

Paradox of Peace

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (Philippians 4:6-7 ESV)

“Will you pray for me?” How often do we hear this question and pause to lift an individual or situation to the Lord? Sometimes the circumstances are dire, other times it is just the mundane crush of busy lives that drives us to ask each other for prayer.

I have been puzzling over this concept of peace that God gives us in the midst of the storms of life. We ask for prayer. We pray for ourselves. We pray for others. We feel burdened to pray. And then we hear how God has answered. A lonely, fatherless young adult is placed within a family. A woman in cardiac arrest makes it across mountain passes to the hospital, where the surgeon meets her at the door. A discouraged heart is encouraged, though the gray of depression resides. The grieving soul feels the presence of peace and the prayers of the saints. We see God sustain us through our suffering, and He draws us ever closer to Him. In our shared need, He also draws us closer to one another.

How marvelous to think that our Father has knit us together and has equipped us to share in each other’s sufferings!

Over a hurried lunch today I ran into a colleague who asked me to pray. Our conversation was fleeting, unexpected, providential. It quickly turned to the working of the Holy Spirit, the prayers of the Body of Christ, and unexplainable peace. It is a mystery how God brings peace in tumult, and I rejoice at His quiet work that is paradoxical to the rage of the storms in our world.

He brings peace, stills the anxious heart, and gives us joy. As I think about the pressures we face in librarianship, it seems of great importance to remember to pray, to believe, and to be assured that Christ Jesus will secure our hearts and minds.

God may not answer in the way we hope. He may not answer in the time we allot, but He will most assuredly give us peace.

But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid (John 14:26-27 ESV).



—Andrea Abernathy

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