

Dear Friends,

What a time of chaos! Jobs are lost, families are under duress, threats of violence are cropping up, there is no place for children to go, and people are wondering where to get supplies. All is chaos, fear, and uncertainty with the entire world in crisis, and one report after another bringing more bad news. Oh, you thought I was talking about our current state of affairs with the corona virus.... No. I am actually talking about what the disciples faced the week up to, and after, Jesus' crucifixion. They had left their jobs and families, expecting to be part of an earthly Kingdom with Jesus as King. No doubt they wondered if it would be like the time when David was King, or Solomon; a time of power and prosperity. They had seen His miracles, marveled at His charisma, and been amazed by His power, so wasn't it just a matter of time before He would rule, and take them with Him? One of their mothers even expected Jesus to set up an earthly kingdom, and asked Jesus if her sons could sit on His left and His right when He ruled. (Matthew 20:20-23) The disciples were literally running for their lives, no doubt wondering if they could ever return to their families. They were afraid for their lives, while watching the chaos in Jerusalem, and grieving the loss of their beloved Jesus. The temple had been desecrated with the veil being torn from top to bottom, rocks were split like bombs had hit them, tombs were scattered in the cemetery (Matthew 27:51-52), and confusion and chaos reigned throughout their city. They must have second-guessed what they had come to expect and believe, and been very afraid, even panicked. The Scriptures indicate they had gathered together, probably for some sort of comfort, and to discuss the situation, and knowing the dynamic of the group, they no doubt had differing ideas for a plan of action. Then Jesus, knowing their uncertainty and fear, sent them directions through an angel (Matthew 28: 6-10) What good news that must have been; they were going to see Him again, and maybe all would be right once again!

So here we are facing such a similar dilemma world-wide. Jobs are being lost, businesses closed, children with no place to go, food supplies limited in places, and the threat of death from disease constantly on our news. Can we not sympathize with the disciples? This is a time of great uncertainty, and our Christian faith and witness are being sorely tried. By the end, if there is one, of this crisis, people will be frustrated and angry, and violence will do doubt surge. So as Christians we must dig deep into our faith, and trust in our Savior as never before. He has promised to never leave us or forsake us (I Peter 5:7). But He also did not promise that our lives would be without pain or trial, with the promise that He has overcome the world. (John 16:33) Now is the time to be in His Word and in prayer as we recognize that we are soldiers in the spiritual battle that is raging along with the world's crisis. The world around us needs to see our peace, and unwavering hope In God, and realize they need a Savior, not the empty solutions the world offers. We are on the front lines, and can be amazing witnesses for Jesus if we just choose to. We must love one another as He has loved us. (John 13:34)

NEXT WEEK: WHAT'S A DISCIPLE TO DO?

On a personal note, thank you so much for the prayers, cards, calls and caring during my recent heart health crisis. It turned out to be more than the doctors or I anticipated, but God never lost control, and I have so much to be thankful for. I must be honest and say I am dreading the second procedure I must have in May, but God's plan for me is still one of hope and blessing, so I will rest in Him.

Blessings,

Judy