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**THEISTIC AND CREATIONAL PRINCIPLES IN CONFLICT
MANAGEMENT AND RESOLUTION: A THEOLOGICAL APPROACH TO
INTRA-RELIGIOUS CONFLICTS IN A LOCAL COMMUNITY DIVIDED
ALONG CHRISTIAN AND MUSLIM LINES**

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Abstract

This study explores effective strategies for conflict management and resolution in a local community polarized along Christian and Muslim religious lines. Drawing from the author's observation of persistent failures in conventional dialogue and secular approaches, the paper proposes a theological framework grounded in universal theistic and creational principles. These principles—emphasizing human dignity, equality before God, the sanctity of life, solidarity, and freedom as values preceding religion, culture, and ethnicity—offer a deeper, more enduring foundation for peace than surface-level dialogue. The research critiques existing methods, profiles Christian and Islamic beliefs, identifies the root causes of religious intolerance (such as truth claims, superiority complexes, conquest, ignorance, and sin), and demonstrates how theistic and creational principles address these roots by reorienting relationships toward a shared humanity under God's authority. This approach aims to foster genuine tolerance, mutual respect, and lasting peace in religiously divided communities.

Keywords: Conflict management, Conflict resolution, Religious polarization, Theistic principles, Human dignity, Dialogue failure, Shared humanity

Introduction

The author's quest for a new approach to resolving communal clashes is born out of a desire to find lasting peace and an enduring solution for a local community engaged in violent sectarian crisis. This community, currently polarized along religious and ethnic lines, previously coexisted and enjoyed relative peace for a considerable period. However, ideological issues rooted in religious intolerance

and ethnic bias suddenly thrust the community into unprecedented sectarian violence. The resultant effects include significant loss of human life and colossal economic destruction, drawing the attention of local and international organizations tasked with finding lasting peace.

Despite substantial investments of energy, time, and resources by peace initiatives, a sustainable resolution remains elusive. The author seeks to examine existing methods, identify their limitations (particularly in the commonly adopted dialogue approach), and propose a theological framework grounded in theistic and creational principles. These principles, which precede religion, culture, and ethnicity, offer a robust foundation for addressing root causes and fostering genuine reconciliation. This introduction sets the stage for defining key terms, analyzing religious profiles and conflict drivers, critiquing secular methods, and presenting the theological model as a viable path to enduring peace.

The author's concerns have been driven by the steady increase in the loss of lives, the time and energy spent, and the sheer volume of paper presentations made by peacemakers who, despite being experts in their respective fields, have been unable to achieve the desired goal of peace. Therefore, the concern of the author is to evaluate the methods adopted by individual groups to create a new platform. This platform will enable him not only to evaluate the root causes of the crises but also to analyze the methods used by these expert groups alongside approaches suggested by other authors known for their work in conflict management and resolution. Furthermore, this paper explores how his own approach, combined with methods previously suggested by other peacemakers, can help bring this warring local community to understand why they must cultivate mutual tolerance, live together, respect one another, and ultimately value every member of their community irrespective of culture or religion. To begin, the author will evaluate one common approach adopted by almost every peacemaker: the dialogue approach.

Observation

As a stakeholder, the author identified several flaws in the dialogue approach used by most experts during the peace process. The primary flaw observed is that the dialogue approach only touches the periphery; it never digs deep enough to remove the root causes that generate violence in most conflicts. Nevertheless, dialogue does provide warring parties with an opportunity to explore avenues for expressing their minds on issues leading to misunderstandings, which eventually culminate in severe conflicts.

Dialogue is a process of bringing warring parties to a round-table discussion to find areas of peace in warring communities or nations. However, the idea behind dialogue has a philosophical undertone rooted in human common sense and logic, as its primary aim is to exchange ideas that foster understanding within the warring community. It provides room for "talking" to begin and narrows the gap of suspicion by creating a platform for face-to-face contact. This breaks the wall of doubt and sets the agenda for future talks. Yet, as beautiful as this process may be, it only creates a pseudo-peace environment that can easily be shattered by the slightest provocation. This occurs because the seemingly achieved peace is not rooted in the nature of God or the laws governing creation.

Another flaw in dialogue is that the experts organizing these peace forums often look for prominent social figures living among the warring community to head peace committees, even though they may not be true representatives of the people. These individuals act as makeshift peacemakers. Because they are not genuine community leaders, they do not truly represent the masses. Instead, they borrow ideas from popular books written from a purely human mindset. For instance, they might gather a manageable group of individuals from the warring parties for a televised peace talk, which ultimately has no real effect on the masses. As Speed Leas states, "The size of the group will affect the organization's abilities to manage conflict—a large number will not provide a better room for

understanding complex problems.”¹ Though well-intentioned, if the selected groups are not genuinely oriented toward the concerns of the affected people, the project will not survive.

The next step for the author is to define certain terms considered highly relevant to understanding the subject matter, serving as parameters to probe deeply into the recurring crises within local communities and organizations.

Definition of Terms

- a. **Conflict:** Conflict is a process in which one party feels discomfort with the attitudes and behaviors of another party, resulting in a failure to understand or tolerate one another. John Paul Lederach states that “conflict emerges through an interactive process based on the search for and creation of shared meaning.” He further explains, “I understand conflict to be a socially constructed cultural event. Conflicts do not ‘just happen’ to people; people are active participants in creating the situations and interactions they experience as conflict” (Lederach, 1995). Alternatively, conflict can be defined as a process that begins when one party perceives that another party has negatively affected, or is about to negatively affect, something that the first party cares about (Robbins & Judge). It involves open and hostile opposition arising from differing viewpoints, going beyond mere disagreement to encompass active hostility (Rush, 1984).
- b. **Society/Organization:** A society or organization is a consciously coordinated social unit composed of two or more people that functions on a relatively continuous basis to achieve common goals.
- c. **Resolution:** A resolution is a formal expression of opinion or a decision made by a legislative body, organization, group of persons, or public gathering that proposes a stance on an issue, which may be favorable or unfavorable to the recipient.
- d. **Control:** As defined by Mullins, controlling is “a process whereby managers monitor and regulate how efficiently an organization and its members are performing to achieve organizational goals.”
- e. **Administrative Management:** Administrative management is “the study of how to create an organizational structure that leads to high efficiency and effectiveness” (Mullins).
- f. **Organizational Behaviour:** Organizational behaviour is “the field of study that investigates the impact that individuals, groups, and structure have on behaviour within organizations,” with the distinct purpose of applying such knowledge toward improving organizational or societal effectiveness (adapted from Robbins & Judge).
- g. **Religion:** Religion can be defined as a personal or institutional system of beliefs, practices, and attitudes involving the service and worship (through rituals, sacrifices, and ceremonies) of God or the supernatural.
- h. **Culture:** Culture is interrelated with religion and can be defined as the way people relate to their environment—encompassing their dress, speech, language, and how they perceive and worship God. In short, culture encompasses the entire life of a people. As Clifford Geertz (1973), a leading authority on culture, famously described it, culture is “a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which [people] communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life.” This anthropological perspective underscores culture as a web of significance that shapes human behavior and social interactions.

Examining the foundational problems tearing apart this local community—which had hitherto lived together for generations before allowing ideological differences to divide them along religious lines—it becomes imperative to raise questions that help reveal the root causes of these lingering crises. This examination will demonstrate how the author utilizes a theological framework. The theological principles discussed here are rooted in theistic and eternal creational principles, which the author

believes will enable the warring community to come to terms and permanently resolve to live together, given that their conflict stems from religious difference and mutual intolerance.

Roots of Religious Intolerance

The author's primary question identifies the root causes of religious intolerance among practitioners of different religious bodies. The author argues that these root causes are found in the following concepts:

1. **Philosophical Truth Claims:** The claims made by each religious group or body are based on certain philosophical views held by one religion over another. These claims are structured around the belief that their specific religious body holds the exclusive truth of God.
2. **Superiority Complexes:** Another root cause is anchored in claims of superiority over the supposedly inferior opinions of other religions. Superiority claims can result in false confidence because of a presumed theological dominance. Within this context, superiority is often defined by:
 - Might
 - PowerThese two elements drive the claim of superiority among religious bodies.
3. **Conquest and Expansion:** The desire for one religion to expand and conquer territory over another is a key driver of intolerance. This is triggered as each religion seeks to extend its tentacles over certain regions, making the annexation of territories inevitable.
4. **Ignorance of God:** The worldview of a religion may be rooted in beliefs that lack a true understanding of who God is. In an attempt to establish the character of God, a belief system may be constructed that deviates from divine truth.
5. **Sin:** Sin is a fundamental root of religious intolerance. Some religious bodies do not understand the root of sin or what constitutes sin in the eyes of God. Consequently, they fail to realize that certain actions carried out in the name of religion are actually acts of transgression against God. These acts are often driven by:
 - Self-centeredness
 - Pride or arrogance
 - Greed, lust, anxiety, fear, and other moral vices

What are the bases of religious conflicts and wars?

Many factors are believed to be responsible for religious conflicts and wars among religious bodies, categorized under the following headings:

1. **Rejection:** As previously noted, religious intolerance often results from one religion claiming absolute truth over another, leading to the mutual rejection of beliefs.
2. **Forced Conversion and Resistance:** When a religion attempts to enforce its truth claims to win converts, it often hits a brick wall of resistance. Resistance to conversion serves as a fundamental catalyst for conflict and war. Because conversion often requires a public denunciation of one's previous faith and a demonstration of allegiance to the new faith, it can put the convert's life in danger, particularly within Islamic contexts. Therefore, this vehicle for enforcing a change of faith tends to spark religious conflict. For instance, using Islam as a case study, it is observed that any action perceived as trying to convert a Muslim is deemed a violation of the Islamic faith and an opposition to Islamic beliefs. Islam holds the core belief that Allah is the greatest and Muhammad is his final prophet. Therefore, an agent of conversion is viewed by Islam as an opponent of Allah and his prophet Muhammad—an act of transgression that the Qur'an classifies as rebellion.
3. **Religious Propaganda:** While witnessing is a biblical principle, religious propaganda can be weaponized to design platforms that forbid individuals from preaching their messages to specific people in specific places. When the right to preach is denied, it sets the tone for underground resistance. The denied group, seeking to exercise their right to freedom of worship, may decide to confront the authority, generating actions that lead to open conflict.

4. **Bad Governance:** Bad governance promotes religious conflicts and wars when a government issues decrees that infringe upon the freedom of worship, association, or faith-based gatherings. There are cases where state income generated in a multicultural society is used exclusively to advance a single religion. It has also been observed that in some Islamic nations, Christians are forbidden to gather, build churches, share the gospel, or even carry the Bible.

Having examined the bases of religious conflicts and wars between Christians and Muslims, the author considers it necessary to understand their individual profiles to discover why these crises have persisted so long. The author is tasked with studying the historical development of these conflicts, identifying what has been left undone, and proffering ways to forestall future occurrences. To ensure a successful resolution, the author must first identify the root causes of the problems this community faces, which are tied to religious mistrust.

The best option is to understand the profile of each religious body to bring peace by teaching the warring parties to trust one another. Another step is to understand the claims each profile makes regarding truth, God, and the source of their beliefs. This approach enables the author to establish common ground based on shared interests to address common problems.

The Christian Profile

1. **Christocentric Knowledge of God:** In the Christian faith, knowledge of God is incomplete without the person of Jesus. This implies that no one can effectively understand or talk about God without knowing Jesus Christ.
2. **The Resurrection:** The resurrection of Christ is the foundation of Apostolic Christianity. The Apostles were ordained specifically to be witnesses of the resurrection of Jesus (Acts 1:22).
3. **Redemption:** The doctrine of redemption highlights the inadequacy of the human condition and humanity's inability to attain perfection independently. In the Christian faith, human beings are seen as fallen sinners unable to save themselves from divine condemnation, making redemption through Jesus Christ inevitable.

The Islamic Profile

1. **Transcendence without Substitutionary Salvation:** Islam acknowledges the absolute transcendence of God but does not emphasize a need for a savior in the Christian sense. To a Muslim, righteousness can be earned through obedience, enabling one to attain alignment with God's expectations.
2. **Earning Paradise:** Entry into heaven is ultimately subject to divine mercy, and salvation is pursued through adherence to religious duties, such as offering alms to the poor.
3. **The Final Prophet:** Prophet Muhammad is the last of all prophets and the messenger of Allah, who brought the message of Islam to guide humanity into submission to Allah.
4. **Strict Monotheism (Tawhid):** Islam's belief in God emphasizes absolute oneness, meaning its theology strictly resists the concept of the Trinity.
5. **The Qur'an:** The Qur'an has a profound impact on the life of every Muslim. The significance of this book elevates its status, as Muslims believe its content was dictated directly by Allah, originating from heaven with an eternal, uncreated status. This is why Muslims believe the Qur'an is superior to the Bible, attributing an eternal status to it.
6. **Hadith and Sunnah:** Islam advocates for the guidance found in the Hadith (sayings) and the Sunnah (traditions) of the Prophet.
7. **The Five Pillars:** Islam requires every Muslim to observe the Five Pillars of faith: *Shahada* (Confession of faith); *Salah* (Ritual prayer, including *Rak'ah*); *Zakat* (Almsgiving); *Sawm* (Fasting during Ramadan); *Hajj* (Pilgrimage to Mecca).

Having mapped the profiles of these two major religious groups, it is clear why they have defied previous attempts at reconciliation. The main barrier to community cohesion is their rigid adherence to conflicting truth claims and distinct pillars of faith. This makes it virtually impossible to dialogue

on a purely religious basis. Therefore, the only option is to find a common denominator that can bridge these two extremes.

In searching for this common denominator, the author evaluated previous approaches used by peacemakers. Investigations showed that conventional approaches were rooted in secular philosophies. In contrast, the author's primary approach relies on a common denominational philosophy rooted in theistic and creational principles. Because these two principles are grounded in the person of God, they constitute a theological approach. Currently, secular approaches are heavily favored by experts and religious leaders, while the theological approach remains underutilized.

In a previous study, Korosi highlighted four basic approaches that experts historically and currently use to handle conflict management within organizational settings. The word "organization" here does not refer to a commercial firm or manufacturing company; instead, it denotes a body of people with diverse religious, cultural, political, and philosophical differences living together.

Methods from the Secular World

Secular conflict management relies on approaches that often fail to resolve root issues, such as:

- Attempting to avoid conflict by retreating from it.
- Attempting to avoid conflict by circumventing major issues to focus solely on minor points.
- Attempting to avoid conflict by dealing with side issues rather than identifying the real core of the conflict and working through it toward a satisfactory resolution.

The Theological Method

The theological model can be highly effective in managing religious conflict if a proper framework for addressing intolerance is applied. The author has developed a model based on two distinct theological pillars:

1. The Universal Eternal Creational Principle

- **1.1** By virtue of creation, every human being is responsible for their fellow human beings, transcending the boundaries of religion, culture, ethnicity, custom, and tradition.
- **1.2** We must recognize that we are all created by God, and each individual's existence is an intentional act of divine creation. Therefore, human beings must accept that ethnic diversity is an inherent part of the creational design.
- **1.3** All creatures of God exist under God's ultimate authority.
- **1.4** All human beings must relate to one another on the basis that we share an identical created nature, requiring us to stand in solidarity with each other.

2. The Universal Theistic Principle

By this principle, every human being bears the responsibility of knowing that:

- **a.** Every human being is created in the image of God.
- **b.** All human beings are created equal before God.
- **c.** All human beings are created to enjoy freedom, an existential reality that precedes all human institutions.
- **d.** Every human being is endowed with inherent dignity and worth; the value of one human being before God is identical to that of any other.
- **e.** The theistic principle asserts that life is sacred. Because life is sacred, its sanctity must be observed and preserved by all humanity. Consequently, no human has the right to kill a fellow human being.
- **f.** This principle demands that human beings live in mutual solidarity.

In conclusion, establishing these tenets demonstrates that these principles clearly precede:

1. Religion
2. Custom
3. Culture

4. Tradition
5. Institutions

For clarity, the characteristics of the two principles can be summarized as follows:

Theistic principles embody the:

- Justice of God
- Love of God
- Wisdom of God
- Truth of God
- Goodness of God
- Sovereignty of God
- Essential being of God

Creational principles cover the following dimensions of human existence:

- Human beings share a single, universal nature.
- Human beings are created in the image of God.
- Human beings exist through a direct act of creation.
- All human beings fall under a single umbrella of divine authority.
- Human beings are created to be free.
- All human beings enjoy equal status before God.
- By the act of creation, human beings are bound together in solidarity, meaning brotherhood and sisterhood are established before the Creator.

Having outlined these characteristics, it becomes imperative to evaluate human religion through these two divine lenses to see if human religion truly protects and defends humanity.

The issue of freedom of choice, which religion historically seeks to promote, actually preceded all forms of human institutions. Freedom is an act of creation and cannot be said to have originated from man. At creation, God granted humanity maximum freedom, expressed in the capacity to make choices. Choice within creation is not guided by external force but is left to the liberty of the individual. As stated in Genesis 2:16-17, *“You may freely eat the fruit of every tree in the garden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. If you eat its fruit you are sure to die.”*

By implication, man cannot manufacture freedom, nor can any religion do so, since freedom is an act of God carrying an eternal seal that no religion can amend or de-seal. Therefore, any religion that fails to promote these eternal principles violates the very nature of God.

These two principles confirm that human nature preceded every conceptual construction that religion seeks to promote, defend, and protect—often at the expense of the sacredness of human life, the sanctity of man, equality, value, dignity, the image of God, and divine authority. All these dimensions of humanity are rooted firmly in the principles of creation.

This prompts the question: if God truly created the universe and all human beings, how can we justify the claims of religion over humanity? Religion and humanity are the two central concepts here. The question demands that we justify religious claims over human beings. However, those who fight for their religion fail to realize that man preceded religion, culture, custom, tradition, and philosophy. God said, *“Let us make human beings in our own image to be like us...”* (Gen 1:26), and further, *“Then God looked over all He had made and He saw that it was very good...”* (Gen 1:31).

However, when the bond uniting the human race came under a curse at the Tower of Babel due to disobedience and rebellion against God, the beauty of ethnic diversity—the pinnacle of creation—was corrupted. The inherent strength of diversity, which at creation was rooted in equality, the imago Dei, a common nature, a shared language, and a philosophy of solidarity, became fractured by this historical curse.

The consequence of human rebellion at the Tower of Babel resulted in the emergence of human religion, localized customs, tradition, racism, cultural fragmentation, language barriers, hatred, discrimination, and other social vices. The birth of human religions introduced systemic bondage, conflicting claims about God, and assertions of religious superiority. The pursuit of these false religious claims inadvertently triggered hostility among groups, consuming harmonious coexistence in an avalanche of hatred, suspicion, and societal disorder. Consequently, the quest for dominance sparked territorial conflicts, giving rise to radical historical movements such as:

1. The *Jihad* executed by Muslims.
2. The *Crusades* spearheaded by Christians.

Class consciousness is another vice introduced into humanity through the construction of religion. At creation, God endowed human beings with an awareness of one another, but this was warped into a class consciousness driven by religious superiority and inferiority complexes.

Resolution Procedure

Many experts have proposed various conflict resolution methodologies. In his work, Lederach notes that when preparing for conflict resolution, we must consider what he terms the *prescriptive approach*. A prescriptive approach refers to a resolution method that assumes the universality of both basic social functions and the specific social forms created to fulfill the need at hand.

He further suggests that in preparing for peace resolution, we must recognize the need to understand and locate exactly what the conflict is about. We must create a proper forum or arena to address core concerns, ensuring parties are heard, understand how to participate, and know who must be involved in negotiations.

Furthermore, peacemakers must pay close attention when constituting peace committees. Committees should actively engage local leaders and youth leaders from the warring community. While some argue that committees should exclude religious bodies on government payrolls—such as Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI) and the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN)—these organizations represent major religious demographics in Nigeria, meaning their involvement in conflict management must be seriously considered within the peace process. While most conflict management organizations champion face-to-face dialogue as a highly effective tool, high-profile meetings and televised handshakes often fail to deliver true resolution. This is because these symbolic gestures frequently overlook a critical component: justice. For conflict resolution to be genuinely successful and lasting, the aggrieved parties must feel that justice has not only been served but also received. Ultimately, meaningful peace cannot exist without justice as its underlying foundation.

Why Justice is Non-Negotiable in Conflict Resolution

Conflict is an inevitable aspect of the human condition, arising from mismatched values, competing resources, and polarized ideological frameworks. When a community or organization fractures along deep-seated religious, ethnic, or structural lines, the mechanisms deployed to restore peace often determine whether the resolution will be permanent or merely temporary. In his theological exploration of communal clashes, Ven. Charles Amobi Ekweozor argues that conventional, secular conflict resolution strategies—specifically surface-level dialogue—frequently fail because they do not address the foundational root causes of hostility. True conflict resolution cannot exist merely as a conversational tool or a political compromise; it must be anchored in justice. Justice is sacrosanct in conflict resolution management because it serves as the operational manifestation of theistic and creational principles, restoring human dignity, establishing absolute equality, and dismantling the artificial hierarchies that fuel intolerance.

The Inherent Link Between Justice, Creation, and Human Dignity

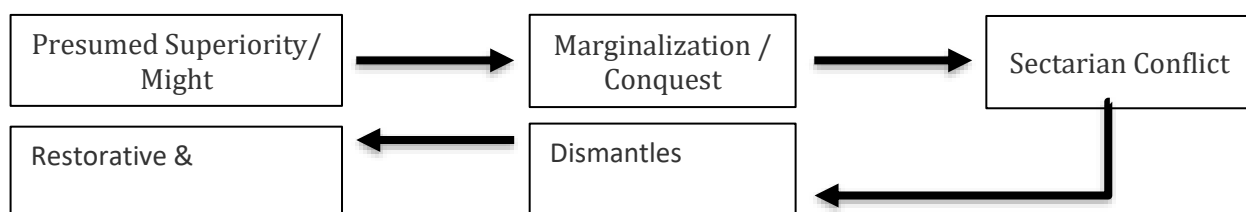
To understand why justice is non-negotiable in conflict management, one must look to the core of human existence. According to creational principles, every human being is uniquely designed in the

image of God (*Imago Dei*). This divine status endows every individual with inherent worth, value, and dignity that completely precedes any humanly constructed identity, including religion, culture, nationality, or ethnicity.

Justice, in its truest sense, is the structural recognition and protection of this inherent dignity. When conflict management ignores justice, it treats the symptoms of violence while ignoring the violation of human worth that triggered the crisis in the first place. For instance, when a minority group is marginalized or stripped of its land and social voice, a peace process that merely asks both sides to stop fighting without restoring what was unjustly taken is a violation of creational law. Justice demands that because every human possesses equal worth before the Creator, any system or action that degrades a person to an "inferior" status must be corrected. Without this rectificatory dimension of justice, conflict resolution is nothing more than an enforcement of the status quo, leaving the underlying humiliation and pain of the oppressed unaddressed.

Dismantling Superiority Complexes and Power Dynamics

As outlined in the text, one of the primary drivers of religious and communal intolerance is the emergence of superiority claims structured around might and power. When one group views its theological dogmas, cultural heritage, or ethnic lineage as inherently superior to another, it naturally creates a justification for subjugation, conquest, and territorial expansion. Historical tragedies such as the Crusades and various Jihads were birthed from this exact ideological distortion.



Conflict resolution management that treats both sides as equal contributors to a crisis without evaluating these power imbalances cannot achieve lasting peace. Justice is sacrosanct because it acts as an equalizer. It forces dominant groups to surrender their false confidence and privileges gained through coercion, while elevating the vulnerable to a position of equal standing. Distributive and restorative justice ensures that resources, political representation, and social respect are shared equitably, effectively neutralizing the elements of "might" and "power" that fuel aggressive expansions.

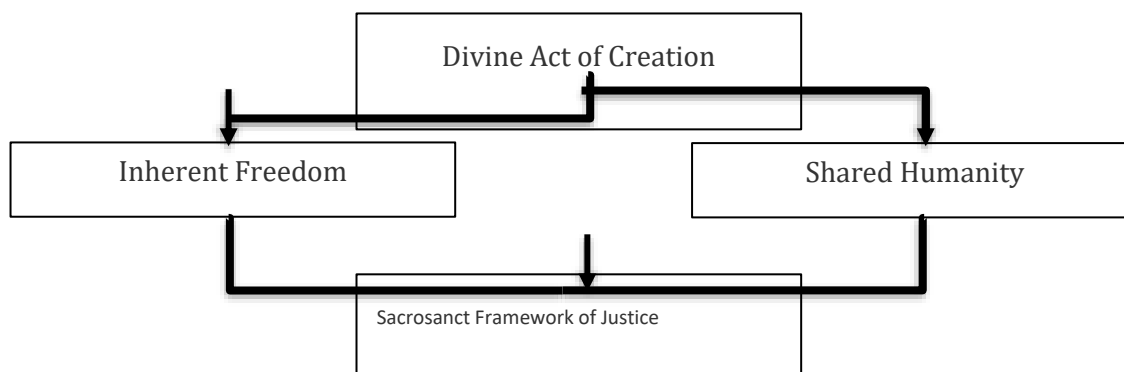
The Fallacy of "Pseudo-Peace" and Superficial Dialogue

A profound critique leveled against secular peace initiatives is their reliance on dialogue that merely touches the periphery of a crisis. Secular models often bring "makeshift peacemakers" or community socialites to a roundtable discussion to generate media-friendly compromises. While this creates a temporary cessation of hostilities, it frequently results in a fragile "pseudo-peace."

Peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice. If a dialogue framework does not address structural bias, systemic corruption, or historical atrocities, the resulting peace environment will shatter under the slightest provocation. Justice is sacrosanct because it refuses to settle for superficial politeness. It penetrates the periphery to uncover why the fighting began, demanding accountability for lives lost and properties destroyed. A conflict resolution model that avoids the painful, rigorous demands of justice—such as restitution, public admission of wrongdoing, and systemic reform—is simply delaying the next outbreak of violence.

Protecting Freedom and Agency as a Divine Right

Creational principles demonstrate that freedom of choice is an eternal law established by God at the dawn of humanity, as illustrated by the liberty given to Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Freedom is an act of creation, meaning no human institution or religious body has the authority to grant or revoke it.



In many intra-religious and communal conflicts, wars break out because one dominant group attempts to suppress the religious propaganda, freedom of worship, or cultural expression of a minority group. Bad governance often compounds this by issuing discriminatory decrees or misallocating public funds to favor a single faith. Justice is the institutional shield that protects individual and collective agency. It ensures that the basic human rights to worship, associate, and speak freely are legally and socially guaranteed. When conflict management prioritizes justice, it builds an environment where diversity is celebrated as a creational asset rather than feared as a competitive threat.

Rebuilding Solidarity and Healing Historical Fractures

The text notes that humanity's original bond of solidarity was fractured during historical downfalls like the rebellion at the Tower of Babel, which birthed discrimination, linguistic barriers, and deep-seated hatred. To reverse this corruption and return to a state of harmonious "unity in diversity," communities must intentionally cultivate a culture of mutual tolerance and shared humanity.

However, reconciliation cannot be forced upon a wounded population through emotional appeals alone. It requires a firm foundation of justice to heal historical trauma. When victims see that wrongdoers are held accountable and that systemic inequalities are being actively dismantled, their suspicion and fear give way to trust. Justice provides the secure environment necessary for former adversaries to look past religious and cultural dividing lines and recognize their shared blood relation under one Creator.

Conflict Resolution: Application of Theistic and Creational Principles

The author has carefully reviewed the procedural resolution methods typically used to resolve conflicts within organizational, matrimonial, or inter-denominational settings, identifying an unexplored dimension. He is convinced that the only common denominator capable of uniting a warring community or conflict-prone organization is the application of both theistic and creational principles. The author maintains that these two principles represent the ideal method to permanently address conflict in any setting.

These theistic and creational principles are necessary in conflict management because they precede religion, ethnicity, and culture. They establish a foundational framework rooted in God's eternal order: every human being is created in the image of God, possesses inherent dignity and worth, enjoys equality before the Creator, and is called to solidarity with others based on shared humanity rather than religious affiliation. Because these principles derive directly from the act of creation and the nature of God, they transcend and judge all humanly constructed systems—including religions—

when those systems violate human sanctity, freedom, or equality. This precedence makes them uniquely powerful for addressing the root causes of religious intolerance and conflict.

If all human beings stand in solidarity with one another—which is a fundamental creational principle—how can we justify religious intolerance, conflict, and the killing of human beings within religious organizations? God's design requires human beings to relate to one another based on their shared humanity, not on the basis of religion, culture, tradition, customs, or divergent worldviews.

If all human beings are equal before God, how can any religion claim that its adherents are superior to those of other religious bodies? At creation, God imputed value, worth, and dignity into humanity. Therefore, if religion is understood through the lens of theistic and creational principles, there would be no room for ideologies that propagate hatred, violence, or murder in interactions with other faiths. The dignity and rights of the individual are creational gifts from God to humanity. Any religion or society that fails to promote human dignity or denies individual freedom directly conflicts with creational principles. By these theistic principles, God demands that human society recognize that no one has the right to destroy life. God's stance on this command is uncompromising because life is sacred, and its sanctity must be preserved by all human beings regardless of religious affiliation.

Christians bear historical guilt for spearheading the Crusades, just as Muslims bear guilt for championing the Jihad. Both sides have historically justified their violent actions by repeating and copying systemic historical mistakes.

Claims of superiority and inferiority by religious bodies disrespect the creational principle of human equality. Therefore, the author firmly believes that a theological approach based on creational and theistic principles remains the only true remedy for addressing religious, organizational, and interpersonal conflicts. This approach is conceived in divine wisdom and can never be matched by human wisdom, which is morally defective due to the fall of man. Any attempt to circumvent God's approach to peacemaking will inevitably crumble under the weight of flawed human nature. As Sean A. Harrison states in a Bible commentary, *"The real problem is that by nature our hearts are hard and sinful, and we lack wisdom to know the right thing to do in a given situation. By nature, we are unable to apply God's word in a way that is consistent with faith in his love."*

By order of creation, man preceded religion; therefore, religion should serve humanity, not humanity religion. Religion, as an institution, is constructed by human beings. Because man has been a depraved being since the fall in the Garden of Eden, humanity can never produce a perfect religion. Every religion functions as a specimen of culture rooted in human philosophy. Following the fall, human thoughts and imaginations have been corrupted by sin. Human philosophies can never be entirely pure because the human heart has been fractured and swallowed up by imperfection.

Conclusion

After carefully analyzing both the conventional approaches used by peacemakers and his proposed model, the author concludes that the best way to address the incessant crises unleashing untold hardship and loss of life in this community is to look inward for an ideal solution. In light of this, the author seeks the indulgence of both warring factions to accept a theological approach through a defined, interactive framework.

For the warring community to experience true peace, they must resolve to engage with every member of their community not along religious or cultural lines, but on the basis of their shared humanity. This shared humanity carries a divine demand to view one another as kin. They must view one another as God's creation, refusing to take human life, and choosing instead to live together in love and unity. In his wisdom, God designed humanity to experience solidarity, acting as the author of unity in diversity. Unity in diversity is a fundamental gift from God that must be respected by all. As stated

in the Holy Bible, “...each able to produce offspring of the same kind” (Gen 1:25). If God had not intended for diversity to be a core part of the human race, He would not have initiated it. Since ethnic diversity is an intentional creation of God, human beings must learn to tolerate and appreciate it in all its ramifications. Ethnic diversity preceded religion, culture, tradition, custom, and the social order of every human setting.

Ultimately, conflict resolution management that bypasses justice builds its house upon sand. The paper notes that human wisdom is inherently fractured and morally defective when separated from divine truth, meaning our secular shortcuts will always crumble due to self-interest and pride. Justice is sacrosanct because it bridges the gap between human frailty and eternal order. By prioritizing the sanctity of life, enforcing absolute equality before the law, protecting individual freedoms, and demanding structural accountability, justice transforms conflict resolution from a temporary political truce into a profound, sustainable reconciliation. For any fractured community to find an enduring path to peace, it must first bow to the absolute and uncompromised demands of justice.

The importance of theistic and creational principles cannot be overstated. These principles precede religion, ethnicity, culture, custom, tradition, and all human institutions. By grounding conflict resolution in the image of God within every human being, the sanctity of life, equality, freedom, dignity, and solidarity, they provide an eternal foundation immune to the flaws of human philosophy or temporary secular fixes. They call warring parties to transcend divisive claims and embrace their shared creation under one sovereign God. Implementing these principles through dialogue, education, and community practices offers the most promising path to sustainable peace, transforming conflict into an opportunity for deeper understanding and reconciliation.

Lastly, theistic and creational principles are of paramount importance because they provide the only enduring foundation capable of transcending divisive claims of religious superiority, conquest, and intolerance. By returning to these God-ordained principles that precede all human institutions, communities can dismantle the root causes of conflict and build sustainable peace rooted in the sanctity of life, equality, dignity, and brotherhood under the sovereign Creator. This theological approach does not merely manage conflict temporarily; it transforms relationships at their deepest level, aligning human conduct with the eternal order of creation.

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