

## “Why are you afraid, man of little faith”?

Where does our faith fit in during a difficult time, the times of testing, the times of storms. There are people who say:

- if you have faith, life will be smooth sailing.
- If you have faith, God will protect you from every danger
- if you have enough faith, if you stay close to God, everything will be fine..

In today's gospel, we discover that it is not always necessarily true.

In the gospel, we find the disciples caught in the middle of the lake in a wind storm. The waves are rolling, the wind is blowing. And they are getting nowhere. It takes everything they have just to try to keep the boat into the wind, making it get across to the other side.

Finally, in the early hours of the morning before first light, Jesus comes to them, walking on the water! The disciples' initial reaction is one of fear. They're terrified! "It's a ghost!" they say. But then Jesus calls out, "Take heart, it is I; do not be afraid." Peter's response:, "*If it's really you Lord, command me to come out on the water with you.*" Jesus answers simply, "Come... come on, Peter."

But Peter is caught. It's do or die. So he cautiously puts one leg over the boat, then the other, still holding on to the boat. He lets go with one hand, and then the other, and there is Peter, walking on the water, too!

Well, here is Peter, walking on the water toward Jesus. Everything is fine, but then *he takes his eyes off Jesus and begins to look around*. And what he sees are big waves and a driving wind, and there he is in the middle of it, unprotected, without a life jacket. He becomes afraid, *and then he begins to sink*. The name "Peter" means rock. But now instead of being a *solid rock of faith*, he's *sinking like a rock*. In desperation, Peter cries out, "Lord, save me!"

Have you ever been to such a situation before? It is the very desperate cry of every human being when we are confronted with that which is beyond our strength, beyond our ability, beyond our control. (Examples..)

In the midst of our helplessness and powerlessness, we cry out, "Lord, save me!" Jesus reaches out and get hold of Peter, pulls him up and helps him back into the boat. "Why did you doubt, Peter? *Where is your faith?* Didn't you believe me? Didn't you believe me when I told you to let go?" Suddenly the wind dies down, the waves settle. The disciples are filled with amazement. Falling to their knees they declare, "Truly you are the Son of God!"

Life is full of adventures, unexpected encounters, accidents and experiences that remind us over and over again, that God alone is God, and we are totally dependent upon the Lord as our *source of life, source of hope and strength*. And even when we are certain that God is leading us, and we are acting according to God's will, things may change in an instance.

*It was only when Peter took his eyes off Jesus and focused on the storm* raging around him that he began to sink. Jesus told us, "Without me, you can do nothing; but with God, all things are possible."

The event reminds us over and over again that ultimately we are dependent upon God for our life, our hope, our salvation. Ultimately, we discover that there isn't anyone else up there, and our only choice is to let God work in our lives.

Many a times, we face the temptation to doubt and falter, to focus on the storms that rage around us, than to focus instead upon Jesus, the Lord of life, the Master of the winds and the waves.

Today let's pray to be God's faithful people, trusting and depending on our Lord, with unflinching trust, always keeping our eyes focused on the One who alone is our source of life, our hope, and our salvation. Amen