



Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and precede him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowds. After doing so, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray. When it was evening he was there alone. Meanwhile the boat, already a few miles offshore, was being tossed about by the waves, for the wind was against it. During the fourth watch of the night, he came toward them, walking on the sea. When the disciples saw him walking on the sea they were terrified. "It is a ghost," they said, and they cried out in fear. At once Jesus spoke to them, "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid." Peter said to him in reply, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." He said, "Come." Peter got out of the boat and began to walk on the water toward Jesus. But when he saw how strong the wind was he became frightened; and, beginning to sink, he cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus stretched out his hand and caught him, and said to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?" After they got into the boat, the wind died down. Those who were in the boat did him homage, saying, "Truly, you are the Son of God." After making the crossing, they came to land at Gennesaret. When the men of that place recognized him, they sent word to all the surrounding country. People brought to him all those who were sick and begged him that they might touch only the tassel on his cloak, and as many as touched it were healed.

**Introductory Prayer:** Lord Jesus, I believe you want me to have faith in you, faith that hearkens to your words without any second guessing. I hope in your words, not relying solely on my own strength or reasoning. I love you. You continue to astonish me by showing me that your ways are not my ways.

**Petition:** Lord, may my prayer lead me to step out from my comfort zone today.

**1. Loneliness and Prayer:** Jesus dismissed the crowds and went up on the mountain by

himself to pray. He was willing to leave the comfort of others' company to be alone with God. Being in silence without others may lead briefly to a certain loneliness and interior emptiness. We may feel the impulse to seek out others – anything – to anesthetize us from the pain of being alone. If this is the case, we need to persevere in prayer. This suffering from silence can turn into joy and peace. But we must remain with God and learn to enjoy his presence in quiet prayer.

**2. Fear of Prayer:** "Take courage, it is I; do not be afraid." Peter said to him in reply, "Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water." At times our fear of silent prayer can be stronger than Peter's fear of Jesus on the water. We are so used to the company of others, of keeping busy, of being needed, of "zoning out", that we fear relinquishing these comforts even for a short time of prayer. We must be willing to give up these common comforts, at least temporarily, if we will learn to pray. We must empty ourselves to be filled by Christ, to trust and rely on his strength.

**3. A Firm Resolve:** "After they got into the boat, the wind died down." Once we "get into the boat," that is, once we resolve to embrace silent, focused prayer, our fears die down like the wind. We must make a firm decision to dive full force into our prayer, overcoming inertia of every stripe, if we wish to experience the freedom, peace and joy of true prayer. Ask the Lord for that grace and be generous as you begin.

**Conversation with Christ:** Lord, you know the sluggishness I experience as I set out to pray. You know how I am tempted to put it off and just do something else. Give me the faith and courage to launch into the deep – to begin to pray with all my heart.

**Resolution:** I will make a firm resolve to pray intensely today.