

June 6, 2021

Christ Church, Dallas

Mark 3:20-35

Second Sunday after Pentecost

Who's Crazy?

Have you ever thought someone you knew was crazy? Probably, its not necessarily unusual to make such a comment about people we know today. Have you ever said "has she gone out of her mind?" There are lots of situation in which we might ask that question of someone we know, but we are shocked when someone asks that question of Jesus.

Just a few chapters into Mark's Gospel, those around him are saying he's crazy and want to get him under control.

In the ancient world, people who were possessed by a demon, or born with some physical or mental illness or defect, were assumed to be cursed or to have sinned. And in an age when family was everything, Jesus was even redefining the meaning of family. Those who do the will of God are his true brothers and sisters and mother. While Jesus has been shaking up the people around him even his own family is trying to get him under control.

As our Presiding Bishop Michael Curry writes, “We want to manage the Messiah. But this Messiah won’t be managed.”

Have you ever done anything that your family thought was crazy? I’m sure you have. I know I have. When I was offered the residency in the Chaplain Office at Texas Medical Center I remember my father saying “are you sure you really want to do this? Won’t it be depressing to be around sick and dying people all the time?” They indeed thought I was making a crazy decision.

So maybe we shouldn’t be too hard on Jesus’ family. We need to consider their reasons for being concerned. What the world called wretched, Jesus called blessed. Blessed are the poor and the poor in spirit. Blessed are those who are merciful and compassionate. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst that God’s righteous justice might prevail. Blessed are those who work for peace. Blessed are you who are persecuted for trying to love and do what is good.

To a lot of people these ideas sound crazy! And yet Jesus calls us to pick up our cross and follow and be crazy enough to love like Jesus and give like Jesus. As Bishop Curry says, we need some Christians who are “crazy enough to dare to change the world from the nightmare it often is into something closer to the dream that God dreams for it.”

To a lot of people, it’s crazy to say that God loves everyone the same, because this isn’t how the world works.

To a lot of people, it's crazy to prioritize the integrity of families, - all families, even immigrant and refugee families – above “border security.” To a lot of people it's crazy to think we could have enough food and decent housing and safe water and adequate health care for everyone – enough for everyone.

In this morning's Gospel Jesus redefines family and in the process gives us a great definition of church. Jesus tells us that sometimes discipleship may cost us our old, natural family ties. But if we do the will of God, we will discover ourselves as new members of the family of God. Jesus moves the value of human relationships beyond the physical to the spiritual. I believe he is saying that as important as physical relationships are, they are not as important as spiritual relationships.

The Bible and our Christian faith point beyond themselves to the vision, the purposes, and the desire of God. Jesus talked about the kingdom or reign of God as the realization of God's loving dream and the vision for the whole human family, and all God's creation.

I believe when we actually study the scriptures and listen for and hear God's word to us, we will begin dreaming God's dream, and maybe some of us will be crazy enough to trust in the dream and stake our lives on it.

Then we can live into God's dream for all of us. Imagine a world where no child ever goes to bed hungry again. A world where everyone has a

safe place to call home. A world in which poverty is truly history, a thing of the past. A world in which every person is treated and valued equally as a beloved child of God. A world where we lay down our swords and shields and guns and bombs, to “study war no more.” A world reconciled to our God and to one another, as children of God and brothers and sisters of one another.

Bishop Curry says “we need more “crazy Christians.” Are we crazy enough to be a part of the transforming, life-changing vision of Jesus Christ? We are invite to follow him and to witness God’s amazing, inclusive love, and to work with him to fulfill God’s dream for all people and all creation.

We have God’s promise that he will be with us always. We can trust that God’s goodness is stronger than evil and that and God’s love will eventually conquer all.

amen