Opinion
Guest Voices



David Cortright (Courtesy of University of Notre Dame/Matt Cashore)



by John Dear

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On this week's episode of "The Nonviolent Jesus Podcast," I speak with my friend David Cortright, a leading scholar on war, peace and nonviolent resistance. He is the former executive director of SANE, the Committee for a Sane Nuclear Policy. Under his leadership in the 1980s, SANE grew from 4,000 to 150,000 members and became the largest disarmament organization in the U.S. He also co-founded Win Without War in 2002. He is a visiting scholar at Cornell University's Einaudi Center for International Studies and professor emeritus at the University of Notre Dame.

David is the author, co-author or co-editor of 23 books, including *Protest and Policy in the Iraq, Nuclear Freeze and Vietnam Peace Movements*; *Civil Society, Peace, and Power*; *Gandhi and Beyond: Nonviolence for a New Political Age*; and *Peace: A History of Movements and Ideas*.

He has written widely about nonviolent social change, nuclear disarmament and sanctions, and provided research services to the foreign ministries of Canada, Denmark, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Sweden and Switzerland. He has served as consultant or adviser to the United Nations, the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict, the International Peace Academy, the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation, and Catholic Relief Services.

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I asked David about the U.S.-Israeli war on Iran.

"It's a war of folly and is completely groundless. It's immoral, unjust and illegal," he said. "Half or more Israelis and American Jews oppose the war in Gaza and Iran. As Americans we have the responsibility to oppose the war, and push to cut off military aid to Israel until Israel agrees to follow the rule of law and U.N. principles."

David and I also spoke about nuclear weapons.

"In the '80s, we had massive movements against nuclear weapons. Now, we are rebuilding all our nuclear weapons to make them even more lethal," he said. "There are no guardrails of any kind, but the U.N. Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons is becoming a global reality."

"We were put on this planet to serve God and follow the nonviolent Jesus. Peacemaking and peacebuilding are obligations of the faith. If we are believers, we are committed and obligated to peace. Jesus was a revolutionary and preached against violence. ... We have power. We are not helpless in front of these violent and evil forces. We have to speak out and work for justice and peace."

Listen to the full episode here.

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