

“I Know That I Have You”

Scripture Reading — Ephesians 4:1-6

Be . . . patient in affliction. — Romans 12:12

Whether affliction results from our own actions, other’s actions, or natural causes, pain and anguish accompany it. Who can be “patient in affliction”? Most of us would rather rail against it, feel sorry for ourselves, complain, lash out, and demand that God tell us why we are suffering so much.

The behaviors that come naturally for us when we are dealing with trouble in life will drive others away from us and destroy community. Patience in affliction deepens community by drawing people together and enhancing care for one another. A healthy body of Christ remains patient in affliction.

In a poem called “Broken Wings,” Cesar R., who is in prison in Texas, describes how he remains patient in the affliction of incarceration:

Today I have a thousand sadnesses, which do not let me sleep.

Today I have a handful of dreams, which I cannot fulfill.

Today I feel I do not have anybody; I feel that I do not have anybody.

But I know that I have You.

My Lord, today I ask You for strength;

Give me the strength to be able to continue.

(Crossroad Journal of the Arts, Winter 2015)

The apostle Paul was a prisoner too. What affliction must you endure? Ask God to strengthen you and give you patient endurance, and pray he does the same for all suffering people.

Prayer

Lord, your compassions never fail. Great is your faithfulness. Give us all your patient strength, we pray. In Jesus, Amen.

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