

John 3:13-21

"No one has ascended to heaven but He who came down from heaven, that is, the Son of Man who is in heaven. "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, "that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life. "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. "For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved. "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. "And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil. "For everyone practicing evil hates the light and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed. "But he who does the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be clearly seen, that they have been done in God."

Peace on Earth

A reporter once asked President Herbert Hoover, "Mr. President, how do you handle criticism? Do you ever get agitated or tense?" "No," President Hoover said, seemingly surprised at the question, "of course not."

"But," the reporter went on, "when I was a boy you were one of the most popular men in the world. Then, for a while you became one of the most unpopular, with nearly everyone against you. Didn't any of this meanness and criticism ever get under your skin?"

"No, I knew when I went into politics what I might expect, so when it came I wasn't disappointed or upset," he said. He lowered his familiar bushy eyebrows and looked directly into the reporter's eyes. "Besides, I have 'peace at the centre,' you know," he added.

Inner peace comes from God. Peace was anticipated outcome of Christ's birth according to the angels: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men" (Luke 2:14). Peace is the gift of Jesus Christ. Jesus said: "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you."

This inner peace is first, a peace with God, founded upon the finished work of Calvary's cross. There Jesus paid the penalty of man's sin, before Holy God, by shedding His blood in death as a substitute for mankind. Individuals find escape from the death penalty of sin by securing that peace through personal faith in Christ: "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ... And we rejoice in the hope of the glory of God" (Romans 5 NIV). The new hope is a promised eternity with God.

This inner peace is also the work of the Holy Spirit in a believer which produces a calm resolve and confident trust in any circumstances: "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace..." (Galatians 5:22). Such peace affords a Christian with the capacity to face trial, persecution and even ridicule, with an inner strength of character that responds with love rather than revenge, with care rather than bitterness. This is one of the marks of a maturing Christian!

Several years ago a submarine was being tested and had to remain submerged for many hours. When it returned to the harbour, the captain was asked, "How did the terrible storm last night affect you?" The officer looked at him in surprise and exclaimed, "Storm? We didn't even know there was one!" The sub had been so far beneath the surface that it had reached the area known to sailors as "the cushion of the sea." Although the ocean may be whipped into huge waves by high winds, the waters below are never stirred. The Christian's mind will be protected against the distracting waves of worry and revenge if it is resting completely in the good providence of God. There, sheltered by His grace and encouraged by His Holy Spirit, the believer can find the perfect tranquility that only Christ can provide.

Have you His peace?

What is my response:
