

SUNDAY, October 6, 2024 "Depend Upon Me"

Job 1:1; 2:1-10 Hebrews 1:1-4, 2:5-12 Mark 10:2-15

In recent weeks you might have seen images of houses sliding and sinking into the ocean, or landslides destroying anything in their path including different kinds of buildings. You might have also seen videos of boats on shore near houses as their owners awaited high winds and giant waves which would destroy whatever was in the way. Many of these images were because of hurricanes and tornadoes of recent weeks creating paths of destruction. Among the wrecked buildings were many uprooted trees over 50-60 years old because what held them firm just couldn't combat the forces against them. And when we see the aftermath of the destruction we wonder whether the buildings and houses properly rooted, or if the foundations were strong when first constructed or even how could the winds destroy these trees after all these years? The winds and waves have been very destructive of late and very unpredictable and seem to be carving a path on their own.

A favourite hymn asks the questions, "*Will your Anchor hold in the storms of life? Will your anchor hold in the storms of life? When the clouds unfold their wings of strife, when the strong tides lift and the cables strain, will your anchor drift or firm remain?*"

Yes this song refers to boat anchors but anchors are also the term used to describe the bolts that connects buildings to rocks. This is important to know because the rock is what makes a strong foundation to buildings and yet we need to be reminded who is our foundation as we experience this Worldwide Communion Sunday. Just who do we depend upon in our every day life? And is this always certain for you?

Our Old Testament reading is Job's story, a man who was blameless and upright, feared God and turned away from evil. He was a good man with a large family and lived with God guiding his life. Yet Job becomes the target between Satan and the Lord as he is put to the test about where he stands in faith. He remains steadfast with God even after he loses everything- his livestock, his wealth and his children. He again is tested by Satan and God and Job is covered in sores and ashes and suffers. But he remains true to God because he depends upon him and trusts God and knows that he can depend on God because he believes and trusts God. Job's story is filled with despair, loss, suffering, grief and those closest to him- his wife, friends and those who just sit in silence with him, wonder what he will do. And it is during this time that Job comes to know again that he can depend on God because he knows that his redeemer lives.

What faith, trust and belief Job has in God! I wonder if we would have such strong convictions if we were similarly tested and facing these same losses. This might lead us all to ask and answer this tough question: Who do you depend upon? Who do you trust with your everyday life?

As we come together this Worldwide communion Sunday we are called to reflect on God's blessings to us, to honour Jesus as Saviour and to realize with new eyes the gift of grace that is offered to us in this moment in time. God's gift to us is Jesus for it states in Hebrews that Jesus is the one 'who is crowned with glory and honour' because of "the suffering he endured for our sakes." It is by God's grace Jesus tasted death for all of us so that we might live with Him forever. But we must choose to follow Jesus our Saviour. Jesus calls us brothers and sisters if we put our trust in him. He says depend upon me and trust me. No matter what happens in your life-- you are mine and I am yours. We can depend on Jesus. You don't have to be worried or burdened about what is possible or causes you to wonder about your life. Depend on me. Pass your cares onto Jesus he will take care of you!

And this is made known to us again this worldwide communion day because we are called to eat and drink and remember him; we are called to celebrate that Jesus died and rose again for us. We need to do what he asks== remember him at the table so that we will be renewed in faith, drink of the new covenant in Christ Jesus and know him personally as Saviour.

Mark 10 has two distinct sections- one focused on divorce but it is the second part that calls us to receive the kingdom of God like children. What does this mean- like children? We know that children are open to receive knowledge, wisdom and are like sponges when it comes to learning. If as adults we had this conviction to learn, with an open trust, dependent and willingness to walk forward in faith wouldn't it be amazing? But no as adults we are sometimes complaining, skeptical or see the negative of everything that is new and challenging. So the question one must ask is who do you depend on for your life?

Job did not waiver in his faith in God; he knew his redeemer. Do you? As we gather at the Jesus' table today; we will eat bread and drink juice; common elements of sharing together. But it is made holy because we offer our prayers that God's Spirit will unite us and show us what it means to truly follow the call of Jesus our Saviour. Who do you depend upon?

The hymn that is familiar states: *We have an anchor that keeps the soul, steadfast and sure while the billows roll, fastened to the rock which cannot move, grounded firm and deep in*

the Saviour's love! This Anchor is Jesus Christ and you can depend upon Him for everything in your life. Just trust and rely on him because He will guide your life.

PRAYER

Holy God of grace and love we praise you and thank you for Jesus' teaching of trust and depending upon him in all ways all the time. Hear our prayers we offer to you as we reflect upon Jesus as the one who we need to cherish and honour all of life. SILENCE. Help us O God to trust, rely and have faith upon you. Call us O God to depend upon you in faith. Amen