

Adam Sandiford

This week's message was recorded in Don's office. You can watch a video of it on Facebook or on our YouTube channel. The sermon is titled Do not fear and the scripture reading is Isaiah 41, verses nine to 10 and 13. 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. For I'm the Lord your God who takes hold of your right hand and says to you Do not fear I will help you.

Don Smith

I want to share some thoughts that I hope will be helpful and encouraging this morning. I also want to let you know that I'm going to forget to say certain things, and I don't feel badly about that, because in my past 42 years of preaching happens to me every single time I preach as I'm driving home, I remember that I forgot. But anyway, we're going to share some things that I hope would be helpful, especially because of the situation that we're in. Now there are times when our world our world is turned upside down. And this has been the case from the beginning of time, even going back to the Garden of Eden, you know how things were turned upside down. But even in the past decade or so, from World War One, and World War Two, plagues and diseases throughout the world. We don't minimize these things, but we don't allow them to haunt us. We remember and read and put into our hearts, the promises of God the promises of Jesus when he said In this world, you will have trouble. And I think that many people have said we didn't think we'd have as much trouble as we've had. But in this world, you will have trouble. But then these words, But take heart, because I have overcome the world. And maybe another way of saying that is I've overcome your world. I'll never leave you. I'll never forsake you. I knew you were before you were born. I know everything about you. And he's reminding us that he is with us, always. And there have been times when even believers have wanted to give up. So we're reminded of what Paul said, Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and petition with thanksgiving. let your requests be made known to God, and the peace of God, which transcends all understanding will help guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

So maybe one of the ways of just thinking about this is if you're isolated, and you're feeling alone, is to picture God himself in the room with you, because he is picture Jesus, sitting beside you, and you can talk to him. He'll hear you and think of God's Spirit who is living in you. Because we are reminded of God the Father, God, the Son, God, the Holy Spirit living inside us. At this time of year to when the difficulties are happening all throughout the world, it's good to get out every once in a while and go for a walk or communicate with friends. Some of you are old enough to remember a song that was written by Dionne Warwick A number of years ago. That's what friends are for, and our lyrics go this way. And I never thought I'd feel this way. And as far as I'm concerned, I'm glad I got the chance to say that I do believe I love you. And if I should ever go away, well then close your eyes and try to feel the way we do today. And then if you can remember, and here are the words, keep smiling, keep shining, knowing you can always count on me, for sure. That's what friends are for. For good times, and bad times. I'll be on your side forevermore. That's what friends are for. And Jesus told his disciples that he was their friend, and that he should no longer be called teacher. But friend. Yes, a friend forevermore. So today as we go through some of the Scriptures that I like to share, we can picture Jesus sitting beside us sitting with us, and being with us all throughout this. I saw a sign driving to church this morning that I thought was

really good. It said, Don't worry about tomorrow. God is already there. His presence is with us always come to me, he said, all of you who are burdened, and I will give you rest. And as we are reminded, laughter is also good medicine. That's the kind of medicine that we need to be taking every day.

And think of the fruit of the Spirit. Love, joy, peace, and patience, and kindness, and goodness, and faithfulness, and gentleness, and self control. These aren't just words, but they're attitudes that we can have that reflect the very nature of God Himself. And so many people are going out of their way to help others. My good friend, Alden Moore, from Sundridge, commented recently, the human spirit is truly amazing. People reaching out to others, coming alongside others, calling others texting one another, making sure they're okay. Spending time with one another, even at a distance to the communication that we have before us today. So we thank you, all of you for your loving kindness that you're showing to so many people. As human beings were made up in a variety of ways, with physical, intellectual, emotional, and spiritual, maybe one of the things that we can think about is physically, keep walking. And even if you have to walk by yourself, sometimes in lonely areas, that's a real good thing to do. Because as you're walking, you can pray you can remember You can talk, physically keep walking. intellectually, keep reading, maybe now is one of the opportunities we have to read books that you've always wanted to read, but didn't have time to read, but good books, books that will help you to grow emotionally, keep loving, and spiritually, keep praying, knocking on the door of heaven, banging, to get in knowing that you are in and talking to God. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit is with all of us. And I think of some of the great scriptures in the Bible scriptures that aren't just written for us. But scriptures that were written for people who are going through some very difficult times. So if you wanted to Turn in your Bible, if you have one, Romans chapter eight is one of those really special passages of Scripture that reminds us that we are more than conquerors in Christ that no matter what is going on, that we can share with Christ and that Christ shares with us.

So these are familiar words. But I think they're positive words. I think they're helpful words, even for today, even though these words were written many thousands of years ago. And it's reminder, here's what Paul says, and we know that in everything, all things, God works for the good of those who love Him, and who have been called according to His purpose, for those God for new, which is an interesting thought. In Acts chapter 17. Paul reminds us that God knew us before we were born, that he knew the exact time and places in which we, we would live. So we're not just by chance. God knew us, even before the creation of the world. And so we reread this enrollment eight, for those God for new. That's us. He also predestined to be conformed to the likeness of Jesus, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined, he also called, and those he called us, he also justified and those He justified, he also glorify God has special plans for each one of us. And he's working them out through us if we allow him to work in our lives. And because of these great comments, Paul Ben says this watch Should we say in response to all the things that we've just said? He said, If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all? How will he not also along with him graciously give us all things? Who will bring any charge against those who God has chosen? It is God who justifies. Who is he that condemns? Christ Jesus who died, and more than that, who was raised to life is at the right hand of God, and is also interceding for us. So then these beautiful words, who shall separate us from the love of God and Christ, shall trouble or hardship or persecution, or famine, or nakedness or danger or sword.

May I just stop at this point to say, We're going through some difficult times, but we haven't gone through these difficult times of terrible, terrible persecution. So then he continues and he says, as it's written, for your sake, we face death all day long. And we are considered as sheep to be slaughtered. And I don't think that we're in that situation either. But then he says, No, in all these things. We are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I'm convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present, nor the future, nor any powers, neither height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God. That is in Christ Jesus. Our Lord was thinking about that earlier this morning. I think of the times when Barb and I were able to bring children into this world with Brianne and Brian, and Carly. And as they come into the world, there they are open, and we hugged them and love them and feed them and teach them. And to this day, we feel the same way. We have this special relationship. They will always be our children, even though they're grown adults and have their own children. And then we think of our grandchildren. This is how God feels about us, pouring out his love into our hearts. He loves us because we are His children, as we love our children, no matter their age. And yes, because of what's happening right now there is fear in this world. But fear does not stop us from loving one another for reaching out to one another for encouraging one another,

Paul also wrote to a church. And in Acts chapter 17, when people are questioning and they have all kinds of ideologies and philosophies, Paul just speaks these words plainly and boldly, with confidence. He says, the God who made the world, and everything in it is the Lord of heaven and earth. And he does not live in temples built by hands. And he's not served by human hands, as if he needed anything, because he himself gives all people life and breath and everything else. From one man, he made every nation of people that they should inhabit the whole earth. And he determined the exact times set up for them in the exact places where they should live. God did this. So the people I would seek Him, and perhaps reach out for him and find him, though he is not far from each one of us. And then these beautiful words, for him, we live. For him, we move for him, we have our very being. We're not alone in this world. We've never been alone. He's always with us. So I thought, for the remainder of my time, today, I wanted to look at some scriptures that deal with fear, reminding us that God is with us. And some of these passages are familiar.

And some may not be. Obviously Psalm 23 is a very popular scripture, and there's a reason for it. It talks about this closeness that we have with God. Here's what David said. The Lord is my shepherd. I shall not be in want. He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside quiet waters. He restores my soul. He guides me in the paths of righteousness for his namesake. And even though I walk to the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil. You are with me, your rod and your staff, they comfort me. You prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil, my cup overflows. Surely goodness and love will follow me all the days of my life. And I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever. So this scripture was written thousands of years ago, but it's still as true today as ever, this relationship that we have with God and the relationship we have with our loved ones and the relationship that we have with friends.

Some of us You know, John Lumley very well, who had some surgery recently, he came through the surgery well, but getting to see him was something I really wanted to do. And I wasn't quite sure that because of the virus if I was allowed to get in, sometimes being a minister has its advantages. And I knew that at noon, no one else was going to be allowed to get in. So I went, and I called earlier, and they said, Well, if you pass the questions that we asked you, you might be able to get in. Long story short, I

got to the front door was welcomed. I had a number of questions to answer. I took a couple of steps. Another person asked me questions I had to answer. I kept having people asking me questions. And finally I got through. I got down to where John Lumley was in a room where lots of people were around doctors and nurses and so forth, and was able to get close to John. Talk to him. And John smiled. He knew I was there, we chatted, we prayed. He smiled, when I laugh. There's a connection there, that even though there's great difficulties in our world, and even with this virus going on, it's so important to reach out to one another. That's how God feels about us. Nothing's going to stop him from loving us in fear is present. But he goes beyond the fear. Don't be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God. And when we go through trials after it's over, that's when the Thanksgiving can rest on us. And we can ask God for His patience with us when we've worried and we can thank him for his help. Psalm 46 talks about the God is our world. refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear even though Earth gives way in the mountain falls into the heart of the sea, though once waters roar and foam in the mountains quake with their surging, there is a river who screams make glad the City of God, the Holy Place where the Most High dwells, God is within her, she will not fall, God will help her at the break of day, the Lord, all mighty is with us. Be still and know that I am God and I will be exalted among the nations. I will be exalted in the earth.

So we are going through difficult times, but we're reminded that the Earth has experienced difficult times, many times previously. So we do not fear be afraid we Trust in God, and we put our love toward him as well. Let me conclude by just reading a couple of other verses from the book of Isaiah. I said, You are my servant, I have chosen you, and I have not rejected you. So do not fear. 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 hand. For I am the larger God who takes hold of your hand and says, Do not be afraid. I am helping you. Do not be afraid. I myself will help you, declares the Lord. Thank you for tuning in today. I hope some of these things have been helpful. I think as the weeks go by, I'll probably feel more relaxed. so grateful to Adam Sandiford who's, who's right in front of me by about six feet, who's allowing all this to take place. And we'll just kind of work with each other throughout this next number of weeks, we pray for everyone's health. And let's conclude by offering this prayer. God, we thank you, we love you. We're so grateful that you're part of the overall scheme of salvation for all people. We believe so strongly that you are with us that you'll never leave us. We pray for all those in our congregation in our communities, that they people will be safe, and that fear will no longer dominate their life. And then we may be an encouragement to each other. Thank you for giving us the strength to move forward day by day. In May we share your love with others around us through Christ we pray. Amen.

Adam Sandiford

Thanks for listening to this week's sermon. The Beamsville Church of Christ meets Sunday mornings at 4900 John Street Beamsville, Ontario. We have classes for all ages at 930 and the worship service begins at 1030. You can subscribe to podcasts through Apple Podcasts, Google Play Music Store or your favorite podcast app. Just search for Beamsville. All our past sermons and more information about our congregation are available at [www.beamsvillechurchofchrist.ca](http://www.beamsvillechurchofchrist.ca)

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