

Religious PASSIVITY

Passive - Pacifism is opposition to [war](#), [militarism](#), or [violence](#). The word *pacifism* was coined by the French peace campaigner [Émile Arnaud](#) (1864–1921) and adopted by other peace activists at the tenth Universal Peace Congress in [Glasgow](#) in 1901.^[1] A related term is [ahimsa](#) (to do no harm), which is a core philosophy in [Buddhism](#), [Jainism](#), and [Hinduism](#). While modern connotations are recent, having been explicated since the 19th century, ancient references abound.

In Christianity, [Jesus Christ](#)'s injunction to "[love your enemies](#)" and asking for forgiveness for his crucifiers "[for they know not what they do](#)" have been interpreted as calling for pacifism. In modern times, interest was revived by [Leo Tolstoy](#) in his late works, particularly in *The Kingdom of God Is Within You*. [Mohandas Gandhi](#) (1869–1948) propounded the practice of steadfast [nonviolent opposition](#) which he called "[satyagraha](#)", instrumental in its role in the [Indian Independence Movement](#). Its effectiveness served as inspiration to [Martin Luther King Jr.](#), [James Lawson](#), [James Bevel](#),^[2] [Thich Nhat Hanh](#)^[3] and many others in the [Civil Rights Movement](#).

Nonresistance (or **non-resistance**) is generally defined as "the practice or principle of not resisting authority, even when it is unjustly exercised".^[1] At its core is discouragement of, even opposition to, physical resistance to an enemy. It is considered as a form of principled [nonviolence](#) or [pacifism](#) which rejects all physical violence, whether exercised on individual, group, state or international levels. Practitioners of nonresistance may refuse to retaliate against an opponent or offer any form of [self-defense](#). Nonresistance is often associated with particular religious groups.

Sometimes non-resistance has been seen as compatible with, even part of, movements advocating [social change](#). An often-cited example is the movement led by [Mohandas Gandhi](#) in the struggle for [Indian Independence](#). While it is true that in particular instances (e.g. when threatened with arrest) practitioners in such movements might follow the line of non-resistance, such movements are more accurately described as cases of [nonviolent resistance](#) or [civil resistance](#).

Wikipedia on passive Christianity-

Throughout history many have understood [Jesus](#) of Nazareth to have been a pacifist,^[23] drawing on his [Sermon on the Mount](#). In the sermon Jesus stated that one should "not resist an evildoer" and promoted his [turn the other cheek](#) philosophy. "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 ... Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who abuse you."^{[24][25][26]} The New Testament story is of Jesus, besides preaching these words, surrendering himself freely to an enemy intent on having him killed and proscribing his followers from defending him.

There are those, however, who deny that Jesus was a pacifist^[23] and state that Jesus never said not to fight,^[26] citing examples from the New Testament. One such instance portrays an angry Jesus driving dishonest market [traders from the temple](#).^[26] A frequently quoted passage is Luke 22:36: "He said to them, 'But now, the one who has a purse must take it, and likewise a bag. And the one who has no sword must [sell his cloak and buy one](#).'" Pacifists have typically explained that verse as Jesus fulfilling prophecy, since in the next verse, Jesus continues to say: "It is written: 'And he was numbered with the transgressors'; and I tell you that this must be fulfilled in me. Yes, what is written about me is reaching its fulfillment." Others have interpreted the non-pacifist statements in the New Testament to be related to [self-defense](#) or to be metaphorical and state that on no occasion did Jesus shed blood or urge others to shed blood.

[Peace churches](#) are Christian denominations explicitly advocating pacifism. The term "historic peace churches" refers specifically to three church traditions: the [Church of the Brethren](#), the [Mennonites](#) (and some other [Anabaptists](#), such as [Amish](#) and [Hutterites](#)), and the [Quakers](#) (Religious Society of Friends). The historic peace churches have, from their origins as far back as the 16th century, always taken the position that [Jesus](#) was himself a pacifist who explicitly taught and practiced pacifism, and that his followers must do likewise. Pacifist churches vary on whether physical force can ever be justified in [self-defense](#) or protecting others, as many adhere strictly to [nonresistance](#) when confronted by violence. But all agree that violence on behalf of a country or a government is prohibited for Christians.

For the following reasons, Jehovah's Witnesses don't go to war:

1. **Obedience to God.** The Bible says that God's servants would "beat their swords into plowshares" and not "learn war anymore."—[Isaiah 2:4](#).
2. **Obedience to Jesus.** The apostle Peter was told by Jesus: "Return your sword to its place, for all those who take the sword will perish by the sword." ([Matthew 26:52](#)) Jesus thus showed that his followers would not take up weapons of warfare.

Jesus' disciples obey his command to be "no part of the world" by remaining strictly neutral in political matters. ([John 17:16](#)) They do not protest against military actions or interfere with those who choose to serve in the armed forces.

3. **Love for others.** Jesus commanded his disciples to "love one another." ([John 13:34, 35](#)) They would thus form an international brotherhood in which no member would ever wage war against his brother or sister.—[1 John 3:10-12](#).
4. **The example of early Christians.** The *Encyclopedia of Religion and War* states: "The earliest followers of Jesus rejected war and military service," recognizing those practices as "incompatible with the love ethic of Jesus and the injunction to love one's enemies." Likewise, German theologian Peter Meinhold said of those early disciples of Jesus: "Being a Christian and a soldier was considered irreconcilable."