

A Word on Wednesday from Pastor Tonia

"My Sweet Lord" 4/19/23

I saw the Lord always before me, for He is at my right hand so I will not be shaken; therefore, my heart will be glad, and my tongue will rejoice; moreover, my flesh will live in hope.
(Ps 16:8,9)

After the crucifixion of Christ, His followers gathered behind a locked door, except for Thomas, who went off by himself and hid. His heart was broken, he couldn't handle this and couldn't even gather with others for comfort. Ever been there?

Jesus made a point of appearing to Thomas and inviting him to see and to know, Jesus had kept His Word. He had not abandoned His followers. Death could not hold Him. And Thomas got it, "My Lord and my God," he confessed.

Jonah did not accept the impossible mission God had given him, he ran off – into the water and the belly of a whale. Like jumping from the frying pan into the fire. But God never abandoned Jonah. He caught him when the whale had had enough. God cared for Jonah – yes, taught him a lesson, but blessed his ministry, even though he'd run off at first. God's grace is amazing, and He is abounding in steadfast love. He is so sweet to us.

When they'd taken Jesus, He was unfairly judged – unbelievable, crucified – inconceivable. Dark days. How could they continue? The sun refused to shine. "Where did things go sideways? When will things turn around and go right?" they wondered.

So, it is with life. We expect good things to happen. We want to live in our dream. We don't want the wind to blow our little boat around. But just when we think everything is going to go right and well, life happens and we are hurt, frustrated, our hearts get broken.

Then we look at the food on our table, feel the warmth of the sun on our skin, the smile of the clerk at the store, the presence of friends who come to comfort us in our pain, the purr of our cat. We hear the birds sing, smell the fresh fragrance of a flower. We sit in awe as we look at the stars. We realize the Lord is so sweet. He is always before us. He is near and we will not be shaken.

Sure, our house burning down, our spouse leaving, this diagnosis, being left in the lurch, the rising price of – everything, another snowstorm, realizing we've been lied to, being forced to move, to leave our home and friends, fill in the blank, is not what we'd counted on, but we can face it. It will hurt, it will be difficult, but God is still with us, even through this.

In order to protect our hearts, we choose to hide them behind locked doors. And God comes into our hidey hole and says, "Peace, be with you." Even here, even now. God's compassion is unfailing. He knows we hurt. He tells us there is no shame in the broken hearted. He can even heal it.

When we finally open our eyes, we see, even through blurry tears, the Lord is at our right hand, and we will not be shaken. Even though broken, our heart can be glad, we can rejoice, and live in hope.

So, try to put the pain behind, focus on the rest of the journey, allow God to strengthen us and to use us, to show us His love, so we can show His amazing grace to others – here there is real heartwarming joy.

Our Lord is so sweet.

Please pray with me:

Lord, my heart is broken. I don't see what good will come from this, but I put my trust in You; because You are faithful, You are real, You care, You are here, You are dependable, in You I have life and love, worth and purpose. Lord, in You I have hope and know I will find joy.

Amen.