

LESSONS LEARNED

2020 is now officially over by almost a month. What did I learn last year? I hope I learned a new appreciation for the everyday things we take for granted. Like sitting in church, going out to eat, going to a movie theater, a trip to the grocery store, going to a department store, breathing without a mask covering my face, not panicking when someone gets too close to me at the meat counter, having friends over, going on jaunts to different places, staying home because I want to not because I have to, and the most important seeing my children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. I know it's not over yet, and that I have to take the next step and get the vaccine as soon as I can get an appointment, that we will continue with mask wearing for some time, that we will have to be socially distanced and that there will be restrictions on places we gather but we are in the home stretch (I have missed baseball) and it will be restrictive for a while, but we can get through this. When I had cancer and was told I would have to have 3 months of chemotherapy, I thought, okay, I can do 3 months. I prayed for strength. The 3 months went by and the doctor said, 6 months would be better, okay, only 3 more months and I again prayed for strength. As I neared the end of the 6 months, the doctor came in and said, 9 months would be better, I said okay but I was becoming weary, I had sores in my mouth, and I was becoming so tired that I would work on the day of chemo but had to take the next day off which was a Friday and so had 3 days off. At the end of 9 months the doctor came in and we went over my body's response according to my physical response and the blood work and finally agreed that I had had enough. I had been praying about this for the last 3 months, what to do if the doctor tried once again to extend it. I felt my energy, my appetite, my strength diminishing day by day, my veins were becoming difficult. My prayer life was strong, and my faith had grown but I did not want to live a half life. God had brought me thus far, but my physical strength was going. As we have had the plateaus and surges of this year with the Covid 19 Virus I have been reminded of that year from diagnosis to finishing chemo and I have relied on the lesson learned that it will be over eventually, we just have to take it one day at a time, (unfortunately that requires remembering what day it is). But I realized then and more so now, that God was my strength in getting through chemo and the worry and fears that it brought. So, I remember "I can do all things through him who strengthens me." So, I will keep calling to get the vaccine, I will keep being isolated, I will endure because I know my God is with me and he will strengthen and uphold me and with him we can persevere.

Hebrews 12:1-3 Therefore, since we are surrounded with such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles us and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us. Let us fix our eyes upon Jesus. The author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart.

Lord, thank you for this day, for the promise of tomorrow, and for all our yesterdays. Be with those that are ill, and those that mourn, those who are weary, those that hunger for your word. Bless our Pastor and bless his ministry, be with our church as we seek to be the hands and feet of Christ. Be with our staff and leaders Lord, show them your path. In Jesus name, Amen.

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