

## Dear Chapel Friends:

**I believe in the ultimate truth of God's word.** It gives us the parameters for our existence. It provides us with principles that act as foundation stones upon which our lives can be built and established. All of our relationships are subject to these principles in the same way the universe is subject to the laws of physics. While God has provided us with eternally true principles to govern our lives, He also allows experiences to shape us. Moses had an experience at a burning bush, Mary had an experience with an angel, Paul had an experience on the road to Damascus and the early church had experiences of a new kind of community.

The Lord allows us to discover how He has wired us for relationship with each other and with Him. This dynamic of how God has created us, how we fall and how we can learn to know His truth, even in relational brokenness, is the reality of the church.

And while the church is busy being the hope of the world, the church is also being built through relational integrity, as we live the Great Commandment to love one another as He loved us. "I will build my church" is firmly established upon love and grace. Love and grace are relational realities.

However, we must acknowledge that these relational realities are often revealed through chaos. Chaos comes in many relational and environmental forms. Since the events of the Garden of Eden, long ago, chaos means things are not what they are supposed to be. Paul put it this way, "We know that the whole creation has been groaning..." (Romans 8:22). We experience chaos and groan because we know everything was supposed to be better. Here are my rules of chaos.

1. Chaos happens every day
2. Chaos demands a response
3. Chaos reveals your level of maturity/faith
4. Chaos reveals your network of friendships
5. Chaos can be inside of you, outside of you, or both
6. The opposite of chaos is not order but honor. Honor says, I will serve others with transparent humility in the midst of relational chaos
7. Honor always conquers chaos

Martin Luther once put it this way:

"This life therefore is not righteousness, but growth in righteousness, not health, but healing, not being but becoming, not rest but exercise. We are not yet what we shall be, but we are growing toward it, the process is not yet finished, but it is going on, this is not the end, but it is the road. All does not yet gleam in glory, but all is being purified."

As I was thinking about chaos and honor, I decided to write another note to you. This note is from God's perspective to help illustrate more clearly these "Rules of Chaos." My hope is that these words may also speak to your hearts today:

**Dear Michael:**

**I made mankind to be perfect. As you know, that didn't work out, because I had to give you a choice, in the garden. But, since I knew it wasn't going to work out even before I made you, I had what you call a Plan B. For Me it was really still part of Plan Alpha and Omega.**

**Chaos arrived to dishonor you. But, as soon as your weaknesses kicked in, I engaged My plan to come back to get you. To put it more succinctly, My Son would come back to restore our unique relationship. There was never a question that this would happen. In His face you would see My face. In His words you would hear My heart. I had a plan and a relational process that would connect us heart to heart once again. Truth is, while My heart was broken, in the garden, and would be broken again on a cross, My love was never broken. That is what sustains the universe, a love that can never be broken by chaos. That is the love I impart to you by My Spirit. That is the love which brought you and brought you back, though your sins were as scarlet. That is the love that gave birth to a grace that knows no chains...a love that burnishes your weaknesses to a shining glory in the sufficiency of grace.**

**While you will always live in the crucible of a life reshaping you in chaotic moments here, I long for you to experience the power of My grace preparing you to be where I am, forever.**

**You see you are never by your own efforts intellectually free, you are certainly never physically free and you will never be politically free...but you *are spiritually free* and owe nothing to anyone other than the love I freely give to you.**

**Here's what the world doesn't understand.**

**The opposite of chaos is not order but honor. Honor is a derivative of love. Honor says "I will treat you with deep respect, I will take care of whatever you need, I will serve you with transparent humility." Honor is also tough and exacting, while balancing love and grace, because it always sees the future and the cost.**

**It is honor that defeats chaos. It is honor that energizes peace. It is honor that rises to sacrifice. I honored you when My Son died for you. I planned it to be that way. Chaos could not stand the light of that glorious moment. And so it continues. Each day brings multiple opportunities for you to honor each other in honor of what I gave to you. Every time it seems that chaos is overtaking your soul, make the move toward honor and see what happens. Every time a relationship is being swept into a sea of chaotic rhetoric, pray fervently for honor to calm the roiling waves.**

**Do you have the courage to redefine yourself through Me? *I'm the only way your life can work.* Yes, chaos happens every day.**

**I answer in power, My grace is sufficient.**

**Chaos reveals your faith.**

**-God**

Chapel family, I challenge you to let chaos reveal your faith and to let honor bring you into relationships of integrity.

To God be the glory,

Michael Simone

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