the writings of Russian author Leo Tolstoy, Gandhi was equally influenced by the work of British writer and critic John Ruskin, who wrote “not greater wealth but simpler pleasure, not higher fortune but deeper felicity [happiness]” (Adams 2002:21). This message of

Ruskin's impacted on Gandhi to such an extent that he purchased land outside Durban where he created an "ashram," a spiritual community later known as the Phoenix Settlement. People who lived at the Ashram were required to be honest, celibate, non-violent, and fearless, to wear simple clothes without jewelry and give up their personal belongings. This particular piece of Ruskin's work prompted Gandhi to take a vow of celibacy to control his personal pleasures and to focus all his energies into worthier causes such as fighting for Indian equality before the British law.

Gandhi's representation of many Indians in legal cases against the government in 1903 resulted in him becoming the leading Indian politician both in Gauteng (previously known as Transvaal) and the rest of Southern Africa. The government's proposal in 1906, that all Indians be fingerprinted and made to carry certificates at all times, incited Gandhi to implement the method of response known as 'Satyagraha,' (A positive act of civil resistance, not just a passive act of non-compliance with the law but it required a positive, active participation in any campaign).

Gandhi referred to Satyagraha as, "the vindication of truth not by infliction of suffering on the opponent but on oneself" (Adams 2002:26). Violence therefore is a show of outward strength, which is physical, while peace is a show of inner strength, which is mental, spiritual and emotional.

On the 11 January 1908 Gandhi was arrested with other Indians for the Asian Registration Act, also referred to as the Black Act. This Act denied Indians the right to immigrate and settle in Gauteng without valid registration and documents. Gandhi was well read and corresponded regularly with writers and thinkers worldwide. The teachings of Russian author Leo Tolstoy in his book entitled "War And Peace" made a significant impact on Gandhi's life. Gandhi like Tolstoy abandoned his wealth for a 445-hectare peace of land, which became

a haven for Satyagrahis (those involved in Satyagraha campaigns) and their families. This place was named Tolstoy Farm in honour and memory of the Russian author Leo Tolstoy.

Due to Gandhi's efforts, an agreement was reached between himself and General Jan Smuts on behalf of the government on the 30 June 1914 (Adams 2002:31). The agreement was to put an end to poll tax on indentured labourers to stop all indentured labour by 1920, to recognise Hindu and Muslim marriages as legal and to give Indians limited rights of movement between provinces, provided they carried identity cards. This recognised the basic rights of the Indian community and also gave them some status in South Africa. Gandhi returned to India on 18 July 1914, after a 21year stay in South Africa. He achieved all he could for the Indian community during that time.

In 1930 he proclaimed a "new campaign of civil disobedience," calling upon the Indian population to refuse to pay taxes, particularly on salt. The campaign was halted after the British made concessions to his demands. However, in 1932 he began new civil disobedience campaigns against the British. He resigned from politics to travel through India, teaching and promoting social reform. However, in 1939 he returned to an active political life, attacking colonial policy over the federation of Indian principalities with the rest of India. Gandhi decided not to support Britain during World War II until they granted India complete and immediate independence.

By 1944 the British government agreed to independence on condition that the Congress Party and the Muslim league resolve their differences. Despite Gandhi's resistance to the principle of partition, India and Pakistan became separate states when the British granted India its independence in 1947. Bloody sectarian violence ensued. When the Hindu's and Muslims were engaged in fierce intercommunal strife in 1946 and 1947, he moved among them to intervene.

Through sheer force of personality he consoled the inconsolable, dissolved hatred and restored a climate of humanity.

When a bomb was dropped at one of his prayer meetings a few weeks later, he chided his frightened audience for being scared of a 'mere bomb.' Through fasts, he quelled violence in Calcutta and New Delhi. When the government of independent India decided with popular support to renege on its promise to transfer to Pakistan its share of assets, he took on the entire country and successfully fasted to awaken its sense of honour and moral obligation. This deeply angered a section of Hindu nationalists one of whom, after respectfully bowing to him, shot him dead at a prayer meeting on January 30, 1948.

### **Posthumous Legacy**

Gandhi's "intellectual influence" on his countrymen was considerable. Though only a few accepted his ideas, none rejected them all entirely. Some were "attracted by his emphasis on political and economic decentralization" (non authored website <http://www.gandhiinstitute.org/index.html>), others by his insistence on freedom, moral integrity, the unity of means and ends and social service. His teaching on Satyagraha and political ideas impressed others.

For others it successfully inoculated India against the virus of Hindu communalism, cultivated a spirit of non-violence, encouraged the habits of collective self-help, and helped lay the foundations of a stable, morally committed and democratic government. Gandhi's ideas have also had a profound influence outside India, where they inspired non-violent activism and movements in favour of small-scale, self-sufficient communities living closer to nature and with greater sensitivity to their environment.

Gandhi spent twenty-one years opposing discriminatory legislation against Indians. His book 'Hind Swaraj' or Indian Home Rule outlined his hope

for “an exploitation-free society.” His civil disobedience campaign of 1920 resulted in violent disorders. Gandhi himself was jailed from 1922 to 1924 for conspiracy. In 1947 he hailed Britain’s decision to grant India independence as the noblest act of the British nation (non authored website <http://www.gandhiinstitute.org/index.html>).

According to Larousse (1994:187), Gandhi was venerated as a moral teacher, a reformer who sought an India free from materialism, and a dedicated patriot who gave the Swaraj movement a new quality. However, critics thought him the victim of a power of self-delusion, which blinded him to the disaster and bloodshed his ‘nonviolent’ campaigns invoked. In Asia he had been regarded as a great influence for peace. His teachings had a message not only for India of whose nationhood he became the almost mystical incarnation but also for the world at large.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi influenced people around the world with his philosophy of peace and non-violence. Looking at what Gandhi taught and how he tried to influence events through his beliefs, it is indeed remarkable how his inquisitive mind interwove ideas from different religions and philosophies and moulded such beliefs as ‘Satyagraha.’ Although Gandhi accomplished much, he rarely held office in a political party or became a member of parliament. Instead, he led by example through his teachings and in so doing altered the course of history in India, as well as the rest of the world. Gandhi educated himself not just in law, passing his final exams in July 1891 but in politics and religion as well.

### **Gandhi and Christianity**

There was a stage in Gandhi’s life when he was almost convinced of the validity of Christianity. Gandhi’s first brush with Christianity came at the age of 17 while he was in London studying law. After passing his law exams, he

accepted a legal post in South Africa, where he stayed for 21 years. He organised Indian ambulance units for the British during the South African War and served with Christians under fire.

He formed a friendship with a Christian missionary, C.F. Andrews, and corresponded with the Russian writer Tolstoy. He was greatly influenced by the teachings of both these men. However, his main work remained for his fellow countrymen. Gandhi included, among others, Christian scriptures in his prayer meetings, which he conducted and at which he made his most important announcements.

Gandhi was a man without wealth, property or title who could not boast scientific achievement, yet he won the respect of governors. He was truly a man of humility and simple truth. Gandhi's stance against Indian injustices and declaration of independence formed his first act of rebellion. Incidentally he was also the first politician to promote non-violence. Gandhi quoted the Bible in his reference to passive resistance, when an individual is struck on one cheek they should turn the other also. In order to achieve a common goal Gandhi encouraged the Indian communities to stand together thereby exercising the biblical concept of "loving thy neighbour as thy self" (Matthew 19: 18, Galatians 5:14).

Gandhi stood out against an era plagued by two world wars, acts of genocides, mass murder, wars and conflict around the world and the development of weapons of mass destruction. In the midst of all this violence Gandhi devised and implemented a method of Satyagraha, a means of using peaceful protest to achieve peaceful change.

In the words of Gandhi "Non-violence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind, it is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction

devised by the ingenuity of man” (Adams 2002:96). Gandhi was prepared to die for a course rather than kill for a course. He believed that individuals should fight against anger and not provoke it. He also believed that he was commissioned to make India proud of herself.

Peace movements, anti-nuclear and anti-war activists in Europe and around the world have all used Gandhi as an example in their campaigns to rid the world of arms and conflict. However, not all of them have been as successful as Gandhi. As long as humankind suffers war, injustices and poverty Gandhi will be remembered as someone who showed everyone how to challenge evil without doing evil oneself.

Gandhi brought hope and comfort to the millions of poor and oppressed people of India. He attempted to heal the angry rift between the Hindus and Muslims of India, which otherwise threatened to tear his country apart. Gandhi’s constant work for international brotherhood, and relief for the suffering inspired many people around the world. As a modern political leader, Gandhi was outstanding.

Gandhi like (South Africa’s ex president) Mr. Nelson Mandela was able to influence millions simply by personal example and gesture. He was often described as one who cared nothing for sensual pleasures, material wealth, personal comfort, praise or promotion. He simply did what he thought to be right. He preached and practiced great tolerance. At the same time he was not easily persuaded to accept another’s point of view. He was of the opinion that logical argument was not always right. He went on to explain that no proof was required for certain matters (Oxford Junior Encyclopaedia, 1960:180). His vagueness regarding solutions to certain political problems often disappointed many a responsible person. “Bapu” (Daddy) is how many of his followers affectionately addressed him.

Like his predecessor, Russian novelist, Leo Tolstoy, Gandhi devoted his time and effort to fighting the plight of the less fortunate among other things. In addition to fighting for and achieving independence for his people on the whole. Gandhi also fought against the caste system of the time as well as religious segregation. He was outspoken in his criticisms of those Indian customs and beliefs he considered inferior to those of Britain. He supported Indian nationalism by publishing newspapers and pamphlets, and visiting the different parts of the country, often on foot. He often chose the poorest parts of the city to stay at, when he visited.

He sent his followers into remote villages to teach about hygiene, first-aid, and to encourage villagers to become self-reliant, by setting up handicraft industries. Would I be incorrect in saying that the memory of this unique individual, reveals more Christ likeness than any Christian individual I am aware of presently? It is therefore easy for me to conclude, that it was Christ's teaching of peace and love, which influenced Gandhi's thought, conduct and speech.

The next leader I will be focusing on is Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

## MARTIN LUTHER KING (1929-1968)



Figure 3: Photograph of Martin Luther King was downloaded from the website, [http://www.mrque.web66.com/dr\\_martin\\_luther\\_king\\_jr\\_.htm](http://www.mrque.web66.com/dr_martin_luther_king_jr_.htm)

American clergyman and Nobel Laureate, Martin Luther King Jr. was one of the principal leaders of the American civil rights movement and prominent advocate of nonviolent resistance to racial oppression. His charismatic leadership inspired men and women, young and old, in America as well as the rest of the world. Through his courage and selfless devotion, the movements and marches he led brought significant changes in the fabric of American life (unauthorized website, <http://www.stanford.edu/group/king/aboutking/>). He was born “Michael Luther King in Atlanta on January 18<sup>th</sup> 1929.” His father was a Baptist minister and his mother was a former schoolteacher. King received the name Martin when he was about the age of six.

King proved to be an exceptional student. His schooling career would have begun at the age of five had his age not being discovered. He was not permitted to continue until he reached the age of six. Even though King was refused entry into school at the age of five, his high scores in the college entrance exams in his junior year at high school, resulted in him skipping both the ninth

and twelfth grades of high school and advancing to Morehouse College in Atlanta at the age of fifteen (nonauthored website, <http://www.thekingcenter.com/mlk/bio.html>).

According to nonauthored website, <http://www.thekingcenter.com/mlk/bio.html>, King graduated from Morehouse College with a BA degree in Sociology in 1948. Upon obtaining his degree it was not King's intention to enter the ministry. However the influence of one Dr Benjamin Mays convinced him that a religious career could also have its intellectual satisfactions (<http://www.mrque.web66.com/dmartinlutherkingjr.tm>).

As a result of this King enrolled at Crozer Theological Seminary in Chester Pennsylvania. He was elected President of the Senior Class and delivered the Valedictory address. He won the Peral Plafkner Award for outstanding student of the graduating class and also received the J. Lewis Crozer Fellowship for graduate study at a university of his choice, all this at the age of seventeen. In 1947 he was ordained a Baptist minister (nonauthored website, <http://www.thekingcenter.com/mlk/bio.html>).

His studies at Crozer and Boston led him to explore the works of Indian nationalist Mohandas K. Gandhi, whose ideas became the core of his own philosophy of nonviolent protest. In 1955 King received his PhD degree and was asked to lead a boycott in Montgomery, Alabama. Married by this time, King returned south, where he also pastored the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery. King became a pivotal figure in the civil rights movement. According to nonauthored website, <http://www.thekingcenter.com/mlk/bio.html>, he was elected President of the Montgomery Bus Boycott and his first mark on the civil rights movement was mobilizing the black community, during a 382-day boycott of the city's bus lines.

In the cause of the 382-day action King was arrested and jailed. His home was bombed and many threats were made against his life. At this stage King had employed armed men to guard his home and he applied for a gun permit, (nonauthored website, <http://www.stanford.edu/group/king/aboutking>). The boycott ended in 1956 with a mandate from the Supreme Court outlawing all segregated public transport in the city. The US Supreme Court declared the Alabama laws requiring bus segregation unconstitutional.

The Montgomery boycott was a clear victory for the nonviolent protest and King emerged as a highly respected leader. According to nonauthored website, <http://www.stanford.edu/group/king/aboutking>, it was the success of the Montgomery boycott that settled King's adherence to the philosophy of nonviolence and thereafter it became more than a method of intellectual assent, but rather a committed way of life for him. The success with the Montgomery boycott, taught King the lesson he needed to learn. King also decided, through the inspirational works of Gandhi, that the philosophy of nonviolence was to be both the philosophical and theological basis of his commitment to social change, (nonauthored website, <http://www.stanford.edu/group/king/aboutking>). King believed that nonviolence was the only morally and practically sound method to the oppressed people in their struggle for freedom.

He saw himself as a modern day Moses (nonauthored website, <http://nobelprize.org/peace/laureates/1964/king-lecture.html>). In the Bible Moses led his people from a life of slavery in Egypt, across the Red Sea and into the wilderness, thereafter they were led into the Promised Land by Joshua. King used this story in the Bible to relate to the people that freedom would not come easily and neither would there be no cost involved. The philosophy of nonviolence would leave them sometimes frustrated and bewildered.

Mindful of this, he summoned together black clergymen from across the South in 1957, and laid the groundwork for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), with himself as its president. It was his organisation of the SCLC that gave him a base from which to pursue civil-rights activities.

### **Civil Rights Leadership**

Before looking at civil rights leadership, one needs to understand what civil rights mean. According to Cook, <http://teacherlink.ed.usu.edu/t/resources/units/Byrnes-celebrations/martin.html>), civil rights are “personal rights that citizens of a nation enjoy such as freedom of speech, freedom to vote, freedom of assembly, and freedom to attend public places.” It was government’s denial of these rights that caused King to take up the plight of Negroes in America.

During his visit to India, he was able to work out more clearly his understanding of the concept of “Satyagraha”, Gandhi’s principle element of nonviolent persuasion, which King had determined to use as his main instrument of social protest. He returned to the United States in 1960 and gave up his pastorate in Montgomery to co-pastor with his father in Atlanta. This was a strategic move that enabled him to participate more effectively in the national leadership of the burgeoning civil rights movement.

While in Atlanta, King led marches and peaceful protests against segregation. He encouraged the Negro people to protest in peace and love and not to get angry when treated unjustly. However, not all his followers listened to him, instead they protested with fighting and violence. In the mid-1960’s King’s leadership in the civil rights movement was challenged as individuals within the Negro communities grew more militant, (nonauthored website, <http://education.yahoo.com/reference/encyclopedia/entry?id=2574>). At the time black leadership was undergoing a racial transformation. Having once focused on

litigation and reconciliation, it was now demanding change “by any means possible.”

Differences between the SCLC and other groups were inevitable, but King’s prestige ensured that nonviolence, although not universally popular at the time, remained the official leader of resistance. In 1963 he led a massive civil rights campaign in Birmingham, putting his nonviolent tactics to their most severe test. In Alabama he organised drives for black voter registration, desegregation and better education and housing throughout the South.

During these nonviolent campaigns he was arrested several times, but his voice was not silenced, hence his classic “Letter from a Birmingham jail.” In this letter he addressed fierce criticisms that his activities were “unwise and untimely.” King equated his passion and zeal for the freedom of his people, with the eighth century prophets persistence and unrelented proclamations against the Israelite kings, the gospel of Jesus Christ, as well as the apostle Paul’s determination to carry the gospel of Jesus Christ to practically every hamlet and city of the Graceo-Roman world. They were passionate and persistent about what they believed in.

King believed that “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere” (nonauthored website, <http://www.historicaltextarchive.com/sections.php?>). Police brutality against the marches dramatized the plight of Blacks to the nation at large. He led the historic March on Washington, August 28, 1963 where he delivered his famous “I have a Dream” speech. In 1964 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. This meant that his work for peace and equal rights was recognized worldwide. King gave his prize money to civil rights workers (nonauthored website, <http://teacherlink.ed.usu.edu/t/resources/units/Byrnes-celebrations/martin.html>).

According to King there are four steps to any nonviolent campaign. They are as follows:- (nonauthored website, <http://www.historicaltextarchive.com/sections.php?>).

- ❖ Collection of the facts to determine whether injustices are alive,
- ❖ Negotiation,
- ❖ Self-purification, and
- ❖ Direct action.

Therefore, King's followers had to attend workshops on nonviolence as well as go through a process of self-purification, before embarking on any nonviolent activity in Birmingham. This shows the seriousness and discipline with which King approached his practice of nonviolent direct action. The following awards were among the numerous received by King, for his leadership in the Civil Rights Movement:-

- ❖ The Second Annual Achievement Award from The Guardian Association of the Police Department of New York, 1958.
- ❖ Selected as one of the sixteen world leaders who had contributed most to the advancement of freedom during 1959 by Ling Magazine of New Delhi, India.
- ❖ Named "Man of the Year," by Time Magazine, 1963.
- ❖ The Nobel Peace Prize in 1964.
- ❖ The Marcus Garvey Prize for Human Rights in 1968.

- ❖ The Aims Field-Wolf Award for his book, *Stride Toward Freedom*.

The above information was taken from nonauthored website, <http://www.thekingcenter.com/mlk/bio.html>.

## **King's Philosophy of Non-Violence**

According to King, (nonauthored website, <http://www.historicaltextarchive.com/sections.php?>), tension is necessary to create a crisis that will force a community, which had previously refused to negotiate, to confront and deal with issues. In other words tension is an integral part of non-violent direct action, because it seeks to dramatize an issue, which can no longer be ignored.

Nonviolent direct action also includes breaking the law. According to King, (nonauthored website, <http://www.historicaltextarchive.com/sections.php?>), it is permissible to break the law when one's conscience tells one that the law is unjust and when one willingly accepts the penalty thereof, so as not to arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice. King goes on to show that this kind of civil disobedience is not a new phenomenon.

He traces it back to the Old Testament (the book of Daniel), where Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego refused to obey the laws of king Nebuchadnezzar because of a higher moral law that was involved. Early Christians were prepared to face hungry lions and the excruciating pain of chopping blocks, rather than submit to certain unjust laws of the Roman empire. There must always be a just cause for civil disobedience as well as a willingness on the part of the so called "defaulter" to face the penalty for his/her disobedience.

In his fight for black civil rights, King attributed the greatest stumbling block in the Negro's stride toward freedom, to the white moderate. He believed

that the white moderate devoted more to “order” than to justice. This group of individuals preferred a negative peace, which involved the absence of tension to a positive peace, which involves the presence of justice, (nonauthored website, <http://www.historicaltextarchive.com/sections.php?>). Their advice to the Negro community, was to wait until a “more convenient season.” King referred to this line of thought, as the shallow understanding from people of goodwill, which is more frustrating than the absolute misunderstanding from people of ill will.

Meanwhile the tension in the south was viewed merely as a necessary phase of the transition from an obnoxious negative peace, which was the passive acceptance of the Negro’s unjust plight to a positive peace, which involved respecting the dignity and worth of human personality. Through nonviolent direct action, tension is brought to the surface where it can be seen and dealt with. Injustice must likewise be exposed through the tension it creates, in order to pierce through human conscience and national opinion before being cured.

King equated the condemning of nonviolent direct action with the condemning of Jesus because of “His unique God-Consciousness and never-ceasing devotion to His will precipitated the evil act of crucifixion” (nonauthored website, <http://www.historicaltextarchive.com/sections.php?>). It is immoral to urge an individual to withdraw his/her efforts to obtain basic constitutional rights because the quest precipitates violence. It should be the government’s responsibility to protect the robbed and punish the robber. King didn’t just express his disgust for the words and conduct of the “bad people,” he was equally appalled by the silence of the “good people.”

Tolstoy concluded that it would take just one individual, well groomed in Christian principles to make a difference and bring about change. According to nonauthored website, <http://www.historicaltextarchive.com/sections.php?> human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability; it comes through the

tireless efforts and persistent work of individuals willing to be co-workers with God. King saw the need and acted in urgency to lift his country's national policy from the quicksand of racial injustice, to the solid rock of human dignity.

With time King became increasingly sensitive to the variety of forms violence could take. It also became clear that scores of Northern cities that had sent protest marches to the South were themselves amiss in correcting racial discrimination. There were three groups of individuals within the Negro community that needed to be addressed: Firstly, Negroes who due to long years of oppression and stripping of self-respect had resigned themselves to a life of *segregation* and secondly, *middleclass* Negroes, who as a result of a degree of academic and economic security had become insensitive to the problems of the masses, and thirdly, there were those who had become bitter and full of hatred as a result of their circumstances and were difficult to restrain from acts of violence (nonauthored website, <http://www.historicaltextarchive.com/sections.php?>).

Angry black youth showed little interest for King's pulpit oratory and little if no concern for his pleas, for peaceful protest. They probably belonged to the latter group. One such Black Nationalist group was the Elijah Muhammad's Muslim movement, which was just one of the many groups which emerged as a result of frustration over continued racial discrimination in the United States of America. It was therefore a very difficult task for King to point these groups to a more excellent way of love and nonviolent protest. The latter group especially, had lost their faith in their country as well as in Christianity. This was later viewed as one of the factors influencing King's decision to focus his attention to the war in Vietnam.

*Had it not been for King's nonviolent efforts, millions of Negroes as a result of frustration and despair, would have sought solace and security in Black Nationalist ideologies and the streets of America would have become an endless*

bloodbath. King encouraged his people to channel healthy discontent through the creative outlet of nonviolent direct action. He saw it as an honour for him to be labelled an extremist because Jesus Christ was also labelled an extremist (nonauthored website, <http://www.historicaltextarchive.com/sections.php?>).

Jesus Christ was an extremist for love (Matthew 5:44), "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you." In Amos 5:24, the prophet Amos is seen as an extremist for justice. The Apostle Paul was also an extremist for the gospel of Jesus Christ, "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." So King shared something in common with a very select group of people in that he had nothing to be ashamed about. Extremists are passionate about the cause they believe in. King felt the same about nonviolent direct action in the quest for freedom. The question is then, not whether or not to be an extremist, but rather what kind of an extremist to be?

It is therefore tragic that churches stood on the sidelines, mouthing pious irrelevancies and sanctimonious trivialities in the midst of blatant injustices inflicted upon the Negroes, (nonauthored website, <http://www.historicaltextarchive.com/sections.php?>). This was probably the reason why many Negroes lost faith in and repudiated Christianity. To add insult to injury, church leaders further attributed the black struggle to social issues, with which the gospel had no real concern. This kind of attitude resulted in King commenting that the church had become "a religious community largely adjusted to the status quo, standing as a tail-light behind other community agencies rather than a headlight leading men to higher levels of justice" (nonauthored website, <http://www.historicaltextarchive.com/sections.php?>). The church as the body of Christ had been blemished and scarred through social neglect and fear of being nonconformists.

King believed that the early Christians rejoiced when they were deemed worthy to suffer for what they believed in because “in those days the church was not merely a thermometer that recorded the ideas and principles of popular opinion; it was a thermostat that transformed the mores of society” (nonauthored website, <http://www.historicaltextarchive.com/sections.php?>). The early Christians knew that they had to obey God rather than man. In comparison the contemporary church is seen as often weak and ineffectual, their numbers are great, but their commitment is small.

The church in King’s day is very much like the church today, it does nothing more than console the power structure of the average community with its silent, and often vocal sanction of things as they are. King recognised in his day, and so too should every Christian today, that if the church does not “recapture the sacrificial spirit of the early church, it will lose its authentic ring, forfeit the loyalty of millions, and be dismissed as an irrelevant social club with no meaning” for the twenty first century, (nonauthored website, <http://www.historicaltextarchive.com/sections.php?>).

Later on many civil rights leaders were antagonized by King’s declaration that the United States was “the greatest purveyor of violence in the world.” This brought about an immediate rift, with the following prognosis:-

- ❖ The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) viewed King’s shift of emphasis as “a serious tactical mistake.”
- ❖ The Urban League warned that the “limited resources” of the civil rights movement would be spread too thin.

- ❖ Bayard Rustin claimed black support of the peace movement would be negligible.
- ❖ Ralph Bunche felt King was undertaking an impossible mission in trying to bring the campaign for peace in step with the goals of the civil rights movement.

However, looking back at history, King's timing couldn't have been more perfect. King's opposition to war by referring to it as a tragic adventure, which throws the destiny of the entire world into chaos, forced white middle class citizens to concede that no movement could dramatically affect the course of government unless it was a product of deliberate and restrained aggressiveness, persistent dissent and militant confrontation.

These made up the ingredients of the civil rights struggle in the South in the early 1960s. The movement comprised students, professors, intellectuals, clergymen and reformers. King continued to focus his attention on the Vietnam struggle, which was in essence the "War on Poverty."

With his War On Poverty stance, King began drawing up plans for a massive march of the poor on Washington D.C. A demonstration of this magnitude was seen as a sure way of forcing Congress and political parties to acknowledge and deal with the unseen and ignored masses of desperate and destitute Americans.

A decision by King to put on hold these plans to lend assistance to the Memphis sanitation men's strike, was partly as a result of his desire to discourage violence and once again to focus attention on the plight of the poor. King was unable to eliminate the violence, which emanated from the summoning and subsequent departure of the National Guard. However, he did remain in

Memphis and was in the process of planning a march he vowed to carry out in defiance of the federal court injunction if necessary.

### **Assassination**

King's subsequent preoccupation with Vietnam and his determination to lead a Poor People's March on Washington combined with shifting public priorities to change his leadership, brought him to near exhaustion from stress and he increasingly alluded to his possible death. He was undeterred however, for as he put it on April 3, 1968 he had "been to the mountain top and seen the Promised Land."

The following day King was shot and killed in Memphis, Tennessee. His death caused a wave of violence in major cities across the country. A white escaped convict, James Earl Ray was arrested for the murder. He pleaded guilty and in March 1969 was sentenced to 99 years in prison. In 1983 president Ronald Reagan passed a bill stating that the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday in January be designated a national holiday in honour of King's birthday (nonauthored website, <http://teacherlink.ed.usu.edu/t/resources/units/Byrnes-celebrations/martin.html>). His Atlanta birthplace and graveside was also made a national historical site.

He was known as Dr Martin Luther King Jr. an American Baptist minister. He dedicated his life to changing the way black people were treated in America and despite many threats on his life he organised campaigns, boycotts, marches and other forms of peaceful protest to bring justice for the black people of America.

As a result of his efforts black people in America were awarded equal voting rights in 1965. His life and vision of a peaceful and fairer world are an inspiration for oppressed people all over the world. King can be identified as the

prime mover of the Montgomery bus boycott (1956), a keynote speaker at the march on Washington (1963), and the youngest Nobel Peace Prize laureate (1964).

According to a nonauthored website, <http://www.san.beck.org?GPJ25-KingCivilRights.html>, King's policy of nonviolent protest was the dominant force in the civil rights movement. It reached its greatest achievement from the period 1957-1968. The principle of nonviolence demands that the means used must be as pure as the ends sought. Therefore to use moral means to preserve immoral ends is just as wrong as using immoral means to attain moral ends. Those individuals, who participate in nonviolent acts, must be courageous and willing to suffer and display outstanding discipline in the midst of inhuman provocation.

According to nonauthored website, <http://www.thekingcenter.com/mlk/bio.html>, "Dr. King's concept of 'somebodiness,' which symbolized the celebration of human worth and the conquest of subjugation, gave black and poor people hope and a sense of dignity." King's philosophy of nonviolent direct action as well as his strategies for rational and non-destructive social change aroused the conscience of Americans and reordered their priorities.

Like Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr. placed great emphasis on religion in his struggle for freedom. He held the belief like Gandhi, that physical force should be met with soul force. This required dignity and discipline. The use of physical restraint was also part of King's strategy, which he had labeled "ahimsa" (Beck on the website, <http://www.san.beck.org?GPJ25-KingCivilRights.html>).

Both men were courageous enough to take the risk to go against the government, to oppose violence with restraint and to challenge individuals to exercise their religious faith and to examine their consciences. It is no surprise

then that both these gentlemen were named in a legacy of peace builders which opened at a Durban Art Gallery.

It was through the powerful vision and dedication of men like Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. who were dedicated to correcting the plight of the poor and oppressed, that altered the course of history. They achieved this by fostering peace and equality positively. King presented nonviolence simply as Christianity in action. According to King, by Beck on the website <http://www.san.beck.org/GPJ125-KingCivilRights.html>, there are six key points on the philosophy of nonviolence, listed as follows: -

- ❖ Is not based on cowardice,
- ❖ Does not seek to defeat the opponent but rather to win his/her understanding,
- ❖ Attacks evil and not those individuals who do evil,
- ❖ It willingly accepts suffering without retaliating,
- ❖ Avoids both physical and spiritual violence; love replaces hatred, and
- ❖ Has faith that justice will prevail.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. wrote six books pertaining to his activities for peace and justice; they are as follows:- (nonauthored website, <http://www.thekingcenter.com/mlk/bio.html>).

- ❖ Stride Toward Freedom – The story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott,
- ❖ The Measure of a Man – A selection of sermons,
- ❖ Why We Can't Wait – The story of the Birmingham Campaign,
- ❖ Strength To Love – A selection of sermons,
- ❖ Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community? – Reflections on the problems of today's world, the nuclear arms race, etc. and
- ❖ The Trumpet of Conscience.

The struggle to change conditions in America, and win equal protection under the law for citizens of all races, formed the backdrop of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. short life.

## SUMMARY

In this chapter I looked at the lives of four individuals who revolutionized their communities as well as the rest of the world. Their legacies have lasted much longer than the memories of their deaths. These were men of great courage and perseverance, by whose efforts and contributions we are today liberated from the ignorance of violence.

For instance, the goodness, justice and concern for others which the man Jesus embodies, are to be shown in all social relationships, to enable states, nations and individuals to reflect the divine will of God in the world. Dr Martin

Luther King Jr. teaches that we must all learn to live together as brothers or we will all perish together as fools.

According to a nonauthored website, <http://www.mrque.web66.com/dr>, the reader is told, "man throughout history has sought to achieve justice through violence." The danger of this method is that it creates more problems than it solves. Looking at the achievements of Leo Tolstoy, Gandhi and Martin Luther King, non-violent means at obtaining world peace is neither absurd nor unattainable. It is an absolute commitment to the way of love and love is the most durable power in the world. Love is the absolute necessity for the survival of our civilization.

King was not convinced at first, that the ethics of Jesus were applicable when racial groups and nations were in conflict. However, after reading Gandhi's work, he began to think differently. Gandhi's emphasis on love and nonviolence influenced King's thought pattern. Gandhi was probably the first person in history to lift the love ethic of Jesus above mere interaction between individuals to a powerful and effective social force on a large scale.

Tolstoy, Gandhi and King although separated by different cultures and continents, shared the same goals, which brought them on a common humanitarian path. Gandhi was a Hindu who latched on to Tolstoy's alternative for violence as a means to an end. The concept of non-violence impressed him to such an extent, that he made a study of other religions as well as his own, in search of the truth. He concluded that the Christian principles of love your neighbour as yourself, turning the other cheek and resisting not evil by force were key factors in the struggle against violence. Gandhi lived by nonviolent principles.

Martin Luther King Jr. was an African American Christian who infused nonviolent principles with love and broke the iron-grip, which segregation held

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Martin Luther King Jr. was an African American Christian who infused nonviolent principles with love and broke the iron-grip, which segregation held

on American social systems. King himself became a great admirer of Gandhi. However like Tolstoy, it is said that Gandhi's teachings bear a distinct resemblance to Adin Ballou's. The same gentleman who's works influenced Tolstoy's opinions on nonviolence. In response to the question that his teaching on Satyagraha was a religious philosophy, Gandhi stated that there is a deeper religion, which transcends Hinduism and Christianity as well as other religions (Rosi on the website, <http://rachele.rosi-kessel.org/BallouTolstoyGandhiMLK.html>). It is this deeper religion that ties Gandhi to Tolstoy and to Ballou, and the final link in the chain would be Martin Luther King Jr.

King's teachings on nonviolence can be traced back to Gandhi, hence also to Tolstoy and to Ballou. It took another Christian preacher, Dr Martin Luther King Jr. to bring Ballou's non-resistance theory to American soil. According to Rosi on the website <http://rachele.rosi-kessel.org/BallouTolstoyGandhiMLK.html>). "Ballou's theory had been so transformed, through the interpretation of Tolstoy and Gandhi, that by the time King discovered it, it was no longer limited to Christianity."

## *Chapter 5*

### **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

In this chapter I will conclude by providing a brief overview of this dissertation and make recommendations regarding an alternate method to violence and its destructiveness.

According to Tolstoy (1984:1), there has been a minority of men from the foundation of Christianity who have professed a doctrine of non-resistance to evil by force. One such group were known as the Quakers. The Quakers have professed the teaching of Christ on non-resistance to evil by force by not using weapons in self-defence.

During the reign of Constantine, the Church abandoned its essential policy of non-violence, to gain the power and prestige of being the official religion of the Roman Empire. Congregation members were no longer forbidden to bear arms in defence of the State.

According to Tyson on the website <http://www.sermonillustrator.org/sermon/Gandhi>, "Gandhi's philosophy of compassion was much nearer to the original gospel of Jesus Christ than anything thought and practised by the Churches that profess Christianity." In order to be saved a Christian is supposed to follow Christ's celibate example in thought, act and deed.

The Bible teaches in John 8:32, "Ye shall know the Truth and the Truth shall make you free." Gandhi, a pacifist, who taught his followers the way of non-violent resistance, declared also "Truth is God and that God is the only liberator."

Origen the great (Alexandrian Father of the Church), declared that Jesus forbade the taking of human life and therefore we are no longer to take the sword against any nation, nor learn war because we have become sons and daughters of peace through Jesus Christ. Ironically, so-called Christians have taken part in or given their consent to, two world wars in the present century, with the blessings of their apostate Church.

Gandhi denounced violence and cruelty and championed nature's cure and spiritual healing. Although nations have frequently won their independence in battle, violence never brings permanent peace. Instead of solving social problems, it creates new and more complicated ones. According to King, nonauthored website, <http://nobelprize.org/peace/laureates/1964/king-lecture.html>, "Violence is impractical because it is a descending spiral ending in destruction for all." It is immoral in that it seeks to humiliate the aggressor rather than win his/her understanding. Violence also thrives on hatred rather than love.

Nonviolence on the other hand seeks to redeem the spiritual and moral nature of an individual. It seeks to secure moral ends through moral means and is also a just and powerful weapon that cuts without wounding and ennoble the individual who wields it. Nonviolent means should be adopted if one's end is a community at peace with itself.

Jesus not only taught and practised spiritual healing, but his early followers understood it to be part of the Christian way of life. Gandhi's belief held that one should not hurt the person of any wrong-doer, or bear any ill will to him/her so as to cause him/her mental suffering. According to a nonauthored website, <http://www.medev.nic.in/Gandhi /nonviolence.htm>, the whole issue of non-violence is a deliberate self-suffering as opposed to deliberate injuring of the supposed wrongdoer. Gandhi's philosophy of "ahimsa" means the largest love,

the greatest charity. Herein lies the biblical commandment, "love your enemy." One is expected to show love to one's enemy as one would to oneself.

In other words the same principle must apply to the wrong doer, an enemy or stranger as to oneself. According to the theory of "ahimsa" a true soldier is one who knows how to die and stand his/her ground in the midst of a hail of bullets and not one who would rely on physical strength and weaponry.

American civil rights leader, Martin Luther King Jr. believed that non-violence is absolute commitment to the way of love. According to nonauthored website <http://www.stanford.edu/group>, King's response to the theory "an eye for an eye", is that this would "end up leaving everyone blind." In our struggle for justice, King views physical violence creating more social problems than it is able to solve.

According to an article in the Sunday Tribune, April 11, 2004 on peace and development, "To talk tough and to act tough will not solve crime and joblessness. See how Sharon has plunged the Middle East into a horrible crisis through his bloody mindedness." One has to network to promote reconciliation, peace, safety, honesty, and high standards in education, rapid development and proper oversight of government.

The three great problems facing humankind are, racial injustice, poverty and war. Once these three problems are solved, humankind would have squared its moral progress with its scientific progress and most importantly, humankind would have learnt the practical art of living together in unity (nonauthored website, <http://www.stanford.edu/group>).

In the words of King, "love is the most durable power in the world. It is not an expression of impractical idealism, but of practical realism" (nonauthored

website <http://www.stanford.edu/group>). It is absolutely necessary for the survival of our civilization. As the songwriter so aptly puts it, "Where is the Love? What are the values of humanity? Instead of spreading love, mankind is spreading animosity."

The media is propagating more war and violence. War and violence is sensationalised rather than love and peace. It's no longer about what's right and what's wrong but rather what sells that counts. At the court hearing for Jesus Christ, the crowd chanted, crucify Him! Crucify Him! Jesus' miraculous works a thing of the past, so soon forgotten, the crowd bayed for the blood of an innocent man. This is an example of how individuals react under the power of sensationalism and emotionalism. Reason goes out the window when emotions are stirred, as in the case of the abovementioned example.

President John. F. Kennedy once stated that "mankind must put an end to war or war will put an end to mankind." There is no longer a choice between violence and non-violence. It is either non-violence or non-existence. Humankind must learn to live together in unity or else we will all perish together like fools.

For humankind to survive then an alternative to war and destruction needs to be found. The essence of the non-violent technique is that it seeks to liquidate antagonisms but not the antagonists themselves. Non-violence requires strength, and there is nothing automatic or intuitive about the resoluteness required for using non-violent methods in any form of struggle, be it political or social, in the quest for Truth.

According to Rosi on website <http://rachele.rosi-kessel.org/Ballou-Tolstoy-Gandhi-Mlk.html> it has been concluded that Tolstoy drew his opinions and ideas of non-violence from Adin Ballou, who himself became converted to a

radical form of Christianity based on the teachings of Jesus. Ballou found the root of Christianity in the doctrine of non-violent resistance to evildoers and it is to this that the great peace movements of the 20<sup>th</sup> century owe much of its development.

Also it wasn't just Tolstoy who arrived at the same conclusion as Ballou, but according to Rosi on website <http://rachele.rosi-kessel.org/Ballou-Tolstoy-Gandhi-Mlk.html> Gandhi's teachings also bear a distinct resemblance to Ballou's and King's teachings can be traced directly to Gandhi. Herein lies the Christian foundation in the doctrine of non-violence.

Judging from the expressions and interpretations of the doctrine of non-violence by Leo Tolstoy, Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King, it shows that Christian teaching plays a major role in the application thereof. Peace cannot be found anywhere because men and women have no peace in their own hearts. This is the real issue in the quest for worldwide peace. According to MacArthur. Jr. (1980:136), "Peace is merely a brief glorious moment in history when everybody stops to reload." The irony is that in 1945 in the aftermath of world war 11 the United Nations brought itself into existence with the motto, "To have succeeding generations free from the scourge of war" (MacArthur. Jr. 1980:136).

However, since that time there hasn't been one day of peace on earth. This therefore amounted to nothing more than a pipe dream. According to MacArthur. Jr. (1980:136), there will be no peace for as long as individuals do not get along with each other and relationships remain fragile. It has also been reported that people have mental and emotional illnesses as never before.

There are more dysfunctional families now than ever before. Schools have become chaotic with disorder and prisons are overcrowded and prisoners are breaking out of prison like never before. It can therefore be stated that since

man/woman have no peace within themselves, the world, which is a mere projection of them, is thereby riddled with chaos. My qualitative research validates my hypothesis, which states the relevancy of Christ's teachings on peace today as it was centuries ago. I say again peace is not just the absence of war but also the presence of God. The fear of God should be brought back into the homes, churches and schools, etc.

## **A RETROSPECTIVE OVERVIEW OF CHAPTERS**

This study focuses on the following:-

Chapter 1 presented the statement of the problem to be analysed and the research methodology that has been used as well as provided a brief outline of the structure of this dissertation as a road map for the reader.

Chapter 2 looked at the Biblical Basis that was fundamental for this research.

In Chapter 3 I focused on the doctrine of nonviolence, its origination, impact on the state and individual and attitudes towards nonviolence and war. I utilised Tolstoy's work, *The Kingdom of God is Within You* as my main source.

Chapter 4 gave the definition to the term leadership and the leadership of four individuals and the influence that they had on their societies as well as the rest of the world were highlighted.

Chapter 5 was concluded, by presenting a brief overview of this dissertation, which was used as a road map for the reader. Recommendations were made regarding the application of nonviolent means in situations of conflict.

I concluded with the bibliography that was used to conduct this research.

## **CONCLUSIONS**

I have mapped out the issue of war and violence, its bloodshed and wickedness. I've uncovered its destructive and corrupt force on humanity. I've also looked at the nonviolent stance in bringing about change peaceably and with dignity. Needless to say the latter is more appealing than the former. If there is an alternative to bloodshed, then by all means it should be applied in situations of conflict.

A peaceful, harmonious community may appear a bit far-fetched and unrealistic at first glance. However, that is what Jesus intended for humankind. Love is supposed to be one's objective, not hate. Peacemaking is a heroic task. A true peacemaker goes to the root off the problem. He/she learns to deal with the causes not the effects. It is the responsibility of a true peacemaker to make peace with God first, with himself/herself second and finally with others.

One cannot make a study of the New Testament without experiencing something of the nature of a shock in view of the glaring difference between the Christian life as one wants to live it, and the ideal as set forth by the Master (Jesus Christ).

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Further research needs to be conducted, which should include lives of individuals in South Africa. This research should be developed into a textbook that could be used for secondary school education. Individuals need to know and understand the art of peace in its truest form, before enjoying the benefits thereof. Christians are the forerunners of peace and should therefore be advised to re-examine the Biblical text 1 Corinthians 13:4-7.

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