

In Him I Trust

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March 22, 2020

Nahum 1:7 The Lord is good, a refuge in times of trouble. He cares for those who trust in him.

Good morning Petra family. I hope you are all doing well and your hearts are at peace during this time. I look forward to the time in the near future when we can all be worshipping under one roof again. There is something special about sitting next to each other as we worship and receive from the Lord together.

I realize how much I have taken that privilege for granted. I think we will soon be together again but until then we will worship together in this way and be grateful.

The prophetic voices have been saying this virus will come quickly, hit hard and then end quickly. So, I am not anticipating this dragging out. So be encouraged.

The church of Jesus has always been resilient. Whether it is outright persecution, pandemics, or natural disasters that hinders our ability to worship together. In all situations, God's people find ways to keep their faith alive and their ability to be God's hands, feet, and mouth to the world around them.

There are opportunities all around us to minister and pray for people. To help them in practical ways such as picking up groceries for them. There are some that are not able to get out, some that will be struggling financially, some that may be in isolation and need that card, email or phone call of encouragement.

Let's be thinking of others during this time and not just ourselves. Ask God to show you how you can help someone.

I believe God wants to use this time to help us disconnect from our busy hectic lives and reconnect with our families and each other in some new ways and hopefully some lasting ways. Let's see this as an opportunity to increase our family time and personal time with God.

It would be easy to develop a negative complaining attitude because we are feeling forced to comply to some mandates that we might not all agree with in this massive shutdown of our normal activities. But God wants to take what the enemy means for evil and turn it into something good in our lives right now. Don't miss it.

My prayer is that you would see the opportunities in your day instead of the limitations. That you would become creative and find the silver lining in each day. So, hang in there. This will soon be over.

This pandemic is shaking the whole world like nothing before. I believe these are the birth pains Jesus talked about in the last days. One little virus is shutting down global economies. Terror and panic have seized the nations.

Lou Engle asks the question, "Could God be using these circumstances to break our idols, draw families together and woo us back to Himself?"

Is this part of God's plan to prepare the nations for revival? I think so. God will have the last word!

Do you remember what our theme for this year is? **Confidence!**

Little did we know that our faith and confidence would be tested in this way. As the world and the media are caught up in a spirit of fear and panic, we have a choice to make. We will either get caught up in the fear or we will rise up in faith.

I am not making light of the seriousness of the virus. If we didn't take it seriously, we wouldn't have closed the church for several weeks. I am speaking to how the media and many people around us are responding to the crisis.

We can either panic and live in fear or we can take responsible actions and trust God to guide us and take care of us and meet our needs.

I would like to remind us of some of the truths about putting our trust and confidence in God that I shared in January when I presented this theme. Some things I believe the Holy Spirit was speaking to us and preparing our hearts for several months ago for such a time as this.

Our Theme verse is taken from Jeremiah 17

**Jeremiah 17:7 "But blessed is the one who trusts in the LORD,
whose confidence is in him.**

**⁸They will be like a tree planted by the water
that sends out its roots by the stream.**

**It does not fear when heat comes;
its leaves are always green.**

**It has no worries in a year of drought
and never fails to bear fruit." (NIV)**

The promise is that when we put our trust and confidence in God, we will be like a well water tree. Our needs will be met, and we will not live in fear or have to worry when tough times come. What a great promise for today!

Let's dig a little deeper into this passage. Jeremiah is saying...

1. We can rise above anxiety and fear when we put our trust and confidence in the Lord.

It is the best thing we can do right now. It is what we want to teach our children right now. This is a great teachable moment they will remember for a long time.

Part of the reason there is so much fear is because the uncertainty and the things we normally put our trust in have been taken away from us.

- The government can't help us.
- Science has not provided a vaccine yet.
- The hospitals in many places are overwhelmed.
- The stock market is going crazy.
- Some paychecks have stopped.
- There are very real fears of catching the virus, especially in the older population.
- People are panicking because they have nothing secure to hold on to. It is a very scary time for many.

But for us, the people of God, we have someone we can rely on who is a very present help in time of trouble.

Let's allow the unchangeable, unshakable, trustworthy word of our Heavenly Father to strengthen our faith and confidence in this hour.

**Ps 46:1-3 God is our refuge and strength,
an ever-present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way
and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea,
though its waters roar and foam
and the mountains quake with their surging.**^[c]

We serve one who is bigger than this virus. One who has promised to care for us if our paychecks stop and our business must remain closed a while longer.

Listen to what your daddy says to you this morning. He sees you right now. He knows your concerns and fears right now and he speaks these words to you.

Matthew 6:25-34 (TPT)

²⁵ **"This is why I tell you to never be worried about your life, for all that you need will be provided, such as food, water, clothing—everything your body needs. Isn't there more to your life than a meal? Isn't your body more than clothing?"**

²⁶ **"Look at all the birds—do you think they worry about their existence? They don't plant or reap or store up food, yet your heavenly Father provides them each with food. Aren't you much more valuable to your Father than they?"** ²⁷ **So, which one of you by worrying could add anything to your life?"**

²⁸ **"And why would you worry about your clothing? Look at all the beautiful flowers of the field. They don't work or toil, ²⁹ and yet not even Solomon in all his splendor was robed in beauty more than one of these!"** ³⁰ **So if God has clothed the meadow with hay, which is here for such a short time and then dried up and burned, won't he provide for you the clothes you need—even though you live with such little faith?"**

³¹ “So then, forsake your worries! Why would you say, ‘What will we eat?’ or ‘What will we drink?’ or ‘What will we wear?’ ³² For that is what the unbelievers chase after. Doesn’t your heavenly Father already know the things your bodies require?

³³ “So above all, constantly chase after the realm of God’s kingdom and the righteousness that proceeds from him. Then all these less important things will be given to you abundantly.

³⁴ Refuse to worry about tomorrow, but deal with each challenge that comes your way, one day at a time. Tomorrow will take care of itself.”

Listen, we will get through this. We need to act responsibly but God asks us not to give into fear and worry. He has your tomorrow.

2. Faith, trust, and confidence are often a choice.

Despite all my questions and feelings about tomorrow I have a choice to make. As the people of God, we are called to choose faith over fear and trust over worry. It is a daily choice we make. I admit some days it is a real challenge.

How do you and I make this choice and live in faith in the midst of a pandemic?

Here is some advice. Some days the best thing we can do is take a break from the news media. Instead turn on some worship music. Take a walk. Read a book. Rent a movie. Do something that will get your mind focused on the good things of life. Count your blessings. Keep laughter alive in your home. It is good medicine.

- The daffodils are blooming, and a new season is coming. Before too long this will all be behind us.

I am putting my trust in God because with him all things are possible. I’m counting on God to come through for me and for you! My confidence is in him. This didn’t take God by surprise. He knows what we need.

I like what the Psalmist said....

Psalm 34:4 I prayed to the LORD, and he answered me. He freed me from all my fears. (NLT)

The answer wasn’t immediate change of circumstances but of fear. And also...

Ps 20:7-8 Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the LORD our God. They are brought to their knees and fall, but we rise up and stand firm. (NIV)

Church, let’s rise up and stand firm. Let’s be the positive ones, the salt and light. Let’s be contagious with hope, faith, confidence, and peace and pass it on to others. This is the hour to show the difference Jesus makes in your life.

3. If we will give God our worries, he will give us his peace.

God has something amazing to help us cope with whatever life may throw at us. It is his peace, but it begins with us surrendering our right to worry.

1Pe 5:7 Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you. (NLT)

Give it up. Surrender it. Let it go. Stop dwelling on the what ifs. Stop speaking fear. Make the choice to transfer your worry from your plate to God's plate.

Philippians 4:6-9

⁶⁻⁷ Don't worry over anything whatever; tell God every detail of your needs in earnest and thankful prayer, and the peace of God which transcends human understanding, will keep constant guard over your hearts and minds as they rest in Christ Jesus. (PHILLIPS)

"Tell God every detail" - Write an anxiety letter to God listing all your worries and needs. Then through prayer surrender each item to him and then tear up the letter.

After you have unloaded all your concerns then begin thanking him ahead of time for the answer. Change the way you pray and speak and something amazing will begin to happen to you.

A peace that transcends understanding will begin to settle over you. Nothing may have changed in your outward circumstances, but something begins to change in your heart and mind.

God describes his peace as being like a security guard that begins to guard you from the arrows of worry and fear. Your anxiety level begins to go down. Peace and joy begin to rule in your life and in your home. And people wonder what has happened to you. You are so peaceful and positive.

This is the blessing and inheritance for the people of God. We respond differently from the world to pandemics, grief, and difficult events that hit our lives. We have spiritual and emotional resources available to us that they don't have.

Let people know how Jesus makes a difference in your life.

We serve the God of the impossible. He is in control. We are in his hands and he will make a way for us in the days ahead. As the body of Christ, we are here to help and pray and encourage each other.

Closing Song – Nothing is Impossible