

Take courage...do not be afraid

Jesus performs the miracle of walking on the water, in this week's Gospel, Matthew 14:22-33. The central theme of this reading is FEAR—how fear overcomes the disciples. First, they were fearful because they thought Jesus was ghost, coming to them on the water. They were already somewhat fearful because their boat was being tossed around by the waves, and the wind was fierce. But a ghost? That was more fear-causing!

"At once, Jesus spoke to them, 'Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid.'"

Then, when Peter daringly began walking on the water toward Jesus, "...when he saw how strong the wind was he became frightened" and began to sink. He called out to Jesus to save him, and Jesus reached out and kept him from drowning. Again, FEAR...when Peter *took his eyes off the prize*—the Lord Jesus—he became frightened and the wind of doubt entered his being.

Jesus said, "Oh you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

To me, the moral of this story is to keep our eyes on Jesus, to believe He will bring us through any storm, with any bruising wind or rocky waves. Keep your eyes on Jesus and you will not be distracted by the worldly wind and waves, but **know** His Truth of Salvation and Hope. When you follow Jesus, you will meet Him in mysterious and wondrous places, in ways that you never thought possible.

What do I mean by meet Him? We encounter Jesus in thoughtful prayer. We meet Him in sharing our goodness with others. We meet Him by reading and pondering His Word. We meet Him through a reverent glance at nature and all its wonders. We meet Him with **a simple prayer** and a clean heart...

A SIMPLE PRAYER

GENTLE PEACE - SURROUND ME

INNER TURMOIL - RELEASE ME

HOPEFUL MIND - RENEW ME

GRACEFUL SPIRIT - FORGIVE ME

GAPING HOLE - FILL ME

SHOT-DOWN EGO - PROTECT ME

LOVING GOD - BELIEVE IN ME

Keep your eyes on Jesus, even if in a simple prayer such as this, and He will see you through any fearful situation! "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid!"

by Rich Melcher