

January 2010

From the Pastor



Happy New Year!

It is 2010! I remember being outside on December 31, 1999 and praying in the New Year. It has been over a decade since that prayer. Do you remember the fear of having our computerized world hitting 2000? I have software still lying around somewhere gathering dust that I put into my PC to prepare it. The future was unknown and was scary.

Over ten years later there are new fears that we face as we face 2010. We are not sure whether the economy will stay together; the housing bubble was still expanding in 1999. There is the continuous threat of terrorism that we didn't have in 1999; at least we weren't aware of it. Also, there are the concerns we face physically that we weren't worried about back in 1999.

As we come to a New Year and I look to the future, I am reminded of this verse:

*So do not fear, for I am with you;
do not be dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.
(Isaiah 41:10 NIV)*

Do not fear...

We are told not to fear. We need not go into the New Year with great concern. The reason is because God is with us. We are not alone. No matter how fearful the place, no matter how dangerous the situation, God is right there with us.

...do not be dismayed....

Another way to say do not be dismayed is to say don't look around worried. We should not look around with worried looks on our faces. God is our God, the God who created heaven and earth, the God who holds the world together



in his hands. This God is our God. There is nothing God cannot handle.

I will strengthen you and help you.....

We have a God who promises to give us strength. In the midst of our weakest times, times that try us to our limit, God will strengthen us. Not only will He give us strength, He promises to help us. I notice that we don't read "I will take away all your problems." It says that I will help you in the midst of your problems.

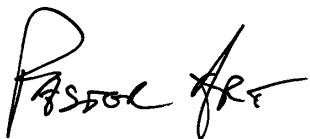
I will uphold you....

God has us in His hand. God cares for us as we face this New Year. God holds us with a righteous hand. This is not the hand of a God who would want to do evil to us. Our God wants the best for us. He wants us to experience His righteousness.

When you consider all of this, 2010 doesn't look fearful at all. In fact I'm excited to see what God has in store. I look forward to His presence in my life. I am glad that we have a mighty God who we can call our God. The strength of God is available to us as well as His help for this year. As the year goes along we will be in God's hand.

I think 2010 is going to be a great year!

In Him and for His glory,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Pastor Arif". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "P" and a long horizontal stroke at the end.