

Friends and Peacemaking

“Meet the Friends,” part 2 of 4

Pastor Ken Redford

December 5, 2021

Welcome to today’s class! Whether you’re here as a prospective member to formally join the church, or if you’re here just to learn more about our history and distinctives, we are glad you’re here.

The Friends church, also known as the Quakers, began in the seventeenth century in England under the leadership of founder George Fox. Today, Friends number some 300,000 people around the world. Meridian Friends Church, founded in 1963, is joyfully affiliated with 40 other local Friends Churches in Oregon, Washington, and Idaho as part of the Northwest Yearly Meeting of Friends Church. Our yearly meeting is part of Evangelical Friends International. To learn more, visit www.meridianfriends.org and check out our “About us” tab.

What is the historic Friends testimony about war?

Quaker founder George Fox, and many early Friends, were imprisoned for their convictions, including refusal to bear arms. In 1651, when George Fox was offered the opportunity to accept a military assignment in exchange for his release from prison, he responded, “I told them I lived in the virtue of that life and power which took away the occasion for all wars.”

1. War is incompatible with Christian _____

“God shall judge between the nations, and shall decide for many peoples; and they shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they learn war anymore.” Isaiah 2:4

2. Friends do not train people to be _____

Friends train people to be _____ of _____, and train people to respond in obedience to God’s will. “You are my friends if you do what I command.” John 15:14

3. Friends do not consider their peace testimony as a _____ testimony, but as a _____ testimony

What does the Bible say about this?

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| Old Testament | The taking of human life is for: _____ to _____ "Thou shalt not kill." Exodus 20:13 In commanding His people to go to war, God did not delegate The _____ to _____ Special note: 1 Chronicles 22:7-9 |
| Jesus' teaching on peace | "Blessed are the meek, the merciful, the peacemakers, the persecuted..." Matthew 5:3-10 "If anyone slaps you on the right cheek, turn to them the other cheek also. And if anyone wants to sue you and take your shirt, hand over your coat as well...Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven." Matthew 5:39-40,44 |
| Epistles' teaching on peace | "God's people must not be quarrelsome; they must be gentle, patient teachers of those who are wrong." 2 Timothy 2:24 "Live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble. Do not repay evil with evil or insult with insult, but with blessing." 1 Peter 3:8-9 "For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does." 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 |

Is peacemaking practical in the real world?

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"A Quaker labored for hours in discussion with an officer in the Revolutionary War, and finally the soldier said something like, 'All right, I'd love to lay down my arms, but only after everyone else has.' The friend responded, 'I see you would be among the last to follow Christ, I hope to be among the first.'"¹

¹Dr. Paul Anderson "Friends as Peacemakers" available from Barclay Press
Not all Friends are of one mind as to the best means for making and keeping peace.

1. Some Quakers, those in line with historic Quaker testimonies, refuse to bear arms believing that their refusal has the potential, as a _____, to _____ the world by nonviolent example, leading society toward greater justice and stability.
 - a. Quakers have always known that if we disarm, we may be destroyed. There is no guarantee our enemies will follow our Christlike example.
 - b. Instead, Quakers have sought to be peacemakers as a way of imitating Christ.
2. Other Quakers choose to bear arms and have done so out of their belief that a strong defense _____ is the best _____ to violence or war.

Note: A pacifist risks being viewed as ungrateful or non-patriotic. As a critique to the ingratitude of the civilian population for the service provided by the common soldier, George Orwell, Rudyard Kipling, and Winston Churchill and are quoted as sources of Richard Grenier's popular phrase, "We sleep soundly in our beds because rough men stand ready in the night to visit violence on those who would do us harm."

Quakers would respond that while they are willing to _____ for their country, they are not willing to _____ for it.

3. Biblical peacemaking is not a _____ issue, it's a _____ issue. In other words, peacemaking is _____ not _____

“Meet the Friends” An introduction to the Quaker Church

Part 1 – Friends and sacraments (baptism and communion)

Part 2- Friends and peacemaking

Part 3 – Friends and equality

Part 4 – Friends and disciple making

All who know Christ as Savior and who agree with our beliefs², our mission, vision, and core values³ are cordially invited to add the strength and witness of their lives to that of our church by becoming members of Meridian Friends Church. It is our desire that, by working and worshipping together, we may bring greater honor to our Lord. Please contact Pastor Ken for a membership application.

² NWYM beliefs <https://nwfriends.org/friends-faith/>

³ NWYM mission, vision and core values <https://nwfriends.org/friends-faith/>