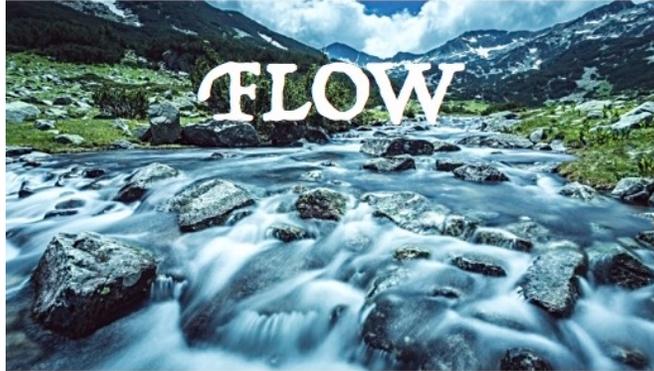


#10 March 14, 2017



Do not misuse the name of the Lord your God.

Exodus 20:7

"Who is this?" They asked themselves. "Even the wind and the waves obey him."

Matthew 8:27

What's In a Name?

by Laura Martin

The question posed by the soggy, terrified disciples in their Matthew 8 storm-tossed boat stops me in my tracks. It's such a great question. After an exhausting day with the crowds Jesus, and his disciples escape on a boat to cross to the other side of the lake. As the wind whipped down from the western hills and began tossing their boat around like a piece of driftwood, the disciples were as completely frantic as Jesus was at peace. When Jesus wakes up and calms the storm (saves their lives!), a new uncertainty took hold. As terrified as they had been, they at least were familiar with the Galilean storms. Now what though? What do you do with a guy in your boat that *calms* storms? Who does that? "Who is this?" emerged not because they had forgotten what to call him or how to spell his name. The question came because they found themselves in a life-altering Colossians 2:9 moment, realizing that all of the power, person and presence of the Almighty God, was in Jesus. Who *is* this? Perhaps they had been guilty up to this point of taking the name of the Lord in vain.... of speaking his name with little care or knowledge of who he is.

I'm guessing we might all identify with that moment when you hit your thumb with the hammer, or step on a Lego barefoot in your child's room at night.... and

out comes a string of very theological words with no particular theological context! God's third commandment was given in a context where the surrounding Canaanite prophets frequently used their god's name to add intensity to what was being said. ("Baal says there will be no rain for 10 days") And God says "don't do that". Don't ask me to damn something just because you are angry. Don't use my name carelessly, or to add authority to your words. We are to honor the truth of who God is with our words, and in an even more foundational sense, live our whole lives in passionate pursuit of discovering who he is, that we may not speak his name, or his heart, recklessly, carelessly, in vain. Who *IS* this? Even the wind and the waves obey him.

His name is ***Jehovah-jireh***, our provider.

His name is ***Jehovah-rophe***, our healer.

His name is ***Jehovah-shaloom***, our peace.

His name is ***Jesus***, our Savior,
and he is in the boat with us today.

Questions:

Imagine you are in the Matthew 8 boat, drenched, heart still racing. How do you answer the question when you hear your fellow disciple stutter, "Who is this?"

How do you answer the question in the context of your day today?

What is God calling you to be, do, confess, or continue in terms of honoring his name today?

Prayer:

Holy God,

Your compassion is beyond our understanding, and we thank you for who you are. Today would you slow our pace and calm the storm in our hearts that we would hold your beautiful name on our lips, and in our lives, with the honesty, joy, and utter devotion that you are worthy of.

In Jesus name,

Amen