



BOB AND DOTTIE (Connor) BINGHAM (303) 761-5005 Fax (303) 761-3682 e-mail: cup@shepherdinggrace.org VOLUME 11.4, Christmas 2005

The Wrong Shall Fail; the Right Prevail --

Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882) composed a Christmas carol about 150 years ago that expresses the apparent conflict between the angels' glorious heralding of the Savior's birth and the stark reality of mankind's decadence.

The first verse expresses the Christian's romantic thoughts and memories of the biblical account of God's revelation of the birth of His beloved Son, Jesus.

I heard the bells on Christmas Day
Their old familiar carols play.
And wild and sweet the words repeat
Of peace on earth, good will to men.

The third verse of the hymn expresses the stark reality of the true heart of mankind – hatred, wickedness, violence and war.

And in despair I bowed my head;
"There is no peace on earth," I said.
"For hate is strong and mocks the song
Of peace on earth, good will to men."

Men and women around the world today experience despair even as 150 years ago. Evil, hatred, wickedness, violence, wars, and worldwide terrorism are rampant. Christians are discriminated against, imprisoned, hated, maimed, tortured, martyred, and humiliated at the hands of evil men and women.

In our own nation a strong movement is gaining momentum to eliminate any allegiance to God or any moral standards. Those who believe in God and morality are summarily discredited and dismissed as being ignorant and irrelevant.

People around the world are yearning for peace; yet there is no peace.

King David expressed the same concern to God, "*Many are those who are my vigorous enemies; those who hate me without reason are numerous. Those who repay my good with evil, slander me when I pursue what is good*" (Ps. 38:19-20).

Consequently, many Christians today, like King David, wonder where God is and why He does not intervene.

Jesus promised, "*A slave is not greater than his master. If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you; if they kept My word, they will keep yours also. But all these things they will do to you for My name's sake, because they do not know the One who sent Me*" (Jn. 15:20-21).

The Apostle Paul instructs Timothy, "*Indeed, all who desire to live godly in Christ Jesus will be persecuted. But evil men and impostors will proceed from bad to*



worse, deceiving and being deceived" (2 Tim. 3:12-14).

These Scriptures are not especially encouraging to Christians who are struggling in the midst of difficult and adverse circumstances. Life is tough when one is left to cope within one's own natural resources. However, the true believer has his Resource in the very Person of Jesus Christ! **This is why He came!**

Longfellow ends with verse five in triumph and with confidence in the God of peace.

Then pealed the bells more loud and deep;
"GOD IS NOT DEAD; NOR DOTHE HE SLEEP;

The wrong shall fail, the right prevail,
With peace on earth, good will to men."

Conversations in homes, coffee houses, cafes, bars and meeting places, revolve around the plight of the world and the desperate need for peace. People around the world are yearning for peace; yet there is no peace.

The peace that the angels' heralded on the night that Jesus was born, "*Peace on earth, good*

will to men”, was not to be bestowed upon the people of the earth “*Carte Blanc*”.

Jesus later identified the peace that the angels spoke of, “*Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Do not let your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful*” (Jn. 14:27).

God’s promised peace is given as a gift to those who believe and receive the Prince of Peace! His peace focuses on and is fulfilled in the Lord Jesus Christ. “**He Himself is our peace**” (Eph. 2:14).

Regardless of the lot we have been dealt or the circumstances in which we find ourselves, the peace of Christ is available to comfort and sustain us through it all, because “**GOD IS NOT DEAD; NOR DOTHE HE SLEEP;** the wrong shall fail, the right prevail, with peace on earth, good will to men.”

The Apostle Paul reveals our Resource, “*Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs [including Christmas carols], singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks through Him to God the Father*” (Col. 3:15-17).

C.H. Spurgeon, known as the ‘prince of preachers’, also addressed God’s Resource for mankind’s despair more than a century ago:

Despair, when you have an omnipotent God to help you?

Despair, when the precious blood of the Son of God has been given for you?

Despair, when God delights in mercy?

Despair, when the silver bell of hope rings, “*Come unto Me, all ye that labor and*

are heavy laden, and I will give you rest” (Matt. 11:28)?

Despair, while life lasts, while mercy’s gate stands wide open, while the messenger of mercy calls you to come?

Despair, when you have God’s Word, “*Though, your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow, though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool*” (Isa. 1:18)?

Remember that God sent Jesus to the nation of Israel at a very dark time in their history. They were under the oppressive rule of Rome and spiritually under a self-serving, decadent religious system that had not heard from the God of Israel for some 400 years. The people of that day despaired wondering, “where is the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob?”

I [Bob] was driving home from Chicago recently. While listening to a CD by Bill Pearce, the following lyrics reinforced the angels’ message to the shepherds that the “*Savior, who is Christ the Lord,*” (Lk. 2:11) is our continual Resource.

He never sleeps, He never slumbers,

He watches me night and day.

He never sleeps, He never slumbers,

He keeps me safe along the way.

Difficulties and adversities come and go, but “*Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, tomorrow, yes and forever*” (Heb. 13:8). He is always our Resource for peace regardless of our lot or circumstances!



Our Family Update

Lori and Vince Burke with Vincent (16) and July (14) are serving in the Philippines with First Love. Kelly (22) and Tami (19) are attending college in the Chicago area.

vinceburke60068@yahoo.com

Sheri and Kevin Robery with Tara (20) and Shara (16), live in

Park Ridge, Ill. Kevin is a videographer for AWANA and Sheri works with a chiropractor. Josh and Rachel and baby Riley live nearby.
kevinR@AWANA.org.

John and Rose Connor with Johnny (20) in college, Katie (17) and Bobby (16) in high school, and Shannon (9) and Bethany (7) live in Boca Raton, Fla. John has his own business and Rose is a physician’s assistant.

pruiba@adelphia.net

Patti and Mark Bogner with Mark (12) Charissa (10) Matthew (8) Connor (6) and Jaclynne (2) live in Centennial, CO. Mark and Patti both teach at Jim Elliott Christian School.

mark-patti_bogner@msn.com.

Deanna and Jim Finley with Laura (16) Sarah (14) and Rebecca (12) live in Delavan, WI. Jim has apartment rentals and Deanna is a nurse practitioner working with premature babies. dfin@ticon.net.

Denise and Kirk Perkins with Bobbie Jo Ann (12) and Mike (12) live in Milton, WI. Kirk is an over-the-road trucker and Denise is a customer service representative for the local daily newspaper.

Deedra Bingham is a discipler with CUPbearers/Gracestoration and is an adjunct professor with Rocky Mountain Bible College and Seminary in Englewood, Colo. deedra@shepherdinggrace.org.

Mark your calendars
and plan to attend
the Annual

**Memorial Day Retreat
May 26-29, 2006.**

Information will be
In the March 2006

Update.

We pray that Jesus Christ –
The Prince of Peace – will
be your peace this
Holy Season!