

## Aren't You Tired?

A friend called me today and she said to me, "Aren't you just tired of it?" She meant the Pandemic. When she called, I was working on Social Security and Pensions and although grateful I have both I was becoming frustrated. But this is a temporary blip and she meant the everyday stuff that is seeming to go on for a long time. These are problems that will be worked out but what about the stuff that has been going on since March? The trips to the grocery store where we have to make sure the cart is clean, we have our mask on, we have something to clean our hands after shopping, we make sure that everything we touch with our dirty hands after we leave the store is cleaned, then we take the groceries home and clean everything before we unpack then clean everything we have touched with our now again dirty hands. And pumping gas! Gloves, wipes, and mask required! We go to church and there is no touching and we see that friend that needs a hug and we cannot give it and we maintain our social distance, but we feel helpless and unable to comfort. These days may bring us some blessings, but we have lost something too. I see the need for masks and distancing, and I practice them because I care about other people. And that is what it comes down to. We care about each other. Before we could show it with a hug but now, we show it with a mask and a step back. It takes some adjusting and rethinking but I wear a mask because I care. I keep my space because I care. Oh, to have an attitude like Paul! Paul was on a mission and nothing would get in the way. The joy he had found on the road to Damascus would not be dimmed.

Paul was in prison. He was separated from friends, from followers and believers, separated from his mission. He and Silas were shackled by chains from their legs to wooden blocks. But Paul did not become defeated, he viewed his isolation and imprisonment as an opportunity and the sure knowledge that he was not alone, and he began to preach to the other prisoners and to the guards. He wrote his letters to his followers in Ephesus, Philippi, and Colosse. He used his time to further his work for Christ.

Philippians 4:4-7 Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again; Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 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.

Lord, give us your peace and assurance. Our world is in disarray. Be with those who are ill and those who are suffering and grieving, give them your comfort. May we feed the hungry, comfort the sorrowful, and lead the lost. Help us to be the hands and feet of Christ. Be with our Pastor and his family, lead his ministry and bless and keep him. We thank you for his leadership. Be with our leaders and staff, guide them. We thank you for their work. We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen

Grace Epperson