

Overlooking Christianity

There was a time in the dim past when it was proper for one to kill another if the victim-to-be was an enemy. For it was a traditional law that if one met a foe on a cliff he should push him off lest the foe pushed him first. It is easy to imagine that conditions then did not lead to peaceful existence and tranquility.

This was true not only with individuals but also with tribes and nations. Distrust and belligerence were imperatives of self-preservation. Consequently, wars were frequent, decimating populations and destroying what man built in the intervals of peace.

In the succeeding ages man improved his social concept, but internationally the old philosophy has prevailed to this day. Nations watch each other suspiciously with powerful radars and spy planes. Science is directed more toward acquisition of greater physical striking power than toward humanity's wellbeing. Should foes meet today, it will be, as in the days of old, a question of who pushes first.

Jesus' doctrine of love for one another — even for an enemy — was, in his time, so revolutionary that people thought him psychotic. But He lived it, and, nailed to the cross by a hate-crazed mob, He died forgiving those who wronged Him. Hundreds of millions have since come under the sway of His teachings, and through the centuries the excellence of His doctrine has been manifested in private lives richly rewarded with contentment and peace.

It is surprising that with such a lead even Christian nations overlook what Christianity has to offer in the quest for world peace. Louis Kossuth, the Hungarian patriot, expressed fully our precise sentiment — albeit partisan because we are Christian — when he said, "As long as the principles of Christ are not carried up into the international relations — as long as the fragile wisdom of political exigencies overrules the doctrines of Christ, there is no freedom on earth firm and the future of no nation sure."

Would that our world leaders try the application of Christian principles in their dealings and relationships if only because other expedients have failed to give mankind the lasting harmony and peace for which it yearns.