



Just Peace: Ecumenical, Intercultural, and Interdisciplinary Perspectives

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Christian theology and ethics have wrestled with the challenge to apply Jesus's central message of nonviolence to the injustices of this world. Is it not right to defend the persecuted by using violence? Is it unjust if the oppressed defend themselves-if necessary by the use of violence-in order to liberate themselves and to create a more just society? Can we leave the doctrine of the just war behind and shift all our attention toward the way of a just peace? In 2011 the World Council of Churches brought to a close the Decade to Overcome Violence, to which the churches committed themselves at the beginning of the century. Just peace has evolved as the new ecumenical paradigm for contemporary Christian ethics. Just peace signals a realistic vision of holistic peace, with justice, which in the concept of shalom is central in the Hebrew Bible as well as in the gospel message of the New Testament. This paradigm needs further elaboration. VU University gathered peacebuilding practitioners and experts from different parts of the world (Africa, Latin America, North America, Asia, and Europe) and from different disciplines (anthropology, psychology, social sciences, law, and theology)-voices from across generations and Christian traditions-to promote discussion about the different dimensions of building peace with justice.



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