



Tom Popp
Guest Preacher

Trinity Sunday

June 12, 2022

Creator
Redeemer
Sustainer



Father Son Holy Spirit
Mother Child Breath of God

Sermon Outline for Sunday, June 12, 2022 “Alert Expectancy” | Trinity Sunday Tom Popp | Romans 5:1-5

Text from Romans 5:1-5 (from *The Message*), saying in part:

"We continue to shout our praise even when we're hemmed in with troubles, because we know how troubles can develop passionate patience in us, and how that patience in turn forges the tempered steel of virtue, keeping us alert for whatever God will do next. In alert expectancy such as this, we're never left feeling shortchanged."

Paul's letter is not saying praise God and your troubles will vanish. It is saying you will have troubles, and they can make you stronger, leading you to the belief that things can be better. God can do what you never saw coming. Memory verse from Jeremiah: "I know the plans I have for you . . . to give you a future with hope."

How you respond to troubles is what matters. My 94-year-old friend whose eyesight and hearing are failing prays the Serenity Prayer frequently. Another friend, now confined to a wheelchair, has a mission that keeps her going. Sikhism believes in *chardi kala*, which is optimistic resilience or praising God even in hardship. From a Sikh guru: "Oh eagle, do not be afraid of the swift and hostile winds. They are there to make you fly even higher."

Gun violence is a national trouble of ours. Its causes are trauma, racism, fear of "the other," and lack of voice. I serve on the board of The Playing Field, which addresses exactly these issues in small children. How will you respond to gun violence? Maybe you will protest or support a piece of legislation or be the comforter to a troubled, lonely, traumatized person. These troubles can make you stronger. Be in the mind of alert expectancy. Watch for what you can do. There is hope.

Tools for facing troubles can include prayer and study of scripture, as Charlie told you last week. Other tools are talking about your troubles, touching each other (while respecting boundaries), and going to the wilderness.

"Don't let it spoil your day," my little grandson reminds me.

I created an orphans project in Malawi and got the funding by being alert to a possibility.

You are about to sing "It is Well with My Soul," whether in peace or sorrow. How you respond is what matters. Be alert.

You will have troubles. You will get through them. They can make you stronger. Be alert to what God will do next. God has a plan to give you a future with hope.

Things can get better. Believe it.

May it be so.