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BISHOP'S DEVOTIONAL THOUGHTS

Patience Please

– James 1:12

God blesses those who patiently endure testing and temptation. Afterward they will receive the crown of life that God has promised to those who love him.

In the last 100 years, we have had ten pandemics: The Russian Flu (1889-1890), The Spanish Flu (1918-1919), The Asian Flu (1957-1958), The Hong Kong Flu (1968-1970), HIV/AIDS (1981-present), SARS (2002-2003), The Swine Flu (2009-2010), Ebola (2014-2015), MERS (2015-present), and COVID-19 (2019-present). COVID-19 has resulted in the most challenging crisis that most of us have ever witnessed. When will it end is the cry of many!

Isn't it annoying when a problem goes on and on and on and on and you have no idea when or if a resolution is coming? I mean, wouldn't it be nice if God would just give us a little vision or a road map or something? Do not let anyone fool you into believing that faith is easy for anyone all the time. We are all human. If faith were such a simple thing to do, there would not be so many biblical examples of those who had endured trials and whose faith was tested, but were okay in the end.

Look at Job, for instance. He did not stop believing in God, but he did complain for a large part of his book, and for good reason. Look at Jesus and his disciples on a boat in a stormy sea. While he was sleeping, they were

terror-struck by a raging storm rocking their boat. At least they saw Jesus wake up and heard him literally say, "Fear not" right before the storm calmed.

Sometimes it does feel like God is sleeping. We wonder whether he understands the urgency of our particular problems. During those times, we have to work a little harder to sense his presence. But anything worthwhile does not usually come easy. Faith is probably one of the surest stress-relievers and blood-pressure reducers, though, so it is worth the effort. While our problems go on seemingly forever, we can read about others' problems that did too, but were eventually resolved. Inspirational accounts help put a refresher on the faith cup while we wait for God's perfectly timed solution.

"Wait patiently for the Lord. Be brave and courageous. Yes, wait patiently for the Lord" (Psalm 27:14).

