

Dear Heavenly Father,

Praise

As the disciples watched, Jesus was lifted up and taken into heaven, and he sat down at your right hand. I worship you today with great joy, and I exalt your Son, who faithfully followed your will and offered himself as a sacrifice for my sins. There is coming a day when Jesus will return in the same way that he went to heaven, and I look forward to and hasten that day! Come, Lord Jesus! Praise the Lord!

Today in Your Word

Today you told me about a failed fishing expedition on the Sea of Galilee. Jesus had said, “Tell my brothers to go to Galilee, and there they will see me” (Matt 28:10). The disciples did as they were told, but their hearts didn’t seem to be in it. Here they were, sitting on the biggest news in the history of the world, and rather than telling everyone that Jesus was alive, they decided to go fishing. Peter, Andrew, James and John had been called away from the sea, and now here they were, getting back into their boat. This shows me that there are times when even the most dedicated Christians get discouraged and go “off-mission.” Now, Jesus could have scolded them, but he didn’t. Jesus could have let them come back empty-handed, but he didn’t. Jesus could have given them the silent treatment, but he didn’t. Instead, he called out to them, “Children, you don’t have any fish, do you? Cast the net on the right side of the boat.” How I love those words! They show me that when I’m out on life’s sea, toiling futilely in my own strength, you’re there on the shore, just waiting for me to come to the end of myself. And Peter? Well, he couldn’t wait for the boat to reach shore. He jumped into the water and made straight for his master. Peter’s impetuous nature convicts my heart, for that’s exactly what I need to do when life confuses and overwhelms me! I need to leave everything behind and run straight into your arms. When breakfast was finished, Jesus looked at Peter and asked, “Simon, do you love me more than these?” He asked the question three times, and his words to Peter teach me three things: (1) I will always find forgiveness when I truly repent, for Peter’s three denials were answered by his three affirmations of love; (2) I can have no greater love in my heart than my love for you, for Peter was called to love Christ more than anything else; (3) If I really love you, I will care for your sheep and labor faithfully in your service, for Peter’s love had to show itself in obedience to Christ’s command. How fitting that after this morning encounter on the shores of Galilee, Jesus appeared to his disciples on a nearby mountain and commissioned them to proclaim the gospel to the world. They were to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them and teaching them to observe all that he had commanded. This is to be *my* mission and *my* passion. Jesus didn’t call me to promote programs. He called me to *make disciples*. As a Christian, I am first and foremost a disciple of Jesus, and I’m called to show others how to be his followers. I do this because all authority has been given to him. This means that he is my Lord and Master—he alone is worthy of all my worship, my devotion, and my service.

Reflection

Two men were put forward as a replacement for Judas and the lot fell on Matthias. Joseph had been there from the beginning, just like Matthias, but the Holy Spirit didn’t choose him to be among the twelve apostles. Do I accept your choice of my ministry and position with humility and grace, or am I resentful when others are chosen instead of me?

Request

Father, help me to fulfill Christ’s great commission. Empower me to walk each day as Jesus walked and to yield to the desires of the Spirit. May others look at my life and be inspired to follow you.

Thanksgiving

Thank you for the gentle voice of Jesus, who calls me to love and loyalty in your service. How grateful I am for the kind way that you restore and refresh those who are weary in battle. Hallelujah!

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Suggested Hymn: “Our Example” – Clara M. Brooks.

Meditation Verse: Matthew 28:19.