

The Potential of a Deeper, More Effective Approach to Conflict and Violence

by Glen Gersmehl

When people of faith reflect on their personal encounters with **violence**, their responses are often very moving, and illustrate the seriousness and breadth of the problem in our society: "A loved one brutally mugged"..."discovering how far-reaching are the effects of domestic abuse on a friend"..."observing my children act out violent scenes from a children's cartoon"..."joining the military as an idealistic recruit and seeing first-hand how awful war really is"..."meeting people who were tortured in a Central American war; later finding out the U.S. was backing the government that was responsible"....

Experiences of **nonviolence** are equally diverse and emotionally charged: "Discovering the power of forgiving someone who I didn't think deserved it"..."Watching a principal who is barely 5 feet tall use only words to pull an angry 6 foot student back from threats of violence"..."Learning from a film about Gandhi, Bonhoeffer, Day, or Romero that nonviolence isn't weakness, it's a different kind of strength than violence"..."Working with the poor in a year of service at a fraction of the salary of my fast-track friends and seeing them come to envy my choice"..."Taking part in civil disobedience and experiencing first-hand that unarmed truth can be more powerful than violence."

Sharing personal stories of **nonviolence** makes clear how much we need to hear positive experiences and images of hope. Sharing our stories of **violence** reveals how deeply enmeshed even thoughtful Americans find themselves in the inadequate understanding and methods of addressing conflict of our violence-steeped culture. And those limitations exist on every level of our lives from the interpersonal to the international. In contrast, it is very rewarding to explore the richness of faith-based perspective on conflict and peacemaking. For there we are offered not our culture's denial and superficial words of comfort. There we are offered a way to see through the web of our violent culture and to work on skills and insights adequate to the challenge of standing up to the 'culture of violence' in our life and ministry.

An activity based on the popular book *Getting to Yes* shows how children in our culture are socialized into flawed, one-sided ways of addressing conflict, what Fischer and Ury term "soft" and "hard" negotiating styles. Examining these methods helps us to better appreciate the conceptual advance of what Fisher and Ury call "principled negotiation" and to learn skills from that approach. Such tools and insights alone could dramatically improve how we address conflict in our congregations, communities, and international relations.

Yet for all its power, the approach of Fischer and Ury has several limitations which a biblical perspective can help us transcend. The focus of *Getting to Yes* is on disputes like who owns the apples from the tree on the property line, disputes which we can resolve as neighbors of roughly equal power. A growing body of experience and thought can help us explore a deeper dimension of conflict and violence.

Digging Deeper

To take on the challenge of conflict and violence in our world today, we first need to delve beneath the surface of specific conflicts to get at the reasons why violence is so enduring; for only by getting at those underlying problems can we come up with strategies that have a chance of making a real difference.

Let's begin with some questions: Why does the U.S. have twice the prison population per capita of most other industrialized nations? Why are most conflicts shown on television resolved with force – often violent force – and only a tiny handful with the techniques experts say should be taught in our schools? What should we make of all the grossly violent and sexist computer and video games that are not only widely available but are the best sellers? How can we account for the extremely high rates of domestic violence in the U.S.? What might explain the growing levels of violence in spectator sports?

Why do leaders of both political parties claim deep Christian values but speak mostly of vengeance and the use of superior force when there's a crisis? While politicians, media pundits, and community or church forums periodically consider such questions, it is rare to find serious exploration of the deeper assumptions and realities that underlie them.

For such problems to be as deep-seated as they are, across such a range of our experience, suggests a structural problem. Consider this hypothesis: Our culture not only has serious deficiencies dealing with conflict and violence, but by all the evidence, our culture is stuck. And it is stuck in ways the church is uniquely equipped to help out, if we can grasp the gifts of the Gospel that might make such help possible.

Engaging our individual and cultural weaknesses in dealing with conflict and violence has the potential to improve at a minimum the way our congregations and church committees deal with conflict. A more serious effort could help the church play a useful, even transforming role in helping our society grapple with conflict and violence. And such a process, in turn, could revitalize our church.

The problem is that most Christians are working with only a fraction of the resources of our own biblical tradition. To grasp the power of those resources requires a paradigm shift in our thinking comprising at least a half dozen major conceptual advances from what is commonly found in the larger culture. That paradigm shift entails a challenge for us; it also contains both the empowerment and the hope we need to achieve it.

Let's start with the limitation we observed in the approach of Fischer and Ury: Many conflicts are caused, held in place, or exacerbated by power imbalances. What does a biblically-grounded perspective on conflict and peacemaking offer? First, it helps to remember that Jesus lived in a culture that was enmeshed in violent power structures – notably, the Roman occupation, an oppressive structure of temple taxes and rules, and institutionalized gender, ethnic, and class relations that made Jesus' conversation with the woman at the well or choosing a Samaritan hero of a story revolutionary acts. In the opening chapters of *Engaging the Powers*, Walter Wink shows how today – as well as in Jesus' time – these oppressive, institutionalized structures together form a 'domination system' and he offers valuable insights for understanding and confronting those structures. In so doing, he offers us a refreshingly challenging vision of discipleship, of servant leadership.

We often hear the U.S. referred to as a 'Christian' culture, but take a closer look at the foundations of how it deals with violence. Far from dealing with our conflicts out of Jesus' call to discipleship, to servanthood, to *Shalom*, the great majority of them are approached from the stance of what Wink terms "the myth of redemptive violence." This is the belief that justice and an end to violence can be sought through violence, whether in a punitive criminal justice system, in the rhetoric of the "war on terrorism," or in most action film and video game versions of how to rid the world of evil. But the worldview or "myth" of redemptive violence reinforces and reproduces violence and counterproductive perspectives on its efficacy in a culture. And because it functions largely on a subconscious level, it is all the more compelling and dangerous. The psycho-dynamics of the great majority of children's cartoons, video games, and films illustrate this myth with great clarity:

Children identify with the good guy so they can think of themselves as good. This enables them to project out onto the bad guy their own repressed anger, violence, rebelliousness, or lust and then vicariously to enjoy their own evil by watching the bad guy initially prevail.... When the good guy finally wins, viewers are then able to reassert control over their own inner tendencies, repress them, and reestablish a sense of goodness without coming to any insight about their own inner evil. The villain's punishment provides catharsis; one forswears the villain's ways and heaps condemnation on him in a guilt-free orgy of aggression. Salvation is found through identification with the hero. (Walter Wink, *The Powers That Be*, page 49)

It should be clear that these cartoons, video games, and action films are not just escapist fun. Together they express a belief system in fundamental competition with our culture's supposed Judeo-Christian values. The sheer scale of the impact of these media should give us pause. The average child graduates

from high school having spent more time in front of the television set than in the classroom. Not more time than the school conflict resolution program, or civics class, or church youth program and Sunday School, but more time than is spent in all classes!

What church or synagogue can even remotely keep pace with the myth of redemptive violence in hours spent teaching children or in quality of presentation? (Think of the typical children's sermon. How bland by comparison.).... No other religious system has ever remotely rivaled the myth of redemptive violence in its ability to catechize its young so totally. From the earliest age, children are awash in depictions of violence as the ultimate solution to human conflict. (*Ibid*, page 54)

Our experience of conflict and violence is characterized by what Wink, Rene Girard and others have persuasively argued is a "spiral of violence." We see it every day. The supervisor comes down on the worker, the worker can't strike back at the source of his frustration so his anger falls on his wife who hits the kids who kick the dog (children who are more likely, in turn, to grow up to be abusive themselves).

The biblical vision thus offers powerful insights into why we are stuck on violence. It has even more to offer on peacemaking, on the way out. The message of Jesus, notably in the Sermon on the Mount, is nothing like the spiritualized and wimpy sort of approach to conflict and violence that I grew up with as a Christian and which is still an all too prevalent stereotype. For Jesus offers a genuine alternative to the myth of redemptive violence, an alternative to wimpy passivity – an alternative to the false dichotomy of "fight or flight." By looking to the historical context of Jesus' teachings we see that he was speaking to the powerless, the oppressed. And he offered them a way to stand up to the Romans, to assert their humanity and to transform their society through love. Jesus called them to act in powerful and creative ways to transform oppressive and violent situations.

The full impact of what Wink and others have done to recover a biblically-grounded response to conflict and injustice is developed in what Wink calls "Jesus' Third Way." He shows how Jesus offers not only a different approach to conflict, but a radically more useful and compelling perspective on **power** as well. That perspective has influenced the most creative theories and actions on the ethical use of power from Penn, Woolman, and Ballou, to Tolstoy, Gandhi, and King. [*In fact, as Gandhi struggled to develop a truly moral approach to conflict, he first found it expressed in the Way of Jesus, particularly the Sermon on the Mount, and only later was able to see those insights more deeply in the Bhagavad Gita of his own tradition.*]

There is still more to what can be learned from the biblical tradition as explored in Wink and in practical training programs like the FOR's Nonviolence Training and "Peacemaker Training Institute," Lutheran Peace Fellowship's "Leadership Training in Peacemaking" and "Peacemaking in the Real World," and Pace e Bene's "Engage" and "From Violence to Wholeness."

For example, Wink's chapter "On Not Becoming What We Hate" builds his case with a wide range of examples, from the U.S. in Vietnam and the deepening Israeli-Palestinian standoff to how prisons socialize inmates into criminal behavior or how Western methods of fighting malaria have increased its incidence over 100 times. He notes that groups like Alcoholics Anonymous, or cancer support networks have evolved methods that are more successful and sustainable than what they have replaced.

In "The Acid Test: Loving Enemies," Wink develops the insight that we can learn from our enemies to understand those parts of ourselves that we dislike and to come to know our own tendencies for evil. And through grace, we are offered the possibility of rising above ourselves, the gift to recognize the good and bad in everyone, the ability to see that we are all sinners and that we can change through love.

The power of such insights have a virtually limitless potential to transform our day-to-day lives. The more I wrestle with these concepts in our workshops and in my own experiences of responding to conflict, the more it seems that Henri Nouwen is right when he asserts:

If anyone should ask you what are the most radical words in the Gospel, you need not hesitate to reply. "Love your enemies." It is these words that reveal to us most clearly the kind of love proclaimed by Jesus... Love for one's enemy is the touchstone of being a Christian.

By this standard, when it comes to dealing with conflict and violence, our culture is stuck. It is in the grip of a worldview that is the antithesis of the Christian view we so strongly assert that we have, a worldview that dominates media depictions of conflict and most responses to violence, one that reinforces and reproduces itself. We are stuck in ways the church is uniquely equipped to help if we can grasp the gifts of the Gospel that might make such help possible.

Those gifts are embodied in the word used by Jesus, the prophets, and the early church: "Shalom." The word itself means far more than simply "peace." *Shalom* fully includes our concepts of "justice," "inclusive community," "wholeness," "healing." And the concept that comes closest to describing how *Shalom* might be achieved in our violent world is "nonviolence," as many of our brightest theologians on the subject have concluded – Walter Wink, Dorothee Soelle, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Henri Nouwen, Susan Thistlethwaite, Walter Brueggemann, John Howard Yoder, Mary Evelyn Jegen, Thomas Merton, Joan Chittister, and Jim Douglas, to mention a few. One could add a great many secular thinkers.

But for us to realize the potential of nonviolence, we have to get past – and help our congregations and communities work through – the many misconceptions and stereotypes that have accumulated around the concept: that compared to violence it is weakness or passivity... that it is less dynamic or interesting than violence ... that nonviolence works on easy conflicts but when things get tough we must resort to violence Moreover, we don't know the full potential of nonviolence because in many ways we are just getting started. We haven't yet been reached by the crest of the wave and can't see back to the ocean that follows us. Nonviolence entails a spiritual transformation we must embrace in ourselves and practice in our lives if we want to fully grasp this alternative.

New Hope: The Decade for Peace

In the past decade, a dramatic initiative has gained momentum, one that could help the church grapple with the questions raised here. And we Christians are at the heart of this initiative.

Here's how it started. In 1997, twenty Nobel Peace Prize winners – the largest number ever to support a single initiative – launched an appeal. They proposed that the first decade of the new millennium be devoted to tackling the problem of violence – specifically to teaching "the practical meaning and benefits of nonviolence in our daily lives in order to reduce violence and... build a new culture of nonviolence."

In 1998 and 1999, a resolution supporting the Nobel Appeal was passed by hundreds of congregations, and over three dozen regional groups synods. Most major denominations 1999 approved resolutions of support and set up entities to provide leadership and resources. In November of 1998, the UN General Assembly passed a resolution without dissent designating 2001-10 as "The International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Nonviolence for the Children of the World." The World Council of Churches and other bodies adopted parallel Decade initiatives. Christians have become the largest, best organized groups in the U.S. on the Decade for Peace.

The 9/11 tragedy could have been an opportunity to address our culture's inadequate security priorities – not just airport screening and intelligence assessment, but the pitifully small amount of resources that go to addressing our culture of violence and the ways it reinforces and reproduces itself. Instead, supported by leaders across the spectrum, we lost our way in responses that have worsened our situation.

How could the Decade be helpful in recovering a more hopeful approach? The Nobel Peace Appeal (a document of just 21 lines) and the Decade for Peace it launched are significant in at least six ways:

- 1) The Nobel Appeal is entitled "for the children of the world" and begins by observing that "all too many children grow up in a culture of violence... on the streets, in the schools, in family life, and in the

community." The approach, "For the children..." has proved to be an extremely powerful means to bring people together across the various divisions that separate us. One thing that parents – Blue and Red state, Israeli and Palestinian... – can all agree on is that *our children deserve better than this*.

2) The Nobel Appeal advances an unusually broad definition of our problem, insisting that we address the full depth and range of violence in our society, "physical violence, psychological violence, socio-economic violence, environmental violence, political violence."

3) It is a reflection of their grasp of the seriousness of the challenge of violence that the Nobel Laureates and the UN called for a full decade of work (2001-2010) in stark contrast to the two or three weeks of saturation media attention after an event like the Columbine tragedy before it is dropped for the Next Big Story. The Decade shows that the Nobel Laureates understand what we are up against.

4) The prestige, integrity, and courage of the Laureates who initiated the Nobel Appeal – people like Nelson Mandela, Aung San Suu Kyi, Mother Teresa, Desmond Tutu, Elie Wiesel, the Dalai Lama, and Mairead Corrigan Maguire – help make the Decade for Peace something to take seriously. The call of peacemaking for them is not an abstract ideal but was forged in some of the most challenging and dangerous conflicts of our time. And the original twenty laureates have since been joined by virtually every living Nobel Peace Laureate, which is completely unprecedented.

5) While the word "peace" appears in the title of the UN resolution, the Nobel Appeal does not use the word at all; instead it uses "nonviolence" six times. This is a conscious decision to ground the work of the Decade in the depth of insight and breadth of practical success of the nonviolent tradition and movements such as those led by Gandhi, King, Day and Nobel Peace laureates like those listed above.

6) It is significant that the Nobel Appeal understands that violence is not just individual acts of conflict and oppression, and the solution is not just a matter of stopping or punishing those acts. We are – all of us – immersed in a "culture of violence" that needs to be understood and transformed. But above all, the Nobel Laureates offer this vision and challenge, that "together we can build a new culture of nonviolence that can give hope to all humanity and in particular the children of the world."

There isn't space to enumerate all that has been accomplished through the Decade for Peace. Significant new projects in countries around the world are addressing domestic violence, racism, conflict education, and street violence. Here's a larger scale example: A Christian was among the participants in the 1999 Decade planning meetings in India who felt that for the Decade to attain its potential, it had to reach down into the neighborhood, classroom, church group, and family. We proposed that a "Pledge of Nonviolence" be made a central element of the Decade for Peace, an idea enthusiastically embraced by the Decade. Since then, an unprecedented number of people – over 75 million – have signed the Decade nonviolence pledge! Many are active in projects in their community.

The Decade for Peace is an especially hopeful initiative for us as Christians. It has the potential to encourage useful activity within our congregations and communities. It offers a context to respond to our culture's severe limitations in dealing with conflict and violence. The Decade also presents an opening to rediscover a neglected dimension of the Gospel, and to experiment with the potent resources it offers for improving our Sunday Schools, youth groups, bible study, and methods of handling conflicts in our church committees and among leaders. We need not stop there. A more serious effort could help our Church play a major, even transforming role in helping our society grapple with conflict and violence. Such service would, in turn, dramatically revitalize the Church. Blessed, indeed, are the peacemakers!

Sources and Further Directions

Quotations from Christian leaders on violence and nonviolence that begin this essay are from participants in LPF Leadership Training in Peacemaking workshops as are the *Getting to Yes*, biblical peacemaking, and other activities

mentioned. The following are drawn largely from resources used to develop those workshops and LPF resource guides from workshop materials and training manuals. See LPF in "Peacemaking Workshops" below for more information.

Conflict Resolution, Conflict Transformation

Agreeing and Disagreeing in Love (Mennonite Peace & Justice network, <http://peace.mennolink.org/agree>): concise, biblical program for congregations and committees; *When You Disagree...* (Mennonite Conciliation Service), audio tapes and manual for up to 10 sessions on conflict resolution geared to improving skills of church groups members

Families Creating a Circle of Peace (Institute for Peace & Justice, 314/533-4445, www.ipj-ppj.org): booklet geared to the Family Pledge of Nonviolence; IPJ has useful curricula, videos, bulletin inserts, manuals, e-newsletter...; Susan G. Fitzell, *Free the Children* (New Society, 1997): fine, helpful conflict education manual for children and youth

Roger Fisher and William Ury, *Getting to Yes* (Penguin, 2nd ed., 1994): well-written, widely used book on negotiation skills; William Ury also wrote *The Third Side* (Penguin, 2000, HC title *Getting to Peace*, '99), extremely useful

How to be a Bridge in a World Full of Walls (LPF, 206/720-0313 www.lutheranpeace.org): helpful, innovative workshop
John Paul Lederach, *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation* (Good Books, 2003): the best intro on the subject

Marshall Rosenberg, *Nonviolent Communication, A Language of Compassion* (PDP, 2003) and *Speak Peace in a World of Conflict* (PDP, 2005): exceptionally well-written and concise books apply the insights of nonviolence to a wide range of conflict resolution and communication issues (see Center for Nonviolent Communication www.cnvc.org)

Peter Steinke, *Congregational Leadership in Anxious Times* and *Healthy Congregations* (Alban, 2006; 2007), and Carolyn Schrock-Shenk and Lawrence Ressler, *Making Peace With Conflict* (Herald, 1999): helpful, practical introductions on addressing conflicts in the congregation; each is grounded in sound research and practice

Going Deeper

Walter Wink, *Engaging the Powers* (Augsburg Fortress, 1992): a gold mine of creative insights and useful examples. No book is mentioned more often as having had a fundamental influence on their thinking and spirituality by Christian lay leaders and pastors. Wink's *The Powers that Be* (Doubleday, 1998) is a briefer version; his *Jesus and Nonviolence* (Augsburg Fortress, 2003): explores a central theme in these books in 100 pages and offers a variety of new insights.

Roland Bainton, *Christian Attitudes Toward War and Peace* (Abingdon, 1960): key survey of biblical and early church sources

Robert Herr and Judy Zimmerman Herr, editors, *Transforming Violence* (Herald, 1998): among the best anthologies on peacemaking, local to global, including chapters by Dorothee Soelle, Walter Wink, Elise Boulding, and Doug Hostetter

Cynthia Moe-Lobeda, *Public Church and Healing a Broken World: Globalization and God* (Augsburg Fortress, 2004, '02)

Donald Shriver, *An Ethic for Enemies: Forgiveness in Politics* (Oxford, 1995): an exceptionally insightful, lucid, and unpretentious study that features five extended case studies

Glen Stassen, ed., *Just Peacemaking: Ten Practices...* (Pilgrim, 1998): threat reduction, conflict resolution, direct action

Paul Wee, *American Destiny and the Calling of the Church* (Augsburg Fortress, 2006): a very useful brief survey

Walter Wink, editor, *Peace Is the Way* (Orbis, 2000): the best anthology we've seen, offering a wide array of insights

John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (Eerdmans, rev. ed., 1996): illuminating exploration of nonviolence in Luke

Peacemaking Workshops and Resources

Lutheran Peace Fellowship (lpf@ecunet.org 206-720-0313 www.lutheranpeace.org): LPF has led over 1000 workshops and 70 intensive trainings in dozens of cities on biblical peacemaking, leadership training in peacemaking, nonviolence in the real world, youth and peacemaking, budget priorities, racial & economic justice, etc. LPF has tested and refined over 90 interactive exercises and audiovisuals and published a dozen activities in its "Peace Points" series for leaders.

Center for Nonviolent Communication (800/225-9185, www.cnvc.org): offers a variety of workshops and resources that apply the power and insight of nonviolence to interpersonal conflict resolution, communication, parenting, etc.

Church Innovations Institute (www.churchinnovations.org): "Growing Healthier Congregations" workshops explore tough issues that move us from fear and avoidance to decision and action in ways that enhance and enrich community.

Engage and *From Violence to Wholeness* (Pace e Bene Nonviolence Center, www.paceebene.org): remarkable 10-session manuals on the spirituality and practice of nonviolence offering well-crafted activities, discussions, brief readings, and prayers. Used by hundreds of churches and groups. In the past 6 years, 1000 Lutherans have bought the *FVTW* manual and LPF's supplement. Pace e Bene also offers workshops, retreats, and training for trainers.

Fellowship of Reconciliation (845-358-4601, www.forusa.org): FOR nonviolence training and *Peacemaker Training Institute* workshops for youth have been among the most useful, and widely available nonviolence workshops in the US.

Help Increase the Peace (American Friends Service Committee, revised edition, 2005, 410/323-7200, www.afsc.org): a dynamic, highly participatory, training program for youth to learn nonviolent skills; AFSC has trainers in 19 states

Institute for Peace and Justice (314-533-4445, www.ipj-ppj.org): offers a wide range of high-quality workshops, videos, weekly bulletin inserts, an e-newsletter, curricula, six versions of its Pledge of Nonviolence and related resources.

Kirkridge Retreat and Study Center, Creating a Culture of Peace Program (610/588-1793, www.kirkridge.org): workshops and retreats on nonviolence and peacemaking, public witness experiences, training for trainers, led by outstanding leaders

Living Faithfully in a Violent World: Walking Jesus' Path of Peace (AugsburgFortress, 2001): superb five-session resource written by activists from the PeaceCenter in San Antonio, with an introduction by Walter Wink. Developed in conjunction with an ELCA workshop program by the same name directed by Loretta Horton, Church in Society.

Religious Peace Fellowships offer workshops within their faith tradition including Adventist, Baptist, Buddhist, Catholic, Church of God, Disciples, Episcopal, Jewish, Lutheran, Mennonite, Methodist, Muslim, Presbyterian, Quaker, Unitarian, and United Church of Christ. Links to the websites of most are on the FOR web site: www.forusa.org/rpf

The Decade for Peace

The ELCA Interunit Task Force on the Decade for a Culture of Peace (www.elca.org/nonviolence): Building on the ELCA Peace Statement calling for education about nonviolence, the Task Force has created resources, a web site, and Equipping for Peacemaking training. ELCA sites: www.elca.org/advocacy/globalmission/hunger/jle/middleeast

Lutheran Peace Fellowship (206/720-0313, <http://LutheranPeace.org>): offers workshops, and more than a hundred advocacy helps, nonviolence stories, worship materials, workshop activities like LPF's **Budget Priorities Game** which explores key dynamics underlying our dilemma, the Nobel Appeal, LPF resolution with the 31 synods that passed it...

UN Decade for Peace (www3.unesco.org/iycp/): UNESCO is the lead UN program on the Decade, and this site offers many activity reports and resources including the int'l Pledge of Nonviolence; **The Fellowship of Reconciliation** (www.forusa.org): offers a variety of articles, resources, and activities on nonviolence and the Decade

Parallel efforts to the Decade for Peace: World Council Decade to Overcome Violence: www.wcc-coe.org others include: www.christianpeacewitness.org www.forusa.org/rpf www.haguepeace.org www.ncccusa.org

Nobel Peace Laureates

Irwin Abrams, ed., *The Words of Peace*, inspiring selections from speeches of Nobel Peace Laureates (rev. ed., Newmarket, 2000); Jeffrey Hopkins, *The Art of Peace: Nobel Peace Laureates discuss Human Rights, Conflict and Reconciliation*, including Desmond Tutu, Oscar Arias, Betty Williams, the Dalai Lama... (Snow Lion, '00); Aung San Suu Kyi, *The Voice of Hope*, conversations on truth and reconciliation, freedom and the force of love (Seven Stories Press, '97) and *Freedom from Fear*, essays and speeches (Penguin, '95); Adolfo Perez Esquivel, *Christ in a Poncho*, Mairead Corrigan Maguire, *The Vision of Peace: Faith and Hope in Northern Ireland*, essays edited by John Dear (Orbis, '99); Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom*, autobiography (Little Brown, '94); Mother Teresa, various volumes; Desmond Tutu, *The Rainbow People of God*, moving sermons and essays (Doubleday, '93), *No Future Without Forgiveness*, on South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission process (Doubleday, '99); The Dalai Lama, *Ethics for the New Millennium*; Elie Wiesel, *Memoirs* ...

Especially Useful Christian Sources

Gregory Baum and Harold Wells, eds., *Reconciliation of Peoples* (Orbis, 1997): global anthology of case studies & analysis
Karen L. Bloomquist and Ronald W. Duty, *Talking Together as Christians about Tough Social Issues*, and Ronald W. Duty, *Talking Together as Christians Cross-culturally* (AugsburgFortress, 2002, 2004): helpful resources on a crucial topic

Rene Girard, *Violence and the Sacred* (Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 1977): Wink's discussion of Girard (chap. 7, *Engaging the Powers*) makes accessible Girard's provocative view of sacrifice and the role of the scapegoat in Biblical times & our own.

George S. Johnson, *Beyond Guilt* a useful brief overview for deeper Christian involvement in peace and justice activity

Patrick R. Keifert, Patricia Taylor Ellison, and Ronald W. Duty, "Growing Healthier Congregations: How to talk together when nobody is listening -- a video workshop," (Church Innovations Institute, 1997; available through AugsburgFortress)

Martin Luther King, Jr., *I Have a Dream* James M. Washington, ed., (HarperCollins, 1995): the best brief MLK anthology, *A Testament of Hope* (HarperCollins, 1986): a major collection; Richard Deats, *Martin Luther King, Jr.: Spirit Led Prophet* (New City, 2003): brief, well-written biography emphasizing King's spiritual dimension; see also volumes by Ansbro, Branch, Cone, Dyson, etc.; Many of King's writings are avail: www.mlkonline.net and www.Stanford.edu/group/King

Larry Rasmussen, *Dietrich Bonhoeffer—His Significance for North Americans* (Fortress, 1990 especially chap. 3), and *Dietrich Bonhoeffer: Reality and Resistance* (Abingdon, 1972): explore Bonhoeffer's insight on nonviolence

Jim Wallis, *God's Politics* (Basic Books, 2005): challenges narrow views on both right and left regarding faith in the world
others: Daniel Berrigan, *To Dwell in Peace* (Harper, 1987); Walter Brueggeman, *The Prophetic Imagination* (AugsFor, '00)..., *Living Toward a Vision*, etc.; Daniel Buttry, *Peace Ministry: Handbook for Local Churches*, (Judson, '95); John Dear, *God of Peace* (Orbis),..., John de Gruchy, *Reconciliation* (AugsFor, '03); Jim Douglass, *The Nonviolent Coming of God* (Orbis, '91)...; *For the Peace of the Whole World* (AugsFor, avail. from LPF); Faithtrust, (www.faithtrustinstitute.org/) on domestic abuse; Roger Gotlieb, *A Spirituality of Resistance* (Crossroad, '99); Dennis Jacobsen, *Doing Justice* (AugsFor, '01); Eric H.F.Law, *The Wolf Shall Dwell with the Lamb* and *Inclusion*, Chalice Press; Mary Evelyn Jegen, *A New Moment*; William Klassen, *Love of Enemies* (Fortress, '84); Jim McGinnis, *Journey Into Compassion* (Crossroad); Richard McSorley, *The New Testament Basis of Peacemaking* (Herald, '79); Thomas Merton, *The Nonviolent Alternative* (Farrar, '80); William Miller, *Nonviolence* (Schocken); Henri Nouwen, *The Road to Peace* (Orbis, '98); Angie O'Gorman, ed., *The Universe Bends Toward Justice* (New Society); Alain Richard, *Roots of Violence in US Culture* (Blue Dolphin, '99); Cheryl J. Sanders, *Empowerment Ethics for a Liberated People* (AugsFor '95); Ronald Sider, *Nonviolence* (Word, '89); Dorothee Soelle, *Creative Disobedience*, (Pilgrim '95)...; Willard Swartley, ed., *Love of Enemy and Nonretaliation in the NT*(WJKP, '92); Susan Thistlethwaite, *A Just Peace Church* (UCC, '87); J. Milburn Thompson, *Justice & Peace* (Orbis, '97); Gerard Vanderhaar, *Active Nonviolence, Enemies and How to Love Them* (23rd Publications); Sharon Welch, *After Empire* (AugsFor, '04)

Other faith traditions: Daniel Smith-Christopher, ed., *Subverting Hatred*, anthol.; Haim Gordon, Leonard Grob, *Educating for Peace*; Murray Polner, Naomi Goodman, eds., *Challenge of Shalom*; Chaiwat Satha-Anand, *The Nonviolent Crescent*; Mahendra Kumar, *Nonviolence*; Bawa Muhaiyaddeen, *Islam and World Peace*; Kenneth Kraft, *Wheel of Engaged Buddhism*; Bernie Glassman, *Bearing Witness*; Thich Nhat Hanh, *Love in Action*; Pandit Tiganuit, *Yoga on War and Peace*; Stephen Legault, *Carry Tiger to Mountain*; Naim Stefan Ateek, *Justice, and Only Justice*; Morihei Ueshiba, *The Art of Peace*...

Worship and Devotional Resources

Bill Kellerman, *Seasons of Faith and Conscience* (Orbis, 91): superb exploration of peace with justice through the church year
Lutheran Peace Fellowship, *Peace Worship Resources*: 60 pages of prayers, songs, litanies, sermons, complete services...(\$4)
Jim McGinnis, *Call to Peace* (Liguori Press, '98): 52 fine meditations on peace themes, with resource listings (www.ipj-ppj.org)
Jack Nelson-Pallmeyer and Bret Hesla, *Worship in the Spirit of Jesus* (Pilgrim, 2005): reclaiming Jesus as peacemaker in liturgy

Cindy Pile, ed., *Our Prayers Rise Like Incense* (Pax Christi, www.paxchristi.org): 50 complete liturgies on peace & justice themes.
Others: Walter Brueggemann, *Praying the Psalms* (SMP, 1982)...; Gary Davidson, ed, *Banquet of Praise*: 300 prayers, hymns. (Bread for the World, 1990, www.bread.org); Geoffrey Duncan, *Timeless Prayers for Peace* (Pilgrim, 2003); Marian Wright Edelman, ed., *Guide My Feet* (Beacon, 1995); Anthony Gittins, *Heart of Prayer* (Collins); Mary Lou Kownacki, ed., *Fire of Peace* (Pax Christi, 1992); Martin Luther King, Jr., *Strength to Love*, sermons (Augsburg, 1965/81); Jim McGinnis, *Journey Into Compassion*(Crossroads, 1993); Henri Nouwen, *Show Me the Way* (Crossroad, 1992) and others; James Brockman, ed., *Violence of Love* (Harper, 1998), *Voice of the Voiceless* (Orbis, 1983), sermons of Oscar Romero; Mary Schram, *Extravagant Love* (Augsburg); Desmond Tutu, ed., *African Prayer Book* (Doubleday, 1995); Brian Wren, *Bread of Tomorrow* (Orbis, 1992)

Outstanding Secular Perspectives on Nonviolence

Joan Bondurant, *Conquest of Violence* (Calif., 1965): an unusually clear and penetrating exploration of Gandhi's genius
Cynthia Enloe, *Maneuvers:...Militarizing Women's Lives* (Calif., 2000): insightful survey of the impact of militarism on women's lives by the author of such ground-breaking books as *Bananas, Beaches and Bases* and *Does Khaki Become You?*
Staughton and Alice Lynd, eds., *Nonviolence in America* (Orbis, 1995): fine anthology with a superb historical introduction
Pam McAllister, ed., *Reweaving the Web of Life* (New Society, 1982): rich collection of essays on women and nonviolence
Colman McCarthy, *All of One Peace: Essays on Nonviolence* (Rutgers, 1994) and *I'd Rather Teach Peace* (Orbis, 2002): thoughtful, humane articles by a fine teacher of nonviolence; many originated as *Washington Post* columns.
Homer Jack, ed., *The Gandhi Reader* (Grove, 1994) and Louis Fischer, ed., *The Essential Gandhi* (Vintage, 1962); Thomas Merton, ed., *Gandhi on Nonviolence* (New Directions, 1964); G. Simon Harak, ed., *Nonviolence for the Third Millennium* (Mercer, 2000); www.mkgandhi.org www.gandhiinstitute.net www.gandhiserve.com
Michael Nagler, *Is There No Other Way: The Search for a Nonviolent Future* (Berkeley Hills, 2001): a valuable recent overview for the general reader by the author of *America Without Violence* (Island, 1982);

Marshall Rosenberg, *We Can Work It Out*, Parenting from Your Heart, Getting Past The Pain Between Us, Teaching Children Compassionately, booklet series by the author of *Nonviolent Communication* (Center for Nonviolent Com., www.cnvc.org)
K. Louise Schmidt, *Transforming Abuse* (New Society, 1995): nonviolent responses to abuse of women and children
Gene Sharp, *Politics of Nonviolent Action* (3 volumes, Porter Sargent, 1973): The magnum opus of a key figure in the development of modern nonviolence theory and practice; the middle volume consists largely of a detailed elaboration of 198 distinct tactics and strategies of nonviolence' volumes 1 and 3 include many stories of nonviolence in action.
Jonathan Schell, *The Unconquerable World*, (Holt, 2003): wonderfully written new study brimming with insights
William Ury, *The Third Side: How We Fight and How We Can Stop* (Viking Penguin, 1999, 2000) and editor, *Must We Fight? A New Perspective on Violent Conflict and Its Prevention* (Jossey-Bass, 2002): unusually helpful volumes
Patty Wipfler, "Listening to Children" (www.handinhandparenting.org): an exceptional booklet series on nonviolent parenting
Others: Elise Boulding, *Cultures of Peace*(Syracuse, 2000); Selwyn Bryn and P.M. Rayman, eds., *Nonviolent Action and Social Change* (Irvington, 1981); Paul Loeb, *The Impossible Will Take a Little While* (Basic, 2004); Chaiwat Satha-Anand and Michael True, eds., *Frontiers of Nonviolence* (available from PJSA, www.peacejusticestudies.org) and *People Power* (Rawat, 2007); James Tracy, *Direct Action* (Chicago, 1996); Stephen Zunes, et al, *Nonviolent Social Movements* (Blackwell, 1999)

Skills of Peacemaking and Justice Seeking

See "Peacemaking Workshop Programs and Resources" for hands-on skills training opportunities. Outstanding print resources:
Medea Benjamin, Jodie Evans, eds., *Stop the Next War Now: Effective Responses to Violence & Terrorism* (Inner Ocean, 2005)
Kim Bobo, Jackie Kendall, Steve Max, *Organizing for Social Change* (Seven Locks, 3rd ed., 2001): superb organizing manual
Si Kahn, *Organizing* (NASW, rev ed 1991), and *How People Get Power* (NASW, rev. ed.,1994): concise and wise
Paul Kivel, *Uprooting Racism: How White People Can Work for Racial Justice* (New Society, rev ed, 2002): fine manual
Bill Moyer, et al, *Doing Democracy* (New Society, 2001): on social movement organizing and how change takes place
Keshavan Nair, *A Higher Standard of Leadership: Lessons from Gandhi* (Berrett-Koehler, 1995); draws out many insights
R. Rinku Sen, *Stir It Up: Lessons In Community Organizing & Advocacy*(Jossey-Bass, 2003): among the most practical manuals
Randi Shaw, *The Activist's Handbook*, (California, 2001): unusually practical and insightful manual
Others: Harry Boyte, *Everyday Politics* (Penn, 2005), *The Citizen Solution* (Minn, '08)...; Michael J. Brown, *Building Powerful Community Organizations* (Long Haul Press, '07); John Castil, *Democracy in Small Groups*(New Society, '95); Stephen Covey, *Principle-Centered Leadership* (S&S, '90); Sam Kaner, et al, *Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making* (Jossey-Bass, '07); John P. Kretzmann and John L. McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out* (ACTA, '97); George Lakey, *Grassroots and Nonprofit Leadership* (New Society, '95) and *Powerful Peacemaking* (New Society, '87); Charles McCollough, *Resolving Conflict with Justice and Peace* (Pilgrim, '91);Paul Osterman, *Gathering Power* (Beacon, '03); Jona Rosenfeld, et al, *Artisans of Democracy* (Univ. Press, '00); Katrina Shield, *In the Tiger's Mouth* (New Society, '94); Lee Staples, *Roots to Power* (Greenwood, 2nd ed '04);Sharon Welch, *Communities of Resistance* (Orbis, '92); Mark Warren, *Dry Bones Rattling* (Princeton, '01); Richard Wood, *Faith in Action* (Chicago, 2002); www.avpusa.org www.cnvc.org www.forusa.org www.lutheranpeace.org www.paceebene.org www.trainingforchange.org

Stories and Case Studies on Nonviolence

William Ackerman and Jack DuVall, *A Force More Powerful* (St. Martin's, 2000, www.aforcemorepowerful.org): companion volume to the celebrated 6-part PBS video series narrated by Ben Kingsley exploring successful nonviolent movements on 5 continents; the book offers additional case studies and provides useful background, extensive analysis, and photos.
Robert Cooney and Helen Michalowski, *Power of the People* (New Society Publishers, 1987): a wonderful illustrated history of nonviolence in the U.S. covering a remarkable number of the key events, leaders, and theorists
Richard Deats, *Mahatma Gandhi* (New City Press, 2005), and Eknath Easwaran, *Gandhi the Man* (Nilgiri, rev. ed., 1997): superb brief biographies emphasizing Gandhi's spiritual grounding; Stanley Wolpert, *Gandhi's Passion* (Oxford, 2001):a fine new full-length biography; other helpful Gandhian studies by Judith Brown, Pico Iyer, Louis Fischer, Gene Sharp...
Pam McAllister, *You Can't Kill the Spirit and This River of Courage* (New Society, 1988, 1991): terrific stories on women and nonviolence by the editor of *Reweaving the Web of Life*, a seminal anthology of essays by women on nonviolence.
People Building Peace: 35 Inspiring Stories from Around the World (ECCP, IFOR, 1999, avail. from www.forusa.org)
The Wall of Hope (www.lutheranpeace.org): illustrated LPF exhibit, list, resources, and activities explore 120 nonviolent movements and heroes throughout history; used at over 600 schools & conferences; free 'how to' kit online/from LPF
Jim Wallis and Joyce Hollyday, *A Cloud of Witnesses* (Orbis, 1991): fine profiles of peace heroes by two *Sojourners* leaders

Others: USA --- Joan Chittister, *Passion for Life* (Crossroad, 1998); Charles deBenedetti, *Peace Heroes* (Indiana, 1986) and *Peace Reform in American History* (Indiana, 1980); Todd Gitlin, *The Sixties* (Bantam, 1987); Vincent Harding, *Hope & History* (Orbis, 1990); David Halberstam, *The Children*, (Random House, '98); Brennan Hill, *Eight Spiritual Heroes* (St. Anthony, 2002); Cathrine Ingram, *In the Footsteps of Gandhi* (Parallax, 1990); Arthur Laffin, Anne Montgomery, *Swords into Plowshares* (Harper, 1987); Mary Ann Luke, ed., *Pilgrims and Seekers* (Pax Christi, 1990); Charles Marsh, *The Beloved Community* (Basic, 2005); Milton Meltzer, *Ain't Gonna Study War No More* (Harper, 2003); Michael True, *Justice Seekers, Peace Makers & To Construct Peace* (23rd Publications, 1985, '92); Kathryn Watterston, *Not By the Sword* (S&S, 1993); Fred Wilcox, *Uncommon Martyrs* (Addison Wesley, 1991). Accounts by and about Dan & Phil Berrigan, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Cesar Chavez, Dorothy Day, Dave Dellinger, Jean Donovan, Muriel Lester, John Lewis, Thomas Merton, A.J. Muste, Rosa Parks, William Penn, Helen Prejean, Andrew Young...

Africa --- Eric Berman, *Peacekeeping in Africa* (UNDIR, 2000); Diana Russell, *Lives of Courage*, (Basic, '89); Bill Sutherland, Matt Meyer, *Guns and Gandhi in Africa* (Africa Wld, '00); Walter Wink, *Violence & Nonviolence in S.Africa* (New Society, '86)

Asia --- Eknath Easwaran, *A Man to Match His Mountains*, hero of nonviolence in Islam (Nilgiri, '86); Sister Chan Khong, *Learning True Love*, social change in Vietnam (Parallax, '93); Douglas Ellwood, *Toward a Theology of People Power* (New Day): on the nonviolent movement in the Philippines that toppled the dictator Marcos

Europe --- Victoria Barnett, *For the Soul of the People: Protestant Protest Against Hitler* (Oxford, 1993); Philip Hallie, *Lest Innocent Blood Be Shed* also a film (HarperCollins, '79); Richard Taylor, Nigel Young, *Campaigns for Peace* (Manchester, '87)

Latin America --- Philip McManus and Gerald Schlabach, eds., *Relentless Persistence: Nonviolent Action in Latin America*, a superb anthology (New Society, '91); Ed Nolan, *Witness for Peace*, a key group (W/JKP, '91); Christian Smith, *Resisting Reagan* a good overview (Chicago, '96); Michelle Tooley, *Voices of the Voiceless* (Herald '97)

Middle East --- Hannah Ashrawi, *This Side of Peace*, (S&S, '1995); Ann Hafften, *Water from the Rock* (AugsFottr, '03); Graeme Mac-Queen, ed., *Unarmed Forces: NV Action* (Science for Peace, '92); Simona Sharoni, *Gender and Israeli-Palest. Conflict* (Syracuse, '95); Munib Younan, *Witnessing for Peace* (AugsFottr, '03); Stephen Zunes, *Tinderbox* (Com Cour, '03)

Others: John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace* (USIP, '97), *Journey Toward Reconciliation*, (Herald, '99); *Preparing for Peace* (Syracuse, '96); Judith Presler, Sally Scholz, eds., *Peacemaking* (Rodopi, '00); Robert J. Burrowes, *Strategy of Nonviolent Defense* (SUNY, '96). *On current conflict:* Chalmers Johnson, *Sorrows of Empire* (Metro, '04), Thomas Ricks, *Fiasco* (Penguin, '06); Lloyd Gardner, Marilyn Young, eds., *New American Empire* (Norton, '05); Nicholas Mills, Kira Brunner, eds., *New Killing Fields* (Basic, '02)... www.fpi.org <http://globalpolicy.org> <http://ips-dc.org> <http://oneworld.org> <http://peacebrigades.org>

Many of the above books offer useful bibliographies, as do resource guides like "Transforming Our World" and "Wall of Hope," from the PJRC, and research sources like Roger Powers and William Vogeles encyclopedic *Protest, Power and Change* (Garland); Ronald McCarthy and Gene Sharp, *Nonviolent Action: A Research Guide* (Garland); April Carter, et al, *Nonviolent Action: A Selected Bibliography* (Housmans); Chales Howlett, *The American Peace Movement* (G.K.Hall)

On the author: Glen Gersmehl's practical experience includes ten year's work as an organizer and educator in the highest crime areas of NY City and Oakland and a key role in the passage of a major arms control treaty in the Senate. He co-led a study trip on the effects of war in Central America, and served as U.S. delegate to the UN Decade for Peace planning process held in India. Glen is national coordinator of Lutheran Peace Fellowship, and directs the LPF Leadership Training in Peacemaking program. He serves on the ELCA Interunit Task Force on the Decade for Peace and other national committees. Glen previously coordinated a university peace studies program and directed global, multicultural, and conflict studies for eighty schools. A computer activity on hunger and development he wrote was adopted by the largest critical thinking project in U.S. education, in use in 30,000 classrooms. He has studied public policy, ethics, and leadership and earned a graduate degree in conflict and security from the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard. Glen has written many articles, appeared on hundreds of radio and TV programs, and presented testimony or worked as a consultant for twenty government agencies and legislative committees, as well as for entities from the UN to the Federation of American Scientists.

For more on peacemaking, further resources, or to comment on this essay, contact the Peace & Justice Resource Center, 1710 11th Ave., Seattle 98122, pjrcbooks@hotmail.com 206.720.0313 <http://pjrcbooks.tripod.com> -