

**AUDIO SCRIPT #2**

***Seas: Courage in the Chaos***

This week we take to the seas. From the beginning days of creation, when life crawled from the seas, to when the sea is no more in the vision of the new heaven and new earth in Revelation, seas are a part of the biblical landscape.

They are part of our inner landscape too. In the waters of the womb we take shape. Our bodies are made of water. Our eyes cry salty tears. Like water we are sensitive. Like a rolling sea we experience chaos. Perhaps we also walk on water. This we will explore this week.

If I say to you, "Jesus Walks on Water" you might recall the story of Matthew 14:22-33 (Reading)

How we title a bible story points to its interpretation: Jesus Walks on Water. We could also name it, "Peter Steps Out." We could call it "Courage in the Storm." We could label it, "The Turbulent Jesus Hidden in the Water."

I'd like to call it almost anything but "Jesus Walks on Water." There are so many jokes and commercials about walking on water that the story loses its power.

There are so many trite and far-reaching explanations trying to claim a literal interpretation of this story (including a claim for a frigid breeze that turned the Sea of Galilee to ice!) that diminish the truth of the story.

Right now, I have to say that the meaning that feeds me is influenced by a poem by David Whyte. It's called "The True Love." And here are lines I love:

Years ago in the Hebrides  
I remember an old man  
who walked every morning  
on the Greystones  
to the shore of baying seals  
  
who would press his hand  
to his chest in the blustering  
wind salt and say his prayer

to the turbulent Jesus  
hidden in the water. (Excerpt from "The True Love" by David Whyte)

I love the image of the old man from the Hebrides walking to the shore and saying his prayer to "the turbulent Jesus hidden in the water."

David Whyte continues his poem using the biblical image of the story of the storm. In this part of the poem I remember that so many experiences in life are preparing us for the moment when we have to say "yes" and step out of the boat. When we do step forth it is rarely onto solid ground. It's fluid. It's shifting. It's scary.

Living like this takes courage.  
Leading like this takes courage.

It is like walking on water.

From time to time we respond to something in us that invites "Come." That call comes to our lives. It also comes to congregations in change. When we can't go back and when staying where we are isn't an option, then we faithfully step out. If we attend to this call it is like stepping out of a boat into the chaos of change.

Seas have long stood for chaos and conflict. See Psalm 89:9 and Psalm 107:25-29. Read the Book of Jonah. Remember the Crossing of the Red Sea. The Sea offers us profound metaphors of conflict, chaos, tears and new beginning.

The gospel writers who tell the story of "Jesus Walking on the Water" are drawing on rich cultural and theological symbols. They assert Jesus as One who is in charge of Land and Sea. I wonder what meaning this has for you?

As for me, I sink deep into the wisdom of the story and seek courage in the chaos in response to the One who calls "Come."

Perhaps the author of the song, "Colour Outside the Lines" says it like I want to live it: *"We'll never walk on water if we're not prepared to drown, body and soul need a soaking from time to time. And we'll never move the gravestones if we're not prepared to die, and realize there are worlds outside the lines."*