

Inner Peace

I recently read a newspaper editorial about former President Jimmy Carter. Carter has been diagnosed with a cancer that spread to numerous parts of his body, including the brain. The article described Carter as handling his health situation with “humility and gratitude for the opportunities and privileges he has enjoyed, but the inner peace he exuded.” Carter has always been considered a man of faith. Did that faith shield him from the affliction of cancer? Not at this time. Did that faith protect him from criticism that goes along with political office? No one can do that in our secular world. In spite of this,



Carter is able to handle his struggles because he is at peace with God.

The editorial highlighted the inner peace Jimmy Carter feels. Carter’s service to the poor has been well documented, especially with Habitat for Humanity homes he helped build. The article also talks about worship services held at Camp David during his presidency. It was attended by members of Carter’s family, staff and invited guests – many of whom didn’t otherwise attend church. It talks about his involvement at his Washington church, often leading Sunday School lessons. He had a positive influence on the spiritual lives of others.

The inner peace also refers to Jimmy Carter’s contentment, even in the face of an illness that may claim his earthly life. For Carter, death is not the end, but a new beginning. At the right time God will welcome the faithful into an eternity with Him.

Inner peace is God’s way of taking on *our* burdens of life. We act on our faith, doing what is reasonable; and then, turn it over to God. Let *God’s will* be done.

Inner peace isn’t reserved only for end of life, but also for our daily struggles. Inner peace is living your life knowing “who” you are, and “whose you are.” Inner peace is being grounded in the faith and enjoying the synergy of believers who gather at church, supporting each other in good times and bad.

We see an entirely different world in the newspapers and on television. Television news report for 29 minutes on the bad things happening in the world, and then tries to end their segment with a one minute positive story. With that ratio it is no wonder people can take a negative view of the world. Satan seems to be at work nearly everywhere we turn. So, how does a Christian overcome the negativism and live in peace? How do we maintain faith in a loving God when our earthly world tries to convince us our world is going to hell? Perhaps the answer to that is our goal of being in the presence of God when our time is up in this world.

Think back to Jimmy Carter. He was constantly serving God by serving people. As President he saw the worst in people. The things he knew, much of which was confidential from the public, was far worse than the 6:00 PM news. Yet, he retained his faith and he put his faith into action by helping others. As the newspaper editorial reported, Jimmy Carter was preparing himself for the new beginning. We should, too. Carter is quoted as saying, “If we subjugate our lives to God, if we open our hearts to the Holy Spirit, if our life is consistent with the purpose or example of Christ ... in our relationship with God, and others, then we will have inner peace...”

Giving it up to God can be difficult for people who want to be in control. God is infinitely more powerful and wiser than we are. Trust Him.

So, in your quest for inner peace in the midst of chaos:

- Let faith be your guiding light, living in communion with Him, knowing you are a child of God, and are loved by the Creator.
- Ask God what he wants you to do and listen for His answer.
- Act on God's wishes, loving and forgiving others. Use the skills He gave you to serve others.
- Then, put it in God's hands. Let "thy will be done."
- Surround yourself with people of faith, in public worship and in your daily life. Seek people who will support your commitment to trust God's answer.
- Allow yourself to rest and recharge
- Trust that God's answer is the right answer; never let go of your faith as you prepare for the new beginning.

God can do wonderful things, so **let it go**, and look forward with peace in your heart. *And the peace of God, which passes all understanding, shall guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus (Philippians 4:7).* Then you can prepare for what God has in store for you, in this world and the next.

Scripture: ... *And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age" (Matthew 28:20).*

Question: Describe the steps you take to seek inner peace, in the midst of this chaotic world.

Prayer: Dear Lord. We don't understand it at times, but help us to live in peace, in spite of the chaos all around us. Help us to center our thoughts on you and what you want us to do, and give us peace. Amen.

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