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To what extent is nonviolence a solution in creating a durable world peace?

This paper explores the origins of non-violence through the hearts and minds of ancient masters such as Lao Tzu, Buddha and Jesus. It unveils the deeper truths emanating from the human spirit of non-violence as an outpouring of love, truth, good over evil, self suffering, service, non-possession, simplicity and freedom. The paper highlights pacifism, the opposition to war and the focus on nuclear weapons. The peace movements have highlighted their opposition but have not taken their struggle further in addressing the underlying causes of violence and war. Modern non-violent action is discussed and the focus on non-violent techniques, acceptance of coercion and the importance of achieving the ends. This is contrasted with Gandhian Satyagraha and the use of values such as truth and nonviolence (ahimsa) as the means to the end with the objective of conversion of the opponent. Gandhi's philosophy is compared with the ancient masters and the intent to remove violence in thought, word and deed.

The paper argues that disputes need to be resolved at their root rather than by an enforced peace. Real peace is argued to embody the deeper spiritual values exhibited in the virtues of the masters of antiquity. The essence of violence springs from self ignorance and lack of love.

It is argued that to create a global democratic civil society there must be a radical shift in the way people live and see themselves. This requires an indomitable will and commitment to create a nonviolent society by educating the public in constructive self empowerment.

In Gandhi's opinion the world has a choice between nonviolence and violence. In the wake of the nuclear attack on Hiroshima, Japan he states that 'unless now the world adopts nonviolence it will spell certain suicide for mankind'.