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Peaceful Patterns:

PEACE! The calm between violence and disturbance. PEACE! A friendly greeting. PEACE! An order to remain silent. PEACE! Something the world needs. There are 18 English definitions of the word “peace.” How interesting, that the English language can take one simple word, then transfer toward so many meanings. But what does it mean to you? Is peace a warm summer day? Is it that song you always need on repeat? Is it something you’ve always had but never truly experienced? This is an individual evaluation.

A naturalist would say peace is the calm cascade of a flowing waterfall. Vocalists would say peace is the roaring symphonies of a choir. An artist would say peace is the soft strokes of a paintbrush gliding gently on a canvas. But personally, the thought of peace is the sound of God's voice. It is often described as a “still small voice,” filled with compassion, love and reassurance. He speaks through people, text, nature, and even through chaos. Peace is vital to life itself because it is my belief that it reflects the true essence of God Himself. This peace reassures me that even though I live in a very troubled world, I have something far beyond what this fallen world could ever offer; and it is priceless.

Any individual can agree that the Covid-19 pandemic was the most trying time of anyone’s patience, especially mine. Virtual learning, inflation, protests, lost jobs, homelessness, places of worship closed, and so much more. Peace seemed distant and, to many, non-existent. Violence peaked, civil unrest increased, and so did COVID-19 cases; and even though this might

have been 4 years ago, many lives are still affected and struggle to maintain an equilibrium of peace. Our world was broken; and it seemed as if violence had conquered. There was no peace found in the voices of News Reporters, there was no peace found in the voice of the government, and there was no peace heard in the voices of the families whose cries could shake the world. At that moment, it seemed as if there was nothing anyone could do. But I went back to the source of my peace. I prayed for the world; I prayed for the government, I prayed for families and medical Facilities miserably affected by this sudden situation. It took time to see the results of these supplications, and sometimes it became discouraging. But as night followed day, the wheels started turning; and the bells of peace started ringing. Four years later, here we are on the road to excellence.

From an individual perspective, I can say that the Covid-19 pandemic has heavily impacted my views on peace. Luckily not for the worse. I initially believed that being stuck at home for months would negatively impact my character, especially since I couldn't go to church to hear sound words of wisdom or even stand on my front porch to hear the wind blowing through the trees. But as time went by, I realized peace wasn't based on what I did or how I felt, but on what I heard.

To conclude, what I believe does not make me perfect or better than anyone who does not hold these same beliefs, but I can speak boldly now because of the process it has taken to realize that my peace only comes from one source. Not from money, not from friends, not from my hobbies, not from my education, not even from music. But from the source of my faith, the voice of God, the one sound that eases my troubled mind and resonates longer than any symphony.