

Mark 3.20-35

When Steve Jobs, one of the founders of Apple, died in 2011, an old Apple commercial from the 90s went viral on YouTube. It was a commercial that aired in 1997 and that attempted to re-brand Apple products. The tag line for the commercial and the company was “Think different,” a phrase that is grammatically incorrect -- which is part of the point.. Think different.

The commercial, showed a collage of photographs and film footage of people who have invented and inspired, created and sacrificed to improve the world, to make a difference. They showed Bob Dylan, Amelia Earhart, Frank Lloyd Wright, Muhammad Ali, Martin Luther King Jr., Albert Einstein, Pablo Picasso, Mahatma Gandhi and on and on and on. As the images rolled by, a voice read this poem, (I invite you think of Jesus as you listen and see if it applies to him as well):

Here’s to the crazy ones. The misfits. The rebels.
The troublemakers. The round pegs in the square holes.
The ones who see things differently. They’re not fond of rules.
And they have no respect for the status quo.
You can quote them, disagree with them, glorify or vilify them.
About the only thing you can’t do is ignore them.
Because they change things.
They push the human race forward.
While some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius.
Because the people who are crazy enough
to think they can change the world,
are the ones who do.

Bishop Michael Curry¹

Does this speak of Jesus, do you think?

Listen to the gospel again: “Then [Jesus] went home; and the crowd came together again, so that they could not even eat. When his family heard it, they went out to restrain him, for people were saying, ‘He has gone out of his mind.’” (Mark 3:19-21 (NRSV))

¹ <https://www.faithandleadership.com/sermons/michael-b-curry-we-need-some-crazy-christians>

The Contemporary English Version, says, "When Jesus' family heard what he was doing, they thought he was crazy and went to get him under control."

Bishop Michael B Curry, the one who preached at the Royal Wedding says:

So forgive me for saying it this way, but Jesus was, and is, crazy! And those who would follow him are called and summoned and challenged to be just as crazy as Jesus. We need some crazy Christians.

I don't want to be too quick to judge Jesus' mother and the whole family. They had good reason to be concerned.

Jesus taught in the Sermon on the Mount: "Do not repay evil for evil or abuse for abuse; but, on the contrary, repay with a blessing" (1 Peter 3:9). That's crazy.

Jesus says, "The greatest among you will be your servant" (Matthew 23:11). That's crazy.

What the world calls wretched, Jesus calls blessed.

Blessed are the poor and the poor in spirit.

Blessed are the merciful, the compassionate.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst that God's righteous justice might prevail.

Blessed are those who work for peace.

Blessed are you when you are persecuted just for trying to love and do what is good. Jesus was crazy.

He said, "Love your enemies, bless those who curse you, pray for those who spitefully use you." He was crazy.

He prayed while people were killing him, "Father, forgive them; they know not what they do." Now, that's crazy.

We need some Christians who are as crazy as Jesus. Crazy enough to love like Jesus, to give like Jesus, to forgive like Jesus, to do justice, love mercy, walk humbly with God -- like Jesus. Crazy enough to dare to change the world from the nightmare it often is into something close to the dream that God dreams for it.²

² ibid

Mahatma Gandhi said: “Be the change you want to see in the world.”

It has just been the Week of Prayer for Reconciliation when we commemorate two significant milestones in the reconciliation journey in Australia—the anniversaries of the successful 1967 referendum and the Mabo decision...

The Australian referendum of 27 May 1967, approved two amendments to the Australian constitution relating to Indigenous Australians.. The amendments were overwhelmingly endorsed, winning 90.77% of votes cast and carrying in all six states. These amendments had the immediate effect of including Aboriginal Australians in determinations of population, and also empowered the Federal Parliament to legislate specifically for this racial group. 1967! So recently! Many crazy people made this happen.

The second event, The Mabo Decision, refers to a decision by the High Court delivered on 3 June 1992. *Mabo v. Queensland [No. 2]* which overturned the doctrine known as terra nullius (land belonging to no-one), and paved the way for the Commonwealth *Native Title Act 1993*.

Eddie Mabo’s role in this landmark judgment was summed up by Bryan Keon-Cohen, junior counsel in both cases: ‘without Eddie Mabo there was no case’ (2011, 1:46).

Edward ‘Koiki’ Mabo (1936–1992), was a Torres Strait Islander community leader and land rights campaigner.

Mabo did not live to hear the High Court’s ruling in *Mabo No. 2*.. Throughout his life Mabo had demonstrated initiative, originality, determination, intelligence, and commitment to obtaining justice for Indigenous Australians and recognition of the traditional land rights of his family and people. Following his death, and in the wake of *Mabo No. 2*, he became a household name. Posthumously awarded a Human Rights Award by the Australian Human Rights Commission in 1992, he was also the *Australian* newspaper’s Australian of the Year for 1992. In the Shire of Torres, and across other regions of Queensland, 3 June—known as Mabo Day—has

been declared a bank holiday, a significant move given that for much of his life Mabo was regarded with hostility by many Meriam leaders. Mabo's life has become the subject of academic scrutiny, art, literature, film and television..³

Eddie was a crazy man who fought for his people's rights, and won!
Are you crazy?

Those who would follow Jesus, those who would be his disciples, are called to craziness too.
We are called to craziness.

...

Think back to the crucifixion of Jesus. Crucifixion was execution by the empire for crimes against the state. It was public torture. It was an intentionally brutal means of capital punishment, an execution designed to send a message that revolution and revolutionaries would not be tolerated. If you were a supporter or follower of the person being crucified, it was dangerous to stand too close by during the execution. The rational and sensible thing to do was to go into hiding or exile.

Having said that, let's call the roll of those Jesus called to follow him; let's take the attendance of the apostles at the crucifixion of their Lord. Simon Peter? Absent. James? Absent. Andrew? Absent. Bartholomew? Absent. Thomas? Absent. Judas? Definitely absent. Mary Magdalene? Present and accounted for! That's a disciple! When the old slaves sang, "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?" there was a woman named Mary who could answer, "I was there!" Now, that's crazy!

It may not be obvious at first, but we actually have a day to remember crazy Christians. We call it All Saints' Day. It's not called "All the Same Day"; it's All Saints' Day, because, though they were fallible and mortal, and sinners like the rest of us, when push came to shove, the people we honour as saints marched to the beat of a different drummer. In their lifetimes, they made a difference for the kingdom of God.⁴

Can you think of some of them, from history, from this town, from this cathedral?

³ <http://ia.anu.edu.au/biography/mabo-edward-koiki-eddie-16122>

⁴ <https://www.faithandleadership.com/sermons/michael-b-curry-we-need-some-crazy-christians>

We need some crazy Christians. Sane, sanitized Christianity is killing us. That may have worked once upon a time, but it won't carry the gospel anymore. We need some crazy Christians like who?.... Mary Magdalene? Who else?

Christians crazy enough to believe that God is real and that Jesus lives. Crazy enough to follow the radical way of the gospel. Crazy enough to believe that the love of God is greater than all the powers of evil and death...

We need some Christians crazy enough to believe that children don't have to go to bed hungry; that the world doesn't have to be the way it often seems to be; that there is a way to lay down our swords and shields, down by the riverside; ...

every human being has been created in the image of God, and we are all equally children of God and meant to be treated as such.⁵

'While some may see them as the crazy ones, we see genius. Because the people who are crazy enough to think they can change the world, are the ones who do.'
Are you crazy?

Susanna

⁵ <https://www.faithandleadership.com/sermons/michael-b-curry-we-need-some-crazy-christians>

