

WARM-UP

- Tell us about one of the hardest things you had to do in the past year.
- If you were not afraid of anything, what would you do? Why?
- Growing up, what is one word your parents or guardians used to describe you? What impact do you think it had on you?

WORD *¹But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. ²When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you."* **ISAIAH 43:1-2**

(Read also **ISAIAH 43:3-7**.)

Israel had failed to trust God. They had trusted in many other things, to no avail, and even rebelled against God. As a result, they faced His judgment and discipline. They even felt like God had abandoned them. However, God remains faithful—to fulfill His promises, to the covenant He made with His people, and to His own character. After everything Israel had done and been through, God referred to them as *redeemed, mine* (Isaiah 43:1), *precious*, and *honored* (Isaiah 43:4). Because He remains faithful, His people can have courage and face every challenge. In this lesson, we will highlight two reasons to not fear.

1 | We will not fear for God is our Redeemer.

But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: "Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine." ISAIAH 43:1

God not only created and formed His people. He also redeemed them and called them His. When God calls people by name, this shows that God knows who they are. This also brings peace and security. If we believe Him, we belong to Him as well. Because of this, no matter what else happens in our lives and even in times that we have failed Him, we can choose to live in hope rather than fear. He has redeemed us in Christ and will continuously assure us as His treasured possession. What are some of the promises God made to His people in Isaiah 43:2-4 that you can appropriate by faith in your own life?

2 | We will not fear because God is with us.

"Fear not, for I am with you; I will bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you." **ISAIAH 43:5**

God promised to be with His people in every situation. Although they had been exiled because of their disobedience, He promised His presence and restoration from wherever they were. As we continue to walk with God, the knowledge of His presence brings joy, peace, and hope in our lives. How do you think the words "fear not" reassured God's people?

The promise of redemption and belonging to God—in spite of our sin and disobedience—was fulfilled in Jesus Christ. On the cross, the Great Exchange happened. God gave Himself up for our salvation, so that we may be forgiven, know Him, and have eternal life. He who never sinned became sin for us, so we could *become the righteousness of God* (2 Corinthians 5:21). He is *Immanuel, God with us* (Matthew 1:23), and He also promised to be with us *to the end of the age* (Matthew 28:20).

APPLICATION

- Why do you think "fear not" is reassuring to hear from the Almighty God? In what area of your life are you learning to "fear not"?
- Take some time to think of where you put your trust. What are you willing to do differently to trust God every day?
- Who do you think would be encouraged by knowing God is with them? What can you do this week to share this truth with them?

