

A Sermon for DaySpring

By Burt L. Burleson

“Fish Thought”

Mark 6: 1-11

July 6, 2003

Fish Thought

*Down in the underneath, deep in the sea
where all the fish live, content as can be.
Swimming and eating and swimming some more,
from corral reef to sandbar, from deep down to shore.
They do what fish do in their aquatic domain,
And never lose sight of that great food chain.
They know their world like the back of their fins
they know how it works and what makes it gin.
They've all been to “school” where they went to great pains,
To learn their fish truth and use their fish brains.
They studied the plankton and all the shipwrecks,
They learned about seashells and cause and effect.
They knew all their numbers and wet history.
They even took classes in psychology.
They were certain, they were, there in the blue,
Of how their world functioned and all that was true.*

*Then... one day a strange fish swam among them
And spoke of strong currents and a thing called “Ocean.”
And said that they where in it, that it was between,
It connected all fishes, though it was unseen.
They lived in this water, it was their source,
It moved all things, as an invisible force.
With the heart it was there for anyone's seeing,
For in it they lived and swam and had their being.*

*Well... some liked this new teaching but most took offense
“ Ocean, ridiculous! That makes no sense.”*

It's always hard to see what is nearest.
It's hard to see what you're swimming in.
Or standing next to.

Most beautiful things can't be seen to close. To see most works of art you have to step back a bit.

To hear the composer's genius, you can't just sit in the French Horn section. You have to at least be a few rows back to hear the good stuff.

Parents know that it's often hard to see the good things in that teenager living in their house. Familiarity breeds blindness.

We're so familiar with our world.

A few hundred years back, we entered the Age of Enlightenment and we all got convinced that one and one would always make two. That for every action there was an opposite and equal reaction.

We're convinced that reality was that which could be seen or heard or handled... and then verified in the laboratory. The five senses ruled the reality roost.

We lived in Sir Isaac's world. Lots of Newtonian parts that worked together like a great big machine. **"Parts were parts"** and the basic belief was that as we figured out all the parts, we'd have life and our world and ourselves figured out. That's modernity in a nutshell... break it down to its parts.

The trouble is... our best and brightest kept getting better at slicing and dicing the world. They got bigger telescopes and stronger microscopes and they begin to realize that the tiniest electron wasn't just a particle but it was also a wave (depending on it's mood) and that it wasn't really a solid that it was mostly space. In other words, "nonmaterial influences are the basic substance of the universe." (Wheatley, Leadership and the New Science.)

Depak Chopra says that since an atom is 99.99 percent empty... it's basically space... our bodies are far more porous than they are dense. He says that we are as "void" proportionately as is intergalactic space.

This is the quantum type thinking that replaced the Newtonian thinking in the last century... most of us aren't up to speed with science.

I'm certainly not.

It requires to big of a shift.

I want parts to be parts but they aren't.

In the Quantum world the concept that we are unconnected individuals has been demolished. It's all a vast web. (Wheatley, 39)

The Quantum physicists say that the world behaves more like a great thought than a machine and that in the Quantum world, relationships are all there is (Wheatley). What they've come to understand is that every time they observe anything, they change it. They change it when they interact with it. The universe is participatory.

I don't get this stuff at all... And Physicist David Bohm says that if it doesn't make your jaw fall off, you haven't gotten it. For instance, they proven that sub atomic particles relate to one another across time and space.

Once they're in a relationship, partnered, they keep dancing, even though one of them is in the next room... or theoretically on the other side of the planet.

They've watched electrons change from particle to wave or wave to particle depending on what the scientists were measuring for... it's like they were cooperating with the experiment. Or like subatomic self-fulfillment prophecy was at work.

There is an **"invisible fabric of connectedness."** There's lots of space but the space isn't empty... it's full of fields. They are unseen forces that become apparent through their effects. Gravitational... Electromagnetical... psychic

Thought is a part of field theory. There are schools of thinking in quantum physics that suggest that it is **"awareness that evokes the world"**... that thought proceeds matter.

Well... is your head spinning yet? Maybe, you're feeling a bit like a fish who just heard that she's swimming in and surrounded by something called an "ocean."

Jesus swam home one day... early on in his ministry. He needed some of Mary's home cooking I'm sure... but he was also anxious to have a little home field advantage for a change. But as we read earlier, it was a great disadvantage to be in too familiar territory.

As Mark tells the story, the folks were asking, **"Where did this man get these things... what's this wisdom that has been given him?"**

Jesus was a "moshlim," a master of wisdom, this was the first title he was given by his followers (Bourgeault, 8). He taught using "mashal," parables and wisdom says.

"A certain man had two sons..."

"The Kingdom is like someone sowing seed."

"It's like yeast..."

"Blessed are the poor in Spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

"Do not judge or you shall be judged"

"Unless you become like a child..."

"Unless you die... you can't live."

He was a "moshlim," he taught in a certain tradition, with mashal and his neighbors in Nazareth wanted to know where he'd gotten it. **"What's this wisdom that enables him to do miracles?"**

Notice their understanding... there is a connection between this wisdom knowing and transcending the physical... Thought and matter... consciousness and the physical. They knew this in the ancient world.

They are impressed by him and by what he is saying. **"Amazed,"** Mark says.

But... it bothered them that it was Jesus. They knew him. **"Honey, isn't that the carpenter that made our coffee table."** They knew his brothers and sisters, who seemed pretty average. They knew his mother and father and there were all sorts of questions about his legitimacy as a baby. **"You know what they say about him. He doesn't look anything like his daddy."**

"I grew up with that guy... we played stick ball in the streets."

His teachings weren't the problem. He was.

"He's just one of us."

"We can't know that."

"We can't do that."

"So... neither can he."

And sure enough, he couldn't.

Mark says, **"He could not do any miracles there..."** Not... **would not... could not**. In other words, they contended that he was just like them and he was... ordinary... not powerful... unable to do the miraculous.

Even Jesus was impacted by negativity and lack of openness... even Jesus' good works were conditioned by the faith around him... by something in the air.

No wonder he took the show on the road... And when he sent his disciples out, it's no wonder he told them not to spend too much time trying to talk people into

something they weren't ready for. **“Just shake the dust from your feet and move on.”** Lots of people aren't ready to see what they're swimming in.

It makes me wonder, how my attitude and expectations and how my faith or lack of it... are impacting the people and the world around me. Because, I'm connected... I may not know that or feel or believe that... but everything that I do and say and even what I think... changes things.

Because I'm living in an ocean... an interconnected world... where relationships are all there is. Ask Jesus or Einstein.

“Look at this Jesus, who does he think he is? He's just like us so he'd sure better behave that way.” And he did.

Is it possible that as a spiritual being, living in a supernatural world, that you're more relevant than you think? You aren't some separate and irrelevant part... some replaceable cog in the universal machine. You're in a wonderful web and everything you are and do and say and think... impacts our world.

Your expectations of how you're going to be treated out there, change how you're treated.

The way you think about your family and friends, your estimation of them and who they are and what they can amount to... matters.

Maybe that's why Paul wrote, **“Think on these things... whatever is true and good and honorable and worthy of praise...”** He knew.

How open or closed you are... will change the circumstances around you. You know this to be true. Haven't you known people who change the feeling in the room when they walk into it?

Have you ever wondered about your prayers? Maybe it made no good theological sense to try and talk God into something... but what if you're joining God in something... your being and God's Being? And what if there is no real distance between you and anyone? They're in the next room but you're still dancing. Every prayer you utter then would be apart of the Tapestry God is weaving around them.

You're very important...

Did you know that your mood and your spiritual disposition and desire impacts worship experience for someone down the pew from you? I have experienced the way it impacts my preaching.

We matter... we can't escape that or this Web for better or for worse. Because of that, some places, work environments, families, churches... exude joy and blessing and breed Saints because of it. Others are oppressive... they bring out the sinner in everyone and keep miraculous things from happening.

Some churches become storehouses of negativity... conflict... poison. I heard about a few of them at the CBF. Good people who've created bad, life-sucking places to be. I was so sad for some of my friends in the ministry. One of them said, **“I could never recommend this vocation to my children because of the way my church has treated me.”**

I didn't say it, but inside I was thanking God that I can say to my children... and to all these students... **"You should consider this... it really can be wonderful."**
Thank you, DaySpring!

Everything matters... "everything's more than it seems." (K. Wood)
This is an amazing world we live in. You are living in the ocean of God's being.
If you can believe that, it'll change the way you wake up tomorrow.

You won't have to be in control...

You won't have to be afraid...

Or so pressed or bored.

You'll be waking up into a wonderful sea of possibilities... in a place where you swim in the currents of God's love and God's work... Where you are connected to all creation by the very life of God. Where everything you do and say and think is important... and you matter very much.

You only have to wake up

*But there were a few fishes who opened their eyes,
Whose consciousness woke and started to rise.
Who swam farther and deeper than ever before,
Whose souls came to life and who said, "There's more."*

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