

San Juan church of Christ

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What Does God's Word Say About... Christianity and Peace

The nature of Christ's kingdom, which is the church of Christ (Matt. 16:18-19; Col. 1:13), is one of peace. This spiritual kingdom [the church] was prophesied in the book of Isaiah, "In the last days" [which is the time from Jesus' death on the cross to the present day], "the mountain [government] of the house of the Lord [church] will be established as the chief of the mountains...And He will judge between the nations...And they [those in Christ] will hammer their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks," (Isa. 2:2, 4) "And the work of righteousness will be peace," (Isa. 32:17). James wrote, "the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God...And the seed whose fruit is righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace," (James 1:20, 3:18).

In the news recently it was stated, "What about military expeditions that Christians undertook from the end of the 11th century to the end of the 13th century, which were called 'The Christian Crusades.'?" This statement was meant to bring to our attention that violence was even done in the name of Christ. Such religious wars were staged by Christians to regain their "holy places", while Muslims warred to convert those of other faiths to Islam and to conquer Christian "holy places." The warfare of Christians in the Medieval Crusades was not Christian in any sense of the word and were not crusades for Christ, because our Lord never taught or intended for Christianity to be advanced in this fashion. The apostle Peter wrote, "And coming to Him as to a living stone which has been rejected by men, but is choice and precious in the sight of God. You also, as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house [church] for a holy priesthood, to offer up a spiritual sacrifice acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. But you are a chosen race...a Holy Nation, a people for God's own possession," (1 Peter 2:4-5, 9). According to this, there should be no Jew or Gentile, who are Christians, that should be fighting for any physical "holy place," (John 4:24).

Notice the dissimilarities between Christianity and Muslims. Islam has been advanced by the sword. Christianity has been advanced by love. The Islam faith has its emphasis on the physical; Christianity gives emphasis on the spiritual. The Islamic faith gains disciples by bloodshed, plunder, and evil for evil. Christ's teaching is the exact opposite of this. The Lord is the only one who takes vengeance: "Never pay back evil for evil to anyone. If possible, so far as it depends on you, be at peace with all men. Never take your own revenge, beloved, but leave room for the wrath of God, for it is written, Vengeance is Mine, I will repay says the Lord," (Rom. 12:17-19). The clear distinctions in these two religions is when Jesus said, "love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven," (Matt. 5:44-45).

Please send any comments, questions, or requests for a Bible study to:

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