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- 7054 Winnetka Ave., Winnetka, CA 91306
- Mail To: P.O. Box 2711, Winnetka, CA 91396
- 818-795-5566 (minister's cell phone)
- W. Bruce Evans, Minister:

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www.winnetkachurchof christ.com

THE BULWARK

“PEACE”

Jack Dawson, the artist who painted the masterpiece “Peace in the Midst of the Storm” is quoted as having said that John 16:33 came to the fore-front of his mind as he put brush to canvas in order to capture peace. At first glance of the painting the first thought most likely isn’t that of peace. Waves crash against jagged rocks. The depiction is that of a turbulent, crushing storm pounding the shore line, hardly peaceful. But then comes the beauty, for when one looks closely at the painting, tucked away securely among the rocks, is a little bird sitting on her nest completely protected and unshaken by the waves. Peace.

“I have told you these things, so that you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble, but take heart! I have overcome the world.” (John 16:33)

There is no doubt that we live in a world that is one gigantic, raging storm; in full on assault on each one of us. Yet, in the painting “Peace”, Dawson seems to capture the feeling of total peace with the dove quietly resting in her nest, while the storm thunders and the waves crash around her. Jesus is indeed the “Prince of Peace” which was prophesied as coming by Isaiah (see Isaiah 9:6). The “Prince of Peace” would also serve as the “Wonderful Counselor”, all of which is designed to provide mankind peace amid the ravages of life.

We are not promised a life devoid of storms and discomfort. The world is broken, and it is due to sin, evil. Imagery is ever present in the painting, but the key is the dove secure, and our take away should be that only in Christ can one find victory and peace. Again, notice what is seen in the sixteenth chapter of John.

“Peace I leave with you; My peace I give to you; not as the world gives, do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, nor let it be fearful.” (v. 27)



The Jack Dawson painting seems to suggest one take a gigantic step backward and take a good long look at our surroundings. Peaceful most likely isn’t at the forefront of your thoughts. But as already noticed in the passages cited, God does indeed promises peace even amid the cacophony of life. Once one is in Christ, he can echo what John wrote in 1John 4:4, “Greater is He that is in me than he that is in the world.” Victory can be ours in Christ. “But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us.” (Romans 8:37)

If ever there was someone in dire need of peace it was the apostle Paul as he was in the clutches of a Roman prison. Yet, even though it was house imprisonment, nevertheless it was disconcerting to say the least, he was able to find peace. Which he wrote about to the brethren in Philippi. “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all comprehension shall guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (4:6-7)

If you ever get the opportunity to see the Dawson painting, “Peace in the Midst of the Storm” “face to face” so to speak; search out the dove and think of the hymn “Shelter in the Time of Storm.” Then come to the awareness that the peace of God transcends all understanding. It can and does guard one’s heart and mind. We can find the peace for which we long, only when we obey Him and turn our cares and concerns over to our Heavenly Father. (wbe)