

This Too Shall Pass, Week 4 of Navigating Deep Waters

Presented by Rev. Kristen Lowe on 9-30-2018

At Crossroads United Methodist Church

Waunakee, WI

Scripture:

Isaiah 43: 1-2

“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have summoned you by name; you are mine. 2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you.

John 7: 37-39

On the last and greatest day of the festival, Jesus stood and said in a loud voice, “Let anyone who is thirsty come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as Scripture has said, rivers of living water will flow from within them.” By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed in him were later to receive.

Exodus 14: 10, 13-15, 21-22

As Pharaoh approached, the Israelites looked up, and there were the Egyptians, marching after them. They were terrified and cried out to the LORD. It would have been better for us to serve the Egyptians than to die in the desert!” Moses answered the people, “Do not be afraid. Stand firm and you will see the deliverance the LORD will bring you today. The LORD will fight for you; you need only to be still.” Then the LORD said to Moses, “Why are you crying out to me? Tell the Israelites to move on. Raise your staff and stretch out your hand over the sea to divide the water so that the Israelites can go through the sea on dry ground. Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and all that night the LORD drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land. The waters were divided, and the Israelites went through the sea on dry ground, with a wall of water on their right and on their left.



My mother used to have a saying that used to drive me crazy! I can remember when I was about 7 years old and I dropped our pet rabbit and injured it's back. I was so sad and upset with myself I thought I should never hold anything ever again! My mom looked at me and said, “Oh Krissy, this too shall pass!”

This Too Shall Pass, Week 4 of Navigating Deep Waters

When I was a sophomore and fell madly in love with the senior who barely knew I existed, I decided to put myself out there and tell him how I felt in a poem. It became the comic reference of the semester. I was devastated and thought I'd never, ever love again! My mom said, "Oh Krissy, this too shall pass."

When I turned 16, the pastor who had been my pastor for the past 12 years, and had shaped my faith, was reassigned to a different church. My heart was shattered! It was like there was a door he was going to walk through with nothing on the other side. My mom said, "Oh Krissy, this too shall pass."

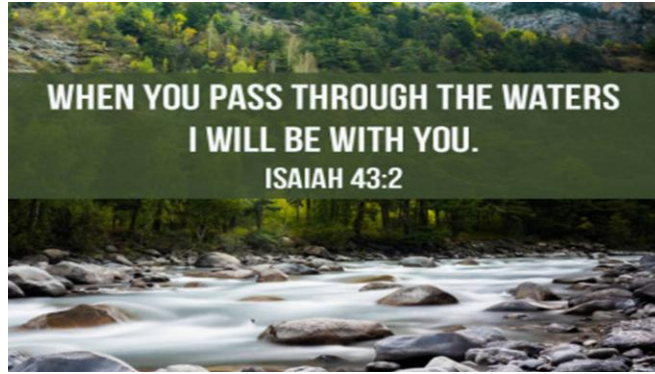
This saying drove me crazy! Because I thought, how would she know?!? Doesn't she understand that the sky is falling and nothing will ever be the same? Doesn't she realize that this is the end of the world? I think she did. That's why she said it. She was trying to reassure me.



On a snowy December day four years ago, I carried my mother into her house and helped her get into the hospital bed that hospice had brought over for her. I thought, everything I'm doing right now with my mom will be the very last. I was sick with grief and pain. Some of you have been there. I thought, "this won't pass. It will come and I will never be able to laugh or breathe or get up from this chair ever again!" My mom still had a bit of strength at that time to speak, although it was very soft and shaky. Guess what she told me?"

And... you know what? She was right. I have held animals, fine china, the steering wheel of a large vehicle and my daughter since the rabbit incident. I have connected with and learned from pastors since Cletus Kramer. I have loved and have had my heart broken and have loved again. And, I did get up from that chair by my mother's bed, I did breathe and laugh again and now find myself saying to my daughter, "Oh Hannah, this too shall pass." God did as he promised. He was with me through the waters.

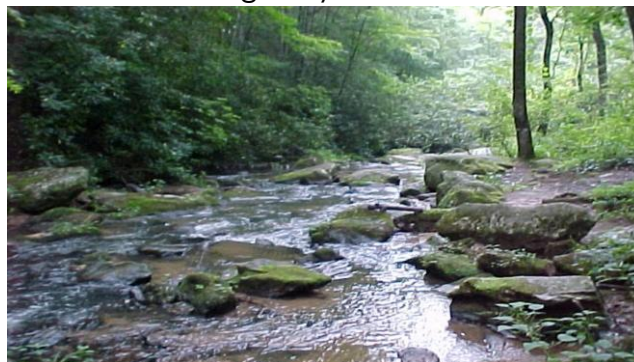
This Too Shall Pass, Week 4 of Navigating Deep Waters



The scripture tells us that “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you.” Like Moses and the children of Israel. We will pass through the waters. That’s what life is. And we’re able to do this with hope and a future because we have Christ in our lives. It is faith in God that tells us that after the storm there will be a rainbow. It is knowing that God is with us as we pass through the waters that we are able to know that whatever change comes, we will not be swept away.



The point is, that nothing is ever stationary. At least, to be healthy, it can't be. Ecclesiastes tell us that everything has its own season right? And each season is markedly different. A time to be born and a time to die. A time to plant and a time to reap. I mean, what would happen if one of those things stayed constant?



We’ve been navigating the water now for the month of September. And, what we notice is that the water is always moving... always alive! We walked with Ezekiel ankle deep, knee deep, waist deep and finally over his head through the water that flowed from the throne. We went with Moses through the Red sea as it parted. We sat in the boat with

This Too Shall Pass, Week 4 of Navigating Deep Waters

Noah and his family as God sustained them over the waves. In other places, we read about the living water that flows out from us when we are believers. Isaiah tells us that “you will be like a watered garden, And like a spring whose waters do not fail.” We find praise in 2nd Samuel when the waters represent troubles. “He sent from on high, He took me; He drew me out of many waters. Could these be the waters that we fear can sweep over us?”



Healthy water is flowing. It's going to the next place. The water passes. If it does not, it is still and becomes stagnant. To be refreshing water... healing water... it must be moving.

We would not drink water from a stagnant pool. But sheep would. Think about Psalm 23. He leads me beside still waters. This scripture accentuates the need for a shepherd. Too often we think of the still waters in this verse, we think of those beautiful landscape paintings. Unfortunately, the interpretation has been skewed. We need to consider the psalm from the perspective of a shepherd and his sheep.



Sheep are incapable of finding good water on their own. If left alone, sheep will drink whatever water they stumble upon, even if it is stagnant, filthy and unfit to drink. They must follow the shepherd if they want to find clean, refreshing water. Also, Sheep will not drink from water that is running too fast. And, remember when Christ calmed the storm and said, “Peace be still?”

This Too Shall Pass, Week 4 of Navigating Deep Waters



All these water references in the Bible. Hundreds of them! so is the water supposed to be moving or still? The answer is: moving. It must pass. So, what about the still waters in the scripture? Well, if we go the literal Hebrew interpretation, the word is: מי מנוכת, *mee meno chooth* It means waters of rests; babbling brook waters. Waters that are not chaotic or dangerous. But... they certainly aren't frozen in place or stagnant.



When Hannah was little, I used to walk her to 4k, which was only about a half mile from the parsonage. We would stop at the bridge that went over the street. Sometimes we would drop a stick in on one side and rush over to see it flow through on the other. It would pass as the stream carried it.

Had the water been stagnant, it would have just gotten bogged down with the other debris. If it were chaotic, it could be lost or even dangerous to stand on the bridge. The water has to pass in a quiet healthy flow. And that's how we are to live our lives... And how the living water can thrive within us. Balance.

As you begin a new chapter with Pastor Scott, remember that change is constant. Everything must pass, like the stick that floats from one side to the other underneath the bridge.

The water reminds us that if it stays still, stagnation occurs. We can't let that happen in our Christian lives. If the water is too rough it's hard to drink from. But we have to remember, that God is still God over the waters. Maybe that's what Jesus was telling us when he stilled the storm. No matter what kind of nature the water has, God is still God and everything will have its season. And, each season will pass to the next to the glory of God.

This Too Shall Pass, Week 4 of Navigating Deep Waters



Sometimes that's a good reminder during seasons of change... That we need a shepherd to help us find the still waters and navigate them. Sometimes we lose sight of this fact and we like to think we are captains of our own ship and that we have control over the water. We know this isn't true. Sometimes we are sheep and we are thirsty. We remember that in both instances, we need to put Christ first. He must be the captain and the shepherd and must be the one we trust when we pass through the waters. Amen