

We ought always to thank God for you, brothers and sisters, and rightly so, because your faith is growing more and more, and the love all of you have for one another is increasing.

2 Thessalonians 1:3

Matthew 14:13-33

When Jesus heard what had happened, he withdrew by boat privately to a solitary place. Hearing of this, the crowds followed him on foot from the towns. When Jesus landed and saw a large crowd, he had compassion on them and healed their sick (vv. 13-14).

1. Seize the opportunity.

As evening approached, the disciples came to him and said, "This is a remote place, and it's already getting late. Send the crowds away, so they can go to the villages and buy themselves some food." Jesus replied, "They do not need to go away. You give them something to eat" (vv. 15-16).

2. Offer what you have.

"We have here only five loaves of bread and two fish," they answered (v. 17).

3. Follow instructions.

"Bring them here to me," he said. And he directed the people to sit down on the grass. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to the disciples, and the disciples gave them to the people. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces that were left over. The number of those who ate was about five thousand men, besides women and children (vv. 18-21).

Immediately Jesus made the disciples get into the boat and go on ahead of him to the other side, while he dismissed the crowd. After he had dismissed them, he went up on a mountainside by himself to pray. Later that night, he was there alone, and the boat was already a considerable distance from land, buffeted by the waves because the wind was against it (vv. 22-24).

Shortly before dawn Jesus went out to them, walking on the lake. When the disciples saw him walking on the lake, they were terrified. "It's a ghost," they said, and cried out in fear (vv. 25-26).

But Jesus immediately said to them: "Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid" (v. 27).

"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water" (v. 28).

"Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on the water and came toward Jesus (v. 29).

Then those who were in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God" (v. 33).