



EVANGELIUM INSTITUTE

TEACHING TRUTH - INSPIRING FAITH

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Three simple steps to prayer:

Before you begin, ask the Holy Spirit to help you in your prayer, to show you the things that God wishes for you to hear.

Step one: Read the meditation. As soon as something strikes you, stop reading.

“Meditation is only the introduction, the initiation into what should become a profound contemplative communion with the indwelling Trinity.”¹

Step two: Reflect or think about what struck you as long as it nourishes your soul. Talk to God about it and pay attention to the things He inspires within you. If your mind wanders, simply go back to the point that struck you or move on to another. God is not hindered by your distractions.

Step three: Before you conclude, pick one thing to remember or to do today based on your meditation – this is a resolution. By the resolution we turn our meditation into action and live the meditation all day. Choose something practical and concrete to remember or do through the day. It may be helpful to write down your resolution and keep it with you.

Consider underlining anything that strikes you. Write in the margins any thoughts, words, or emotions that are stirred up within you as you read the meditation.

A house built on rock

...Christ speaks to us of two houses, built at the same time, and apparently identical with each other. But the great difference between them became obvious when the testing time arrived: the rains came, and the floods and the gales. One of them stood firm because it had solid foundations: the other fell because it was built upon sand; its ruin was catastrophic and complete. Our Lord calls the man who built the first house, the one that stood firm, *a wise man*. The builder of the second house, He tells us, is a fool.

The first house resisted the wintry blasts and the rising flood-waters so well, not because of its architecturally pleasing design, or even because its roof was soundly put together, but thanks to its foundation on bedrock. That house lasted, it gave secure shelter to its owner and was a model of good construction. Just so is the person who builds on the rock of desires put into practice by fulfilling God's Will in the small things of everyday, in more important matters,

¹ Thomas Dubay, *Fire Within: St. Teresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross, and the Gospel – on Prayer*, (Ignatius Press: San Francisco, 1989), 49.

and also in times of real trouble when they come. So we see sick people, weakened in body by their disease, bear their pain joyfully and lovingly, greatly strengthened by seeing in their condition the hand of God's Providence, which always blesses those who love him, although in mysterious and very different ways. So too the person who has to put up with slander and calumny, or who faces financial ruin and sees the inevitable effects on his family, or who suffers the death of a loved one still in the prime of life, or who experiences job discrimination because of religious bigotry...The house – the life of the Christian who follows Christ in his deeds – does not fall, because it is built upon total abandonment to the Will of his Father God. This abandonment does not prevent him from defending himself when justice is at issue. He also demands the rights to which he is entitled as a worker, or to have access to means to remedy his legitimate grievances. But all this is done with serenity without anguish of mind and without bitterness or rancour.

In our prayer today we will tell our Lord that we want to abandon ourselves in his arms; there we will be absolutely safe. *Desire nothing for yourself, either good or bad: want only what God wants. When you are with Jesus you will find that what is bitter becomes sweet, and what is rough turns smooth.*

Jesus, I put myself trustingly in your arms, hiding my head on your loving breast, my heart touching yours: I want what you want, in everything.²

Questions for reflection:

1. When was a time you went through a "storm" in your own life? What helped you get through it?
2. What are some ways people are tempted to build their life on sand? Which of these do you struggle with most?
3. What are the rocks in your life? What are your biggest priorities? What gives you stability amidst life's ups and downs?
4. Jesus does not say that building our lives on Him means we can avoid storms, but that we can withstand them. Scripture does say however that "all things work together for the good of those who love Him." (Rom 8:28) When was a time that God brought good out of a storm in your own life?

² Mediation excerpt taken from Francis Fernandez, *In Conversation with God: Daily Meditations vol. 3: Ordinary Time weeks 1 – 12* (Scepter: New York, 2005), 460 – 462.