**Not Afraid – We are never alone!**

**Another week of shelter in place – in a lock down culture.**

**Will things ever be normal? Is the end of this coming? Will there be another wave? Uncertain times can bread anxiety.**

**Bombarded with news, conspiracy theories, and loneliness.**

**More contagious than Covid-19 and fear – is HOPE!**

**We are talking about how we do not need to fear for we have peace, we have hope, we have a living Savoir, we have a king, and today…**

**\*\* We have another reason to not be afraid - We will never be alone!**

**We are not alone – I am not talking about aliens…**

**When you feel anxious, alone, and afraid – in Christ you are not alone.**

**Matthew 28:18 Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.** **And surely, I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”**

**You may feel alone. But truth is this will be over eventually – and you may still feel alone.**

**BUT KNOW THIS – in Jesus you are never alone!**

**Psalm 9:9 The Lord is a refuge for the oppressed, a stronghold in times of trouble. 10 Those who know your name trust in you, for you, Lord, have never forsaken those who seek you.**

**Psalm 75:1 We thank you, O God! We give thanks because you are near. People everywhere tell of your wonderful deeds.**

* **When you are weak—God is your strength!**
* **When the world feels unstable—God is always faithful!**
* **When you are anxious, unsure, afraid—God is your hope!**
* **When you feel isolated, hurting, and alone—God is near!**
* **When you mess up, fail, sin—God is so good and ready to forgive!**

**Today we finish our NOT AFRAID series – picking up where we left off last week. Jesus ascended into heaven – he reigns as the soon coming victorious king. But until then…**

**Acts 1:3 After his suffering, (death on the cross) he presented himself to them and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God.**

**The What Now? - 1. Jesus had a clear mission**

**Jesus was not confused or misled – his death was not a mistake.**

**It was on point and intentional. Jesus had come to die - for us!**

**Often telling his disciples he would be crucified and rise.**

**The cross was not a sad story, it’s a story of triumph & victory!**

**Acts 3:4 On one occasion, (after resurrection) while he was eating with them, he gave them this command: “Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait (We are not good at waiting… Plus – they were to stay in a city that was hostile to them) for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5 For John baptized withwater, but in a few days, you will be baptized withthe Holy Spirit.”**

* **You may have knowledge, but now you need power**

**Christianity is more than just information, it's about immersion**

**Like water immersion, we are to be immersed in the Holy Spirit**

**6 Then they gathered around him and asked him, “Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?” (they still did not understand) 7 He said to them: “It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. (Don’t you worry about it - just do what you are called to do)**

* **Don't focus on the end time, focus on the now time (the current)**

**Don't worry about the transition, focus on the mission.**

**So many are obsessed with the end - books - movies - date setting - prophecy - some crave the fear & anxiety of the end times. Jesus says - don't worry about it - just do what I tell you to do.**

**(What does he tell us to do?)** **Acts 1:8 But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses (To tell others what you know, have seen, have heard, and experienced with Jesus) in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.”**

**2. Jesus gave His disciples a clear mission**

**You will be my witnesses in Garland / Sachse / Wylie / Plano / Rowlett / greater Dallas / north Texas / Texas / US and – to the ends of the earth.**

**Our mission disciples - tell the good news of Jesus to everyone!**

* **We are saved, rescued, and born again with and for a purpose**

**We are not merely saved for heavens sake and hells avoidance**

**We are commissioned and unleashed with purpose to tell the world what Jesus has accomplished and done!**

**Jesus echoes our clear mission – over and over**

**Mark 16:15 He said, “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation.”**

**Luke 24:47 – “…so that the forgiveness of sins will be preached to every nation”**

**John 20:21 Jesus said, “…As the Father has sent me, I am sending you.”**

**Matt 4:19 - Jesus invitation to follow, "come and I'll make you fishers of men."**

**God’s kingdom is the highest priority for every disciple of Jesus – above all other things!**

* **Notice the Order of mission, "Jerusalem - Judea - Samaria - world”**

**Acts 1:8 …and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, (locally- near you like you) and in all Judea (geographically- not near you like you) and Samaria, (demographically- near you not like you) and to the ends of the earth.” (Globally - not near you, not like you).**

**We start at home, then work your way out - that means you can start today – right now – those who you rub shoulders with daily.**

**He told them "…you will be my witnesses…" Are you a witness? Sure.**

**Gk. Mar-toos /martyrs - genuine testimony proven thru death.**

**Our mission is clear, but it will be difficult - it will cost our life – how can we do this? Can we stand strong during uncertainty?**

**Jesus says how - 8 …you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses…”**

**3. Jesus gives us power for this life and this mission**

**Power for what? We need power for two reasons:**

**\*Power to live a life that honors God before others**

**\*Power and boldness to tell the good news of Jesus to others**

* **The Holy Spirit - is the power of God in us to do it**

**The Holy Spirit is God in us - not an it. Jesus refers to the H.S. as a gift / Comforter / Helper / Advocate / Teacher / Guide / power of God in us.**

**We cannot know Jesus, be redeemed by Jesus, follow Jesus without the H.S – it is impossible! To effectively tell and love others Jesus sends us the HS who convicts, draws, leads, empowers!**

**You might think - I can't do that – I’m a mess up… Guess what? You’re right. That is why we are given the H.S.**

* **God uses unexpected people to accomplish his mission**

**We can't forget who this rag tag team of people were - Jesus called farmers, fishermen, reg. Joes, society rejects, immoral tax collectors, zealous fighters, and sinners caught in the act - to follow him.**

**Acts 1:9 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight. (This is vital, it was not imagined, they saw it. Jesus did not die again he sits on the throne of God. is the coming victorious king!)**

**This ensured that they had seen was the work of God not man!**

**10 days later – it happened, and the word was ignited!**

**Jesus next mission - His return. He's coming back. But this time not as a servant – but a warrior king! The resurrection is proof of his return.**

**This is our mission - back to Matthew 28:18 - Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. (Jesus has full authority to say it - not optional) 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”**

**Go – it is to be intentional**

**Make Disciples – followers not converts. People who walk w/Jesus.**

**Of all nations - every nation, tribe color, culture, race & background!**

**Baptizing them – public confession, declaration of faith & repentance**

**In the name of the FSH - what we believe matters, hold tight essentials**

**Teaching them - not instant, process of growth. Grounded in Jesus teachings. Changes in the way we think. BTW - Disciples are teachable.**

**To observe (obey) - Less about information more about transformation. Changes in the way we live. Disciples are humble.**

**I am with you always, to the very end of the age.**

**We will never be alone – He is with us always and forever.**

**4. Jesus will be with you (his disciples) always**

**Gen 28:15, Ex 33:14, Josh 1:9, Deut 31:6,8, Is 41:10, Is 43:2, Zeph 3:17, Matt 28:20, John 14:16-17, Romans 3:38-39, Hebrews 13:35, Rev 21:1-27**

**What do they all say – Jesus is faithful, close and near and will never ever leave you alone!!!**

**Matthew 25 Jesus parable: Master leaves his wealth (represents The Word) in the hands of 3 servants. 2 did great things with it - 1 hid it. The Master responds to each differently. What will Jesus find when he returns – what have we done with what he has given?**

**Will he find His people too scared to tell to a friend, too selfish to help a neighbor, or too proud to reach out to a stranger - paralyzed by what people think - married to materialism & self-obsessed.**

**Jesus will be back… what will he find and say to you?**

**Matthew 25:21 – when the master returned to the faithful servants... 21 His lord said to him, ‘Well done, good and faithful servant; you were faithful over a few things, I will make you ruler over many things. Enter into the joy of your lord.’**

**Finish line ribbon – We run a race – we may run and stumble, and fail, and lose our way, but get back up and run – run for Jesus is calling us.**

**I will grab as many who will come with me and run - because I only get one change to run this race - and one day I will cross the line. Tired and well spent…**

**Jesus my king will wrap his arms around me – and I want to hear him say… well done though good and faithful servant…**

**And I pray – that I can look up and see those who are there because I lived His mission. The tape is stretched**

**The race of faith – but there are those who race for themselves**

**We got the what now? We got the how? Now it’s time for the – The DO!**

**We are to be a people - unleashed on a city and the world!**

**Proclaiming and living the life and love of Jesus everywhere we go!**

**And Jesus says assuredly - I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”**

**I want to end on a verse we started with when this happened.**

**Philippians 4:4-7**