“Peace, Perfect Peace”

The old hymn calls for “Peace, perfect peace, in this dark world of sin….” Ever since Cain killed Able, this terrestrial ball has sought for peace. In the 20th century alone, an estimated 231 million people have died in direct war conflict or allowed to die by human decision (starvation, etc.). That is mind-boggling! How can mankind be so atrociously violent to his fellow man?

The answer is amazingly simple, mankind forgets Jehovah God! In every form of sin, man ignores the word of God… that is the very definition of sin. The *degree* to which man forgets God and His word is the degree to which his degradation descends.

Peace has been so vitally important to mankind that some cultures even greet on another with “Peace” rather than, “Hello.” Case in point would be the Jewish and Christian greeting, “Shalom” in both testaments.

Yet peace can happen even between former enemies. December 7th has been a “day which will live infamy” since President Roosevelt’s speech on December 8, 1941, the day the U.S. entered WWII. My father was with the 112th Cavalry and saw heavy combat in the S. Pacific and came home a hospital ship after nearly being killed by a Japanese bomb in the Battle for New Britian (near Australia). His comments were sobering as he related that he didn’t want to be there fighting the Japanese soldiers any more than they wanted to be there fighting him.

I find it fascinating that Japan and Germany are now two of our closest allies! Even more surprising were my trips to Japan where I was treated like a long lost friend by my new Japanese friends. Even as a stranger on the streets and in the airports, I was treated with warm friendliness, sometimes more so than in US airports. Our daughter and son-in-law spent two years teaching English in Japanese public schools in Mito, Japan, about 60 miles northeast of Tokyo. They constantly spoke of the friendliness of their host country. Our daughter was treated with respect and even apologies when she visited ground zero with Japanese friends with whom she taught. “We are sorry for Pearl Harbor,” one of the said, with her head bowed. Wow!

A major point here is that mortal enemies can become close friends. I’ve seen it happen and perhaps you have too. But there are some necessary requisites for that to happen. Repentance, confession, forgiveness, acceptance, deep forgiveness and true *agape* love (that form of love that seeks the highest good for another). When God’s word is followed it is astounding how much peace can be found, and equally astounding how much past can be completely forgiven!

I am once again reminded of the bumper sticker, “No Jesus, no peace. Know Jesus, know peace.” It’s not rocket science, in fact is truly simple. It’s just challenging to our pride and prejudice. We must remember that Jesus said if we don’t forgive, we will not be forgiven. But if we do forgive, we can be forgiven. (See (Matthew 6:14, 15.) What an amazing plan God has for us to be with former enemies and to be with Him for all eternity. Peace and reconciliation through forgiveness. Let’s all make a deep commitment to “know Jesus and know peace,” personally, nationally and internationally.

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