

Peace and Nonresistance: Two Kingdoms

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Notetaking Sheet

1. Nonresistance
 - a. Rooted in a strongly dualistic understanding of “two kingdoms”
 - i. Some key scriptures
 1. John 18:36 “My kingdom is not of this world. If it were, my servants would fight. . .”
 2. Matthew 5: 46-48 “If you love those who love you. . . do not even the pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore . . .”
 - ii. The Schleithem Confession – “The sword is ordained of God outside the perfection of Christ.”
 - iii. Two varieties of dualism
 1. “Happy dualism” sees nonresistance as a Mennonite “distinctive” and is supportive and pleased when the state does its job
 2. “Sad dualism” believes that the state has a job to do, but mourns the use of force.
 - b. Sometimes criticized for focusing more on what is not done than what is.
 - c. Its strongest expressions, however, are not passive, but active

- d. Has produced a rich peace tradition that includes compassion and relief work – Mennonite Central Committee and Mennonite Disaster Service are good examples.
2. Non-violent peace activism
- a. Uncomfortable with what it sees as the double morality of nonresistance – what is good for Christians is good for everyone
 - b. Distinctive emphases:
 - i. Pacifism is a positive, often costly task
 - ii. Justice is an integral component of peace
 - iii. Does not recognize the “limits of propriety”
 - iv. Is understanding of third world revolutionary violence
 - v. Willing to “take on” structures of oppression
 - vi. Addresses the larger social context
 - vii. Interested in situations of political conflict
3. Non-violent resistance
- a. William Lloyd Garrison and the abolition of slavery
 - b. Gandhi and the idea of victorious suffering
 - c. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the civil rights movement
 - d. Operation Rescue