

CHANGE YOUR LIFE. CHANGE YOUR WORLD.

activated

Vol 18 • Issue 5

THE PEACE OF GOD

It can be yours!

Stressed Out

7 solutions from the Bible

Riding the Wave

The magic of praise



EDITOR'S INTRODUCTION THE MOST SIGNIFICANT DECISION

An American shoe representative was sent to a remote region of Africa. Before long, he wired the home office: "Selling shoes in this part of the world is pointless! Nobody here *wears* shoes!"

He returned home, and the manufacturer sent another representative. This one wired back order after order. "Everybody in this part of the world *needs* shoes!" he explained.

Both sales representatives encountered the same situation, but their different perspectives or attitudes brought different results.

That story may be apocryphal, but it's a great introduction to this issue of *Activated*.

In the midst of personal and professional pressures, it's hard to maintain a positive attitude 100% of the time. I think most of us believe we're at least generally positive, but if we asked our best friend or spouse for an honest assessment, would they agree?

The Bible teaches that attitude isn't something we're given or born with. A healthy, positive attitude must be cultivated and developed from within. It can't be bought. It can't be manufactured. It doesn't rely on outside influences, such as friends, family, teachers, bosses, coworkers, or the media. It begins with a decision—one that God's Word invites us to make:

"Fix your thoughts on what is true and good and right. Think about things that are pure and lovely, and dwell on the fine, good things in others. Think about all you can praise God for and be glad about."¹

Let's choose each day and every day to keep an attitude of faith and joy and belief and compassion.

Samuel Keating
Executive Editor

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1. Philippians 4:8 TLB



ISLAND MEMORIES

BY SALLY GARCÍA

ABOUT 30 YEARS AGO, my husband Gabriel and I had just welcomed our daughter into the world. At the time we lived on a mountaintop overlooking a lush valley on a beautiful tropical island in the Caribbean. Gabriel had his dream job working with musicians on a musical radio program. The valley was uncomfortably hot, but because of the elevation, there was a constant breeze where we lived that made the weather idyllic.

Unfortunately, a lot of the time, I wasn't happy. I guess, even in paradise, you can find poison ivy. So in later years, whenever I would think of the time spent living on that tropical mountaintop paradise, it would leave a sour taste in my mouth. A gray cloud would overshadow my memories.

Until one day Gabriel and I met up with one of the musicians who had participated in the radio program. "Those were the best two years of my life!" he mused. As we shared stories and memories, I was astonished! He remembered things from an entirely different perspective. I decided at that moment that I wanted *his* memories instead of *mine*.

That gray cloud that obscured my memories was made up of tiny details, trivial things, all in the past and of no importance to my life now. Yet this cloud had cast a gloomy shadow over all the wonderful details of that time. That very day I resolved to let go of my petty complaints and to focus instead on the incredible experiences that had made our island adventure unique.

We cannot change our past. We cannot change the fact that people act in a certain way. We cannot change the inevitable. The only thing we can do is play on the one string we have, and that is our attitude.

—Charles R. Swindoll (b. 1934)

This experience taught me that—like in school—we remember best what we review the most. I hadn't realized that I could make such a definite decision to let go of my negative thoughts. They didn't have to be given free rein in my mind.

When I count my many blessings and think of all the good experiences I enjoyed there, the unpleasant memories seem inconsequential. In the end, I realized they had just been a part of living.

And you might be wondering what those things were that had so bothered me. To be honest, I can't even remember now!

SALLY GARCÍA IS AN EDUCATOR, MISSIONARY, AND MEMBER OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL IN CHILE. ■

JOY, FULFILLMENT, HAPPINESS

BY PETER AMSTERDAM, ADAPTED

WE ALL HAVE MANY OPPORTUNITIES AND POSSIBILITIES TO MOVE FORWARD IN OUR FAITH, our relationships, our work, our inner lives, and more. Of course, making progress in any area requires determination, discipline, effort, sacrifice, and hard work, but the results are worth it.

I believe that joy, fulfillment, and happiness are intrinsically connected to being strongly attached to God. This doesn't mean that we are focused on God alone, that we are on our knees praying during all our waking hours, or that we're "so heavenly minded that we're no earthly good," as the saying goes. We each have God-given responsibilities that need to be attended to. We're to care for ourselves and our family and loved ones, and to fulfill the duties of our work or calling, all of which involve a myriad of details each day.

Living a life that is strongly attached to God is living a life in relationship with Him. It's inviting Him into the daily details of our lives, our responsibilities, our family, our relationships with friends and coworkers. It's allowing Him to be an integral part of our lives.

It's in this interactive relationship with God that we find joy, fulfillment, and happiness. When we live in partnership with Him, we let Him use us for His purpose, and doing so places us in the path of His blessings.

Unfortunately, however, we may often find ourselves on "autopilot" in our relationship with God, where we go about our lives with Him seemingly hovering in the background. He's there, and when we feel the need for Him, we ask for His help or guidance. But that's not the kind of relationship that allows Him to have the role He desires in our lives. He's not our "cosmic bellhop," at our beck and call to clean up our messes or make our wishes materialize. He wants—and deserves—to be an active partner in the business of our lives, and the more we partner with Him, the more we benefit from that partnership.

A key component in this partnership is being available *to Him* and *for Him*. *To Him*, in the sense of being sensitive to when He wants to communicate with us, and being available to listen to what He has to say. *For Him*, in the sense that we open ourselves to being agents of His purpose in the lives of others, acting as a means for Him to communicate with others who aren't yet in relationship with Him.

1. Matthew 6:10 NLT





Making ourselves available to God requires intentionality on our part. We consciously decide that we're going to be attuned to God, that we will give Him opportunity to communicate with us—by making time for Him, by seeking out a quiet place, and quieting our inner selves so that we are in the right frame of mind to listen to Him. We make ourselves spiritually available to hear whatever He may want to say to us or show us. We also make ourselves available in a practical sense by being determined to let His Spirit use us as His representatives to others. It's through our lives, our love, our examples, our words and witness, that others can be introduced to Him and brought into the orbit of His love.

Our spiritual and practical availability is our declaration to God that He is a full partner in our lives and we want His involvement in all we do. It's an open invitation for the Holy Spirit to not just dwell within us but to actively engage in our thoughts and actions. Of course, such an invitation has repercussions. When God's Spirit connects with those who have made themselves available, the Spirit moves in their lives. Things happen, opportunities arise.

When we've truly made ourselves available *to Him*, we are open to receive His guidance and direction. When we are available *for Him*, we follow His leading, as He directs us in ways which are in alignment with His purpose, where He can use our gifts and talents to be a blessing to others—whether our personal family, those we work with, or complete strangers. While being open to and accepting whatever guidance He may give might not always immediately result in the outcomes *we* are hoping for, it does put us on the path to fulfilling the purpose *He* intends.

Making ourselves available to and for God is a manifestation of His reign in our lives. It's the application of what Jesus expressed when He said to pray, "May your Kingdom come soon. May your will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."¹ Our availability aligns us with God's will, reign, and Spirit. It's within this alignment with our God, Creator, and Savior that we find satisfaction and experience well-being and contentment.

PETER AMSTERDAM AND HIS WIFE, MARIA FONTAINE, ARE DIRECTORS OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL, A CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY OF FAITH. ■





The Joy-Filled Life

BY MILA NATALIYA A. GOVORUKHA

THE DISCOURAGEMENT WAS OVERWHELMING AND GROWING BY THE MINUTE. So many things were coming at her; possibilities were expiring; problems were piling up.

Teaching is never an easy job. And it's the most difficult at the beginning and end of the school year—this was the last week. One of her favorite classes didn't do well in the year-end exams. Had she failed?

She got paid per lesson, and because of the two-week break, she'd only get half her usual salary this month. Then one of the students she was giving private lessons to called to say he was quitting. *This will be a tight month*, she thought, feeling sorry for herself.

As she walked out, she thought of her upcoming birthday party, which she was no longer looking forward to as much. Some people she was hoping would attend had let her know they couldn't make it. And both her

sons were living in other countries. Her nose began tickling—a sign of tears threatening to overflow.

As she waited at the bus stop, her thoughts wandered to her own exams less than a week away and how unprepared she felt.

It was drizzling; the bus was late. It finally arrived, but soon got stuck in traffic, and the ride home took twice as long as usual. She wanted to call her sister, but her phone was dead. What a day!

The last straw was the electricity bill slipped under her door. It was larger than expected.

She dropped on the couch and cried. She was upset at the problems, at the situation, at her loneliness, but also at letting herself fall into depression and self-pity. She quietly prayed the simplest shortest prayer that always worked. *"Please, Jesus, do something!"*

The rain stopped. She could hear the birds. The wind blew in the

fragrance of blossoming lilacs. That felt like the first break she'd gotten all day. She decided to play a gratitude game that she'd played countless times with her boys.

"Thank You for my sons who are happy and healthy." Both boys brought her so much joy.

"Thank You that I have a place to live." She felt better already.

"Thank You for Your supply," she mumbled, making her favorite tea.

"Thank You for the magic of music!" She browsed through her favorite playlist.

She looked out the window and was struck by the bright colors of one of the most beautiful sunsets she'd seen. Her heart felt grateful. Her soul was rejoicing, as she was reminded that life was filled with joys, both big and small.

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ZERO CREDITS, FULL BENEFIT

BY ELSA SICHROVSKY



AS A COLLEGE FRESHMAN, one of the things I disliked the most was required, zero-credit Physical Education (PE) classes. At my university, undergraduate students were required to take four consecutive semesters of PE. I hated the feeling of working for nothing.

In addition, I was truly out of my element at PE. My first course was an elementary badminton class. My teacher smiled at my first shots, and I sensed the smile was one of humor rather than admiration. I would have much rather spent the time poring over a textbook or writing reports, instead of sweating as I tried to master basic maneuvers most of the other students were adept at.

That year, I was bemoaning my plight to a friend of mine, a middle-aged woman who'd never had the chance to go to college. When she

heard my groaning, she blurted out, "Why are you complaining? Many people have to pay lots of money to learn badminton with a professional coach! And you can do it every week as part of your studies? I'm envious!"

I just stared at her, too shocked to come up with a response. To her, the PE course, which was the bane of my college life, was a special boon that she envied! I realized I could go on childishly whining through my two years of PE, or I could get off my proverbial sofa in the library and build some muscles. Rather than focusing on the fact that I was not going to get any credit for those courses, I could focus on the fact that PE class gave me the opportunity to learn a sport from a professional.

My friend's remark prompted me to examine my responses to other unappealing aspects of college life—the cafeteria menu, my professors' evaluation systems, the

early-morning exams—and I found, to my embarrassment, that my complaints stemmed from a deeper lack of trust in God's love for me and His perfect wisdom. I couldn't apply Paul's admonition to "Give thanks in all circumstances"¹ until I learned to see every annoyance as a jewel of God's love in disguise.

By the end of the semester, I had not only picked up basic badminton skills, I had also improved my hand-eye coordination and physical endurance in general. Most importantly, I had become more conscious of the times when I get stuck on unattractive wrapping and miss the gift. As the German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe said, "It is not doing the thing we like to do, but liking the thing we have to do, that makes life blessed."

ELSA SICHROVSKY IS A FREELANCE WRITER. SHE LIVES WITH HER FAMILY IN TAIWAN. ■

1. 1 Thessalonians 5:18 NIV



STRESSED OUT

BY MARIE STORY

I HAVE A SIX-YEAR-OLD NEPHEW WHO LOVES VIDEO GAMES. The other day I was sitting with him while he was playing a racing game on his Wii. The levels were getting progressively more difficult, the speed was faster, and the courses were more hazardous. I could see him becoming more and more stressed—his face was turning red, his hands were getting sweaty, and he couldn't stay in his seat.

Finally, it got to be too much for him. He burst into tears and yelled, "I can't take it anymore! I'm just too stressed out!" All of a sudden,

this game that he had been enjoying became sheer misery. I had a little chuckle at his dramatic outburst, then turned off the TV for a bit so he could take a break.

The very next day, I felt like yelling too. Several big projects came in at once, and deadlines were tight. I usually enjoy my work, but I felt the pressure building up and I wanted to yell, "I just can't take it anymore!" I didn't burst into tears, and I didn't throw a tantrum, but I sure did feel like it.

Stress is the body's reaction to a change that requires a physical, mental, or emotional response. Life is a delicate balance, and while some stress is natural and can be healthy, too much pressure in any area can produce negative effects, such as trouble sleeping, withdrawal, emotional instability, and health issues. The longer you wait and allow it to build, the more hazardous it can be.

So what are some ways to deal with stress? Well, stress isn't a new

development—it's a problem that's been around for ages. Because of that, the Bible is full of solutions. Here are some important ones:

TALK WITH SOMEONE

The apostle Paul tells us to "Bear one another's burdens."¹ Others may not be able to solve your problem, but often just being able to unload your troubles to a listening ear can be a tremendous relief. And many times, once you've talked it out, your problems don't seem so formidable anymore and you can tackle them without feeling stressed or overloaded.

BREAK DOWN GOALS INTO SMALLER CHUNKS

If we're under too much pressure, it could be because we're trying to tackle too much at once. Jesus tells us that His yoke (or workload) is easy, and His burden is light.² So if your burden is too heavy, maybe you need to set some of it down for a while.

1. Galatians 6:2 ESV
2. See Matthew 11:28–30.
3. Luke 14:28 CEV
4. Matthew 6:34 NLT
5. 1 Corinthians 6:19–20 CEV
6. NIV
7. Matthew 11:28 NIV
8. Psalm 55:22 NIV
9. 1 Peter 5:7 NIV
10. Hebrews 4:15 NASB



SET REALISTIC GOALS

If you or others can't meet your expectations, maybe you haven't thought them through enough. "Suppose one of you wants to build a tower. What is the first thing you will do? Won't you sit down and figure out how much it will cost and if you have enough money to pay for it?"³

FOCUS ON THINGS YOU CAN CONTROL

Jesus tells us, "Don't worry about tomorrow."⁴ There's enough to think about today without stressing over stuff in the future. And "tomorrow" isn't just talking about the day after today—it means anything you don't have control over. If you can't do anything about it, just trust that God will help you handle it when the time comes.

TAKE CARE OF YOURSELF PHYSICALLY

Often when everything's piling up, personal care is the first thing you cut out. But that's the opposite

of what you should be doing. If you're eating well, getting enough sleep, and exercising, you'll feel better physically, which will help you to face challenges with more confidence and energy. Paul explained: "You surely know that your body is a temple where the Holy Spirit lives. The Spirit is in you and is a gift from God. You are no longer your own. . . . So use your body to honor God."⁵

TAKE BREAKS

Proverbs 17:22 tells us that "a cheerful heart is good medicine."⁶ Sometimes all you need when you're stressed is a little break. Taking time to rest and relax will help to clear your head, and you'll come back to your task refreshed, happier, and more focused.

TAKE TIME WITH JESUS EACH DAY

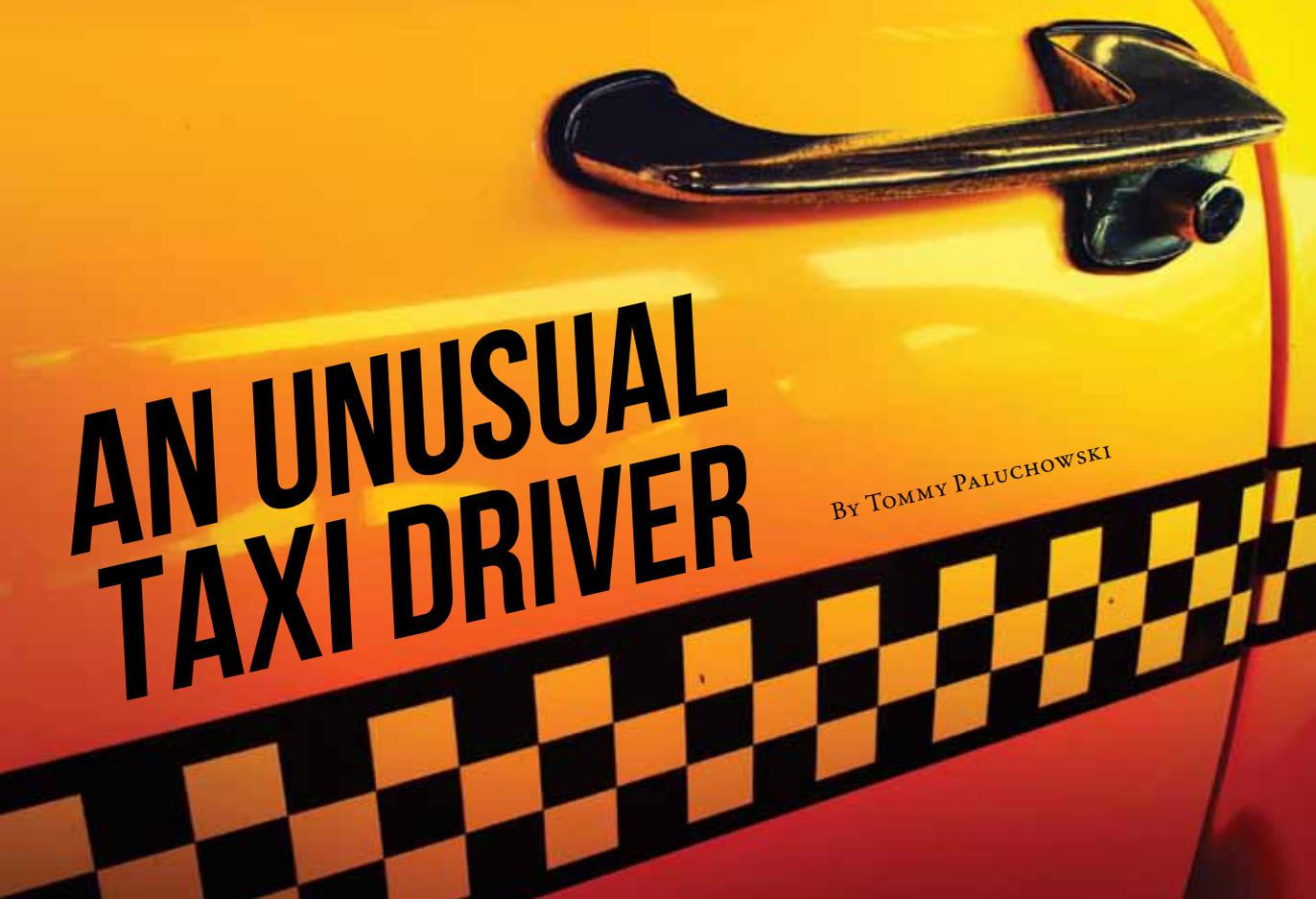
Jesus says, "Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest."⁷

King David, who faced extreme stress in his life, advises us: "Cast your

cares on the Lord, and he will sustain you."⁸ Peter also tells us to "cast all your anxiety on [God], because he cares for you."⁹ Talk to Jesus about your troubles and ask Him for His solutions and advice. He has promised an easy yoke, so if yours is too heavy, He can show you how to lighten it.

Remember that Jesus understands the pressures you're facing. "We do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are."¹⁰ As you take your cares and concerns to Jesus, He'll give you the strength to handle each task and responsibility—without getting stressed.

MARIE STORY LIVES IN SAN ANTONIO, USA, WHERE SHE WORKS AS A FREELANCE ILLUSTRATOR AND VOLUNTEERS AS A COUNSELOR AT A LOCAL HOMELESS SHELTER. ■



AN UNUSUAL TAXI DRIVER

By TOMMY PALUCHOWSKI

RING, RING, RING... My cell phone interrupted my Internet browsing.

“Sir, we have found the problem with your vehicle. You can come now and pick up the broken part as a sample to buy a replacement,” the cheerful voice on the other side informed me.

“Already?” I asked.

“Yes, and if you come down now, we might finish working on your car today.”

“I’m on my way,” I said, trying to sound upbeat.

In reality, I was annoyed with this interruption to my plans. I had woken up very early to beat the morning traffic and driven a long distance from one end of town to the industrial

area on the other end. Then I had walked to the nearest shopping mall, where I had done some quick shopping. Finally, I had ordered breakfast and was looking forward to relaxing and enjoying the free Internet service provided to the customers of the café.

Most importantly, though, I was hoping to take it easy. I have Parkinson’s disease, and the tremors had already started. The best way to make my tremors cease is to take short breaks throughout the day. It seemed there was no time for that right now.

Trying to stay calm, I paid my bill and gathered my belongings.

“Taxi?” shouted a man from his car, when he saw me exiting the mall.

He was parked strategically, at the spot closest to the main entrance. I was

a bit surprised that he only stuck his head out without coming out of his vehicle. Besides, wasn’t this parking space reserved for disabled drivers?

We proceeded to negotiate a price that seemed fair to both of us.

When I opened the back door I saw a crutch lying on the back seat. I placed my shopping next to it and sat in front.

After starting the engine, the driver promptly reached out for the second crutch, which was neatly placed by his right-hand side. Skillfully, with his right hand he placed the crutch on the acceleration pedal, pushing it down. The car moved out of the parking spot, and we were on our way.

Surprised, I looked closer at the

I had the blues
Because I had no shoes
Until upon the street,
I met a man who had no feet.
—Attributed to Denis Waitley (b. 1933)

Cheerfulness, it would appear, is a matter which depends
fully as much on the state of things within, as on the state
of things without and around us.
—Charlotte Brontë (1816–1855)

It takes no more time to see the good side of life than to see
the bad.
—Jimmy Buffett (b. 1946)

I think that is a better thing than thanksgiving: thanks-
living. How is this to be done? By a general cheerfulness
of manner, by an obedience to the command of Him by
whose mercy we live, by a perpetual, constant delighting
of ourselves in the Lord.
—Charles Spurgeon (1834–1892)

driver's legs. His right leg was missing from the knee down.

He is a one-legged driver! I told my startled self. But there were more surprises in store.

We were coming to a red traffic light. To stop the car, the driver lifted up his left leg with his left hand and swiftly placed it on the brake pedal. Then the light turned green again, and the taxi driver, with his left hand, removed his leg from the brake while at the same time pressing the acceleration pedal with the crutch in his right hand. His movements were well coordinated, and the car moved smoothly in the morning traffic.

As I sat there digesting what I saw, I heard, "Excuse me, sir. Do you mind if I ask you something?"

"No, not at all. Go ahead," I answered.

"Do you go to church?"

"I am saved. Thank you for asking." I admired him for doing his best to be a witness with the opportunities he had. "Can I ask you a question?"

"Yes," was his friendly answer.

"How long have you been a taxi driver?"

"Three years," was his short reply.

Then, realizing what I was after, the taxi driver continued, "I didn't want to end up begging on the street, because there's no future in that and I have a family to support. Besides, a man has to have some respect, or he can't live with himself."

How quickly my life came into focus. I was complaining about my

little tremors due to my illness and my interrupted schedule for the day, while here was a man who hadn't let his misfortune interrupt his life. I felt so very blessed all of a sudden. I could walk unaided. I had just finished a good breakfast. I could afford a taxi ride. My vehicle was being worked on, and hopefully I would have it back the same day. I had it easy.

Just then the short ride was over and we reached the garage. "Thank you! God bless you! And keep it up!" I said to the taxi driver.

It's a wonderful life, my heart sang.

TOMMY PALUCHOWSKI CAME TO KNOW JESUS IN 1984, AND HAS BEEN A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY INTERNATIONAL SINCE. ■



NOTHING TO FEAR

BY KOOS STENGER

MY WORST FEARS CAME UPON ME THE DAY I LANDED IN THE HOSPITAL. I dreaded entering the huge, ominous health factory, where impersonal doctors would study my symptoms with a distant professional look, and nurses would appear at my bedside at the strangest hours to stick me with a thermometer, an injection, or a cup of weak coffee.

God, get me out of here!

Don't worry, He answered.

How can you say that? I hate it here!

I was certain God had me mistaken for somebody else. I didn't belong in this place. Why me?

Don't worry, God said again. *I am with you all the time.*

All the time?

Yes, son. All the time!

That thought gave me some peace. I lay back on the bed and tried to relax. But I was still a bit worried. I still felt nervous when a new doctor

appeared and narrowed his eyes as he looked at my charts.

Nurses still stuck thermometers in my mouth. They still poked my arm with their needles first thing in the morning, but I saw God smiling too.

It's all right, son. I told you, I am with you.

And it helped. There was a peace. Not the kind you feel when you sit on a bench near a beautiful mountain lake listening to the birds sing praises to the Creator. Still, there was a peace, and maybe, in some strange way, that peace was even better than when sitting in front of a lake.

Apparently others saw it too.

The day I left the hospital, a man I had never seen before came up to me.

"Can I talk to you?" he asked.

I raised my brows. "Sure."

"You're a believer, right?"

"Why would you say that?"

"Two weeks ago, I was brought in for an emergency. I was going on holiday, but instead I ended up in the hospital. I was seriously considering jumping out the window. Then I saw you."

What's so good about that? I wondered.

"You were so peaceful. You had no stress. I wondered why, but then I saw a Bible near your bedside. Then I knew—God is with me. There's nothing to fear."

He shook my hands and thanked me profusely for helping him.

Helping him? I had done nothing of the sort. I had been preoccupied with battling my own fears.

But then I heard God again: *I told you, I am with you all the time. There's nothing to fear.*

KOOS STENGER IS A FREELANCE WRITER IN THE NETHERLANDS. ■





RIDING THE WAVE

BY PAOLO ALLELUIA

IT WAS ONE OF THOSE MORNINGS when you wake up and get barraged with one piece of bad news after another. Everything that can go wrong does, and there seems to be no end to this downward spiral. To top things off, my wife was away on a trip, and things are always worse when she's not around. Even as I embarked on the day, I was already feeling overwhelmed and discouraged.

Then our van's motor started making a strange loud noise. Over the past little while, there'd been one breakdown after another. One problem would get fixed, only for something else to break. I started thinking how I couldn't count on this van anymore, and it was turning into a bottomless pit that devoured time, money, and energy.

Once my mind gets on a negative wavelength, the worst thing I can

do is start listening to it, as I did that morning. As the day progressed, everything seemed to get bleaker and more miserable. I was unhappy about pretty much everything.

It was in this frame of mind that I reluctantly took the van to a car service. While the mechanic worked on it and I had some time alone, I remembered the story about playing the glad game—trying to name the good things in your life when you are feeling sad. So I decided to give it a try and started counting my blessings. At first, I felt like I was forcing myself to come up with things to say. But as I continued, more things came to mind, and eventually I began to feel genuinely grateful to God for His goodness and blessings.

And then suddenly something magical happened: like a sea wave washes away rocks and debris that

have built up on the seashore, a wave of joy overwhelmed me, washing away all the negativity and sadness. My heart and mind were filled with peace, contentment, and joy. My day was completely turned around!

It's only later on that I realized that nothing had actually changed in my physical circumstances. I was still at the mechanic's with a broken van, and my wife was still away. But suddenly, none of that really had any impact on my happiness. I became keenly aware of how content and happy I was with my life and everything in it. I experienced the magic of gratitude that can turn a miserable day into a joyful one.

PAOLO ALLELUIA LIVES IN CROATIA, WHERE HE HAS BEEN ACTIVE IN VOLUNTEER AND HUMANITARIAN WORK SINCE 1994. ■

POINTS TO PONDER

THE PEACE OF GOD

INNER PEACE

THE PEACE OF GOD, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus.—*Philippians 4:7*



If we have not quiet in our minds, outward comfort will do no more for us than a golden slipper on a gouty foot.—*John Bunyan (1628–1688)*



Peace comes not from the absence of trouble, but from the presence of God.—*Unknown*

1. See Mark 4:35–41.
2. Quotes attributed to Jesus but not followed by Bible references are excerpts of personal messages that individuals received from Jesus while in prayer.
3. Matthew 22:39
4. Proverbs 14:26
5. Revelation 3:20 NIV

Our daily lives can easily become filled with stress, pressure, and confusion. But we can stop at any moment and slip away into the presence of God's Spirit through prayer and meditation, and there find peace and refreshing.—*Mottos for Success*



Dear restless heart, be still, for peace is God's own smile, His love can every wrong and sorrow reconcile; Just love, and love, and love, and calmly wait awhile.—*Edith Willis Linn Forbes (1865–1945)*



Jesus lay in the boat sleeping. The waves rose, the wind blew and the storm battered the small vessel about. His disciples were afraid: afraid of the wind, afraid of the waves and fearful for their lives. They came to Jesus, woke Him up, begging for His help. The answer lay in His power. He said, "Peace, be still," and there was peace. The wind ceased, and there was a great calm.¹ No matter the turmoil of our life, we too can find peace if we turn to Jesus for His help.—*Marge Banks*

Let My Spirit rest upon you and fill you with peace. Let My Spirit flow through your thoughts, mingle with your spirit, and give you strength.—*Jesus*²



PEACE WITH THOSE AROUND US

Live in peace; and the God of love and peace will be with you.—*2 Corinthians 13:11*



All men desire peace, but very few desire those things that make for peace.—*Thomas à Kempis (1380–1471)*



All works of love are works of peace. ... Peace begins with a smile.—*Mother Teresa (1910–1997)*



Jesus gave us the key to happiness and harmony when He said, “Love your neighbor as yourself.”³ And remember, “neighbor” doesn’t only mean the one who lives next door; your neighbor is anyone He brings across your path.

When people don’t treat others with much love, of course they’re going to have problems. In fact, many of the evils in the world today can be traced back to people’s lack of love for God and one another. The simple love of God and one’s neighbors is still God’s solution, even in such a highly complex and confused society as ours. If we love God, we can love others, and follow His rules of life, liberty, and the possession of happiness.—*David Brandt Berg (1919–1994)*



Sometimes it can be difficult to do the right thing, especially when the person you’re dealing with hasn’t done right to you, but I didn’t say, “Do to others as they do to you.” My code for living is far above that normal perception of fairness. I want you to live on a higher plane. Anyone can be nice to those who are nice, but the person who can be nice to those who aren’t is the bigger person and more blessed by Me.—*Jesus*



PEACE IN A WORLD OF CONFLICT

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God.—*Matthew 5:9 KJV*

We look forward to the time when the power of love will replace the love of power. Then will our world know the blessings of peace.—*William E. Gladstone (1809–1898)*



Peace is not a relationship of nations. It is a condition of mind brought about by a serenity of soul. Peace is not merely an absence of war. It is also a state of mind. Lasting peace can come only to peaceful people.—*Jawaharlal Nehru (1889–1964)*



Pray for those who are touched by war at this very moment. They need your prayers, and each one needs Me, the Prince of Peace.—*Jesus*



PEACE WITH GOD

Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.—*Romans 5:1*



“In the fear [reverence] of the Lord there is strong confidence, and His children will have a place of refuge.”⁴ This place of refuge is promised to all believers, yet so few venture therein. I say unto you, come aside, My dear one. Come under My wings, into My place of refuge, that you may experience My love and My peace.—*Jesus* ■

You can have God’s peace in your own heart by inviting His Son, Jesus, to come in. He says, “I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in.”⁵

Dear Jesus, please come into my life and give me Your peace. Forgive me for the wrong things I’ve done, and help me get to know You better and share You with others. Amen.



FROM JESUS WITH LOVE

THE SUNSHINE OF MY LOVE

You can't make the sun come out on a rainy day, but you *can* work to change the mood around you.

Most people feel happier and are more upbeat on a warm, sunny day than on a stormy one. You can warm and encourage the people around you by the sunny “rays” or good vibes you send their way. But if you're carrying around a cloud of problems and woes, you're likely to create a “pressure system” that will dump rain and dampen and darken the day for everyone around you.

So carry a warm, sunny atmosphere with you wherever you go. Let the sun of your happy smile shine on others and cheer them up. And in times when you don't feel happy—when you're under pressure or you feel like you're under a big cloud yourself—call on Me to drive away the clouds and shine the light of My love on you instead.

The sun is *always* shining where I am. I always have plenty of warm rays to send your way, and I want you to soak them up and reflect them to others. Let's make some nice weather!