Opinion
Guest Voices



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by John Dear

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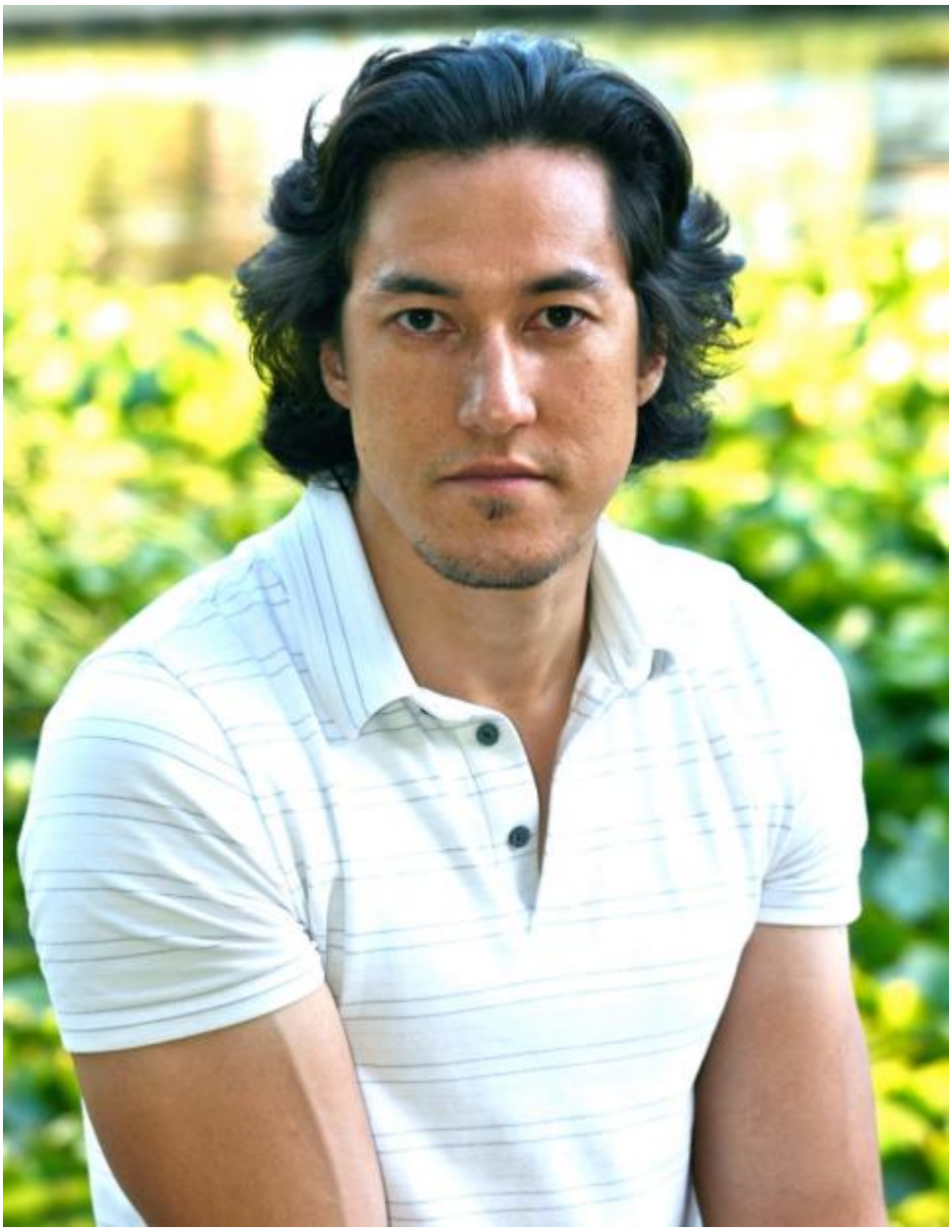
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October 13, 2025

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This week on "The Nonviolent Jesus Podcast," John Dear speaks with Paul Chappell, an international peace educator and founder of Peace Literacy Institute.

A former military captain, Chappell created the Peace Literacy Institute to help students and adults from all backgrounds work toward their full potential and a more peaceful world. Chappell is the author of six books: *Will War Ever End?*, *The End of War*, *Peaceful Revolution*, *The Art of Waging Peace*, *The Cosmic Ocean and Soldiers of Peace*.



Paul Chappell (David Hernandez)

In the episode, Chappell focuses on three questions: What if people were as well trained in waging peace as soldiers are in waging war? What if people were trained to address the root causes of problems rather than symptoms? What if we taught peace as a skillset, as a life-saving literacy, with as much rigor as we teach reading and writing?

"Peace Literacy teaches that peace is not merely a goal, but a practical skillset — a literacy like reading and writing — that needs to be taught and practiced from pre-K through higher education," Chappell said.

"Humans have a natural aversion to hurting and killing others," he said. "Military history shows us that dehumanization is used to keep the mind from feeling guilty or remorseful. Nonviolence refutes all the stereotypes of dehumanization. We try to help rehumanize people with social interaction, storytelling and art, and nonviolence skills. We offer new curriculums about peace for every grade; skills to teach peace by our example; and how to use one's culture to create a new culture of peace and nonviolence."

There are basic skills of nonviolence that people can use in their daily lives, Chappell said.

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"If we don't teach people peace literacy and nonviolence, then we're actively teaching people the opposite," Chappell said. "The idea that peace is inevitable is dangerous. We have to do something to help push humanity in that direction. Teaching peace is necessary for human survival. The education and practice of nonviolence has to involve a deeper knowing, a deep knowing down to our bones, and that process takes a lot of effort."

"I think there are explainable causes for why we're doing what we're doing and that there is a path that can lead us out of that," Chappell added. "If we can teach the building blocks of peace to young children, we can help people internalize peace and nonviolence and live the ideals of peace."

Click here to listen to the full episode.

This story appears in the **The Nonviolent Jesus Podcast** feature series. View the full series.