



HOW CAN YOU REACH YOUR GOAL WHEN YOU ARE VERY AFRAID?

If I tell you F.E.A.R., does that mean anything to you? Yes, FEAR! Fear, panic, you certainly have experienced it? Haven't you? Have you ever been afraid? You know, sometimes because we are afraid we cannot do what we want to do, we can no longer move forward. We do not succeed in reaching our goal. It's not just children who are afraid, adults also experience fear; the fear of not succeeding, the fear of making a mistake, of being ill, of being alone, of losing a friend or their work.

Do you know that Jesus talks to us about fear? But he also tells us about his power. In the story that we are going to tell you, you will see how he knows how to encourage us to trust him to achieve the goal.

Let us now listen to this adventure which happened to his disciples. You will find it at chapter 14 of the Gospel of Matthew. Then you can answer my question: What can I do when I'm afraid?

PANIC IN THE BOAT!



Peter, John, James, Philip and the other disciples spent a wonderful day with a crowd of people who came to listen to Jesus. And finally they witnessed an extraordinary miracle. With the five buns and the two fish a young boy gave him Jesus fed more than ten thousand people. When everyone had finished eating twelve large baskets were filled with the remaining pieces.

Imagine the joy of all these people:

- He does wonderful things for us and our families some say.
- It is God who sends him to us say the others.
- Yes, Jesus is truly the one God had promised.

- He must become our king!

Yes, they would like Jesus to become their king, but that is not God's plan.

- Get into the boat, said Jesus to his disciples. I will send this entire crowd away, we must let them go home now, it's late. You go now before me. Go to the opposite shore, on the other side of the lake!

And here is the goal to be reached: the other side of the lake:

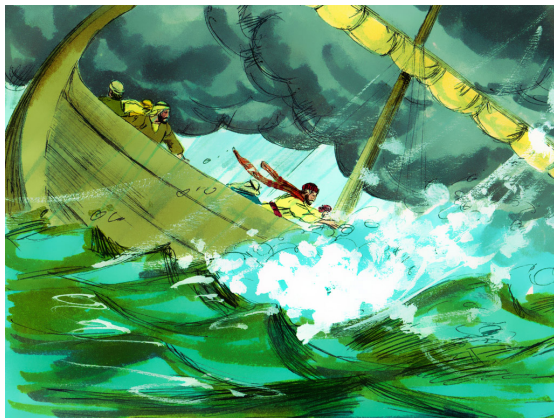
- No problem, think the disciples, we know this large lake and we are used to sail on it, we know how to do it.

Yes, most of them are fishing sailors. So off they go.

Jesus sends all these people home and he walks away from the shore. He goes up the hill.

Why is he getting out of the way? To be alone with God his Father, to speak to him, to pray.

It is dark now and the weather is suddenly changing. Not a single star can be seen; big black clouds suddenly arrive pushed by a violent wind which raises strong waves. Pierre and his friends are now in the middle of the lake and their boat is rocked by those big waves.



- This wind is too strong, they cried. It is driving us adrift! We are no longer moving forward.

We have to row harder.

But the boat is tossed about on all sides like a walnut shell lost on this lake. The wind howls all it can! The disciples are overcome with fear.

- We will never reach the goal, the storm is too strong, this time we are finished, they say to themselves.



Around three in the morning, in this terribly dark night, they see a white shape that advances towards them, a human silhouette walking on the raging waves and approaching the boat

- It's a ghost, it's a ghost, Help, help!

- But, no, don't worry, it's me, don't be afraid!

It's the voice of Jesus! They recognize it:

- Lord, says Peter, if it is really You, then order me to come and join You on the water.
- Come! Jesus says to him.



Under the astonished gaze of the disciples, Peter climbs over the boat and puts one foot on the water. He does not sink in! He puts the second foot down and quite naturally, he begins to walk on the water towards Jesus. Imagine, He walks on water just like one walks on earth and he thus advances towards Jesus.

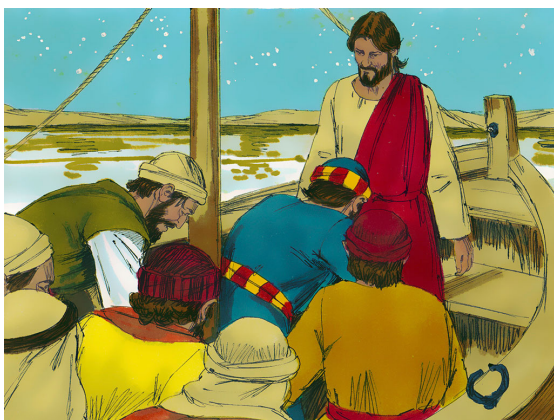
Suddenly, what does he notice around him? The wind that keeps blowing ever so violently, the waves splashing him, the night so dark. Fear seizes him, he feels his feet starting to sink in, he's about to sink. Is he going to drown?



- Help, Lord! Save me!

Immediately, Jesus reaches out to him and catches up with him. Peter can walk on water again, next to Jesus he is saved.

- Your faith is very small, Jesus says to him, why did you hesitate?

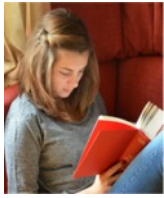


They both get into the boat; the wind is falling, no more waves, no more storms. Everything becomes calm and peaceful again. And immediately, they dock at the very place they were supposed to go. They have reached the goal that Jesus had fixed them.

The disciples are upset, they come to bow, bow down to Jesus:

- You are truly the Son of God they tell him.

1, 2 3, 4 AND YOU AND ME!



Like Peter, John, James and all the other disciples, I too say:

- Jesus, You are truly the Son of God.

And you, can you say it? It might happen that one day you are scared, very scared, so what are you going to do? This is the question we asked you. Well!

Remember this gospel story and do like Peter, ask Jesus to come to your aid. He will help you reach the goal. How? I don't know but you can trust him.

4, 3, 2, 1 AND WE PARENTS!



This crossing of the lake ... would it make us think of the journey of life?

Crossings without storms, is it possible? We can doubt that, right?

Jesus has set a goal for us, a meeting, he is waiting for us on the other side but he has not said that the crossing, the journey will be without difficulties.

If we do the crossing on our own, we risk exhausting ourselves. Jesus has the power to help us so that we can reach the goal, the port where he awaits us.

I wish you a safe trip for you and your children.