

Jesus To The Rescue

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- [0 : 0 0] and trust him to be the rescuer from your sin and that you would turn to him for all of your needs. As you boys and girls go to Sunday school now, we're going to sing.
- We're going to praise God for being the rescuer for that great problem of ours from Psalm 51. Psalm 51. We're going to sing from verses 1 to 5 and then verse 7.
- So that's the first four stanzas and then the sixth. After thy loving kindness, Lord, have mercy upon me, for thy compassion's great blot out all my iniquity.
- Let us sing to the Lord. The Word of God All my iniquity.
- Me cleanse from sin and to the heart.
- [1 : 3 7] From my iniquity. For my transgressions I confess.
- My sin I ever see. Against me the only advice.
- My sin in life I come this hill. That when thou speakst thou hast Jesus.
- And here may thou take sin. Behold thy iniquity.
- Once born thou would within. My mother also be.
- [3 : 0 8] Cause you see. In guilty hands and sin. Do thou with his love sprinkle me.
- I shall be cleansed so. It washeth me.
- And then I shall be whiter than the snow.
- Let's turn to the Bible together.
- Let us hear from God's word. Our reading this morning is from Matthew's gospel chapter 14. And beginning from verse 13. Matthew chapter 14.
- [4 : 1 8] And beginning from verse 13. And the context of this is that John the Baptist.
- Has just. Jesus is hearing about the news. Of John's death. So from verse 13. When Jesus heard of it. He departed thence by ship into a desert place apart.
- And when the people had heard thereof. They followed him on foot out of the cities. And Jesus went forth and saw a great multitude. And was moved with compassion toward them.
- And he healed their sick. And when it was evening. His disciples came to him saying. This is a desert place. And the time is now past. Send the multitude away.
- That they may go into the villages. And by themselves victuals. But Jesus said unto them. They need not depart. Give ye them to eat.
- [5 : 3 0] And they say unto him. We have here but five loaves and two fishes. He said bring them hither to me. And he commanded the multitude to sit down on the grass.
- And took the five loaves and the two fishes. And looking up to heaven he blessed. And break. And gave the loaves to his disciples. And the disciples to the multitude.
- And they did all eat. And were filled. And they took off of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. And they that had eaten were about five thousand men.

Beside women and children. And straight away Jesus constrained his disciples to get into a ship. And to go before him onto the other side. While he sent the multitudes away.

And when he had sent the multitudes away. He went up into a mountain. A park to pray. And when the evening was come. He was there alone. But the ship was now in the midst of the sea.

[6 : 30] Tossed with waves. For the wind was contrary. And in the fourth watch of the night. Jesus went unto them. Walking on the sea. And when the disciples saw him walking on the sea.

They were troubled. Saying it is a spirit. And they cried out for fear. But straight away Jesus spake unto them. Saying. Be of good cheer. It is I.

Be not afraid. 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 down 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. Saying Lord.

Save me. And immediately. Jesus stretched forth his hand. And caught him. And said unto him. O thou of little faith.

[7 : 30] Wherefore didst thou doubt. And when they would come into the ship. The wind ceased. Then they that were in the ship. Came and worshipped him.

Saying. Of a truth. Thou art the son of God. And when they were gone over. They came into the land of Gennesaret. And when the men of that place. Had knowledge of him. They sent out into all that country.

Round about. And brought unto him. All that were diseased. And to sort him. That they might only touch. The hem of his garment. And as many as touched. Were made perfectly whole.

Amen. This is God's precious. And living and holy word to us. That we will return to you. Shortly. In our service. But now. Once again. Let's come to the Lord.

In prayer. Together. And we will remain seated. As we pray. Let us pray. Our God.

[8 : 28] And Father of our Lord. Jesus Christ. We. Come and bow before you. As the God. Who alone saves. And you Lord. Who alone provides.

For all of our needs. You are our creator. You have lifted. Each one of us together. In the womb. You know us. Through and through. And each day. Lord.

You sustain. The very fabric. Of our being. Just as by your word of power. You sustain. The universe. You provide. For all of our needs.

We thank you. Lord. That you have taught us. Not to be anxious. For anything. But in everything. With prayer. And supplication. To cast our anxieties. Upon you.

And know your peace. That surpasses understanding. We thank you. Lord. Above all. That you provide. All that we need. For life. And for godliness. And that as we come to you.

[9 : 24] Not only creatures of dust. Who are weak and needy. But as sinners. Lord. With corrupt hearts. And twisted natures.

That we find in you. In your purity. And your grace. And love. And holiness. The answer to all of our needs. That you. Sanctify.

That you give life. That you raise us from the dead. In Christ. And that you make us whole in him. Continue to do so.

We pray as we trust. Upon you. And as we look to you. For all of our needs. Just as you have taught us to do. Looking to you. For our daily bread. And for the forgiveness.

Of all of our sins. To deliver us. Lord. From evil. And keep us from temptation. You are our god. And shepherd. And the king of our lives.

[10 : 20] Our father. We pray. For our own hearts. For that we would not be anxious. We pray. Lord. For the anxieties. That may be weighing on us. Whether at home.

Or at work. With finance. Or ill health. Father. We pray this morning. Especially for those. Who grieve. Lord.

We are saddened. To hear the passing. Of our sister Chrysota. Our father. We thank you. So much. That she knew you. And had faith.

In the Lord Jesus Christ. His death. And his resurrection. That she died. In that wonderful hope. Of being raised with him.

On the last day. And that even now. Lord. We trust. Because you promise. That she sees you. Face to face. And knows. Lord.

[11 : 13] By sight. That which she put her faith in. Throughout her life. So Lord. Be with this dear. Church family. This congregation. Lord.

As they grieve. Her loss. Lord. Be with her daughters. And grandchildren. Also Lord. As they grieve her passing. Lord. We pray. That they would not grieve. Without hope.

But Lord. Would know. That same hope. In which Chrysota. Put her trust. Lord. Throughout her life. Father. We. Pray. That you would continue.

To provide. For this congregation. In a time of vacancy. Lord. We pray. That they would know. Unity. In Christ. Lord. We pray. That you would strengthen them.

That you would build up this body. Father. We pray. That you would continue. To provide ministers. Of your gospel. On this island. Lord. We thank you. For the faithful ministries.

[12 : 07] And the faithful men. Who preach. Lord. Lord. Say. To Lord. Say. Your gospel. Father. We pray. Because you have taught us. To pray. That the harvest.

Is plentiful. But the workers. Are key. And so Lord. Again. We look to you. To send out workers. Into your harvest field. Lord. We pray. That you would raise up. Godly men.

Who are qualified. Lord. To teach. And preach. Your gospel. Father. We pray. That you would send. A minister. Here. To Calanish. In your time. And in your way.

But Lord. In the meantime. We pray. That you would. Be raising up. Men and women. Within the congregation. To serve. To pastor. To teach. Lord.

We know. That you distribute gifts. To all of your people. And we pray. Lord. That in this time. That the body. The church body. Here. Would be built up. Lord. As each part.

[13 : 02] Does its work. So Lord. Bless this dear congregation. We pray. And every congregation. Lord. On the island. That is in a time of vacancy. Father.

We remember too. The pre-church youth conference. That is happening. Lord. Over this weekend. Lord. We thank you. For all that has been taught. So far. By Andy Pearson. Lord.

And others yesterday. And we pray. Lord. That that work. And that word. And teaching. Would bear fruit. In the lives. Of these young people. Father. We pray. That you would be. Raising up.

Lord. A generation. Who love. You. Who are rooted. And grounded. In Christ. Who love your word. And are ready. To live for you. Lord. In our day. Father.

We pray. That this weekend. Would be good. For equipping. Lord. The young people. Of our church. For that end. And Lord. That they would know. Friendship. And unity. That will sustain them.

- [13 : 56] Throughout their lives. Our Father. Beyond our own nation. We pray. For your church. In places of the world. Where your people. Are fiercely persecuted. Lord.
- We are so saddened. Lord. To hear. Their persecution. In Nigeria. Lord. Where men and women. And children. Are killed. And abducted. Lord.
- For their faith in you. Father. We pray. That you would strengthen. Your church. In that land. We thank you. Lord. For the witness. Of your people there. We pray. Lord. That you would keep. Their lampstand.
- Burning bright. And strong. Lord. That your church. Would not. Grow weak. Or become compromised. But Lord. That you would continue. To build your church.
- In that land. And Father. We. Are so conscious. Lord. Of our world. Being unstable. Lord. We pray. That you would give wisdom.
- [14 : 51] To those who lead. Your word tells us. That the heart of a king. Is like a stream of water. In your hands. That you turn. Whichever way you would. And so.
- Our Father. We pray. That you would turn. The hearts of our leaders. Into the way of wisdom. And the way of peace. The way of justice. And of mercy.
- Our Father. We know that. True justice. Will not come. Until the return. Of our Lord and King. Jesus Christ. But Lord. Have mercy upon us.
- We pray. And in a world. That is far from you. Have mercy upon us. Lord. And we pray. Keep us looking. To that wonderful hope. That you give us.
- In the gospel. Of the return. Of the Lord Jesus. The coming together. The consummation. Of his kingdom. And of a world. Made me. Set our hearts. On that hope.
- [15 : 47] And upon him. We pray. In Jesus name. Amen. Amen. As we prepare. Our hearts.
- To return. To God's word. We're going to sing. Again from God's word. From Psalm 93. And seeing the Lord. Mighty. Above the waters. His voice.
- Above the waters. We'll sing. Psalm 93. In verses 3. 4. And 5. The final three stanzas. Let us sing again. To God's praise. Amen.
- Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
- That is all night, is all night by night.
- [17 : 15] That the night of many waters are in the yellow sand.
- Thy gentilies, every one, in faithfulness again.
- And will be dead forevermore, like the kingdom and well.
- Thank you.
- And the voice of the Lord Jesus calling us to yourself. And so Lord, our prayer is simple. Speak Lord, for your servants are listening.
- [18 : 56] In Jesus name, Amen. Well we began thinking already with the children about a rescue.
- And as I say in our house, the rescues that go on are Paw Patrol themed. Not just on the TV, but before I came away we were chasing around the kitchen, pretending we were doing these rescues.
- All is well in Adventure Bay. But then, mild peril strikes. Ryder, the only person, gets the pups, the dogs together in their high tech tower.
- They get a breakdown of what the problem is. And then once they've worked out what kind of problem it is, they have to decide what kind of rescue is needed.
- Which pups with which special skills will be needed to go and save the people of Adventure Bay. I won't spoil it for those of you who haven't seen it.

[19 : 59] Needless to say, every episode ends in exactly the same way. What kind of rescue do we think we need? Of course, we face much more serious situations, don't we, than people in a children's cartoon.

War. Economic uncertainty. Terminal illness. Sexual violence. The name but a few. What kind of rescue do we think we need?

And what do we need to do about it? We're coming to a section of Matthew's Gospel this morning where Matthew wants us as learners of Jesus to learn what kind of rescue King Jesus brings and how we need to respond.

So far in the Gospel, if we had read it up to this point, we would have seen something of what King Jesus has come to do. He has been bringing God's kingdom.

And is bringing God's good and loving rule to bear on his world. We've seen that through the countless healings that he's performed. Our passage is topped and tailed with even more healings that Jesus, in his compassion, does for people.

[21 : 18] King Jesus restores something of the wholeness which God created us for in the beginning. King Jesus restores something of the world. But he's done that even more so through his teaching, his words.

Up to this point in the Gospel, Jesus has given three big sermons where Jesus, as King, has been setting his followers straight, and to some degree the crowds straight, about what God's kingdom is and how we live in it.

Some have taken his words to heart. They have taken the crown off their own heads and given it to him. They have bowed before Jesus as their King and Lord and Saviour.

They've turned to live under his good and loving and wise rule. Many, though, along the way have heard him, and either they've missed the point or they're only half understood.

And of those who have understood something, many have not liked what they had. Not least the religious teachers, the Pharisees and the scribes, who have called him no less the prince of demons.

[22 : 32] And so now we've had a chance to see and to respond to something of what King Jesus has come to do. It's now time for him to show us more. This is a new chapter in the Gospel and in Jesus' ministry, because now he decides it is time to reveal the rescue plan to his people.

Jesus to the rescue. But what kind of rescue is it? And what do we need to do about it? And firstly then, this morning, let us see that King Jesus has come to Exodus rescue us.

Exodus rescue us. Now, I think the passage that we read together just now from Matthew's Gospel is one of those passages that shows us that if we've been in the church for any length of time, that we know our Bibles too well and not well enough.

If you grew up in the church, what Jesus does in our passage is classic quintessential Jesus, isn't it? I reckon even today, if you went out on the street or knocked on your neighbour's door, that they would know that Jesus fed 5,000 and walked on the water.

You would love to know, perhaps after the service, how many times you've had these verses preached from a pulpit, from any of the Gospels. Perhaps so many that you've lost count.

[23 : 56] We know these stories too well, don't we? But like so many things in the Bible that we think we don't need to return to you again, it turns out that is because we don't know our Bibles perhaps well enough.

Here I wonder as we read how many of us thought, what? Why are we doing all of this together? Can't we see he feeds 5,000 and then he walks on water?

Why the rush? Let's slow down. But see, it's only when we put it all together that we get a sense of what's really going on. So let me tell you this story again, but in a different way, okay?

Starting from the end and working backwards. And tell me what you see. The Lord's people worship him. They cry out to him to save them.

They are terrified, but he brings them safely through the sea. He goes up on a mountain. In the wilderness they are hungry, and in his compassion he feeds them with bread from heaven.

[25 : 05] Now if I asked you, where does that happen in the Bible, where would you take me? Through the sea, up a mountain in the desert where they eat miracle bread.

It's the Exodus, isn't it? It's the story of the Exodus. Specifically, it's the Exodus rescue. God hits Egypt with 10 plagues or 10 strikes.

After the 10th, his people are set free, and he brings them out safely. He splits the sea in two so that they can cross. He takes them to himself at Mount Sinai, and he lovingly feeds them with bread from heaven on the way.

Now what Jesus does here, and what Matthew wants us to see in chapter 14, is that Jesus is recreating the Exodus rescue.

To see that with me in the text, verse 13, he goes to a desert place, and the crowd come to him. And so soon the question of food comes up.

[26 : 11] His disciples say, this literally, they say, is a wilderness. Send the crowds away to go and buy themselves some food. What are we going to eat, Lord? Now Jesus' target audience here, I think, is the disciples.

And we've seen this before in the Gospel, the Sermon at the Mount. Now, for example, there's the crowds all around, huge multitudes, but Jesus is speaking to the disciples, the 12.

He wants them in particular to see what he's doing. And so he says to the disciples, verse 16, that they don't need to go away. You give them something to eat.

So suddenly, the whole question of feeding the crowds becomes, in a sense, their problem. You know, it's like, perhaps, if you've ever said, you know, this person needs a lift, and they've said, oh, well, why don't you take them then?

Oh, you know, a problem that you thought was somebody else's problem has become my problem. Now, Jesus does that to the disciples, I think, not because he's expecting them to come up with 5,000 plus dinners, but so that they will be drawn in and recognise that he is going to do something that they have no power to do.

[27 : 37] Hence why they say, we have five loaves and two fish, and Jesus does not say to them, does he, you start giving them out, but bring them to me, bring them to me.

Significantly, he then looks up to heaven, where the manna came from, the bread from heaven in the wilderness. He says a blessing, and then he gives it back to the disciples to distribute.

And then we read, the disciples gave it to the crowd, and they all ate and were satisfied. Not only that, they took up 12 baskets full of whatever was left, that is the number of tribes in the wilderness, and those who ate were about 5,000 men besides women and children.

So, of course, we know this story, don't we, as the feeding of the 5,000, but really, perhaps it's the feeding of the 15,000 to 20,000. 5,000 men plus women and children.

Now, if you were those disciples, what would you be thinking? Who can do things like this? You feed thousands of people in the desert where there is no food.

[28 : 51] And this wasn't, was it like passing around the loaf, the bits of bread at communion, and we take a wee piece. No, this was, everyone was filled, satisfied, and there was some left.

With our own hands, we gave him five loaves and two fish. And with our own hands, we gave out enough food to fill everyone up and then some.

And what happened in between? Well, he did. Jesus happened. We tell the story of the bread from heaven every year, they would say, but now we're living it because of Jesus.

And then once everyone's eaten, Jesus sends them away on a boat while the crowds trickle away. And verse 23, after he dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray.

Now, given the disciples aren't there at this point, this is only for him and for us. For him, of course, he went into the wilderness in the first place to spend some time alone with his father.

[30 : 03] This is why he went, and only now does he get that time in prayer. But it's written here for us, too, so that we get another piece of the big picture. Because after they've been fed in the wilderness, where do the people of God go?

Well, they go to the mountain. Moses went up Mount Sinai alone to meet with God, as God took the people as his own. Here, Jesus does the same. He meets God alone in prayer on the mountain.

Before he comes down and crosses the sea to meet his disciples in the boat, which was a long way from land, beaten by waves, for the wind was against them.

Now, perhaps you're asking or wondering, the sea doesn't split open for him, does it, in the way that it did for God's people in Exodus? No, but when Moses raised his staff over the sea, it says in Exodus, all that night the Lord drove the sea back with a strong east wind and turned it into dry land, and the people walked through.

Well, now on another windy night, the Lord walks through the water as if on dry land. He came to them walking on the sea.

[31 : 22] And then his people do too. Lord, if it is you, Peter says, command me to come to you on the water.

And he said, come. So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. You take it like the bread and fish. Jesus wants his disciples to experience this rescue for themselves, to get this up close and personal sense of their need and his power.

And right on cue, as he begins to sing, Peter cries out, verse 30, Lord, save me. Lord, save me. Immediately we read, the Lord Jesus reached out his hand and took hold of Peter.

And as soon as he got into the boat, the wind ceased. What do we see? The Lord saves his people by bringing them safely through the sea.

And the final piece of this puzzle, if we need it, is verse 33. Those in the boat worshiped him, saying, truly, you are the Son of God. Again, who can do a rescue like this?

[32 : 35] Surely the only one who is worthy of worship, the Son of God, the Lord himself, Jesus Christ. Now, friends, each part of that story is a miracle in its own right.

But put it all together, and the point is simply incredible, that Jesus is the God of the Exodus. And that he has come to do another Exodus rescue.

I take it that Matthew hasn't simply recorded these miracles so that we would know that Jesus is God. He is God. But Matthew has told us that and shown us that before.

Why show us, then, that Jesus can recreate this Exodus rescue? Because, friends, that is the rescue that we need. And that is the kind of rescue that he has come to bring.

See, it's not enough, is it, for Jesus to come into the world and call us into his kingdom. What's the problem with that?

[33 : 46] Why won't that work? Well, we won't come, will we? What's holding us back? Well, we are captives in another kingdom. We are slaves to sin.

We are being held. We live out our days under the shadow of death. Like the Israelites in Egypt, we can't just leave when we want to. The kingdom of darkness will fight tooth and nail to keep us.

The prince of darkness will work us to death in his service. So, what point would there be in Jesus calling us to come into his kingdom when we can't?

Friends, Jesus is not a helpless salesman trying to pitch his goods, trying to sell us his wares. We are not smart consumers weighing up what is best for us, the best deal that we can get.

Yet, we are slaves in a kingdom of darkness. And King Jesus has come to fight for us. To pound that kingdom of darkness until it lets us go.

[34 : 51] To set our hearts free to live under his wise and compassionate and life-giving rule in his kingdom. In other words, he has come to exodus rescue us because that is the rescue that we need.

There are lots of things going wrong in the world, aren't there? Lots of things. In the news this week. Wars, diplomacy breakdown. World leaders playing games, corruption.

Rescues are needed. But what is the problem behind those problems? It's the fact that by nature we belong to a kingdom of darkness and we serve its interests and we obey its rules.

It's that we are born as slaves of an evil empire ruled by sin and death and the devil. Friends, our problem, our world's problem is the mother of all problems.

But praise God, the gospel tells us that King Jesus came to rescue us from the mother of all problems. He has come to break us out from our slavery to darkness.

[36 : 00] To set our hearts free to serve a better master. Our God and King who knows us and loves us and made us for himself. That is the rescue we desperately need.

And it's what he came to do for us. He came to exodus rescue us. Friends, what kind of rescue do you think you need?

And what kind of rescue do you think our world needs? The story of the Bible is so much bigger than we think, isn't it?

Jesus' work, God's rescue plan, it goes so much deeper than we could ever dare to imagine. And so what do we need to do about it? Well, friends, since this is the rescue that Jesus has come to do, we must trust Jesus wholly with our rescue.

Trust him with our rescue. This is the second of our two points this morning. We're not told, are we, what the disciples talked about after Jesus fed the small town with bread and fish.

[37 : 03] Over the page, though, in chapter 16, we find out that they didn't really get it. In another boat, they find they haven't brought enough bread. And Jesus says to them there, O you of little faith, why are you discussing among yourselves the fact that you have no bread?

Do you not yet perceive, do you not remember the five loaves for the five thousand of how many baskets you gathered? See, the miracle has gone over their heads.

And in lots of ways, the coming chapters are showing the disciples that they struggle to know what to do with what Jesus has shown them. But the drumbeat of these chapters is not O you of little intelligence.

O you of low IQ. It is O you of little faith. Jesus says that three times in the next four chapters because their problem isn't up here, that they're not clever enough to work out what he's doing.

It's in here. That they lack the trust in him. That they need for him to be their rescuer. And that's what this scene with Peter nearly drowning is about.

[38 : 19] Again, it's so well known that it's lost its impact on many of us. We might think, mightn't we, as we read it, that Jesus is being a bit harsh on Peter.

O you of little faith. I mean, how many of us have tried to walk on water? He stepped out of the boat, didn't he? You know, is Jesus being like a strict teacher with standards that are impossible to meet?

Give him a chance, Lord. But just think about the rescue that Peter is part of. It's as if he and the other disciples are being taken back in time.

They're reliving the greatest rescue story in the world. The Exodus rescue was their history and heritage. But that day it became their lived experience.

They had put a small lunch into Jesus' hands and he'd given them back multiple supermarkets worth of food. They'd been struggling across the sea. Jesus had simply walked to them over the water.

[39 : 24] And Peter gets something of what's going on, doesn't he? Something. Something. Lord, if it is you, he says, command me to come to you on the water. He wants to live it, doesn't he? He wants to grasp it, more so than the other disciples.

He probably couldn't swim, at least of all in open water on a stormy night. But he literally, doesn't he, he climbs over the side of the boat and puts his feet on the water, trusting that it will hold his weight simply because Jesus has told him that it will.

There is faith there. Faith. But what kind of faith is it? You'd be asked before, what kind of rescue?

Not all rescues are equal, are they? We have a little dog that we need to walk. One kind of really windy, stormy night, another dog followed us home that had lost its owner.

Thankfully, it had a number that we called and the owner came and he was very grateful. But, you know, we never heard from him again. He went his way. He went our way. Because, you know, it wasn't as if we'd rescued his child from being run over.

[40 : 37] Or given someone in his family CPR. The response is proportionate to the rescue, isn't it? The bigger the rescue, the deeper the response. Jesus didn't just tell Peter to walk on the water.

He said as Peter stood on the water, verse 27, Take heart, it is I. Do not be afraid. But what happens?

Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid. Is that a proportionate response to Jesus?

What kind of faith does he have? Well, it's half a faith. It's some faith. He trusts Jesus some of the way, but not the whole way.

And friends, that is not a proportionate response to someone who has done what Peter has seen Jesus do, is it? It's not a big enough response to the biggest rescue that Jesus is showing that he has come to do.

[41 : 45] Of course, the point in the original Exodus story is that God's people did cross the sea to safety. But Peter comes very close, doesn't he, for suffering the fate of the Egyptians.

He was swallowed by the waves. Why? Because he did not trust Jesus not to be afraid. When Jesus told him, there was nothing to be afraid of.

He trusted him enough to obey some of his words. But not enough to obey the rest of his words. Friends, these chapters in Matthew are here to show us that more than anything, this is what we need to be rescued from.

Little faith. Little faith. Unbelief. A heart that has one foot in the kingdom of heaven and one foot in the kingdom of darkness.

A heart that on its own cannot trust Jesus all the way, even if we wanted to. Which is why Peter is a really uncomfortably clear mirror for us to look into, isn't he?

[42 : 55] Because if in some ways we should want to be more like him, well in other ways we are far too much like him. But really when he's pushed, he's thinking he's going to drown.

He cries out the most important words that anyone could ever cry out to the Lord Jesus. Lord, save me. Lord, save me. If his first stumbling steps were weak in faith, what he says when he stumbles shows a faith that really is big enough for the rescue that he really needs.

And you know that can be true of us too, can't it? If things, brothers and sisters, feel like they're getting harder for you. If temptations feel like they are getting harder to bear.

Or if doubts feel like they are growing. Or the pressure to conform to a worldly lifestyle or a different way of thinking is just expanding in your life.

Or perhaps just the general difficulties. Situations that keep getting worse or just aren't getting better and therefore just become harder to bear. And you feel like you're sinking and going to drown.

[44 : 11] Or sometimes, friends, that is when our need is most apparent to us. And therefore our faith in Jesus is strongest.

Before we could walk on the water. But now we're sinking and we can't help but cry out to Jesus, save me. Well, let me say, friends, that that is where Jesus would rather that we were.

That is where Jesus would rather we be. Then, with half a faith, trusting in ourselves to do what only he can do for us. If you're here this morning and you feel like you are sinking and going to drown.

Let me assure you from God's word that you need only cry out to Jesus to save you. And he will. See that in verse 31. Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him.

Yes, he was waiting for Peter to cry out. But he did not wait a second longer than that to reach out and grab him. Friends, you say the word. And he will immediately reach out to you.

[45 : 18] To save you. In all his compassion and power. To save you from sinking. Sinking. Sinking. Sinking not just in the busyness of life and stress, but into judgment and death and hell.

Well, perhaps you've never done that before. You've never said that in your heart to him or said that with your mouth to him.

Well, let me say with all the mercy, with all the tenderness in the world, that this is where you are today. You are sinking. You are going to drown.

Not just in busyness, not just in stress, but into God's condemnation, into death. But with those three simple words, prayed from the heart, confessed with your mouth to Jesus, Lord, save me.

You will be saved. He will reach out his hand and save. Not before you ask, but the very moment that you do. Immediately he will.

[46 : 25] So if that is you, don't call back. Cry out to him. Cry out now in your heart. Speak to somebody after the service. Come to him. He will save. But really, as we close, the challenge is for those of us who are Jesus' disciples, who are Christians today.

Because even if Jesus would rather that we were at the end of ourselves than half trusting him, well, he would still rather, wouldn't he, that we didn't need to sink before we trusted him wholly.

Hence, he doesn't commend Peter for his faith, does he? But he actually says, verse 31, Oh, you of little faith. Why did you doubt? You, Peter, got there in the end.

But think about it. It's a bit of a functional faith, isn't it? The faith that needs to sink before it cries out to the Lord Jesus. The faith that Jesus is looking for, the proportionate response to his saving work as a trust, that doesn't take its eyes off him on any part of the journey.

But doesn't let him go despite our fears, the wind, the waves, but fixes upon him and reaches him.

[47 : 43] Most of us have seen who this man is, what he's come to do. He is the son of God. He's come to rescue us from being slaves to sin and death and the devil. So what more does he need to do to convince us that we can trust him with all of our life, all the way, wholly?

What more can he do? Brothers and sisters, we still need him, don't we, to save us from our unbelief. To say, Lord, I believe, help my unbelief.

We need him to deliver us from the hard, the stubborn parts of our hearts, that even now we're free, choose to go back to the chains from which he's released us by his death.

And when we cry out to him, we know that he will rescue you. Not only because he has reached out his hand to Peter as he cried out, but because he has stretched out his hands upon a cross to die in place of all who cry out to him, Lord, save me.

So that is where his rescue takes him, all the way to the cross, where he died to set our hearts free. And his question is, where will it take us?

[49 : 01] Where has it brought you? Lord, save me. Friends, Jesus has come and rescued. He is mighty to save you. So let us say those words to him.

And let us say those words as we pray now. Let us pray. Lord Jesus, we have seen you, the Son of God.

We worship you as your people did in the boat, as they saw your power and glory and might. Lord, we recognize that you are the Savior, the rescuer sent from God to save us from our sins.

And Father, we pray that you would forgive us for thinking more of ourselves than we truly are. Lord, we confess that we believe in our heart of hearts that we are sufficient for our rescue.

Lord, we pray that we do not really need to be rescued. Lord, free us from that deceit, we pray. Lord, we pray. Lead us back to the Lord Jesus to put all of our faith in him, to cry out to him, Lord, save me day by day by day, not to take our eyes from often.

[50 : 14] And Lord, for those of us here, if you have not done that, Father, by your Holy Spirit, would you grant that faith that cries out to Jesus for salvation?

And would he immediately save them, we pray in Jesus' name. Amen. Amen. Well, as we close, our final item of praise will be from Psalm 116, where we find that cry to the Lord Jesus echoed in the psalm.

We'll sing from Psalm 116 in verses 1 to 6 together. We'll remain seated as we sing. Let us sing to God's praise. Amen. May God bless you.

To come to me, his ear. Of death that our hearts and sorrows did, How bad he come astride, The grace of hell dribbled on me, I dream that trouble found.

Upon the name of God the Lord, Then day I call and say, In the love of my soul, I do thee humbly pray.

[52 : 41] God merciful and righteous is, Yea, day and day our hearts, But change the need I would do, He gave me help of all.

Now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, And the love of God, And the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, Be yours both now and for ever.

Amen. Amen.

Amen.