

Calm in the Storm

A year ago, I thought I knew what this year, 2020, would look like. Where I would be going, what I would be doing. None of us could have foreseen the scenario we are living out now. Yet I am strangely comforted knowing that I am not where I thought I would be...

A year ago, I was filling out a residency application to move to Australia. We had decided it was time. We prayed. We waited. We didn't have a sense one way or the other about what God would have us to do. So we made the decision to go. Our heart was to do the will of God. We wanted to serve Him while reaching out to family in Australia and providing a life we thought we wanted for our girls. We had made this decision together as a couple. It seemed so right.

And then it wasn't right. November brought with it a turn of events we had not expected. Another baby. Due in July. Right when we were planning to move. God must know what He is doing. We accepted it with joy and peace. We told family our plans had changed.

Then the miscarriage. What in the world is God doing? Why so much confusion? Now what? We had already committed to staying. So we stayed. Trusting that God is good and He has good plans, but that His plans are much bigger than us.

For the past 3 months I have been seeking. Trying to figure out what God wants from me. Who does He want me to be? If I quit my job now, who am I? If I seek to be a better wife, what does that look like for the husband God gave me? If I were a stay-at-home mom, would that be enough? Should I get another job in ministry or just get a job to make money?

I have often had trouble in my life, getting so wrapped up in who I am and trying to figure out what God wants me to be that I forget the most important thing. Just as Martha was busy with preparations for Jesus, she had forgotten the most important thing: "But the Lord answered her, 'Martha, Martha, you are anxious and troubled about many things, but one thing is necessary. Mary has chosen the good portion, which will not be taken away from her'" (Luke 10:41-42). Mary was sitting at Jesus' feet, listening to his teaching.

As a mom with young children, it is hard to make time for anything. And yet there are some things that are essential, and time at the feet of Jesus is essential. I didn't know how to prioritize that a few years ago. But slowly I have carved out a time and place to be with Him. I study my Bible. I pray. I journal. And He meets me there. I am getting to know Him. I am learning to praise Him for who He is. Not because of what He has done (although that too). But when I start to see the bigger picture, outside of myself and my time in history, I see Him and this story He is writing.

Quite a while back when I was trying to figure out the “why” to something, my husband suggested this instead: “When we can’t learn more about why, we have to learn more about God.” This has really stuck with me. And may be part of what drives me to study God’s Word. As I get to know Him more, I want to know Him more and I start to see that my questions are not as important as I thought they were. And I start to see what is important. At least, what God calls important.

So for the past 3 months, as I have been seeking who God wants me to be, He has been revealing Himself to me. It’s as if every question I ask about me is answered with a truth about who He is. “I am the bread of life” (John 6:35). “I am the way, the truth and the life” (John 14:6). “I am who I am” (Exodus 3:14). And in Revelation I am reminded, “Worthy are you, our Lord and God, to receive glory and honor and power, for you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created” (Revelation 4:11).

So right now, in the midst of this coronavirus that is causing world-wide fear, anxiety, job insecurity, financial upset, delays in travel and business, and even death, I am experiencing such a deep sense of peace and calm. Of course I have concerns. And I don’t take lightly the turmoil that many others are going through. But a year ago I thought that this time of year we would be getting our house ready to sell. We would be purging and prepping to get a shipping crate for all our belongings. I thought I would be coaching my 7-year-old to transition into the middle of 2nd grade for a different school year in Australia. I thought I would be studying to take an exam for my profession in another country. And I thought my residency application would not take the average 14 months to be approved. I think about all that stress I could have been experiencing on top of this world-wide pandemic and I think, You do know the plans You have for me! This pandemic is not a surprise to Him. It is affecting the whole world. He has so much to attend to as God of the universe, and yet He cared enough about me and my family to keep us from making a decision that would have been just really bad timing. His ways are not our ways (Isaiah 55:8-9).

I have just come through, and really am still going through, a really confusing and uncertain time in my life. I still have so many questions about my future, about the next couple of months. But for me right now. I feel strengthened. To continue on with the path He has marked out for me. I already knew I could trust Him, but He has reassured me that He is there, and He does care about me specifically, and for all who put their trust in Him. Is He worthy? He is!