

As I sit with the reality of our lives today given the coronavirus and the fact that next Sunday is Easter...

I was taken to the hours before and following Jesus' crucifixion

For those who were faithful followers of Jesus, they were devastated

Their world was turned upside down

Everything they hoped for and believed was killed on the cross

Jesus had told them about this day and tried to prepare them

He promised that the Holy Spirit would come as a Comforter to be with them

And remind them of everything that Jesus had told them

But when it happened, they weren't ready... they were devastated and afraid

Let's go back to Jesus' message to them as he told them he was leaving — words for us today

A message to carry in these days when we face unprecedented changes to life

Jesus reminds us to trust him and to do life by following Jesus' ways

By doing that we will be with Jesus, because Jesus and God are one

When Jesus leaves, the Holy Spirit, the Advocate, the Comforter will come to us

Abide in Jesus and bear fruit as God the vine grower tends the vines

Love one another as Jesus loves us

We are friends of Jesus who are chosen by him

The Spirit will guide us and tell us what we need to know as we need it

In this world, we will face [trouble], but take courage, Jesus has conquered the world

We are one, God and Christ in us—we have the fullness of God and God's love in us

I'm going to challenge us this week to read the story of Jesus' last week on earth in John 12-19

These chapters include John 14-17 where Jesus talks to his friends and that I summarized

Next week, on Easter, we will gather and complete the story

The other message I heard this week, is from Gil George, assistant clerk of Sierra-Cascades Yearly Meeting

His daughter couldn't sleep and asked Gil to sing for her

Among the songs he sang for her was "God Giveth More Grace"

He writes, "When I sang this for them, both of my children started chuckling. I asked them why and they said it was because when the song spoke of hoarded resources, they could only imagine toilet paper."

It seems like a good reminder for us during this pandemic — God's grace is sufficient for these days

*God giveth more grace as our burdens grow greater,
God sendeth more strength as our labors increase,
To added afflictions God addeth God's mercy,
To multiplied trials, God multiplied peace.*

*When we have exhausted our store of endurance,
When our strength has failed ere the day is half done,
When we reach the end of our hoarded resources,
Our Father's full giving is only begun.*

*God's love has no limit, God's grace has no measure,
God's power has no boundary known unto us;
For out of God's infinite riches in Jesus,
God giveth, and giveth, and giveth again.*