



Christmas Bells

"Illustrated London News - Christmas Truce 1914" by A. C. Michael - The Guardian - Originally published in The Illustrated London News, January 9, 1915. Licensed under PD-US via Wikipedia - https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Illustrated_London_News_-_Christmas_Truce_1914.jpg

The news seems to get darker and darker each day. I don't envy the politicians who have to make decisions about how to respond to the violence and wickedness out there. Is the world getting worse? Sadly, I think it has always been like this—we are perhaps just better at hearing about it all these days. So how can we be positive?

Christmas truce

We can choose to stop hostilities. The picture above reminds us of how in 1914 soldiers chose to stop fighting to celebrate Christmas together. However, the following year, a few units arranged ceasefires, but the truces were not nearly as widespread as in 1914; this was, in part, due to strongly worded orders from the high commands of both sides prohibiting fraternisation. Soldiers were no longer amenable to truce by 1916. The war had become increasingly bitter after

devastating human losses suffered during the battles of the Somme and Verdun, and the incorporation of poison gas. It can be too hard.

Christmas Cheer

We can try to dull the pain. Alcohol consumption in Britain increases by 40% in December, at more than 600 million units of alcohol. However, 14% drink more than they intend to over Christmas, and 54% of men and 41% of women are expected to drink over the recommended guidelines. What are the results? Just two examples: emergency admissions to hospital for acute intoxication spiral, and the Samaritans report increases in phone calls. It isn't a lasting solution.

Christmas message

We can ask the Prince of Peace to change us. By ourselves we can't keep up any good intentions; by ourselves we can't ignore the pain. But Jesus came to save us from our weakness and offers us the power to be changed. What is more, he promises a future when there will be no more sorrow or crying or pain. Ring out those Christmas bells! There is hope for us all! Find your way to a local church and keep seeking until you find Jesus.



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