

# Rescue

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Preacher: Rev Joe Hall

[ 0 : 00 ] It's my pleasure to welcome to the pulpit this evening Reverend Joe Hall who is Minister in Bon Accord Free Church in Aberdeen.! It's delighted to welcome him here with us this evening. He's been preaching in Kalanish already today this morning and now he's preaching with ourselves.

This evening he's been to the island before but just spending time visiting the place as a tourist. So this is his first time coming over to preach here in the island.

So we're delighted to have him with us. I know he'll be familiar to some of you here with either being in Aberdeen or relatives in Aberdeen or if you've been out in Aberdeen he's maybe familiar to you. So we look forward to his ministry with us this evening and I'm delighted just to hand over to him at this point. Well thank you Kalan and thank you all for your invitation.

It's a delight to be with you this evening to worship God with you. Bring warm greetings from the congregation at Bon Accord. Some of whom have been known to some of you.

[ 1 : 04 ] But just delighted to be here to partner with you and to worship with you here this evening. Hear these words of Jesus that come from John chapter 8.

Jesus said, As we come to the risen Lord Jesus Christ this morning, this evening, let us believe in him and we will never hunger.

We will not thirst. We will not thirst. We will be satisfied in him. Let us come to him then with our praise this evening. We're going to stand together to sing from the Scottish shelter Psalm 100.

All people that on earth do dwell, sing to the Lord with cheerful voice. Let us stand to sing God's praise. Let us stand to sing God's praise.

Let us stand to sing God's praise.

[ 3 : 01 ] Let us stand to sing God's praise.

Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray. Let us pray.

Why the Lord the God is good.

His mercy is forever sure. His truth at all times turn thee to.

I shall promise to his vengeance. Let's join our hearts in prayer to God.

[ 4 : 47 ] Let us pray together. Gracious God and loving Heavenly Father, it's our joy and delight this evening to join our hearts and our voices together in praise of ye, your goodness, your glory, your greatness.

Father, we delight to join our voices with your church throughout the earth, all peoples that on earth do dwell, who call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and gather in your presence this Lord's day.

It's our joy and our delight, Father, to join our voices, even with the angels in heaven, gathered around your throne to be in your presence, exalted and majestic, the holy God.

we come to you with praise and adoration, for truly you are over all. And yet, Father, we praise you, we glorify you, that you have drawn near to us through your Son, by your Holy Spirit.

Our Father, we praise you, that you, by your grace, have called a people to yourself in Christ.

Christ, we thank you that you have set your everlasting love upon us, that you have put your triune name upon us, the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

[ 6 : 19 ] And you give us strength and you bless us. And our Father, as we gather to you this evening, we confess that it is only in your strength and it is only with your blessing that we can come.

Our Father, it is only because you have sought and called us that we are gathered here. Lord, we confess that if our coming before you depended on our own strength or will, our merit, our works, our own desire, oh Lord, we would not be before you.

We could not stand. Our Father, we have proved in countless ways this past week how our love for you has not been with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength.

Lord, we have not loved our neighbor as ourselves. And yet, as we gather to you, our Father, we rejoice that you have loved us from eternity past, that you have shown your love for us in this, that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

And so, Father, it is not for our own love that we come, but for yours. Forgive us, we pray, for what we're not. Lord, make us like your Son.

[ 7 : 48 ] And as we hear your word and as your spirit is at work in us tonight, as we trust, according to your promise, that he will be, that you would conform us to his image from one degree of glory to the next.

Our Father, be at work in us. Renew our hearts that we might love and worship and serve you tonight and as we go from here into the coming week. For we ask in the name of the crucified and risen Lord Jesus.

Amen. Well, we are going to hear the words of Jesus now from Matthew's Gospel, chapter 14, and reading from page 13.

Matthew, chapter 14. We're beginning from verse 13.

Just before this, we hear of the death of John the Baptist. That is what Jesus is hearing about in verse 13.

[ 9 : 02 ] Now, when Jesus heard this, he withdrew from there in a boat to a desolate place by himself. But when the crowds heard it, they followed him on foot from the towns.

When he went ashore, he saw a great crowd and he had compassion on them and healed their sick. Now, when it was evening, the disciples came to him and said, this is a desolate place and the day is now over.

Send the crowds away to go into the villages and buy food for themselves. But Jesus said, they need not go away. You give them something to eat.

They said to him, we have only five loaves here and two fish. And he said, bring them here to me. Then he ordered the crowds to sit down on the grass and taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing.

Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples and the disciples gave them to the crowds and they all ate and were satisfied.

[ 10 : 15 ] And they took up 12 baskets full of broken pieces left over and those who ate were about 5,000 men besides women and children.

Immediately, he made the disciples get into the boat and go before him to the other side while he dismissed the crowds. And after he dismissed the crowds, he went up on the mountain by himself to pray.

When evening came, he was there alone, but the boat by this time was a long way from the land, beaten by the waves, for the wind was against them. And in the fourth watch of the night, he came to them, walking on the sea.

But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified and said, It is a ghost. And they cried out in fear. But immediately, Jesus spoke to them, saying, Take heart.

It is I. Do not be afraid. And Peter answered him, Lord, if it is you, command me to come to you on the water. He said, Come.

[ 11 : 24 ] So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid. And beginning to sink, he cried out, Lord, save me.

Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, O you of little faith, why did you doubt?

And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshipped him, saying, Truly, you are the Son of God. And when they crossed over, they came to land at Gennesaret.

And when the men of that place recognized him, they sent word around to all that region and brought to him all who were sick and implored him that they might only touch the fringe of his garment.

And as many as touched it were made well. Amen. This is God's living and holy word and the words of the Lord Jesus Christ.

[ 12 : 31 ] We'll come back to those verses later in our service. But now as we respond to the reading of God's word, we're going to sing from Psalm 77 in Sing Psalms and verses that speak of





Lord, humble our hearts this evening, we pray, as we bow before you and listen to your word. Speak, O Lord, for your servants are listening. In Jesus' name, amen.

Well, I wonder, what kind of rescue do you think we need?

[ 28 : 20 ] What comes to mind when I say the word rescue? Now, at home, we have toddlers, a three-year-old and a two-year-old.

So, I won't lie, what comes to mind when I say the word rescue? For me, in our house is Paw Patrol. Perhaps some of you have watched an episode or two or three or four or five of Paw Patrol. If you haven't seen it, no worries. Every episode is exactly the same. All is well in Adventure Bay. And then mild peril strikes. Ryder summons the pups to the pup tower.

They get a breakdown of what has gone wrong. And once they have worked out what kind of problem it is that they have to solve, they then need to work out which pups with which special skills, special tools will be needed to save the day.

Who will do the rescue? Now, I won't spoil it. Every episode is the same. They succeed in the rescue. But what do we think of when we think of the word rescue?

[ 29 : 32 ] What kind of rescue do you think that we need? Of course, we face far more serious situations in life than ever visit the people of Adventure Bay.

Wars. Terminal illness. Natural disasters. Relationship breakdown. Sexual violence.

We could go on. What kind of rescue do you think we need? And what do we need to do about it?

We're coming to a section of Matthew's Gospel this evening where Matthew wants us as learners of Jesus to learn what kind of rescue King Jesus came to bring and how we need to respond.

So far in the Gospel, if we'd read up to this point, we have seen something of what King Jesus came to do. He has been bringing God's kingdom into the world.

That is God's good and loving rule to bear on people's lives. We've seen that through the countless healings that he's performed. Our reading tonight is topped and tailed with even more as King Jesus brings, restores something of the wholeness to people that God created us for in the beginning.

[ 30 : 52 ] But he has brought God's kingdom all the more through his word, through his teaching. And so in this Gospel, we have had up to this point three big sermons, three teaching blocks, where Jesus has set his people, and to some extent the wider crowd, straight on what God's kingdom is and how we live in it.

And we've seen different responses. Some have heard Jesus' message of God's kingdom, and they have bowed before him. They've taken the crown off their own heads.

They've given it to him. They have recognized him as Lord and Christ and Savior. And they have turned and begun to live in God's kingdom.

They have followed King Jesus. Many, though, have heard him and have either misunderstood what he has said, or they've only partly got what he has said.

And of those who have only got part of what he said, some even then haven't liked what Jesus has said. So the religious leaders, the Pharisees, the scribes, have called him, no less, the prince of demons, and begun already to plot his death.

[ 32 : 10 ] So now we've had a chance to see and to respond to something of what King Jesus has come to do. It's time to see more.

This is a new chapter in the gospel, a new chapter in Jesus' ministry, because now Jesus decides it's the time to reveal the rescue plan to his people.

Jesus to the rescue. So what kind of rescue is it? And what do we need to do about it? Two points this evening.

Firstly, then, let us see that King Jesus has come to Exodus rescue us. Now, our reading from Matthew, it's one of these chapters, isn't it, that shows that we know our Bibles both too well and not well enough.

Right? We heard that chapter, didn't we? And we thought together, we know this. I reckon we could go out on the street this evening, we could ask people about Jesus walking on the water, feeding the 5,000, and they would know what we were talking about.

[ 33 : 19 ] We know these chapters of the Bible, don't we, too well. But like so many things in the Bible, we think we don't need to hear again. It turns out that's because actually, perhaps, perhaps, we don't know our Bibles well enough.

See, how many of us, I wonder, as we read, thought, well, this is a big chapter. Why don't we break it down? Right? Can't he see the headings? It says, doesn't it, Jesus feeds the 5,000, Jesus walks on the water.

Slow down! Why are we going so quickly? But it's only when we put it together that we begin to see what is going on.

So, let me tell you this story in a different way and see if we can see. Let me tell you from the end, 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.

[ 34 : 25 ] In the wilderness, they are hungry. In his compassion, he feeds them with bread from heaven. Now, if I asked you, what part of the Bible does that come from, what would you say?

Where would you take me? Through the sea, up a mountain, in the wilderness, where they eat miracle bread. That is the Exodus, isn't it? It's the Exodus.

Specifically, it's the Exodus rescue. God hits Egypt with 10 plagues, 10 strikes. After the tent, his people are set free. He brings them safely out.

Across the sea, he gathers them to himself, makes them his own, and lovingly feeds them with bread from heaven on the way. Now, what Jesus does here, and what Matthew wants us to see, is that Jesus is recreating the Exodus rescue.

Just see that with me in the text. Verse 13, Jesus goes out to the wilderness, and a crowd comes to him. Soon, the question of food comes up.

[ 35 : 36 ] His disciples say, literally, the word they use, this is a wilderness. Send the crowds away to go and buy food for themselves. What are we going to eat, Lord? Now, the target audience here is the disciples.

Okay, we've seen this before in Matthew, the Sermon on the Mount. For example, the crowds are all around him, but before him, close up, he's got the 12, the disciples.

Jesus wants them, particularly, to see what he's going to do. So he says to the disciples, verse 16, they need not go away, you give them something to eat.

And straight away, this has all become a lot more personal, hasn't it? It's a bit like, perhaps, you've said, oh, so-and-so's here, they need a lift.

And somebody said, well, can't you take them? Right, suddenly, the problem has become your problem. Jesus does that to the disciples, I think not because he's really expecting them to feed the crowds, but so that they'll recognize that he is going to do something that they have no power to do.

[ 36 : 49 ] Hence, when they say, when we have five loaves and two fish, Jesus says not, he doesn't say, does he just start giving them out? He says, bring them here to me.

Significantly, he looks up to heaven, where the manna came from, the bread from heaven. He says a blessing and gives it back to the disciples to distribute. Then we read, the disciples gave it to the crowds and they all ate and were satisfied.

Not only that, they took up twelve baskets full of broken pieces left over, that is, the number of tribes in the wilderness, and those who ate were about five thousand men besides women and children.

So, the heading in your Bible, which is not inspired, says Jesus feeds the five thousand, which is wrong, isn't it? Jesus feeds the fifteen to twenty thousand, five thousand men plus, women and children.

Now, if you were those disciples, what would you be thinking at this point? Who can do stuff like this? Feed thousands of people in a desert where there is no food?

[ 38 : 05 ] food. And this wasn't just like passing around the loaf at communion or taking the wee bits of bread. No, these people ate to the full.

They were satisfied. They were filled and then some. With our own hands, we gave him five loaves and two fish. And with our own hands, we gave out enough food to feed five thousand men plus women and children and then some.

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.

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

Now, given the disciples aren't there at this point, this is for Jesus and for us, isn't it? It's for Jesus. That's why he went into the wilderness in the first place, to have that time by himself with his father.

[ 39 : 21 ] Only at this point does he actually get that time. But it's written here for us so that we get another piece of the big picture because after they've been fed in the wilderness, where do the people go?

Well, to the mountain where Moses goes up by himself to pray to God and meet with him on the mountain before coming down and Jesus crosses the sea to meet his disciples in the boats, which was a long way from the land beaten by the waves so the wind was against them.

Now, perhaps you're thinking the sea does not, does it, at this point, split open for him to walk through on dry land, okay? But when Moses raised his staff over the sea, it says, 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 the sea.

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

and then his people do too. Lord, if it is you, asks Peter, command me to come to you on the water. Come on, Peter.

[ 40 : 45 ] So Peter got out of the boat and walked on the water and came to Jesus. I take it like giving them the bread and the fish. This is because Jesus wants the disciples to experience his power up close and personal.

Their need, his power at work. And right on key, as he begins to sing, Peter cried out, verse 30, Lord, save me.

Lord, save me. Immediately, we read, the Lord Jesus reached out his hand, took hold of Peter, and when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. The Lord saves his people by bringing them safely through the sea.

And the final piece of the puzzle, if we need it, is there in verse 33, those in the boat worshipped him, saying, truly you are the Son of God. Again, who can do this?

Right? Only one who's worthy of praise and worship, the Lord, Jesus, the Son of God, the Christ, the Son of God. Now, each bit of that story is an amazing miracle in its own right, isn't it?

[ 42 : 03 ] But I think, put it together, and the point is simply incredible. That Jesus is the God of the Exodus, and, still better, that he has come to do another Exodus rescue.

I take it that these miracles are not recorded for us in this chapter of Matthew simply to reinforce that Jesus is God.

He is God. But Matthew has made that point before. He's shown us that. We know that. Why show us that Jesus can recreate the Exodus rescue?

well, because, friends, that is the kind of rescue that we need, and so it is the kind of rescue that he has come to bring.

Think about it. What would be the problem with Jesus simply bringing God's kingdom into the world and calling us into it? What would still not happen?

[ 43 : 10 ] What could we not do? Why would we not come? Well, what's holding us back? It's that we are captives in a kingdom of darkness.

It's that we are slaves of sin and death. We live out our days under the shadow of death, and like the Israelites in Egypt, we cannot just go when we please.

The kingdom of darkness will fight tooth and nail to hold onto us. The devil will work us to death in his service, and like Pharaoh, the actual prince of this world will not let his people go.

So what point would there be in Jesus calling us into his kingdom if we can't come? Friends, this chapter of Matthew reminds us that Jesus is not a helpless salesman pitching us his wares, selling us his stuff, hoping hoping that we will buy.

And we are not smart consumers weighing up our options. What's best for me? What's the best deal in life? No, we are slaves in a kingdom of darkness.

[ 44 : 27 ] darkness. And here is the good news of the gospel, that King Jesus has come to pound the kingdom of darkness until it lets us go, to set our hearts free, to live under his wise and loving and compassionate 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 wrong in the world, aren't there?

In the news this week, wars, diplomatic breakdown, corruption, rescues are needed.

But what is the problem behind those problems? Well, it is the fact that by nature we belong to a kingdom of darkness, and we serve its interests, and we obey its rules.

We are born as slaves in an empire of evil. Friends, we suffer from the mother of all problems. But the gospel tells us that Jesus came to rescue us from the mother of all problems.

[ 45 : 46 ] He's come to break us out of slavery to darkness, set our hearts free to serve a better master, the God who created us, who knows us, who loves us.

That is the rescue that we desperately need, and is what he came to do. He has come to exodus, rescue us. what kind of rescue do you think you need?

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, it is so much deeper, better, longer lasting than we dare even to imagine.

And so what do we need to do about it? Friends, this is the rescue Jesus has come to do. So secondly, trust him with your rescue. This is the second of our two points tonight.

Trust him with your rescue. And now we're not told what the disciples talked about after Jesus had fed us a small town with bread and fish, but over the page in chapter 16, we find out they didn't really get it.

[ 47 : 03 ] In another boat, they find they haven't bought any bread. Jesus says to them, oh, 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 5,000 and how many baskets you gathered? The miracle has gone straight over their heads.

But the drumbeat of these chapters is not, oh, you of little intelligence, you of little IQ, it is you of little faith.

He's going to say that three times in the next four chapters because their problem is not up here that they're not clever enough to piece the pieces together, it is in here that they do not trust him to properly be their rescuer.

that's what the scene with Peter nearly drowning is about. Again, it's so well known it's lost its impact on many of us. We think coming to this passage that Jesus perhaps is being a bit harsh on Peter.

[ 48 : 15 ] How many of us have walked on water? It was a stormy night. Peter probably couldn't swim. Is Jesus just being the strict teacher with a standard that's impossible to meet?

Well, no. Think about the rescue Peter is part of. It's as if he and the other disciples have been 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'd put a small lunch into Jesus' hands and they have given back out supermarkets worth of food to people.

They've been struggling across the sea. Jesus simply walked up to them on the water. And Peter gets something, doesn't he? Something of what's going on. Lord, if it is you, he says, command me to come to you on the water.

He wants to live it. He wants to grasp it for it all to be true and real for him. And so he gets out of the boat.

[ 49 : 22 ] And he rests his feet on the water trusting that it will hold his weight simply because Jesus has said it will. There is real faith there, isn't there?

But what kind of faith is it? We asked before, what kind of rescue? Not all rescues are equal, are they? we not only have two small children, we also have a small dog.

One very stormy night, we took the dog for a walk, and a different dog actually followed us home that had lost its owner. And thankfully, the dog had a tag, we phoned the number on it, the owner came 20 minutes later, he was very grateful, he took his dog home, but you know what, we've never seen him again, we didn't get a card or flowers or anything, because it's not like we performed CPR on somebody in his family, or saved one of his children from being run over, 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, did he?

He also said as he stood on the water, verse 27, take heart, it is I, don't be afraid, don't be afraid, but what happens?

[ 50 : 46 ] Peter got out of the boat, walked on the water and came to Jesus, but when he saw the wind, he was afraid. Is that a proportionate response to the rescue that Jesus is doing?

What kind of faith does Peter have here? Half a faith. Faith in some of what Jesus has said and done, not faith in the rest.

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

of course, the point of the original Exodus rescue is that God's people did cross the sea to safety, but Peter very nearly suffers the fate of the Egyptians being swallowed by the waves.

Why? Well, because he didn't trust Jesus not to be afraid when Jesus told him there was nothing to be afraid of.

[ 51 : 54 ] He trusted Jesus enough, didn't he, to obey some of his words, come to me, but not the rest of his words, have no fear. And friends, the rest of these chapters in this section, they're here to show us that more than anything, that is what we need to be rescued from.

little faith, little faith, unbelief, a heart that has one foot in the kingdom of heaven, but one foot still trapped 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 an uncomfortably unclear mirror, isn't he, for us to look into.

In some ways, we should want to be more like him, in other ways, we are far too much like him. But when he's really pushed, as he's sinking and he's going to drown, he cries out, doesn't he, the most important words that anyone could ever say to the Lord Jesus, Lord, save me, Lord, save me.

If his first stumbling steps of faith were weak, what he says when he stumbles shows a faith that is big enough for the rescue that Jesus is bringing.

And that can be true for us as well, can't it? Perhaps you can relate to Peter here. If things feel like they're getting harder for you, like temptation is getting worse, doubts, or doubts are growing stronger, or perhaps just the pressure to conform to a worldly lifestyle, a way of thinking, is getting tougher, or just generally situations in life that are getting harder, or just not getting better, and the longer we have to carry it, the tougher it gets, and you feel like you're sinking and you're going to drown, well, it's at that point, isn't it, that our need becomes clearest, and therefore our faith in Jesus grows deepest.

[ 54 : 12 ] Before we could walk on water, now we're sinking and we can't help but cry out to Jesus, Lord, save me. Well, friends, let me say that that is where Jesus would rather have us than going through life only half trusting in him, but half relying on us.

A full-throated, whole-hearted, desperate trust in him to save us rather than a halfway faith that secretly fears that we won't make it. If you're here tonight and you feel like you're sinking or going to drown, you only need cry to Jesus to save you, and what will he do?

Just see in verse 31, Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him. He was waiting for Peter to say the words, but no longer than that, right?

Immediately he reached out his hand and saved him. Friends, you say the word and Jesus will immediately reach out and take hold of you in all his compassion and power to save you from sinking and drowning in fear, judgment, and death.

And perhaps for some of you, you've never done that in your life, you've never prayed that prayer in your heart or said those words with your mouth to the Lord Jesus. Let me say with all the tenderness in the world that if that is you, this is where you are tonight, sinking and drowning, not only in life, in busyness and stress, but one day into death and condemnation and hell.

[ 56 : 01 ] Friend, you need only say the word to Jesus, cry out to him, these three simple words, Lord, save me, and immediately he will.

Immediately he will. Not before you ask, but at the very moment that you ask, he will immediately save you. If that's you, don't hold back, cry out to him, pray that prayer, speak to somebody after the service, Lord, save me.

But really as we come into close, the challenge of these verses is for those of us who are Jesus' disciples, who are Christians, because even if Jesus were rather that we were at the end of ourselves rather than half trusting in him, he would still rather, wouldn't he, that we didn't have to get to that point before we trusted fully in him.

Hence, here's the twist, Jesus doesn't commend Peter for his faith, does he? But actually says, verse 31, oh you of little faith, why did you doubt?

think about it, it's a bit of a functional faith, isn't it? That we need to sink before we're ready to cry out to him.

[ 57 : 27 ] Wouldn't Jesus rather that Peter had kept his eyes upon him the whole way, not let him go, not feared the wind and waves, but stuck to him and got across to him?

Isn't that the doubt that Jesus is speaking about, the little faith? The faith that Jesus is looking for, the proportionate response to his saving work is a trust that doesn't let go of him on any part of the journey, a trust that when he tells us not to fear, therefore doesn't fear, but keeps its eyes firmly fixed upon him.

I trust that most of us in this room have seen who this man is, and we don't need to be convinced that he is the son of God, he is the Christ. We've seen what he can do, we've seen the rescue that he brings from sin and death and unbelief, what more does he need to do to convince us that we therefore do not need to fear when he tells us we don't need to fear, that he is trustworthy and reliable to save, to redeem, to deliver.

Brothers and sisters, we still need him don't we to save us from our faithless fears, to pray with that man at the bottom of the mountain, Lord I believe, help my unbelief, that he would free us from the stubborn, the hard parts of us that still resist trusting him with our lives, from the bits of us that run back to the chains that he's freed us from in the past, to put them back on ourselves.

Friends, when we cry out to him, he has proved that he will rescue, that he will deliver us, not only by stretching out his hand to Peter to pull him out of the sea, but by stretching out his hands on a cross to pull us out of sin and darkness and death.

[ 59 : 33 ] That is where the rescue of Jesus took him to the cross to suffer, to die in our place, to set our hearts free from sin and fear and death, so that as we trust him for that rescue, Lord, save me, we are saved, we are rescued.

Friends, Jesus has come and he has accomplished his rescue. He is mighty to save, so let us trust him fully with that full and free rescue that he holds out to us tonight.

And let's pray as we do that. Let us pray. Lord, we believe.

Help our unbelief, we pray. Lord, we have seen that you are the Son of God, that you are mighty to save, that you are the God of miracles, that you give life to the dead, and we simply ask, Lord Jesus, that by your Holy Spirit you would set our hearts free from fear, that you would fix our eyes firmly upon you, that we would not take our eyes away from you, Lord, when we are battered by winds and waves of life, or indeed, Lord, the winds and waves that are in our own hearts, the chaos of our own doubts and sin.

Oh, Lord, hold us close, we pray. We thank you, Lord, that you immediately saved Peter, and immediately, Lord, you do deliver, you do rescue. And so, from our hearts, we pray, Lord, save us.

[ 61 : 19 ] And, Father, we ask particularly for those who have never said that in their heart, and that by your Holy Spirit you would grant them that faith that leads to repentance and eternal life, that they would pray to you, Lord, save me.

This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen. As we respond to God's word, we're going to sing together from Psalm 116, from Sing Psalms, words that echo Peter's cry to Jesus, Lord, save me.

We're singing from verses 1 to 6, and the tune is even tied. Let's stand to sing God's praise. I love the Lord because he heard my heart.

voice he listened and I cried to him for me.

I'll call him as for us I shall live because he turned to hear me when I force of death the manage and will lead upon me give thee and wish of the grave with Grief and trouble I was overcome.

[ 63 : 21 ] Then on the name of what I called, Lord, sing.

The Lord, our God, is high and full of praise.

O Christ, and come, God, sure is He.

The Lord protects all those of childlike faith.

When I was in great, He rescued me. 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 forever.

[ 64 : 26 ] Amen. Amen.