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Choose Peace Through Christ

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Hello friend,

If recent events haven't convinced you that we're in the last days, I don't know what will.

A worldwide pandemic is pretty epic, but then throw in a volcano eruption, and a full-scale war, and we are living the prophecies foretold ages ago.

Tell me if this passage from Luke 21 doesn't sound familiar:

"But when ye shall hear of wars and commotions, be not terrified: for these things must first come to pass; but the end is not by and by. Then said he unto them, Nation shall rise against nation, and kingdom against kingdom: And great earthquakes shall be in divers places, and famines, and pestilences; and fearful sights and great signs shall there be from heaven." (Luke 21: 9-11)

So, let's listen to Christ and 'be not terrified'. And as our [Prophet and First Presidency has counseled](#), let's 'pray for peace'. Knowing these events have been prophesied doesn't make them easier to endure, but maybe we can have a little more faith and hope knowing that God sees the end from the beginning and is orchestrating His plan.

If you're reading your Book of Mormon regularly, you should be somewhat accustomed to war. That doesn't mean we like it or condone it. Even though there are times when we can be justified in defending our families, we should always be proponents of peace. Christ was the Prince of Peace. We are his followers.

Of course, to be completely peaceful at all times and all situations can be an easy thing to say, yet super difficult to do, especially when there is such injustice and aggression toward us, or someone we love. Yet Christ says, "but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also." (Matt 5:39)

This is a hard doctrine. That's why it was so revolutionary when Christ said it, and still inconceivable today:

"Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.

But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;" (Matt 5:43-44)

Even though that can be difficult to apply in a war, we can definitely apply it to our own homes. Our homes should be a refuge and a place of peace.

One of the first messages Christ gave to the people in the Americas when he visited them after he was resurrected was about not allowing contention to prevail.

"For verily, verily I say unto you, he that hath the spirit of contention is not of me, but is of the devil, who is the father of contention, and he stirreth up the hearts of men to contend with anger, one with another." (3 Nephi 11:29)

How do we control our anger?

The same way we control any feeling or desire that comes from our carnal bodies.

First, we realize that we can control it. That we do have a choice.

"for there is a God, and he hath created all things, both the heavens and the earth, and all things that in them are, both things to act and things to be acted upon." (2 Nephi 2:14)

"...they have become free forever, knowing good from evil; to act for themselves and not to be acted upon,." (2 Nephi 2:26)

We are 'things to act.' We can act for ourselves and not be acted upon.

"Therefore, cheer up your hearts, and remember that ye are free to act for yourselves" (2 Nephi 10:23)

Second, know that our flesh is carnal and naturally wants to do things that are contrary to God's law.

"For the natural man is an enemy to God, and has been from the fall of Adam" (Mosiah 3:19)

"And not choose eternal death, according to the will of the flesh and the evil which is therein, which giveth the spirit of the devil power to captivate, to bring you down to hell, that he may reign over you in his own kingdom." (2 Nephi 2:29)

So with that dichotomy, what are we to do?

We choose Christ.

"They are free to choose liberty and eternal life, through the great Mediator of all men." (2 Nephi 2:27)

"choose eternal life, according to the will of his Holy Spirit." (2 Nephi 2:28)

"unless he yields to the enticings of the Holy Spirit and putteth off the natural man and becometh a saint through the atonement of Christ the Lord, and becometh as a child, submissive, meek, humble, patient, full of love, willing to submit to all things which the Lord seeth fit to inflict upon him, even as a child doth submit to his father." (Mosiah 3:19)

We are to pray for the Spirit, then 'yield to its enticings'. You know when something is not right, when you are not feeling the spirit. Seek it, then listen.

Avoid anger like it is a virus. You don't have to be right. You can allow unfairness toward yourself. You can say, "I'm sorry" first. Anger is worse than 'losing' an argument. How did Christ deal with the injustice against Him?

We're Christians. While war is raging abroad and in the hearts of men, let's make our home a palace of peace. All it takes is a choice. You have the power. Christ will help.

Take care.

Bishop Williams

P.S.

- March is our ward's opportunity to serve by cleaning the building. You may be getting a phone call and asked to help on a certain day.
- March 3 - 5 - Rootstech Family History Conference (virtual) <https://rootstech.org>
- March 7 - When our youth are eligible to register for FSJ this summer. Have your week chosen before then.
- March 18, 6:30 - 8:00pm - Penny Creek Ward Family History Workshop. Bring your laptops and phones and be guided through <http://Familysearch.org> by experts. (This time and date is a change from previous plans.)

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