

# When Jesus Lends a Hand

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[ 0 : 00 ] All right, so if you have your Bibles, please open them up to the Gospel of Mark and find the ninth chapter, Mark chapter 9. I don't want to preach a message this morning I'm calling, When Jesus Lends a Hand.

When Jesus Lends a Hand. I suppose that you've been in a situation in your life where you've needed somebody to lend a hand. You've probably even said, Hey, will you lend me a hand? It's kind of an awkward phrase, really, if you take it literal.

You're not really looking for a loan. You're just looking for help. You're looking for a third hand.

There's times where you're holding a board. I've been doing holding a board. Got this screw gun in my hand, and the screw falls down to my feet.

And I just need a hand. Sometimes I use my elbow or my knee or my forehead. Even I've done that to try to hold things in place while I reach around. I'm thinking we've probably all been in those places in life at some point.

Maybe you need somebody to hold the door for you. You just need a hand. And we all understand what that means. And we're looking for assistance. And there's some verses in the Bible.

[ 1 : 13 ] There's one in particular that we're going to start with that means something to me. And it's a time when Jesus reached forth His hand to help somebody that was in need. And when you consider this, and I looked up a lot of scripture this week and looked over a lot of references that not only talk about Jesus Christ using His hands, but just the hand of God.

Or really, it's an interesting study. Some of the things that I was seeing for a whole other different time and place. But there's various occasions when He lended a hand.

There's certain miracles that we are familiar with where He did not touch anybody, where He just gave the word. He gave commandment. In some cases, He wasn't even present. He just spoke the word. And it took place miles away.

There's a case in the very first miracle we read of in John chapter 2 where He turned water to wine. He didn't do it with His hands at all. He just told them to fill these water pots with water.

And He says, go draw out and bear to the governor of the feast. And when they did that, the man drank the water. It was turned into wine. But Jesus Christ didn't touch it. He didn't do any magic trick there, physically speaking, with His hands.

[ 2 : 23 ] Other times, He says, with His voice, He says, Lazarus, come forth. And out from the grave He came. One time, He's told a man, rise, take up thy bed and walk.

One time, some lepers came to Him. In Luke chapter 17, we read of it. They had leprosy. And they cried out for Him for mercy, thou son of David, or have mercy on us, they said, Lord. And He said, go show yourselves to the priests.

And so, they just turned and walked. And on the way, as they went down that way, they were healed. They were cleansed. And so, by His own words, He can heal. He can perform impressive miracles.

Just tells the wind to be still and to cease. But there's other instances or other times or occasions where He uses His hands. And I want to look at a few of these.

And while we're going through a few thoughts here, I want to just mention this kind of on the onset here. That we live in a society where the government wants to lend a hand.

[ 3 : 29 ] And we've been programmed, unfortunately, to reach to the government to help us and to be our helping hand. And sometimes, we're in a situation and a bind.

And our first thought is, how can we fix this? And we'll call our parents. We'll call our friends or our neighbors. And we'll seek help. And sometimes, in some cases, somebody else ought to be called first.

And it's those cases I want to talk about today here where we ought to be leaning on the Lord Jesus Christ and calling on Him for help because He's ever-present and ready. And so, look here with me in Mark chapter 9.

And I just want to read, to start here, the verse that is important to me. Verse 27, where the Bible reads, But Jesus took Him by the hand and lifted Him up.

And He arose. Now, we're reading here in a story of a child. I don't know how old he is at this time. But he's possessed with a devil, a dumb spirit.

[ 4 : 31 ] In verse 17, it's called. And the spirit is tearing him. He's casting him into fire, into waters. It's a terrible thing to see this and for a father to deal with this.

And as I read through this, I read that Jesus cast this spirit out of him. And he just lay there as one dead. And in verse 27, then the verse said that Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up and he arose.

And this verse is one of those verses. I tell you about one the other week. But this is another one of those verses that captures my attention when I'm reading through my Bible. The Lord has impressed me more than one time to say that, Toby, was you.

That was you laying there in a destructive mess brought on by the devil. And Jesus took you by the hand and lifted you up and you arose.

And the only reason that you're upright today or that there's any goodness in you and the only reason that you're walking with God today is because Jesus Christ took you by the hand and lifted you up and you arose.

[ 5 : 48 ] And that's what Jesus does. He lifts people up. He picks them up. And I want to talk about that a little bit today and use this as one of the cases here.

When I look back into this passage, I see that this boy, this boy that was in such a mess, he had a father that cared for him. And in verse number 17, the father, one of the multitude answered and said, Master, I have brought unto thee my son, which hath a dumb spirit.

This boy had a father that just didn't say, well, too bad, so sad. It's going to be a tough life for you, kid. But no, he brought him to where he perceived he could get help.

And he brought him to the Lord Jesus Christ. And his father cared for his son. He even took him to the disciples first. At the end of verse 18, he says, I spake to thy disciples that they should cast him out and they could not.

And so he's already attempted to take him to those men that have been trained and empowered by Jesus Christ to be able to fix things just like this. And nothing was able to be done about it.

[ 6 : 50 ] But he cared for his son even so much that we see in verse 24. It says, Straightway, the father of the child cried out and said with tears, Lord, I believe.

This man is as sincere as possible. He cares for his boy. And publicly he's crying with tears in front of everybody for Jesus Christ to help him.

Do something, please. He had a father that really cared for him. He had disciples that attempted to help him, but to no avail.

As I read in verse 18, The disciples, he spake to the disciples, they cast him out, but they could not. This is just a bit of personal testimony here to move on.

It's not something I care to talk about much, but this is where we're at this morning. And I feel like God has showed me myself in this passage, having parents that loved and cared for me, that tried to take me to Jesus Christ and get me around good people.

[ 7 : 53 ] And even to the place where, wherever I got myself into this mess, that even disciples couldn't do anything for me. And I'm reminded of times, a time where a guy in the church, a kind of a bit of a mentor to me at a young, at a young man, maybe young adult age, that when he saw me getting out into sin and getting away, he saw my car parked at a friend's house of mine, and that guy was, he was trouble.

And I was there and up to no good, and he stopped, and he came, he knocked at the door and asked if he could talk to me, and I didn't want to go talk to him, but I went out in the driveway, and the man pleaded with me to leave, and to come with him, and to go and just get away from these guys.

And he pleaded with me to just, to get back with the Lord, and to do what's right, and not go down this path. And I listened to him, but my heart was already set. And he tried to say, look, maybe your parents have been too strict with you, and maybe you just, you need to get away from that, and just,

you know, be able to do what's right.

But, and I said, no, that's not it at all. It's not my parents' fault. It's me. This is my choice. This is what I'm choosing. And I regret, I regret badly, the future after that moment.

But I had a man, a godly man, a disciple of Jesus Christ, come after me, and try to help me. But he couldn't. I had a youth pastor once, I had an apartment, and he came and knocked at my door, and I hadn't been going to church, and I hadn't been right with the Lord, and I looked out the door, and I saw, and I knew who it was, and I was like, I am not dealing with this.

[ 9 : 31 ] I am not answering this door. I do not want to be confronted by him. I don't want him telling me to get right, to come back to church, and I don't want him trying to befriend me, or being, I just said, I just wouldn't answer the door.

I didn't want to deal with it. My heart was cold and hard, and I didn't want to have to face up, to the music, and admit it to somebody else, that I'm making my own choices, and I'm going to do what I want to do.

And there was a time in my life, where the disciples of Jesus Christ, as it were, couldn't do anything for me. They were helpless. They were powerless, because in my heart, it was already decided.

They couldn't plead with me. They couldn't reason with me. It had no effect on me, because I had this wicked drive, for sin, and for the world, and just to be selfish, and just to do what I wanted to do. And here's a man, that loves his son, but he can't help him. And here's disciples, that try to fix it, but they can't do anything either. And so he takes him to Jesus Christ, this boy's pining away, it says in verse 18, he's in a destructive mess, and he needs Jesus Christ.

[ 10 : 38 ] And as the passage and story goes, the Lord cast the devil out of him. And look at verse number 25, when Jesus saw that the people came running together, he rebuked the foul spirit, saying unto him, thou dumb and deaf spirit, I charge thee, come out of him, and enter no more into him.

And the spirit cried, and rent him sore, and came out of him. And he was as one dead, in so much that many said, he's dead. He's dead.

He killed him. They saw the devil tear him. They saw this violent flailing, perhaps, and saw the child just lay there limp, and lifeless, not moving, not breathing.

And after looking on this, they determined, he's dead. Right there and right now, the kid's gone. His life was short-lived, and what a mess it was, what a wreck it was.

But verse 27, the story is not over. They say he's dead, but Jesus. And at that moment, the Lord Jesus Christ, is not breaking bread, and just passing it out, feeding thousands of people.

[ 11 : 49 ] He's not turning water to wine, satisfying all the upset guests, at the wedding. He's not standing on some boat, or some hillside, just proclaiming, and teaching the word of God, where the congregation, just hungered, and thirsted after this truth.

He's not performing something, and fulfilling something, and just engaging the masses. No, at this moment, Jesus Christ bends down, over this pathetic, destroyed, lifeless child, and he reaches out his hand.

He took him by the hand, this limp hand, with no grip in it, Jesus Christ gripped it. And he took that hand, and picked him right up.

The Bible says, he lifted him up, and he arose. Because that's what Jesus does. He lifts people up. This hand-to-hand moment, this personal connection, will never be forgotten.

It changed the life, of this boy forever. And when Jesus lends a hand, in this case, to a young person, a young person, whose life has been wrecked, by the devil, and destroyed, and destruction, all through his life, no hope, and no chance, nobody can help him.

[ 13 : 16 ] When Jesus lends a hand, that young man, gets a chance, to live life, for the glory of God. This young man, now has the ability, to enjoy life, that he never had before.

Well, I don't know, when this came on him, the father said in verse 21, of a child. He wasn't born that way. Somewhere along the line, this took over his life, and it sent him, in a terrible direction. But Jesus Christ, showed up, and Jesus Christ, lifted him up. And in this, this lending of a hand, to this person, Jesus Christ, not only, gave this young boy, a chance to live, a good life, and a quality of life, but he also, the father got his son back.

He got to spend time with him, and not worry over him anymore. Not be praying for him, and seeking help for him, because he found help. And a relationship, was restored, because Jesus, lifted him up.

And that's not, necessarily, everybody's testimony, in here, but it's mine. And I bet you, there's some, probably, that are pretty close to it. And there's some, probably, that are out there, that are, that are getting there, and they need the hand of Jesus Christ, to reach down, and lift him up. [14:34] I'm telling you, that's what he does. He lifts people up. There's somebody else, that needed a helping hand. Look at Mark, or Matthew chapter 14.

A completely different scenario, and a different character, altogether. But he found himself, in need of a hand. Matthew 14.

And I'll just point out, the verse, before the story. It's verse 31, where it says, And immediately, Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him.

And said unto him, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou die? This is Peter. This is Peter, walking on water. What a marvelous story, an amazing account, the way I know it.

Nobody else has walked on water. The way I know it, in the history of the human race, nobody's walked on water, but one. Peter. And to get the context here, a little bit more, Christ sends his disciples, in verse 22, he constrained them, to get into a ship, and go before him, to the other side, while he sent the multitudes away.

[15:54] Christ goes up on a mountain, to pray, into the evening, and the ship, down below, going across that sea, in verse 24, was now in the midst of the sea, tossed with waves, for the wind was contrary.

And the night is long, it's far spent, because it's the fourth watch, of the night. So it's pushing, toward the early morning hours, and Jesus went unto them, walking on the sea.

And the disciples cry out, in fear, they think it's a spirit. And in verse 27, the Lord speaks to them, Jesus, a straight way, Jesus spake unto them, saying, be of good cheer, as I. And Peter answered him, and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee, on the water.

And he said, come. And when Peter was come, out of the ship, he walked on the water, to go to Jesus. But when he saw, the wind boisterous, he was afraid, and beginning to sink, he cried, Lord, save me.

And immediately, Jesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him. Now again, this is a different situation, and it says, Peter, in verse, in verse 30, and beginning to sink, he cried.

[17:02] So, Peter's not drowning, he's not under, he's maybe, just knee deep, in the water, but the peril is real, and he's afraid. And this is, this is a man that's brave enough, to get out of the boat, and walk on water.

And so, he's a pretty special character, in that sense. Walking by faith, believing Jesus Christ, bid him come unto him, and he walked on the water, to go to Jesus.

But then this wind, this boisterous wind, this gust of wind, comes up, out of nowhere, and you know what happens, waves begin, and it just, throws him off, it distracts him, to where, what was, just, quite an amazing, incredible, speechless thing, going on, all of a sudden, is not the reality, because, that blast of wind, just, totally threw him off, balance, and threw him away, from what he was doing.

And so, Peter, no longer is walking, by faith, Peter's distracted, and something, popped up, that's, out of his control, that's overwhelmed him, he's overcome, now, by fear, he was, afraid, it said, in verse 30, and beginning, to sink, I bet his feet, are still moving, I bet, I bet they're moving faster, than they were before, as he panics, and as you know, you can't walk, through water, nearly as well, as you could, if you were on top, of water, and so things, are getting worse, and he's trying harder, and he's getting nowhere, and he's sinking, and his fears, are elevating, and he cries, Lord, save me, and immediately, Jesus stretched forth, his hand, and caught him, and Christian, there's going to be times, in your Christian life, where maybe you're on top, of everything, and maybe you're just walking, with God, and this is pretty good, and I'm,

I'm doing pretty good here, when out of nowhere, that gust can come, and things can just, in an instant, in a day, in a moment of a day, change everything, and faith, and faith, was present, and your faith, seemed great, to be walking with God, and things going so well, because God's just, richly blessing me, and then all of a sudden, your faith, is quickly tested, and you'd have to admit, like Peter, it's of little faith, faith, it's in these moments, that you need to be, aware, and learn to call out, to the Lord, right away, and not allow, that powerful gust, or that trial, to those waves, of disappointment, to take your gaze, and your attention, from the Lord Jesus Christ, but even when you do, even when those things, bury you a bit, he stays within reach, because the Lord Jesus Christ, knows who you are, and he knows, that you're probably, going to need, his hand, to catch you, if it happened to Peter, this leader, and bold disciple, a man that Jesus Christ, personally

handpicked, and called, he surrounded himself, with men, that he rebuked, continuously, of being little faith,

[ 20 : 24 ] I'm quite sure, that when he looks on us, he considers, that we too, are flesh, and understands, that he needs, to stay within his arm's reach, and catch us, and so don't be too proud, if you feel like you're sinking, if you feel like you're going down, don't be too proud, to ask him to lend a hand, and the Bible, immediately, he stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and what a relief, to Peter's distress, but I want you also, to think on this, this was Peter's doing, this was his idea, he said in verse 28, if it be thou, bid me, come unto thee, on the water, this wasn't Christ saying, which one of you, wants to walk on water today, this was Peter's idea, this was him, trying to dabble, into things, that are godly, God's things, things that Jesus does, no one's ever done this, but Jesus Christ, and he says, I want to do that, I want to get out of the boat, and do what he's doing, and the Lord, allowed him to, and I just wonder, if Jesus Christ, didn't know, that this was going to be, a teaching moment, for Peter,

I kind of feel like, he knew that, okay Peter, come, that was his response, come, he didn't say, everybody watch this now, Peter's going to show us, how great his faith, no, this was Peter's idea, and what I'm saying is, I think Peter's ambition, and maybe his pride, got him into a situation, walking with God, but got him into something, that he wasn't prepared for, that he couldn't actually, follow through with, or handle, he got him into something, he belonged in the boat, actually his last orders, were to get in the boat, and to go across, to the other side, and he decided, with his own ambition, that I want to get out of the boat, and whether it was the wind, or the waves, or his own ambition, that got him into trouble, the one thing we know, in all of this, is that the rescuing hand, of Jesus Christ, caught him, when he was sinking, and you could be up to your neck, in the waters of despair, and of discouragement, and I don't see how I'm going to finish, or fix this, you could be defeated, there could be circumstances, that maybe you brought on yourself, remember, whatever the motivation, whatever the reasons, whatever the case, the Lord Jesus Christ, can lend a hand of rescue, because he's within arms, reach, come to Matthew chapter, 8,

I'm going to, hurry up, there's a few more, I want to look at, but I'll do these quickly, Matthew chapter 8, and verse 3, and notice another case, where Jesus puts forth, his hand, in verse number, I'll begin at verse number 2, it says, and behold, there came a leper, and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean, and Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will, be thou clean, and immediately, his leprosy was cleansed, here's a hand of cleansing, reached out, reached forth, to a leper, leprosy, in your Bible, is a picture of sin, it's a disease, eating away at you, it's bringing about death, it's incurable, and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death, and the leper here, is in need of something, he can't fix it himself, he can't do anything about it, and so he comes to the one, who can, and he calls out to Jesus Christ, if thou wilt, if it's your will, if you desire to do this, then you can do this, and Jesus said,

I will, it is my will, he's not willing, that any should perish, but that all should come, to repentance, and the Lord Jesus Christ, is capable, and willing, to cleanse lepers, to cleanse sinners, and I'm thankful to God, that he's willing to cleanse, just some old leper, like me, I'm thankful, to the Lord Jesus Christ, that when a sinner, comes to him, big or little, he can receive a cleansing, if he's seeking a cleansing, Jesus Christ will always say, I will, I will, I don't know, if you know the passage, by heart, but in 1 John chapter 1, in verse 9, the Bible says, if we confess our sins, he is faithful, and just, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us, from all unrighteousness, you could be a sinner, that's on your way to hell, this morning, and never been saved, you could be on your way, to hell, and you can come to Jesus Christ, and call out, and say, Lord Jesus, will you cleanse me, from my sin,

I don't want to pay, for these sins in hell, I believe that you died for me, that your death, and your blood, that you shed, was what God requires, that you'll cover my sins, and forgive me, you could be a Christian, living in sin, and walking after the flesh, and I want to report to you, this morning, that Jesus Christ, will cleanse you, of your sins, if you'll call on him, he will, he will, there's no sinner, no lost sinner, saved sinner, no sinner, with sins on him, that can't come to Jesus Christ, and have him cleansed, in a moment, if you'll humble yourself, if you'll come to him, humbly saying, if you will Lord, I want to be clean, doesn't matter, how nasty your sin is, Jesus Christ can cleanse it, doesn't matter, how willful your sin is, the Lord Jesus Christ, is in the business, of cleansing sinners, and he'll do it for you today, you could have walked, through these doors, filthy, in your mind, and in your heart, there could be the sin, that does so easily, beset you, just wrecking you, you can call on

Jesus Christ, oh but I've done that, 30 times this week, you can do it again, he'll still say, [ 26 : 20 ] I will, if you'll humble yourself, and seek a cleansing, there's a lot of Christians, that walk around, with sin on them, they walk around, out of fellowship with God, they put on their, Sunday church clothes, and they got sin, all of them, they're filthy, from the night before, from the things they, watched or listened to, or places they went, and they know they're saved, and they come to church, and they haven't been, to Jesus Christ for a while, to confess their sins, and to ask for a cleansing, to restore, a relationship that's there, and a fellowship, that he longs for, in this case, Jesus touched him, in verse 3, he put forth his hand, and touched him, and said, I will be thou clean, that hand, that Jesus Christ lends, can be the hand of cleansing, that you need this morning, you may be in sin, headed for hell, Jesus Christ can cleanse you, you may be in sin, in your life, and not be, not see like,

I can never get out of this, I can never get past this, it keeps wrecking me, Jesus Christ can cleanse you again, one thing to consider, is that, that it is possible, for you to leave church, this morning, cleansed, and have a clear slate, that's possible, if you're interested, you could have it, what do you have to sacrifice, in order to get that clear slate, probably just your pride, that's probably all you have to do, is humble yourself, and say, God I'm sick of this, I'm wrong, I want it to be right, will you clean me, and you know what he'll say, I will, be thou clean, come to, come back to the gospel of Mark, and we'll finish with this one, Mark chapter 10, one last, place I want to look at, among many, but there's one more, Mark chapter 10, and this one shows up, in a few of the gospels, but we'll just read it, from Mark's account, in,

I'll start actually, in verse number 13, Mark 10, 13, and they brought young children to him, that he should touch them, and in another gospel, it says that he should pray for them, he says that he should touch them, and his disciples rebuked those, that brought them, but when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, suffer the little children, to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such, is the kingdom of God, verily I say unto you, whosoever shall not receive, the kingdom of God, as a little child, he shall not enter therein, and he took them up, in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them, and blessed them, you know the best way, to live your life, is as a child, be brought to Jesus Christ, to meet him, and then go forward, living a life, that is blessed, by God, it doesn't get, it doesn't get any better, than that, than to, to know Jesus Christ, at a young age, and then to go forward, living, under that blessing, it's not a physical blessing, it's not a financial blessing, that God's pouring out, into their lives, but knowing, that God is blessing your life, or what you're doing, and the decisions, that you're making, it is invaluable, it is a Christian life, you don't have to go through life, second guessing, and unsure, of things that, if it will work out or not, if I pursue this, or if I go this, or marry them, or make this decision, you don't have to go through life, unsure, if that's going to work, if it's okay, if it's right, because you can have peace, and you can have assurance, when you walk with God, and when you allow him, to direct your steps, if you refuse to allow God, to direct your steps, there'll be no peace, you won't know, that it'll work out, you won't know, that you'll end up happy, you think you can handle it, on your own, and then you're in for a surprise, because life can be nasty, and this world can be cold, and it can be lonely, my wife and I, our family knows of a friend, back east, that was counseled against, getting involved, with this particular boy, by her Christian home, her Christian family, they said, don't date him, he's lost, he's not, maybe not a bad guy, but he's just not, he's not for you, stay away from him, and she said, I'll do what I want, and so she ended up, moving out of the house, and then she ended up, dating this guy, and then ended up, marrying him, and some 20 years went by, where they were married, and they were coming to church, and their child, was in a Christian school, and grew up knowing, our family, and our kids, and the boy, came to youth group, at church, and even, there was times, where the dad, they came to church, Sunday morning, and I believe, he got saved, along the lines, they say, he did, he says he did, and they even came, once in a while, on Wednesday nights, but not much, and as the, as their life unfolded, in the last few years, now they're, they're divorced, and they're, they're divorced, because of circumstances, and things, and the, the woman, told my wife, she said, something to the effect of, this is what you get, when you make a decision, that you know is wrong, back then, this is where it left me, divorced, away from my home, that I had, with my family, living with my mom, back in my house, again lonely, no husband, my child doesn't even, see me anymore, and she's upset, and she's miserable, and she's looking for help, and it's a decision, she made, because she refused, to follow the blessed life, that God offered, and to make those decisions, that God would give, instead she said,

I'll do it, my own way, much like I did, but the best life, is to start young, or whatever age you're at, to get to Jesus Christ, and then to live, the Christian life, it's the life, where God will bless, there's a swimmer, a swimmer, a man that was in great shape, and he decided, I'm going to swim, across this big river here, not too many people, can do it, but with my ability, and I'm in the shape, of my life, I could do it, and people thought, I think he can do it, he can do it, and he was confident, I know I can do it, and he got a little bit, of attention in the town, and little people, you know, they're going to come out, to watch him, and on the date, that they set to do this, before that, prior to it, there were some heavy rains, and the river, had come up, and the flow, was much stronger, the current, and he decided, I think I could still do it, and I know, it'll be a little harder, but I'm confident, in my ability, and others cautioned him, and said, no, don't do this, you should just wait it out, be patient, you're going to regret this, and he said, no,

[ 33 : 35 ] I can do it, and he stood on the shore, and he looked across, and saw the other side, he says, I can make it, to that shore, I know I can, and his eyes, were focused on his goal, and on his dream, of doing this, he could see it, and felt he could do it, so he set out, and fought against the current, and he pushed forward, swimming across this river, but the further he got, the more into the mainstream, and current of the river, he realized, that there was something, that he did not account for, all of that rain, and all of that flooding, had washed debris, and things into this water, that he did not, see under the surface, he didn't see swimming across, he just saw his goal, he saw where he wanted to get to, and knew he could make it, and as he's swimming, thrusting his hands forward, into the water, and kicking with his legs, different barrels, and things were floating, and rusty pieces of metal, where he cut himself, he hit himself, and cut gashes, and began to bleed, and sting, and feel that, as he's swimming across, it distracted him, but he pushed forward, worse yet though, this major, rain brought in, some branches, and brought some, some fallen trees, that were washed in, and now floating, down the river, and he encountered, these obstacles, obstacles that caused him, to force him off, his path, and expend some energy, getting around, in one case, a large tree, that he was afraid, to go under it, because of fearful, of catching branches, and getting caught up, and not knowing, and he didn't want, to go over it, but he did, and ripped up his belly, and ripped up his legs, a little bit, trying to scamper, over this log, expending more energy, than he expected, and he pushed on, and he pushed on, and he got further, and he got worse, and he got worse, and the current, got stronger, as it threw him off course, until he ended up, calling out, and waving for a rescue, he never made it, and the swimmer, that man, and his pride, and his arrogance, and his confidence, in himself, reminds me, of some people, that I know, they set their sights, on living life, and they set their sights, on the other side,

I can do it, I'm strong enough, I'm smart enough, I'll deal with it, I can do this, I don't need anybody else, I don't need your advice, and they get swimming, away from God, and away from his safety, and away from his will, all confidence, but they don't account, that life, that river of life, doesn't care about them, and it can be a cold, in an angry place, and it can cut them, and it can bruise them, and it can throw them, off course, and when they're away, from God, they're away from the protection, and safety of God, and there's obstacles, obstacles that you don't see, people get, they get, just this narrow minded, their eyes set on a goal, this is where I want to be, this is what I want for me, and they don't understand, and realize, that if they're not going to live, God's life, they're, they're opening themselves up, to dangers, that don't need to be, and just like that swimmer, found out, there were things,

I couldn't see, that were waiting for me, out there in those waters, sometimes, that Christian, that walks away from God, finds out, there's things in life, that I wasn't prepared for, my goal, my goal was to be this, and I never made it, I never made it, because, I wasn't walking with God, and following his direction, life doesn't care about you, but Jesus cares, and you better, you're best to stick with him, you're best to stay, where it's safe, where you don't need to get out, into those deep, rough waters, chasing some goal, that God doesn't have for you, and he never did, maybe this morning, like these we've read, if you're down, he can lift you up, he can lend a hand, if you're sinking, he can catch you, cry, cry out to him, if you're in need of a cleansing, he's the only one, that you need to talk to, maybe life's not going, the way you hoped, maybe you need to turn around, maybe you need to call out to him, to get you back, into that blessed life, that safe life, the life where he can lead, and direct, it's not necessarily, an easy life, or a perfect life, but it's one that you know, with assurance, it's what God wants, it's the best life there is,

I wonder this morning, if you need a hand, if you need somebody, to lend a hand, don't call the government, don't call your friends, don't talk about it, but if the Lord's dealing with you, about a situation in your life, then take it to him, ask Jesus Christ, to lend a hand, let's pray, Lord I'm thankful this morning, thankful before your people, that you reached down, and picked me up, and thank you for, thank you for lifting me up, God I ask this morning, that if there's those, who have their hearts, set on a goal, or on something, that's not of your will, that you'll discourage them, from that, that you'll reveal, through these thoughts, the best life, the blessed life, is staying with you, and knowing you, and trusting you, and seeking your will, Lord for others, that feel like, they're sinking, in certain aspects of life,

I pray you'd catch them, and help them, lift them back up, restore them, and restore relationships, restore things, that maybe they've even, gotten themselves into, but God we need your hand, I want to thank you also, that you've never gone, too far away, that you couldn't reach out, I appreciate that, in my life, Lord others, I'm sure here do as well, if anybody's not saved, here this morning, and need a cleansing, of the blood of Christ, and press their heart, reveal to them, what Jesus Christ, did for them on the cross, and draw them to Calvary, and draw them to salvation, Lord I pray for our, our brothers and sisters here, Lord the sins, that are in our hearts, and that we're, surrounded with in this world, God help us to be quick, to confess, and to come as that leper, and seek a cleansing, and to get it often, as often as is necessary, we pray these things, in Christ's name, [ 40 : 21 ] Amen, Amen, we're going to have a,