



**BETWEEN 6:00 AM—9:00 AM: “I NEED ASSISTANCE. I AM SINKING. THIS IS NOT A JOKE.”**



Last month, Kevin Escoffier (on the left), an experienced French skipper, was sailing nearly 1,000 miles off the tip of South Africa when a sinister wave swamped his boat, folding it like a taco. In seconds his high-tech vessel filled with salt water. He punched out a message to his support team in France and slipped into his survival suit. Then he grabbed his emergency beacon and took to his life raft, a tiny speck in the vast ocean.

Escoffier was racing in the Vendée Globe, a solo, 24,000-mile-race that starts in France and goes around the world. When Escoffier’s closest competitor, Jean Le Cam (to the right), got the message, he changed course to aid Escoffier. After two hours, he spotted the strobe light on Escoffier’s raft, motored in, and threw him a line.

The story gets more compelling when we consider Jean Le Cam’s history and motivation to help. Le Cam himself had been rescued 11 years earlier in the same race, hundreds of miles off of Cape Horn. His situation was even more dire. Le Cam was trapped in the hull of his wrecked

boat for over 16 hours, cold and out of communication (to the left). When his sailing rival Vincent Riou got the distress message, he immediately took action. The details are quite dramatic. You can read about it in a New York Times article called “French skippers describe rescue from capsized boat in Vendee Globe race” dated 1/7/2009. It’s free online.



We believers know what it’s like to be offered a lifeline when we were helpless and sinking. It’s healthy to remember the existential danger we faced and the Mariner who was drowned to give us life. Let’s meditate on Titus 3:3-6 where Paul reminds us of our collective rescue and the costly means by which it was accomplished. We included a question after each verse to help us reflect deeply on each thought.

**Titus 3:3** *For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.*

**Pause:** What was your life like before the Savior sailed in? Looking back, how were you unwise, unruly and trapped?

**Titus 3:4** *But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared,*

**Pause:** Remember the time when Jesus became visible to you. Who or what was his particular agent or ambassador?

**Titus 3:5** *he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,*

**Pause:** Consider the means of our deliverance from sin and death. A Divine Washer came upon and within us.

**Titus 3:6** *whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,*

**Rescues are often pricey affairs. The Messiah himself paid the bill to send the Spirit into our lives. His currency was suffering and blood. The phrase “through Jesus Christ” is a shorthand way of talking about the ten events in the life and career of the Saving King, events we’ve been talking about in Joel Moment. Offer the Lord words of thanks.**

## BETWEEN 9:00 AM—12:00 PM: FRESH PERSPECTIVE, FRESH PRIORITIES

After being plucked out of the sea by Vincent Riou (to the right), Jean Le Cam never looked at his rescuer the same way. After all, Riou took great personal risks to save his fellow sailor. The picture below is of Riou and Le Cam raising cups four years after Riou saved Le Cam's life.



I like this shot of unity and celebration. I imagine raising cups someday at the Messianic banquet with those who told me about Jesus the Messiah. I think I'll do so with that middle-aged man at VBS who shared the gospel with me back in 1978. I'll also toast the Messiah out of gratitude for his faithful people whose giving and service made that event possible. One man told me the gospel story, but dozens more worked behind the scenes by making crafts, leading recreation, preparing snacks, playing instruments, processing my registration papers, and helping my



mom park safely. You get the point of the story we're telling: *rescued people become diversified agents of rescue themselves*. Based on their gifts and abilities, they participate in evangelism and compassion with their minds, bodies, resources and emotions.

Paul tells Titus that people who enjoy spiritual safety must cede captainship to Jesus. He directs them on all subsequent voyages. Let's read Titus 3:8-9 and do some careful reading and reflection on five elements in verse 8.

**Titus 3:8** *The saying is trustworthy, and I want you to (1) insist on these things, so that (2) those who have believed in God may be (3) careful to devote themselves to (4) good works. These things are excellent and profitable for people.*

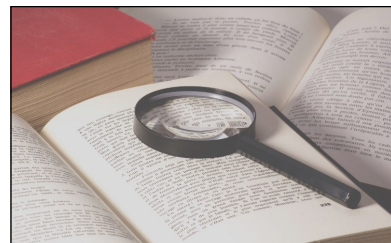
1. "*insist*" — If your boss or someone in authority over you *insists* on an action rather than merely *suggesting*, what difference does that make in your response?

2. "*those who have believed in God*" — Is any baptized believer left out?

3. "*Careful to devote*" — What do you already think about and plan to do? Apply it to #4.

4. "*good works*" — The possibilities for rescue-oriented actions are as wide as the sea. What activities are you equipped to carry out? Maybe you have money to give or logistical support to offer? Do some thinking now.

5. "*profitable*" — How have you already been blessed in life by helping others emerge from the ocean of sin and futility? Maybe aftercare is your calling, that is, encouraging "rescuees" in their new lives on dry land. Imagine. Pray. Get excited.



## BETWEEN 12:00 PM—3:00 PM "THE MASKED SINGERS"

You'll love this. Here's Dave and Dian Ruder with their family singing for the honor of the Messiah and encouragement of Bill and Jane Carpenter. Bill even joined in and played his harmonica.

In this three-hour block, let's imitate the Ruders, even if you can't play an instrument! Let's call someone or send a text message. Let's break out of our normal courses and zigzag at the leading of the Holy Spirit. There's someone who needs to be engaged and encouraged by the Christ in YOU. Let's set sail in their direction in this time period. Work and school can wait ten minutes.

**BETWEEN 3:00 PM—4:00 PM: Join the Joel Moment Prayer Gathering. Go to Zoom.com and enter Meeting ID and Password.**





**JARED LACEY** [He was drowning in sin in the middle of the Arizona desert, but God intervened. Now he's a full-time rescuer.]

**Titus 3:3** *For we ourselves were once foolish, disobedient, led astray, slaves to various passions and pleasures, passing our days in malice and envy, hated by others and hating one another.*

**Titus 3:4** *But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared,*

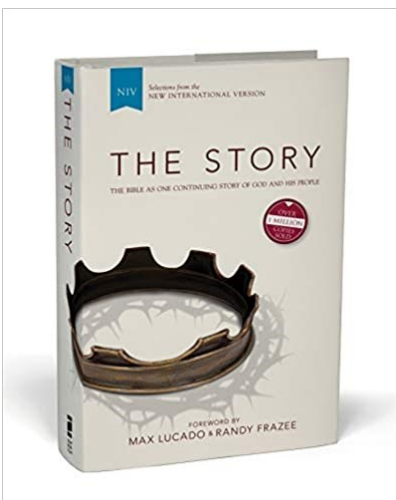
**Titus 3:5** *he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,*

**Titus 3:6** *whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior,*

**Titus 3:7** *so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

**BECKY SEITZ** [You never know what rescue opportunities might come your way when you stand at the deli counter at Lucky to buy oven-roasted turkey and cheddar cheese.]

**Acts 13:49** *And the word of the Lord was spreading throughout the whole region.*



**BETWEEN 5:00 — 10:00 PM: PEOPLE ARE WET, COLD AND HUNGRY FOR HOPE**

Along with a Bible, this book pictured to the left is what Becky gave to the young woman she met in the grocery store. It's called *The Story* and we're excited to tell you about it.

First, some introduction. People are shaken up and starved for truth. This book can help. Again, it's the whole story of the Bible divided into 30 chapters. It has large sections of Bible text and also summaries of sections that are important but less accessible to people who don't have much experience with the Scriptures.

We're planning a fall 2021 churchwide mission to get these books into the hands of our friends, neighbors, dentists, stylists, teachers, etc. There's a video portion as well that we'll tell you about before too long. Check out **thestory.com** and watch a short promotional video or two to get a feel for how the whole thing works. Then rest.



**GROUP PRAYER PROMPT #1 (7 min.):** *Psa. 11:3 if the foundations are destroyed, what can the righteous do?"*

This verse is perfect for today. The “*foundations*” — that is, the laws of the United States and the customs of decency — are taking a beating. Even our national monuments are being dragged through the mud. (Some believers think this is a good thing.) Confusion abounds. What should the believing community do? The first step is to remember that “*The LORD is in his holy temple*” (Ps. 11:4).” So, let’s offer honor and praise to the world’s true King.

**GROUP PRAYER PROMPT #2 (7 min.):** *Psa. 11:5 The LORD tests the righteous, but his soul hates the wicked and the one who loves violence.*

Saying “I’ve been or done wrong” is hard to do in a group, but let’s acknowledge where we’ve had aggressive, hostile hearts to those whom we perceive to be our enemies. The LORD sees what’s inside already with his penetrating fatherly vision. Our Joel Moment started with lamenting and repenting. Let’s get back to the roots of this ministry by telling God we’re sorry.

**GROUP PRAYER PROMPT #3 (7 min.):** *Psa. 11:7 For the LORD is righteous; he loves righteous deeds; the upright shall behold his face.*

Brothers and Sisters, we talked about “good deeds” today in the Prayer Guide. God loves them, and none more than deeds of rescue. We’re all washed and members of his Coast Guard. So, let’s be ready to change the rudder, head in a new direction, zero in on those whose heads are bobbing up and down in the water wherever we encounter them (like the deli counter at Lucky). Intercessory prayer is also righteous deed, so let’s do it, praying for as many names and needs as come to mind.

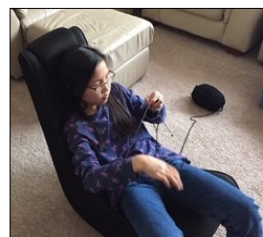
**BETWEEN 5:00 PM-10:00 PM:** *[Committing our teenagers to our Heavenly Father.]*



Let’s lift up our Valley Church teenagers, like Antonio and Angelina Cuan. If you come to second service, you’ve seen Antonio Cuan behind the drum cage laying down the groove for the worship band. Notice, no drum sticks. Here his hands are occupied in a different way. He’s doing community service. (Antonio, don’t pick up anything sharp! Pastor Daniel needs you.)

Angelina’s hands are also in motion. She knits. She made this rose for her aunt before she recently passed away from pancreatic cancer. You might know that our church

family lost **Elaine Nelson** this week. She was a force of service and shepherding. She cared mightily for church family. She got people to participate in church life in many different ways.



Now she can rest in the Lord’s presence until she gets serving again in an indestructible body in the resurrection world (“*And after my skin has been thus destroyed, yet in my flesh I shall see God*” — Job 19:26).