

Let us turn now to Luke 2:8. Yes. A Christmas Scripture. But it seems to fit today also, after the school shootings and nonstop press telling us how to prevent them in the future. The great apostle, Dr. Luke, wrote some twenty centuries ago:

Now there were in the same country shepherds living out in the fields keeping watch over their flock by night.

And behold! An angel of The Lord stood before them, and the glory of The Lord shown around them.

AND THEY WERE GREATLY AFRAID!

Then the angel of The Lord said to them, ***BE NOT AFRAID!***

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So think on these points; this small humble litany of how we might implement a response to the Coronavirus:

- **Turn to Scripture.**
- **Resurrect Hope.**
- **Turn to Prayer.**
- **Trust.**
- **Do not fear.**

And as a final step, I ask you to lean upon your own understanding ... your understanding of James 1:2-3 and Romans 5:1-4.

James says:

My brethren, ***count it all joy when you fall into various trials,***
Knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience.

Paul writes:

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord, Jesus Christ, Through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. And not only that, ***we also glory in tribulations knowing that tribulation produces perseverance; perseverance, patience, character; and, character --- HOPE! HOPE!!!***

**Count tribulations as joy. Well, we sure have plenty of them right now!!!
But from them we will add to our storehouse – our storehouse of perseverance; of patience; of character; – AND OF HOPE!**

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Sand Hook

I leave you with this simple visual. You may interpret it as directed at golfers – and while it could be – think of it in terms of the broader picture. The broader picture of life.

You have hit the ball out of bounds. Into the woods.

That was **NOT** your plan.

For one, it hurts your score.

And among other results, it requires extrication.

Now my quizzer: *How will you recover?*

People, we are facing deep dark woods. We may see very little path out. We may be fearful. May I recommend:

Scripture.

Hope.

Prayer.

Trust.

Know that school shootings have come. Diseases and plagues have come.

Be patient. Persevere. HOPE.

AND REMEMBER MOST OF ALL ... OUR GOD IS STILL ON THE THRONE.