

Don't you care Mark 4:35-42 5th Sunday after Pentecost June 24, 2018

Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing? And he awoke and rebuked the wind and said to the sea, be still. Mark 4:38-39 Don't you care

Dear friends in Christ, there is a saying among those teaching teenagers. "They don't care how much you know until they know how much you care." Its used by teachers teaching high school math, counselors trying to help troubled youth, coaches, and even by pastors as they begin a new year of confirmation. It tells us to start by listening, by empathy, and by sharing, rather than by directing. It is something we take as true.

So it is jarring when we hear the disciples say to Jesus, Don't you care if we drown? He'd been teaching about the kingdom of God and they were taking him across the sea of Galilee. He had fallen asleep in the boat, and a storm blew in. And the disciples were struggling with the boat. They were struggling to keep it afloat. While Jesus slept. Don't you care if we drown. WE don't know what they expected of him, just that they expected him to be awake, to show he cared.

Now there are times when presence is enough, a little sign that you care. A kiss on a scraped knee, a call for a neighbor feeling lonely. A cup of coffee with a friend. There are times when storms come and we don't know what to do. Times when the waves seem to crash over us, and there is still nothing you can do, and all you can do is show you care. When it isn't a scraped knee but a trip to the emergency room. When the test results come in and it is cancer. When the end is near and it is time to gather. Then the only consolation we have is that we are there and we care. The disciples are in that situation in the boat, and they want Jesus to show up, as the family gathers for the final good byes. It is inconceivable that he is sleeping.

But he seems less disturbed than they. He awakes. He rebukes the wind and says to the sea, Quiet, be still. And the sea is calm. And the disciples are silenced as he asks if they still have no faith. And suddenly, they are left with a different spin on the same question. Do you care?

Do you care for me when I get worried about the wind and the waves, the tests and the relationship with my boyfriend or girlfriend, my wife or husband, do you care when I worry about finances. Who are you who commands the wind and the waves, and if they are nothing to you, who am I.

My cat shows this well. HE's an affectionate cat when he sees we have a lap and we are seated, when he can come to us on his terms. But if we carry a big box, if we are wearing clunky shoes that make a lot of noise, he runs away, because he isn't sure we see him. He isn't sure we won't hurt him with our big boxes and shoes.

So we feel with a god that orders the universe. WE wonder if our small problems even matter to him.

Now Jesus is god in human flesh. The one who created the universe, who commands the seas, took on our flesh and shares our lives. He knows what it is to live with storms, with tests, with people, with finances. And yet he slept in the boat. He told the disciples as they struggle with the wind that their fear was misguided. That their work is not in vain, for God is with them. Its the child awake in the night and scared of the dark and the noises she hears. Yet she is quieted not by light nor by ceasing the noise but by her fathers voice or her mothers touch.

This is the kingdom of God that he asks us to see. Not the wind and the waves but the seed of his word. This is God coming in the waters and telling us that we will not be washed away but washed clean. The disciples hate this bath and wonder what they will lose, but Jesus shows them what they gain. They gain the presence of God as he comes to them more clearly as they go through the waters. Baptism as much as the storm. This is the God who comes in the flesh in his supper and tells us for you. He tells us not to be afraid, his death and resurrection have overcome the world, we have life eternal with him.

The storm we face is not with wind and waves, but with doubt and unbelief. And Jesus in his death and resurrection has overcome them as well. He sends his spirit to say he is with us.

Have faith, your God is with you. Fear not, he calms the storm