

SOMETHING TO CHEW ON

Man's desire for universal peace is so great, so deep-rooted, that he often thinks he sees it approaching when it isn't there at all. Over and over again down the years he has cried, "Peace, peace," when there was no peace. He was doing it even in Jeremiah's day, twenty-five centuries ago. (Jeremiah 6:14).

When the twentieth century dawned, it was hailed as "The Christian century." There hadn't been a major war for thirty years, said the optimists, and there never would be another. After all, were not Christian principles more firmly implanted in people's minds than ever before, thanks to a triumphant century of missionary advance?

It was all an illusion. A great illusion. Almost immediately the Boer War broke out, followed a few years later by World War 1. After 1918 there was much peace talk both before and after the founding of the League of Nations. Then came the treaty to outlaw war, signed by most of the nations of the world. In the midst of this illusion Germany invaded Poland and Czechoslovakia, and World War II blew the flimsy structure of world peace to smithereens.

It didn't destroy the hope of peace, of course, and when the exhausted nations finally laid down their arms and buried their millions of dead, the peace builders started again, once more quoting the prophet Isaiah's familiar statement about beating swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks. Then, out of the smoking ashes of the League of Nations arose, phoenix-like, the United Nations, "the last great hope of mankind" as its eager sponsors declared.

This was another illusion or rather, another phase of the same great illusion which has haunted and frustrated mankind since the dawn of time. True, for the past six decades there has been peace of a sort, but when one thinks of the dozens of wars that have raged since this it is a sorry record indeed. The United Nations is not a solid hope for mankind but an ideal built of sand which the onrushing tides of history will eventually sweep away.

One solid hope remains in this awesome and dangerous world. It is the hope that has sustained Christians down the ages - the hope that Jesus Christ, will return to set up his kingdom of righteousness and peace which shall never pass away. There is no illusion about this. It may be a dream; but, as the Bible says, it is certain and sure of realization (Daniel 2:44).

In this present age, we as Christians are knit to God through the mediatorship of Jesus Christ. We are spoken of as being in Christ and as Christ being in us. We are his workmanship, and a people who walk by faith and not by sight. By the study of his Word and by the ministry of his Spirit and communion with him we worship an invisible God and obey an invisible Leader and live in an invisible sphere with dimensions beyond those of time and sense and knowing no such thing as physical boundaries. We may be amongst a crowd, with noise and chatter all around us, yet we can retire within the citadel of the soul and hold communion with God. We may be drawn into the rush and bustle of the day with duties pressing us from every side, and sweeping our hearts into the cauldron of the world's restlessness, yet in a flash of time we can consciously stay our minds upon God and draw from Him an inner quietness and strength which allays the

fevered stress and calms the troubled brow. We may have problems too great for us to handle and trials burdensome beyond human strength, but because God has fashioned a way of entrance into His presence through the new and living way, we have access to wisdom beyond our human intellect and strength out of reach of natural help. We have the confidence that what we ask in the name of Jesus Christ is heard and answered, not in our way perhaps, but according to all the wisdom of the Father of eternity.

This life of faith is very wonderful. It forms the background to all life and living. It gives support to our mere humanity by putting under us foundations which withstand the shatterings of physical and material disasters and still leave the reality of living untouched. A Christian does not use his faith as an escapist but as a weapon which no enemy can foil.

We read in the Scripture that - "Without faith it is impossible to please God." "The just shall live by faith." "We have access by faith," "we walk by faith, "we live by faith," "we are children of God by faith in Jesus Christ," "we have the promise of the Spirit by faith," "faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God," and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." How important it is to have true faith.