

Sermon for the 5th Sunday after Pentecost.

Mark 4:35-41.

Hymns: 578, 524, 341, 301, 289, 616.

Introit: Psalm 124.

P "If it had not been the LORD who was on our side,"

C **Israel should say,**

P "if it had not been the LORD who was on our side,

C **when human beings rose up against us,**

P then they would have swallowed us alive,

C **when their anger blazed against us.**

P Then the waters would have engulfed us.

C **The stream would have swept over our lives,**

P then the raging water,

C **would have swept over our lives."**

P Blessed be the LORD, who has not given us up,

C **as prey to their teeth!**

P Our lives have escaped like a bird from the snare of the hunters.

C **The snare is torn, and we have escaped.**

All: **Our help is in the name of the LORD, who has made heaven and earth.**

Collect: Almighty God, in Your mercy guide the course of this world so that Your Church may joyfully serve You in godly peace and quietness; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

Old Testament: Job 38:1-11.

Epistle: 2 Corinthians 6: 1-13.

Gospel: Mark 4: 35-41.

The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with you all. Amen.

The text for the sermon is the Gospel heard before, Mark 4: 35-41.

35 That day, when evening came, Jesus said to His disciples, "Let us go over to the other side!"

36 They left the crowd, and took Him along in the boat just as He was. There were other boats with Him.

37 A violent windstorm came up, and the waves kept beating into the boat, so that the boat was already filling up. 38 Jesus was in the back of the boat, sleeping on the cushion. They woke Him and asked Him, "Teacher, do You not care that we are drowning?"

39 When He had been wakened, He rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, "Be quiet! Be silenced!"

The wind stopped, and it became very calm.

40 He asked them, "Why are you afraid? Do you still have no faith?"

41 They were very afraid, and kept saying to one another, "Who is this, then, that even the wind and the sea obey Him?"

Lord God, heavenly Father, sanctify us in your truth. Your Word is truth. Amen.

Dear Friends in Christ,
Peace be with you.

The story recorded for us in the Gospel isn't just a nice story about a Miracle Worker called Jesus saving His followers from a watery grave. It's also full of teachings concerning the nature of Jesus as the Christ and the nature of the sinners in the boat with Him.

The context leading up to the events in today's Gospel include a very full day of teaching for Jesus. We heard two of the parables He taught in last week's Gospel. It's been a long day. Jesus is tired. As is often the case after a busy time of ministry, Jesus decided to get away with His disciples for some much needed rest and relaxation. In this case, He elected to take a cruise to the other side of the Sea of Galilee.

The Sea of Galilee is about eight miles across from east to west at its widest point. Ordinarily, the crossing should only take a few hours, but on this crossing, a storm came up. Even though several of the disciples were experienced fishermen, they were still frightened. This indicates that the storm was fairly powerful.

So where was Jesus during this storm? He was asleep in the stern of the boat. He was exhausted from His long day and fell into a sleep so sound that even the storm didn't wake Him. The fact that Jesus was asleep is an important demonstration of the nature of the Christ. Other than His actual death on the cross, there is no better demonstration of the humanity of Jesus than the sleep of exhaustion. Every human being on the planet knows what it is to grow tired and fall asleep. Here Jesus demonstrates His unity with all people. He sleeps like any other human being.

But then the disciples wake Him and ask for His help. Now we shouldn't assume that the disciples were expecting much from Jesus. After all, He was brought up as a carpenter, not as a sailor. It's more likely that they were thinking in terms of another set of hands to help bail out the boat or trim the sails or something. It may even be that they just wanted Him to move away from the stern so that they had better access to the rudder. In any case, they woke Him and asked for help, but they didn't expect what happened next. Jesus woke up and had a few cross words with the storm. The word "rebuke" in the text means that Jesus scolded the wind and the water rather harshly. After that, the wind and the water became calm.

Now, you and I could yell and scream at the weather until we were blue in the face and nothing would change. In fact, if we continued in that sort of activity, people might wonder if they should call the authorities to take us to the funny farm to get a mental checkup. Jesus, on the other hand, scolded the weather and the weather paid attention. It paid attention because Jesus is not just your ordinary, sleepy human being, having been woken up out of a deep sleep and cranky. He's the God of all creation. Jesus' ability to control the wind and the waves with just a word clearly shows that He is God. So it is that this one event very clearly demonstrates that Jesus is both 100 % man and 100 % God in one person.

The disciples, on the other hand, were terrified. They were in a boat with someone who could talk to the wind and the waves and the wind and the waves would pay attention to what He said. They began to question who their master and teacher really was. This is one of the themes in Jesus' life. People often ask who Jesus is. Today, we heard that the wind and the waves know who Jesus is. In other parts of the Gospel account, we learn that diseases, birth defects, and injuries know who Jesus is also. Even the demons know who Jesus is. But, when it comes to the human beings, Jesus is a great mystery. They regularly ask, "Who is this? Where does He get this authority?" This reminds me of the words that the Holy Spirit spoke through His prophet Isaiah. **The ox knows its owner, and the donkey its master's crib,** [*"A place in which cattle are fattened."*] **but Israel does not know, my people do not understand.** [Isaiah 1:3.]

The terror of God traces its way clear back to Eden. God called and Adam replied, **"I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid."** [Genesis 3:10.] Adam had sinned and the presence of the holy and almighty God terrified him. It's the same for all people who see their sin clearly in the holy presence of Almighty God. It's a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. [Hebrews 10:31]

That's the reason it so important that Jesus be both man and God. If Jesus were only God, He couldn't take our place under the law and live a holy life for us. He also couldn't suffer the penalty we've earned for our sin. If Jesus were a man, and nothing more, then His perfect life and sacrificial death would earn the salvation of one and only one person. The rest of the world would be lost. It's essential for our salvation that Jesus be both God and man.

We need the salvation that Jesus provides because the storm on the Sea of Galilee is just one instance of the many disasters that the sin of humanity has brought into this world. The destruction that storms bring is an expression of the curse that came when sin entered the world. Our sin not only brings sickness and death to us, - even the world is cursed. The Holy Spirit inspired Paul to write to the Romans: **"We know that the**

whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. [Romans 8:22.] Floods, fires, hurricanes, tornadoes, hail, lightening, earthquakes, drought, and all the other natural disasters are the result of the curse that our sin brought into the world.

But these natural disasters are not the only storms that our sin has brought into the world. There are other storms in our lives as well. There are the medical storms of infections, heart disease, diabetes, strokes, cancer, and so on. There are the relational storms of broken families and friendships. There are the financial storms of workplaces closing and staff cut backs. Ultimately, there is the storm of death that comes to all of us sooner or later. We may try to deny the existence of sin in our lives, but these storms, both private and public, say otherwise.

It's in the incarnation of Jesus Christ – the fact that the Son of God assumed human nature – that we see God's loving plan to deal with sin. In Jesus Christ, God assumed human nature to save humans from their nature – their sinful nature. For our own sin doomed us to perish – not just from this earth, but also from the blessings of God's presence with us. **7 However, if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, cleanses us from all sin.** [1John 1:7.] Christ's human nature allowed Him to be the target of God's wrath as He hung on the cross. Christ's Divine nature allowed Him to endure that wrath for all people in all times and places. So it is that God took on human flesh and saved us from our sins.

We have complete confidence in that salvation that Jesus earned for us because death was unable to hold Him. For Christ did not remain in the grave, but, after He conquered death, He rose from death never to die again. After He rose, He showed Himself to His disciples. He encouraged them to examine the marks of the cross in His body. He talked with them and ate with them. He interacted with them in very human ways. At the same time, locked doors and windows were no barrier to Him as He appeared and disappeared at will. In His resurrection, He demonstrated that He lives forever as both God and man in one person.

Jesus Christ is both fully God and fully man. With that combination, we find our full salvation from sin, death, and the power of the devil. In His humanity, He was able to suffer on the cross in our place and for our good. In His deity, He was able to defeat our foes and rise from the dead to give us eternal life. It's in the person of Jesus Christ who both slept and stilled the storm that we have our faith and the promise of eternal life. **Amen.**

The peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. **Amen.**

3rd Hymn: 341

Prayer of the Church Fourth Sunday after Pentecost

P Let us pray to our gracious God for all people according to their needs.

Brief Silence

P For the peace of God and the salvation of the world, for the proclamation of the Gospel to all, for the protection of His holy Church and the unity of all Christian. Lord in Your mercy.

C hear our prayer

P For all who serve as our pastors and church workers in the AELC, that they may receive godly respect and support and all point to Christ alone. Lord in Your mercy.

C hear our prayer

P For those in the midst of trouble, that they may trust in Christ who saves us, is with us and has command of all creation; Lord in Your mercy.

C hear our prayer

P For all who govern and bear responsibility in our country, that God would give them determination and wisdom to serve the general welfare of the people, so that justice is protected and we can joyfully serve the Lord in godly peace and quietness, Lord in Your mercy.

C hear our prayer

P For those who serve in the armed forces of our country, that they may be safe and serve well, For rescue workers, police and medical workers, that they may be protected and succeed in delivering help to

others; for all who travel, that they may be kept from all harm by God's holy angels, and that their families may be sustained, Lord in Your mercy.

C **hear our prayer**

P For the afflicted in body and mind, [*especially* _____] that
the Lord would comfort them and answer their petitions according to His gracious will,
Lord in Your mercy.

C **hear our prayer**

P For those who mourn, - for those who are in 24 hr care facilities, for those who are unable to leave
their homes [*especially Conrad Behrendorff, Audrey Gerber and Joan Wedding.*] also for those who are near
death, that they may rejoice in the certainty of Christ's defeat of death; Lord in Your mercy.

C **hear our prayer**

P For rain for our great land so that crops can be planted and the live stock can be fed; Bless also those
who work the land providing for our nourishment and wellbeing, That they look to You to give us what we
need in Your time and by Your grace. Lord in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P At Your gracious invitation, we come to Your Table to eat and drink Your holy body and blood. Let
us find favour in Your eyes to receive this holy Sacrament in faith for the salvation of our souls and to the
glory of Your holy name. Lord, in Your mercy,

C **hear our prayer.**

P Lord God, heavenly Father, You know what we need. Answer our prayers according to Your gracious
will. Lead us ever to rest in Your abiding care; through Jesus Christ, Your Son, our Lord, who lives and
reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

4th Hymn: , 301,