

Today's devotional was written by Anneke de Jong, a member of Visalia CRC.

Thursday, July 23, 2026

God Gives Us His Peace

As you enter your time with God today, pause for a moment of silence before beginning with this prayer from Psalm 85:

Show me your unfailing love, LORD, and grant me your salvation. May I listen closely to what you say and may I hear your promise of peace to me, your faithful servant. Amen

My sister-in-law was diagnosed with cancer 4 years ago. She's someone who has struggled with anxiety, so she approached her cancer treatment very intentionally. One thing she did was keep a journal of "God moments". For example, when she woke up from her second procedure after her diagnosis, she woke up to the same nurse she'd had the first time. The nurse told her, "I was in the room when the doctors found your cancer, and I thought about how scared you must be. When I saw your name on the board today, I asked to be your nurse so you'd see a familiar face, and we could pray together."

Or when she told one of her friends about her diagnosis and her friend gave her the name of the best oncologist in the area. Turns out it was the same doctor my sister-in-law was already seeing.

"God moments." She wrote them down so that when things got hard, or when she felt the anxiety, nerves, and worry creeping in, she could go back and see what God had already done. She could bring her requests to God with thanksgiving.

And what she experienced during the long year of radiation, chemo, surgery and more chemo was a peace that is beyond human understanding. It doesn't mean she didn't have fears and worries, but she had a peace that guarded her heart and her mind, and kept those fears and worries from overwhelming her.

My sister-in-law learned that there are important practices in the life of a believer that help us experience the peace of God. She had very intentionally put into practice the words of Philippians 4:8-9:

Finally, brothers and sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things. Whatever you have learned or received or heard from me, or seen in me—put it into practice. And the God of peace will be with you.

Paul knew that whatever filled the minds of the Philippian Christians would directly impact the way they experienced God's presence and his peace. In Philippians 3:18-20, Paul warned against those who set their minds on earthly things.

“For, as I have often told you before and now tell you again even with tears, many live as enemies of the cross of Christ. Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is set on earthly things. But our citizenship is in heaven.”

As citizens of God's kingdom of peace, they were to set their minds on the things of God. *Whatever was true, noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable, excellent, or praiseworthy.* Those were the thoughts of people at peace with God.

This practice might be one of Paul's most timely truths for us today. In 2026, we can fill every millisecond of our day with news, music, podcasts, books, movies, sports, and the never-ending scroll of social media. Not all of it is bad. Some of it is even very good. But this constant barrage of information and noise can quickly fill our minds and drown out the voice of God and his promise of peace.

And so it's incredibly important that we are deliberate and intentional in cultivating what fills our minds—following the example of Paul, who devoted his life to following Jesus. Regular prayer and Bible reading, worship, and fellowship with other believers all bring us closer to the God of peace. And as we come to know and love Him, He will fill us with His perfect peace.

Reflection Questions:

Consider your daily habits and practices. Are they helping you experience God's peace, or are they stealing your joy? What changes might you need to make to ensure that your mind is set on the things of God?

Finally, take with you these words from Isaiah 26:3

*You will keep in perfect peace
those whose minds are steadfast,
because they trust in you.*