

Just Peacemaking

Just Peacemaking: The New Paradigm-for the Ethics of Peace and War (Pilgrim Press: 1998,2004,2008), Glen H Stassen

Just Peacemaking: Transforming Initiatives for Justice and Peace

(Westminster John Knox. 1992). www.matthew5project.org www.fuller.edu/sot/faculty/stassen

Let us be clear that just peacemaking is not merely halfway between pacifism and just war theory, as if it were asking the same question as they ask. It is asking a different question: what works to prevent wars, and is obligatory on us to support? They ask a question on the x axis: is it OK to make war. Just Peacemaking points to the y axis: what practices prevent war. That question keeps being left out by the x axis. Let's be clear that no war that a president wanted ever failed to win over 50% support initially if the question was: do you support this war action? But when asked, do you support a specific alternative instead of war, just peacemaking regularly wins two to one. Why keep asking the losing question?

INITIATIVES

- 1. Nonviolent direct action.** Based on Jesus' way of transforming initiatives (Mt 5:38ff.) Proving widely effective. See Daniel Buttry, *Christian Peacemaking* (Judson Press). How smart was it for Hamas to lob rockets from Gaza onto Israel, thus driving Israeli politics to the militaristic right and providing justification for massive Israeli war against Gaza and locking the Gazans in like a prison?
- 2. Independent initiatives.** (also Mt. 5:38ff.)
 - 1) visible and verifiable actions; 2) announcement of purpose to decrease threat and distrust, and invite reciprocation; 3) not leave the initiator weak; 4) not wait for the slow process of negotiations; 5) timing announced in advance and carried out regardless, 6) in a series. How presidents Eisenhower and Kennedy achieved the nuclear testban; how president George HW Bush and Gorbachev got major nuclear reductions; now the Roadmap to Peace.
- 3. Cooperative Conflict resolution.** (Mt. 5:21ff-Go make peace w. adversary while there's time) President Carter's achieving peace in the Camp David accords between Egypt and Israel, and peaceful resolution of conflicts with Haiti and North Korea. A key test of governments' claims to be seeking peace is whether they initiate negotiations or refuse them, and develop imaginative solutions that show they understand their adversary's perspectives and needs. Sign up at www.matthew5project.org, and have a group discussion.
- 4. Acknowledge responsibility for conflict and injustice;** seek repentance and forgiveness. (Mt. 7:1-5 Don't judge, but take the log out of your own eye). Initiated by Dietrich Bonhoeffer, and then churches. Germany, U.S. government, Japan, Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, lanced festering historical resentments. Rwanda is now a hopeful country because Pres. Clinton, Kofi Anan, Tony Blair, came and apologized, and Rwandans have been apologizing, and more genocide seems not to be in the offing.

JUSTICE

- 5. Human rights, religious liberty, and democracy.** (Mt. 6: 19-33-Don't hoard, but seek God's reign and justice; see Chris Marshall, *Crowned with Glory and Honor: Human Rights in the Biblical Tradition-Herald Press*) During the 20th century, democracies with human rights fought *no wars* against one another. The official report of the United States Department of State on international terrorism shows the astounding increase in terrorist incidents since the Iraq War and the torture of prisoners:
 - 208 terrorist attacks caused 625 deaths in 2003;
 - 3,168 attacks caused 1,907 deaths in 2004.
 - 11,111 attacks caused 14,602 deaths in 2005.
 - 14,500 attacks caused 20,745 deaths in 2006.
 - Approximately 14,500 attacks caused 22,605 deaths in 2007.Former Secretary Rumsfeld has mused that more terrorists are being recruited than the United States is killing or capturing. The agreed assessment by the 16 U.S. intelligence agencies in 2006 says U.S. actions against Arab Muslims are increasing anger and increasing terrorist incidents and training for terrorism.

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Relative economic deprivation is a major cause of intranational war. Scarce natural resources. East Asian economies grow rapidly because they distribute wealth more widely. Latin American the opposite, both ways. Russia made massive war against Chechnya and still has violence by Chechnyans and Caucasus against Russia. Israel made wars against Gaza and Lebanon; and still does injustice against Palestinians, and peace is not happening. The U.S. made wars against Muslim nations and Muslim terrorists, and international terrorism increases. By contrast, Great Britain did justice toward Northern Ireland, and Turkey invested twice as much in economic development of Kurdish areas than the rest of Turkey, and IRA and PKK terrorism are ended.

Economists Alan Krueger and Jitka Maleckova show that "when Palestinian college enrollment doubled in the early 1980s, coinciding with a sharp increase in the unemployment rate for college graduates," and "the real daily wage of college graduates fell by around 30%," then frustrated and angry Palestinians turned to the popular intifada of 1988. When "the Israeli occupation of the territories and lack of an effective capital market or banking system ... prevented the labor markets in the West Bank and Gaza Strip from equilibrating," the violent intifada of 2000 broke out.

With the Israeli closures, unemployment increased to 80% in parts of the occupied territories of Palestine, and absolute poverty rose disastrously. 70% of the people were living on less than \$2 a day. Levels of acute malnutrition reached 25%, hitting women and children the hardest. This drastic drop in basic economic sustenance against a background of past higher expectations correlates with intense suicide bombings in that period. Double-digit unemployment causes the educated but unemployed youth to grow increasingly angry and frustrated (*Battle/or Hearts & Minds 364-5*).

LOVE: INCLUDE ENEMIES IN THE COMMUNITY OF NEIGHBORS

7. Networks in the international system. (Mt. 5:43ff.-Love your enemy)

Empirical evidence shows that the more nations are involved in international organizations, communication, travel, missions, international business, the less they make war. Unilateral policies cause more wars. Making war on Iraq before the international inspections were finished, when they had found no weapons of mass destruction, and against the advice of almost all other nations, caused international resentment. Closing out other nations from bids for Iraqi reconstruction intensified the international hostility. Arguing that prisoners in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Guantanamo were not subject to the protections of international law left the prisoners vulnerable to abuse and the U.S. subject to international and Muslim criticism and hostility. Rejecting repeated warnings from the International Red Cross of prisoner abuse allowed the abuse to become an international scandal. Ignoring warnings of the international inspectors that 350 tons of very high explosives stored in Al Qa Qaa needed guarding allowed these high explosives to fall into the hands of terrorists for use against U.S. forces, Iraqi police, and future targets elsewhere.

8. United Nations and international organizations. (Mt. 5:43ff.-Love your enemy)

Empirical evidence shows that nations that are more engaged in UN and regional organizations more often avoid getting entangled in war. Unilateral policies cause more wars.

9. Reduce offensive weapons and weapons trade. (Mt. 5:39- Don't set yourself in revengeful retaliation by evil means, but engage in good means of nonviolent confrontational initiatives; Mt. 26:52 (Put up your sword). Danger when one nation believes it has such offensive capability it can get away with making offensive war: Serbia's wars against Croatia, Bosnia, and Kosovo, genocide. US War Against Terrorism, Afghanistan, Iraq. Weapons are *now* so destructive that war is usually not worth the price. The offense suffers huge retaliatory damage. Reducing offensive weapons makes war less likely. The movement toward abolishing nuclear weapons is on the way: <http://twofuturesproject.org> See also www.Matthew5project.org .

10. Grassroots peacemaking groups and voluntary associations (Jesus' strategy of organizing disciples and villages). www.ecapc.org = every church a peace church. Has links to various church peace fellowships. The largest U.S. grass-roots peace organization = www.peaceaction.org. Sign up at www.matthew5project.org and have a group discussion. See www.Juller.edu/sot/faculty/stassen for articles on just peacemaking applied to cases.