

Coffee to Go | Proper 7

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SPEAKERS

Blake Smith, Karin Peter

Karin Peter 00:27

Welcome to Coffee to Go, where we center ourselves in the scriptures, seasons and holy days of the Christian tradition. I'm Karin Peter. And I'm here with Blake Smith, your host for Coffee to Go. And we welcome you on our journey. So we're still in ordinary time this season after Pentecost. And we find ourselves this week in a boat with Jesus on the water in a raging storm. And we are frightened, at least I would be if I'm in a boat in a storm. So Jesus, however, is sleeping. So let's hear what happens here. Blake?

Blake Smith 01:12

So I always like to find connections between Jesus and myself like most disciples would. So I'm glad to know that Jesus is a deep sleeper because I am as well. Nothing can wake me. It would seem anyway. So our Scripture today comes again from the Gospel of Mark the fourth chapter, and we are at the end the 35th, through the 41st verse.

On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, "let us go across to the other side." And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. other boats were with him. A great windstorm arose, and the waves beat into the boat so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern asleep on a cushion, and they woke him up and said to him, "Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?" And waking up, he rebuked the wind and said to the sea, "be silent, be still." Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm? He said to them, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?" And they were filled with great fear, and said to one another, "who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?"

Okay, so I, I just have to say before I get into the talk about this passage, when I read, he was in the stern, he was asleep, and they wake him he's not scared. And he wakes up. It says he rebuked the wind and said to the sea, but I'm not sure he's not also talking to the disciples, "BE SINT."

Karin Peter 03:00

If it was me, I want to go back to sleep. Definitely!

Blake Smith 03:02

I'm sleeping! Oh, goodness. Well, what we're really talking about here is faith or what I want to pick up on is this idea of faith. And because I think maybe, especially in today's context, we tend to use faith as a word, to compare ourselves to others. So I might say, "are you afraid of something and I am not? Well you just don't have enough faith?" Or, "does your life seem more difficult than mine? Well, that's because I'm living right? I'm living a life of faith." In one Bible commentary, I read that "to think having faith means all will be well, or God will protect you is simply naive." I mean, if we take just this passage by itself, yeah, we could we can pull this passage out and say, Well, you know, they they woke up Jesus. And they said, Jesus, help us. Well, actually, if you read it carefully, they didn't. They were just like, how can you possibly sleep in the midst of the storm? We're about to die? [What is wrong with you?] They weren't going to ask him to do it. [Yeah,] he just did it, maybe to quiet and calm them as much as the storm so that he could, could rest again. But we take this passage, and we're like, oh, well, they woke him up. And he calmed the storm and that's all we've got to do. We've got to have faith and ask Jesus to make it all well, but if we look at the passage, first of all, they're scared to begin with. They're scared of the storm. They realize, they're fishermen they know, several of them, at least are fishermen. They know that this is dangerous water so they're scared of that. Then Jesus calms the storm and it says, "and then they were filled with great fear and said to one another? Who is this that even the wind and the sea obey him?" I mean, so it's not about fixing things. It's not about life is all going to be? Well, if we think about when you ask this question, Who then is this? Well, this happens to be the same guy that's going to go to the cross. [Yeah] You talk about the model of ultimate faith and connection to God and doing everything, knowing that nothing can separate us from God is Jesus, and things didn't turn out good for Jesus, at least at first, with a resurrection. So when we use faith as this dividing line to say, Well, my faith must be stronger than yours. Or, I've been healed from this because I have faith. Or, you haven't been healed, because you haven't prayed enough. And your faith is not strong enough. That's actually really dangerous, if you will, and harmful, and spiritually abusive, I would even say. To fault others for lack of faith is not a good thing for them or for you. To have faith is not believing everything will work out, okay. But rather that however things go, in the midst of the storms are not, nothing, even death, can separate us from God's restoring love. That's what faith is about. So in this passage, you know, the disciples are afraid, and they ask, and, and but even in the end, they still worry and they wonder, because things aren't working out great. All they can hold on to and count on is that nothing can separate them from God's love. So some questions we might ask ourselves are, When has God's presence been made known to me when I was alone, adrift or afraid? When in the storms and chaos of life has God's presence been made known? Another one is, What is raging in your life, or your family or your community, or perhaps even your nation, and what does it mean to have faith in the midst of these storms? And finally, when have I been a holy presence for someone else who was lost or afraid? It was the faith of his friends that brought healing.

Karin Peter 07:42

Yeah, that scripture where they lifted him and then lowered him down through the roof. Jesus didn't say to the man, I heal you because you have faith. It was the friends. [Yeah]. The love and care of the friends. So this week, let's just ask ourselves, this week, the same questions, the disciples asked each other. Who is this Jesus? Who is this guy who can calm storms and the wind and the sea obey him? Who is Jesus today to me? And write down your response every day, what that is. At the end of the week, go back and look at all those responses and see, see what that snapshot of Jesus is in your life

and what he's saying to you. So every day at some point, ask yourself, Who is Jesus to me today? Write that down each day for the week.

Blake Smith 08:44

All right. Well, our blessing today is from an anonymous author, and it is from "Life Prayers: Affirmations to Celebrate the Human Journey."

When the wind blows, that is my medicine.

When it rains, that is my medicine.

When it hails, that is my medicine.

When it becomes clear after a storm, that is my medicine.

Something to ponder. [Absolutely]

So thanks for joining us again here this week at coffee to go as always, we invite you to join us next time for the next part of our journey through the liturgical seasons and holy days of the Christian tradition.