

February

Salem Family,

Philippians 4:6-7 is a familiar passage to many. I was thinking about this passage again recently in my “cave time” and had some fresh ideas about it.

“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.” Philippians 4:6-7(NIV)

The peace of God is a very desirable thing. I certainly feel a desire and a need for that peace. The passage states that this peace comes “in Christ Jesus”, in a life-giving relationship with God through his Son. The passage also states that this peace can be experienced as we are in meaningful communication with God; praying, thanking him, asking him for things we need or care about.

I thought about my role as a university professor and about my anxious students who don’t know how much I want them to succeed and who are afraid to bother me when they don’t understand something. If and when they finally ask for help, I help them and it is often remarkable to see how their anxiety simply evaporates! They leave my office both grateful and at peace. It’s one of those rewarding moments for a teacher.

I put myself in my students' place and thought about how I often don't bring my concerns and anxieties to my God who loves me more than I can imagine. If I can help my students as much as I do with my marginally greater understanding of chemistry than theirs, how much more can God give me his peace, which transcends all understanding, if I bring my concerns and requests to him.

In the days ahead, may we bring our requests to God and may we experience the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, and which will guard our hearts and our minds in Christ Jesus.

In other news from the elders, we recently received the final update on how Salem finished 2021 financially. We are thanking God for the many cheerful and generous givers in our fellowship who enabled us to end the year \$4000 dollars in the black! While we did not meet our budgeted giving goal, spending was less than giving and that's how we ended up in the black. More information about our current financial needs will be forthcoming shortly but we wanted to let you know about this good news for the end of 2021 and to take this opportunity to thank God and to thank you!

Gary Edverson