

Hello Salem!

The Salem elders are in the process of revitalizing the 'Elder's Corner'. We plan to make it a monthly communication. It is meant to be a glimpse into recent activities of the elders, with encouragement, prayer requests and updates. This month I couldn't help but turn my gaze on what the world has been going through, and how that relates to our faith.

Earlier this summer, I was optimistic 'to see that the Covid 19 pandemic was getting better, businesses were gaining steam and people were generally enthusiastic about getting life back to 'normal'. Then more bad news, a new variant, many Salem attenders impacted by death and disease, political divides, racial tensions, and social media rants. If I had to describe the last few years in a word, it would be '*heartbreaking*'. However, I know the world has seen hardships before and will see them again. The only thing certain seems to be uncertainty about what is coming next!

In John 16:33 Jesus says "in this world you will have trouble, but **TAKE HEART!** I have overcome the world."

Also reflect on the Beatitudes.

Matt. 5 1-"Blessed are the **poor in spirit**,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

⁴ Blessed are **those who mourn**,
for they will be comforted.

⁵ Blessed are the **meek**,
for they will inherit the earth.

⁶ Blessed are those **who hunger and thirst for righteousness**,
for they will be filled.

⁷ Blessed are the **merciful**,
for they will be shown mercy.

⁸ Blessed are the **pure in heart**,
for they will see God.

⁹ Blessed are the **peacemakers**,
for they will be called children of God.

¹⁰ Blessed **are those who are persecuted because of righteousness**,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

¹¹ "Blessed are **you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me.** ¹² Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.

As you can see, this is not at all unexpected--we will have trouble, no doubt about it.

However, take heart! We have the good news!" Jesus came to serve the brokenhearted. His death and resurrection paid our debts FULLY AND COMPLETELY! We are FREE! Strive to keep that in your heart and mind as you face the days ahead, and freely teach it to others. Ask God for opportunities to help spread the GOOD NEWS! Ask Him to put others in your path that need to know Him and give you the opportunity to connect with them.

This weekend, the Salem elders will be on a retreat. (Sept. 10-11) Please pray for refreshment, rest for our spirits, unity and discernment as we discuss church matters and pray together. Also pray that our minds are clear of any personal troubles as we each strive to draw closer to Him.

Thank you always for the prayers,
Daryl H.