

WHAT WE BELIEVE

Peace and War

XVI PEACE AND WAR

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations, and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

GOD CREATED US FOR PEACE

- Romans 12:18 - If possible, on your part, live at peace with everyone.
- Matthew 5:9 - Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.

GOD CREATED US FOR PEACE

- God created us to have peace with him, with ourselves, with each other, and even with the creation itself
- This was the way Adam and Eve existed at the beginning when God created them and placed them in the garden
- Sin robs us of our peace

GOD CREATED US FOR PEACE

- Conflict and violent confrontation have marked the human experience ever since Adam and Eve were cast out of Eden. Historians estimate that war has been the nearly constant experience of humanity. Periods of widespread peace and freedom from conflict have been all too brief and infrequent.

WE MAKE PEACE THROUGH THE GOSPEL

- God promised that the Prince of Peace would come and bring with him a kingdom that would be characterized by peace
- We are able to enter that kingdom, receive forgiveness of our sins, and be transformed into the image of God once again, because the Prince of Peace himself, Jesus Christ, made it possible

WE MAKE PEACE THROUGH THE GOSPEL

- Once we have experienced that peace, we can become peacemakers – once we know the Prince of Peace and have experienced the peace of God we can be agents of that peace

WE MAKE PEACE THROUGH THE GOSPEL

- 2 Corinthians 5:19-20 – “God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not counting their trespasses against them, and He has committed to us the word of reconciliation. Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were making an appeal through us; we beg you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God.”

WE MAKE PEACE THROUGH THE GOSPEL

- Ephesians 6:15 - and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE;

PEACE AND WAR

- . The experience of Christians throughout the centuries demonstrates the difficulty of living at peace with others as well as the complexity of understanding how we are to seek peace.
- . Some Christians have adopted pacifism - a total rejection of all armed conflict.

PEACE AND WAR

- Most Christians are not strict pacifists. Although they hate war, they see some possibilities as even worse, including the slaughter of innocents, and they see the necessity of war in certain situations.
- Most Christians have adopted some form of Christian moral realism, a reluctant but honest recognition that armed conflict may sometimes be necessary and may even be morally superior to other options.

PEACE AND WAR

- In general, this understanding takes the form of what theologians and philosophers call the just-war theory.

JUST WAR THEORY

- The effort must have a just cause, which means that the use of force must be defensive and never offensive.
- The force must also be employed with a just intention to secure a fair, lasting peace for all parties.

JUST WAR THEORY

- War must also be understood as a last resort, when all other legitimate means of settling a conflict have been tried and have failed.
- Other principles demand that a just war limit objectives to what is necessary to establish a just peace, that the use of force be approved by legitimate authority, that only proportionate means be used, and that noncombatants be protected whenever possible.

JUST WAR THEORY

- There must also be a reasonable chance of success and a realistic hope that the conflict will lead to a superior, lasting peace.

THE REIGN OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE

- The scourge of war is another reminder of why Christ died and why true and permanent peace can come only when Jesus Christ returns and subjects all powers to His authority.

THE REIGN OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE

- Isaiah 9:6 - For a child will be born to us, a son will be given to us;
And the government will rest on His shoulders;
And His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Eternal Father, Prince of Peace.

THE REIGN OF THE PRINCE OF PEACE

- Luke 2:14 - Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace among men with whom He is pleased.
- Revelation 17:14 - These will wage war against the Lamb, and the Lamb will overcome them, because He is Lord of lords and King of kings, and those who are with Him *are the* called and chosen and faithful.