

## **Religion, Pacifism, and Principles of Justice in Warfare**

How did warfare become acceptable to Christians in the early centuries of church history? What are some of the similarities and differences among Christian ideas about warfare and those of other faith traditions? How have various faith traditions contributed to principles of justice in warfare that are reflected in the charter of the United Nations and the Hague and Geneva Conventions? This class will begin by discussing foundational contributions by Christianity and other faith traditions to thought concerning the morality of warfare and will continue through a summary of current principles in international treaties. We will then have open discussions concerning the morality of the Gulf War of 1991, the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and recent military action in Libya. We will conclude by working together on a statement of how we might contribute to peace-building.

**Week 1:** Is violence fundamental to human nature and to religious traditions / spiritual teachings and communities? Is the Holy One violent?

**Week 2:** What does the Bible tell us about warfare?

**Week 3:** Saint Augustine on Just War and Erasmus of Rotterdam's Critique of "Just War" theory, with some attention to more recent debates among Christian pacifists and proponents of principles of justice in warfare.

**Week 4:** Other Sacred Texts on Pacifism and Just War: Abrahamic

**Week 5:** Other Sacred Texts on Pacifism and Just War: Buddhism, Hinduism, Confucianism, Taoism, Sikhism

**Week 6:** Modern Principles of Justice in Warfare

**Week 7:** Case Studies

The Gulf War of 1991

Afghanistan

Iraq

Libya

**Week 8:** An Experiment in Interfaith Peace-Building: Generating a Common Statement