

1. Strength During COVID 19
Isaiah 41:8-10

In my years of pastoral ministry, I have found that one of the ways we respond in a situation we cannot control is with fear. What can we do to get a handle on this pandemic situation during this time of world history in dealing with the Coronavirus, COVID 19?

First, ALWAYS practice hygiene protocols. Be mindful to wash our hands, cover our nose and mouth when we sneeze, cough into our elbow, and maintain 6 feet or more of distance in social settings.

Second, many may not agree with our governor on political matters, but he is a pediatric neurologist and has a background in the medical profession. Governor Ralph Northam is asking us NOT to gather in groups of more than 10 people.

I spoke with our Gloucester County Sheriff's Office, and they said the gatherings of no more than 10 people applies to ALL Churches! Our Lord has taught us to obey the civil laws so that Christ is honored. Therefore, our church family certainly wants to obey Christ's teachings.

Third, how can we find peace of mind during COVID 19? ALWAYS turn our minds to the Word of God. In **Isaiah 41:8-10**, God spoke to Isaiah during a difficult national crisis.

*But you, Israel, **my** servant, Jacob, whom **I** have chosen, you descendants of Abraham **my** friend, **I** took you from the ends of the earth, from its farthest corners **I** called you. **I** said, 'You are **my** servant'; **I** have chosen you and have not rejected you. So do not fear, for **I** am with you; do not be dismayed, for **I** am your God. **I** will strengthen you and help you; **I** will uphold you with **my** righteous right hand.'* (the bold wording is from me).

How can these 3 verses comfort us during COVID 19? Did you notice "my" and "I" are used **13 times** from our Heavenly Father! Beloved, God was with His people during their national Old Testament crisis AND our Heavenly Father will be with us today in our 2020 pandemic crisis!

Israel was God's chosen people through kinship to Abraham. God chose them and not because of anything they had accomplished. Today, all believers in Jesus Christ are God's chosen people! While the medical profession is working diligently on a vaccine for COVID 19, here is our cure from our Great Physician, Almighty God: **WE NEED NOT TO FEAR BECAUSE ...**

(1) God is with us ("I am with you").

(2) God has established a personal relationship with us ("I am you God").

(3) God's assurance of strength, help, victory, and fellowship are with us ("My righteous right hand").

As we welcome each other by shaking with our right hand, our Heavenly Father has set the example for us to follow. The righteous right hand of God is His symbol of strength, power and His desire to welcome us into His arms of care and comfort.

He is ALWAYS welcoming ALL people into His righteous right hand of fellowship. Let us not be fearful nor discouraged. Let us obey our public officials and trust in our God who is with us and powerfully in control!

Serving Christ with you,
Pastor Bud Goude