



# Peace At Last Ministries (PALM)

Sharing God's comfort with the terminally-ill, their loved ones and caregivers.

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Paul & Kathleen Humphreys

## *“beside the still waters” via FaceTime!*

Present-day communication technology amazes me. I'm old enough to recall what it was like before FAX machines and when letters to my family overseas took three to four weeks to arrive and the same for a reply. My grandkids can't imagine such an existence. Now, my friends get upset with me if I don't respond to a text message within five minutes, not to mention live FaceTime calls from anywhere on the planet! Whew!

I thought about this recently as I sat with the family of a dying patient. His grieving wife set up a laptop computer and established a FaceTime connection with loved ones in Finland, her European homeland. Images of parents, siblings, cousins, uncles and aunts, neighbors, friends, even beloved pets began to populate the screen. They all 'came up' for a virtual farewell visit with someone very precious. Tears flowed.



The apostle Paul came to my mind. What might he have done in the first century with such incredible communication tools?

The patient's room was quiet except for the rhythmic hissing of an Oxygen Concentrator. My virtual audience watched as I turned the pages in my Bible to Psalm 23. But before reading it in English, I used my iPhone to play a narration of the passage translated in the heart language of my Finnish viewers. *“Herra on minun paimeneneni: ei minulta mitään puutu...”*

While reading in English, I emphasized the personal pronouns, ***my** Shepherd, **I** shall not want, makes **me** to lie down, leads **me** beside the still waters, restores **my** soul...* etc.

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It was not the time for a lengthy sermon; emotions were too raw, too sensitive. But the reading of God's word and a few distilled comments were most appropriate, even anticipated.

Emphasizing the personal pronouns was intended to portray how one's relationship to God is an individual, personal matter, solely apart from religion or church. God invites us, individually, to join him *beside the still waters*.

Metaphorically, *the still waters* speak of peace, quietness of soul. While present circumstances can be tumultuous, like a raging out-of-control torrent, tranquility and comfort can be found with God *beside the still waters*. We might try to make our own peace with God but fail to understand that he has made peace for us. He did this when he lovingly sent his son, Jesus Christ, to die in our place on the cross. His death fully satisfied the law-courts of heaven on our behalf. The moment we take God at his word, believe him, the holy Judge of heaven rests his case, forgiving all our sins. The raging waters of divine judgment are truly stilled. Now, he lovingly invites us to join him, *beside the still waters*. Peace with God is ours to enjoy knowing that he is truly at peace about us.

After a short prayer, I left the virtual congregation alone with their loved one to visit in private. The patient died a few hours later.

In the weeks following, I learned the patient's wife had video-taped my conversation. She told me how she and her loved ones had viewed it over and over again. Only eternity will reveal the full impact of the spoken word in those difficult moments. But it appears God used it to lead some grieving souls, precious individuals halfway around the world, *beside the still waters*. And technology helped make it possible. Who knew!

*Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Romans 5:1-2*

Ever grateful for your prayers and support,

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