



Letters About Peace

Philippians 4:4-9; Hebrews 11:1; Colossians 3:15

Safari Sam sadly trudged through the door of the Mail Center and plopped his elbows down on the counter. “Hi, kids. I am sad, sad, sad. I’m so worried about Superstar Sally. She’s really not feeling well.” He put his head in his hands and let out a loud sigh.

Ranger Reggie overheard Safari Sam as he walked in the Mail Center. He looked at his friend and asked, “Who is Superstar Sally?”

“Who is Superstar Sally? Who is Superstar Sally?!” Safari Sam cried. “She’s only the greatest four wheel drive jeep that ever climbed a mountain and now she won’t start!”

Ranger Reggie laughed. “Oh! Your car! I thought it was something serious.”

Safari Sam glared at Ranger Reggie. “It is serious! I’ve had Superstar Sally since she was fresh off the assembly line. For twenty years she has taken me everywhere I needed to go.”

“Twenty years is a long time to have a car. Maybe it’s time to put her in the junkyard.”

Safari Sam gasped. “How can you say that? Sally is more than a car to me! She’s like family! But, now I’m worried I may not be able to fix her.”

“Safari Sam, I hate to see you so worried,” Ranger Reggie said. “I know what will cheer you up. What if we read a letter from the Bible?” He took the letter from the mailbag and waved it in front of Safari Sam. “Look, it’s Paul’s letter to the Philippians! Want to read it?”

Safari Sam looked away. “No, thank you. I’m too worried to think about anything else.”

“Hmm . . . you never miss a chance to read God’s Word! I’ll read it to you.” Ranger Reggie found the correct passage and read, “‘Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful.’ Did you hear that, Sam? God called us to peace and he wants us to be thankful!”

“Thankful?! Super Star Sally is about to go to jeep heaven! I don’t feel like being thankful.”

“It might bring you peace,” said Ranger Reggie.

Safari Sam’s eyes filled with tears. “How can I have peace without Sally?”

“We could pray to God and ask Him for peace,” Ranger Reggie offered. “Would it make you feel better if I let you call Wild William?”

Safari Sam chewed a piece of hay. "I don't think anything could make me feel better."

"Okay, it's up to us, kids. Do you know what time it is? It's time for our Creature Feature!" Wild William appeared just then at the Mail Center doorway. Ranger Reggie asked him, "Wild William, who is today's featured creature?"

"Sweet and peaceful in his flight, filled with Holy Spirit's light," Wild William announced. He disappeared just as quickly as he had arrived.

Ranger Reggie put his finger to his chin and tapped it. "Do any of you campers have a guess?"

Several campers called out, "A dove!"

Ranger Reggie nodded. "I think it's a dove, too!" Everyone watched as a dove descended from the rafters. Ranger Reggie hid behind a curtain as the dove landed on a camper's shoulder. "I keep getting attacked by the featured creature so I'm going to let you handle him," Ranger Reggie called out from his hiding place. The camper stroked the bird's head and the dove cooed softly.

Ranger Reggie peeked out from behind his hiding place. "Look at that, he likes you!" He cautiously moved next to the camper with the dove. "Here, let me hold him!" Ranger Reggie said as he bravely held out both hands. The dove let out a startled coo and pecked Ranger Reggie's arm!

"Ahhh! Get it off me! Get it off!" he yelled. With that, the dove flew back up to the rafters. "Wow, I thought doves represented peace! Well, Safari Sam maybe we should see if Orville has a letter about peace."

Safari Sam shrugged, "Go ahead."

"Wow, you are really upset!" Ranger Reggie noted. "Okay kids, let's all shout for Orville."

Together, Ranger Reggie and the campers called out, "Hey Orville, come on down!"

Orville swooped down from his nest, dropped the message egg in Ranger Reggie's hand, then promptly crashed into the countertop. The campers watched as Orville shook out his feathers and flew in a crooked, wobbly line back to his nest.

Ranger Reggie opened the egg and read the letter. "It's from the letter to the Philippians. It says, 'Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, 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.'" Ranger Reggie smiled. "See that, Safari Sam? You don't need to worry! All you have to do is pray and have faith in God. He will give you peace in your heart and mind!"

Safari Sam reread the letter quietly to himself. "How can I have faith in something I can't see?"

"You just have to believe what God's Word says!" Ranger Reggie explained.

"Well, that's hard to do!" Safari Sam replied through gritted teeth.

"It is hard to do," Ranger Reggie agreed, "but I think I can show you that having faith has its rewards." He put two boxes in front of Safari Sam. "I have these two shoe boxes. Now, one of them has a wonderful prize inside and one of them has a nasty mousetrap. You can't see what's inside, you just have to reach into the box and get your prize. Here's the good news; I will tell you which box has the prize."

"How do I know you'll give me the right box?" Safari Sam questioned, his voice filled with doubt.

Ranger Reggie answered. "In all the years we've been friends, have I ever lied to you?"

"Well, no," Safari Sam said hesitantly.

"Then, you can have faith that I'm telling the truth. Pick the green box," Ranger Reggie said.

Safari Sam reached for the box but quickly pulled his hand back. "I'm worried about what is inside."

"You trust me, don't you?" Ranger Reggie asked a camper. The camper nodded. "Then, you come up here and get the prize." The camper reached into the green box and pulled out a huge bar of chocolate.

"Congratulations!" Ranger Reggie said. "You had faith without seeing!"

Safari Sam jumped up and yelled, "I've got faith! I've got faith! Give me that box!" He snatched the yellow box and reached inside. A loud snap echoed through the room and Safari Sam jumped back and dropped the box. "Ouch! Ow! That stings! That really smarts!"

"Safari Sam! I told you it was the other box!" Ranger Reggie exclaimed.

"Silly me! I just can't get a break," Safari Sam complained.

"I've got a prize for you anyway." Ranger Reggie handed him another chocolate bar. "Do you feel better?" he asked.

"A little bit," Safari Sam said. "I believe God's Word and I have faith that God is in control."

"That's the peace that comes from trusting God," Ranger Reggie explained. "It's hard to explain, but if you know God is in control, your heart and mind will be calm even if there are problems all around you. That's what it means to have peace.

Safari Sam finally smiled. "I guess I really do have peace, even if I don't have Sally. I'm going to pray for more peace."

"I'm proud of you, Safari Sam. Would you like to lead us in the Camp Venture Camper's Code?"

"I sure would!" Safari Sam agreed. He motioned to the campers. "On your feet, Campers! Raise your right hand and repeat after me!"

Together, they said, "I will love God with all my heart. I will love my neighbor as myself. I will be a light wherever I go!"

"And God will give me peace, even in hard times!" Safari Sam's smile was a mile wide as he headed out of the Mail Center with the campers to enjoy the day.