

Introduction:

- Theme: How to stay calm and overcome in chaos.
- Fact: No matter how big the 'chaos'/Mayhem, God is always in control.
- When I look at the cross, I see the world around it in chaos. And in all that chaos, I hear God say, " I GOT THIS!" The cross brings stability to our lives.
- The chaos we find ourselves in today with Covid-19, has all the elements of chaos that we find around the cross.
- According to research at an Elingsh university, it doesn't matter in what order the letters in a word are, the only important thing is that the first and last letter is at the right place. The rest can be a total mess and you can still read it without a problem. This is because we do not read every letter by itself but the word as a whole. **APPLICATION**
- There's a lesson to be gleaned from this little exercise. We must learn to read life the way we read words on a page, resisting the temptation to focus too much on the individual events, choosing instead to take it all in as a whole.
- Jesus claims to be the Alpha and the Omega, the Beginning and End. Among other things, this suggests that the beginning and the end of all things are exactly as they should be. Unfortunately, it's in the middle where we live, and it's a total mess! But God has not left us to wallow in CHAOS and confusion.
- By making sure the beginning and the end of all things are what they should be, God restores meaning to life. When we read life as a whole, the CHAOS in the middle is brought into proper perspective. We are assured that one day it's all going to make sense. Illustration Exchange Readers Digest 2003.
- Luke 23:1-13
- I want us to look at three things this morning: When Chaos Comes, Avoiding Mayhem, and Are You In Good Hands.

- I. When Chaos Comes** We will all face chaos at some point in our lives at some level.
- A. Chaos is defined as a state of utter confusion. It is an inherent unpredictability in the behavior of a complex natural system. When Jesus was crucified religious systems were sent into chaos. Governmental systems were thrown into mayhem. Social systems were thrown into inherent unpredictability. Personal systems were thrown into utter chaos.
1. When life becomes unpredictable you have entered a realm of chaos. Most of us do not like chaos. We like order to our world. IE. Parents like order in their children's rooms. Teachers like order in the classroom. Shoppers like order in their shopping experience.
 2. We like everything to be in its place. Like toilet paper on the shelf at Walmart. Meat in the meat section. Job security. Medical care when we need it. When that does not happen chaos begins to move into our lives because the usual system has been changed. It is also important to note that when ever people are involved there is always opportunity for chaos, But...we do not have to get caught up into chaos!
- B. First of all lets look at the people associated with the story of the cross. As we do I want you to begin to see the chaos being released and what is causing the chaos. Chaos comes from the heart of people. A storm may trigger it. An earthquake can trigger it. A tragedy can

trigger it. There are multiplied triggers to chaos but how we respond determines the level of chaos we live with in our own hearts.

1. Judas betrays Jesus out of greed. IE. For the 30 rolls of toilet paper.
 - a) His actions set things in motion creating chaos. But greed keeps it going!
 - b) He had no idea what his choice was about to start.
 - c) And if he did, he did not care.
 2. Peter denies Jesus out of fear. IE. You will deny me three times before the rooster crows.
 - a) Three times! To a man, a small group and to a servant girl.
 - b) All the disciples were scattered out of fear for their lives. Chaos.
 3. The Pharisees seek to kill Jesus, out of thirst for power and position...because Jesus is 'draining the swamp.' He has more followers than they do.
- C. When chaos comes, systems breakdown and things go out of control as people individually seek to take control or be in control.

II. Avoiding Mayhem

- A. Here are common responses found in chaotic atmospheres.
1. Fear - Peter was fearful for his life. In our situation with Covid19:
 - a) people fear 'lack of toilet paper.'
 - b) fear of stock market crash.
 - c) fear of lack, not having enough.
 - d) Child become afraid when they see parents afraid. Fear is a common response of people in the middle of chaos.
 2. Doubt - the 12 had walked with Jesus for 3.5 years and did the "stuff"... preaching with miracles, raising the dead, healing the sick, and casting out devils. Now they are in doubt!
 - a) This absence of faith causes them to descend into a pit of despair and fear.
 - b) This absence of faith not only brought on fear it brought on discouragement.
 3. Denial - Peter, James, and John slept while Jesus prayed. They lacked the sense of urgency that Jesus displayed. Jesus knew the crisis was coming. Jesus is sweating blood while they are asleep drooling in their beards.
 - a) Denial is the refusal to believe. IE. Jesus stopped wind, waves, demons, and leprosy. In their minds He can handle this.
 - b) Kind of like people refusing to self quarantine or social distance.
 4. Anger - Anger comes from an attempt to be in control. IE. Peter, in anger, cuts off a mans ear. The Pharisees in anger cry out for Jesus death. The crowd moved by anger want Jesus crucified. Anger is often a symptom of being unable to control another. IE Road rage.
 5. Greed - Pharisees have a greed for power and position. That is why they want Jesus dead.
 - a) Their greed drives them to control Jesus so they can have power and position.
 - b) Jesus humility drives Him to give away power and position.
- B. These five spirits released at once create a high unpredictable atmosphere of chaos and mayhem.
1. Doubt by itself causes confusion and misunderstanding.
 2. Anger will cause in others confusion and misunderstanding.

3. These two things lead to fear which in turn causes one to act so that they are in control.
 4. And often anger comes in people's lives because it is one way to get back control by creating more fear. See how the circle seem to be going around and around?
 - a) Some people go 'ballistic' when they are not in control. Thus creating more mayhem.
 - b) IE. That is what causes them to steal TP out of other people's shopping carts.
 - c) IE. Like Peter they cut off a mans ear. The anger and rage is about pushing your way through, even if you hurt someone.
- C. But the cross makes the statement, in the midst of the chaos, God is in control!***
1. Jesus. Have you ever noticed as you read the Gospels that Jesus never entered into chaos even though He was often in the center of it? How did He keep calm in the chaos?
 - a) He knew the Father was in control. Do you actually believe that God is in control? This is critical to believe if you are going to stay out of chaos. Jesus knew God was in control. God spoke the world into existence. He can speak it out of existence.
 - b) He prayed (He took His sorrow to the Father) while the disciples slept. What He received in prayer was grace!
 - (1) He found grace! "...*Yes, by God's grace, Jesus tasted death for everyone.*" (Hebrews 2:9, NLT) Grace is God's ability in me to the things I cannot do in and of myself.
 - (2) In God's ability, grace, He did not enter into chaos but stayed calm. In grace discouragement left because he was not working out of his own strength but God's strength.
 - c) He obeyed the Fathers will. Through grace and trust His heavenly Father empowered Him to be obedient. Grace and trust raises the level of obedience and lowers the level of chaos.
 - (1) Here is how Jesus lived before the Father. [It is not about us. It is about God and what He desires.] And when it is about God and what He desires there are no control issues and thus there is profound calm in the storm.
 - (2) "*Because his heart was focused on the joy of knowing that you would be his, he endured the agony of the cross and conquered its humiliation...*" (Heb 12:2 TPT).
 2. The disciples, on the other hand...
 - a) They were not convinced that God was in control....Jesus had been in control up to now.
 - b) They slept while Jesus prayed.
 - c) Because they slept, they did not find grace to help in this time of need.
 - d) Without grace (God's ability) their trust level went down and their chaos level went up.
 - e) They were not able to be obedient and were scattered.
 3. Element of Chaos Elements of Cross

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • fear • doubt • anger • denial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • confidence • trust • peace • acceptance/obedience to the Fathers will
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III. Are You In Good Hands?

- A. Jesus took His 'exceeding sorrow' to the Father in Gethsemane. Rather than taking things into our own hands we must learn to take them to the Father. Father first.
1. That exceeding sorrow was the pain he was submitting too, the unjust suffering, the isolation from those He loves, and Father turning away. IE. That is social distancing right there.
- B. Jesus prays to Father and He receives grace, (God's ability) to get through trying times. Rather than trusting in our own ability we must learn to trust in God's ability in us.
- C. Jesus obeys. When you receive grace, your trust in God goes up and you are able to say, "Not my will but yours be done." When you receive grace you are empowered by God to go through difficult times.
- D. When we take our trials to the Father in prayer, we receive grace which boosts our trust, confidence, peace and acceptance....THEREFORE, we stand and walk through chaos! Because...GOD IS IN CONTROL!!! The cross brings stability to our lives because it reminds us and reaffirms to us that God is in control.

Conclusion:

- When life is in chaos, God says, "I got this."
- The cross brings stability to our lives when we are found in middle of chaos. It is our anchor telling us God is in control.
- *"Then Jesus said to his disciples, "If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross, and follow me." (Matthew 16:24, NLT)*
- *"And there shall be stability in your times, an abundance of salvation, wisdom, and knowledge; the reverent fear and worship of the Lord is your treasure and His." (Isaiah 33:6, AMP)*
- *"Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid" (John 14:27)*
- *"I have told you these things, so that in me you may have peace. In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33)*
- *"And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus" (Philippians 4:7).*