



When I was pregnant, I was frequently asked many questions and often from strangers. At times, it would feel like the great inquisition. Questions would typically go in this order:

When is your baby due? May I touch your belly? Are you having a boy or a girl? Are you having twins (my least favorite)? Have you picked out a name? It would always amaze me when I would share the names we were considering and folks that we didn't know very well would share the reasons why we shouldn't choose those names.

Stephen and I would always make a list of our favorite names and take long consideration into making our choice. A name is permanent. It is the first gift that you bestow upon your precious little one. It is one that you spend a lot of time calling and sometimes yelling. ☺

As we draw closer to Easter Sunday, I want to encourage you to read **John Chapter 20**. As you do, I want you to imagine that The Lord is calling your name as he does to Mary in verse 16 of this week's passage.

How precious is it when the risen Christ calls YOUR name? **When HE speaks, all doubt, fear, and uncertainty are replaced with assurance, faith, and the certain knowledge that He knows YOU by name.**

First, notice that initially Mary did not recognize who Jesus was. She thought he was the gardener. **It was not until He spoke her name that she had full realization of who she was speaking with (verses 15 & 16).**

As I was preparing this guide, Christ laid on my heart these questions:

- Are we aware when Christ is near?
- Do you sense His presence working in your heart and life?
- Do your children and teenagers know how to recognize when He is at work?

This week leads up to Easter. Growing up a pastor's kid, I never really understood the new dresses, Easter baskets, gifts, and candy. We had those things, but as a young girl I couldn't figure out why having a new dress on Easter was more special

than any other day of the year. To me Easter was certainly a special day, but no more special than the other 51 Sundays in the year. The same King that victoriously arose on Easter Sunday is the same one that lives the week after and the week after and the week after that.

I have a friend who told me that her brother likes the appearance of Easter. I didn't understand what she meant. She explained, "Well, his family will get dressed up, take pictures, and act as though they go to Worship. When in reality, after pictures, they put on jeans and just go eat lunch. It is important to our parents that they at least go on Easter. So, they take the photo so she doesn't know the difference." Wow- this perplexed me. Why go to such trouble to please man, when Christ knows your heart and knows you by name?

My name was called in a different way this past week. Normal, routine, and expected are all three words that I often take for granted. I frequently complain the most in the midst of the mundane. I was reminded how ordinary moments can be the ones that are the most extraordinary. They are also the ones that are most missed when they are gone. I had gone for a routine doctor's office visit for a regular check-up. The doctor found a place that looked suspicious. He diagnosed it as a subcutaneous nodule and referred me to an orthopedic surgeon. I saw this surgeon a few days later who took x-rays and said, "Mrs. Cannon this is a lump and it is definitely going to have to be removed." He has been a surgeon for 41 years. He thought it was benign, but that it would need to be biopsied upon removal. This was on a Monday. My CT scan had been set up for the following Monday and then a visit with a specialist for the next Thursday. I called and had my CT scan moved from Spartanburg to the Village at Pelham.

When my doctor called to check on me, I explained to him that I had moved up my scan to a different location. He volunteered to call the specialist to see if she could see me any sooner. He called me back within minutes and said, "This is amazing. That same day that you moved your scan too is the very first day that she will be seeing patients in the Pelham location. You will be in the same building." It was not a coincidence- it was all God. EVEN in the small details, He knows your name. He told me that he and the surgeon had consulted and that they thought this was a sacral tumor. A tumor. I got this news before church last Wednesday and was struggling to even put one foot in front of the other.



The next day as I sat in the waiting room, I anxiously waited for the nurse to call my name. As I lay down for the CT Scan, I looked up and saw the below to the left. I asked the technician if I could take this photo. As tears streamed down my face during the scan, I was reminded that no matter the outcome, God knows my name. It was written so clearly on this machine. As the machine took the images, all I could think of was my children. The

moments that I often complain about- the packing lunches, the loads of laundry, the toys all over the house. How that in a day, life can surely change with the outcome of one test. As soon as I left, my name disappeared, and the board reflected another name for another scan.

The verses that God had given me for this particular week were Isaiah 43:1-2.

At the end of verse 1 it says, "...Fear not, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by your name; You are Mine."

When Stephen and I saw the specialist just an hour after the CT Scan, she said she was confused. She showed us the CT scan images and said there was nothing there. The tumor that had been there just a few days before was no longer showing on these new images. She was puzzled however Stephen and I were not. We knew that God had performed a miracle. She said, "Mrs. Cannon when your doctor called me yesterday, he was very concerned. Frankly, I thought we would be looking at surgery next week. However, there is nothing to operate on."

As I walked out of the waiting room that day, I was flooded with thoughts of thanksgiving.

- Thankful for another day to pack the children's lunches.
- Thankful for another day to wash the clothes and look for mismatched socks.
- Thankful for another day to sit in the car line.
- Thankful for another day to pick up Ruthie's baby dolls which are strewn all over the house.

Just as God called Mary's name outside of the EMPTY tomb, He is calling your name today.

If you have surrendered your heart and life to The Lord, then you are His as it says in Isaiah 43:1. If you are reading this guide and you have never made that decision, then what better time to make that decision than Easter.

I want to close today with, **Isaiah 43:2**

*"When you pass through the waters,
I will be with you;
and when you pass through the rivers,
they will not sweep over you.
When you walk through the fire,
you will not be burned;
the flames will not set you ablaze."*

Everywhere that it says "you", I want you to take a pen and cross it out and write your name over the top. Personalize this verse to your life and your family and then post it somewhere you will see it often. I have it on my desk at work and have

looked at it many times over this past week. **Notice that it doesn't say IF you pass through the waters or IF you walk through the fire, it says WHEN.**

Beloved, we will pass through the waters; however, we do not have to be afraid. You and I can relinquish control to the One who knows YOUR name.