

Wednesday, April 15, 2020
Devotional Thoughts from Pastor Jim Murr...

"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)

WHAT I CAN CONTROL

If there's one thing that a wise person will learn from the experience of this pandemic, it's that there is very little that we can control. I can't control the weather ... we woke up to snow this morning in West Dundee! Although there are those in our country who weren't able to control the tornadoes that ravaged their towns and homes, so I guess I shouldn't complain about a little snow! I can't control everything about my health. I can't control the fact that a pandemic has taken over life for the time-being. I can't control when the pandemic will no longer be a pandemic.

A lack of control is what often creates anxiety. I have said in the past that "worry and anxiety is my failed attempt to be God." A long time ago I was told that the only thing I can control is my own attitude. I'm not so sure that that is even true.

There is one thing I do believe you and I can control ... and that is, whether or not I pray. I can also control HOW OFTEN I pray. I can even control WHAT I pray. What a gift God has given to us – the gift of prayer! Prayer reminds me that I can't control life. But I can turn my anxiety over to the One who does control everything. And His Word tells me that when I do that, He gives me peace in exchange for my prayer. When I pray, He turns anxiety into peace. I think this is partly because I have put my trust in the One Who does control everything. But I also think I am given peace because I stop trying to be God, or at least I stop regretting the fact that I am not God.

You are in control of your prayer life. You can control how many times you will pray today. You can control whether or not you remove all other distractions while you do pray, even if only for 5 minutes. You can control what you pray. Maybe your prayer can be for an end to this pandemic. That would be a good prayer! Maybe your prayer can be that God would draw you closer to Himself because of the conditions of life right now. We can certainly pray for those who are fighting this battle on the front lines. We can pray that God would give us unprecedented wisdom as we consider the fragility of life in this world.

Whatever your need or concern is right now, you are invited to "let your requests be made known to God." And when you do that, He will change your anxiety into peace.

God's peace!
Pastor Jim