

Mexico - riding the waves on a boogie board

- Thrown to the bottom of the ocean
- Having to get my bearings again

Have you ever been in over your head?

- A series of events seems too much to handle
- You took on a project that you have no idea how to complete
- The schedule of running your kids here and there overwhelms
- The pill box you are filling seems not quite big enough to hold all the medicines it takes these days

The disciples today are in over their head

- After a long day, Jesus invites the disciples to the other side of the lake
- The travel doesn't go so smoothly
- A storm arises and the boat takes on water
- The disciples, fisherman used to the rough waters, are in over their heads
- And Jesus is asleep in the boat

The disciples do not wake Jesus to call for action

- The disciples wake Jesus to accuse him of indifference
- How could he not care?
- The disciples do not wake Jesus to call for action.
- Instead they wake him to call him apathetic.
- But he was in the boat with them
- This is not indifference
- What the disciples wanted to know that Jesus cared
- They want to know that God still broods over chaos like God did in the creation of the world

Jesus demonstrates that brooding in the midst of the disciples fear

Peace! Be still!

- And they were
- That's the ancient way of saying that Jesus was stronger than chaos

James Earl Jones plays Terrance Mann in Field of Dreams

- Near the end of the movie he is being called into the cornfield
- That's why he came to Iowa, after all
- He is a bit afraid
- Putting an arm in and reaching around and pulls it back out
- Then he gives this knowing smile at everyone
- He lets go of his fear
- With a joyful smile, enters into the unknown.

Moving out of our fear and into trust in God is not always from the unknown to the known.

Instead, it is very often from the known into the unknown, in trust and faith.

Jean and Allen's story

- In April Allen had delicate surgery in California
- The pre-op physical showed some difficulties
- In follow-up work here in Rochester a few weeks ago, he was diagnosed with Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia
- A few weeks before that, at Allen's first day back to work, he was laid off from his job
- In the midst of all of these known events, they are selling their house, moving to Indiana where their kids are, and starting over
- They are going from known into unknown
- But they can do that because they know they go in the care of God
- What could be a fearful time has turned into faith and trust in God

What are we afraid of?

So often what we are afraid of is what is unknown

Fear or Faith – our two responses

Fear is exaggerated, misdirected, and unproductive

- The fear of the disciples exaggerates their situation – "we are dying"
- The fear of the disciples is misdirected – they are afraid of the storm with the creator of the wind and the waves in their boat
- The fear of the disciples is unproductive – instead of solving their situation, they stand paralyzed in fear

The faith Jesus wants to find in them is different than their fear

- Faith that is grounded in reality – the creator of the wind and the wave is in the boat with you!
- Faith that is powered by the will of God – remember, I just called you to ministry, not to shrink in the face of difficulty, that's God's will
- Faith that is fertile ground for God's activity – God has things to do through you, and fear can't allow it to happen

In all the places and situations where we are in over our heads

- The world encourages a response of fear
- Jesus invites us to a place of faith
- Jesus invites us to see things as they are, to remember the will of God for you, and to be ready for the work God wants to do in you

In all the places and situations where we are in over our heads

We can respond in fear or faith

Eugene Peterson's translation of the Isaiah text reminds us

"When you're in over your head, I'll be there with you.

When you're in rough waters, you will not go down.

When you're between a rock and a hard place, it won't be a dead end

Because I am God...your savior."

Thanks be to God!

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