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## Preface

In life, one of the great quests is to find inner peace, an all-abiding calmness and gentleness that proclaims all is well. It is to stand before all, fulfilled, complete, seeking nothing, asking only how we can bless others. Certainly, without such peace our lives can be shallow, wanting, difficult. Though we have perfect health and the wealth and power of kings, we have nothing if our minds are distraught or the shade of depression is descending over our waking thought. Whatever our station in life, a primary need is to find such peace.

In seeking true peace, we often wonder if we can realize it in our lifetime? And we ask, why does it so easily elude us? There are any number of stumbling blocks we face not the least of which is the pressure of daily living – we are too challenged, too stimulated, often too frightened to find the time needed for reflection and prayer. The so-called “miracles” and technological wonders of the age challenge our peace. They have computerized our lives and minds, giving us instant gratification with just the push of the button, and making us utterly dependant on such “conveniences” as computers, e-mails, fax machines, television, CD’s, to name a few. And who can escape the web of cell phones, which can invade our privacy day or night? This is not to condemn these wonders, but to suggest that they can obfuscate the inner calm we really seek and need. They make it decidedly more difficult to find the quiet needed to contemplate something greater than ourselves and the orbit of our personal lives. Interestingly, in Ecclesiastes, in the Old Testament of the Bible, King Solomon, son of King David, summed up the very challenge we face today, “*Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.*” (Eccl. 7: 29)

Where then do we turn? What do we do? For me, I have found that the Bible provides great solace, and is, in fact, a roadmap to find the way. It is filled with such inspiration and healing that anyone willing to examine it is assured of finding the way. If we acquaint now ourselves with God we shall “*be at peace.*” (Job 22:21) The gospel of Mark admonishes us to “*believe the gospel.*” (Mark 1:15)

In examining the Bible, I found immediate comfort in the assurances it gives that the peace we seek is not elusive nor something we might stumble across if we are lucky. Rather, it is covented and ordained by God that we shall receive it. The prophet Ezekial states: “*I [God] will make with them a covenant of peace*” (Ezek 34:25), and the prophet Isaiah

promises that, “*Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us.*” (Isa. 26:12) In other words, we don’t have to search the highways and byways for the peace we seek. It is already ours. Our task, thus, is simply to prepare ourselves to recognize and accept what God has already covenanted and ordained.

For some, who are humble, gentle, kind, loving, the task will be easy, for they are already prepared to receive. For others, and I include myself, a steadfast effort will have to be made as we seek the way. Paul, in his epistle to the people of Corinth, admonished,

*[B]e ye steadfast, unmovable, always  
abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch  
as ye know that your labour is not in vain in  
the Lord. (1 Cor. 15:58)*

Our task might be likened to a journey down a road leading to fulfillment and peace of mind. As we traverse this road, three mile markers will help us in our endeavor. The first helps to build a foundation of peace within ourselves. The second helps us find peace with our neighbors. And the third helps us take on the role of peacemaker to assist others in conflict find peace. This book then is divided into three parts: Finding Peace Within Ourselves, Finding Peace With Our Neighbors, and Becoming a Peacemaker To Help Others.

## CHAPTER 8

### The Way of the Righteous and Upright

**(Gentleness, kindness and patience pave the way to fulfillment.)**

If we are to negotiate successfully the path chosen, we need to strive to be righteous and upright. It may seem fatuous to tell us we need to be good, obey the commandments, be kind to our neighbors, and do good deeds. Yet, to be such, we are assured that we will inherit the land where peace reigns, and fully receive of the Father. In Psalms it states, "*The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein for ever.*" (Ps. 37:29)

Many of us may be at a crossroad. We may not be ready to travel the path of the righteous and upright for there are many potholes and obstructions, and the way may be difficult. However, if we are just willing to try, that is all that is asked at this time. Jesus in the Beatitudes stated: "*Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.*" (Matt. 5:6) In other words, to hunger and thirst means we are trying to find the way. Our motive is right and we are sincere in our efforts. If we approach the task in this way, the Father will surely help us along the way.

Ultimately, the path of the righteous and upright leads to perfection, which assures the peace we seek. "*Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect.*" (Matt. 5:48) And, this goal is realizable as stated in Psalms: "*Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace.*" (Ps. 37:37)

This chapter discusses the qualities of the righteous and upright that will aid us in finding the way. It covers: (1) being a good person; (2) having a pure heart; (3) not conforming to the ways of the world; (4) being humble; (5) being patient; and (6) being gentle.

#### **1. The challenge to be a good person.**

Goodness is a fundamental lynchpin of the righteous and upright. It is an important step towards the perfection we seek. The Bible repeatedly asserts that only by being a good person can we demonstrate our love for God and receive. It is stated in Ecclesiastes: "*For God giveth to a man that is good in his sight wisdom, and knowledge, and joy.*" (Eccl. 2:26) And Psalms reaffirms this: "*The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his ways.*" (Psalms 37:23)