

Transformed

Weathering the Worry

“Rejoice in our confident hope, be patient in trouble, and keep on praying.”

-Romans 12:12, NLT

When friends or colleagues ask how you are doing, what is your response? Quickly we often say, “Oh hey! I’m fine. How are you?” The daily grind of studying for exams, seeing office calls from a packed appointment list, or driving to the next farm while slamming down a cold bologna sandwich is a way of life in our profession. The world around us spins so quickly in the daily hustle and bustle. But under the surface of our fast greeting, worry and anxiety often lurk and quietly consume our hearts. As followers of Christ, Romans chapter 12 calls us to transform the way we live and love.

As humans, we struggle with worry. We are worried about time spent away from our families, worried about student debt, and worried that we won’t be able to find an associate. This worry produces anxiousness and discontentment in our hearts. Romans 12:12 reminds us that we do not have to worry as the world does, what an encouragement!

When we transform our minds through prayer and meditation on God’s Word, we can **rejoice in our confident hope, be patient in times of trouble, and remember to keep on praying.**

What is our confident hope? How we each answer this question is integral to how we face the challenges that meet us daily. *Titus 2:13* reminds us that “...we look forward with hope to that wonderful day when the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, will be revealed.” That is our hope! It is not blissful optimism; it is a promise found over and over in the Word of God. Jesus will return! He has defeated sin and death on the cross! The victory belongs to Christ! So, “we have this hope as a strong and trustworthy anchor for our souls.” *Hebrews 6:19.*

If this is our starting point when facing darkness, it is cause for great rejoicing!

As much as this joy is part of our lives, we know all too well that problems and distress await us on this side of Heaven. As veterinary professionals, we not only experience personal hardship, but we carry those burdens for our clients, classmates, and the animals we treat. It is so hard to be patient in times of trouble! We are human, we want to fix it, solve it, and move on with our lives.

The Greek word for “patient” in this verse is *hupomenó*. In English, it means to remain, to persevere, and to endure. These translations make it even harder to consider being patient! Why should we endure?

We certainly cannot rely on our own strength to stay strong and patient during times of trouble. As followers of Christ, we have the Holy Spirit living in us. When we choose to endure, the Holy Spirit fills us with God’s grace to carry on! We deny our human tendency to run like a scared rabbit. God, in His infinite grace, walks with us through the trial.

A church marquis sign once read: “Don’t pray for a lighter load, pray for a stronger back.” The Holy Spirit gives us the ability to stay, endure, and carry the load through our trial.

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Persevering during times of affliction is a heavy burden but Jesus' words here nudge us to remember that His yoke is light. *"I have told you all this so that you may have peace in me. Here on earth you will have many trials and sorrows. But take heart, because I have overcome the world."* (John 16:33) If we are so full of this joyous hope, we **can** continue through life's certain trials!

Our final charge in this verse: Keep on praying. Other Bible translations say, "faithful in prayer," or "continuing steadfastly in prayer."

Prayer is how we have direct communication with the Creator of the universe. What a gracious gift the Father has given us! In daily life though, has prayer become a less than exciting, one-way communication to God with seemingly no response? While considering CVM's theme of "Transform" this year, one of the best ways to renew our minds is to allow the Holy Spirit to transform the way we pray.

As we read and meditate on God's Word, we can pray the scriptures back to Him. We are praying God's thoughts – His agenda, not ours!

Are you facing persecution in your practice or on your campus? Here is one example of praying through God's Word. Consider praying these verses to the Lord:

*But I am trusting you, O Lord,
saying, "You are my God!"
My future is in your hands.
Rescue me from those who hunt me down relentlessly.
Let your favor shine on your servant.
In your unfailing love, rescue me. (Psalm 31:14-16)*

This intentional prayer will stay with you and His word will be in your heart. As Corrie Ten Boom said: "Is prayer your steering wheel or your spare tire?"

- 1) How can you be joyful, patient, and faithful in a current situation you are facing?**
- 2) Recall a trial in your life. Give glory to God by remembering how He revealed Himself to you during that time.**
- 3) Does prayer guide each step of your day? Where in your daily routine can you be more intentional about praying?**



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