Lest we Forget – Forget What?

In Canada each year we celebrate Remembrance Day on Nov. 11 - when we remember those who lost their lives in the wars.

As a way of contributing, I would like to put the following meditation in the local paper. If there are errors or suggestions, do let me know:

Lest we Forget – Forget What?

Every year fewer veterans are left to remind us of the suffering and loss that occurred during the world wars. Yet none of us can forget about the problem of conflict - along with human misery. It has never gone away.

So what is it that we must be careful not to forget?

Consider this quote:
During the last 3,500 years of recorded history, there have been less than 270 years of peace. That means that since the beginning of recorded history, the entire world has been at peace less than 8% of the time. During this time, more than 8,000 peace treaties were made . . . and broken.

It seems like humanity tends to forget the fact that war never leads to lasting peace. Let's admit, we have failed to eradicate conflict. Evidence is everywhere - from the playground to the global front.

Soon another Remembrance Day will have slipped by, and our attention will be drawn to the season when we celebrate peace and good will: Christmas. What a contrast!

Do you ever wonder why there seems to be such a lack of peace and goodwill - even among adherents of the Christian religion? Definitely, something is being forgotten ...

... but not by all.

The recent school tragedy in Pennsylvania, in which five Amish girls died has attracted a great deal of attention - especially the unconventional response of the Amish community towards the offender and his grieving family. Is this not the way of peace and goodwill?

Though the Amish do not participate in retaliative measures, their response to the crisis was certainly not passive. With out any hesitation, they chose to forgive the criminal, just as Jesus taught: Â“Forgive those who sin against you.Â”

In a TV interview an Amish midwife was asked how they could forgive such an atrocity. She responded, Â“You canÂ’t forgive unless you first experience ChristÂ’s forgiveness for yourself.Â”

Forgiveness is a gift to ourselves as well as our enemies. It keeps us from turning bitter, sour, and vengeful. It gives us peace of mind.

JesusÂ’ way of responding to wrongs seems totally illogical. Yet, on the other hand, letÂ’s not forget that our own ways of tit-for-tat retaliation have never worked Â– never!

Sadly, humankind will keep on forgetting this, and will continue warring and avenging. But letÂ’s remember that no matter what is happening, we are always free to offer a taste of peace to our fallen world through forgiveness and goodwill.

by Diane Eaton
Re: Lest we Forget Â– Forget What? - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/10/12 9:30
Matt. 6:12
And forgive us our debts,
   As we forgive our debtors. KJV

and forgive us our sins,
   as we have forgiven those who sin against us. NLT

And forgive us our debts,
as we also have forgiven
(left, remitted, and let go of the debts, and have
given up resentment against) our debtors. (Amplified)

"For if you forgive men when they sin against you,
your heavenly Father will also forgive you.

But if you do not forgive men their sins,
your Father will not forgive your sins."
Matt. 6:14

Re: Teaching about Love for Enemies - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/10/13 8:14

Â‘You have heard the law that says,
Â‘Love your neighborÂ’ and hate your enemy.
But I say, love your enemies!
Pray for those who persecute you!
In that way, you will be acting as true children of your Father in heaven.
For he gives his sunlight to both the evil and the good,
and he sends rain on the just and the unjust alike.

If you love only those who love you,
what reward is there for that?
Even corrupt tax collectors do that much.
If you are kind only to your friends,
how are you different from anyone else?
Even pagans do that.

But you are to be perfect,
even as your Father in heaven is perfect. Matt. 5:43-48

It seems like whenever I write about something, the Lord brings a challenge into my life where I must practise what I preach. Just recently I submitted an article to a Newspaper only to discover that a writer slightly changed a few words and then put his name on it. He got the money and the recognition, and I did the work and research. Suddenly a colleague began to say.

Now what would Jesus want me to do about that? Of course he would want me to forgive, to turn the other cheek, and walk the second mile. So I did. I submitted another article (another Paper). The same thing happened. It seemed like my benevolent motives (honor others through my articles) were being used as a tool for selfish gain.

Now, do I turn the cheek again, and walk the third mile. I don't know, but I do know that my Lord can guide me. And really, does it matter who gets the glory? The message got out - and that's what mattered.

The test for me is this: Do I really believe what I'm writing, or is it just religious rhetoric? Do I really trust Christ?

It's easy to forget the principles taught by Christ - as they relate even to the small things - because they are so beyond our human bent.

"...you are to be perfect."
Don't you think that to be perfect is to respond to the wrongs in life just as Christ would? That would be the result of Christ within us, Christ living through us.

Diane

Re: Lest we forget - posted by roadsing (), on: 2006/10/14 7:29
A student replies:

I think that is something we definitely all need to think about. I found your article to be very helpful right now while I'm having difficulty forgiving someone. After your reminder it is much easier for me to let it go, because I will rot inside if I don't.

In this new age, instead of saying "I forgive you", we say things like "water under the bridge", "I wouldn't worry about it", and "I've already forgotten about it" (all said with a "forgiving" smile). I think I'll have to use these phrases more often from now on.

I'm studying this centuries history in school right now, we've made it as far as the atomic bomb and I am every time as horrified as I was the first time I heard about these atrocities.

Lest we forget... These things are still going on.

"Forgetting what is behind, and straining toward what is ahead..." Phil 3:13

Forget all that weighs us down in the race... like bitterness, unforgiveness, past offenses...

And remember our goal:
.."I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ." Phil 3:14

Re:Lest we forget... Jesus' teachings - posted by roadsing (), on: 2006/10/14 7:35
It occurred to me that the quote I used in the beginning post, though it covers the span of recorded history, could not include the perpetual tribal warfare that occurred in remote, uncivilized places.

Most likely this globe has never been conflict-free.

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A teaching of Jesus:

"... he who has been forgiven little loves little."  
Lk. 7:47

What does this say about the power of forgiveness?

Diane
Re: Lest We Forget: The Peace of Christ - posted by roadsign (), on: 2006/10/18 9:01

Some here may be wondering where this phrase Â“Lest We ForgetÂ“ comes from. It is a Canadian motto applied to Remembrance Day ceremonies. IÂ’m sure that other countries have their own traditions and motifs that help them remember war-tragedies.

I would like to apply the phrase, Â“Lest We ForgetÂ“ to biblical teachings that God has called us to remember?

Consider this:
Â“Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace.Â”
Col. 3:15

What does this mean? Peace - ruling our hearts? Peace - our calling?

One translation says:
Â“So let the peace that comes from Christ control your thoughts.Â” CEV

How does the peace of Christ rule our hearts, or control our thoughts?

Strongs Concordance renders Â“ruleÂ” : arbitrate, govern, or prevail.
NIV comment says: Â“function like an umpire in all human relationshipsÂ”

Clearly this is not referring to an enforced civil peace - though we cannot discount the need of that: Â“RulersÂ… do not bear the sword for nothing.Â” Rom. 13:3 Enforced peace or peacekeeping measures cannot change the heart. God has ordained something far better for his chosen people.

Â“Therefore, as GodÂ’s chosen people Â… bear with one another and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts.Â”

Without ChristÂ’s peace prevailing over our hearts, even personal peacekeeping measures are fragile at best. Nasty roots of bitterness take over. In time, mental landmines become embedded in the deep recesses of our minds and thoughts - carefully concealed underneatn politeness and finely-dressed hypocrisy.

They lurk everywhere. You donÂ’t know they exist in someoneÂ’s heart until you step on one Â– maybe in a conversation. Then POW! It explodes. Angry smoke hits your face and swords are drawn. You have no idea what you said Â“wrong gÂ”. Nevertheless, you quickly change the topic, or go elsewhere.

I remember inadvertently stepping on a Â“landmineÂ” when I was helping out in a church. Just maybe that was the only reason God had me there for a brief time. Perhaps a risk of being a peacemaker (as opposed to peaceKEEPER) is discovering buried weapons - so that they can be replaced with ChristÂ’s peace-making measures - like forgiveness.

Â“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.Â” Matt. 5:8

None of us can get through life in this fallen world without at some point encountering someoneÂ’s invisible stockpile of weaponry. We encounter bitterness and quarrelsomeness. We meet those who have a bone to chew, or those who are on a mission to combat all the sins, heresies, and bad religions. We encounter fractured relationships....

Very few today are governed by the peace of Christ. We may not even know if we ourselves are or arenÂ’t Â– until we encounter testings and threats. Then whatever is in our hearts will govern the occasion - that is, arbitrate or be the umpire of our responses.

Will our responses flow from ChristÂ’s peace? That would be the mark and calling of GodÂ’s chosen people, would it not?

Â“Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.Â” Matt. 5:8
Food for thought: How did Christ's life demonstrate that peace ruled and controlled his heart and thoughts? What about Paul? Peter? ... others?

Diane

Re: Lest we Forget – Forget What? - posted by ginnyrose (), on: 2006/10/18 18:53

Diane,

This article contains a lot of food for thought. I suggest you go ahead and submit it...reconsider another person will steal it again? If so, you will be challenged or put to the test, for sure! Reminds me what Paul said in Phil.1:18 "What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretense, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." Difficult is it not? I am learning that when I do anything it will not matter who gets the credit. When this becomes a part of who you are, it is very liberating because it frees you from the bondage that prestige inflicts upon you. Prestige enslaves.

I loved these quotes:

Quote:
"None of us can get through life in this fallen world without at some point encountering someone's invisible stockpile of weaponry."

Quote:
"The test for me is this: Do I really believe what I'm writing, or is it just religious rhetoric? Do I really trust Christ?"

Quote:
"Don't you think that to be perfect is to respond to the wrongs in life just as Christ would? That would be the result of Christ within us, Christ living through us."

Quote:
"Forgetting what is behind, and straining toward what is ahead..."

Do what needs to be and never mind who gets the credit will ensure a whole lot more will get done. Yes, this is an aspect of the forgiving lifestyle.

Enjoyed your posts....

ginnyrose