

*“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you;
I have called you by name; you are Mine!
“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
And through the rivers, they will not overflow you.
When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched,
Nor will the flame burn you. (Isaiah 43:1-2)*

It's easy to feel like we are in a storm at sea or facing a roaring fire. If you read or listen to the news, podcasts, and pundits it sounds like the end is right around the corner. Covid19 is a novel virus, we were not expecting it, not ready for it, and we are not really sure what it is or where it came from – but, here it is.

Our world is shutting down for fear of this infectious and deadly virus. People are sick, gravely ill, many have died or are dying. Healthcare providers are working around the clock, making decisions they dread making, the results with which they will have to live. They are tired, but they are fighting a battle and they will not give up.

The front line for this disease is huge. People doing their jobs, putting themselves out there where they may become infected, but they continue to serve the public. People are practicing physical distancing, wearing masks, staying home.

Everything is starting to reopen, it's just not as easy as unlocking a door. Many businesses were closed, some will never reopen, some changed how they did business. Some dine-in restaurants offered curbside pickup. Some Automakers switched to making ventilators. Instead of belt buckles, Silversmiths made masks. One attended church at home in their pajamas, watching a pre-recorded worship service on their computer or phone. Banking was done through only the drive in. We all did and are doing what we think is best to continue with our lives. Businesses closed their doors, some for the duration, some for good. Unemployment. Worrying over when the pink slip will land. Phone-in orders, drop offs on the stoop. As we begin to reopen, we realize life will go on, but man, it will sure different. We don't like change. We do not want different. Fear. Confusion. Doubt. Questions. Insecurity.

One cannot deny this is the reality we are facing, nor should we deny God's presence in it. Yes, we are afraid, this is a scary unknown. But God says, “Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine!” With love and compassion, God reaches out to remind us, “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they will not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you will not be scorched, nor will the flame burn you.” Even when Coronavirus spreads across the globe, when your job is gone, your financial situation is not secure, your food security is questionable, your health tomorrow uncertain; I, Your God, am with you. NOTHING can or will come between you and My love for you. Turn to me, I will give you peace, I will show you compassion. Rely on me for the strength you need to carry on. Look to Me, “For I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are Mine!”

Peace

Pastor Tonia