



Sermon Reflections June 24, 2018

All texts for Sunday

http://www.lectionarypage.net/YearB_RCL/Pentecost/BProp7_RCL.html

Focus Mk 4- Jesus Calms the storm & Mk 6 - Jesus walks on water

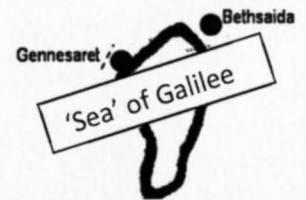
This is a cropped picture of *The Storm on the Sea of Galilee*. It is a painting from 1633 by the Dutch painter Rembrandt van Rijn. Here I have enhanced the brightness so that you can see some of the detail on the right side of the canvas even though you will lose some on the left. Go to https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Storm_on_the_Sea_of_Galilee to see the history and a full-sized picture. The painting's biggest claim to fame is that it was stolen and remains stolen.

I will be looking at the different characters in the painting as a way to understand Jesus' identity and our common responses. When the disciples got glimpses of who Jesus was, they did not understand, and he didn't explain things very well. He either lectured them or told them to keep it quiet – that's not a very good church growth strategy.

The sermon today focuses not only on Jesus calming the storm, but also his walking on water in Chapter 6. Both texts are loud and clear demonstrations of Jesus' identity; he is the lord of creation.

In Chapter 4 the disciples ask Jesus "don't you care that we are dying?" He does not answer their question but speaks words to stop the storm. The disciple's questions seem very reasonable, but Jesus's 'answers' are often actions. He still does not answer them after the storm but says, "Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?"

The disciples ask, "Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" This final question is key. Actions speak louder than words, like Teddy Roosevelt "speak softly and carry a big stick". The big stick is authority. Who is this that the wind and sea obey? The Lord of all Creation, like the pre-school song "He's got the whole world in his hands". The Lord of all creation shows up again when Jesus walks on water in Chapter 6, only the Lord of Creation would be able to walk on water. Peter will teeter into this, but it does not last. Jesus is calm in the boat, during the storm, and even out for an evening stroll on the water.



Water is the means of the message, especially in Chapter 6 Bodies of water in Ancient Near East were places of chaos and disorder. Christ is Lord even in chaos and uses chaotic water as his path for a stroll. **Reference 1** Beginning of Genesis "*The Spirit of God was hovering over the water.*" **Reference 2** Mark 6:48 "*Shortly before dawn he went out to them, walking on the lake. He was about to pass by them.*" That's odd. Odd unless you know the story in Exodus where God blesses Moses. Exodus 21 *Then the Lord said, "There is a place near me where you may stand on a rock. 22 When my glory passes by, I will put you in a cleft in the rock and cover you with my hand until I have passed by."* **Reference 3** Crossing chaos from a Jewish village Bethsaida to a more gentile village, Gennesaret to show he is lord of Jew and Gentile. There is more but I won't bore you. Just know Mark's main point "he's got the whole world in his hands". His authority is over the created order as well as the hearts of all people. **PT**