

Monday, August 21, 2017 - Day 232 – Isaiah 43-45, Psalm 39, II Timothy 3

2 Timothy 3:1: “You must face the fact, the final age of this world is to be a time of troubles.”

I remember my grandmother saying, “What is this world coming to?” My mother, and then I, have said the same thing before we could stop ourselves ... and I am sure my children have already caught themselves echoing their parents’ concerns! I begin to wonder, at times maybe we just can’t stomach the depravity, injustice and pain and just want this to be the end of time so that we don’t have to hear about or experience it any longer.

A young man came to my office one day seeking help in dealing with the chaos of his work environment. He told me that the supervisors who are supposed to hear complaints were the ones preying upon the young women and men in their charge – they had nowhere to turn. Theft, sexual harassment and even drug use had become the norm and if he quit he had nowhere to go. He said he wanted to be a Christian in the midst of it but didn’t know if God cared about him.

What was I to say? He quoted the scriptures about these times of hardship and depravity. I had to agree that they sounded similar. Sometimes the depravity seems like it will swallow us that take all that hope and goodness with it.

Sometimes the abuse of the human body is more than we can bear when the only consolation is spiritual. That is why Jesus walked the earth with us. Whenever I got the most discouraged as a teenager I would think about God walking around in this frail flesh and it would be enough to face my troubles. Will that always be enough? Maybe not for everyone. It was enough for this forlorn man to enable him to continue the conversation. He was able to garner enough courage to go back to work and talk with his supervisor. God knew there would always be the poor with us; danger and discouragement everywhere. So Jesus stretched out his arms on the hard wood of the cross so that everyone might come within the reach of his loving embrace.

By The Very Rev. Donna Maree