

Rescued By God From a Watery Grave

One day, as I was taking a businessman from the San Juan Islands to Port Townsend in my boat, I had an opportunity to prove God. This man, who was an atheist, began making fun of my religion. He knew I had been sick, and he said, "If there is a God and you are His son, why doesn't He take care of you?" He bragged that he was never sick.

Later we started for home, but about five miles from shore, trouble developed with the engine. I asked him to pilot the boat while I went below to see what could be done. While I was working, the boat struck an object which broke a hole in it. Within moments we began to sink. I gave my passenger a life preserver, put one on myself, and we climbed up onto the engine room. When the first wave went over us, it was very cold, but under that wave Jesus was with me. His promise came to me: "When thou passest through the waters, . . . they shall not overflow thee" (Isaiah 43:2). As the boat came out of that wave, I raised my hand to Heaven and shouted, "Glory to God, I have Jesus!"

I knew that the Lord would take me safely through. I didn't know how He would do so, but that didn't matter. I couldn't swim, we didn't have a lifeboat, and there wasn't another boat in sight. The atheist said, "I'm glad someone on board has faith!" The waves were so strong that we were almost washed off, but holding onto a handrail, we both prayed. I said to him, "There is a God, isn't there?" He said, "Yes, and if I ever get out of here, I will live a different life." While he cried, "Lord, I am not ready to die!" I could look up and say, "Lord, I am ready to go!"

My passenger told me, "There is no hope for us. The tide is going out, and the wind is blowing us out to sea." I answered, "I know, but I have a promise from God. If I will hold on, I am going ashore." Within minutes, the waves broke into the pilot house and tore loose the front deck. As I was trying to help the other man tie himself to a piece of deck, he slipped under. I managed to lash myself to the deck rail and began paddling with a board.

After about six hours in the water, I came to shore on Whidbey Island—worn and exhausted, but alive! I stood and tried to walk, but the cold and exposure were almost too much for me. My legs and hands would cramp, and I would fall over. Finally, using two sticks as canes, I struggled down the beach almost three miles to where I had seen a light. There I found a cabin where some fishermen were camped. They gave me food, dry clothes, and a warm bed.

The next day, the sheriff came and retrieved the body of my passenger. It had come ashore near the place where I had. The sheriff said to me, "You're a lucky man. In the past, we have picked up the bodies of five men off this beach. They had crawled up above the logs when they came ashore, but they were dead when we found them." I told him, "God kept me alive."

I was no stranger to the power of God. My mother had become a Christian before I was born, and my father was saved when I was about fourteen years old. While traveling across the country, he knelt in the smoking car of a train and prayed. When he got up from his knees, he was a changed man. He threw his tobacco out the window, and when he arrived home he began to read the Bible and have family prayer. From then on, the prayers of my parents followed me.

Early in life, I had chosen the ways of the world. I spent my time in pool halls and other places of amusement. I was stubborn and wanted my way, but one day God called me to repentance. When I was just twenty years of age, He talked to my heart in a little Gospel meeting and asked me where I was going to spend eternity. I knew I would have to stand before Him and account for the misdeeds I was committing. That night, as the evangelist preached, I felt as though I were standing on the very brink of eternity, about to be ushered into Hell.

I knelt at an altar and prayed, "God, be merciful to me a sinner." In a moment, He took sin out of my heart and wonderfully saved my soul. The peace of God flooded my heart. Sinful habits and desires were gone in an instant. God took out the blasphemy and the terrible temper and gave victory and happiness. He helped me to repay the debts I had said I would never pay and to return things I had stolen, and He gave me the power to "go and sin no more."

I went to work the next day in the mine where I was an electrician. There I heard a man use a common swear word. I turned around with utter surprise that anyone would use God's name in vain, although for years I had been an awful blasphemer! Something inside my heart said, "You are changed."

God had made a wonderful transformation in my life. That experience lasted and is why I had no fear that day of my boating accident.

I have been in many tight places in my life, but thank God, He always hears my cry and answers me. Several years ago, I fell about fifteen feet off a ladder, breaking my arm in two places and crushing my elbow. The doctor said my elbow was crushed so badly that it was impossible to set and that I would never bend it again. They put my arm in a cast. I returned two weeks later for x-rays, and after they looked at the picture, the doctor said, "It is all well!" Just two weeks and God had healed me—a man almost seventy-two years old. I have had full use of that arm since then. People say, "A child would have had to have his arm in a cast longer than that!" My bones knit together perfectly, through the power of God.

Through the years, I have found God to be a Friend who "sticketh closer than a brother." I thank Him for the wonderful hope in my heart, of seeing Him someday. — Alba Green

