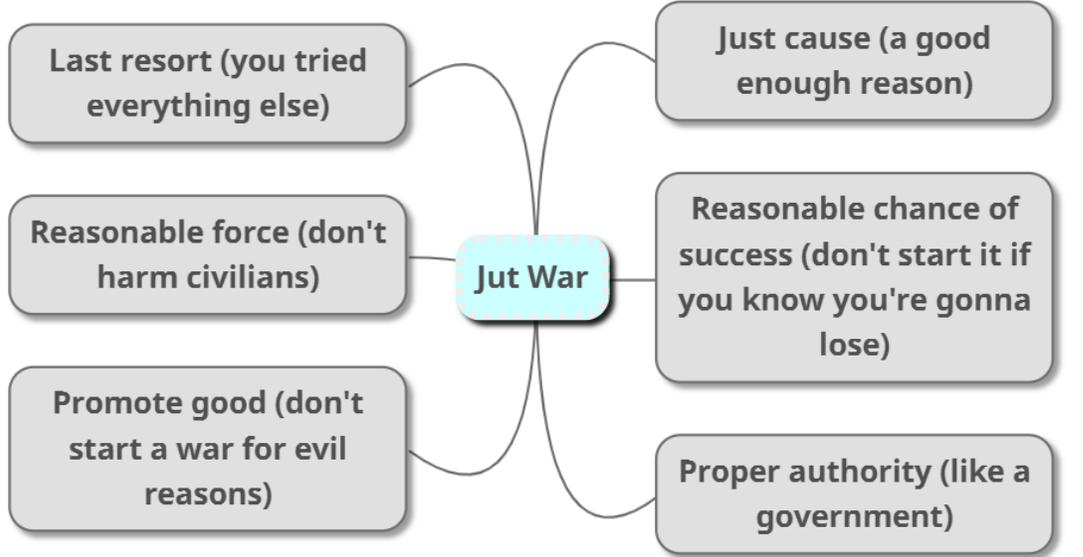


## Just War Theory by Thomas Aquinas



## Year 9 Term 1 Peace and Conflict

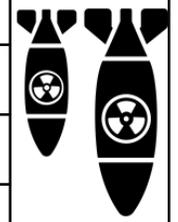
All people are affected by conflict. All people have the opportunity to work for peace. In this topic we will study how. We will look at religious teachings on peace and conflict and will analyse real life case studies to help understand the relationship between religion, peace and conflict.

### The causes of conflict

- Resources and Economics
- Ethnicity and Nationalism
- Politics
- Religion

ahimsa	Hindu belief in non-violence
conflict	A serious disagreement or argument that may be violent
deterrent	Something use to scare or put people off
Harb al-Maqadis	Holy war in Islam fought in the right way for the right reasons
just war	A war in Christianity that is fought in the right way for the right reasons
pacifist	A person who believes violence is wrong
Weapon of mass destruction	a weapon able to cause widespread devastation and loss of life

Weapons of Mass Destruction	
For	Against
They are a deterrent	They kill civilians
They end wars	The effects last decades



- 'In times of war abandon the urge to fight.' Buddha
- 'My conscience won't let me go kill my brother...' Muhammad Ali
- 'Fight in the way of Allah...but do not go beyond the limits.' Quran
- 'Turn the other cheek.' Jesus
- 'Love your enemies' Jesus
- 'An eye for an eye will make the whole world blind.' Gandhi
- 'May your weapons be strong to drive away the attackers.' Rig Veda

## The Causes of War

These are generally accepted as the main causes of war - however different philosophers, historians and other individuals may disagree with the categories.

**Resources:** World economy (financial security) can cause conflicts if one country has a resource another country needs (oil, gas)..

**Ethnicity and Nationalism:** group within a region or country is much larger than other groups, they can favour their own group over another, this can lead to the minority groups fighting civil wars.

**Religion:** conflict over which religion or how to interpret religion - Different religions followed in one place can cause conflict. Disputes within religions in how to practice or when a religious group claim one area as their God-given land.

**Politics:** If one group holds particular strong viewpoints on certain issues and then tries to enforce those views on other people or neighbouring countries, this can cause national or even world wars

## Christianity and Peace

The early Christians interpreted Jesus' commandments to mean that they could not fight in wars or be violent. In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus said:

'Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.'

Matthew 5:9

They also look to the example of Jesus' life for further reasons to be pacifists. When the guards came to arrest Jesus he did not fight back and he commanded his disciples to allow him to be taken.

Pacifists also use the teaching in the Ten Commandments to justify their position. In Exodus it says: 'Do not murder.' Exodus 20:13

Today there are pacifists in most Christian denominations. Some Christian denominations teach their members that pacifism is the only acceptable response to violence. Some examples of pacifist groups are the Mennonites, the Amish and the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers).

## Christianity and Conflict

Most Christians believe that war should be avoided if possible, and should only be undertaken if all efforts to resolve an issue by peaceful means have failed.

Sometimes war may be necessary and right, even though it may not be good. In the case of a country that has been invaded by an occupying force, war may be the only way to restore justice. Pope Benedict XVI said defending oneself and others is a duty.

## What is the Just War theory?

The **Just War theory** was first developed by **St Thomas Aquinas**. Aquinas was one of the most influential **theologians** of the last 1,000 years. The theory set out conditions against which to judge whether or not a war should be waged (**jus ad bellum**) and if it could be justified, and how it should be waged (**jus in bello**).

### **Aquinas's conditions for a Just War - jus ad bellum**

- The war must have a just cause - eg against invasion, or for self-defence - and not to acquire wealth or power.

- The war must be declared and controlled by a proper authority, eg the state

- The war must be fought to promote good or avoid evil, with the aim of restoring peace and justice after the war is over.

### **Later conditions developed by other Christians - jus in bello**

- The war must be a last resort when all peaceful solutions have been tried and failed, eg negotiation.

- The war should be fought with 'proportionality', with just enough force to achieve victory and only against legitimate targets, ie civilians should be protected.

- The good which is achieved by the war must be greater than the evil which led to the war.

## Islam and Peace

It is the command of Allah that all live in peace, justice and brotherhood - therefore peace is always preferred. Many of Muhammad's teachings focus on peace, forgiveness and tolerance. "You do not do evil to those who do evil to you, but deal with them with forgiveness and kindness". The Qur'an teaches that Muslims should seek reconciliation and not revenge, and show kindness to others.

"The best among you is the one who doesn't harm others with his tongue and hands". A peaceful solution to any situation of conflict must be sought and if an enemy offers peace Muslims should accept it. "*If the enemy inclines towards peace, then you should also incline towards peace*".

## Islam and conflict

Muslims must only wage war according to the principles of Allah's justice. 'Those who believe fight in the way of Allah, and those who disbelieve fight in the way of the Shaitan.' Qur'an 4:76

Islam allows war in self-defence, to defend Islam (rather than to spread it), to protect those who have been removed from their homes by force because they are Muslims (Qur'an 22:40), and to protect the innocent who are being oppressed (Qur'an 4:75).