

Mark 8:32-33  
“Impetuous People”  
2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday in Lent

March 1, 2015  
Our Redeemer Lutheran Church  
Rev. Brent Hartwig

Grace, mercy, and peace be unto you from God, our Heavenly Father and Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen! Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

[*Impetuous Peter*] Impetuous Peter!

Peter’s personality stands sharply addressed in scripture.  
He just seems to act before he thinks.

Remember...

He jumps out of the boat to walk on the water.  
Realizing it was the Lord and hearing His command,  
Peter just gets out of the boat ... in the middle of the sea...  
And he walks on water ... until he realizes...  
Until he sees the wind; Until he sees the waves, and he sinks. *Impetuous Peter!*

There was another time...Remember?

He jumps out of the boat. Yes, again.  
Just before the boat gets to shore, Peter jumps out of the boat.  
Splashing and marching through the water, Peter runs to greet the risen Christ.  
He doesn’t think about getting wet.  
He doesn’t worry what the other disciples thought.  
Peter just runs. *Impetuous Peter!*

And yet another time...Remember?

The cock crowed. *O Impetuous Peter!*

Here, in our Gospel reading, he does it again. *Impetuous Peter!*

He is just acting on the spur of the moment, without considering the consequences.

Remember?

Jesus asks, “Who do people say that I am?”

And they told him saying, “John the Baptist.”

Another said, “Elijah.” Still more say you are one of the prophets.

But Peter, he just steps forward and he just answers, “You are the Christ.”

Now *THAT* he gets right!

Impetuous Peter and Impetuous People!

[*Jeremiah*] O Impetuous People!

It was 587 BC – the southern kingdom, Judah is exiled.

A decade of battle succumbed to surrender.

The hammer of Babylon crushed Judah.

It was now reduced to a Babylonian province,  
and Gedaliah serves as the governor

appointed by the Babylonian king, Nebuchadnezzar.

Left in the land was a remnant, and Governor Gedaliah says: (2 Kings 25:24)  
***“Live in the land and serve the king of Babylon, and it shall be well with you.”***

With a lot of thought, they rose up and struck down Governor Gedaliah.  
With a little thought, they called upon Jeremiah to deliver a message from God.

You see, the people wanted to escape the Babylonians and run away to Egypt.  
And Jeremiah has a message:

***“Thus says the LORD, the God of Israel, to whom you sent me to present your plea for mercy before him: If you will remain in this land, then I will build you up and not pull you down; I will plant you, and not pluck you up; for I relent of the disaster that I did to you. Do not fear the king of Babylon, of whom you are afraid. Do not fear him, declares the LORD, for I am with you, to save you and to deliver you from his hand.”***

(Jeremiah 42:9-11)

But the impetuous people cried out, ***“You are telling a lie...to deliver us into the hands of the [Babylonians]”*** (Jeremiah 43:2-3)

And the impetuous people ***“came into the land of Egypt, for they did not obey the voice of the Lord.”*** (Jeremiah 43:7)

Those who cried to Pharaoh, “Let my people go!”  
Now cry to Pharaoh, “Let my people stay!”

The Israelites who were freed from Egypt found themselves imprisoned their again.  
And God was coming again. Not to free them, but to destroy them. ***O impetuous people!***

***[Impetuous People]***        We are no different!  
                                      Many times we are just acting on the spur of the moment.  
                                      Many times we act without considering the consequences.  
How many of us decide to stay home or go to church when we wake in the morning?  
      O impetuous people!  
How many of us decide to not offend someone by mentioning Jesus?  
      O impetuous people!  
How many of us decide to not pray in public, embarrassed by our faith?  
      O impetuous people!

With Jesus we walk on water... then we sink.  
With Jesus we jump out of the boat ... then we worry we are wet.  
With Jesus the cock crowed ... and we get it wrong.

***[Got it Wrong]***  
Now Peter got it right! “You are the Christ.” He got it right, but not for long.  
Jesus then begins explaining things to them.

With just the disciples Jesus says:

***“It is necessary that the Son of Man  
suffer a lot, be tried and found guilty  
by the elders, high priests, and religious scholars,  
be killed, and after three days rise up to live.”***

He said this simply and boldly so they couldn't miss it.

“Jesus now introduces betrayal, suffering, and death into the picture of his destiny. What Jesus says represents a ‘turn’ in the story line, as it were” (Voelz, 7).

No doubt the disciples are surprised!

But then Peter... O Impetuous Peter ... grabbed him in protest.

Now Jesus, turning and seeing his disciples wavering, wondering what to believe, Jesus confronted Peter, and he actually says:

***“Get behind me Satan, because you are not thinking the things of God  
but the things of men.”*** (Mark 8:33)

Sticks and stones may break your bones, but names will never hurt you!

Come on? Really? Jesus resorts to name calling?

[***Satan***]

Peter is impetuous, but it is not Peter whom our Lord is scolding.

Jesus sees beyond Peter, sees beyond the physical to know the spiritual reality.

Satan roams like a roaring lion.

And the reality is that Peter knows this.

1 Peter chapter 5, verse 8: ***“Be sober-minded; be watchful. Your adversary the devil  
prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.”***

Satan is at work!

He is at work in this pericope, “working against, the ministry of Jesus, through means, as it were. His more obvious means are unclean spirits and demons; his less obvious means are human beings. Now, through Peter Satan tempts Jesus ... to think the things of men...” (Voelz, 12)

Oh and not only here, but throughout his ministry – throughout the ministry of Jesus.

Remember when ...

the Scribes accused Jesus of being in league with Satan (Mark 3:22)?

How ironic that it was they themselves, the Scribes, who were the tool of Satan.

Remember when ...

Jesus was being called by his family to go with them and abandon the ministry (Mark 3:31)?

Here is another temptation of Satan.

And remember when ...

the crowds gathered and chanted and cheered?

***“Hosanna! Blessed is the coming kingdom of our father David!***

***Hosanna in the highest!”*** (Mark 11:10)

Yes, here is another attempt by Satan to lure Jesus into the things of men.

Being drawn away from His Father’s will, by the praise of this world.

To lure Jesus into liking this world’s praise more than following His Father’s will.

**[*Things of God*]**

The spiritual realm is an important theme in the Gospel of Mark.

And Jesus did not have his mind on the things of men, but on the things of God!

So what are the things of God?

The necessity of Jesus fulfilling His mission!

The necessity of Jesus’ suffering before triumph!

The necessity of Jesus’ death for our sins!

Your sins, my sins, the sins of the whole world!

The necessity of Jesus’ resurrection for our life!

Jesus was focused on our salvation.

**[*We Get It*]** O Impetuous Peter!

He gets the answer right, but he still doesn’t get it.

A friend of mine always says, “Even a blind squirrel finds a nut every now and then.”

And that is Peter!

Eventually, the disciples, including Peter will understand the mission of Jesus, but here we get it! We actually see!

“We certainly gain new insight and we see much more clearly who Jesus truly is and what his mission is truly about. We hear the teaching from his own lips: ‘It is necessary that the Son of Man suffer ... die ... and rise.’” (Voelz, 14).

The “great theologian” Johnny Nash had it right! “I can see clearly now...”

“Now we can see everything more clearly – much more clearly than was apparent in the previous seven and one-half chapters, when we saw a mysterious man of power” (Voelz, 14).

And now, as the story continues, this sight of him will become ever clearer.

He himself gives us a constant witness.

He himself fulfills the meaning of His words.

He himself is our Savior. Amen!

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No matter how impetuous you are...

You are the body of Christ, each one of you part of it. Amen!