

The Peace that Eludes Us



A few years ago, a coworker humorously showed our team a picture that reminded her of me. It was of a squirrel looking intense, with his paws raised up. It seemed to portray a sense of agitation—that he was about to blow. It reminded her of me because when I am interrupted while dealing with an immediate problem, my tendency is to respond in a somewhat stressed manner. After laughing together, I started calling myself “Old Squirrel Hands.” It caught on.

All of us deal with stress in our lives. For some it comes from serious circumstances such as illness, job loss, or relationship problems. For others, it is simply caused by the everyday stuff that doesn’t seem to be going our way.

As believers, we know we are supposed to walk in peace. But it often eludes us in the nitty-gritty of life. That response must have been common in every era of humankind. For sure it was in Paul’s day, as he had to remind the Philippian believers: “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” (Phil. 4:6–7).

There is a huge connection between prayer and peace!

I have recently been struck and challenged on this topic because over the summer I worked on a new book by Dave Butts entitled *Prayer, Peace and the Presence of God: A 30-Day Journey to Experience the Shalom of Jesus*. We released it in September.

Dave had wanted to write a book on this topic for some time, as he believes many believers struggle with the ability to always appropriate what they have in Christ, and to walk every day in that peace.

But ten days into starting the project, Dave learned that he has a rare form of lymphoma—and he was already at stage IV. He was at death's door! Talk about a peace robber. But God was allowing Dave to live out what he was teaching others to do. Dave often wrote portions of his book from a hospital bed. Dave and his wife Kim experienced the peace of Jesus in powerful ways throughout this trying time. (Read Dave's story on page 20.)

I have never used this column to point toward one of our resources. But I must *highly recommend* this book to you and to your friends. I have worked on eight previous books of Dave's, and this is by far the best, most powerful book he has written. Formatted as a 30-day devotional, *Prayer, Peace and the Presence of God* can alter how you walk through life. Its format also makes it a great resource for an entire congregation to pray together.

You can get this book through prayershop.org, or through normal book purchasing sites/stores. It is also available as an ebook. You won't be disappointed. The shalom of Jesus does not need to elude you.

—Jonathan Graf