



The Aldershot and North Camp Anchor

Issue 50: Sunday 20th June 2021



Dear Friends,

Last week Joy and I were on holiday in North Devon. The weather towards the end of the week was generally cloudy, but earlier in the week we were able to watch three glorious sunsets out of the window of the holiday flat where we were staying. One of those sunsets is shown above.

I imagine that I'm not the only one who finds such a scene 'awe inspiring'. Looking out over the sea, towards the horizon, and watching the sun gradually disappear, is a powerful reminder of the wonder of creation and of the invitation to worship God the Creator.

As the sun sets, it is also, for me, a reminder of what lies beyond the horizon. Out of my sight, but not out of God's care, are other lands and other followers of Jesus who are part of God's one family. As the sun sets where I am, it is rising to invite others into a new day of prayer and praise.

The traditional hymn 'The day thou gavest, Lord is ended' brings these thoughts together in what is, for me, a powerful way.

The hymn was written in the 19th century and, therefore, its language and imagery may appear dated and lacking inclusivity, but in these days of uncertainty and anxiety this hymn speaks to me about God's power and God's eternal purposes. It is a hymn which encourages me to look beyond the horizon of each day into a future where God is already present. This hymn lifts my eyes and my heart in hope and praise.

I'll include the whole hymn (StF 147) below so that you can use the words in your own prayers and reflections.

*The day thou gavest, Lord, is ended,
the darkness falls at thy behest;
to thee our morning hymns ascended,
thy praise shall sanctify our rest.*

*We thank thee that thy Church, unsleeping
while earth rolls onward into light,
through all the world her watch is keeping
and rests not now by day nor night.*

*As o'er each continent and island
the dawn leads on another day,
the voice of prayer is never silent,
nor dies the strain of praise away.*

*The sun that bids us rest is waking
our brethren 'neath the western sky,
and hour by hour fresh lips are making
thy wondrous doings heard on high.*

*So be it, Lord; thy throne shall never,
like earth's proud empires, pass away;
thy kingdom stands, and grows for ever,
till all thy creatures own thy sway*

Yours in His service

Worship Reflection

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. (Psalm 100 v 1-2)

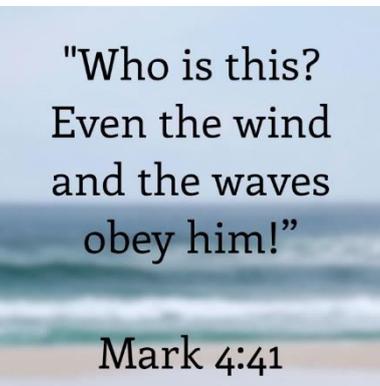
Hymn (StF 250)

Jesus calls us o'er the tumult
of our life's wild, restless sea;
day by day his voice is sounding,
saying "Christian, follow me."

Prayer: Lord God, you are always forgiving, always loving, always offering new beginnings. We offer you our praise and thanksgiving. Amen

Bible Reading (Mark 4 v 35-41)

On that day, when evening had come, he said to them, 'Let us go across to the other side.' And leaving the crowd behind, they took him with them in the boat, just as he was. Other boats were with him. A great gale arose, and the waves beat into the boat, so that the boat was already being swamped. But he was in the stern, asleep on the cushion; and they woke him up and said to him, 'Teacher, do you not care that we are perishing?' He woke up and rebuked the wind, and said to the sea, 'Peace! Be still!' Then the wind ceased, and there was a dead calm. He said



to them, 'Why are you afraid? Have you still no faith?' And they were filled with great awe and said to one another, 'Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?'

Reflection

Mark's Gospel begins with a bold statement in the very first verse proclaiming, "The beginning of the gospel about Jesus Christ, the Son of God". However, from that moment on, Mark describes to us the way in which those who first meet Jesus gradually come to discover this truth for themselves. The first verse reveals the truth about Jesus to the reader, but the first disciples of Jesus only learn who Jesus is as they spend time with him.

As Mark describes the mission and ministry of Jesus, those who are travelling with him discover, in the events described in the first three chapters of the Gospel, that Jesus is a wise teacher and a powerful healer. These are important insights for them to learn, but in the event recorded in this week's Gospel reading, they discover an even more significant truth. The disciples are in a boat with Jesus when a great storm begins. It is such a storm that even the experienced fishermen in the group fear for their lives. The disciples wake Jesus and, with a few words, Jesus stills the storm. The disciples then say to each other, 'Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?'

Interestingly Mark does not record any answers that may have been given at the time to this question, but for those first century disciples it would have been clear that it was only God who had such power over the wind and waves. They begin to realise in this moment that Jesus is not only a teacher and a healer but that he is someone who is both human and divine.

Mark leaves the question hanging at the end of this chapter. It is a question which is not answered by the fishermen in what Mark records – but is a question which still invites our response two thousand years on.

What, then, is your answer to this significant question, 'Who then is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?'

Prayers of Intercession

This week let us pray especially:

- That the G7 leaders will turn their words into action so that vaccines are widely shared, and our planet is protected from climate change.
- That the new government in Israel might lead wisely and well
- For those whose hopes and plans have been most severely disrupted by the lockdown extension.

Gracious God, we ask these prayers through Jesus Christ, our risen Lord and Saviour. Amen

Hymn (StF 624)

Calm me, Lord, as you calmed the storm;
Still me, Lord, keep me from harm.
Let all the tumult within me cease;
Enfold me, Lord, in your peace.

Final Prayer: Lord Jesus Christ, guide our thinking, our living and our praying, that we may discern your will and follow in your way. Amen.



This is the 50th edition of 'The Anchor'. Who would have thought when the first edition was produced for Palm Sunday 2020 that we would still be going in

June 2021! Thank you to those who have contributed articles over the last 15 months and those who have contacted me to let me know that they have found 'The Anchor' helpful.