

God whose almighty word, chaos and darkness heard, and took their flight.

Hear us we humbly pray, and where the gospel day sheds not its glorious ray, let there be light.

So it is the hymnwriter tells the story of creation. God spoke and chaos and darkness fled, took their flight. Scripture tells that same story with these words: In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. The earth was without form and void and darkness was upon the face of the deep; and the Spirit of God was moving over the face of the waters. And God said, let there be light and there was light.

Darkness was upon the face of the deep.

Before God spoke, there is the deep, the waters, a symbol for chaos. Within the deep there was no life, no order, no purpose, no light, chaos. But when God's word came, then there was light, order, life.

The story of the flood is the story of God letting chaos loose once more. Where once his word had held back the waters, providing space for life, because of sin God let go, he gave the world back to the deep, and all died but those he preserved on the ark.

Water as chaos is such a powerful symbol in scripture. The children of Israel come to the Red sea, pursued by Pharaoh's army. God pushed aside chaos, the waters, so that his children might escape, then when Pharaoh's army pursued them through the sea bed, God lets Chaos have its way, the waters return, and Pharaoh's soldiers are drowned.

Or Christ, walking on the water, demonstrating his power over chaos. And Peter shares in that power, walking with Jesus until fear leaves him sinking.

Most of all, baptism. We went down, under the waters, overwhelmed by chaos, drowned like Pharaoh's army, or the people in the flood, or Jesus on the cross. Then God raised up a new creation, his new son or daughter, to be overwhelmed by chaos no more.

Yet today, chaos is like a sea rising all around us. I heard the second

letter to Timothy describe the last days and I say, that's us: In the last days there will come times of stress, For ~~men~~ <sup>people</sup> will become lovers of ~~money~~ <sup>themselves</sup> ~~money~~ lovers of money, proud, arrogant, abusive disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, inhuman, implacable, slanderers, profligates, fierce haters of good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding the form of religion but denying ~~its~~ the power of it.

Chaos. That is what is happening in our homes, in our classrooms, in the streets. <sup>No order, no purpose.</sup> Chaos. People are being ruled by what they feel, what they think, what they want. Chaos. Undisciplined, uncontrolled. Chaos.

These words were written to Timothy: But as for you, continue in what you have learned and have firmly believed, knowing from whom you learned it and how from childhood you have been acquainted with the sacred writings which are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus. All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work.

Scripture is inspired by God, God breathed is what the word means. It is God breathed, not so we can argue how the creation is taught in our ~~schools~~ schools, but that the chaos in our lives might be driven out by God's word. Scripture is God breathed that it might be useful to us, guiding and directing us in our living. ~~Scripture~~ Scripture is God-breathed, that we might believe in Christ and have everlasting salvation. Scripture is God breathed, inspired that Christ who is the word of God might be our light in the darkness of this world.

The news papers say day after day, if we can just find the right government program, we will win the war on drugs. If we can just administer the severe enough penalties we will drive the drunk driver from the road. If we can just create the proper educational programs, then the schools will become effective once again.

And so we wait for someone to solve all these problems. For some teacher or minister to train our children, for our children to change so we no longer need yell at them, for our spouse to change so our home will no longer be such a shambles. We wait and fail to do the one thing that can make any difference. We fail to let God rule over our lives with his word.

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God has breathed into scripture that through it he might be in charge of your life. God has inspired scripture not so we can have a Bible we can worship, but that through these sacred writings our whole lives will be given to worship our Lord. God has breathed into scripture, that through his word day after day chaos and darkness will be driven out of you and you will be his new creation through faith.

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Today I intended to preach about missions. About telling others. About giving our money that the chaos in our neighbors hearts and lives might be replaced by Christ. But giving money can never replace giving of our hearts. We, who have spoken the word, who have heard the word, we stand in need of the chaos and darkness being drivin out and faith in Christ being poured in. To scripture is where God sends us, that we might be instructed, corrected, reprove, trained. To scripture is where God sends me and you that we might be prepared for salvation through fiath in Jesus Christ.

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