

Merchant of Death

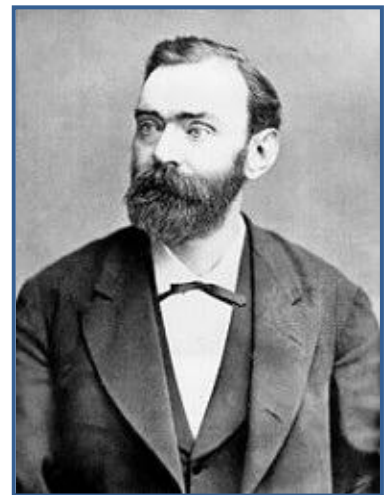
About 80 years ago, a man picked up the morning newspaper and, to his horror, read his own obituary. The newspaper had reported the death of the wrong man. Can you imagine what that must have been like – to see in print an account of your demise?

Like most of us, however, he relished the idea of finding out what people would say about him after he died. He moved past the bold caption that stated, “Dynamite king dies,” to the text itself. He read along until he was taken aback by the description of him as a “merchant of death.” The obituary went on to say that he “became rich by finding ways to kill more people faster than ever before.”

He was the inventor of dynamite, and he had amassed a great fortune from the manufacture of weapons of destruction. But he was moved by this description. Did he really want to be known as a “merchant of death?” It was at this moment that a healing power greater than the destructive force of dynamite came over him. It was his hour of conversion.

From that point on, he devoted his energy and money to works of peace and human betterment.

Today, of course, he is best remembered not as a “merchant of death,” but as the founder of the Nobel Peace Prize – Alfred Nobel, Swedish chemist, engineer, innovator and armaments manufacturer.



Living in a world in turmoil, with wars and natural disasters commanding headlines on the front pages of newspapers, and personal challenges that confront us, we are all desirous of peace. The Bible has high praise for those who can help us achieve that goal. “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God,” our Lord Himself states in the Sermon on the Mount.

Let us be sensitive to the role we may play in achieving peace – in the workplace, in the home, or in the community.

– Beecher Hunter