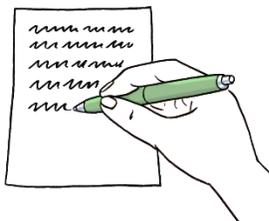


From the Pastor's Pen

I was just asked this question from a pastor friend of mine, "If you



could write a letter to the Church at Large, what would you say?" That was a good question

and it got me thinking. I thought that since it is time once again to write a letter to the folks at LoG, I would attempt to answer this question. So, here it goes!

My Brothers and Sisters in Christ, there are a great many things that I'd like to say. So many in fact, it is difficult to keep track of them all. I could talk about the affects COVID is having upon us personally, and upon the Church as a whole. I could talk about the difficulties and challenges we face every day in a society where we are losing ground and sway every day, in

every way. I could talk about the importance of outreach



and living the life of discipleship. I could pontificate upon the fact that we, God's people are being sifted like wheat in the midst of this fallen world of death.

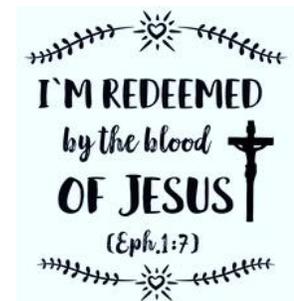
Those are good and viable, nay necessary topics to address. I have had several discussions along all these lines with many of you over the past four months. I greatly

enjoy engaging with y'all in conversations along these lines.

It is beneficial and rewarding for all involved.

However, I want y'all to know, above all else, that we are all the redeemed people of God in Jesus' death and resurrection. He has called us by name, we are His (Is.

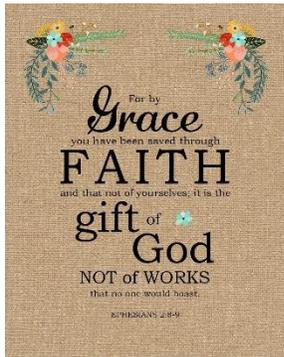
43:1). He has placed His name upon our hearts, and we have our names engraved upon His heart (Revelation 2:17, 3:5, 3:12). We have a personal, loving and intimate Father who is deeply concerned about all His people. He sees our struggles. He knows our fears, anger, rage, frustration and despair in the light of today's challenges of body, mind and spirit. He gives us His Holy Spirit of power, love and self-discipline (2



Timothy 1:7) to help us fight the good fight of the faith (I Timothy 6:12), every day we live. His Spirit drives out the spirit of sin and Satan (John 3:5-

6) and gives us peace the world can't give (John 14:27). He is with us always, even unto the very end of the Age (Matthew 28:20).

My Brothers and Sisters, we were not a people. We were once lost in slavery to Satan, sin and death. Now we are the people of God (I Peter 2:9-10). He has called us, enlightened and enlivened us in faith. We are a Kingdom of Priests (I Peter 2:9). He has justified us by grace through faith, apart from boasting works, for we are God's



workmanship created in Christ Jesus to do good works that were created beforehand that we should live in them, always (Ephesians 2:8-10). He wants

us to respond to His love for us by living the life of discipleship, struggling between our two natures of sinner and saint (Romans 7:7-25), and being fed by Him in His Word. He has called us to a life of suffering servanthood in Jesus Christ, who came not to be served but rather to serve and to give His life as a ransom for many (Mark 10:45).

We all struggle with this faith. We should struggle with it. It is good to struggle and strive with our faith. He has called us to do just that as His already redeemed people. The forces of evil raging war against us (Ephesians 6:12), His Church is nothing new under the sun. Satan has been raging

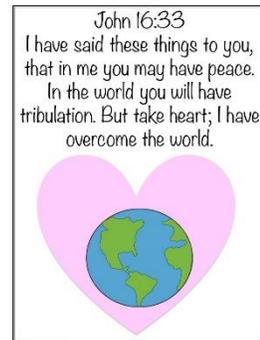
war against Christ's Church ever since His ascension into heaven. He will continue to rage against us until Jesus returns for us (Revelation 22:20).

Jesus has always been honest and up front with us about this. He's never tried to hide the truth, water it down, candy coat it or promise us our best life now. He plainly says we will be hated, scorned, mocked, spit upon and suffer many things on account of His name, but to take heart for He has overcome the world (John

16:33). The world hates us because it hated Him first (John 15:8). We are blessed when people curse us, hate us and

despise us on account of His name (Matthew 5:11). We are called to daily cross bearing and self-denial (Matthew 16:24). We are called to freely give as we have freely received (Matthew 10:8).

We should not be shocked that being a Christian is a difficult and narrow path (Matthew 7:14) and that few will travel it. However, it is a path which leads to eternal life and rest, peace and blessing (Revelation 7:14-17, Mark 10:30). God may be testing us in this life, sifting us via sufferings and struggles (Luke 22:31), and causing our faith to grow and



prosper despite of and during these trying times. God fully loves each



and every one of us, not because we are so intrinsically good or righteous. In fact, it is just the opposite! We are sinful and unclean,

yet Jesus dies for us sinners (Romans 5:8). He has loved us with an everlasting, unconditional love in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior.

There's still so much more to say. We have time together to say much. I am greatly enjoying my time here serving as your pastor. I am looking forward to many fruitful years of service together. We are going to walk through this journey of faith together. I am here for you, and we are here for each other as a result of God's love for us. Rest easy my friends. Rest easy in His peace and means of grace. We are walking this narrow path together, and we are never alone. God's peace be with you all.

