

宗教與和平

——二〇〇六年三月廿六日講於國際自由宗教聯盟世界大會

星雲

西來、南華、佛光大學創辦人

各位法師、各位貴賓、各位居士，大家好！

首先至誠歡迎大家蒞臨佛光山，參加「二〇〇六年國際自由宗教聯盟第三十二屆世界大會」，爲了這次會議的召開，負責籌辦的相關人士，如國際自由宗教聯盟牛津秘書處秘書長安德魯·克拉克（Andrew Clark）、婦女會副會長關根安西子（Akiko Sekine），以及立正佼成會外務部次長神谷昌道（Masamichi Kamiya）、立正佼成會外務部業務職員本塚季代子（Kiyoko Kizuka）、立正佼成會駐牛津秘書廣田惠（Megumi Hirota）、金光教泉尾教會執行長三宅善信（Yoshinobu Miyake）、一燈園董事西田多戈止（Takeshi Nishida）、玉光神社副官司本山一博（Kazuhiro Motoyama）、椿大神社國際部豬熊俊吉（Yuji Inokuma）等人，從前年開始就數度到佛光山展開事前的籌備工作，先後總共召開了五次的籌備會議，由於他們的辛苦，因此成就了今天的盛會。

這次會議的主題「宗教與和平」，旨在透過宗教交流，落實世界和平，不但符合當代的思想潮流，同時也指出宗教對於世界和平的促進，有著責無旁貸的使命。現在正當舉世都在渴求和平之際，宗教之間應該如何相互合作，共促世界和平？今天就針對這個主題，提出個人的四點看法，請大家指教。

第一、宗教不要排他，尊重才能相互包容

自古以來，有人類便離開不了宗教。宗教的重要，在於能領導生命的大方向，能將生命之流的過去、現在、未來銜接，所以人人都應該有宗教信仰，有信仰生命才有規範與目標。

宗教信仰和道德的規範，都在使社會的發展能夠依循秩序前進，尤其現在世界各國發生許多天災人禍，宗教在這方面更是發揮極大的作用。例如二〇〇一年美國九一一事件發生後，布希總統隨即召開宗教大會，期以宗教的力量來安定民心，希望透過宗教信仰，幫助大家發

揮智慧和勇氣來面對困難。甚至正當人心惶惶之際，我也在天主教神父陪同下，進入雙子星大樓廢墟，為罹難者祈福，並且祈求世界和平。

此即說明，宗教信仰是超越國界的，宗教具有安頓人心與促進世界和平的功用，因此世界上不管任何宗教，都有義務共同致力於促進地球上國與國之間的相互尊重、種族與種族之間的和諧相處，以期讓許多不同的語言能溝通、文化能交流、男女能平等。尤其對於世界和平的促進，宗教應該身先表率，彼此相互尊重包容，把「有容乃大」的胸襟，從宗教之間推展開來，進而影響社會各個團體，這是宗教界的責任，也是對現代社會應該提供的貢獻。

為了達成此一目標，先決條件是宗教之間應該建立「同體共生」的關係，不要互相排斥。雖然宗教之間，各自的教主不同，彼此應該相互尊重，不可混淆；教義也各有所宗，應該各自發揮；但是教徒之間則可以彼此溝通往來。

我的意思是說，教主不能合，耶穌就是耶穌，佛祖就是佛祖；教義也不能合，文學就是文學、科學就是科學、醫學就是醫學，根本就不必合！但是教徒可以互相來往，彼此可以做朋友，你信伊斯蘭教、基督教，我信佛教、道教，我們可以在一起談話做朋友，彼此可以互相來往，互相尊重。

尊重是人際和諧的基本要素，人人都喜歡被人尊重，卻往往忽略了要去尊重別人。所謂「敬人者人恒敬之，愛人者人恒愛之」，人與人之間能夠尊重包容，才能群策群力，共成美事。就如五指互相尊重，才能團結成一個拳頭；一個拳頭才有力量，有力量才能謀求和平。所以宗教之間要「同中存異、異中求同」，彼此包容、彼此尊重，就如人體的五官，要相互共生，才能共存。

佛教一直是提倡尊重包容的宗教，也是世界上最沒有排他性的宗教，佛陀組織教團，「四姓出家，同一釋種」。在佛教裡，刹帝利的王子、首陀羅的賤民，佛陀同樣看待；拜火教的大迦葉、好玄論的迦旃延，佛陀都能攝受成為僧團裡的中堅分子。因為佛陀能容納異己，所以十大弟子各有專長，故而有千二百五十人都能得道的美談。佛教的信仰，念佛拜佛，都建立在尊重上；沒有尊重，彼此猜忌，彼此賤視，如何能和平相處？沒有尊重的和平，也無法持久，因此今日宗教界欲圖世界的永久和平，首先必須建立彼此尊重之心；如果宗教之間都能互相尊重，彼此團結，則祈願世界和平當非難事。

第二、教派不要內鬥，對外才能發揮力量

從宗教的歷史來看，每個宗教都有不少的教派，有的以「人」為派，有的以「義」為派。教派太多，所產生的問題就和黨派太多一樣，容易造成民眾的分裂。例如，以耶穌教來說，曾經有一位樞機主教告訴我，耶穌教有五千多個教派。光是一個耶穌教就有五千多個教派，

甚至「上帝」之名，也有「耶和華」、「主」、「神」、「阿拉」等各種不同的稱呼；因為「派」太多，大家各自為政，各行其事，如此怎麼能團結合作呢？

乃至於以佛教而言，也有各種宗派之分，例如大乘、小乘，南傳、北傳、藏傳，顯教、密教，空宗、有宗等。不同的是，佛教雖然宗派有別，生活背景也不一樣，但是大家所信仰的佛陀只有一個，基本的教義，如三法印、四聖諦，都是一樣。所以佛教徒在一個佛陀，以及共同的教義信仰下，雖然僧伽生活方式有所不同，但基本上三寶是一體共遵的。佛教的發揚，可大可小，可一可二可三；其他宗教在這一方面，雖然也力圖統一共遵，但仍顯得散漫。佛教順應眾生的根機不同，也有時候分，有時候合，很能合乎人間的需要。

其實，宗派太多導致力分散，並不是最嚴重的問題，值得憂慮的是，一般人性都有「順我者生、逆我者亡」的弱點，宗教徒之間也往往因為不能包容他人不同的思想、言論、風格，所以難以團結，甚至互相內鬥。當一個團體內部本身都無法和諧，又如何對外發揮影響力呢？因此儘管所有宗教的教義都是為了導人向上、向善，但是如果教派之間不能和諧，教徒經常彼此內鬥，又如何能把和平的理念與精神傳達出去呢？

因此，如何聯合宗教界來促進世界和平，以具體發揮宗教的功能？首先要從宗教徒的相互和諧、彼此尊重做起，唯有人人以身作則，以身教來感召世人對和平的追求，才是最具說服力的傳教。尤其現在是個「地球村」的時代，人與人之間相互往來關係密切，更應該保持良好、和善的關係，如此大家才能歡喜融和的共生吉祥。

第三、彼此不要執著，無我才能共創和諧

二〇〇〇年佛光山在澳洲的南天講堂開光，我前往主持佛像開光法會，當天應邀出席的澳洲國會議員羅斯·卡麥隆 (Ross Cameron) 問我：「世界上的宗教領袖當中，哪一個最好？」我說：「你歡喜的那個，就是最好！」

世間上本來就沒有絕對的好與壞，一般人對於他所信仰的人，就看成是神、是佛；自己所不信仰的，他就是魔、就是鬼。尤其宗教人士基本上有一個「排他」性格，你不同我，我就不和你來往。例如歷史上有名的「十字軍東征」，就是回教與基督教之間的宗教戰爭，彼此為了聖地「耶路撒冷」，而於一〇九五年開始，到一二七〇年，前後發動八次戰爭，最後於一二九一年回教徒攻破十字軍所佔領的最後一個城市，終於結束十字軍東征。

十字軍東征是典型的宗教戰爭，宗教為什麼會互爭？其實就如政治人物，為了實現理想，當別人與我的目標、理念不同，尤其彼此利益衝突時，自然就會有政爭，這就是「我執」作祟。

「我」是紛爭的源頭，因為「我」而自私，因為「我」而執著，因為「我」而愛染，因為「我」而紛爭；「我」之一念，令人永不安寧。經典提到：我見太重之人，喻如餓鬼。因此欲求世界和平，必須「無我」，如《金剛經》說：「無我相，無人相，無眾生相，無壽者相。」「無我」才能大公，大公才能和平。

宗教徒之間，雖然有的人「我執」已除，但「法執」未遣，就如佛教的阿羅漢，雖已證果，我執不再，但是那份對真理的執著仍然存在；因為執著，沒有包容性，所以爭執不斷，甚至不得不發動戰爭。

其實，宗教最大的意義，就是追求解脫；執著存在，如何解脫？所以宗教要有包容性。佛教的包容性最強，在佛教裡，不管藥師佛、彌陀佛、彌勒佛，都是「佛佛道同」，甚至關公、媽祖，在佛教裡也能佔有一席之地。

佛教容許異己的存在，在佛教二千多年的歷史裡，從未有過戰爭或衝突。佛教把儒家當成是人乘的佛教，把耶穌教、伊斯蘭教看成是天乘的佛教，把道教的出世無為當成是聲聞、緣覺乘的佛教，彼此都是圓融無礙，互相尊重包容。

宗教其實本來就是與宇宙同行，與人民同在，世界上的宗教很多，在各種宗教當中，包括天主教、耶穌教、回教、佛教等，雖然彼此信仰的對象有別，但不管是天主、上帝、阿拉、佛陀，乃至地方性的各種神祇等，其實都是信者自己心中所規畫出來的「本尊」，名稱雖有不同，意義卻是一樣。由於各人心中各有本尊，所以不管耶穌、穆罕默德、孔子、上帝、關公，自己認定就好，但不要互相排斥，也不要執著自己的最好，不要以自己心中的本尊去要求別人，宗教之間應該互相融和，大家和平共存，才不會失去宗教追求真善美的本質。

第四、人我不要對立，慈悲才能促進和平

常有人問：世界能否和平？自古至今，任何時代都有災難，儘管今日的世界籠罩著各種苦難，但是人只要能保持一顆善良的心，只要內心祥和，世界自能和平。

宗教在世界上一向最倡導和平，最受人尊重，但是和平也不能沒有力量。例如過去羅馬教廷提倡世界和平，蘇聯的史達林就問：「你歐洲的教皇有多少軍隊？」意思是說，提倡和平，就要有力量；沒有力量，有什麼資格談和平？

佛教是最重視和平的宗教，但是佛教也主張修行要降魔，降魔並非跟別人戰爭，而是跟自己內心的煩惱戰爭。修行就是要「降伏其心」，所以要有慈悲、忍耐的力量來莊嚴自己。現在宗教要促進世界和平，也不能沒有力量；我們的力量就是因緣果報的力量，就是緣生緣滅的力量，就是慈悲喜捨的力量，就是共同和諧的力量。

慈悲是需要「立場互換」，現在世界最嚴重的問題就是恐怖分子，就是暴力事件，不斷威脅著整個世界，擾得人心惶惶。不過對付暴力，如果「以暴止暴，終不能止」，只有用慈悲，才能解決。所以九一一事件後，美國在征討阿富汗的同時，也帶了糧食去救濟，並且帶了很多人去幫助他們興學，因此阿富汗的人也都在心存感激。又如美伊戰爭，美國對伊拉克也只是指向海珊一個人，但對全伊人民也要照顧，所以慈悲會獲得友誼。

慈悲是佛法的根本，《法句經》說：「一切皆懼死，莫不畏杖痛，恕己可為譬，勿殺勿行杖。」吾人如果能彼此易位，如果能視眾生如己，則實踐慈悲不難；有了慈悲之心，人與人之間自然能和平相處，人與自然也才能共同存在。

現在科學發達，交通咫尺天涯，乃至電話、電視、電腦網際網路的發明，使得人際之間的關係真是天涯若比鄰。但是世間的智慧有利有弊，科學發達雖然帶給人類許多富樂，但相對的也造成人際疏離，甚至製造許多交通事故、電腦犯罪等問題。可以說，科學帶給人類福利，但也引生許多弊端，所以單純的發展科技，並不究竟。

比科學發明更重要、更偉大的事，就是現在人類的思想要相互交流、相互關懷；唯有人類彼此互相來往、互相聯誼、互相瞭解、互相幫助，世界才會和平、人民才能安樂。因此，「世界和平」不是關閉的，而是「同體共生」，不但人與人之間、國家與國家之間，乃至宗教與宗教之間，彼此都要互相尊重、互相來往，大家才能共存共榮。

今天謹針對「宗教與和平」的議題，提出如是四點看法：

第一、宗教不要排他，尊重才能相互包容。

第二、教派不要內鬥，對外才能發揮力量。

第三、彼此不要執著，無我才能共創和諧。

第四、人我不要對立，慈悲才能促進和平。

未來希望透過宗教界人士的努力，能夠喚起世人的共識，大家共同促進世界和平。最後祝福大家，身心自在，共生吉祥。

Religion and Peace

Religion and Peace

Venerable Master Hsing Yun

English Translation by Ven. Miao Guang

Revised by Ven. Miao Hsi (International Translation Center)

Date: 26 March, 2006

Event: International Association of Religious Freedom Conference

Dear Venerables, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen,

First of all, I would like to welcome all of you to Fo Guang Shan for the 32nd General Conference of the International Association of Religious Freedom. In particular, I would like to welcome the organizers Andrew Clark, the IARF International Secretariat at Oxford, Akiko Sekine, Vice President, of the International Association of Liberal Religious Women (IALRW), Masamichi Kamiya, deputy director of the organization's External Affairs Department, Kiyoko Kizuka, member of the organization's External Affairs Department, Megumi Hirota, Secretary, Rissho Kosei-kai of the UK International Association for Religious Freedom, Rev. Yoshinobu Miyake, Executive Director of the Konko Church of Izu, Takeshi Nishida, the deputy head priest of Tamamitsu Jinja, President of Itto-en, Kazuhiro Motoyama, Yuji Inokuma, International Director of Tsubaki Grand Shrine and many others. They have paid several visits to Fo Guang Shan from the year before and conducted five preparatory meetings for this conference. It is their hard work that has made today's event possible.

The theme of this year's conference is "Religion and Peace." Its objective in achieving world peace through religious exchanges therefore happens to conform with contemporary thinking, and also points out the fact that religion has the responsibility in promoting world peace. As the whole world now yearns for peace, how do religions come together and make it happen? I humbly present the following four suggestions regarding this

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matter for your reference.

1. Relinquish exclusiveness; respect one another for greater tolerance.

Religion has been an essential part of human race for as long as it has existed. The importance of religion lies within its ability to provide a guide to life's general direction as well as a vital link between one's past, present and future lifetimes. This is why each one of us needs to have a religious faith, because only faith will guide us in finding a set of norms and objectives in life.

Religious faith and moral ethics allows the society to progress in an orderly manner, which is much needed in times of continued natural disasters and manmade calamities. For example, as soon as the September 11 terrorist attack happened in 2001, President Bush immediately called for a religious gathering, hoping that through the help of religion, his people can find peace of mind and be given the courage and wisdom to face such a difficult time. I even paid a personal visit to Ground Zero shortly after along with a Catholic priest to chant for the victims and pray for world peace because people were greatly affected by terror and fear during that time.

This is proof that religious faith is beyond national borders, and that it can help settle people's minds and enhance world peace. Therefore, every religion in this world has the duty of promoting respect between nations and harmony between races, allowing different languages to communicate with each other, different cultures to make exchanges, and for men and women to be treated equally. With respect to world peace in particular, religions must set a good example by respecting and accepting each other, and demonstrate a broad mind and great capacity of tolerance for different religions and other communities in society. Not only is this the duty of religions, it is also their contribution to today's society.

The first step toward this goal is oneness and coexistence, and remove the exclusiveness of certain religions. Although each religion has its own founder, followers of other religions should still respect each other without getting confused with one another. Each religion's doctrine also has its own objective and should be allowed to develop accordingly, while followers should feel free to communicate and socialize with each other.

What I mean by this is that the founder of each religion cannot be mixed up, Jesus is

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Jesus, and Buddha is Buddha, nor can the doctrines be confused with one another, because literature is literature, science is science, and medicine is medicine, they cannot become each other. However, there is no reason that the followers cannot be friends. For example, even if you are a Muslim or Christian, and I a Buddhist or Taoist, we can still respect and befriend one another.

Respect is an essential factor to inter-personal harmony. While we all wish to be respected by others, most of us tend to neglect the similar wish of others. It is said, "One who respects others shall be respected by all; one who loves others shall be loved by all." Only by respecting and accepting each other will we be able to work with collective wisdom and concerted efforts to achieve our common goal. When the five fingers respect each other and clasps together, a fist is formed. With a fist, there is power, and only with power will we be able to pursue peace. Therefore, religions must embrace each other's uniqueness and appreciate each other's similarities. This is similar to our different facial organs mutually accepting and respecting the place and function of each in order to coexist in harmony.

Buddhism is a religion that always advocates respect and tolerance, and the least exclusive amongst others. For example, the Buddha established his order and advocated that whoever becomes a monastic shall be regarded as the people of Śākya Clan. Be it a prince from the kṣatriya caste or a slave from the śūdra caste, the Buddha regarded all his disciples as equals. Even Mahā-kāśyapa, the fire-worshipping Brāhmaṇa, or Kātyāyana the one preoccupied with metaphysics one, were touched by the Buddha and later regarded as the backbone of the Saṃgha. The Buddha's great capacity of acceptance for those different from him allowed his ten most outstanding disciples to each have their own uniqueness, and the one thousand, two hundred and fifty disciples to all attain enlightenment. The Buddhist belief and practice of chanting and laying prostrations in front of the Buddha are all based on the concept of respect. If we doubt or look lowly upon each other instead of being respectful, there cannot be peace. Peace without respect cannot persist, therefore if religions wish to achieve eternal peace, they must begin by respecting each other. When religions respect each other and unite as one, world peace shall no longer be a difficult goal to achieve.

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2. Cease infighting; unite for stronger influence.

When we take a look at the history of religions, we will see that each of them consists of numerous sects or schools. Some follow a certain leader, while others follow a certain doctrine. When too many sects exist, similar to having too many political parties, problems will arise and create disunity. Take the Protestants as an example, a cardinal once told me that Protestantism consists of over five thousand sects, and even God is known in different names such as Jehovah, Lord, God and so on. With this large number of sects as well as divided opinions and leadership, how can they ever unite and come together?

Buddhism also consists of different traditions such as the Mahāyāna and Theravāda Traditions; Northern, Southern and Tibetan Schools; Esoteric and Sutric Schools; or even the Schools of Emptiness and Existence. However, what makes Buddhism different is that although it also has different schools and the followers are from different backgrounds, they all believe in the same Buddha. They also share the same fundamental principles such as the Three Dharma Seals and Four Noble Truths. Therefore, under the guidance of the one Buddha and a common set of teachings, the Saṃgha, whose members are from different places and adopt different lifestyles all honor the same Triple Gem.

In fact, the most serious issue faced by religions is not the undermining of strength due to too many sects or schools. It is the lack of tolerance for different thinking, opinion, and styles which make it difficult for people to unite. The insistence on “obey my words or prepare to face destruction” may cause internal disputes in a religion. If even those of the same religious organization fail to harmonize, how can they influence others? Therefore, despite the fact that all religions endeavor to guide people towards a higher state of being and virtue, when different schools of a religion do not harmonize with each other and cause constant internal disputes, what right do they have to speak of peace?

Therefore, in order to unite the power of religions for enhancing world peace and bring the function of religion into full play, we need to begin with harmony and respect between followers of different religions. By making personal examples in the pursuit for world peace, we will be making the most persuasive propagation of religion. In particular, as we live in the era of the global village, people have come closer and are involved in more active interactions, we should strive to maintain positive and friendly relationships. As such, we shall all enjoy an auspicious coexistence living in joy and harmony.

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3. Cease insistence on one's view; selflessness is the only path to harmony.

During the 2000 Inauguration Ceremony of I.B.A.A. Parramatta, Fo Guang Shan's branch temple in Australia, I was asked by one of the distinguished guests, Ross Cameron, a member of Parliament, "Who is the best religious leader in this world?" My answer was, "Your favorite one is the best."

There is no absolute best or worst in this world. Most people consider the object of their belief as God or Buddha, and see those whom they do not believe in as devil or demon. Furthermore, a sense of exclusiveness is inherent in religious followers, and they tend to choose not to be friends with those who are different from them. Take the Crusades for example, it was a religious war between Muslim and Christianity for control over Jerusalem, a place commonly agreed as the sacred land. A total of eight wars broke out during the period between 1095 and 1270, and in 1921, the Muslims finally conquered the last city occupied by the crusaders and put an end to the famous Crusades.

The Crusades are a typical example of religious war, but why do wars arise between religions? The most likely reason is political ambition, when your goals and beliefs differ from that of others, especially when there is a conflict of interest, political disputes occur. This is caused by egoism.

'I' is the cause of disputes, because of 'I,' people become selfish, attached, love-clinging, and disputative. A single egoistic thought is sufficient enough to cause endless turmoil. The chapter on similes and parables of the Sūtra says that one who has heavy attachment to the self is like a hungry ghost. This tells us that the only way to world peace is through letting go of the self, just as the *Diamond Sūtra* tells us, "No attachment to the form of self, no attachment to the form of a person, no attachment to the form of sentient beings, no attachment to the form of life." Only selflessness brings common justice, and only common justice brings peace.

Although some people have already eradicated their attachment to the self, they are still clinging onto the Dharma. Just like the arhats in Buddhism, although they are no longer attached to the self, their persistence in pursuing the truth is still there. Due to this persistence, they tend to lack tolerance, and are therefore involved in continued disputes or even forced to initiate a war.

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The most important meaning of religion is to seek liberation. However, how can liberation be possible if attachment exists? This is why religions must be tolerant, and amongst them, Buddhism is regarded as one with the greatest capacity for tolerance, because be it the Medicine Buddha, the Amita Buddha or the Maitreya Buddha, they all follow the same path, and even Guangong the red faced legend and Mazu, the goddess of the South China Sea, have a place in Buddhism.

Buddhism embraces those who are different, and therefore has never been involved in any war or conflict throughout its two-thousand five-hundred years of history. To Buddhism, Confucianism is regarded as the vehicle of humans, Christianity and Islam the vehicle of heavenly beings, and Daoism the vehicle of śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha. Each of them respects and accepts each other. They are in harmony and do not hinder each other's existence in any way.

Religions function with the universe and coexist with humanity. Amongst the many religions in this world, Christianity, Catholicism, Islam, and Buddhism each has its own founder. However, be it the Lord, God, Allah, Buddha, or even the various gods or deities, they are all a figure of belief chosen by the follower. Although different in name, their significance is the same. Since we have each chosen our own belief, whether it is Jesus, Muhammad, Confucius, God or Guangong, all that matters is we recognize the object of our belief. Furthermore, we must not reject each other, try to prove that our belief is the best or demand others based on our belief. There should be harmony between religions and also peaceful coexistence so as not to lose religion's nature of truthfulness, virtue, and beauty.

4. Cease opposition between one another; only compassion finds peace.

People often ask whether world peace is ever possible. Despite the fact that every era has been filled with disasters, just as long as people maintain a kind heart, their inner peace shall bring peace to the world.

Religions are known to be the advocators of peace, and are therefore most respected. However, sometimes peace also requires the assistance of power. For example, in the past, when the Roman Catholic Church proposed world peace, Russia's Stalin asked, "How

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much armed forces does your Pope have in Europe?” What he meant was, the promotion of peace needs to be supported by power, and without power, one may find it difficult to speak of peace.

Buddhism is the greatest supporter of peace, it also advocates spiritual cultivation to subdue evil. However, the evil that needs to be subdued is not ones who battle against us but the afflictions from within. Spiritual cultivation is about taming one's mind, therefore, the power of compassion and endurance are thus required to adorn our hearts. If religions wish to achieve world peace today, power is still a necessary factor, and this power comes from the laws of causes, conditions, and effects. In other words, it is the power of dependant origination, the power of loving kindness, compassion, joy, and generosity, and also the power of unity and harmony.

Compassion calls for the will to put oneself in another's shoes. The most serious issue in today's world is terrorism, in other words, violence has placed a constant threat to the whole world, causing perpetual fear. However, force cannot put an end to force, only compassion can do so. For this reason, during the war between USA and Afghanistan, America also brought food and supplies to relieve the Afghan people, and even helped to build schools for them. Therefore many Afghans were also grateful to America. Take the America-Iraq war as another example: America's purpose was to bring down Saddam Hussein, but they also have to take care of the Iraqis. From this we can see that compassion will win friendship.

Compassion is the basis of Buddhism. Just as the *Dhammapada* tells us, “All sentient beings fear death, all are afraid of the knife and cane. Seeing the similarity to oneself, one should not kill or strike with a cane.” By standing in each other's position, we will treat others as we do ourselves, and the practice of compassion will not be difficult. People shall be able to get along peacefully, and humans and nature can coexist as well.

Technological advancements have brought people closer. The invention of telephone, television, computers and the Internet have enabled those from different parts of the world to be close like neighbors. However, secular wisdom has its merits and demerits. While technology has given the human race wealth and enjoyment, it has also lengthened the gap between people and caused problems such as traffic accidents and computer crimes. Therefore, it can be said that technology itself does not bring ultimate happiness to the

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human race.

One thing more important than scientific inventions is the exchange and communication of thoughts and ideas between human beings. When humans interact, socialize, understand, and help each other, world peace will be possible. Therefore, world peace is not about shutting ourselves up but coexisting as one. There needs to be respect and interaction between people, nations, and religions in order for all to coexist and prosper.

In conclusion, I propose the following four points as my response to the theme “Religion and Peace,”

- 1. Relinquish the exclusiveness; respect one another for greater tolerance.**
- 2. Cease infighting; unite for stronger influence.**
- 3. Cease insistence on one’s view; selflessness is the only path to harmony.**
- 4. Cease opposition between one another; only compassion finds peace.**

May all religious leaders strive to call for awareness in the world working for world peace. Last but not least, may you find ease in mind and body, and be blessed with auspicious coexistence.