

## Adversity

A friend and I were talking one day, and we began to talk about how the bad things that had happened in our lives had served to strengthen us and give us growth in our faith. When bad things happen, it can be hard for some to continue to believe in a God that would cause such things to happen. After all, we are taught as young children that if you are good, God will be good to you. My Mother, bless her, would tell me if I tripped or stubbed my toe or was hurt in any way that God looked down and punished me. That I must have transgressed in some way. When I had cancer, someone asked me if I still believed in God. I thought it a strange question and thought about it for a minute and said that my belief had only strengthened. I did not believe that God looked down and “gave” me cancer, but that God was there to help me through it, no matter the outcome. He did not plant cancer cells in my body, I could not believe in that vengeful God, but he wept for my trials and helped me through them. No matter the outcome, he walked this walk with me. He used this trial to draw me closer to him. He strengthened me and gave me a secret gift; he gave me hope and courage. He taught me in that time to be grateful for the good days and to endure the bad days. He taught me to hug those I love today and to forgive the small stuff and, in the end, it is all small stuff. My friend spoke about the things he is grateful for, his child, and his parents and God’s love and mercies. He appreciates each day and though he has trials his attitude is amazing, and he seeks God’s help in meeting those trials and feels blessed. Thanks be to God in all things.

Isaiah 30:20-21 Although the Lord gives you the bread of adversity and the water of affliction, your teachers will be hidden no more; with your own eyes you will see them. Whether you turn to the right or to the left, your ears will hear a voice behind you, saying. “This is the way, walk in it.”

Lord, we thank you for this day. Lord, we have all known the pain of adversity in this last year. Be with us, we pray, strengthen us, and guide us. Help us Lord to return to “normal” but to not forget the lessons learned. The pain of loneliness, the pain of loss, the pain of helplessness as we watched loved ones become ill. May we treasure each day and find the hope and peace that can only come from you. Be with our Pastor, bless his ministry, be with his family, keep them safe and well. Be with our leaders and our staff, bless them, and bless all they do for our church, strengthen them. Thank you, Lord, for your blessings and the gift of each day. In Jesus name, Amen.

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