

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

Wednesday, July 22, 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

Today we again turn to Philippians 4. Take a moment to read these encouraging words aloud.

Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

A few years ago, we planted new trees along the driveway from our house to our dairy. We specifically chose to plant male Chinese Pistache because we wanted to experience their beautiful fall colors.

Last fall, my husband came home from work down that driveway. It had been a long week; he was not feeling well, and he was tired and distracted. I asked him if he had noticed that the leaves on our new trees were bursting with vibrant red and orange fall colors. He looked over at the driveway and was quiet for a moment. Then he said, "I have driven past those trees a dozen times today and never even noticed. I just needed to open my eyes and see what was right in front of me."

How often isn't this true about God and the peace that He promises? It's so easy to miss what's right in front of us.

That is why we need to pray. Prayer invites us into the presence of God. It opens our eyes to "God with us" and helps us to see Him.

Prayer forces us to slow down and to be still. And in the stillness, we have the chance to acknowledge the troubles that fill our lives.

"Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God." (Philippians 4:6)

God invites us to bring every situation to Him—this is our privilege as his people. God already knows our requests, but he wants us to bring them to Him **so that we know that He knows**.

Prayer is an invitation to unburden ourselves. To bring our limitations to our limitless God. When we get our fears and worries off our chest and out of our mind, they lose their power in the face of God.

I don't know about you, but my anxieties tend to amp up in the middle of the night. For some reason, my mind seems to think that's the best time to go through all the worst-case scenarios. I'm sure many of you can relate. But I am learning to see those times as opportunities to put Philippians 4:6 into practice.

Confessing my fears to God, who has all the power and authority over every situation, reminds me that He already knows the outcome and that He will be with me every step of the way. My pastor calls this "borrowing tomorrow's hope for today."

We are to bring our prayers with thanksgiving. Gratitude takes our eyes off of ourselves and puts them back onto God. When we recount all the ways he has been faithful, when we list how he is providing for our needs, and when we remember that our very salvation has come from Him, we find His comfort and assurance.

We find God's peace. His Shalom.

And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Philippians 4:7)

This is not a peace dependent on answered prayers or positive outcomes. But a peace that comes from recognizing the presence of God, even in the midst of the most difficult and trying times. This peace guards our hearts and minds against the cycle of worry and fear that's our natural human tendency. It's a peace that literally goes to battle for us.

Regular prayer, bringing both our requests and our gratitude to God, is vital to knowing the peace of God.

I encourage you to end your time today in prayer:

*Lord, I come; I confess
Bowing here, I find my rest
Without You, I fall apart
You're the one that guides my heart*

*Lord, I need You; oh, I need You
Every hour, I need You
My one defense, my righteousness
Oh God, how I need You*

(Matt Maher)