

Peace

“Peace on earth, good will toward men.” So the angels proclaimed at the birth of our Lord. But where is the peace? Has God been thwarted in His intentions? Has human iniquity been too much for Him? Or has Satan been able to wrest the earth from His grasp? 2000 years after the “Prince of Peace” came, the world is still wracked with conflict. What is the answer?

The answer lies in the nature of peace. What does God mean by peace? Philippians 4:6 tells us that the peace of God passes all understanding. Peace is all around us, but it requires spiritual eyes to see it; that is, eyes that see from the perspective of the spirit. To see peace as God sees it—that is the peace of God. As God's kingdom is all around us, so is His peace. But as Christ said to Nicodemus, **“Except ye be born again, ye cannot see the kingdom of God.”** (John 3:3)

In Satan's kingdom all is confusion and turbulence. As long as we are in Satan's world, we will be touched by its turbulence. We live in the midst of it. God has never kept His family in a capsule, sealed off from the world. It serves God's higher purpose to let us suffer as Christ suffered, just as it pleased His purpose to let Christ suffer as man suffers. By sharing in the torment of the world, we can empathize with those around us and help them to faith. As Christ was crucified for the world, so we too must be crucified for our family, our friends, our fellow pilgrims. This seems hard, but when we finally give up to it and accept it, then the peace of God will fill our hearts.

Then we will have peace in the midst of the conflict—the peace that passes understanding. Human peace demands the elimination of conflict. God's peace is perfected in the conflict. Apart from God, conflict and turbulence can lead to bitterness and cynicism. But with God the Holy Spirit takes the conflict and translates it into growth and graciousness.

The secret is to look for peace in Christ and nowhere else. **“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee.”** (Isaiah 26:3) Christ says, **“These things have I spoken unto you that in Me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but be of good cheer I have overcome the world.”** (John 16:33)

Such peace as this is not possible without an awakening of our inner spirit. This awakening can only come from God. He is “the Father of Spirits.” **“The fruit of the spirit is peace.”** (Galatians 5:22) If you want peace you must be born again of God's Spirit. This new birth will not keep you from distress in this world, but it will allow you to see the world as God sees it and to find in its conflicts the perfection of your life and the harmony of your inner spirit. Peace will flow as a river below the surface of the turbulence. **“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing.”** (Romans 15:13)

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