

Advance Copy

Peace in Christian Thought and Life
A Reader

Edited and Introduced by Christopher Dorn



**World Council
of Churches**
Publications

PEACE IN CHRISTIAN THOUGHT AND LIFE

A Reader

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Foreword

One of my favourite parts of the New Testament, which I use day by day as part of my own personal prayer and worship, is the song of Zechariah, first sung joyfully by an aged father as he celebrated the beginning of a new era of God's working among and for God's people. The song concludes by asking God to "guide our steps into his way of peace."

It gives me great pleasure therefore to write a foreword to this anthology, which makes it clear how important peace has been within the Christian church and Christian tradition—from the very earliest days, right up to the present time. The ecumenical movement, and the World Council of Churches, has been an important contributor to such Christian thinking about peace. It is my hope that this substantial collection of documents will be explored and used in a wide variety of contexts, by young people and students, by activists, by theologians, for the enrichment of the whole ecumenical movement.

This book has come into existence as a direct result of a specific piece of work undertaken by the World Council of Churches in the area of peacemaking. In 2012, in response to the tensions and conflict in Nigeria which seem, at least on the surface, to have an inter-religious dimension to them, the World Council of Churches and the Royal Jordanian Aal al-Bayt Institute for Islamic Thought organized an international joint Christian-Muslim fact-finding visit to Abuja, Jos and Kaduna in Nigeria. Prince Ghazi bin Muhammad bin Talal of Jordan led the Muslim delegation, and I led the Christian participants. A number of specific proposals emerged from this visit. One particular agreement was that the Royal Jordan Aal al-Bayt Institute would produce a book that set out the importance of peace in Islam, while the World Council of Churches would publish a complementary book to explore the same theme within Christianity. This book is our fulfilment of that commitment. It has come into existence as the result of collaboration between Clare Amos of the WCC's Programme for Interreligious Dialogue and Cooperation and Michael West, the WCC publisher. Both Michael and Clare are very grateful to Dr Christopher Dorn, who was asked to take on the role of gathering, collating, and editing relevant material, and who accomplished his task with despatch and efficiency. I also want to add my own thanks to Dr Dorn. It is as a result of his commitment that this book is able to be published in time for the WCC's 2013 Assembly in Busan, South Korea.

As we prepare for the assembly, we hold before us the assembly prayer, “God of life, lead us to justice and peace.” We are travelling to Korea as pilgrims for peace. We hope, pray and desire that our pilgrimage for justice and peace in our world will continue after the assembly through the following years. This book will be an important resource for such a pilgrimage. I am glad that we have such an offering to help “guide our steps into the way of peace.”

Olav Fykse Tveit

General Secretary, World Council of Churches

Introduction

In 2001, the World Council of Churches (WCC) launched the “Decade to Overcome Violence: Churches Seeking Peace and Reconciliation” (DOV). In the course of the decade, participating churches and ecumenical groups sought to reflect on their positions concerning war and peace, violence and nonviolence, with the aim of developing new theological approaches to the pursuit of peace, justice, and reconciliation. For this task they studied the scriptures, revisited church history, and reflected on existing peace-building practices to determine anew what it means to be church in a violent world. The WCC harvested the insights that emerged in these years at the International Ecumenical Peace Convocation (IEPC), held in Kingston, Jamaica, in May 2011, which were then presented in the form of a declaration, “An Ecumenical Call to Just Peace.” Together with a supporting document that contains more extensive biblical, theological, and ethical content, proposals for further exploration, and examples of good practice, this resource represents the current mind of the WCC on issues that have engaged its member churches since its inaugural assembly in 1948 at Amsterdam.

This current volume represents a modest attempt to retrace the stages in the churches’ journey that have led to the IEPC. Since these churches, of course, are heirs to traditions that have their origins in the earliest communities of Jesus-followers—traditions, moreover, that from then until now have informed and guided the decisions of the churches as they respond to problems in new and changing contexts—it does not suffice to feature documents that date only from 1948. For this reason this volume consists of representative sources from the Christian traditions that span from the 1st to the 21st centuries. Together they provide a historical account of the churches’ attempts to witness to the good news of Jesus Christ in a violent world.

Peace is at the heart of the good news the Christian faith proclaims. The Old Testament prophets proclaimed that the coming messiah would be called the Prince of Peace (Is. 9:6); that people would live in the knowledge of God and peace with one another (Is. 54:13), no longer making war against one another (Is. 2:4; Micah 4:3-4; Hos. 2:18; Jer. 23:6; Zech. 9:10). God’s reign is portrayed under the image of a holy mountain, where the “wolf shall live with the lamb” and the “child shall play over the hole of the asp,” for “they will not hurt or destroy” there (Is. 11:6-9; cf. Ezek. 34:25). Even with nature will people be

at peace (Hos. 2:21-22; Ezek. 34:26). Thus a new world of peace that embraces all things is the promise of the messianic kingdom.

With the birth of Jesus Christ, this peace on earth is announced by the angels (Luke 2:14). In Jesus Christ God is revealed decisively as a God who wills peace. God chose not to deal with God's enemies by destroying them, but rather by reconciling them to Godself through the death of God's Son (Rom. 5:10; 2 Cor. 5:19-21). Christ himself is also "our peace," having "broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us" (Eph. 2:14). In raising Jesus from the dead, God revealed that death does not have the last word (1 Cor. 15:54-57), that God is on the side of life. Moreover, in the resurrection of Jesus is revealed God's final purpose for all creation, to liberate it from its bondage to decay into the new life that God has destined for all God has redeemed in Christ (cf. Rom. 8:21). The last chapters of the Apocalypse of John depict a new creation in which "death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away" (21:4).

Peace is the gift of the risen Christ through the Spirit to his followers (John 14:25-27). Christians are to make every effort to "maintain the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3). This peace is to rule among them, "since as members of one body, they are called to peace" (Col. 3:15). The seventh beatitude presupposes that as God's children, they will be peacemakers (Matt. 5:9). The exhortations of the apostle Paul are consistent with this teaching: Christians are never to avenge themselves, to be overcome by evil, but, rather, to overcome evil with good (Rom. 12:19, 21). And if it is possible, as far as it depends on them, they are to live at peace with everyone (Rom. 12:18). This conduct reflects the character of God, who absorbed hostility in the death of the divine Son for all, having exercised mercy rather retribution. Admonitions to refrain from retaliation and revenge abound throughout the New Testament (e.g., Luke 6:27-36; 1 Thess. 5:15; and 1 Pet. 2:21-23). The church of Jesus Christ is called to be the bearer of God's peace.

Despite this peace accomplished in Christ, the sin and evil that find expression in violence have persisted in this world. Since the early centuries of the church, Christians have struggled to fulfill their calling to peace in the face of the harsh realities of violence entrenched in human communities. This struggle is reflected in the divergence between two approaches to their calling. The first has come to be known as "pacifism," a term that derives from the saying of Jesus, *beati pacifici* ("Blessed are the peacemakers"), in Matthew 5:9, as translated in the Latin Vulgate. The earliest Christian writers featured in this volume insisted on strict adherence to the pacific precepts of Jesus and his apostles, forbidding Christians from killing and serving in the military. For them, killing and warfare belong to the old dispensation, which is passing away now that the grace of God in Christ has come into the world. Indeed, many were convinced that universal peace would soon prevail as more and more people accepted the gospel.

Opposition to Christians' participation in military service was relaxed as a result of the Constantinian settlement of the roles of church and state beginning in the 4th century. Formerly a proscribed religion, Christianity soon became the religious foundation of the Roman Empire, entailing its military defense as a moral obligation for Christians. In this context there emerged paradoxically the second approach to their calling to peace. Just-war theory, as this approach came to be called, developed to legitimate military force under certain conditions. Augustine (354–430) became the first major exponent of just war, having introduced criteria that became the basis of later theory. According to Augustine, because it contradicts the peace and love of the celestial city that struggles here on earth toward its final destination in the vision of God, war is never a good. On the contrary, wars are “evils so great, so horrid, and so savage that a wise man will undertake even a just war in a spirit of sorrow and lament” (*City of God*, 19.7). Nevertheless, Augustine insisted that war is a tragic necessity in a sinful world. War can be waged provided that certain criteria are met, including the criterion of just authority (including God) and that of just intention (to restore peace). Thus war can then be waged at the command of legitimate authorities by soldiers who are committed to serve peace and the common welfare (*Contra Faustus* 22). Ominously, because violence according to these criteria aims to restore stability to the social order, it can be used to repress religious dissidents.

Warfare is one of the more recurrent themes in Eastern Orthodox monastic spirituality—spiritual warfare against human passions and demonic forces, without inflicting pain on others. Killing in the time of war receives very brief attention among the early Eastern Orthodox writers. Though the tradition includes among its saints Christian soldiers, it has never formally endorsed just-war theory.

I have regarded it as necessary to include extensive selections from the early Christian writers representing both approaches, since these writings are constitutive of the traditions of the Christian churches that have entered into the ecumenical movement. The approaches have set the terms of the discussion and debate on issues of peace and war, violence and nonviolence, even as it would become increasingly evident through new historical experiences and encounters that both have unresolved problems and in the last analysis prove inadequate. Thus the perceptive reader will soon realize that in conceptualizing the issues in the terms they provide, the historic churches never really succeeded in overcoming the fatal dualisms that lie at the basis of the positions they have advocated as the proper Christian response to violence in the world. These include, *inter alia*, soul and body (Augustine and Calvin); kingdom of God and kingdom of this world (Augustine, Luther, and Calvin); church and world (Anabaptists); order of redemption and order of preservation (historic peace churches); Christian pacifism and Christian realism (Reinhold Niebuhr); *agape*-justice and *lex talionis* (Paul Peachey); and order of freedom and order of necessity (Jacques Ellul). These ontological dualisms in turn have given rise to intolerable ethical tensions in which either the moral claims on Christians as citizens in human

societies to protect the most vulnerable from violent assault have superseded their calling as Christians to practice an ethic of nonviolence or their calling as Christians has supplanted their social responsibilities as citizens charged to “seek the peace of the cities” in the wider world.

The later documents featured in this volume illustrate the desire among the churches to move beyond the dilemma posed here. Beginning in the 1980s, ecumenical leaders began to call for a change of perspective. The old approaches “start with war and move to peace”; the new approach starts not with war, but with the need for justice. In this context, the churches became aware of the extreme economic disparities between the rich and poor countries. They perceived that the overconsumption of the rich countries leads to ecological destruction and the depletion of natural resources. They became attentive to injustices inherent in social and economic structures, including institutionalized racism and sexism.

In short, the churches identified the roots of conflict and violence in the various manifestations of injustice in the world. Thus the eradication of injustices was seen as critical to the prevention of violence and the outbreak of war. To this end, the churches actively explored strategies of nonviolent resistance as a means to dramatize injustices and force the powerful to the negotiating tables. They called on states to guarantee security to their citizens and examined the potential of the United Nations to ensure a stable international order. In all this they collaborated with nongovernmental organizations, non-Christian religious groups, and people of good will to promote cultures of peace.

The reader will see that this change of perspective was supported by new biblical, theological, and ethical insights. Ecumenical statements on peace have made frequent reference to the biblical concept of *shalom*. The term connotes not only an absence of conflict and war, but also justice, prosperity, wholeness, and salvation. In sum, it indicates a state of well-being and harmony in which relationships are rightly ordered between God, humankind, and creation (*Just Peace Companion*, 2d ed. [Geneva: WCC Publications, 2012], 26). In ecumenical social ethics, *shalom*, though an eschatological reality, nevertheless calls God’s people here and now to search for the well-being of the whole and justice for all. The vision of *shalom* is full human flourishing. This concept of a holistic peace has been reinforced by developments in ecumenical ecclesiology. Here the concept of *koinonia* (“communion”) was accorded a central place in understanding the nature of the church. The concept above all denotes the communion within God as a trinity of persons. In Christ, through the Spirit, God extends a share in this communion to the baptized. But because God in the incarnation of the Son and the immanence of the Spirit is in *koinonia* with all creation, the church cannot be closed in on itself. It is possible that this ecclesiology has also served interreligious dialogue and cooperation. Renewed appreciation for the ideals and values that all religions share has in any event been enlisted in the cause of peace in a world suspicious in recent years of the role that religions have played in violent conflict. Today interreligious harmony is regarded in many conflict-torn regions in the world as critical to peace.

A final word about this text. By no means do the readings compiled in this volume pretend to be exhaustive. To readers who want a more comprehensive witness of the Christian traditions, especially Roman Catholic, to peacemaking, I recommend Ronald G. Musto's massive three-volume *Catholic Peacemakers: A Documentary History*. More recently, Michael G. Long, professor of religious studies at Elizabethtown College in Pennsylvania (USA), has marshaled an extensive number of sources ranging from Jesus' Sermon on the Mount to the latest contributions of scholars working in the modern field of peace and conflict studies. The special value of Long's *Christian Peace and Nonviolence: A Documentary History* is that it contains texts that are often lacking from standard anthologies on the subject, including letters, sermons, and prayers from lesser-known figures who have nevertheless borne distinctive witness to the Christian commitment to peace and non-violence, especially in the North American context. For those who wish to learn what the Orthodox Christian tradition has taught concerning peace and violent conflict across the centuries, I have found no better resource in the English language than *For the Peace from Above: An Orthodox Resource Book on War, Peace and Nationalism*, a project coordinated by the Orthodox Research Institute in Rollinsford, New Hampshire (USA). This volume contains numerous sources from the Christian scriptures, the canons of the ecumenical councils, liturgical prayers, the witness of the saints, the writings of the church fathers, and official declarations of the Orthodox churches. Finally, I cannot neglect to mention Donald F. Durnbaugh's very helpful *On Earth Peace: Discussions on War/Peace Issues Between Friends, Mennonites, Brethren, and European Churches, 1933–1975*, which contains important contributions from the historic peace churches. No doubt many readers will express surprise or even disappointment that I did not include this or that source, which may even have the status of a classic in this subject. I can only beg the pardon of these readers and remind them that my selection of sources was determined by the extent to which they helped me to map the evolution of the ecumenical concept of peace.

I am also aware that there is vast literature on the related subjects of forgiveness and reconciliation, and I regret that constraints of time and space did not allow me to include readings about recent conflicts in various regions of the world that illustrate how communities traumatized by racial, ethnic, and religious violence have begun to find healing through processes facilitated by truth and reconciliation commissions and those trained in conflict resolution. Omission of these sources from this volume by no means implies that I regard these subjects of lesser significance. On the contrary, I can only hope that a companion volume containing a wide selection of informative case studies will soon be forthcoming.

For his technical assistance and support, I wish to thank Doug Krikke. For directing me to several sources suitable for inclusion in this volume, I wish also to thank Eric Karloski. The selections I have made do not necessarily reflect those he would have made.

1.

Christian Scriptures

The Christian scriptures of the Old and New Testaments constitute the source documents from which the Christian traditions have derived their stances on peace and war, nonviolence and violence. The complexity of these stances can be attributed in part to the complexity of the sources themselves. The Old Testament presents an ambivalent and at times even self-contradictory perspective on these subjects. On the one hand, there are disturbing passages in which God commands Israel to wage ruthless wars of extermination against whole nations of people (Deut. 7:16; 20:13-17; Josh. 6:21; 8:22ff.; 10:28, 32; 1 Sam. 15:2-3). The martial spirit of such passages as these is also reflected in the imprecatory psalms, in which the psalmists call down curses on their enemies, or implore God to punish and destroy them without mercy (Psalms 7, 35, 55, 58, 59, 69, 79, 109, 137, 139). Later Jewish apocalyptic also envisions a final day of reckoning, in which the blood of the unrighteous will soak a devastated earth (Is. 24; 63:1-6; 66:15-16, 24; Zech. 12:1-4). These “texts of terror” are impossible to ignore, with the result that it is very difficult to argue the case that the Old Testament espouses the cause of peace. On the other hand, there are also passages that make clear that God ultimately wills peace for Israel—and through this one nation for the entire world. Here it is important to consider Israel’s peculiar self-understanding in contrast from that of its ancient Near Eastern neighbours. Israel was not to be like the rest of the nations, amassing horses and chariots, forming international alliances through royal intermarriage, and accumulating large stores of silver and gold (Deut. 17:16-18). Rather than relying on these means of security, Israel and its king were to trust in the Lord their God alone, who had delivered the people from their Egyptian oppressors, entered into covenant with them, and promised to continue to protect them from their enemies. But the Old Testament depicts Israel as a rebellious people who persistently rejected their God and refused to trust in God. Indeed, they even explicitly chose to be like the other nations (1 Sam. 8:19-20).

This choice, however, invited relentless prophetic critique. The opposition between Israel and the prophets is illustrated in the encounter between Isaiah and King Ahaz. At the time of the divided kingdom, when Ephraim and Syria threatened to invade Judah,

Isaiah warned the king against basing the nation's security on a strategic alliance with Assyria (Isaiah 7). For the prophet this decision was tantamount to a denial that Israel's sole source of security was the Lord. "If you do not stand firm in faith, you shall not stand at all" (Is. 7:9). Ahaz's refusal to heed the voice of the prophet was typical of the kings who succeeded him—with disastrous consequences for the people. The king, whose mandate was to promote justice and peace (*shalom*) in accord with Torah (Deut. 17:18-19) became instead an instrument of chaos. As a result, Jerusalem, the capital city, was burned, the temple destroyed, and the king and people carried off into exile (2 Kings 25), just as Isaiah and other prophets had warned.

But in the face of this disaster the prophets also announced a new covenant. It was based on God's promise rather than on Israel's dedication, for while the people were unfaithful, their God could not be unfaithful. This covenant would be founded on the divine favour accorded to David, the ideal king, whose heir, the faithful son of David, would succeed where his predecessors had miserably failed. This one would establish a kingdom never to be overthrown, one characterized by everlasting justice, peace, and prosperity (*shalom*), not only for God's people but also for all creation.

The New Testament is not entirely free from the violent language and imagery found in much of the Old Testament, from which, of course, it draws. (See, e.g., Matt. 8:11; 10:15, 34-36; 18:6 par.; 24:4-32 par.; 1 Cor. 16:22; Gal. 1:9; 2 Tim. 4:14; 2 Pet. 2:13; Jude 5-7; Revelation 6–20 *passim*). But it contains far less, not least because it is less interested in telling about the calamitous history of the nation of Israel than about the one in whom it sees the culmination of this history. In Jesus Christ, the New Testament authors saw the fulfillment of the Old Testament prophecies, as already mentioned above. Here was the promised messiah, the Son of David, through whom God established the new covenant and brought peace and salvation. This salvation has both a present and a future dimension, corresponding to the two comings of Christ. In the first, Christ came to bear the sins of the people (Heb. 9:28) and reconcile them with God (2 Cor. 5:18-20); in the second, Christ comes to make all things new (Rev. 21:5). Much of the New Testament is interested in the implications of these saving events for human life. In light of them, how are human beings to live together?

Old Testament

The Old Testament passages selected here depict the conditions of peace and prosperity that God's people and all God's creation will enjoy when God will at last have established *shalom*. This is the hope of Israel, a hope that became associated with a future king and an everlasting kingdom, as already mentioned.

Leviticus 26:4-6

I will give you your rains in their season, and the land shall yield its produce, and the trees of the field shall yield their fruit. Your threshing shall overtake the vintage, and the vintage shall overtake the sowing; you shall eat your bread to the full, and live securely in your land. And I will grant peace in the land, and you shall lie down, and no one shall make you afraid; I will remove dangerous animals from the land, and no sword shall go through your land.

Psalms 85:8-11

Let me hear what God the LORD will speak,
 for he will speak peace to his people,
 to his faithful, to those who turn to him in their hearts.
 Surely his salvation is at hand for those who fear him,
 that his glory may dwell in our land.

Steadfast love and faithfulness will meet;
 righteousness and peace will kiss each other.
 Faithfulness will spring up from the ground,
 and righteousness will look down from the sky.

Isaiah 2:2-4/Micah 4:1-4a

In days to come
 the mountain of the LORD's house
 shall be established as the highest of the mountains,
 and shall be raised above the hills;
 all the nations shall stream to it.
 Many peoples shall come and say,
 "Come, let us go up to the mountain of the LORD,
 to the house of the God of Jacob;
 that he may teach us his ways
 and that we may walk in his paths."
 For out of Zion shall go forth instruction,
 and the word of the LORD from Jerusalem.
 He shall judge between the nations,
 and shall arbitrate for many peoples;
 they shall beat their swords into ploughshares,

and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more.

Isaiah 9:6-7

For a child has been born for us,
a son given to us;
authority rests upon his shoulders;
and he is named
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.
His authority shall grow continually,
and there shall be endless peace
for the throne of David and his kingdom.
He will establish and uphold it
with justice and with righteousness
from this time onward and for evermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Isaiah 11:6-9

The wolf shall live with the lamb,
the leopard shall lie down with the kid,
the calf and the lion and the fatling together,
and a little child shall lead them.
The cow and the bear shall graze,
their young shall lie down together;
and the lion shall eat straw like the ox.
The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp,
and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den.
They will not hurt or destroy
on all my holy mountain;
for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD
as the waters cover the sea.

Isaiah 32:16-18

Then justice will dwell in the wilderness,
 and righteousness abide in the fruitful field.
 The effect of righteousness will be peace,
 and the result of righteousness, quietness and trust forever.
 My people will abide in a peaceful habitation,
 in secure dwellings, and in quiet resting places.

Jeremiah 23:5-6

The days are surely coming, says the LORD, when I will raise up for David a righteous Branch, and he shall reign as king and deal wisely, and shall execute justice and righteousness in the land. In his days Judah will be saved and Israel will live in safety. And this is the name by which he will be called: "The LORD is our righteousness."

Ezekiel 34:24-28

And I, the LORD, will be their God, and my servant David shall be prince among them; I, the LORD, have spoken.

I will make with them a covenant of peace and banish wild animals from the land, so that they may live in the wild and sleep in the woods securely. I will make them and the region around my hill a blessing; and I will send down the showers in their season; they shall be showers of blessing. The trees of the field shall yield their fruit, and the earth shall yield its increase. They shall be secure on their soil; and they shall know that I am the LORD, when I break the bars of their yoke, and save them from the hands of those who enslaved them. They shall no more be plunder for the nations, nor shall the animals of the land devour them; they shall live in safety, and no one shall make them afraid.

Hosea 2:18-20

I will make for you a covenant on that day with the wild animals, the birds of the air, and the creeping things of the ground; and I will abolish the bow, the sword, and war from the land; and I will make you lie down in safety. And I will take you for my wife forever; I will take you for my wife in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love, and in mercy. I will take you for my wife in faithfulness; and you shall know the LORD.

Zechariah 9:9-10

Rejoice greatly, O daughter Zion!
Shout aloud, O daughter Jerusalem!
Lo, your king comes to you;
triumphant and victorious is he,
humble and riding on a donkey,
on a colt, the foal of a donkey.
He will cut off the chariot from Ephraim
and the warhorse from Jerusalem;
and the battle bow shall be cut off,
and he shall command peace to the nations;
his dominion shall be from sea to sea,
and from the River to the ends of the earth.

New Testament

The New Testament texts contained in this section are about the peace that God gives in Christ, as well as the peace that is to characterize the relationships of those who have received that peace.

Matthew 5:9

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Matthew 5:38-42

You have heard that it was said, “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.” But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile. Give to everyone who begs from you, and do not refuse anyone who wants to borrow from you.

John 14:27

Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled, and do not let them be afraid.

Romans 5:1

Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 12:17-21

Do not repay anyone evil for evil, but take thought for what is noble in the sight of all. If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all. Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” No, “if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads.” Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Ephesians 2:14-16

For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. He has abolished the law with its commandments and ordinances, so that he might create in himself one new humanity in place of the two, thus making peace, and might reconcile both groups to God in one body through the cross, thus putting to death that hostility through it.

Colossians 3:15

And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be thankful.

1 Peter 2:21-23

For to this you have been called, because Christ also suffered for you, leaving you an example, so that you should follow in his steps.

“He committed no sin,
and no deceit was found in his mouth.”

When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten; but he entrusted himself to the one who judges justly.

