

Inner Peace

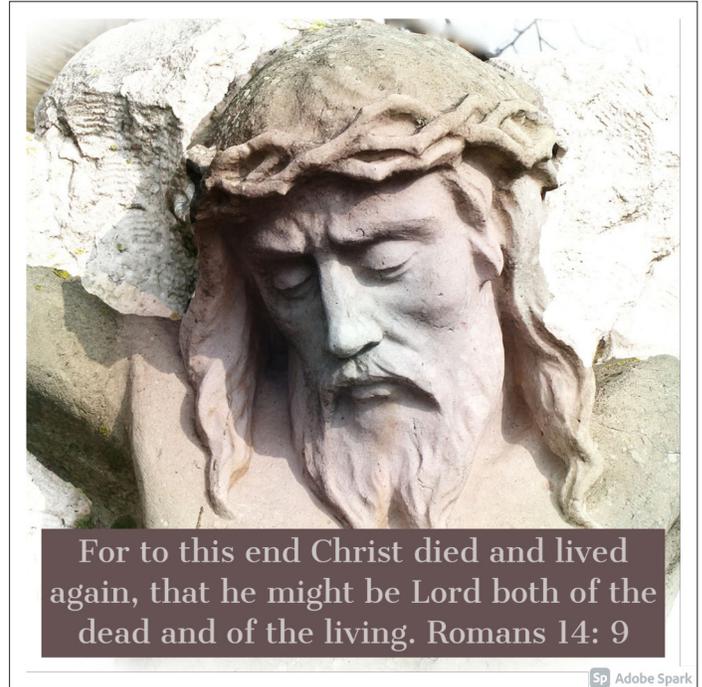
by Rena Detlefsen

For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living (Romans 14:7-9).

There are two thoughts that come to mind with this Bible verse in the light of COVID-19. The first is that we need not fear death. Christ is already in control of those who are living and who are dead. There is nothing that can separate us from our Heavenly Father. As Romans 8:38-39 says, *"For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."* I acknowledge suffering is painful, stressful and worrisome. Knowing, however, that afterwards we have an eternal home gives us hope to pass through to eternity.

The other thought from Romans 14:7-9 is that if we are the Lord's then He has work for us to do. We are able to share with others that suffering cannot take away our confidence since our Lord has already suffered and paid the price to take us back in love and to be forever with Him.

We live not only to ourselves but live in love to our fellow man. When we look at others, our gaze is the gaze of Jesus. What we do to another we do ultimately to Christ. We are His arms, feet, legs, heart, and song to cheer, minister and to encourage our neighbour. Christ may even be calling us to see a neighbour whom we would not normally help, like



the Good Samaritan did. The Good Samaritan would be like a spiritual and social marginalist who takes care of a priest left half-dead on a Toronto side street.

All of this is to say that COVID-19 presents challenges to us Christians and brings hope to a tired and conflict-present society. May the hope of the Gospel that was present in the Roman occupation in Palestine during Christ's day, be the hope that we share during COVID-19 and other world challenges.

Prayer: Dear Heavenly Father, You are faithful to me and have called me to be Your light in a challenged world. Grant me Your Holy Spirit to speak lovingly of my hope to those who need to hear it.
In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.