

19A SML 2017  
MT 14:22-33

What dominates your life? In other words, what are the waves and the winds in your life that can periodically threaten to sink you?

When St. Peter kept his eyes on Christ, he could literally walk on water. But since Peter had quite a few winds and waves in his life, it's no wonder he was distracted. When he let himself be distracted by the storms in his life, figuratively speaking, those spiritual clouds that periodically dominated him, he sank.

Peter's storms? Peter's clouds?

Pride! "Though they all fall away . . . I will never fall away . . . Even if I must die with you, I will not deny you!" (MT 26:33, 35) That's pride. That was a spiritual storm in St. Peter's life.

Selfishness! "Lord, we've left everything to follow you. What will there be for us?" (MT 19:27) Selfishness was another dark sky for Peter.

Temper! "Then Simon Peter who had a sword, drew it, struck the high priest's slave, and cut off his right ear." (JN 18:10)

Cowardice! Peter caved in to very non-threatening people in the courtyard the night of Our Blessed Lord's trial, and denied Him three times. (MT 26:69ff)

Pride, selfishness, temper and cowardice were some of the moral and spiritual "clouds, waves and winds" that got to Peter and threatened to sink him.

So what dominates your life? "Dominates" is a strong word, as it should be, since it comes from "*Dominus*" or the Latin word for "Lord." So the question really asks, "What lords over your life?" "Who is Lord of your life?" Is it Our Blessed Lord, or is it the winds and the waves of life?

One of the most practical things we can do in our walk on the water toward Our Blessed Lord is to identify, in all humility and candor, what it is that threatens to drown us, to make a good examination of conscience.

- What are the sins in my life?
- What are the troubles, problems and distractions – anything in my life – that can sink me and threaten to take my gaze off Our Blessed Lord?

St. Barnabas spoke beautifully, and very thoroughly, I might add, about the man who is dominated only by Christ:

Consider now the way of light; any man who is bent on walking on water to reach Our Blessed Lord must be very careful in all he does. These are the directions that have been given to us for the journey:

1. love your Creator;
2. reverence your Maker;
3. give glory to him who redeemed you when you were dead;
4. be single minded but rich in spiritual treasure;
5. avoid those who travel down death's highway;
6. hate whatever is displeasing to God;
7. detest all hypocritical pretense;
8. do not abandon God's commandments.
9. Do not put on airs, but be modest whatever you do;
10. claim no credit for yourself.
11. Plot no evil against your neighbor,
12. and do not give pride an entrance to your heart.
13. Love your neighbor more than your own life.
14. Do not kill an unborn child through abortion, nor destroy it after death.
15. Do not refrain from chastising son or daughter, but bring them up from childhood in the fear of the Lord.

16. Do not set your heart on what belongs to your neighbor and do not give in to greed.
17. Do not associate with the arrogant but cultivate those who are humble and virtuous.
18. Accept as a blessing whatever comes your way in the knowledge that nothing ever happens without God's concurrence.
19. Avoid duplicity in thought or in word, for such deception is a deadly snare.
20. Share with your neighbor whatever you have, and do not say of anything, this is mine. If you both share an imperishable treasure, how much more must you share what is perishable.
21. Do not be hasty in speech; the mouth is a deadly snare.
22. For your soul's good, make every effort to live chastely. Do not hold out your hand for what you can get, only to withdraw it when it comes to giving.
23. Cherish as the apple of your eye anyone who speaks to you of the word of the Lord.

24. Never hesitate to give, and when you give, never grumble; then you will know the one who will repay you.
25. Preserve the traditions you have received, adding nothing and taking nothing away.
26. The evildoer will ever be hateful of you.
27. Be fair in your judgments.
28. Never stir up dissension, but act as peacemaker and reconcile the quarrelsome.
29. Confess your sins, and do not begin to pray with a guilty conscience.

Such then is the way of light.

This is a man who has Our Blessed Lord as his *dominus* and is dominated not by wind, nor wave, nor storm.