

## OVERCOMING FATIGUE

***But those who trust in the Lord will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint. (Isaiah 40:31)***

We have been hearing a lot in the news recently about people gathering in large numbers whether it be at outdoor BBQ's and parties or at indoor events. Many of the people attending these events are not wearing masks or maintaining proper social distancing and as a result the number of cases of COVID-19 is on the rise in Ontario. The reason being given for why people are choosing to participate in these gatherings is they are "fatigued" and "tired" from the restrictions put upon them by the province.

When we think in terms of fatigue, our focus tends to go first toward the physical. While we may not have been as active as we normally were due to COVID-19, the fatigue it is causing so many people to experience is "emotional". This pandemic has been hard on us emotionally because of:

- Being isolated from others in the beginning,
- Staying in a social circles of just 10,
- Missing out on gathering with family and friends at school, work, church, coffee shops, and in other ways.

People want this pandemic to be over. They want their lives to feel the same again. They want the emotional connection they experience with others at gatherings and events to be the same. Tired and exhausted of this new reality, they have ventured out to these gatherings and, once there, their old familiar habits set in:

- Sharing a hug,
- Drawing in close for a conversation,
- Standing or sitting side by side with strangers,
- Sharing food or drinks,
- Touching commonly used surfaces without washing their hands afterward.

Emotional fatigue may have led them to do these things. It may have given them temporary strength for their emotional well being, but if they become infected as a result, they will experience not only emotional fatigue from being quarantined for 14 days but also physical fatigue from the virus itself.

This current example is a reminder to us that we need to find proper ways to help in overcoming our fatigue. Scripture acknowledges the reality that we all feel fatigued: ISAIAH pointed out this reality”

*“Even youths will become weak and tired and young men will fall in exhaustion”  
(Isaiah 40:30).*

No matter whether we are young or old, strong or weak we all experience tiredness and fatigue be it physical, emotional or spiritual. After acknowledging this reality, Isaiah offered this advice to overcome one’s fatigue:

*But those who trust in the Lord will find new strength. They will soar high on wings like eagles. They will run and not grow weary. They will walk and not faint.*

As Isaiah pointed out, the starting point to deal with our fatigue whether it be physical, emotional or spiritual is to *TRUST IN GOD* that *He will strengthen and help us to endure*. This is so important for us to remember especially on those days when the fatigue of COVID-19 has us feeling overwhelmed. On those days when we begin to question whether we can keep going emotionally, physically or spiritually through this, we need to put our trust in God whose strength and power never diminish. Just as God promised in this passage, when we can call upon Him in our moments of fatigue, we can trust that He will:

- *Take our physical fatigue away and renew our strength in those moments,*
- *Lift our emotional thoughts from the depths to a point of soaring again,*
- *Strengthen us to walk and run with renewed faith as opposed to being dragged by exhaustion, worry and doubt.*

I found myself in need of God fulfilling this promise for me recently. I was driving my mom to a medical appointment and she was telling me about a conversation she had with someone whose church reopened recently. Hearing about this I found myself fighting fatigue and a bit of frustration and anger considering all the effort I have put in to dealing with the County of Brant to get permission for our church to reopen. Knowing this kind of emotional fatigue was not putting me in a good place, I dropped my mom off and sat in my car in the parking lot and closed my eyes and prayed. I asked God to remove my fatigue and anger. There I sat in the car for a half hour or more praying and just resting in silence. About 15 minutes into this I felt the anger begin to leave me. After the anger left, I felt my energy begin to return. By the time my mother’s appointment was over, I was in a better place physically and emotionally and spiritually. She probably found me far

more pleasant to be in the car with driving home than driving up to her appointment.

There will be moments in our on-going journey through COVID-19 when we will feel fatigued and weary emotionally, physically and perhaps spiritually. Instead of trying things that may expose us to risks like going to large social gatherings, let us go instead into prayer with God and trust that He will renew our strength and get us through that day. Many more months of enduring COVID-19 seem to still be on the horizon for us. I think there will be a lot of days ahead where we will need to trust God to renew our strength through this pandemic. The Good News is that we know He will renew our strength if we ask.

God bless and stay safe.

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