



Sixth Sunday after Pentecost Sunday, July 1st, 2018

Dangerous Faith Facing Up to the Demons and Powers! Reading the Signs of the Times



“Reaching Out, Touching His Hem”: Brian Jones

We do not live in a neutral world: this is the biblical view of things. Last week, we discovered this insight through the imagery about the destructive character of the storms that threatened to drown Jesus and the disciples. This week, we discover the same insight through a double-loaded reading: a woman scapegoated by religious and social convention for her ‘impurity’, and then, the ‘death’ of Jairus’ daughter. In between these stories of the past two weeks, there lies, Jesus’ exorcism of the man possessed by demons (Mark 5:1-20). All these stories reflect the violent nature of our world and invite us to read, to interpret its violence, our violence, with intelligence and sensitivity: to read reality *with depth*. But there is more to Christian faith than correctly interpreting the world around us. We are also invited to understand that Christian salvation is not just a creedal thing, but concrete and world-changing. In short, it is not enough to just believe. For belief to be real, it must transform and liberate people, community and society, from ‘the destructive’, from ‘the demons’.

GATHERING

Announcements

Welcome

In the name of God,
the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit

The Lord be with you

And with you

Hymn: Praise My Soul (TiS 134, Praise my Soul, Henry Francis Lyte)

Introduction to the Theme

Community Prayer

Oh woman: what was it like...your illness I mean.
Was it painful...physically?

But what of the psychological pain
because others rejected you...
Even other women, who should have understood,
chose to maintain their ritualistic distance from you;
you...unclean outsider!

And what of your anxiety *from the inside*...
No peaceful snugness for you...
but a situation of being driven to your limits,
where you finally made a leap of faith,

Did you plan it, this approach?
Or did it just happen in desperation;
a leap further, deeper into your own anxiety,
not knowing whether this strange rabbi would catch you,
whether God might catch you...
or the nothingness of your situation ultimately devour you.

***Isolated and alone
Woman of blood
pours herself towards
the fabric of life.***

Our Confession and Reconciliation

Let us be still and listen to the voice of God

Silence

Leader: Let us confess

***My judgmental words that may have
caused another pain.***

***My compromises made that may have
fragmented truth.***

***My complacency that may have
permitted hopelessness to replace
hope in the heart of another.***

***My apathy that may have stilled
words and actions for justice in the
lives of others.***

***O God, forgive us and create in
us a new heart to build
communities founded on
acceptance.***

The Peace

Peace be with you;
and also with you

Children leave for SMG

LET'S HEAR THE WORD

Some Anecdotal Thoughts About Reality's Depth

Often when people think about the idea of demons, they think in personal terms; “the demons inside us”, “the demons that drive us to self-destruction”. Certainly, the New Testament when telling stories of “the demons” includes this understanding. But there is more to it than that. For the New Testament, the demons are located in the systems and structures that betray the designs of a life-giving God. They are impersonal spiritual realities at the centre of our personal and institutional lives that destroy life and justice.

Walter Wink, “The Powers that Be”

The beauty of the Gospel is this: that we are assured that evil does not reflect the fundamental nature of our world, leading us into a sense of fatalism and resignation. Rather, Jesus' challenging of the demons and powers, assures us that the world is good and it is the job of humanity to build it accordingly.

José Ignacio González Faus, “Jesús y los demonios”

Readings

2 Samuel 1: 17-27 (Good News Translation)

Elwyn Hoskin

We have been following the stories of David: Samuel's secret nomination of him as king of Israel, even as Saul, falls out of favour with Yahweh, and then David's victory over the Philistine Goliath. In sum, the stories have traced David's rise and Saul's demise. Today, we hear that Saul and his son Jonathon have both been killed in battle against the Philistines. In this reading David laments their deaths, but it is a difficult tight-rope that he walks. On the one hand, Saul was his lethal enemy, seeking to eliminate him from political contention. Jonathon on the other hand, was a close ally, a dear friend. What impresses in the reading is the genuine poignancy of the moment of loss, but also the way in which David has to negotiate the complex political situation, where the power he does not yet have could be turned on him. This is a tense personal and political moment: much hangs upon it when it comes to both David's and Israel's future.

¹⁷ David sang this lament for Saul and his son Jonathan, ¹⁸ and ordered it^[a] to be taught to the people of Judah. (It is recorded in *The book of Jashar*.)

¹⁹ “On the hills of Israel our leaders are dead!
The bravest of our soldiers have fallen!

- ²⁰ Do not announce it in Gath
or in the streets of Ashkelon.
Do not make the women of Philistia glad;
do not let the daughters of pagans rejoice.
- ²¹ “May no rain or dew fall on Gilboa's hills;
may its fields be always barren!
For the shields of the brave lie there in disgrace;
the shield of Saul is no longer polished with oil.
- ²² Jonathan's bow was deadly,
the sword of Saul was merciless,
striking down the mighty, killing the enemy.
- ²³ “Saul and Jonathan, so wonderful and dear;
together in life, together in death;
swifter than eagles, stronger than lions.
- ²⁴ “Women of Israel, mourn for Saul!
He clothed you in rich scarlet dresses
and adorned you with jewels and gold.
- ²⁵ “The brave soldiers have fallen,
they were killed in battle.
Jonathan lies dead in the hills.
- ²⁶ “I grieve for you, my brother Jonathan;
how dear you were to me!
How wonderful was your love for me,
better even than the love of women.
- ²⁷ “The brave soldiers have fallen,
their weapons abandoned and useless.”

The word of the Lord

Thanks be to God

Mark 5:21-43 (Good News Translation)

Marian Kingham

This is a ‘double-whammy’: two stories about healing: the first, the woman with gynaecological difficulties, which are not only physically distressing, but more significantly, lead to her social rejection and scapegoating as constantly “impure”; and the story of the daughter of Jairus, who is given up as dead, and who, Jesus raises to life. While not directly about demons, as such, these stories are about the sentence of death imposed upon people, even in life, which is what the biblical language of demonology is all about. Note here also that we begin the reading with the image of the lake or sea (thalassa), which in the Hebrew mind always suggests fear and death: the Hebrews were not great sea-farers or swimmers.

²¹ Jesus went back across to the other side of the lake. There at the lakeside a large crowd gathered around him. ²² Jairus, an official of the local synagogue, arrived, and when he saw Jesus, he threw himself down at his feet ²³ and begged him earnestly, “My little daughter is very sick. Please come and place your hands on her, so that she will get well and live!”

²⁴ Then Jesus started off with him. So many people were going along with Jesus that they were crowding him from every side.

²⁵ There was a woman who had suffered terribly from severe bleeding for twelve years, ²⁶ even though she had been treated by many doctors. She had spent all her money, but instead of getting better she got worse all the time. ²⁷ She had heard about Jesus, so she came in the crowd behind him, ²⁸ saying to herself, “If I just touch his clothes, I will get well.”

²⁹ She touched his cloak, and her bleeding stopped at once; and she had the feeling inside herself that she was healed of her trouble. ³⁰ At once Jesus knew that power had gone out of him, so he turned around in the crowd and asked, “Who touched my clothes?”

³¹ His disciples answered, “You see how the people are crowding you; why do you ask who touched you?”

³² But Jesus kept looking around to see who had done it. ³³ The woman realized what had happened to her, so she came, trembling with fear, knelt at his feet, and told him the whole truth. ³⁴ Jesus said to her, “My daughter, your faith has made you well. Go in peace and be healed of your trouble.”

³⁵ While Jesus was saying this, some messengers came from Jairus' house and told him, “Your daughter has died. Why bother the Teacher any longer?”

³⁶ Jesus paid no attention to ^[a] what they said, but told him, “Don't be afraid, only believe.” ³⁷ Then he did not let anyone else go on with him except Peter and James and his brother John. ³⁸ They arrived at Jairus' house, where Jesus saw the confusion and heard all the loud crying and wailing. ³⁹ He went in and said to them, “Why all this confusion? Why are you crying? The child is not dead—she is only sleeping!”

⁴⁰ They started making fun of him, so he put them all out, took the child's father and mother and his three disciples, and went into the room where the child was lying. ⁴¹ He took her by the hand and said to her, "*Talitha, koum,*" which means, "Little girl, I tell you to get up!"

⁴² She got up at once and started walking around. (She was twelve years old.) When this happened, they were completely amazed. ⁴³ But Jesus gave them strict orders not to tell anyone, and he said, "Give her something to eat."

The Gospel of the Lord

Praise to you Lord Christ

Some Thoughts

Let's Give

Doxology

***Praise God, from whom all blessings flow,
praise him, all creatures here below,
praise him above, ye heavenly host,
praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost.***

Prayer of Dedication

EUCCHARIST

Hymn: Touch the earth lightly (TiS 668, Tenderness, Shirley Elena Murray)

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you

And also with you

Let us lift up our hearts.

..... ***We lift them to the Lord.***

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

..... ***It is right to give our thanks and praise.***

It is indeed right to give you our thanks and praise, O God,
for your love is forever
and you have raised the crucified Christ from the dead.

You created all things and placed Christ as the cornerstone.
You made your grace known to Israel in the wilderness,
and through your prophets you pledged
your everlasting love and constant faithfulness.

You anointed your child, Jesus,
with the Holy Spirit and power,
and he went about doing good
and healing all who were oppressed by evil.
He was put to death, hung on a tree,
but you raised him on the third day,
and allowed him to appear, first to Mary Magdalene
and then to your other chosen witnesses.
So now we praise you within the gates of justice
and raise our glad songs of victory
for you have become our saviour
and hidden our lives in Christ in glory.

Therefore we join with all the company of heaven in their song

***Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,
Heaven and earth
are full of your glory.
Hosanna in the highest.***

***Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.
Hosanna in the highest***

Through him, in him and because of him,

We affirm the Church's faith

Christ has died.

Christ has risen.

Christ will come again.

Institution

Lord's Prayer

Let us say the Lord's Prayer

***Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.***

***Forgive us our sins,
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.***

***For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.***

하늘에 계신 우리 아버지여
이름이 거룩히 여김을 받으시오며
나라이 임하옵시며
뜻이 하늘에서 이룬 것 같이
땅에서도 이루어지이다.
오늘날 우리에게 일용할 양식을 주옵시고
우리가 우리에게

죄 지은 자를 사하여 준 것 같이
 우리 죄를 사하여 주옵시고
 우리를 시험에 들게 하지 마옵시고
 다만 악에서 구하옵소서
 대개 나라와 권세와 영광이
 아버지께 영원히 있사옵나이다. 아멘

Breaking of the Bread

Christ is the bread of joy
Who shares food with sinners.

Christ is the cup of life,
Who revives the faint-hearted

Let us receive what we are;
Let us become what we receive.

Agnus Dei

Jesus, Wisdom of God,
have mercy on us

Jesus, Word made flesh,
have mercy on us

Jesus, Liberator of creation
grant us peace.

Communion

Distribution

We come forward as a family to partake of the elements together at the Communion Table. The cup on the right-hand side as you face the table is unfermented grape juice and the cup on the left-hand side is alcoholic wine.

Prayer after Communion

God of heaven and earth,
you make us one in Christ.

Inspire us with new vision of the sabbath
becoming a community marked by the freedom to serve.

Give us strength to walk together

In Christ's name

Amen

Prayers of the People

Jane Ann Tainsh

The one who prays ends each petition with the words, "***help us to see***", and the congregational response, "***to read the signs of the times***".

Closing Hymn: Guide Me O thou Great Redeemer (TiS 569, Cwm Rhonnda, William Williams)

Blessing and Sending Out

Christ is life!

Through Christ
we seek to read the signs of the times
with perception and discernment,
without fear, with imagination and courage

Our service has ended

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord

In the name of Christ

Going Out: Father bless us as we go (TiS 781, Kookaburra, Robin Mann)

Musical Postlude

Organist:

Tony Ireland

