

CHRISTIAN PEACEMAKING IN THE GLOBAL CONTEXT

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Introduction

Peacemaking is central to the biblical narrative. This is especially true regarding Jesus Christ, whose life and teachings are normative for Christian disciples and communities. Jesus blessed peacemakers (Matt. 5:9), and he is the giver of peace (John 14:27; Phil. 4:7). Furthermore, Jesus came to set our feet in the way of peace (Luke 1:79), taught the importance of reconciliation over commonly valued religious expressions (Matt. 5:23-24), and cried over Jerusalem when it failed to learn the things that make for peace (Luke 19:41-44). Paul terms the good news of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus with all of the surrounding implications as the gospel of peace (Eph. 6:15). Relatedly, the ministry of reconciliation, which is stressed throughout the book of Acts and the rest of the New Testament, had concrete expressions within the community of faith as the walls between Jews and Gentiles, male and female, slave and free were broken down (Acts 10; 2 Cor. 5:18; Gal. 3:28).

Clearly, this peacemaking has far reaching implications that expand well beyond both the inner peace and the peace with God that many of us seek. These teachings and narratives demonstrate that peace and reconciliation are God's desires for all people living in our culturally diverse world. Despite this peace theology, some have claimed that religion is a source for conflict rather than a solution to it. Religious *incompatibility* and *dissimilarity* are seen as factors driving conflict.¹ In what Powers calls the *secularist paradigm*,² religion is generally viewed as "irrational and dysfunctional, a source of conflict and division, and a powerful motive force behind exclusivist world views. Al Qaeda's terrorism is exhibit A. Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo,

¹ Gerard F. Powers, "Religion and Peacebuilding," in *Strategies of Peace: Transforming Conflict in a Violent World*, ed. Daniel Philpott and Gerard F. Powers (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010), 319.

² *Ibid.*, 317.

Iraq, Lebanon, Israel-Palestine, Northern Ireland, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Sudan, Kashmir, and Sri Lanka are also cited.”³

The instances of religiously tainted violence just cited raise a number of questions for Christians today who desire to embody the biblical teachings presented above. Can religion, specifically Christianity, truly be a force for peace? If so, how can Christians work for peace in their communities and in the world? More specifically, what approaches to peacemaking are appropriate for individuals, congregations, denominations, associations of churches, Christian organizations, and believers employed by or volunteering in non-Christian organizations? For Christians concerned about both faithfulness and effectiveness, what historical examples can be used as models for reflection and training regarding the “things that make for peace”?

These questions are addressed in the three major sections of this paper. Part I describes a six-part taxonomy or spectrum of peace-building activities. This section not only considers various implementation modalities in each of the six categories, but also explores relevant characteristics of each. Part II presents a number of peacemaking methodologies that have been utilized by Christian actors in situations of conflict in various geographic locations. This section will focus on column 4, Conflict Transformation, since this is the section most directly relevant to peacemakers narrowly defined, as differentiated from actors traditionally associated with categories to the left (e.g., international peacekeeping forces) and to the right (e.g., non-governmental development agencies) of column 4. Finally, Part III brings the various actions or methods of peacemaking together in a single case study that considers the Christian and inter-faith actions that brought the warring parties to the table for peace talks in the African country of Liberia.

³ *Ibid.*, 318.

An additional question worth asking at the start of this consideration concerns the value of addressing *Christian* peacemaking rather than focusing on basic, non-religious peacemaking. Peace researchers and activists see, contrary to secular predictions, a “contemporary global resurgence of religion.”⁴ This renewed focus on the role that religion plays in many contemporary conflicts has highlighted the unique place that religious actors hold in peacemaking. Four “attributes that give religious leaders and institutions sizeable influence in peacemaking” include:

1. A well-established and pervasive influence in the community
2. A reputation as an apolitical force for change based on a respected set of values
3. Unique leverage for reconciling confliction parties, including an ability to rehumanize relationships
4. The capability to mobilize community, national, and international support for a peace process.⁵

Given this understanding of the power of religious leaders and the knowledge that religion “can cause conflict or it can abate it,”⁶ Douglas Johnston calls for ways to be found that “use religion as a positive force in resolving problems of communal identity that are proving beyond the reach of traditional diplomacy, such as ethnic conflict, tribal warfare, and religious hostilities.”⁷

Part I: Taxonomy of Approaches to Peacemaking

Christians have a bewildering array of peacemaking activities to choose from when facing conflict. Little and Appleby describe this wide variety of actions that can be described as

⁴ Douglas Johnston and Brian Cox, “Faith-Based Diplomacy and Preventive Engagement,” in *Faith-Based Diplomacy: Trumping Realpolitik*, ed. Douglas Johnston (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2003), 11.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 14.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid.*, 15.

religious peacebuilding as “the range of activities performed by religious actors and institutions for the purpose of *resolving and transforming deadly conflict*, with the goal of *building social relations and political institutions characterized by an ethos of tolerance and nonviolence*” (emphasis theirs).⁸

Arranging the possible peacemaking activities as a taxonomy enables the Christian peacemaker to more easily evaluate the various modalities (see Table 1).⁹

Table 1: Basic Peacemaking Taxonomy

Peacemaking Taxonomy & Nomenclature						
Confronting Conflict		Resolving Conflict		Preventing Conflict		
1. Just War/Violence	2. Just Policing	3. Judicial Justice	4. Conflict Transformation	5. Community Building	6. Development	
Unilateral Force		←—————→				Multilateral Cooperation
Implementation						
3D	Defense (Broadly Defined as Armed Intervention)		Diplomacy (Judicial, Political, Structured & Nonviolent Intervention)		Development (Social and Economic Intervention)	
Little	Enforcement (non-consensual)	Peacekeeping (consensual)	Agreement-making		Institution- and Capacity-building	
Stassen	Just War v. Pacifism	Just Peacemaking				
Primary Source of Power	Physical Force	Legal Force		Relational Force		
Focus	Problem Solving			Capacity Building		

⁸ David Little and Scott Appleby, “A Moment of Opportunity? The Promise of Religious Peacebuilding in an Era of Religious and Ethnic Conflict,” in *Religion and Peacebuilding*, ed. Harold Coward and Gordon S. Smith (Albany, NY: State University of New York Press, 2004), 5.

⁹ Adam Curle’s conceptualization of the progression of conflict is also worthy of consideration for the Christian peacemaker. Although Stages 1 to three (Education, Confrontation, and Negotiation) are relevant for Columns 3 and 4 (Judicial Justice and Conflict Transformation), while Stage Four (Sustainable Peace) corresponds to Columns 5 and 6 (Community Building and Development). See: John Paul Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1997), 64-66, or Máire A. Dugan, “To Negotiate or Not to Negotiate: That is the [False] Question,” *Beyond Intractability*, June 2003, http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/Peaceful_Chg_Strats/._June_2003.

Additionally, this taxonomy presents potential responses for Christian actors at eight levels (see Table 2), an approach that builds on Lederach's observation that different actors in a conflict have different parts to play depending on their leadership level—grassroots, middle-range and top.¹⁰

Each of the three broad response categories (i.e., Confronting Conflict, Resolving Conflict and Preventing Conflict) in the taxonomy is further divided into two sub-categories—Just War, Just Policing, Judicial Justice, Conflict Transformation, Community Building and Development, respectively. These six sub-categories form the broad areas in which peacemaking efforts can be grouped and represent a continuum of possible peacemaking initiatives.

I have not included David Steele's four-part typology in my taxonomy because he combines the resolution of current conflicts with the prevention of future conflicts, whereas for my present purpose of demonstrating the different nature of various peacemaking efforts, I find it useful to divide the actions into further divisions based on characteristics relating to force and cooperation. While strategic peacemaking requires a link between Steele's four divisions¹¹—(1) observation and witness, (2) education and formation, (3) advocacy and empowerment, and (4) conciliation and mediation¹²—his categories lump activities in a way that make it difficult to assess the qualities of each as my current taxonomy does. While strategic peace efforts need to be supported by a broad range of peacemaking organizations and individuals, the particular methods of engagement can be studied independently, as is made visually clear by my proposed six-part taxonomy.

¹⁰ Ibid., 38-55.

¹¹ Powers, "Religion and Peacebuilding," 332.

¹² David Steele, "An Introductory Overview to Faith-Based Peacebuilding," in *Pursuing Just Peace: An Overview and Case Studies for Faith-Based Peacebuilders*, ed. Mark M. Rogers, Tom Bamat, and Julie Ideh (Baltimore, MD: Catholic Relief Services, 2008), 22-33.

After describing the six sub-categories listed above, we will then turn to Implementation and expand it to include the eight leadership levels mentioned above.

Confronting Conflict

The first component of Confronting Conflict is Just War.¹³ These military actions are advocated by those who believe that in certain circumstances violence is a necessary evil to end injustice and to create an environment in which long-term peace can be established.¹⁴ World War II is a classic example of this reasoning. It is argued that the violence of stopping Hitler was a lesser evil than allowing the horrors of the Third Reich to continue. Alternatively, pacifist theologians and activists question this logic. For example, Walter Wink has written extensively on the “myth of redemptive violence.”¹⁵

While justifiable war in its standard philosophical and theological configuration can only be initiated by a legitimate authority,¹⁶ generally the political head of state, in this taxonomy the label Just War can be applied to any action where an organized group advocates violence as the legitimate means for correcting an injustice or preparing the way for future peace. This broad definition goes well beyond the standard criteria for determining justifiable war, the factors concerning *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello*.¹⁷

¹³ John Howard Yoder has argued that a more precise term for this category is “Justifiable War”; however, for sake of brevity, I am using the shorter wording. See: John Howard Yoder, *Christian Attitudes to War, Peace, and Revolution*, ed. Theodore J. Koontz and Andy Alexis-Baker (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2009), 83-84.

¹⁴ Michael Walzer, *Just and Unjust Wars: A Moral Argument with Historical Illustrations*, 3rd ed. (New York, NY: Basic Books, 1977).

¹⁵ Walter Wink, *Engaging the Powers: Discernment and Resistance in a World of Domination* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1992), 13-31.

¹⁶ Yoder, *Christian Attitudes to War, Peace, and Revolution*, 95-97.

¹⁷ Yoder, *Christian Attitudes to War, Peace, and Revolution*, 88-104; Roland H. Bainton, *Christian Attitudes toward War and Peace: A Historical Survey and Critical Re-evaluation* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1960), 95-100.

Next, Just Policing refers to non-military law enforcement. This has been most actively advanced by Gerald Schlabach.¹⁸ While more peacemakers accept Just Policing than the theory of Just War, some pacifists such as Andy Alexis-Baker have argued that this level of coercive force is still beyond the scope of proper Christian peacemaking.¹⁹

Resolving Conflict

The second broad category—Resolving Conflict—moves the peacemaking focus to mutually agreed upon structures for resolving conflicts. First, Judicial Justice consists of the various legal, statutory and judicial bodies and processes designed for civil society to use when resolving disagreements and conflicts. The court system plays a significant role in this category in regards to both criminal and civil law, where legal adversaries present evidence to a neutral third party, often a judge or jury, who determine the proper resolution of a presenting problem based on current law and the facts of the case.

Conflict Transformation, the partner column to Judicial Justice, goes beyond mere dispute resolution by including relational dynamics that can be addressed in mediation and similar processes. Rather than settle for the win-lose orientation of Judicial Justice, Conflict Transformation operates with a win-win paradigm by attempting to find mutually agreeable solutions that build trusting relationships.²⁰ Social transformation is possible at this level because structures and systems can be addressed from a standpoint of mutual concern for what is best for society today and in the future.

¹⁸ Gerald Schlabach, ed., *Just Policing, Not War: An Alternative Response to World Violence* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2007).

¹⁹ Andy Alexis-Baker, "Just Policing: A New Face to an Old Challenge," in *Peace Be With You: Christ's Benediction Amid Violent Empires*, ed. Sharon L. Baker and Michael Hardin (Telford, PA: Cascadia Publishing, 2010), 80-99.

²⁰ Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*; John Paul Lederach, *The Little Book of Conflict Transformation* (Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 2003).

Preventing Conflict

The third section—Conflict Prevention—is forward focused. Community Building focuses on the relationships as well as the short-term infrastructure needs of the community. Issues of concern may include inter-religious dialogue, race relations, or the polarizing effects of partisan politics. Finally, Development is the broad category for deep and lasting change in society. This includes such diverse elements as improving the education system, providing safe drinking water, reducing crime, and building sufficient affordable housing. John Paul Lederach makes the case for including these development type projects in the peace conversation. Peace includes

the elimination of deadly violence and the development of local and national communities that respect the dignity of each individual and promote authentic human flourishing. These conditions include the absence of war and other forms of deadly violence, such as violations of human dignity by state or nonstate actors (i.e., negative peace) and extends to basic human security, access to food and clean drinking water, housing, justly compensated employment, education and other expressions of positive peace.²¹

Characteristics of the Six Categories

Beneath the Implementation row, four additional rows of characteristics describe the nature of the six peacemaking categories. These descriptive rows are tools for analyzing the nature of the six categories, which present a spectrum ranging from unilateral use of force on the left (Just War) to non-coercive multilateral cooperation on the right (Development).

²¹ John Paul Lederach and R. Scott Appleby, “Strategic Peacebuilding: An Overview,” in *Strategies of Peace: Transforming Conflict in a Violent World*, ed. Daniel Philpott and Gerard F. Powers (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2010), 41-42.

These rows demonstrate how the taxonomy can be in conversation with other major peace-building theories—Glen Stassen’s work on just peacemaking,²² David Little’s four types of peacemaking,²³ and Lisa Schirch’s 3D Initiative²⁴—as well as other questions such as sources of power (Physical, Legal or Relational) and overall focus (Problem Solving or Capacity Building).

Further, these five descriptive rows show that each of the six columns have overlapping qualities²⁵ that can be described and analyzed from different perspectives. This taxonomy therefore not only allows peace practitioners to think clearly about their response options, it also enables ethicists and theologians to clarify relevant moral questions regarding each of the six response categories. For example, including Just War in a peacemaking taxonomy is anathema to pacifist practitioners, a tension which is highlighted in the row focusing on Stassen’s paradigm. Furthermore, it is seen that even Just Policing is a contested concept.

Implementation and Types of Actors

Table 2 includes the same six categories, but it expands the Implementation row by dividing it into eight levels of responders based on the logic of Lederach’s types of actors. Because the focus of the remainder of this paper will be on implementation, the descriptive rows presented in Table 1 are now excluded. Brief examples are given in most of the intersections between columns and rows in an effort to make the table more readily understandable, though these diverse examples are by no means exhaustive.

²² Glen H. Stassen, ed., *Just Peacemaking: The New Paradigm for the Ethics of Peace and War*, 2nd ed. (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2008).

²³ David Little, ed., *Peacemakers in Action: Profiles of Religion in Conflict Resolution* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 442-447.

²⁴ <http://www.3dsecurity.org/>

²⁵ This overlapping reality is demonstrated visually in the lower four rows of Table 1 with a combination of solid vertical lines, dashed lines, and deleted lines that merge blocks across peacemaking categories.

Table 2: Implementation Methodologies for Seven Levels of Peace Actors

		Peacemaking Taxonomy					
		Confronting Conflict		Resolving Conflict		Preventing Conflict	
		Just War/Violence	Just Policing	Judicial Justice	Conflict Transformation	Community Building	Development
Implementation	Individual	-Enlist in military	-Join police force	-File legal suit	-Engage in Mediation -Repentance & forgiveness -Nonviolent action	-Support advocacy movements	-Volunteer with a development agency
	Congregations	-Support local military personnel		-Offer moral education relating to national policy (legal and political elements)	-Resolve intra-congregational conflicts	-Develop cultures of peace -Build bridges across cultural and religious boundaries	-Mobilize local volunteers
	Denominations	-Express support for military personnel -Encourage congregations to support		-Issue human rights statements -Encourage church-based discussion of national issues -Advocate for just national policies	-Support congregations in training -Resolve intra- and inter-denominational conflicts.	-Encourage Grassroots/voluntary groups -Mobilize members -Dialogue with other denominations & religions	-Support denominational aid orgs -Mobilize members
	Christian Assoc. (NCC, WCC)	-Encourage denominations to support military intervention		-Issue human rights statements -Advocate for just national policies	-Support repentance & reconciliation efforts -Encourage denominations to pursue peace -Plan nonviolent direct actions	-Encourage interfaith dialogue -Advocate for national policies (domestic & foreign) that support peace & justice	-Support civil society
	Christian NGOs (MCC, CPT)			-Advocate for just national & local policies	-Arbitration -Mediation -VORP -Prayer Conferences	-Implement school and community-based education programs	-Support civil society -Education -Healthcare -Business -Food & water
	Non-Christian NGOs (Oxfam, Nairobi Peace Initiative)			-Support Democratic Efforts	-Arbitration -Mediation	-Collaborate with grassroots/voluntary groups -Run programs/projects at community level	-Support civil society -Education -Healthcare -Business -Food & water
	Governments	-Engage in military operations	-Police Intervention	-Enact democratic reforms -Truth Commissions	-Truth commissions		-Develop government processes -Enact weapons reduction (MIC)
	Inter-gov. Orgs (UN, WTO, ICC)		-UN Peacekeeping	-International courts, treaties & structures -UN declarations		-Collaborate with and support grassroots/voluntary groups	-Education -Healthcare -Business -Food & water

Rather than limit this taxonomy to Lederach's three levels—grassroots, middle-range and top leadership—I have expanded it to eight levels. I believe the definitions of Individuals, Congregations and Denominations are readily understood, so I will not describe them in further detail. “Christian Associations” include groups such as the National Council of Churches (NCC), the National Association of Evangelicals (NEA), the African Evangelistic Enterprise (AEE), and the World Council of Churches (WCC).

The row titled “Christian NGOs” addresses nongovernmental agencies dedicated to peacemaking or other forms of humanitarian work within a Christian paradigm. This includes Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT), Peacemaker Ministries, Mennonite Central Committee (MCC), and many others. “Non-Christian NGOs” includes entities like the Nairobi Peace Initiative and the Center for Community Justice. I have divided NGOs into these categories because Christian organizations have a set of religiously informed tools such as prayer conferences that would not be employed by non-religious NGOs or would be approached in a very different way by humanitarian agencies organized around other faith traditions.

The next row, “Governments,” include local, regional and national state actors. Finally, “Inter-governmental Agencies” includes international bodies such as the United Nations, the World Trade Organization, the International Criminal Court, and the African Union. These eight types of actors represent the full range of organizations that a Christian may choose to partner with or work for when promoting peace in society.

The taxonomy laid out in Table 2 provides a framework that Christians can use to aid in selecting appropriate and ethical peacemaking initiatives. However, the neatly arranged columns and rows necessarily oversimplify the complexity of peacemaking efforts. That is, methodologies cannot always be reduced to one discrete box; they can easily move along both

the vertical and horizontal axes. As an example, I have listed Truth Commissions in both Judicial Justice and Conflict Transformation since they can be arranged in very different ways with very different intentions. Reflecting on his six-part typology of peacemaking efforts in Northern Ireland, John Brewer comes to the same conclusion. “The kinds of activities engaged in by organizations, groups, and individuals can fall into several categories of peacemaking and can overlap.”²⁶ While helpful for analyzing case studies, taxonomies and models by nature oversimplify the available data.

The manner in which John Paul Lederach differentiates between conflict resolution and conflict management further demonstrate the connection between the various divisions of my taxonomy, in this case blurring the line between the end of Conflict Transformation and the beginning of Community Development.

A conflict resolution standpoint is clear about what needs to be stopped—violence, for example....*Conflict transformation*, on the other hand, focuses on change, addressing two questions: “What do we need to stop?” and “What do we hope to build?” Since change always involves a movement from one thing to another, peacebuilders must look not only at the starting point, but also at the goal and the process....While conflict resolution focuses on de-escalation of conflict and diffusion of crises, transformation...sees the presenting problem as a potential opportunity to *transform the relationship* and the *systems in which relationships are embedded*.²⁷

²⁶ John D. Brewer, “Northern Ireland: Peacemaking among Protestants and Catholics,” in *Artisans of Peace: Grassroots Peacemaking among Christian Communities*, ed. Mary Ann Cejka and Thomas Bamat (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2003), 83.

²⁷ John Paul Lederach, Reina Neufeldt, and Hal Culbertson, *Reflective Peacebuilding: A Planning, Monitoring, and Learning Toolkit* (Notre Dame, IN: The Joan B. Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, University of Notre Dame and Catholic Relief Services Southeast, East Asia Regional Office, 2007), 17.

Because this peacemaking matrix is too expansive for one paper to address in any significant depth, I have chosen to limit the peacemaking methodologies presented in Part II to the three sections highlighted above in orange (See Table 2). My focus is on the practices that Christian Associations, Christian Organizations, and Christians in secular Nongovernmental Organizations can use when approaching Conflict Transformation. Although example narratives will include elements of other categories, the consideration will generally exclude congregational, denominational, and governmental actors as well as organizations focused on community development (Column 5) so that a spotlight can be shown on the efforts of Christian organizations working in conflict zones for the cessation of violence and the building of sufficient stability required to engage in actions that build positive peace.

Part II: Peacemaking Methodologies

Christian peacemaking draws on a broad range of practices. While not exhaustive, the following description of practices is intended to present an accounting of peace methodologies used by Christians in violent conflicts around the world. Because the characteristics of a given methodology make it more or less effective depending on situational factors, peacemakers should be aware of the menu of options available to them. Furthermore, types of responses should not be considered in isolation, but should be combined for increased spiritual and social impact. For example, prayer initiatives and mediation should be seen as complimentary actions, not competing methodologies where one must be utilized at the expense of the other.

Two more clarifications will set the stage for the following peacemaking examples. Firstly, I have focused this analysis on efforts and techniques for ending violent conflicts. This means that I have not included nonviolent actions aimed at promoting social justice and broad human rights that would fall in the fifth section of the taxonomy—Community Building (e.g., land reform, living wage, freedom to vote, etc.). While the actions listed here may prove useful

in these larger issues, the examples I have chosen are limited to ending violence, promoting peaceful conflict resolution, and engendering reconciliation. Secondly, I have chosen to look for “low profile” examples. To this end I have not included stories from the much publicized nonviolent movements and actions in Poland (Solidarity), South African (Apartheid), Philippines (Marcos-Aquino), the United States (Civil Rights), or Eastern Europe (End of the Soviet Union).

Prayer Initiatives

In addition to the well-known development activities of World Vision such as child sponsorship and food provision, the organization also sponsors prayer initiatives around the world. Prayer conferences have been held in conjunction with local congregations and international prayer teams in some of the bloodiest conflict zones the world has seen—Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia, and Kosovo.²⁸ Prayer warriors John Robb and James Hill, both with ties to World Vision, assert, “This kind of praying does not preclude normal human attempts to resolve conflict, such as diplomacy, conflict mediation, and even the use of military force, but rather it helps them to be effective.”²⁹ This reference to military intervention demonstrates that prayer is valued by pacifist and non-pacifist peacemakers alike.

Robb and Hill share moving stories from their prayer conferences, highlighting a number of lessons that are applicable in a broad range of settings.³⁰ First, prayer makes a difference in the physical world where our conflicts are manifested. In each of the four countries listed above, changes at the grassroots and national level were seen in the weeks and months following the international and interdenominational prayer conferences. For example, after Cambodia Christian Services and World Vision co-sponsored a prayer initiative in March 1995, “the Khmer

²⁸ John D. Robb and James A. Hill, *The Peacemaking Power of Prayer: Equipping Christians to Transform the World* (Nashville, TN: Broadman and Holman Publishers, 2000).

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

³⁰ In addition to the guidelines and observations presented here, see Robb and Hill’s list of 18 lessons in *The Peacemaking Power of Prayer*, 115-120.

Rouge continued to dissolve as an effective political and military force to the point of extinction. One month later, the government reported that they had been reduced to a mere nuisance.”³¹ This reinforces a point Robb makes when quoting Walter Wink, “History belongs to the intercessors.”³²

Second, Robb and Hill stress “the importance of loving, bold confrontation of sin and the need for reconciliation.”³³ Two stories illustrate this point. At a prayer meeting in Bosnia, the focus was on reconciliation between the three warring factions—Serbs, Bosnians, and Croats. Attendees from each ethnicity, including soldiers and people who had lost family members, confessed their anger toward the others and asked for forgiveness in order to be reconciled. After a period of group confession, each person was asked “to go to another from a different ethnic group and personally ask them for forgiveness. For some, this was a most difficult task. However...we all began to move around the room confessing, asking for forgiveness, and extending forgiveness. We hugged and wept together, asking the Lord to heal.”³⁴ As seen in this story, Evangelical Christians are able to serve “as interlocutors and facilitators...because evangelicals are the only nonnational religious group; they have believers from all groups.”³⁵

Confronting sin as a means of enabling reconciliation was also critical to the success of the international prayer conference in Cambodia. On the second day, the conference leader went to the front and declared, “Some of you have blood on your hands!”³⁶ After a period of silence, the spiritual and emotional dam broke and opened the way for

³¹ Robb and Hill, *The Peacemaking Power of Prayer: Equipping Christians to Transform the World*, 165.

³² *Ibid.*, 48.

³³ *Ibid.*, 116.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 60.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 110.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 159.

weeping, wailing, and torrents of tears. One by one, pastors and evangelists confessed that during the ‘killing fields’ time, they themselves had killed others with their own hands. At that time they had not yet come to Christ and since then had been keeping their crimes secret for fear of retaliation upon themselves and their families. However, suppressing the truth had taken its toll, hindering the unity of the church and making them distrustful of one another.³⁷

After this time of confessing crimes like burying babies alive and murdering hundreds of innocent people, the group “felt emboldened to pray aggressively for the healing and deliverance of the land idolatry and the dominion of darkness.” With this renewed energy, they broke into teams and continue their prayer efforts in various areas around the capital.

A third lesson presented by Robb and Hill relates to connectivity. International prayer conferences should be connected to international supporting intercessors outside of the country and to church and parachurch leaders in the local setting. In each of the stories presented, prayer networks (e.g., World Vision email list or the European Prayer Link) were used to request intercession from Christians around the world, while the prayer team followed the leadership of church leaders while in the areas of conflict.

Robb and Hill’s international prayer experience demonstrates that prayers for peace, forgiveness, reconciliation, justice, healing, courage, and the growth of God’s good kingdom should be the first tool of choice for Christian peacemakers. By seeking God first, we invite God’s power to transform the “enemy,” and we are better prepared to employ the other peacemaking tools at our disposal.

³⁷ Ibid.

Of course, prayer initiatives can take many forms. For example, Friends (Quaker) women in Kenya formed prayer groups of women across the country in the early 1990s.³⁸ Because the Friends yearly meetings had splintered because of conflicts in the 40s, these women began attending the yearly meetings of the various groups. The pastor of these groups, Nora Musundi, shares that these factions are now “united under the umbrella of the Friends Council of Kenya. In 2001, all the yearly meetings held a reconciliation meeting in which the people were willing to forgive one another and to commit to work together in harmony.”³⁹

These Kenyan women also pray for concerns outside of the church. They also pray for national unity, for peace elections, and for strength to carry out a range of humanitarian activities, including caring for orphans and those affected by HIV/AIDS, providing job training to school dropouts, and educating young people. “The strength behind our work is always prayer.”⁴⁰

Fasting

Like most of the actions listed in this section, fasting is a spiritual and social activity that has been used by both Christian and non-Christian peacemakers. Gandhi is quite likely the most famous non-Christian used fasted often and at great lengths in his peace- and justice-making efforts.⁴¹ Fasting is a powerful tool for personal and social change, and has been used effectively in tandem with other modes of peacemaking.

³⁸ Nora Musundi, “Caring for Victims in Kenya,” in *Seeking Peace in Africa: Stories from African Peacemakers*, ed. Donald E. Miller et al. (Telford, PA: Cascadia Publishing, 2007), 143.

³⁹ Ibid., 146.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ Louis Fischer, ed., *The Essential Gandhi: An Anthology of His Writings on His Life, Work, and Ideas*, Second. (New York, NY: Vintage, 2002), 241.

In 1997 the Christian Peacemaker Team in Hebron decided to fast as a response to the destruction of Palestinian homes by the Israeli military.⁴² “We made the decision to fast for seven hundred hours—one hour for each of the looming demolitions. We began...with three members doing a liquid-only fast and the others, a Ramadan-style fast that consisted of eating only between sundown and sunrise.”⁴³

To improve the effectiveness of the fast at raising awareness of the demolitions, the team set up a tent in a visible area and networked with other groups in the area—“Sabeel (a Palestinian Christian Liberation Theology organization in Jerusalem), Rabbis for Human Rights, Israelis and Palestinians for Nonviolence, and a United Methodist group in Jericho.”⁴⁴ A journal was also used for Palestinians who visited the tent to record their stories, accounts that were then translated into English for activists and the press. Palestinian women used the tent as a place to make speeches at the end of a march designed to draw attention to the demolitions.

Determining the success of the fast depends on one's perspective. Some homes were temporarily spared, new connections were made, awareness was raised, and three Israeli activists who had supported the fast started a new organization, Israeli Committee Against Home Demolitions (ICAHD).⁴⁵ And yet years later, “the demolitions continue. The Israeli army continues to uproot families. The human face that we helped the world to see is still streaked with tears.”⁴⁶ However, the final chapter is not written yet. CPT activist Art Gish reminds us,

⁴² Dianne Roe, “Witnessing Demolition, Fasting for Rebuilding,” in *Getting in the Way: Stories from Christian Peacemaker Teams*, ed. Tricia Gates Brown (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2005), 82.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 83.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 86.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 87.

“We just have to do what’s right. We never, never can predict the consequences of our actions.”⁴⁷

Three years later, another CPT delegation fasted in Chiapas, Mexico, in support of indigenous communities who had been forced to leave their homes and villages because of paramilitary violence. In conjunction with the displaced Abejas, “an indigenous, pacifist, Christian group that refused to take sides in the conflict between the Mexican state and the Zapatista rebels,”⁴⁸ CPT decided to fast and pray throughout the duration of Lent. Like the team in Hebron, this group set up a tent; however, the location was quite provocative—the middle of a Mexican army base that had been established near the indigenous refugee camp.

Surprised that the military did not intervene, a rotation of CPT members and Abejas continued to fast and pray in the shelter. At night up to twelve people would squeeze into the tent to sleep in solidarity. This continued until Holy Week when the Abejas planned community action and worship. Mexican university students and others from abroad joined these actions—a procession following the Virgin of the Massacre, public scripture readings, writing “PAZ” (peace) on the helipad, singing songs and raising peace flags.⁴⁹

Similar to the fast in Hebron, the full impact of the fast is difficult to assess. After the fast, at least two soldiers left the Mexican army, and eventually the Abejas were able to return to their villages even as the Zapatistas felt the need to remain in their refugee camps. Looking back on the fast, William Payne concludes that “we are called to act in truth and to trust that God is directing the results even when we cannot see them.”⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Leahy Matthew, *Old Radicals*, Online, Documentary, 2010, <http://www.docchallenge.org/2010-Finalists/old-radicals.html>.

⁴⁸ William Payne, “People of Faith Occupy a Military Base,” in *Getting in the Way: Stories from Christian Peacemaker Teams*, ed. Tricia Gates Brown (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2005), 114.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 121-122.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 123.

Prayer and fasting have also been promoted by the Catholic Church in other areas. For example, in Sri Lanka daily prayer and fasting was introduced during Lent in 2000 and by the next year the practice had spread throughout the Diocese.⁵¹

Zones of Peace

José Inocencio Alas, also known as “Chencho,” was active in community organizing in El Salvador when he was a Catholic priest. Although he has now left the priesthood, he continues to work for peace and justice as a Catholic layperson. Among his many peacemaking initiatives is the “Zone of Peace,” which he has promoted through Coordinadora del Bajo Lempa, a community-based organization. Alas describes the violence prevalent in Salvadoran society after the end of the sixty-year civil war—rampant street crime, kidnappings, killings, torture, robberies, and more recently, gangs.⁵²

In response, Coordinadora held dozens of workshops that focused on building a shared vision for a Local Zone of Peace, “a region committed to changing the culture of violence to one of collaboration, mutual problem solving, and peace.”⁵³ On the first day of the workshops, participants described the violence experienced in their local communities. This was followed with reflections on biblical material such as Cain and Abel or the Sermon on the Mount. The second day used more Bible teachings to develop a vision of peace. After nearly two years of such preparation, a multi-national parade of peace inaugurated the Zone of Peace.⁵⁴

The vision of peace that the region developed is holistic and “includes the full range of issues that need to be addressed to reach true peace, and not merely the absence of war.” This

⁵¹ Shirley Lal Wijesinghe, “Sri Lanka: Prophetic Initiatives amidst Deadly Conflict,” in *Artisans of Peace: Grassroots Peacemaking among Christian Communities*, ed. Mary Ann Cejka and Thomas Bamat (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2003), 175.

⁵² Little, *Peacemakers in Action: Profiles of Religion in Conflict Resolution*, 45.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 46.

demonstrates the connection between columns 4 and 5 (Conflict Transformation and Community Building) in the taxonomy presented above. While they can be considered as discreet types of peacemaking, both work together well in real-world applications.

Alas continues to support the Zone of Peace through fundraising via the Foundation for Self-Sufficiency in Central America (FSSCA). These peacemaking efforts have spread, and Alas is now working on the Mesoamerican Peace Project that looks to expand peace throughout the region by developing “a peaceful response to globalization from the bottom up.”⁵⁵

Half-way around the globe, Rev. Dr. Benny Giay has worked in West Papua, Indonesia, much as Alas has in El Salvador.⁵⁶ As an indigenous human rights worker, activist, and church leader, Giay has seen education, community organizing, and peacemaking as central to the mission of the church. Even though he has been critical of the evangelical Christian community’s over emphasis on one’s relationship with God to the neglect of promoting harmony in society and with creation, Giay cites a 1992 report by the Evangelical Church of West Papua documenting the Indonesian government’s record of tortures and killings as being pivotal in making human rights work an important part of his ministry.⁵⁷

Also similarly to Alas, Giay has been involved with efforts aimed at building a zone of peace. In response to conflict between Papuans and the government as well as between ethnic Papuans and Indonesian migrants, the Provincial Parliament of Papua established the zone in West Papua in 2002 and created the Papua Peace Commission to put it into practice. Giay was named the director and was given the task of building “a coalition of all segments of the Papuan community (including non-governmental, religious, women’s, and student organizations) in

⁵⁵ Ibid., 48.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 402-422.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 409.

support of” the peace zone.⁵⁸ Although progress has been slow, arguably because of military interventions and outsiders who come and provoke intertribal conflict, Giay continues to educate and build bridges in hopes that the future will be marked by peace and justice rather than the violence of the past. This perseverance is at last partially understood given his faith as expressed in his first principle of peacemaking: “Christ came to establish a ‘shalom society,’ and Christians are called to be part of this mission.”⁵⁹

Accompaniment

Accompaniment is the partnering of international peacemakers with local, threatened people and communities with the goal of preventing localized violence within a larger context of conflict. The technique’s effectiveness results from the increased additional media exposure of local abuses. In the short film, *Old Radical*, Art Gish calls the peacemaking effect of the presence of him and his wife (both of whom are well passed retirement age) the *grandmother effect*. He explains, “There are things that nobody would do if their grandmother were watching. There are things that soldiers will not do if they know they’re being watched. So in a situation of violence and tension, if the people on both sides know they’re being watched, they know that whatever they do is going to be reported to the rest of the world, just that in itself will tend to reduce the violence.”⁶⁰

This is the primary intervention used by Christian Peacemaker Teams (CPT), though they also combine other actions. Teams “choose to live in conflict zones to create space for local efforts of nonviolent resistance. They talk to soldiers, guerrillas, and paramilitaries; they

⁵⁸ Ibid., 416.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 420.

⁶⁰ Matthew, *Old Radicals*.

accompany school children and farmers; they advocate for human rights, support local initiatives in nonviolence, and disseminate reports of what they witness.”⁶¹

A CPT experience in Hebron illustrates the violence-diminishing effects of accompaniment. In early January 1999, the Palestinian Authority in Hebron planned a nonviolent protest of the curfew that applied to Palestinians but not to Israelis. Because the revered Ibrahimi Mosque is located in the Israeli-controlled section of the city (H2) where the curfew is enforced, Palestinians are not able to worship there. Consequently, the demonstrators planned to march from the Palestinian section (H1) into the disputed area (H2).⁶² CPT members did not participate in the march, but they were invited to be on hand as a deterrent against violence, knowing that a public demonstration of this nature could be highly volatile.

CPTer Mark Frey recounts that as the group approached the H2 border:

a squad of soldiers charges down the alley, garbed in full riot gear.... They move into firing positions. Pierre, Sara, and at least one Palestinian man leap in front of the leveled M-16s, screaming “Don’t shoot! This is nonviolent! They’re not throwing stones!” They’re trying to use their whole bodies to stop more death.

CPTers run to the front of the crowd and do the same. If the soldiers are going to fire, they will shoot us first, and we’re banking they won’t.⁶³

Before the demonstration ended with Muslim prayers, CPT members again stood between Israeli guns and Palestinian demonstrators, leading to the arrest of two team members. At the conclusion of the event, CPT engaged in other peacemaking efforts, demonstrating the link between accompaniment and other actions. “Back at the apartment, we begin our follow-up:

⁶¹ Tricia Gates Brown, ed., *Getting in the Way: Stories from Christian Peacemaker Teams* (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2005), 11.

⁶² Mark Frey, “Standing in the Gap,” in *Getting in the Way: Stories from Christian Peacemaker Teams*, ed. Tricia Gates Brown (Scottsdale, PA: Herald Press, 2005), 71.

⁶³ *Ibid.*, 73.

calling our Israeli partners, the media, and CPT's Chicago office, writing press releases, and locating Sara and Pierre."⁶⁴

Commenting on the effectiveness of CPT's peacemaking methodology, team member Jerry Levin explains: "I don't think [about] turning the situation around here immediately, or even in the short- or mid-term. But I think we're part of a movement that's trying, that is succeeding one person at a time or two people at a time...in demonstrating that there is a nonviolent way to deal with conflict."⁶⁵

Mediation

Mediation has been defined as "an intervention in a conflict, by an actor not a party to the dispute, aimed at helping the parties resolve their conflict peacefully through negotiation and compromise."⁶⁶ This problem solving technique can be used at both the micro and macro social levels. Assefa lists seven required characteristics of successful mediators, characteristics that will be demonstrated in the subsequent examples:

1. Impartiality regarding the issues in the dispute;
2. Independence from all parties to the conflict;
3. The respect of and acceptability to all protagonists;
4. The knowledge and skill to deal with the issues;
5. Possession of the required physical resources, e.g., meeting site, transportation and communication facilities, persons for verification and inspection services;
6. International support for the mediator;
- and 7. Leverage, i.e., the possibility for the mediator to put pressure on one or both parties to accept a proposed settlement.⁶⁷

⁶⁴ Ibid., 76.

⁶⁵ Steve Petrou, *Peacemakers in the Holy Land*, Online, Documentary, 2006, <http://www.veoh.com/collection/PeppersprayProductionsindymediaPres/watch/v5765287yMfR2be>.

⁶⁶ Hizkias Assefa, *Mediation of Civil Wars: Approaches and Strategies--The Sudan Conflict* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1987), 4.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 22-23.

One significant example of mediation at macro social level occurred during the civil war in Sudan, where the World Council of Churches (WCC) played a pivotal role in negotiations between northern and southern groups.⁶⁸ Assefa highlights the importance of the seven characteristics listed above in relation to civil wars because governments have unique political demands relating to other dissident groups, national sovereignty, and the international status of the rebels.⁶⁹ Because of these special concerns, the first groups (i.e., Presidents of Uganda and Ghana and the Movement for Colonial Freedom or MCF), who attempted to build bridges between the government in Khartoum and the Southern Sudan Liberation Movement/Army (SSLM/A) had been unfruitful; however, the WCC fit the criteria.

Growing divisions between the Arab north and the underdeveloped African south trace back to the 1820s with the conquering of the area by the Viceroy of Egypt under the Ottoman Empire.⁷⁰ As the scheduled date for Sudanese independence from Britain and Egypt approached (January 1, 1956), the south feared domination by the north. In an atmosphere of distrust, segments of the military loyal to the south mutinied in 1955, marking the beginning of the civil war that would last until mediation efforts in the early 1970s.

The WCC, in partnership with the All Africa Conference of Churches (AACC), took over the mediation efforts in 1970 when the south felt the MCF was no longer impartial but favored the government in Khartoum. The WCC and AACC were acceptable to sides of the conflict because they had offered material aid to those affected in the south since 1965 while not being publicly critical of the north as other missionaries were who had been forced to leave in

⁶⁸ Assefa, *Mediation of Civil Wars: Approaches and Strategies--The Sudan Conflict*.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 29.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, 37.

1962.⁷¹ Furthermore, a preliminary study by the WCC and AACC convinced the government that they had a “fair and objective” understanding of the issues.⁷²

After a successful initial visit with the Sudanese government in May 1971, the WCC/AACC delegation began to contact all parties with ties to or significant interests in southern Sudan, including civil and political leaders as well as exiled Southerners in Zaire, Uganda, Kenya, and Ethiopia. These behind-the-scenes communications limited the ability of the various actors to publicly use the peace process to their advantage and enabled the mediators to gain a deeper understanding of each stakeholder’s positions.

The WCC/AACC delegation continued to shuttle between the parties, assessing levels of commitment and passing messages between them. These secret communications eventually culminated in preliminary talks on November 9, 1971, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. In addition to leaders of the WCC and AACC, a representative of the Sudan Council of Churches was also on hand.⁷³ Between this date and the formal talks beginning February 15, 1972, there was a flurry of activity on all sides as each party attempted to strengthen its position.

Religious expression was prominent throughout the peace talks. The chair of the talks, Burgess Carr, began the negotiations with a sermon about Nehemiah rebuilding the walls of Jerusalem, a story supported by both the Old Testament and the Koran.⁷⁴ Mid-way through the process of moving from surface issues to deeper, more complex issues, Carr began using prayer more regularly, asking “all members to stand up and pray silently every time negotiation over a major issue area concluded in agreement.”⁷⁵ At the conclusion of the talks, “Carr stood up and started to pray aloud, rather than silently as he had done whenever a major issue in the

⁷¹ Ibid., 94-95.

⁷² Ibid., 106.

⁷³ Ibid., 122.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 134.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 137.

negotiation was settled. He said that he was crying as he prayed, and some members of the delegations were also crying.”⁷⁶

The end of negotiations did not complete the work of religious institutions. Various exiles and members of the SSLM objected to the negotiated settlement, so church organizations began meeting with dissident groups to explain the agreement and build support for it. When these questions were settled and the peace accords were ratified, the WCC/AACC delegation continued to be involved by escorting southern leadership to Khartoum and by participating in the early process of implementation.⁷⁷

This example of church sponsored mediation highlights the role that Christian associations can have in promoting peace. Unfortunately, the agreement only lasted a little more than a decade. In 1983 the Second Sudanese Civil War began, in many ways due to the same contentions underlying the first civil war. This demonstrates the on-going nature of Christian peacemaking; violence can occur at any time, and peacemakers must be ready to respond.

Catholic and Protestant churches also played critical roles in ending Mozambique’s civil war in 1992.⁷⁸ In 1975 Mozambique gained its independence from Portugal. Devastated by the loss of more than 200,000 Portuguese settlers who had formed much of the country’s economic and civic backbone, the nation had significant challenges from its inception. The new president was the leader of The Front for the Liberation of Mozambique (FRELIMO), a group with Marxist ideology. Resistance to FRELIMO coalesced into the opposition group, Mozambique National Resistance (RENAMO). The civil war that began in the early 1980s between these two groups would kill over a million people and displace up to eight million others before the peace agreement was signed in 1992.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 142.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 148.

⁷⁸ Lederach and Appleby, “Strategic Peacebuilding: An Overview.”

Despite pressure and disruption from FRELIMO during the civil war, the actions of Christian leaders and organizations during the conflict laid the ground work for role the Church would play in the negotiation process. Even though various church denominations favored different parties, “the religious communities...constituted the nation’s civil society.”⁷⁹ For example, the Marxist state recognized that “churches were providing essential social services—such as the distribution of food and clothing, education, and health care—which the state itself was unable to supply.”⁸⁰

One active group during the war years was the Community of Sant’Egidio, a Catholic organization. Members of Sant’Egidio made efforts to build trusting relationships with leaders of both FRELIMO and RENAMO, and even reached out to Muslim communities. Social services and education were promoted for all, and a 1984 meeting with government officials, “led to the establishment of a program, supported by the Italian government at Sant’Egidio’s request, to deliver massive shipments of food and medicine.”⁸¹

When the president was killed in an airplane accident in 1987 and a new government was formed, Sant’Egidio and the Mozambican Christian Council (CCM) were able to begin the process of initiating peace talks. The joint delegation became known as the Peace and Reconciliation Commission, and in 1989 they held preliminary peace talks in Nairobi, Kenya. The following year formal peace negotiations began under the auspices of the Commission, and in conjunction with other national and international leaders

representatives of Sant’Egidio were able to maintain a momentum for peace among the two parties over the course of ten rounds of talks, which were held from 1990 to 1992 in the sixteenth-century Carmelite convent in Rome that serves

⁷⁹ Ibid., 19.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 20.

⁸¹ Ibid., 29.

as the international headquarters for Sant'Egidio. Following two closing summits, the General Peace Accord was signed on October 4, 1992.⁸²

In contrast to these examples of mediating civil wars, the Mennonite church in Colombia realized that mediation could be useful at the local level, in communities around the country where small-scale conflicts needed resolution. Because of a backlog of court cases, the government passed a law allowing communities to establish mediation centers. In response, the church established the Center for Conflict Analysis and Transformation in 1994, as well as a cyclical training program (Permanent Course) designed to prepare community mediators.⁸³ The practice and social analysis of the Center opened the leaders' eyes to the roots of many of the conflicts. Consequently, the vision has expanded "beyond training mediators, to fostering transformation into a community of peace through justice. Mediation is just one of the strategies for building a peace that is integrated with justice, nonviolence, human rights, and politics."⁸⁴ The relationships formed through the Permanent Course, the Center, and local community mediation work have formalized into the Network of Community Justice and Treatment of Conflict.⁸⁵

Justapaz has also brought mediation into the public school system. Work began in Mennonite primary schools, but as the reputation of the program spread, it was invited to teach mediation skill in government schools. This has been done through the Program for

⁸² Ibid., 30.

⁸³ Ricardo Esquivia and Paul Stucky, "Building Peace from Below and Inside: The Mennonite Experience in Colombia," in *From the Ground Up: Mennonite Contributions to International Peacebuilding*, ed. Cynthia Sampson and John Paul Lederach (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2000), 135.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 136.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 138.

Peacebuilding in School Settings. The school program has expanded to include teachers, parents and administrators.⁸⁶

Similar to the community mediation established in Colombia by Mennonites, the Evangelical Friends Church (Quaker) in Burundi has also promoted conflict transformation. This has been done through establishing community training courses and forming the Mission for Peace and Reconciliation Under the Cross (MIPAREC). One aspect of its mission is “establishing community reconciliation and peace committees to manage community conflict.”⁸⁷

Researcher John Brewer describes the ways that Christians have supported mediation in the context of Northern Ireland, “where there are occasional flashes of high-intensity violence which require direct intervention but where the normally low-key character of violence provides some space for local people to learn mediation skills.”⁸⁸

Formal mediation leadership and training is provided by a number of organizations, including Corrymeela, Cornerstone, ECONI, and the Irish School of Ecumenics. These groups engage in “mediation in specific instances of conflict, conflict counseling among protagonists, the facilitation of discussions and local consultations, and what is called ‘Transforming Conflict Training’ given to local residents and other involved parties.”⁸⁹ Additionally, the Mediation Network works with both religious and non-religious conflicts. Many of the network’s staff volunteers are Christian, and one is a Mennonite, but it is not an explicitly religious organization.

Informal mediation at the grassroots level is also quite common in Northern Ireland, primarily involving the clergy in “ad hoc, emergency-style intervention in disputes in the local

⁸⁶ Ibid., 136-137.

⁸⁷ Philippe Nakuwundi, “Healing in Burundi,” in *Seeking Peace in Africa: Stories from African Peacemakers*, ed. Donald E. Miller et al. (Telford, PA: Cascadia Publishing, 2007), 126.

⁸⁸ Brewer, “Northern Ireland: Peacemaking among Protestants and Catholics,” 79.

⁸⁹ Ibid.

neighborhood.”⁹⁰ This work is done despite the risk of violence toward the clergy, even violence perpetrated by those of the same denomination who do not wish any cooperation or collaboration with those from other faith communities.

Irrespective of the risks, the leaderships of the churches have frequently taken a proactive stance in facilitating discussion and negotiation. One example has been the valuable work of the Church of Ireland Primate, Archbishop Robin Eames, and Presbyterian minister Roy Magee in brokering the Loyalist paramilitary cease-fire in 1995.⁹¹

Less structured forms of mediation have also proven successful in some locations. For example, a peacemaking methodology termed the People-to-People Peace Process was effectively used in southern Sudan at Peace and Reconciliation Conferences before the end of the north-south civil war that devastated the country. When southern forces splintered and violence between people groups in the south increased, the church realized it could and should work to promote reconciliation. To this end the New Sudan Council of Churches (NSCC), “seized the opportunity and effectively stepped into the unknown, committed to assisting the promotion of peace among southerners.”⁹²

Because internationally sponsored peace events had generally ignored the local context of peacemaking—listening, mutual respect, restoring relationships, and a bottom-up approach—the church encouraged shared Christian and traditional African values at the 1994 Akobo Conference. The inter-tribal conflict between the Jikany and Lou was centered on a dispute regarding grazing land that had escalated to the point that many people had died on both sides.

⁹⁰ Ibid., 80.

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Julia Aker Duany, “South Sudan: People-to-People Peacemaking: A Local Solution to Local Problems,” in *Artisans of Peace: Grassroots Peacemaking among Christian Communities*, ed. Mary Ann Cejka and Thomas Bamat (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2003), 215-216.

After preliminary dialogue had been fostered, the Conference was scheduled for further conversation.

Over 5,000 participants attended the conference to discuss water usage, grazing and fishing “under the mediation of a chairperson or moderators chosen by consensus among the people.”⁹³ “Women played a particularly effective witnessing role at the conference, acting as an informal ‘truth commission.’ Each a maan naath (mother of the nation), the Nuer women would shout down any man whose accounts contained falsehoods.”⁹⁴ After much discussion over forty-five days, the consensus agreement was endorsed by the local authority, and the peacemaking process received support to be used for future conflicts.

At the request of local churches that had gained trust for the NSCC,⁹⁵ it was asked to host more conferences, including one in 1999 to address grievances between the Nuer and Dinka tribes relating to grazing and fishing.⁹⁶ Before the conference, chiefs visited each other’s territory to commit to the peace process. After these regional ceremonies, the Peace and Reconciliation Conference convened with local and international observers.

The first three days of the conference were set aside for storytelling between Dinka and Nuer. In this first round of dialogue, key issues were identified. Following that, working groups met to propose resolutions. Then the entire conference met for dialogue about the proposals and to reach a consensus on the final resolutions.⁹⁷

These examples of mediation, as well as the other activities described here, demonstrate that religious persons and organizations must work in concert with other parties. “Successful

⁹³ Ibid., 222.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 217.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 220.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 218-219.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 219.

religious peacebuilding usually involves collaboration with other civil society actors, governments, and international institutions.”⁹⁸

Conscientious Objection

Although conscientious objection is not a direct response to ending violence in society, it is an action that seeks to avoid participating in violence that the state defines as compulsory. Young men and women today have considerable freedom in avoiding military duty because of the commitment and sacrifices of those in earlier times who worked to achieve these freedoms. In many other countries this is still not the case; avoiding compulsory military duty can bring significant negative consequences.

For example, there were no legal exemptions for conscientious objectors (COs) in Colombia when the Mennonite church began to grow there in the 1940s and 50s. In the 1980s the church focused more attention on this issue. Partnerships with the Columbian Confederation of Evangelical Churches (then CEDEC, now CEDECOL) and a Jesuit group among others, developed during this time, and the network of Christian groups formed the Collective for Conscientious Objection in 1990 after the Mennonite church founded Justapaz with conscientious objection as one of its primary foci.⁹⁹

Justapaz began teaching churches about the topic using Quaker-designed workshops, and also campaigned to make a national constitutional amendment to allow conscientious objection. While this was not fully successful, an exception to military service was made for seminary students. To take advantage of this opening, the church opened the Seminary for the Training of

⁹⁸ Powers, “Religion and Peacebuilding,” 325.

⁹⁹ Esquivia and Stucky, “Building Peace from Below and Inside: The Mennonite Experience in Colombia,” 129.

Peacemakers, which including training in human rights, conscientious objection, the theology of nonviolence, social ethics, history, conflict transformation, and ecology among other topics.¹⁰⁰

Publications

Whether used for violence or for peace, information is a powerful weapon. Gathering and sharing information can take many forms, print materials being one of the most common communication tools used in peacemaking.

On the island of Sri Lanka, Tamils and Sinhalese waged a vicious civil war from 1983 until 2009. One notable peacemaking effort during the violence was a group composed of Sinhalese Roman Catholic youth—*Kitusara*, meaning, “Light of Christ.” Publishing books and magazines was one of their major tools for raising awareness and building the values needed for peace.¹⁰¹ In 1990 the youth began publishing a self-titled monthly news magazine informing the Sinhalese in the south of the atrocities endured by the Tamil at the hands of the Sinhalese government. A second magazine published by these Sinhalese youth is actually for and by Tamils, giving them the resources to document their own experience of the conflict. The content includes the hardships, “of soldier families, widows, and orphans; the poverty that drives young men and women to become soldiers; the inalienable right of Tamils to their land; protests in the South against the war; and the enormous war expenditure.”¹⁰²

In addition to these periodicals, *Kitusara* also published, *Sanvedi* (“Sensitivity”), a book decrying the uselessness of the war. After noting that people were willing to die for war but not for peace, a subsequent book was published telling the stories of four priests who died as martyrs

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 131-133.

¹⁰¹ Wijesinghe, “Sri Lanka: Prophetic Initiatives amidst Deadly Conflict,” 181.

¹⁰² Ibid.

for peace. These publication efforts are the main focus of *Kitusara*, though other actions—visitations, concerts, and lobbying—have also been engaged at times.¹⁰³

Rallies, Vigils and Demonstrations

Public events have been used by Christian peacemakers to build solidarity, draw attention to injustices, and promote values that strengthen society. For instance, in Northern Ireland a range of public gatherings and actions has been sponsored by various peace and reconciliation organizations for these purposes.¹⁰⁴ Women Together and Community Dialogue has used public meetings to bring highlight those who are suffering and to educate the public on policy issues. Other groups have organized “peacemaking events, such as the ‘Light a Candle on Christmas eve’ peace campaign, ‘Friendship Seats’ in parks...and ‘*Stamp Out Sectarianism* Roadshows’ in shopping centers, festivals, sports arenas, and the like.”¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, since 1968 Protestant and Catholic Encounter has used “drama, carol services, and readings, as well as anti-sectarian projects, ecumenical services, and prayer meetings.”¹⁰⁶

In Asia, similar public events have also been hosted to promote the peace agenda. The Centre for Society and Religion (CSR), which was founded by Catholic priests in the early 1970s, has promoted peace in schools and in other village forums. A significant rally, Sama Jeevanaya (“Lifegiving Peace”) was held in 1999, bringing together youth from villages across the country. A joint declaration by the attendees declared their hopes and ideals for the country:

We the youth of this country refuse to kill or be killed. We do not wish to carry forward a conflict created by our political ancestors. We wish to till our land and

¹⁰³ Ibid., 181-182.

¹⁰⁴ Brewer, “Northern Ireland: Peacemaking among Protestants and Catholics,” 85-86.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 85.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.

live in peace and harmony. We call on you, our leaders, to work out an acceptable, honourable, just and sustainable solution to the present conflict.¹⁰⁷

Part III: Case Study—Liberia

The peacemaking efforts of Leymah Gbowee and the others who joined the Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace were instrumental in bringing about the signing of Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Accra, Ghana, on August 18, 2003. This agreement, which was signed after Liberia's president, Charles Taylor, had already been indicted for war crimes by the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL), ended Liberia's second civil war, which had begun in 1999.

Liberia's history of violence makes this peace agreement all the more noteworthy. Beginning in 1822 the American Colonization Society began repatriating former slaves to Liberia. These returnees, Americo-Liberians, were established as the ruling elite when Liberia was founded in 1847.

Given a land to govern, they built their system of rule on the only political and administrative system with which they were familiar: the system of the plantations in the United States' deep south. The main difference was, of course that this time they were the 'masters' and the indigenous population in the country they had been given to govern became their slaves.¹⁰⁸

The minority elite ruled the country in this manner for the next century, enriching themselves and disenfranchising the broader society. "Liberia was de facto both a one-party state and an apartheid state."¹⁰⁹ This trend might have continued had the prices for the two major

¹⁰⁷ Wijesinghe, "Sri Lanka: Prophetic Initiatives amidst Deadly Conflict," 176.

¹⁰⁸ Morten Bøås, "The Liberian Civil War: New War/Old War?," *Global Society: Journal of Interdisciplinary International Relations* 19, no. 1 (January 2005): 76.

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*

exports—rubber and iron ore—not plummeted, significantly decreasing the elites’ ability to fund their control of government and social structures. “The decline in market values for primary products coupled with a long-standing progressive movement for more open, inclusive government paved the way for a military coup in 1980, rigged elections in 1985 and [the first] civil war from 1989 to 1996.”¹¹⁰

In 1997 warlord Charles Taylor was elected President of Liberia; however, widespread discontent with his leadership catalyzed further rebellion, and in 1999 the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and other groups began armed conflict with the purpose of ousting Taylor. This Second Liberian Civil War was especially destructive. “The real losers were the civilians who lived in these areas. First LURD would occupy a village and plunder it. Then Taylor’s forces would come and chase LURD away, and in turn plunder what little there was left.”¹¹¹ Child conscription, mutilation, murder and rape were weapons of war which left no one safe.

It is within this violent context that the heroic efforts of Leymah Gbowee and the other peacemakers are set.¹¹² Gbowee had an unusual entrance into peacemaking efforts. She recalls, “I had a dream, and it was like a crazy dream, that someone was actually telling me to get the women of the church together to pray for peace.” Even though she felt like “the wrong person for God to be speaking to,” because she did not consider herself a “Holy Ghost-filled Christian,” she went to her friends and shared the idea. She felt unfit to be their leader, but they insisted. “After they convinced me, we started this journey together. Then I realize that every problem we’d

¹¹⁰ Mary H. Moran and M. Anne Pitcher, “The ‘Basket Case’ and the ‘Poster Child’: Explaining the End of Civil Conflicts in Liberia and Mozambique,” *Third World Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (2004): 505.

¹¹¹ Bøås, “The liberian civil war,” 85.

¹¹² Unless otherwise noted, the stories of Gbowee and the Mass Action for Peace are taken from the award-winning documentary, *Pray the Devil Back to Hell* (both the film and the additional interview included on the DVD), directed by Gini Reticker (Fork Films, 2008).

encounter on this journey, I'm going to rise above it and lead these women because they trusted me with their lives and their future."

In June 2002 Gbowee stood in front of a large congregation in Monrovia, the capital of Liberia, and declared, "We feel it's now time to rise up and speak, but we don't want to do this alone. We want to invite the other Christian churches to come and let's put our voices together." This call for "ordinary mothers, grandmothers, aunts, [and] sisters" to join in prayer led to the formation of the Christian Women Peace Initiative.

Asatu Bah Kenneth, the Assistant Director of the Liberian National Police, heard Gbowee's call. She went in front of the congregation with Gbowee and announced, "I am the only Muslim woman in this church.... We're all serving the same God. This is not only for the Christian women.... I'm going to move it forward with the Muslim women." Thus, from the beginning this was a movement of both Christian and Muslim women.

The role of religion in this conflict is further complicated by Taylor's own claims to God's blessing and providence. In a church declared to the congregation: "I'm here because the One that created me to launch this revolution, and I tell you, if God did not want me—I'm not here because I wanted to be here. Because the only person that could have protected me over the past five to six years is Jehovah God Almighty!"

Even though Taylor's actions and policies argued against his true adherence to the faith, the women realized that if they wanted to put pressure on Taylor, they would need the support of the respected religious leaders of the country. Similarly, since the leaders of the LURD were Muslim, the key to reaching them would be through the Muslim women and their Imams. Efforts to communicate their situations and desires to the religious leaders of both faiths were pursued.

As the civil war became more intense around Monrovia, the women realized they needed to do something “more forceful, more dramatic,” so they decided to protest. A Catholic woman who worked for Radio Veritas, Catholic radio station, announced a peace festival and rally. Gbowee gives the background to the event: “We went back to the Bible. We saw what Esther did for her people, that she went in sackclothes and ashes, saying, ‘I mean it.’” Dressed in white to signify peace, they looked for a “strategic point” to encounter Taylor and get his attention. They settled on the fish market, and hundreds of women—Christian and Muslim, local and displaced women (IDPs)—participated in the daily sit-ins.

In the face of the potential for harm, the women stood firm. One woman was warned by her mother not to join the demonstration. “They will beat you people; they will kill you.” She responded by saying, “Well, if I should get killed, just remember me, that I was fighting for peace.” At one point there were more than 2,500 women demonstrating together, singing, chanting and holding signs for peace.

After a week of daily demonstrations at the market, President Taylor did not address them directly. Despite the apparent lack of impact, the women bonded as they got to know each other during this period. As they talked about their desperation, they developed a new plan—a sex strike. Each woman was instructed to tell her husband, “Look, if you have any power to put stop to the war, you go and do it.” Gbowee shares, “Men were the perpetrators of violence, so either by commission or omission, you were guilty.” Then the men were praying equally with their wives for the end of the war! Regardless, both Taylor and the rebel groups refused to begin peace talks.

Group reflection on the effectiveness of their mass actions was an important part of the movement. Gbowee explains: “A lot of the things we did weren’t really planned, but every day

what we did was after we did one action, we sat down and analyzed how effective it was. So it wasn't just protesting and going to sleep at night. So if we were there 'til twelve midnight, we would still find one hour to sit to evaluate the work that we did. That was one strategy that we used from the beginning. So every day the protest got better. All of the sluggish things we started with on the first day we didn't repeat on the second day, on the third day. So it just got from one stage of being strategic to the other. And I and some of the woman had read...different nonviolent action. I read King. I read Gandhi. I had read about the Nigerian women seizing the Shell oil place in Nigeria in the Niger Delta. Different things. And people brought different ideas every day. As we did these things, we came back and said, 'Let's look at this differently.'

Through this cycle of action and reflection, the women decided to issue a position statement to the Liberian government presenting the case for beginning peace talks. They were careful not to speak about politics per se, so as not to be arrested. They highlighted the word *peace*. As the women marched to Parliament to present their statement, more and more women joined the procession. Kenneth describes the reason for escalating their efforts. "[W] didn't care if we had jobs or not, whether we had food or not, because if we never had peace, you wouldn't have job. Your children wouldn't have gone to school, my husband wouldn't work."

Finally, President Taylor could no longer ignore the demonstrations, and he met with the women on April 23, 2003. "Going to meet Taylor that day was the moment that I've lived for," declares Gbowee. With hundreds of women praying for her, Gbowee, introduced as the coordinator of the Women's Peace Building Network, stood in front of the gathered crowd of demonstrators and delivered the group's position statement. She proclaimed with confidence, "We are tired of war. We are tired of running. We are tired of begging for bulgar wheat. We are tired of our children being raped. We are now taking this stand, to secure the future of our

children. Because we believe as custodians of society, tomorrow our children will ask us, ‘Mama, what was your role during the crisis?’

Following this presentation, Taylor finally agreed to begin peace talks with the rebels groups. This meant the women had to focus on getting the rebels to also agree to join talks. Two of the women, Asatu Bah Kenneth and Atweda “Sugars” Cooper went to Freetown, Sierra Leone, to meet with some of the rebel leaders. They made a presence there so that others in western Africa would know the level of seriousness of the peace movement. Together, Liberian and Sierra Leonian women waited outside the leaders’ motel and along the travel route ready to meet them.

Kenneth pointed out to the leaders, “Your mothers have come this far to talk to you. Your sisters have come this far. If you don’t go, don’t you know these people will die in Monrovia? And don’t you think you will be guilty that you are also responsible for their death?” The presence of women from areas control by Taylor’s forces and areas controlled by the rebels along with the voicing of human rights abuses committed by both sides enabled the women to be neutral middle figures that did not support one faction over another. Eventually, they agreed to join the peace talks in Ghana, talks that were expected to last approximately two weeks.

With the government and rebels committed to the talks, the women had to begin raising money so they could send representatives as well both to observe the talks and to mobilize the refugees who were already living in Ghana. Gbowee underscores this importance:

We realized that if we stayed back in Liberia, the idea of the struggle would be in vain....Because when we started the protest, the idea was that we needed for the media to see that...there was another side to this story—the women and children that were affected. Because all we saw on CNN were footages of fighting and

bombing and interviews with Taylor and the rebel leaders, and we wanted them to see that there were victims to all of this glorified media attention given to these boys with guns. We were the victims.

She continues, “We are the conscience sitting out here. We are calling to their conscience to do the right thing...to give the Liberian women and their children the peace that they so desperately need.”

Surprisingly, on the first day of the talks, Charles Taylor was indicted for war crimes. He hurried back to Liberia leaving his representatives to continue the talks, which were now in complete disarray. Sensing the urgency of the situation, rebel leaders decided to commence fighting in Liberia within the day despite their continued presence at the talks in Ghana. The women demonstrating in Ghana heard reports of the violence, yet persisted in their vigilance despite strong desire to be home and care for family that was surely being affected by the fighting.

General Abdulsalami Abubakar, the chief negotiator and previous President of Nigeria, viewed the women as allies. “We on the mediation side, we felt the women were doing a good thing trying to make the men see reason.” These efforts to open the minds and hearts of the men was an on-going battle with ever changing strategies. One woman explained, “We had to continuously strategize what to do because the men, they felt the more persons you kill, the stronger you are and the more people...listen to you on the peace table.”

Not only did the women continue to draw attention to the talks and thereby pressure the participants to fully engage, they also actively engaged in mediation by talking with various leaders outside of the official meetings. General Abubakar describes how he viewed the female protestors. “The women kept going from one delegation the other, from one hotel to the other,

trying to influence these delegates. And the belligerents have really come to the point they have just but captured the whole of the government of Liberia. So, during the peace talks, really they were talking about power, about position, about a job, and the control of the resources.”

All this time the Muslim and Christian women who had remained in Liberia continued their demonstrations with fasting and praying at the fish market, even during the renewed fighting. Then they decided to move the demonstration to the American Embassy, ostensibly to increase media exposure and call for U.S. intervention.

As the peace talks stretched longer and longer, reaching six weeks instead of two, the women’s desperation began to peak. The delegates were living in luxury at the talks compared with how they normally lived in the bush and on the front lines, so they had minimal motivation to negotiate an agreement. General Abubakar admits that the peace talks were stalled. “We were getting nowhere. And we were really reaching the end of the road.

Finally, the women decided to apply more pressure, and they called for more women to join the demonstration. The nearly two hundred women then circled the building where the government and rebel leaders were talking, locked arms to form a chain, and refused to allow the delegates to leave or get food and water until they had signed a peace agreement. Security came and said they were going to arrest the leader, Gbowee, for *obstructing justice*. The irony of this phrase pushed her to the breaking point, and she threatened to strip naked in protest. She explains:

That moment of rage when you’ve been disgraced, and you’ve been walked on, when your pride has been just, there is nothing left, when people think they’ve taken everything from you, you decide you’re giving them some of what they thought they’ve taken away. I feel that’s the greatest pain any woman can feel, so

at that moment, here am I barricading a hall where you have a bunch of people who have killed people for about fourteen years, and here are these guys living in a...peaceful country, and they're arresting me for obstructing justice. There was, for me at that moment, the world had turned into something that I never knew....That moment, was like this is a world where no one cares. And if they don't care, you should not care. You do whatever you can do to get people to know that you're hurting.

The film's producer, Abigail Disney, shares how this threat affected the peace talks. “[W]e had an opportunity to sit with one of the warlords who'd been present at the peace talks, and I asked him, ‘How is it possible in a country where fifty-percent of the women have been raped for one woman threatening to strip naked to cause such mayhem?’” He answered:

“[Y]ou have to understand they were our mothers, and the only way your mother would do that is if she were driven to total desperation. And there was something in that moment there that caused everyone man in that room, no matter what he'd done during the conflict, to ask himself, ‘What have I done? What have I done to get us here?’ And talk about changing the dynamic of the room. You know, that was the last thing on Earth that would've happened in the hearts of those men had the woman...abandoned the moral discourse, had they...acted the way they were being persuaded to act.”

Eventually the women were convinced to let the delegates out, though the demonstrators vowed they would do the same action again in two weeks if an agreement had not been made. The women insisted, “This peace talk has to be a real peace talk, not a circus.” Gbowee threatened that if they had to do another sit-in, another lockdown, it would be even bigger. “And

next time, we will be more than 1,000. There are over 25,000 women at the Buduburam refugee camp. There are over 10,000 Liberian women living in Accra. We can do it, and we will do it again.” In harmony with this sentiment, international supporters threatened to withdraw funding if a breakthrough was not made. Two weeks later an agreement was signed.

Included in the terms of the cease fire, President Taylor would go into exile in Nigeria, and in his place an interim government would prepare the way for democratic elections. To restore security, UN Peacekeepers were deployed on August 4, 2003. The celebration was exuberant when the women returned from Ghana to Liberia. Gbowee describes this powerful experience as children sang one of the demonstrators’ theme songs, ““We want peace, no more war. We want peace, so no more war’ until we just had this train of children following us all of the time. That was the moment for us.”

It would have been easy for the women to return to their homes and the work of restoring their local communities, but they realized they had to continue to be involved with the rebuilding of the nation, not just their individual homes. Continued demonstrations let the transitional government know that they were still observing and still playing a part in reconstruction. Their presence was also helpful in other ways, such as helping to restore order when the disarmament process deteriorated into chaos.

This vigilance was also directed at the mending of the nation’s social garment. One participant shared her perspective: “Peace is a process. It’s not an event. When the guns are put down, we have to continue to build the peace. We have to accept our combatants into our midst. We cannot hold it against them.” Another woman who finds it hard to reconcile with them still faces her own question, “How can we move on if we do not forgive?” Gbowee shared this anger

for the ex-child soldiers, but her feelings began to change as she worked with them. “I realized that a lot of them were as much victims as we were.”

At this point, the women’s actions for ending violence, for resolving the outright conflict (column 4 in my taxonomy), were ended. Next, they used their new-found confidence, respect, organization, and voice to support community building for a new Liberia (taxonomy column 5). “Women were determined this time to make a difference,” stated one woman. Gbowee adds, “We believed that until we had elected democracy, Liberia would not know true peace. We decided to keep working and going to the field until that day came.”

This political action culminated in the election of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf on January 17, 2006, the first female president in Africa. In her inaugural speech, she acknowledged “the powerful voice of women from all walks of life whose votes brought us to victory. They defended me. They worked with me. They prayed for me. It is the women who labored and advocated for peace throughout our region.” Gbowee calls the peacework the cake and the election of Sirleaf as the icing. Contemplating the campaign’s success, one woman reflected, “If we had not had different women from different walks of life banding together, we may not have been able to solve the problem.”

The woman ended the mass action campaign and left the field by the fish market after two and a half years. Echoing Charles Taylor’s departing words when he went into exile that he would be back, God willing, Gbowee declared at the conclusion of the mass campaign, “Liberians knew that if things ever got bad again, we would be back.”

While it is true that the activities of the women did not single-handedly bring down the Taylor regime, they played a critical role in applying social pressure to the warring factions. It is acknowledged that “the military successes of LURD and MODEL, the presence of ECOWAS

troops, and the threat of US intervention in the form of troop-carrying ships visible off the coast”¹¹³ all played a part in bring an end to Taylor’s regime and the beginning of the process of rebuilding democratic institutions.

These grassroots activists prayed together, worshiped together, strategized together, stood in the sun and rain together, demonstrated together, traveled together, and overcame together. Paying attention to top level actors such as national and international leaders when analyzing conflict is useful; however, if used exclusively, this approach has “elite and structuralist biases” that “overlook the important roles that social forces and local organisations can play in demanding the compliance of their leaders, in the implementation of peace accords, in their maintenance once they are established, and in the shape of reconstruction efforts.”¹¹⁴ The story of the Women of Liberia Mass Action for Peace demonstrates this dramatically by showing what would be missed if the actions of Charles Taylor and the other warlords were the only pieces of information to be included in society’s collective memory of Liberia’s Second Civil War.

In May of 2009, three years after the election of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, Leymah Gbowee received the John F. Kennedy Profiles in Courage Award. At the ceremony, Caroline Kennedy stated, “By bringing together women of all religions, ethnic groups and walks of life to stand up, sit in and speak out against violence and in favor of peace, reconciliation and progress, they played a crucial role in restoring democracy to their war-torn country.”¹¹⁵

Conclusion

The case study of the peace action in Liberia demonstrates a number of important elements of this study. First, it demonstrates the roles that actors from the grassroots to the top

¹¹³ Moran and Pitcher, “The ‘Basket Case’ and the ‘Poster Child’: Explaining the End of Civil Conflicts in Liberia and Mozambique,” 516.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 503.

¹¹⁵ “Kennedy Peace Prize Goes to Leymah Gbowee of Liberia,” *New York Amsterdam News* (New York, NY, May 21, 2009), 2.

national leaders play in the peacemaking process. Second, the story brings together many of the peace actions described separately in Part II, showing how they may be used in concert to bolster their collective influence. Third, the movement from ending conflict to rebuilding a community after a level of order is restored is seen as the women move from supporting negotiations to helping to elect the next president. That is, the Liberian story demonstrates how portions of the taxonomy are in relation to the others. While there are many other forms of violence that can be addressed by Christian peacemakers—domestic abuse, gang violence, criminal activity—the stories in Parts II and III give Christian peacemakers a starting playbook for reflection as they seek for God-honoring ways to work for the peace of their city, their society, their world.

Appendix A – The Peacemakers’ Techniques¹¹⁶

(David Little)

“[M]any of the *Peacemakers’* techniques are comparable to the methodologies employed by secular social justice workers....But what ultimately distinguishes the *Peacemakers* is their ability to use religion, as a source of motivation and as a practical tool....Also significant is that their peacemaking techniques sometimes involve active efforts to address and stop ongoing conflicts; sometimes focus on creating the societal preconditions for achieving a sustainable peace; and sometimes do both simultaneously.”¹¹⁷

Ten Techniques

1. The use of religious texts.
2. The power of the pulpit.
3. Using religious and cultural rituals and traditions.
4. The use of religion in debate and finding common ground.
5. Peace education as the foundation for ending conflict and sustaining peace.
6. Religious peacemaking through the use of communication skills.
7. Creating philosophies of nonviolence and Zones of Peace.
8. Interfaith mobilization as a tool in peacebuilding.
9. Awakening the global community.

¹¹⁶ All material presented in each of the Appendixes is copied from the original source. None of this material is original with me. These Appendixes are presented as reference material for peace activists.

¹¹⁷ Little, *Peacemakers in Action: Profiles of Religion in Conflict Resolution*, 9-10.

10. Adapting secular and western practices for religious peacemaking.¹¹⁸

¹¹⁸ *ibid.*, 10-19.

Appendix B – General Lessons Regarding Religion and Peacebuilding

(David Little)

1. Religion neither causes violence by itself, nor, by contrast, is it without influence, particularly in its extremist form, on the course and character of violence.
2. Religion is not just a source of violent conflict but also a source of peace.
3. Proper religion exhibits a preference for pursuing peace by peaceful means (nonviolence over violence) and for combining the promotion of peace with the promotion of justice.
4. Religion dedicated to promoting justice and peace by peaceful means often prompts a hostile and violent response, at least in the short run.
5. Hostility and violence are best overcome, morally and most likely practically, by favoring the promotion of justice and peace by peaceful means and by willingly bearing the risks and costs associated with such activity.
6. Because of their innovative efforts in places such as Afghanistan and South Africa to overcome gender-based, political injustice and conflict by assertive nonviolence, women represent a particularly important resource for peace.
7. The question of the use of force in the proper pursuit of peace is unresolved (as far as the testimony in this book goes) and remains a moral dilemma to be considered.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 437.

Appendix C – The Significance of Religion

(David Little)

1. *The hermeneutics of peace*. “[A]n interpretive framework that begins with the conviction that the pursuit of justice and peace by peaceful means is a sacred priority in each of the traditions presented.”¹²⁰
2. *Empathic detachment*. “[P]rominent religious identity provides a badge of trustworthiness and impartiality that can be of great benefit in either formal or informal negotiations.”¹²¹
3. *Persistent religious concerns and peace agreements*. “[T]he rise of religious extremism in all faith communities should be enough to convince anyone committed to Middle East peace that a diplomatic paradigm which is rationalist and utilitarian, addressing only military and economic issues, will never work. What is urgently needed in peacemaking, [Yehezkel Landau] claims, is concerted understanding of and attention to the specifically religious dimensions of a conflict, something that will require, at some stage, the active participation of ‘credible religious authorities.’”¹²²

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 438.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, 440.

¹²² *Ibid.*, 441-442.

Appendix D – Ten Actions of Just Peacemaking

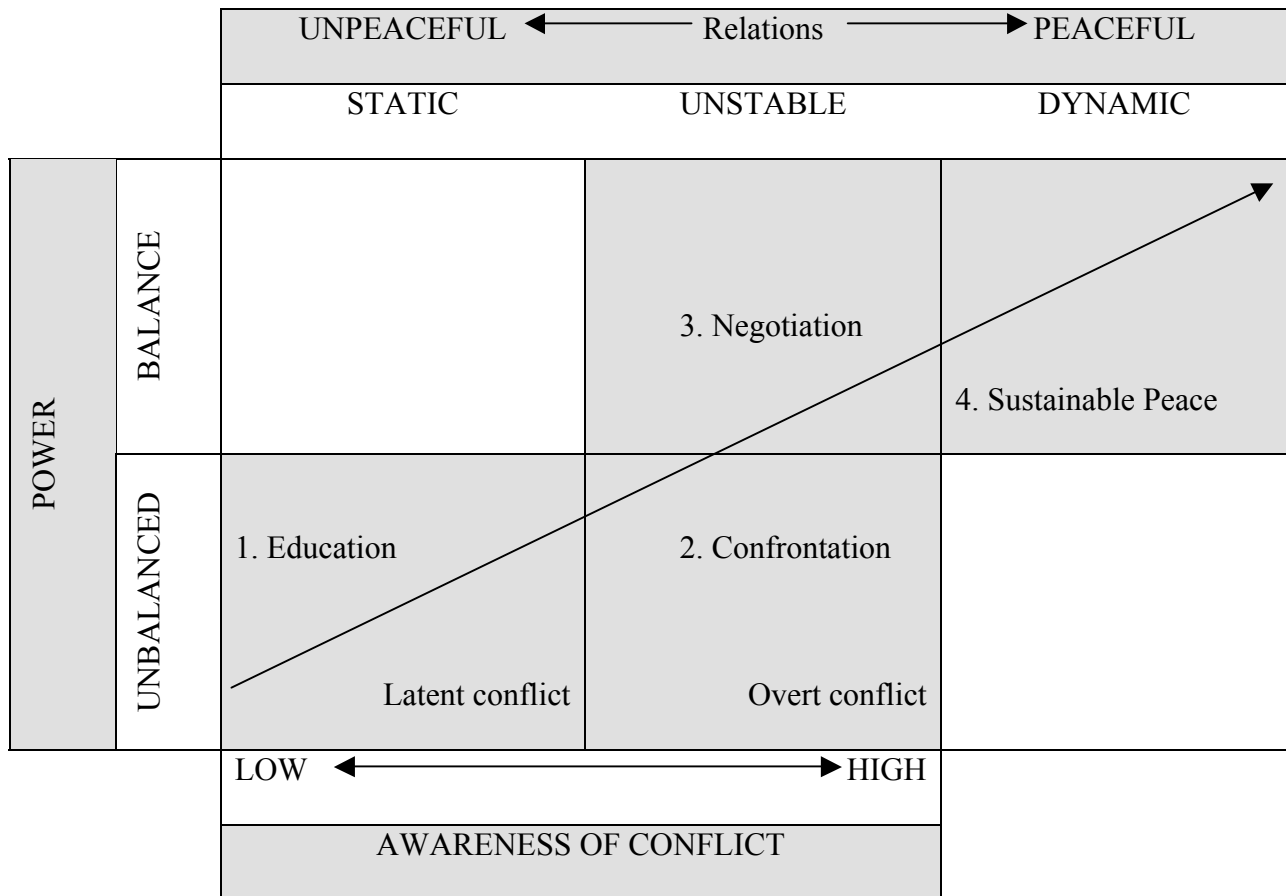
(Glen Stassen)

1. Support nonviolent direct action.
2. Take independent initiatives to reduce threat.
3. Use cooperative conflict resolution.
4. Acknowledge responsibility for conflict and injustice and seek repentance and forgiveness.
5. Advance democracy, human rights, and interdependence.
6. Foster just and sustainable economic development.
7. Work with emerging cooperative forces in the international system.
8. Strengthen the United Nations and international efforts for cooperation and human rights.
9. Reduce offensive weapons and weapons trade.
10. Encourage grassroots peacemaking groups and voluntary associations.¹²³

¹²³ Stassen, *Just Peacemaking: The New Paradigm for the Ethics of Peace and War*.

Appendix E – Adam Curle’s Progression of Conflict

“From his experiences in Africa and Asia where he worked as a mediator, Curle suggested that conflict moves along a continuum from unpeaceful to peaceful relationships. This movement can be charted on a matrix that compares two key elements: the level of power between the parties in conflict and the level of awareness of conflicting interests and needs.”¹²⁴



¹²⁴ Lederach, *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, 64-65.

Appendix F – Five Suggestions for Practitioners

(John Paul Lederach & R. Scott Appleby)

“What practical suggestions can we make for those currently working to build peace within their particular niche, area of expertise or issue, and who seek to become strategic? Speaking directly to the practitioners, we can identify five.

1. First, the cornerstone of strategic practice is the act of locating oneself within the wider system of conflict and change.
2. Second, learn to think about your goals in reference to change processes that build and transform constructively those things that most concern you.
3. Third, focus on clusters of influence and contribution around the change goals.
4. Fourth, identify system change facilitators or existing spaces where system change converges.
5. Fifth, develop capacity to think simultaneously rather than sequentially.”¹²⁵

¹²⁵ Lederach and Appleby, “Strategic Peacebuilding: An Overview,” 38-39.

Appendix G – Five Principles of Strategic Peacebuilding

(John Paul Lederach & R. Scott Appleby)

“These principles animate the basic philosophy of peacebuilding at its most robust and provide a guideline for assessing the strategic weight of specific initiatives.”¹²⁶

1. First, strategic peacebuilding is *comprehensive*. This principle commits us to develop the lenses that permit us to see the overall picture of needs, actions, vision, and design—the architecture of peacebuilding.
2. Second, strategic peacebuilding is *interdependent*. This principle proposes that peacebuilding is connected to the nature and quality of relationships.
3. Third, strategic peacebuilding is *architectonic*, that is, it pays attention to design and infrastructure. This principle demands that we provide the social spaces, logistical mechanisms, and institutions necessary for supporting the processes of change engendered to pursue a *justpeace*.
4. Fourth, strategic peacebuilding is *sustainable*. This principle emphasizes the long-term concern for where our activity and energy is leading.
5. Fifth, strategic peacebuilding is *integrative*. This principle pushes us beyond the visible aspects of any given activity and requires that we situate the design and assessment of peacebuilding action in terms of how it links immediate need with the desired vision of change.¹²⁷

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, 40.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, 40-41.

Appendix H – Faith-Based Diplomacy and Reconciliation

(Douglas Johnston & Brian Cox)

“The reconciliation sought by faith-based diplomats causes them to seek:

1. Unity in diversity through active acceptance of the pluralistic nature of life itself in terms of race, gender, ethnicity, and culture
2. The inclusion of all parties in any final solution, including one’s enemies wherever possible
3. The peaceful resolution of conflict between individuals and groups (consistent with the principles of just war theory)
4. Forgiveness as a prerequisite for restoring healthy relationships
5. Social justice as the appropriate basis for a right ordering of relationships.”¹²⁸

¹²⁸ Johnston and Cox, “Faith-Based Diplomacy and Preventive Engagement,” 15-16.

Appendix I – Five Characteristics of Faith-Based Diplomacy

(Douglas Johnston & Brian Cox)

“The faith-based diplomat is one whose actions are informed by five characteristics.”¹²⁹

1. First, there is a conscious dependency on spiritual principles and resources in the conduct of peacemaking... Faith-based practitioners call into play a range of spiritual tools that are unavailable to their secular counterparts: prayer, fasting, forgiveness, repentance, and a wealth of helpful and often inspiring references from sacred scripture.
2. The second characteristic of faith-based practitioners is that they operate with a certain spiritual authority.
3. The third quality is a pluralistic heart. Faith-based diplomats with a pluralistic heart are firmly rooted in their own religious traditions, but they understand and respect the essence of other traditions.
4. The fourth characteristic is a transcendent approach to conflict resolution.
5. The final quality of faith-based intermediaries is their ability to persevere against overwhelming odds. Their motivation to be reconcilers and peacemakers stems from a deep sense of religious calling.¹³⁰

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, 16.

¹³⁰ *Ibid.*, 16-17.

Appendix J – Four Modes of Faith-Based Intervention

(Douglas Johnston & Brian Cox)

“Just as there are multiple traits that characterize faith-based diplomacy and multiple dimensions to the reconciliation that it pursues, so too are there different modes of intervention in this kind of peacemaking.”¹³¹

1. First, there is the offering of a new vision, in which the diplomat encourages the parties to embrace a new reality and a new relationship with one another.
2. A second mode of intervention is building bridges, a task that involves the development of tangible and intangible connections between diverse groups so that they can communicate their respective needs and aspirations more effectively.
3. A third mode involves healing conflict, usually through mediation.
4. Yet another mode of intervention focuses on healing the wounds of history.¹³²

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 18.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 18-19.

Appendix K – CRS Peacebuilding Principles

“Peacebuilding:

- Responds to the root causes of violent conflict, including unjust relationships and structures, in addition to addressing its effects and symptoms.
- Is based on long-term commitment.
- Uses a comprehensive approach that focuses on the local community while strategically engaging the middle-range and top levels of leadership.
- Provides a methodology to achieve right relationships that should be integrated into all programming.
- Builds upon indigenous non-violent approaches to conflict transformation and reconciliation.
- Requires an in-depth and participatory analysis.
- Is driven by community-defined needs and involves as many stakeholders as possible.
- Is done through partners from the local Church and other organizations who represent the diversity of where we work and with whom we share common values.
- Strategically includes advocacy at local, national, and global levels to transform unjust structures and systems.
- Strengthens and contributes to a vibrant civil society that promotes peace.”¹³³

¹³³ Mark M. Rogers, Tom Bamat, and Julie Ideh, eds., *Pursuing Just Peace: An Overview and Case Studies for Faith-Based Peacebuilders* (Baltimore, MD: Catholic Relief Services, 2008), v.

Appendix L – CRS Best Practices

“A number of practices keep reoccurring throughout many of the dimensions of the peacebuilding process and the roles discussed for faith-based actors.”¹³⁴

1. Storytelling emerges over and over as a paramount *modus operandi* (critical tool). It can create empathetic bonds between people, clarify misunderstandings, help people explore their difficult experiences with apology or forgiveness and build the kind of relationships that can lead to joint implementation of any of the peacebuilding roles.
2. Joint activities frequently hold a special breakthrough power that could take the peacebuilding effort to a new level — joint accompaniment of those in danger, joint “walk through history,” joint statements of apology or forgiveness, joint protests, joint advocacy for all victims, joint worship services or prayer meetings, joint relief and development projects, mediation of joint agreements, the creation of joint interfaith institutions, joint choirs, even sharing a cup of coffee as a simple act of hospitality.
3. Faith traditions have a unique contribution to make to peacebuilding in the form of ritual. Scriptural laments have been used as models for contemporary mourning. Rituals of grief and memorials for the dead are important for trauma healing....Singing together songs of the faiths provides a peace witness that touches the heart.
4. Making peacebuilding part of a larger social endeavor is important. Working in cooperation with schools, media and government will often enhance the educational program of faith-based peace-building and vice versa.¹³⁵

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 34.

Appendix M – Four Attitudes of Peacemakers

(Alan Kreider, Eleanor Kreider, & Paulus Widjaja)

1. *Vulnerability*. “Healthy relationships between human beings are always based on the willingness to make ourselves vulnerable and to take risks that may come up in that relationship.”¹³⁶
2. *Humility*. “God’s truth is bigger than we have yet seen, and we cannot get the full measure of God’s truth without others.”¹³⁷
3. *Commitment to the safety of others*. “We will try not to wound people even when they are our enemies, because we believe that God’s desire is to build friendship out of enmity.”¹³⁸
4. *Hope*. “[O]ur mission as Christians is not primarily to bring solutions to the world’s problems, but to bring hope for redemption. We believe that Jesus is Lord of all, and that his Lordship can express itself in surprising ways—and in the most unlikely places.”¹³⁹

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 34-35.

¹³⁶ Alan Kreider, Eleanor Kreider, and Paulus Widjaja, *A Culture of Peace: God's Vision for the Church* (Intercourse, PA: Good Books, 2005), 76.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, 76-77.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, 78.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, 78-79.

Appendix N – Four Skills of Peacemakers

(Alan Kreider, Eleanor Kreider, & Paulus Widjaja)

“While the right attitudes are important, these will rarely be adequate in themselves. We also need to develop certain skills if we are to be effective peacemakers.”¹⁴⁰

1. *Truthful speech.* “Peacemakers are called to learn to communicate truthfully but lovingly, passionately but humbly.”¹⁴¹
2. *Attentive listening.* “People in conflict care passionately about things, and they want to be heard....We will seek to discern the core meaning of what the other person is trying to communicate, and we will avoid getting hooked by the barbs...the other may include.”¹⁴²
3. *Alertness to community.* “Peacemakers learn in community about the complex interweaving of human experience. Peacemakers are aware of the importance of differing generations.”¹⁴³ “We learn through apprenticeship to masters who have learned God’s story of peacemaking and lived it out.”¹⁴⁴ “[P]eacemakers must remember that the *shalom* of a community will depend on its willingness to face economic questions.”¹⁴⁵
4. *Community discernment and mutual accountability.* “Individuals need the moral discernment that takes place within the believing community.”¹⁴⁶ “Our decision to join the church is essentially a declaration that we are willing to be held accountable by our

¹⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 80.

¹⁴¹ *Ibid.*

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, 81.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, 86.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 87.

¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 88.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 90.

fellow-believers in our Christian walk.”¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 91.

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