Legend of the Hebrides Islands

Bruce Thielemann, former pastor of First Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, told the story of a legend circulating through the Hebrides Islands, off the west coast of mainland Scotland. It is about a god who lived beneath the sea.

The great desire of this sea-god was to have a little baby boy – a human baby. He was, therefore, always trying to catch little babies that might be in boats passing along the surface of the sea from island to island. The people knew this, and they always held their children close when in their boats.

On one occasion, this sea-god almost got a boat. He was surging behind it when the boat reached the shore. The occupants lifted the little boy who was in the boat out onto the shore just as this sea-god approached in a great wave. The parents and their fellow travelers hurried away with the boy. At least, they thought they had gotten away. What they didn't know was that the sea-god managed to send just one little wavelet into the heart of the child.

As the sea-god, momentarily frustrated, settled back down to his palace beneath the waves, he was heard to say, "He will return to me, for I have put part of myself into his heart."

Years later, the people of the village were astonished one day to see a strong, young man go down to the beach, get in a rowboat and begin to row out into the sea – but not toward another island. They called out to him, "There is no island that way!"

But on he rowed. As the villagers watched, when he was a good distance from the shore, the young man stood up and dived into the sea to the god who had put a part of himself into that boy's heart.

That's the legend, Thielemann said. But it offers a lesson to us.

It is a reminder to us that when we were made, Jehovah God – the One who created heaven and earth and the sea – put a bit of Himself inside of us, and it cries out for Him.

And not until we join our Lord through faith in His risen Son do we find the peace, the joy and the contentment that comes from such union.

– Beecher Hunter