

Session 6

Taming Chaos

A reflection on Mark 4:35-41; 6:47-52

By the Rev. Brad Landry

“Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?”

The list of people who were known to have commanded the wind and the waves is quite short. There's Moses, and then there's God. The priests who were carrying the ark of the covenant across the Jordan also walked through on dry land, but again, that's because of God.

Moses, in the face of an obstacle that seemed like a dead end (literally), lead the children of Israel out of their bondage in Egypt, through the Red Sea, and into the land of promise. God, in the beginning of creation calmed order out of primordial chaos, and called all this ordered chaos “very good.” It would seem a certain amount of chaos is a key ingredient to creativity.

The unspoken answer to the disciples' question is that God was clearly at work here. The voice of Jesus echoes the voice of God.

God creating order out of chaos, Moses pointing prisoners to God's promise, Jesus instilling faith in place of fear - this is the story of God and of God's people. Whether it is a messy house or messy relationships, could you imagine God creating something beautiful out of your particular chaos?

You see, I don't think following Jesus is a matter of everything being perfectly ordered in our lives. Were we to wait to have it all together, none of us would ever begin the journey. The life of faith is

not a matter of avoiding being overwhelmed; it is a matter of being overwhelmed by the right things. The wind and the waves will not overwhelm you, but following Jesus just might. It is a matter of being overwhelmed by the right things. Whoever loses their life will find it, because Jesus is very good at finding lost things.

I can remember as a child being overwhelmed by sea sickness the first time I went deep sea fishing. Just after I had surrendered the contents of my stomach overboard, the first fish began to be reeled in. My sea sickness was soon replaced with joy, as I was overwhelmed with catching fish.

“Fishers of men” will experience the occasional stormy sea, but in these words, “Peace! Be still,” Jesus is not just speaking to the wind and the waves, he is speaking to his disciples. “Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid.” In the very midst of your fears and chaos, Jesus is present and creating something beautiful.