

**PASS THROUGH THE WATERS**  
**October 15, 2017 –Baptism Sunday –Isaiah 43: 1-5**  
**The Church of the Covenant**

When the flood waters rose in the parking lot this summer and ruined a lot of automobiles, did that feel to you like an image of God's love and the enfolding of children and new Christians into the embrace of God? I don't think so. But God's love has transformed the image of raging, chaotic destructive floodwaters into an image of baptism and the embrace of little children into the arms of Jesus. In the same way that the love of God has transformed the cross from an image of suffering and shame into a sign of life and eternal life, so too has God transformed the raging, rising torrential floodwaters. It is the power of love to transform the world!

What does it mean to be in covenant with God? What does it mean to be in relationship with the Lord of the universe? What does it mean to have Jesus as personal Lord and Savior alive in our heart through the Holy Spirit? What does it mean to a little baby baptized and taken into the arms of Jesus and have from his earliest memories the Spirit alive in his little heart? It means that there is an unbreakable, unshakable, unchanging covenant relationship of love established by God through Jesus Christ into the heart of a child. Jesus today promises to be with this little child and to walk with him throughout his life, no matter what.

In our scripture from Isaiah God promises those whom He has called to be baptized – *“When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers they shall not overwhelm you.” (Isaiah 43: 2)* Whatever storm in life you may face I will get you through it, promises the Lord God to those with whom He is in covenant. Whatever rising, raging rivers seek to overwhelm you and suck you down into the vortex of destruction and death, I will walk with you through it each step along the way. The hurricanes of life, I will be the eye of peace and calm in the center of it. The tornadoes of life, I will be your storm shelter. From life to death, from infancy to adulthood, from youth to old age, from birth to death, I promise I will hold your hand and never let you go, says the Lord. That's what it means to be in covenant with the Lord God Almighty, through what Jesus has done for us at Calvary, in the power of the Holy Spirit.

Why? God says in our passage from Isaiah –“I have created you; I have formed you.” He goes on to state: “Fear not, I have redeemed you (through the precious blood of Jesus); I have called you by name (this is a personal God in whom there is a personal covenant in

whom there is a personal relationship). You are mine, say the Lord. I have named you and I have claimed you. I have created you and I have redeemed you. Why? He says it right there in verse 4: *“Because you are precious in my eyes...and I love you.”* (Isaiah 43: 4) That’s why “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you” is an unshakable, unbreakable, everlasting, unchangeable promise of covenant relationship that God forges with us in His steadfast love and faithfulness. The promise and covenant of God is sure and certain, and it is the promise and covenant of God into which we baptize this baby today...

Repeat after me: “Fear not, for I have redeemed you.” Repeat after me: “I have called you by name, you are mine.” Repeat after me: “When you pass through the waters, I will be with you.” Repeat after me: “Because you are precious in my eyes and I love you.” A promise of covenant with God through the waters of baptism...

At Washington Hospital I love a certain poster that is in the back of the main elevator going up to the hospital rooms. There is a picture of a beautiful baby, sort of olive-skinned, with very large, round and very brown eyes. Perhaps you’ve seen it, too. And if you look very, very carefully at the picture you will see an image reflected back at you in the glimmering eyes of the little baby. I have often tried to see WHO it is staring back at me through the infant’s eyes. I think it is the father. I think it is the image of the father reflected back through the eyes of the child.

When we look at a little baby baptized and when we look very carefully into its little eyes, I believe we see the love of the heavenly Father looking back at us. When you pass through the waters in life, little one, Fear not, for I am with you; you are precious and I love you, promises the Lord; I will demonstrate to you the power of my love through my covenant. Look, see what great love the Father has for us, that we should be called children of the covenant, and so we are. Amen and Amen.

*By: The Reverend Dr. Stuart D. Broberg, The Church of the Covenant, Washington,  
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*IF THIS HAS BLESSED YOU, PLEASE PASS IT ALONG TO A FRIEND!*