

Pastor's Ponderings on February 20, 2019

Sickness sometimes seems to surround us and then infect us—especially at this time of the year. Stomach flu. Respiratory ailments. Seasonal Affective Disorder. The list goes on and sometimes the effects of these maladies linger longer than we want. More than one person has said to me recently: ‘I just can’t seem to shake this bug. I keep fighting it, but I’m still not feeling right.’

We all want to feel right and healthy and energetic. But I have to wonder sometimes if that image of ‘fighting it’ is counterproductive. Fighting takes a lot of energy. And forcefulness. And strength of mind and spirit. But when we’re sick, is fighting really the best thing to do? Wouldn’t peacefulness, rest, resignation to lower energy levels be more true to the situation?

Of course, the world keeps moving. Family, jobs, even our church responsibilities continue to drive us, corral us into levels of activity that just sometimes feel impossible. When we push our way, slogging through mud in spite of feeling yucky...are we making it easier to get well? Or harder? To get well. To be restored. To return to our desired levels of energy.

Seems like sickness sometimes serves a holy purpose of a sort. Being sick is an opportunity to accept our human limitations and remember that God didn’t give us unlimited power and strength. As human beings, we are designed with physical, mental, and emotional frailties that can be frustrating and even embarrassing, but they are real. And in our weakness...God’s strength has a chance to be made visible and even perfect. Is it possible that we could get better faster if we would only stop fighting and let God take care of us and our obligations more intentionally, for a little while? At least for the time necessary for us to feel better.

No one likes to be reminded periodically that we can’t do it all. Yes, we all fall short, don’t we? But that is probably God’s way of also reminding us that we are so much more than what we do. We are so much more important than what we look like on our worst days. Our essential ‘beingness’ goes far beyond our productivity and efficiency. Our souls are just as precious to God when our hearts are bruised and our bodies are under the weather as they are when we are functioning at peak performance.

In God’s eyes, it’s OK to be sick, and it’s OK to rest. Let sickness be a resting time...even if you still have to go to work, shovel snow, and take care of the kids. Let yourself be slower, softer, and take lots and lots of breaks. And stop fighting! Rest in the Lord and let your faith...keep you strong in love, and hope, even in the times of weakness. God’s peace to us all.

Pastor Geri