

## Study Guide

Sermon Series: Crossing Life's Rivers

Scripture Passage: Isaiah 43:1-5

April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020

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**Read:** Isaiah 43:1-5; Romans 8:1-4, 28-30

### Discussion Questions

1. Isaiah's reminder to Israel to "Fear not, for I have redeemed you...When you pass through the waters..." was spoken to them within the context of their exile in Babylon. God's Word, Scripture, is not just a wish and a prayer, but a proclamation of who God is and what God will be for God's people. Reflect upon that truth that this is not just something we hope will be true, but something God has literally staked His identity upon through covenant promises.
2. God's people have always found themselves facing opposition that is much larger, stronger, more imposing than they are able to face on their own. How do the stories of Israel's captivity, exile, experience of surrounding foes impact your thinking, prayer life, faith during Covid-19?
3. In verse 2 of Isaiah 43 God says to Isaiah: "When you pass through the waters, I will be with you." This "when" is in the indicative form, it is not a matter of "if" you have to pass through waters, but "when." Take some time with your group and discuss an experience or two in your life that required you to pass through the waters. Does this indicative, circumstantial assurance that tough stuff will come actually make the facing of it a little more hopeful?
4. Read Romans 8:1-4, 28-30
5. The hope we have of Easter is that Jesus made the ultimate passage through the cross and death, overcoming both for our sake. Take a moment together to reflect silently, with gratitude, the gift of his atoning death for our sake. Together discuss/brainstorm tangible or visible reminders we can put in place for ourselves to be reminded each day that Jesus' passing through the waters before us gives us strength in our times of struggle.

For example: each time I pass a Hawk perched on a telephone line alongside the road as I drive I use it as a tangible reminder that the Holy Spirit is with me. Amy did something similar, whenever she saw a Cardinal (sorry Cubs fans, the bird not the club) she thought of the Holy Spirit with her. Coming up with these expressions from creation can be like a little wink from God.

### Pray

Lord Jesus, thank you for going before us, passing through the ultimate valley, the widest river, and leading us to the other side. We ask that you would make yourself visible and knowable through your Word and the witness of creation, and give us courage and faith to walk through the difficult experiences of life with you, God.