

still waters

home church studies

Psalm 105.1-6, 16-22 [Worship]

1 O give thanks to the LORD, call on his name, make known his deeds among the peoples. 2 Sing to him, sing praises to him; tell of all his wonderful works. 3 Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice. 4 Seek the LORD and his strength; seek his presence continually. 5 Remember the wonderful works he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he uttered, 6 O offspring of his servant Abraham, children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

16 When he summoned famine against the land, and broke every staff of bread, 17 he had sent a man ahead of them, Joseph, who was sold as a slave. 18 His feet were hurt with fetters, his neck was put in a collar of iron; 19 until what he had said came to pass, the word of the LORD kept testing him. 20 The king sent and released him; the ruler of the peoples set him free. 21 He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his possessions, 22 to instruct his officials at his pleasure, and to teach his elders wisdom.

Consider: [Think & Pray...]

Jesus seems nonchalant in the description of him walking on the water. He's finished praying, is ready to be with his friends in this hour just before dawn, and is just getting to them in the most convenient way—by foot.

We can empathize with the disciples if they don't react calmly. Their night has been spent buffeted by waves, the whole universe seems to be one endless turbulence. And here someone—or some spirit—approaches as though it's a still evening on a flat plain. It's not just miraculous, and terrifying, it's a touch mocking.

Jesus' first response to the disciples' fear is not to still the wind or otherwise make the situation less stressful; he simply announces his

presence and tells them not to be afraid. It is this presence in which they are to have faith, not any external change in circumstance. The disciples, we can imagine, would rather have the latter.

Peter takes a step out of fear into faith and/or foolishness—he proposes to check Jesus' identity by risking his own neck with a stroll on the waves. In a classic display of human nature, Peter asserts his belief in who Jesus is—"Lord, save me"—in the same moment that he falters because of doubt.

Even though Jesus chastises Peter for this, it seems that this moment of sinking doubt is what strips away Peter's illusions and allows him truly to see Jesus. Without this doubt would Peter and the rest, now worshipping at Jesus' feet, believe so deeply?

Julie Polter



[The Scripture]

Romans 10.5-15

5 Moses writes concerning the righteousness that comes from the law, that "the person who does these things will live by them." 6 But the righteousness that comes from faith says, "Do not say in your heart, 'Who will ascend into heaven?'" (that is, to bring Christ down) 7 "or 'Who will descend into the abyss?'" (that is, to bring Christ up from the dead). 8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, on your lips and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); 9 because if you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For one believes with the heart and so is justified, and one confesses with the mouth and so is saved. 11 The scripture says, "No one who believes in him will be put to shame." 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; the same Lord is Lord of all and is generous to all who call on him. 13 For, "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." 14 But how are they to call on one in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in one of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone to proclaim him? 15 And how are they to proclaim him unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good news!"