

## Walking on the Moon, still warring on Earth

Does peace on Earth seem like an impossible dream? Consider the moon. Over thousands of years the human race has looked to the moon in awe. We would stare at the craters and wonder what made them. We would also wonder what the moon was made from. Over the last few centuries telescopes and technology have played a huge part in exploring the moon but to *get* to the moon was an impossible dream. However in 1969, with determination and teamwork we overcame the challenge, landing the first people on the moon: Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin.

The concept of abolishing war *seems* impossible, but like landing on the moon it can be overcome if we put the right things in place, and work together. From 1939-1945 the Nazi regime killed millions, while in the Hundred Years War 2.3-3.3million were killed. What can we learn from this? Well, in the end they all made agreements not to fight again, but only *after* millions had died. War is *never* a good solution, because in the end there are huge losses of lives, and no one truly wins. If we could learn to work together in harmony, respect, communicate and understand one another, then no one else would die needlessly in war, and we will *all* be happier knowing our loved ones are safe from the terrors of war like bombings, and killings.

At first war can seem like a suitable or *only* option for solving big problems but, in the end, it kills to reach its conclusion. In the ongoing Syrian Civil War over four hundred thousand people have already been killed, leaving many families grieving and proving that war is not always the answer. In war innocent people are killed, famines are caused and the fighting leaves death, devastation, debris and misery.

An inspiring example of the human race overcoming a challenge is Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris. At the time it was built lots of normal working people put in money, effort, skills and labour to come together as a community and strive for something bigger and better than their normal daily life. Something to take them out of the busy streets and look to the sky. Hope to reach it. Now, in 2019, the people of the world are working together saving money, designing and planning to overcome the huge challenge of rebuilding Notre Dame after the recent fire. The moon missions and space exploration, including missions underway today or in planning, are seeking to do something similar: scientists from different fields, entrepreneurs, and investors all coming together to achieve something bigger and better than they thought possible.

Take climate change. Even with our knowledge of climate change and deforestation we still squander Earth's supplies and precious resources to wage ever more destruction, including war. Is the idea of abolishing war an outdated, precious but soon to be forgotten dream or can we all work together to overcome it, just as we overcame with the building of Notre Dame 1163–1345, and the moon landing of 1969? Maybe we will continue to lose thousands, possibly millions to war, murder bombings and terrorism. Does it *need* to be this way? Action is the only way forward.

I was recently inspired by Greta Thunberg who, at the age of 15, started peaceful protests about the need to take action immediately, to stop climate change. She is known for starting the school strike for climate change movement in November 2018. On the 15<sup>th</sup> of March 2019 an estimated 1.4 million students in roughly 112 countries around the world took part in strikes and protests, following her lead. Greta has also received various prizes and awards for her activism. Again, *action* is the key. This March Greta was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize (age 16!) by three members of the Norwegian Parliament and made the cover of *Time Magazine*.

If one person, like Greta Thunberg, can inspire over a million people – leading to strikes and protests, resulting in bans on some plastic products in England – and bring together young people from around the world, what could we accomplish together as a team? Could we stop climate change, deforestation and even create a more peaceful Earth? Well, why not?

As human beings we are drawn to one another, to working together, to looking to the sky and we can take strength from knowing that when we work together *anything* is possible!

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