Chapter 14

Responsible Leadership and Peacemaking

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ABSTRACT

This chapter suggests that immediate action is needed in regard to solving what the author believes is the root cause for these problems. A few questions suggest various approaches – a set of strategies for world peace. Precise tactics are left to the professionals. It’s sad that world peace should require special strategies and tactics. Ideally, world peace would emerge from changes in parenting, education, the arts, and other areas. For example, consider Strategies for Peace,1 an attempt to survey those needs. There is one central problem underlying these. Please consider the unpleasant fact that today’s emergency calls for immediate action to address the central problem – a problem of failed leadership.

INTRODUCTION

Why can’t humanity achieve a fairly stable global peace? Even with the United Nations and a multiplicity of peace organizations and other lovers of peace?

The answer cannot surprise anyone, although it seems widely ignored. The problem lies with leadership. While many factors are necessary to maintain peace, it’s important to precisely name the underlying problem preventing world peace. That problem is leadership, utterly failed leadership.

Sometimes the leadership problem occurs with world leaders and government leaders and, yes, even corporate leaders, those darlings of the financial world. But the immediate problem inhibiting peace is a problem with rogue leaders – terrorists and scoundrel governments.

Arguably, the problem is not with all leaders, or even with a substantial majority of them. As with technological development, it only takes a few negative players to destroy the well-intentioned efforts of many. And such destruction is anything but well intentioned, regardless of justification claimed by rogue leaders. The really evil ones are usually claiming to rescue a people, administer God’s will, or some other pretense. Amazingly, many rogue leaders have the gall to suggest they seek justice. (Whittaker, D.J., 2004)

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EQUALITY

No, one might insist, suggesting that leadership is not the problem at all. That the problem is unequal distribution of wealth and privilege. Or failing to solve poverty and hunger. Or violating the environment, depleting natural resources. Or a natural consequence of economic and historical factors. Or failing to honor God in a specific way.

These problems cannot be dismissed. However, it’s clear that solutions to such problems will require years of planning and implementation, even if it’s humanly possible to obtain support for them. Perhaps we should just give up. After all, the problems have existed for time immemorial. They have become part of ancient literature, including the history of religions.

RELIGION

In another example, is the problem a failure to honor our creator in a specific way? Well, accepting that God is in control and there’s a need to honor the higher power, this may represent the challenge, not a solution. If peace can be attained, surely this accomplishment will honor the creator.

In viewing these problems at root level, one will ask whether these problems truly demand a solution. If indeed humanity is on an irreversible progression toward Armageddon, what reaction is called for? Perhaps everyone will simply succumb to what is seen as God’s will. On the other hand, if human beings are to decide, self-preservation is the correct solution. At the most basic level, no matter what happens, this is proven in the need to preserve one’s family and loved ones. Today, because of the use of genocide weapons with potential to destroy life on Earth, a peace accord can be part of this “self-preservation.”

WORLD PEACE

This article suggests that immediate action is needed in regard to solve what the author believes is the root cause for these problems - leadership. Here various approaches are suggested – a set of strategies for world peace. Precise tactics are left to the professionals.

It’s sad that world peace should require special strategies and tactics. Ideally, world peace would emerge from changes in parenting, education, the arts, and other areas. For a survey of these, see (Cook & Azcona, 2016).

Today’s emergency calls for immediate action to address the central problem – a problem of failed leadership.

In a recent conversation about world peace, a friend of the author asserted me that world peace is impossible unless everyone completely trusts one world leader. In that case, there would be no reason for disputes among followers of this leader.

How could such a leader emerge? Perhaps everyone ponders this question as a youth, concluded that the world would only unite if there were a common world enemy. For example, it could be an invasion from outer space. That, possibly, would unite everyone.

In the same way, if a rogue leader in North Korea or Iran was foolish enough to target a population with a nuclear weapon, the world would unite in contempt for that leader. But that would be temporary,