

*IS WAR COMPATIBLE WITH
THE SPIRIT AND TEACHING*

OF

JESUS CHRIST

&

EARLY CHRISTIANS?

&

*Subsequent
Attitude changes
Considered in sequence.*

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*The following is from a wider study that includes consideration of other
scriptures and further insights particularly from George Fox and Friends
(Quakers) with a particular emphasis on experiences of Irish Friends.*

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This edition is abbreviated from a more detailed and wider study, for further information see Postscript.

INTRODUCTION.

Here assembled are the teachings of Jesus Christ & Early Christians on relationships and war. It is for the reader to decide if they are compatible, and how to apply them in the 21st Century.

Verses listed include the whole section out of which the printed quotes have been taken. *The author's comments are in italics.*

For ease of access the main points are in **bold**.

Scriptures are mainly quoted from New Revised Standard Version of the Bible. You are encouraged to read the quotations in context so references are given. In doing this you will find that some quotes are not word for word. For example some text has been put into the 1st person, and on some occasions a word or phrase, mostly from other translations, that the editor feels more apt or clearer has been substituted *in italics*. It is hoped that these changes have not distorted any meaning. Some early Christian writers from other sources are also quoted

This booklet sets out the Biblical /Christian basis of Friends' testimony that all war is inconsistent with the spirit and teaching of Christ. It also illustrates the slide back to supporting war since the time of Jesus.

SECTION A

CONSIDER WHAT JESUS TAUGHT ON RELATIONSHIPS

1. LOVE

1.1 RELATIONSHIPS ARE TO BE BASED ON LOVE

The second commandment is this, ‘You shall love your neighbour as yourself.’ Mark 12:28-

“This is my commandment, that you love one another as I (*Jesus*) have loved you. As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love”. John 15:9-12 **“By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.”** John 13:34-35

1.2 LOVE IS NOT TO BE LIMITED TO THOSE WHO LOVE US.

(Jesus said) **“If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? For even sinners love those who love them..... But love your enemies.....”** Luke 6:32

1.3 IMPLICATIONS OF LOVE

Love your neighbor as yourself, *includes loving your neighbor in the next generation:-*

War leaves roots of bitterness. Memories of Cromwellian wars and displacement of peoples from their homes still rankle some people in Ireland today after 350 years. Use of anti personnel mines and weapons containing radioactive material like depleted uranium are likely to cause health problems for children yet unborn.

2. FORGIVENESS

2.1. FORGIVENESS OF OTHERS IS AN INTEGRAL PART OF BEING FORGIVEN OURSELVES

(Jesus said) **“Whenever you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against anyone;”** Mark 11:25

(Jesus said) **“When you are praying, do not heap up empty phrases “Pray then in this way:...**

And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

For if you forgive others their trespasses, your Heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.” Matthew 6:7-15

2.2 HOW MANY TIMES ARE WE TO FORGIVE?

Jesus said to him, “Not seven times, but, I tell you, seventy times seven” .. Matt 18:21-22

2.3 LACK OF FORGIVENESS OF OTHERS MAKES US LIABLE FOR SINS GOD HAS ALREADY FORGIVEN US.

My heavenly Father will punish every one of you, [for already forgiven debts] if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart.” Matt 18:23-35

“There are no resentments in heaven, either we get rid of them here or we won't be there.” Dorothy M Sinton

2.4 SPOKEN FORGIVENESS

On the Cross Jesus said, “Father, forgive them; for they do not know what they are doing.” Luke 23:32-34

While Stephen was being stoned to death, he prayed aloud, **“Lord, do not hold this sin against them.”** Acts 7:59-60

I feel the situation in Ireland today would have been worse without those like Gordon Wilson, & Michael McGoldrick's parents who have spoken forgiveness, after a child of theirs was killed by terrorists.

Note that neither Jesus nor Stephen waited to be asked for forgiveness before forgiving.

2.5 THERE SEEMS TO BE NO BASIS IN THE TEACHING OF JESUS TO JUSTIFY WAITING FOR A PERSON TO APOLOGISE BEFORE WE FORGIVE THEM.

Sometimes people think an apology is necessary before forgiveness, possibly because of confusing reconciliation with forgiveness. Forgiveness sets us free and readies us for reconciliation when/if the apology arrives.

3. RECONCILIATION

3.1 FACE UP TO OUR OWN FAULTS

With the judgment you make you will be judged, ^{Matt 7:2} do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive*, and you will be forgiven; ^{Luke 6:37} (*different word from one usually translated forgive, **“Release and you will be released.”RV**). “Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy. ^{Matt5:7}

Why do you see the speck in your neighbor’s eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? ^{Matt7:3-4} Or how can you say to your neighbor, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ while the log is in your own eye? ^{Luke 6:41-42} You hypocrite, (***you actor! Get real!***) first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbor’s eye.

^{Matt 7:3-4}

3.2 OUR RESPONSIBILITY TO BE RECONCILED

“If you remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother or sister, and then come and offer your gift”. ^{Matt 5:23-26}

When I was speaking to a group of people in Black Church in Jamaica, I felt called to ask forgiveness, that probably my ancestors in England had done nothing when their ancestors were being shipped on slave ships.... Their faces lit up.

3.3 BASIS FOR RETALIATION ?

“You have heard that it was said, ‘An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.’ But I (*Jesus*) say to you, do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also”. ^{Matt5:38-42}

When James and John wanted to call down fire on village that would not receive them Jesus “turned and rebuked them and said, “You know not what spirit you are of; the son of man has not come to destroy men’s lives but to save them.” ^{Luke 9:51-56}

3.4 IMPLICATIONS OF LOVE & ANGER

While the emphasis of Jesus was clearly for his followers to be motivated by LOVE and to make love their aim, this did not stop him exposing actions that he considered wrong.

“You have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not murder’; and ‘whoever murders shall be liable to judgment.’ But I [Jesus] say to you that if you are angry with a brother or sister, you will be liable to judgment;” Matt 5:21-22

Since Jesus calls us to avoid anger - a root of murder - not just to avoid murder, how can his followers be justified in taking part in premeditated killing, or preparations for it?

4. RELATIONS WITH ENEMIES

4.1 WHO IS MY NEIGHBOR?

“But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Luke 10:25-37 Jesus answered by telling the story of the Good Samaritan ... implying that people of other cultures were neighbors.

4.2 LOVE YOUR ENEMIES

“You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I [Jesus] say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, Matt 5:43-48

“But I [Jesus] say to you that listen, Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you. If anyone strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also; and from anyone who takes away your coat do not withhold even your shirt. Give to everyone who begs from you; and if anyone takes away your goods, do not ask for them again. Do to others, as you would have them do to you. Luke 6:27-31

IN THE TEACHING OF JESUS, WHERE IS THERE ANY BASIS FOR VIOLENCE OR WAR AGAINST THE ENEMIES YOU LOVE?

With Jesus calling us to relationships based on love, forgiveness, & reconciliation - not only in relation to those who love us but also to our enemies, where is there any basis for violence and war?

4.3 GOD NOT PLEASED WITH DEATH OF WICKED

“God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him”. John3:17

“God our Savior, ...desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth”. 1Tim.2:3-4

“Say to them, As I live, says the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn from their ways and live; turn back, turn back from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel?” Ezekiel 33:11

5. TEMPTATION TO HAVE EARTHLY POWER

5.1 TEMPTATION OF JESUS

One of the temptations Jesus faced in the desert recorded in Matt 4:8-10 and Luke 4 was to have earthly power. “When the devil had finished every test, he departed from him until an opportune time”. Luke 4:13

5.2 TEMPTATION THROUGH HIS DISCIPLES WHEN THEY WERE REJECTED

When Jesus and disciples were on the way to Jerusalem a Samaritan village rejected the disciples, “When his disciples James and John saw it, they said, “Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?” But he turned and rebuked them.” Luke 9:51-

56

5.3 TEMPTATION FROM SCRIPTURE?

We do not know if Jesus was tempted through thinking of fulfilling the scripture Isaiah 53:12 about being counted among the transgressors and lawless; maybe thinking that he actually had to be a transgressor? What we do know is that having taught that his disciples would be known by their love for one another... love for enemies... at the last supper he told them to buy swords. see Luke 22:35-38

5.4 “NOT WHAT I WANT”.....STRENGTH TO PERSEVERE IN DIFFICULT SITUATION

In the place called Gethsemane; Jesus said, “Abba, Father, for you all things are possible; remove this cup from me; yet, not what I want, but

what you want.” Mark 14: 32-41 *but the disciples slept, and were unprepared so note the difference between their attitudes and actions and those of Jesus.*

5.5 VIOLENCE OF UNPREPARED

When Jesus was betrayed one of his disciples struck the slave of the high priest and cut off his right ear. But Jesus said, “No more of this!” And he touched his ear and healed him. Luke22:47 –53 **Jesus said to Peter, “Put your sword back into its sheath. Am I not to drink the cup that the Father has given me?”** John 18:10-11

Would it not appear that whatever the intentions of Jesus in asking his Disciples to buy swords, his surrender to the Father’s will in the Garden of Gethsemane strengthened him to choose the way of love for enemies, instead of violence. He healed the servant’s ear and told his followers to use no more violence.

By telling Peter to put up his sword, some early Christians felt that Jesus, in effect, told all his followers not to fight with the sword for his kingdom.

6. CITIZENSHIP

6.1 CITIZEN OF WHERE?

Pilate said, “What have you done?” Jesus answered, **“My kingdom is not from this world. If my kingdom were from this world, my followers would be fighting to keep me from being handed over to the Jews, but as it is, my kingdom is not from here.”** John 18:35-37

Jesus’ public ministry revolved around sharing the good news of the kingdom of God. Starting with, “Repent for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand” Matt 4:17 and included teaching his disciples to “pray thy kingdom come” Matt 6:10. He and his disciples interchanged the phrases “eternal life” Matt19:16 and “entering the kingdom” Matt19:24 with “being saved.” Matt19:25 Near the end of his ministry Jesus explained to Pilate (John 18:36) that his kingdom was not of this world. Early Christian writing later explains how this was understood.

6.2 From Epistle to Diognetus, thought to have been written between 120 to 200AD

. “They take their full part as citizens, but they also submit to anything and everything as if they were aliens. For them, any foreign country is a motherland, and any motherland is a foreign country. They repay calumny with blessings, and abuse with courtesy. For the good they do, they suffer stripes as evildoers; and under the strokes they rejoice like men given new life.” · From Early Christian Writings Penguin Classics

7. WHO DO WE SERVE (WHO IS BOSS)?

(Jesus said) “No one can serve two masters; for a slave will either hate the one and love the other, or be devoted to the one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon” Matt 7:24

(Jesus said) “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly”. John 10:10

Is it right for one who has decided to follow Jesus (who came to give life and give it more abundantly) to commit to obeying orders, which may tell one to kill and destroy?

8. DO NOT SWEAR

“Again, you have heard that it was said to those of ancient times, ‘You shall not swear falsely, but carry out the vows you have made to the Lord.’ But I *(Jesus)* say to you, Do not swear at all”,. Matt 5:33-37

There are two implications in this passage:

- *The concept of having one standard of honesty.*
- *The concept at that time that, fulfilling a vow was more important than acting according to moral standards like obeying the commandment not to kill. There is an apparent example of this in the “binding by the oath” ,in Acts 23:21, apparently giving Paul’s opponents the right to kill him.*

In telling us not to swear, Jesus advises us not to get involved in either aspect.

War Crimes Tribunals of recent times have not accepted a military oath to obey orders as a valid alibi for actions of genocide.

Clement, disciple of Peter and afterwards Bishop of Rome wrote:
“For it is not an ordinary harm that we do ourselves, but rather great danger that we shall run, if we shall rashly give up ourselves to the wills of men who promote strife and seditions, to turn us aside from what is fitting. But let us be kind to one another, according to the compassion and sweetness of him who made us. For it is written the merciful shall inherit the earth and they that are without evil shall be left upon it: but the transgressor shall perish from the face of it”. Clement 7:8-1 Epistle to Corinthians from Lost Books of the Bible

9. AS CHRISTIANS, DO WE DO WHAT JESUS TOLD US?

“Why do you call me ‘Lord, Lord,’ and do not do what I tell you?” Luke 6:46
“Not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven.

Matt 7: 21-22

‘Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.’ Matt 25:41-46

SECTION B

CONTEXT OF MESSAGE OF JESUS.

10. RECAPPING ON SOME OF THE OLD TESTAMENT

10.1 DRIVE OUT AND ONLY ALLOW A FEW TO LIVE

Moses commanded the people to drive out all the inhabitants of the land, and told them that if they didn't, the inhabitants who remained” would be barbs to them”. Numbers 33:50-55

And Joshua said at Jericho “Only Rahab the prostitute and all who are with her in her house shall live” Joshua 6:17

10.2 BUT THERE ARE HINTS OF A BETTER WAY

The Old Testament not only includes the ideal of loving ones neighbour as oneself but also says “you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were

aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the LORD your God.” Leviticus 21:33-34 see

also Exodus 22:21,23:9

10.3 NON VIOLENT SOLUTIONS

*Amidst the violence and examples of man’s inhumanity to man, is found, tucked away in 2 Kings 6: **Elisha had attackers fed and sent them home in peace.***

10.4 GOD’S PROTECTION

There are also examples of Gods protection in the Old Testament. In Exodus 14 the pursuing army was drowned in the Red Sea and in 2 Kings 8 the severe siege of Samaria was lifted.

10.5 PROPHECY OF FUTURE PEACE

The prophet Isaiah speaks of the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.

“They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation.” Isaiah 2v3 see

also Micah 4:1-5

Also there is prophesy of the coming “Prince of Peace” and of the “increasing peace” ... Isaiah 9v6-7 ...

11. CONTRAST AND FULFILMENT OF OLD TESTAMENT

The teachings of Jesus were clearly rooted in the Laws of Moses about loving God and loving ones neighbor. Jesus fulfilled the prophesy in the Old Testament.

*And there is a tremendous **contrast** for example between the words of the Psalm:*

“Do I not hate those who hate you, O LORD?

I hate them with perfect hatred;

I count them my enemies.” Psalm 139:19-24

*And....: Jesus saying, **“But I say unto you love your enemies”** Luke 6:27*

*This saying of Jesus seems in part to be an **answer to the Psalmist’s plea** “Search me, O God and know my heart: try me and know my thoughts and see if there be any wicked way in me and **led me in the way everlasting”.***

Psalm 139:-24

12. NEW TEACHING OF JESUS

Jesus also said, “A new commandment I give unto you love one another.” ^{John13:34} **“The law and the prophets were in effect until John came; since then the good news of the kingdom of God is proclaimed,”**

Luke 16:16

*Jesus contrasted the accepted norms and understandings of Old Testament teaching of his day with his phrase **“but I say”**.*

13. EARLY CHRISTIAN’S APPRECIATION OF WHO JESUS WAS:

It was against this background that Early Christians saw the coming of Jesus

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. ...The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world. ... to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God”, John 1:1-13

14. EARLY CHRISTIANS’ APPRECIATION OF HOW FAITHFUL JESUS WAS IN TEACHING WHAT HE WAS GIVEN BY HIS FATHER.

Then Jesus cried aloud: **“for I have not spoken on my own, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment about what to say and what to speak. And I know that his commandment is eternal life. What I speak, therefore, I speak just as the Father has told me.”** ^{John 12:44}

15. DECISION NOT TO IMPOSE A LOT OF EXISTING PRACTICES ON GENTILE CHRISTIANS

Along with the writer to the Hebrews, 1:1-2, The early church recognized that while in times past God spoke through his prophets he has now spoken through his son.

The early church saw that the teaching of Jesus superseded much of the earlier teaching and decided not to impose much of it on Gentile believers (Acts 15).

While present day Christians profess to recognize that Jesus came from God; is the son of God and look to him as mediator and savior, they appear to disconnect from the new and living way that Jesus taught and prefer the instructions people felt they received in the Old Testament in relation to the way they were supposed to treat their enemies.

SECTION C WHAT THE APOSTLES TAUGHT

16. JAMES

16.1 WISDOM FROM ABOVE

“But the wisdom from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without a trace of partiality or hypocrisy. And a harvest of righteousness is sown in peace for those who make peace.” James 3:13-18

16.2 WHERE WARS COME FROM

“Those conflicts and disputes among you, where do they come from? Do they not come from your cravings that are at war within you? You want something and do not have it; so you commit murder. And you covet something and cannot obtain it; so you engage in disputes and conflicts”. James 4:1-5

“Come now, you rich people, weep and wail for the miseries that are coming to you.Listen! The wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. You have lived on the earth in luxury and in pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter” . James 5:1-6 see also Luke 6:24 and Luke 9:15

17. JOHN

17.1 SOURCE OF BLINDNESS

“But whoever hates another a brother or sister is in the darkness, walks in the darkness, and does not know the way to go, because the darkness has brought on blindness.” ^{1John2:9-11} **“Can a blind person guide a blind person? Will not both fall into a pit?”** ^{· Luke 6:39-42}

Are we not in great danger if we are led by people blinded by hatred and resentment?

18. PETER

18.1 RELATIONS WITH GOVERNMENTS

For the Lord’s sake accept the authority of every human institution, whether of the emperor as supreme, or of governors, as sent by him to punish those who do wrong and to praise those who do right. For it is God’s will that by doing right you should silence the ignorance of the foolish. **As servants of God, live as free people, yet do not use your freedom as a pretext for evil. Honor everyone** (*for there is that of God in everyone*). **Love the family of believers. Fear God. Honor the emperor.**

^{1Peter2:13-17}

Note: Our freedom is limited by Love and Jesus did not put a limit on who to love.

18.2 OBEDIENCE TO GOD BEFORE MAN

In Acts 4 Peter had chosen to listen to God rather than the religious rulers **“Whether it is right in God’s sight to listen to you rather than to God, you must judge; for we cannot keep from speaking about what we have seen and heard.”** ^{Acts 4:18-21}

Believers are called to obey governments in what is right, yet live in the freedom of servants of God.

19. PAUL

19.1 FOR PAUL THE BATTLE TO BE FOUGHT WAS NOT WITH WORLDLY WEAPONS.

“For though we live in the world we are not carrying on a worldly war for the weapons of our warfare are not worldly but have divine power to the pulling down of strongholds” ^{· 2Cor10:3-4 RSV see also Ephesians 6:10-17}

19.2 RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS, INCLUDING GOVERNMENTS - PURPOSE OF GOVERNMENT - ALL ENCOMPASSED BY LOVE.

19.2.1 LOVING ONE'S NEIGHBOUR AS ONESELF OVERCOMING EVIL WITH GOOD

“Let love be genuine; hate what is evil, hold fast to what is good; love one another with mutual affection; extend hospitality to strangers. Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them....do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to *the indignation of God directed at wrongdoing* Greek lexicon alternative for *οργη*; for it is written, “*Vindication* how same Greek word is translated Luke18:7 RSV **is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” No, **“if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good**” . Rom 12:9-21**

19.2.2 SUBJECT TO THOSE IN AUTHORITY

“Let every person be subject to the governing authorities; for there is no authority except from God and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore whoever resists authority resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgment. For rulers are not a terror to good conduct, but to bad. Do you wish to have no fear of the authority? Then do what is good, and you will receive its approval; for it is God’s servant for your good. But if you do what is wrong, you should be afraid, for the authority does not bear the sword in vain! It is the servant of God to execute wrath on the wrongdoer. Therefore one must be subject, not only because of wrath but also because of conscience. For the same reason you also pay taxes, for the authorities are God’s servants, busy with this very thing. Pay to all what is due them—taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due” . Romans13:1-7

The above passage from Romans 13 is the only passage in the New Testament quoted by one evangelical commentator to justify Christians taking part in war. Even if one goes along with that argument, one has to recognize that Christians could find themselves fighting on opposing sides in wars as has happened many times in the past. It should also be noted

that to justify taking part in war from this passage one has to take it out of the context of the previous chapter and the verse that immediately follow :-

“Owe NO ONE ANYTHING, EXCEPT TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER; for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law. The commandments, “You shall not commit adultery; You shall not kill¹; You shall not steal; You shall not covet”; and any other commandment, are summed up in this word, “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law”. Romans13:8-10

Can one go to war without doing harm to ones neighbor?

Paul wrote to Titus

“Remind them to be subject to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for every good work,” Titus 3:1-2

*(Note: In Titus Paul is speaking about being ready for any good work, just as he says in Romans 13 about acting in love and that love does no wrong to a neighbor. **Subjection to authority was not expected to include wronging anyone.**)*

“Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?” Rom6:16 *RSV

In the above passage Paul points out the importance of choosing whom we obey and the consequences, which is a very similar thought to Jesus saying, “No one can serve two masters....God and mammon”. Matt 6:24

Paul’s attitude to taxes Romans 13:7 reflects the attitude of Jesus Mark12:13-17

SECTION D

EARLY CHURCH WRITINGS

20. POLYCARP

Polycarp, Bishop of Smyrna, when he was facing martyrdom about AD 156 is reported to say to the Governor **“we have been taught to pay all proper**

¹ The Greek word here translated kill may also be translated Murder as is done in many modern translation. While Murder only covers premeditated killing and appears to restrict the meaning of the prohibition, However since a lot of preparation and forward planning goes into killing that takes place in Warfare the change of word does not exclude it.

respects to powers and authorities of God's appointment, so long as it does not compromise us." Early Christian writings Penguin Classics

21. Gospel of the Hebrews

"Never be glad except when you look at your brother or sister with love".

The Complete Gospels

22. FROM THE DIDACHE - THE TEACHING OF THE APOSTLES – (LATTER HALF OF FIRST CENTURY):

"The Way of Life

There are two Ways: a Way of Life and a Way of Death, and the difference between these two Ways is great.

The Way of Life is this: Thou shalt love first the Lord thy Creator , and secondly thy neighbour as thyself ; and thou shalt do nothing to any man that thou wouldst not wish to be done to thyself.

What you may learn from these words is to bless them that curse you, to pray for your enemies, and to fast for your Persecutors. For where is the merit in loving only those who return your love? Even the heathens do as much as that. **But if you love those who hate you, you will have nobody to be your enemy."** Early Christian Writings Penguin Classics

23. IGNATIUS, BISHOP OF ANTIOCH TO EPHESIANS "No man professing a true faith sinneth; **neither does he who has charity (love) hate any".**

Ignatius martyred in Rome between 97-117. Ephesians 3.15 P170 The Lost Books of the Bible World Bible Publishers

24. GRANDSON OF JUDE THE LORD'S BROTHER...

... "when asked about Christ and his kingdom explained it was not of this world or anywhere on earth but angelic and in heaven" Eusebus The History of the Church page 82

25. BARNABAS

"Thou shalt never cause divisions; but **thou shalt make peace between those that are at variance, and bring them together.** Barnabas 14:23-24 The

Lost Books of the Bible LB Press

26. IRENAEUS, GREATEST THEOLOGIAN OF 2ND CENTURY

who lived about AD 180r. *affirms the fulfilment of the prophecy of Isaiah, "For the Christians," says he, " have changed their swords and*

their lances into instruments of peace, and they know not now how to fight." Inquire on war Jonathan Dymond p98 Historic Writings of Quakers against war

27. JUSTIN MARTYR - A CONTEMPORARY OF IRENAEUS, WRITES:

"The prophecy is fulfilled, you have good reason to believe, for we, who in times past killed one another, *do not now fight with our enemies.*" Inquire on war

Jonathan Dymond p98 Historic Writings of Quakers against war

28. JUSTIN MARTYR PHILOSOPHER & THE GREATEST 2ND CENTURY APOLOGIST:

Quoting the prophesy of Micah he speaks of it as already fulfilled by the Christians and goes on to say, **"We who were once full of war and mutual slaughter, have every one through the whole earth changed our swords into ploughshares and our spears into implements of tillage, and now cultivate piety, righteousness, charity, faith and hope, which we have from the Father Himself through him who was crucified."** Early Church History

Backhouse and Taylor p126

30. TERTULLIAN (160-220)

"So it is not fear for ourselves that makes us send you this pamphlet, but fear for you and for all our enemies, or should I say, our friends, since it is the teaching of our faith that we are to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us. Here lies the perfection and distinctiveness of Christian goodness. **Ordinary goodness is different; for all men love their friends but only Christians love their enemies..... A Christian is an enemy to no man.**" p227 Documents in Early Christian Thought Cambridge University Press

31. QUESTION:

SHOULD NOT THE REAL DISTINGUISHING MARK OF A CHRISTIAN BE LOVE OF ENEMIES - not just rejection of war? The Meek Inherit the Earth Matt 5:5

32. TERTULLIAN:

"Our religion teaches a divine patience and it is on this basis that we conduct our lives. You can see this clearly enough from the fact that **although we are such a large company of men (almost a majority in fact of every city) yet we live out our lives quietly and temperately;** we are probably better known individually than as a corporate entity, since the only way we can be distinguished is by the way we get rid of our former vices. **Far be it from us** to react with indignation when we suffer things

which in fact we welcome or **in any way to plot the vengeance at our own hands which we confidently await from God..** P136 Documents in Early

Christian Thought Cambridge University Press

33. EARLY CHURCH AND MILITARY SERVICE

*Regarding a Soldier whose rejection of a laurel crown led to martyrdom, and upset less faithful people, Tertullian wrote: “The tribune immediately asks, ‘Why are you dressed differently?’ He says that, “he is not allowed to dress like the others”. He is told to give his reasons. ‘I am a Christian’, he replies. ‘Proud warrior of God!’ A vote is taken; the case is recorded; he is sent for sentence to the prefects. There and then he removes his heavy cloak (he is beginning to be lightened of his burden); he takes his cumbersome boots off his feet (he is beginning to stand on holy ground [see Exod. 3:5] he hands over his sword (his Lord did not need one to defend himself [see John 18:10-11]) ; the laurel wreath falls from his hand. Instead he is clad in the crimson of the blood he expects to shed; he is shod with the preparation of the gospel; he is girded with the word of God sharper than any sword -thus he puts on the whole armour of which the apostle speaks [see Eph. 6: 13-16; Heb 4: 12]. Then as one who is to receive a far better crown, the dazzling laurel crown of the martyr, he waits in prison for the bounty, which Christ will give him. **Views are expressed about him (I hesitate to call them the views of Christians, as they were no different from those of non-Christians). He was headstrong, rash, eager to die, he had made things difficult for Christians by getting himself interrogated on a matter of dress -whereas the truth of the matter is that he was the only brave man among all his Christian fellow-soldiers, in fact the only true Christian at all.”*** P133-4 Documents in

Early Christian Thought Cambridge University Press

34. AGAIN FROM A LATER SOURCE:

“In A.D. 295 at Teveste, (now Algeria) ' an Episcopal city in Numidia, the recruiting sergeant brought before Dion the Proconsul, one Maximilian, a young man of twenty-two years, as fit for military duty. It was during a season of toleration and general tranquillity. The young man was accompanied by his father. As he came up ‘ **I cannot engage in military service; I am a Christian.**’ ‘ **I cannot fight, I cannot do evil, I am a Christian.**’

Dion. If thou will not serve, thou must die.

Max. ‘**I will not serve. You may cut off my head if you will. I cannot engage in earthly warfare: I am God's soldier.**’

Dion But there are Christians in the Imperial armies who fight.

Max. They know what is allowable for them; I am a Christian, I cannot do evil.

Dion Why, what evil do those commit who fight?

Max. ‘You know what they do.

Dion Do not scorn the service lest thou perish miserably.

Max. ‘I shall not perish; for though you put me to death, my soul will live with Christ my Lord’.

P315 Early Church History p315Backhouse and Taylor (language of translation updated)

35. ORIGEN – DEFENDER OF CHRISTIANITY:

“About the end of the 2nd century Celus one of the opponents of Christianity charged the Christians with refusing to bear arms even in the case of necessity. Origen the defender of Christianity, does not think of denying the fact; he admits it, and justifies it, because war was unlawful.” Inquire on war Jonathan Dymond p97 Historic Writings of Quakers against war

35.1 Lactantius was a Christian writer of the Ante- Nicene period left this emphatic statement of the general views of the early church, written about A.D. 311:

“For when God forbids us to kill, He not only prohibits us from open violence, which is not even allowed by the public laws, but He warns us against the commission of those things which are esteemed lawful among men. Thus it will be neither lawful for a just man to engage in warfare, since his warfare is justice itself, nor to accuse anyone of a capital word, or rather by sword, since it is the act of putting to death itself which is prohibited. Therefore, with regard to this precept of God, there ought to be no exception at all; but that it is always unlawful to put to death a man, whom God willed to be a sacred animal: Works of Lactantius Vol 1 Book

VIII, Chapter XX.

36. COMMENTS:

The majority of Christian leaders for the first 300 years after Jesus Christ saw that it was not compatible for Christians to serve in the Roman Army although, as Tertullian pointed out, there was an erosion of faithfulness to this. There were apparently three major reasons for this.

- *Jesus taught love of enemies and avoidance of anger not just murder; thus he forbade killing. Shall the son of peace take part in battle? How will a Christian war with the sword Christ took away?.*

- *Jesus forbade his disciples to have two masters. Is it right for human oaths to be added to the divine one; for a person to promise allegiance to another master besides Christ?*
- *Roman Soldiers had to attend Pagan worship.*

The Christian Community multiplied as they loved and cared for each other through persecutions and famines.

SECTION E CONSTANTINE AND THE END OF REFUSAL TO FIGHT

37. CONSTANTINE'S VISION:

Reportedly Constantine had a vision of putting the cross on his banner before the battle at Milvian Bridge. This he did and won the battle.

Subsequently he:-

- *Removed the requirement for soldiers to make offerings to idols (around 311AD), so eliminating this objection to Christians being Soldiers.*
 - *Gave the church property to defend.*
- This resulted in the Church of that time losing their aversion to war and in time led to the development of a "just war theory".*

Milman wrote regarding the vision: **"Thus for the first time, the meek and peaceful Jesus became a God of battle, and the Cross, the Holy Sign of Christian Redemption, a banner of bloody strife.** This irreconcilable incongruity between the symbol of universal peace and the horrors of war, in my judgement is conclusive against the miraculous or supernatural character of the transaction." P209 Early Church History p315Backhouse and

Taylor

Significantly Eusesbius the "Father of Church History" and a great admirer of Constantine in his "The History of the Church" while enthusiastically describing in detail the Milvian Bridge battle in chapter 9 makes no reference to a vision thus leaving good reason to doubt whether

it really happened or if it was fabled to swing Christians away from the prince of peace.

To Lactantius, who was selected by Constantine to be the private tutor of his son Crispus., is attributed the first recording of the vision. Compare this with Lactantius' pre Constantine teaching in section (35.1). .

38. CONSEQUENCES OF CONSTANTINE

I and probably many other were taught that he was the first Christian Roman Emperor and only recently I have realized that while he conferred favours on Christians many of his actions cannot be described as in line with the teaching of Jesus. Constantine for example had his son Crispus put to death.

It is known that he remained head of the state pagan cult and only was baptised as a Christian on his Death Bed.

Another consequence, of Constantine, was that by getting Christians into his army, Christian leaders wanted to support their members that joined, and looked to provide basis for doing this.

THE COUNCIL AT NICENE IN 325

Constantine called the Council of Bishops of that time to Nicea in 325AD and Constantine [who was not yet a Christian] presided over it because he wanted a unified Christian Church.

The creed it produced in 325 was added to at the Council of Constantinople in 381AD. Including the addition "the Holy Spiritspoke by the prophets" a phrase that continues in the version which is used today.

This phrase is a contrast to "While in times past God spoke by the prophets he has now spoken by a Son" Hebrews 1:1-2. Since the creed does not mention that God had since spoken by his Son, the phrase appears as an attempt to connect people with Old Testament.

To me the phrase is a subtle attempt to upgrade what the Old Testament prophets said to the same status as what Jesus taught.....and in doing so an attempt to get unquestioning acceptance for the Old Testament prophets approval of warfare an attempt to reverse what Jesus had said about the Law and the prophets being until John and then the kingdom of God being proclaimed? Luke 16:16

For those who do not stop to consider the phrase, it may imply that all the Old Testament Prophets said was because they were moved by the Holy Spirit, and appear in agreement with the verse in 2 Peter 1:19-20 “First of all you must understand this, that no prophecy of scripture is a matter of one’s own interpretation, because no prophecy ever came by the impulse of man but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God.” But for those who consider, it is clear that Peter was only writing about Prophecy, rather than all scripture. Similarly saying that the Holy Spirit spoke by the prophets does not mean that all that was said by them came from the Holy Spirit. Could it not have happened that some of the prophets like the foolish Galatians, having begun in the Spirit went on in the flesh as Paul pointed out in Galatians 3:1-3, and that some of what they said did not come from the Spirit of God and, for example came from party spirit a work of the flesh? Galatians 5:20.

39. THE CONCEPT THAT CHRISTIANS SHOULD NOT FIGHT DID NOT IMMEDIATELY DIE OUT:

40. BORN ABOUT 316, MARTIN OF TOURS...

...after his conversion, refused to serve any longer in the army. “Hitherto” he said to his general “I have been thy soldier; let me now be God’s. I am the soldier of Christ; it is not lawful for me to fight.”^{p58}

Witnesses for Christ Backhouse and Taylor

41 CANNON OF SCRIPTURE

The Synod in Carthage held in 397, was the first to list the Canon of the New Testament, as it is known today. When one realizes that the choice of the New Testament scriptures took place at a time when it had become acceptable for Christians to be soldiers, it is amazing that the New Testament is not supportive of war. And the book in it that includes most about violence (Revelations) was not included 35 years earlier in the list produced at the Synod of Laodicea.

The Old Testament with all its stories of God’s help in battles, wars, victories – Joshua, Sampson, David – and prophesies of turning swords into farm implements and of coming Prince of Peace was combined with the New Testament into what we now know as The Bible.

The combining of the Old and New Testament together, especially where it is all called the word of God, appears to blind people to realizing that the new and living way Jesus taught by his life and his word, is different from the old.

IF WE CHOOSE TO FOLLOW THE IDEALS OF THE OLD TESTAMENT where these are not in accordance with the teaching of Jesus, are we not being ashamed of His words, denying who He is and that he faithfully taught what He was given?

42.1 Were early Christian's writings contrary to support for Christians in military left out?

Since Eusebius AD260-339 who wrote The History of the Church (which is used as a major source of knowledge of the early church) was a supporter of Constantine, one has to bear in mind the possibility that his history was written from that viewpoint. (He argued that James should not be included in the New Testament. Did he want to keep James 5 out?)

Consider some early Christian writings that were lost for Centuries.

42.1.1 The following is a section of the Didache

“The teaching of the Lord to the Gentiles by the twelve apostles.

(1). There are two ways, one of life and one of death, and there is a great difference between these two ways.

(2) Now this is the way of life: first, "you shall love God, *who* made you"; second, "your neighbour as yourself"; and "whatever you do not wish to happen to you, do not do to another."

(3) The teaching of these words is this: "Bless those who curse you," and "pray for your enemies," and "fast for those who persecute you." "For what credit is it, if you love those who love you? Do not even the Gentiles do the same?" But "you must love those who hate you," and you will not have an enemy.

(4) Abstain from physical and bodily cravings. "If someone gives you a blow on your right cheek, turn to him the other as well," and you will be perfect. If someone "forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles"; "if someone takes your cloak, give him your tunic also"; if someone takes from you what belongs to you, do not demand it back," for you cannot do so.

(5) "Give to everyone who asks you, and do not demand it back," for the Father wants something from his own gifts to be given to everyone. Blessed is the one who gives according to the command, for such a person is innocent. Woe to the one who receives: if, on the one hand, someone who is in need receives, this person is innocent, but the one who does not have need will have to explain why and for what purpose he received, and upon being imprisoned will be interrogated about what he has done, and

will not be released from there until he has repaid every last cent. (6) But it has also been said concerning this: "Let your gift sweat in your hands until you know to whom to give it." The Apostolic Fathers Holmes

The Apostolic Constitutions composed in Syria in the 3rd Century and modelled on the Didache also opens with thought that we ought not to return injuries nor revenge ourselves on those who do us wrong. Including the saying. "Do not that to another which thou hatest another should do to thee"

42.1 .2 From the Epistle of Diognetus – Section 5 (thought to have been written between 150 & 225)- - a document that gives authors insight into living the message of Jesus.

(1) For Christians are not distinguished from the rest of humanity by country, language, or custom. (2) For nowhere do they live in cities of their own, nor do they speak some unusual dialect, nor do they practice an eccentric life-style. (3) This teaching of theirs has not been discovered by the thought and reflection of ingenious men, nor do they promote any human doctrine, as some do. (4) But while they live in both Greek and barbarian cities, as each one's lot was cast, and follow the local customs in dress and food and other aspects of life, at the same time they demonstrate the remarkable and admittedly unusual character of their own citizenship. (5) They live in their own countries, but only as aliens; they participate in everything as citizens, and endure everything as foreigners. Every foreign country is their fatherland, and every fatherland is foreign. (6) They marry like everyone else, and have children, but they do not expose their offspring. (7) They share their food but not their wives. (8) They are "in the flesh," but they do not live "according to the flesh." (9) They live on earth, but their citizenship is in heaven. (10) They obey the established laws; indeed in their private lives they transcend the laws. (11) They love everyone, and by everyone they are persecuted. (12) They are unknown, yet they are condemned; they are put to death, yet they are brought to life. (13) They are poor, yet they make many rich; they are in need of everything, yet they abound in everything. (14) They are dishonoured, yet they are glorified in their dishonour; they are slandered, yet they are vindicated. (15) They are cursed, yet they bless; they are insulted, yet they offer respect. (16) When they do good, they are punished as evildoers; when they are punished, they rejoice as though brought to life. (17) ... they are

assaulted as foreigners, and they are persecuted, yet those who hate them are unable to give a reason for their hostility. The Apostolic Fathers Holmes

*(Similar thought to Phil 3:20 when Greek word is translated citizenship instead of “commonwealth” in RSV “conversation” in KJV and John 18:36)

Both extracts from Apostolic Fathers published by Baker Nook House Co.

43. JUST WAR THEORY

Augustine of Hippo, looked up to both by Catholics and Protestants because of The Confessions of St. Augustine his spiritual autobiography –, also wrote City Of God. This was written at a time when the Roman Empire was under attack. Rome was entered and sacked in 410 and the book completed 426AD. He separated private morality, from public responsibility writing for example: “All the more we must realize that no man may take his own life, for, in the command ‘Thou shalt not kill’ there are no limitations; hence, no one, not even the one who is commanded, is to be excepted.” Yet a few paragraphs later he wrote in Chapter 21: “The same divine law which forbids the killing of a human being allows certain exceptions, as when God authorizes killing by a general law or when He gives explicit commission to an individual for a limited time. Since the agent of authority is but a sword in the hand, and is not responsible for the killing, it is in no way contrary to the commandment, ‘Thou shalt not kill,’ to wage war at God’s bidding, And then went on with Old Testament stories of Jephthah and Samson apparently disconnected from the teaching of Jesus – Augustine also said, “henceforth, everyone professing Christian teaching and observing its precepts will out of love for God, perform whatever the welfare of the country demands out of self-interest and on its own behalf” a suggestion apparently unlimited by requirement to do what is good Rom 13:3 and to owe nothing but love Rom 13:8.

R.G. Clouse expressed it this way, “Augustine led the way in revising Christian attitudes towards war by formulating a series of rules to regulate violence and permit believers to fight for the empire. He combined the Old Testament with the ideas of Aristotle, Plato and Cicero into a Christian Doctrine of the Just war.”

Augustine supported the use of the power of the Roman State 411-2 AD to put down the Donatus Christians and confiscate their Churches - their chief faults being that they considered it important that church leaders lead holy lives, and that they were not obedient to his church. Augustine died with the city of Hippo surrounded, the Vandal having invaded North Africa

and caused the members of his church to suffer there just like they had made the Donatus suffer. The Christian church in that area has never recovered.

43.1 *Sadly for whatever reason and on whatever justification Christians have fought one another.*

44. MOHAMED

*Mohamed (about yr 635) in the Koran said “^{Qu’ran 2.253} “We gave clear (signs) miracles to Isa son of Marium, (Jesus son of Mary) and strengthened him with the holy spirit. **And if Allah had pleased, those after them would not have fought one with another after clear arguments had come to them, but they (chose) to wangle”***

Is it not very clear from clear statements (arguments) in many preceding sections in this booklet that it is not God’s will for his followers to fight and that if they had done God’s will as taught by Jesus they would not have fought one another?.

Mateen A. Ellass wrote “the terms of jihad closely parallel Augustine’s “just war” conditions. Only proper government authorities can conduct jihad. Fighting must avoid harming non-combatants, hostages, prisoners, and property (especially trees and landscape), and its ultimate goal must be secure justice and lasting peace.”

44.1 *After Mohamed’s Death*

Not long after Mohamed’s death there was a split among his followers and they have been fighting each other on and off ever since.

45. POPE LEO IV (YR 847-855) MADE THE FOLLOWING PLEDGE TO FRANK SOLDIERS

*“Now we hope that none of you will be slain, but we wish you to know that the kingdom of heaven will be given as a reward to those who shall be killed in this war. For the Omnipotent knows that they lost their lives fighting for the truth of the faith, for the preservation of their country, and the defence of Christians. And therefore God will give them, the reward we have named. ” *A saying not very different from the promise in the Koran written about 350 years earlier of going to the garden when you die or are slain in Allah’s way.**

46. POPE JOHN VIII IN 878 ASSERTED

“We confidently reply that those who, out of love to the Christian Religion, shall die in battle fighting bravely against pagans or unbelievers, shall receive eternal life”.

47. IN SENDING FORTH THE CRUSADE TO CAPTURE JERUSALEM

Pope Urban in 1095 said “God has conferred upon you above all nations great glory in arms. Accordingly undertake this journey for the remissions of your sins, with the assurance of the imperishable glory of the kingdom of heaven.”

48. 39 Articles and Westminster Confession

When Queen Elizabeth the 1st wanted a united church behind her and her army, the bishops in England drew up the 39 articles of the Anglican Church which tightly ties the Old and New Testament scriptures together, saying that one should not be interpreted as contrary to the other. The 39 articles also listed the 66 books of the Bible and called them the ‘word of God’, another phrase that has tended to blind people from seeing the teaching of Jesus Christ and the message of the kingdom of God as different from the old covenant.

Similarly the Westminster Confession was drawn up when the Westminster Parliament was at civil war with King Charles

The Wycliff Tyndale and Coverdale English Translations of the Bible that came before 1550 do not include in 2 Timothy 3:16 the second “is” This appears to have been first done in the Bishops Bible produced in the time of Queen Elizabeth the 1st so making the statement “All Scripture is inspired by” Neither does the Greek or the German Lutheran translation. This appears to be a way the Bishops used to tie old testaments prophets support of war in with the incompatible “Love you enemy” of Jesus and make both acceptable as inspired by God.

SO THE SAD SAGA HAS CONTINUED...

... with Protestant and Catholic Christians fighting each other and when fighting together having their chaplains bless their war efforts like the flight of the Aloha Gay to drop the Atomic Bomb on Hiroshima killing 225,000 people and leaving horrific injuries.

SECTION F PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY REVIVED

49. BACKGROUND TO THE QUAKER TESTIMONY AGAINST SUPPORTING WAR.

Civil war had been raging in England since 1642 when George Fox was 18 years of age.

The king and parliament had been fighting each other and this resulted in the execution of King Charles 1st in 1649. Cromwell then led his puritan army to Ireland and there they sacked Drogheda and massacred many of the inhabitants that same year.

Two years later George Fox was asked to become a captain in Cromwell's Commonwealth Army against Charles Stuart that he first expressed his conscientious objection to military service. He said, "I told them I knew from whence all wars arose, even from the lusts, according to James's doctrine; and I lived in the virtue of that life and power that took away the occasion of all wars." Fox was put in a lousy stinking place in Derby Prison without a bed among 30 felons where he was kept for nearly 6 months for his refusal to join the army. People said he would never come out.

This happened within three years of George Fox's loss of hope in all men and feeling he had nothing outward to help him nor could he tell what to do. It was then he heard the voice which said, "There is one even Christ Jesus who can speak to thy condition." Fox said "I was sent to turn people from darkness to light, that they might receive Christ Jesus: for to as many as should receive him in his light I saw he would give power to become the sons of God; which I had obtained by receiving Christ". He felt all Christians ought to be circumcised by the Spirit, which puts off the sins of the flesh....and renews up into the image of God, which man and woman were in before they fell, so they might sit down in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

50. IN 1660 GEORGE FOX AND OTHER QUAKERS WROTE TO KING CHARLES 2ND [Charles Stuart] AT THE TIME OF 5TH MONARCHY MEN RISING AGAINST THE KING.

“Our principle is, and our practices have always been, to seek peace, and ensue it, and to follow after righteousness and the knowledge of God, seeking the good and the welfare, and doing that which tends to the peace of all. **All bloody principles and practices we do utterly deny, with all outward wars, and strife, and fightings with outward weapons, for any end, or under any pretence whatsoever, and this is our testimony to the whole world.**

That spirit of Christ by which we are guided is not changeable, so as once to command us from a thing as evil, and again to move unto it; and we do certainly know, and so testify to the world, that the spirit of Christ which leads us into all Truth will never move us to fight and war against any man with outward weapons, neither for the kingdom of Christ, nor for the kingdoms of this world.

And as for the kingdoms of this world, we cannot covet them, much less can we fight for them, but we do earnestly desire and wait, that by the word of God's power and its effectual operation in the hearts of men the kingdoms of this world may become the kingdoms of the Lord and of his Christ, that he might rule and reign in men by his spirit and truth, that thereby all people, out of all different judgements and professions might be brought into love and unity with God and one another, and that they might all come to witness the prophet's words, who said, 'Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more!.'” (Isaiah 2:4; Micah 4:3)

Extract from Declaration to Charles II, 1660

George Fox was not alone in what he was saying.

In Europe there were Mennonite Anabaptists who for a 100 years had been choosing to forgive and refusing to fight. In 1632 Dutch Mennonites drew up their Dortrect confession of Faith which acknowledged Jesus Christ as the Word of God, and did not call the Bible the word of God similar to George Fox, the most significant difference was on the subject of Baptism. [British Baptists while apparently agreeing on the subject of Baptism with the Mennonites have supported warfare and the Westminster Confession]

51. IN 1688 GEORGE FOX WROTE TO SULTAN MOHOMET EMPEROR OF THE TURKS

He quoted from the available translation of the Koran, the Alcoran pointing out the commitment to obey Jesus and how Jesus will be a witness on the day of judgement. In passages like these in a more recent translation:

- Having called people to fear God and obey him Qu'ran 3:50 Jesus asked in Koran Qu'ran 3:52-53 who would be his helpers, and there is commitment there to be his witnesses.
- How in Qu'ran 4:159 it is recognised that Jesus will be a witness on the day of Judgement/Resurrection.

Based on such texts, George Fox asked how do you obey the Law or Commands of Jesus “Love your enemies, Bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, pray for them that despitefully use you, and persecute you, that you may be Children of your Father who is in Heaven. Etc. (*For actual text see Answer to the Speech of the Great Turk in Gospel-Truth Demonstrated George Fox*)

In a common word the following is written about

Love of the Neighbour in Islam

There are numerous injunctions in Islam about the necessity and paramount importance of love for—and mercy towards—the neighbour. Love of the neighbour is an essential and integral part of faith in God and love of God because in Islam without love of the neighbour there is no true faith in God and no righteousness. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ said: *None of you has faith until you love for your brother what you love for yourself.*¹⁸ And: *None of you has faith until you love for your neighbour what you love for yourself.*¹⁹

However, empathy and sympathy for the neighbour—and even formal prayers— are not enough. They must be accompanied by generosity and self-sacrifice. God says in the Holy Qur'an:

It is not righteousness that ye turn your faces²⁰ to the East and the West; but righteous is he who believeth in God and the Last Day and the angels and the Scripture and the prophets; and giveth wealth, for love of Him, to kinsfolk and to orphans and the needy and the wayfarer

and to those who ask, and to set slaves free; and observeth proper worship and payeth the poor-due. And those who keep their treaty

when they make one, and the patient in tribulation and adversity and time of stress. Such are they who are sincere. Such are the pious. (Al-Baqarah, 2:177)

And also:

ye will not attain unto righteousness until ye expend of that which ye love. And whatsoever ye expend, God is Aware thereof. (Aal 'Imran, 3:92)

Without giving the neighbour what we ourselves love, we do not truly love God or the neighbour". (*sadly Qu'ran 3:47-54 gives a different attitude*)

52. SADLY ABOUT 100 YEARS AFTER GEORGE FOX...

(And in spite of the way William Penn set up Pennsylvania) When the Pennsylvania legislature were considering raising an army - having been without one since the foundation of the state - John Woolman wrote: "It requires great self-denial and resignation of ourselves to God to attain that state wherein we can freely cease from fighting when wrongfully invaded, if, by our fighting, there is a probability of overcoming the invaders. Whoever rightly attains to it does, in some degree, feel that Spirit in which our Redeemer gave His life for us; and through Divine goodness many of our predecessors and many now living have learned this blessed lesson, but many others, having their religion chiefly by education, have not been enough acquainted with that cross which crucifies to the world, do manifest a temper distinguishable from that of entire trust in God."

53. "ALL DOWN THE GENERATIONS, AND EVEN TODAY men are going out, and killing their fellow men, and appear to be doing it with God's blessing. And yet one of the things my God requires of me is that I refrain from killing my fellow men." William H. Sinton, - 1978 Irish Friend.

54. ACCOUNTABLE TO THE CALL TO LOVE.

Jesus clearly calls all to love one another, to love our neighbour, to love our enemies; the call is clearly for each one of us as set out in the following:

Jesus gave a new commandment "Love one another" John 15:34. "You have heard it said, 'Love your neighbour and hate your enemy', but I tell you who hear, 'Love your enemies, do good to those who hate, bless those who

curse you, pray for those who mistreat you'. Matt 5:43 Luke 6:27. "If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Do not even tax collectors do that? And if you greet only your brothers, what are you doing more than others? Do not even the pagans do that?"

Jesus said, "As for the person who hears my words and does not keep them, I do not judge him. "For I did not come to judge the world but to save it". There is a judge for the one who rejects me and does not accept my words; the very words that I spoke will condemn him at the last day."

Is it not therefore clear that what really matters is how we care for those least able to care for themselves - the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the sick, those in prison. (See matt 25:31-end).

55. THE WRITER OF THE HEBREWS CALLS US TO

"Consider those who are bound (in prison, sick) as if you were bound with them, and those who are ill-treated as you also are in the body." Heb 13:3 (some words from Greek interlinear)

Sadly torture is still alive today. This poses the question:

Is not approval of torture "approval for treating others in ways we would not like to be treated ourselves"? Is not that of God in everyone's conscience saying "We really should treat others as we like to be treated"? While Jesus is calling "Do unto others as you would like them to do to you."

56. YES IT TAKES

"Faith to lead just lives" to seek "to overcome evil with good" to put "on the breast plate of justice" and yet unless our "justice exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees, we shall not enter the kingdom of heaven"but the alternative is an "eye for an eye" and soon we are all blind if we have not already been blinded by hate and overcome by evil.

57. GOD REVEALED BY JESUS CHRIST,

The question this booklet is trying to answer is whether War is compatible with the Spirit and Teaching of Jesus Christ? In other words the question is whether war is compatible with being a friend of Jesus Christ by doing what he commanded instructed, taught by his life as well as his words. In part it is asking the question whether one is following the God revealed by Jesus Christ, or a book?

58. RELEVANCE TO FOLLOWERS OF THE QU'RAN

Let us start with what there is in common

God/Allah took the Messiah Isa/Jesus..... up to Himself Qu'ran 4:157-159 andon the day of resurrection/judgement he will be a witness against them.

Witness against those who did not listen to what Jesus taught when on earth

Blessed are the Merciful, for they shall receive mercy Matthew 5:7

With what judgement you judge others you will be judged. Matthew 7:2

You have heard it say you shall love your neighbour and hate you enemy

Matthew 5:43 but I say to you Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, pray for those who mistreat you. Luke 6:27

When you stand praying forgive if you have anything against anyone Mark 11:25

For if you do not forgive you will not be forgiven Matthew 6:15

Do onto others what you would like them to do to you. Luke 6:31 Matthew 8:12

When John the Baptist heard in Prison what the Messiah(Christ John 1:41) was doing, he sent his disciples to ask him, are you the one who was to come or should we expect someone else? At that very time Jesus cured many diseases, many sicknesses and evil spirits, and gave sight to many who were blind. So Jesus replied to the messengers. "Go back and report to John what you have seen and heard: The blind receive their sight the lame walk, those who have leprosy are cured, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the good news is preached to the poor, Blessed is the man who does not fall away on account of me" Matthew 11:2-6 Luke 7:18-23

The implications of the above appear understood in the following:-

We Qu'ran 2:253 gave clear (signs) miracles to Jesus Isa son of Marium, and strengthened him with the holy spirit. And if Allah had pleased, those after them would not have fought one with another after clear arguments had come to them, but they (chose) to wangle.

Can the Arabic be read

The Jesus son of Marium was strengthened with the Holy Spirit and given clear proofs if Succeeding Generations had done the will of Allah they would not have fought each other but they choose to wangle and disagree.

My simple understanding of this is that Jesus will be a witness against those who fight each other, and this does not exclude any one.

59. POST SCRIPT

In the light of:-

- *Jesus telling us to love our enemies, and do good to those who hate us; bless them that curse you and pray for those who abuse you. Luke 6:27-28*
- *Paul calling us to overcome evil with good, and that if possible so far as it depends on us to live peaceably with all.*
- *The writer of Hebrews saying, “Pursue peace with everyone, ... See to it that no one fails to obtain the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springs up and causes trouble, and through it many become defiled”* Heb 12:14-15

It is for each of us to decide what is right for us as individuals to do.

60 LET US PRAY

Don't forget Jesus taught that we should pray and not faint or lose heart Luke 18:1-8, **to watch and pray that we may not enter temptation; for the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.** Mark 14:38 That when we stand praying we should forgive if we have anything against anyone; so that our Father who is in heaven may forgive us. Mark 11:24-26 Paul taught that we should continue steadfast in prayer, being watchful in it with thanksgiving Colossians 3:2 to rejoice in the Lord always.....to have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving to let our requests be known to God that the peace of God which passes all understanding may keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:4-7 Paul urges us that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgiving be made for all men, for kings and all in high positions, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way. 1 Timothy 2:1-2 The Spirit helps us in our weakness; for when we do not know how to pray the Spirit himself intercedes for us with sighs too deep for words. And he who searches the hearts of men knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. Romans 8:26-28 For though we live in the world we are not carrying on a worldly war, for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but have divine power to the overthrowing of strongholds. 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 Finally be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might, Let us put on the whole armour of God, that we may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we are not contending against flesh and blood, but against the principalities the powers, the rulers of this present darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.Pray at all times in the Spirit, with prayer and supplication, Ephesians 6:10-20 that indeed we may pray and not faint.

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ABOUT THIS BOOKLET

This study has been prepared in an effort to clearly set out the teaching of Jesus and early Christians. The subsequent acceptance of war is outlined. Finally there is the call of George Fox and Friends to return to loving ones' enemies. There is reference to how this teaching is relevant to the followers of the Qu'ran. May we be willing and strengthened to live out the principles of Jesus in our daily lives.

IRISH FRIENDS' QUERY

Do you live in that life and power which takes away the occasion of violent conflict, and with God's help work for reconciliation between individuals, groups, and nations? Do you faithfully maintain our witness that all war, or preparation for it, is inconsistent with the spirit and teaching of Christ?Endeavour, through His power and grace, to overcome in your hearts the emotions that lie at the root of violent conflict.

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