

January 20

Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV) ⁶Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. ⁷And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. **Isaiah 26:3 (NIV)** ³You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you.

We were enjoying the holidays when we began to hear news that COVID was once again closing in. Before long, one friend after another tested positive. This affected the school and church. Then, I had a new doctor's appointment that resulted in more tests being ordered to determine what was going on. We received a cost-of-living increase in Social Security, but that was wiped out by the rising inflation that has not stopped yet. In addition, health issues continued to make themselves known at random intervals. All these concerns battled for attention throughout the day.

Paul understood anxieties. At one point, he was the major cause of those anxieties as he hunted followers of Jesus Christ. He knew what awaited those who proclaimed Jesus as the Christ. Therefore, his words carry great weight because he is speaking from experience. To avoid being overwhelmed by the anxieties that seem to find us daily, Paul tells us we are to keep our minds steadfast on the Lord. To do this, we take every anxiety and turn it into a prayer, a conversation with the Lord. Like David, we are to be honest and share our feelings and concerns. We make our requests known, but we do not stop there. We also give thanks. In every situation, His faithfulness will give rise to our thankfulness. COVID. Yes, it is spreading, but I can thank Him for healing the sick and for those who care for us. More Health Tests. I can thank Him for meeting every health need in my life, for leading me to good doctors, for medicines that have brought healing, for His comfort when I was concerned, and for His being with me now, for amazing friends, etc. Finances. I can thank Him over and over that since we began tithing, we have never been wanting. I can thank Him that today will be no different. After giving thanks, the anxiety is replaced by His peace that cannot be explained but is very real and by His faithfulness that never waivers.