

Why Being Rescued Is Not Easy

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 04 September 2022

Preacher: Nick Louw

[0 : 0 0] Well, there's a principle in life that I think you'll identify with. It's a principle that's true in a lot of contexts. And the principle is this. If you want something to get better, sometimes it needs to get worse first.

Am I right? Have you experienced that? I've just experienced it recently going to the dentist. I've spent far too much time in the dentist's chair over the last few weeks. And I've learned that principle again.

That, you know, I had some problems in my teeth. And for my teeth to get fixed, I needed to be made more uncomfortable for a while. For the problems to get resolved. And it's true in many forms of life.

Whether it's the dentist or some problem we have, some medical issue we've got. Often it needs to become worse before it becomes better. That principle, however, is also true of God.

And when it comes to God fixing us. And God coming into someone's situation to fix it, often it makes it more uncomfortable, not less.

[1 : 0 3] And that is part of the process. It was certainly true, as we see today, for the Israelites in Egypt. Who had cried out to God for rescue. They were in a terrible situation.

They were slaves to the Egyptian overlords. And they had cried out to God. And they were wondering if God is going to care or going to listen. And we've learned so far in Exodus that he did hear them.

And he did listen. Because of his covenant that he had made with their forefather Abraham. All those centuries before. And he listened to them. And he acted. And we've seen how so far he has answered them.

He has called Moses as a rescuer. He's got a plan. And he's starting to put it into action. But it's here in chapter 5, before we realize what he's going to do.

And before we read about his plan coming to fruition. It's here in chapter 5 that we learn that being rescued isn't going to be comfortable for the Israelites. And that principle is the same today as it was then.

[2 : 0 2] Because the truth is, if you don't know yet, one of the main things the Bible convinces us of is that we all need rescue. We are all in a situation where we need God to intervene and rescue us.

Because we are all slaves to sin. By nature. We are slaves to sin and its power over us and its eternal consequences. And the reason Jesus came was to rescue us from our sin.

To rescue us from that slavery. And when he died on the cross to make it possible for our sins to be atoned for. So that we could come back in relationship with God. And when he rose again to give us the power to live a new life.

And ourselves one day to rise in his restored creation. He came and he did everything we need to rescue us from that problem. We know deep down inside we all need rescuing from.

But what we need to realize is that being rescued by Jesus is no walk in the park. It's not always comfortable. And it's in today's story that we learn why.

[3 : 10] Some of the main reasons that being rescued for God's people in every age is not comfortable. And the first reason I want us to see from Exodus chapter 5 is that rescue always in one way or another confronts authority.

Rescue confronts authority. And we see that in this story, don't we? Pharaoh did not take it well when God intervened in his country to save the Israelites.

He didn't say to Moses, Oh, your God's going to rescue you? Oh, great. Great news. Good to hear. Good for you guys. I hope it goes well. That wasn't Pharaoh's reaction, was it? No.

Pharaoh didn't take well to God acting to rescue you because it confronted his authority. Look at verse 1 and 2 of chapter 5. Later Moses and Aaron went in and said to Pharaoh, This is what the Lord, the God of Israel says, Let my people go so that they may hold a festival for me in the wilderness.

But Pharaoh responded, Who is the Lord that I should obey him by letting Israel go?

[4 : 22] I don't know the Lord. And besides, I will not let Israel go. In other words, Who are you to tell me what to do? I'm the boss around here.

I'm in charge. This is Egypt, if you didn't notice. And I'm the Pharaoh. Nobody tells me what to do. And that was true. Nobody told the Pharaoh of Egypt what to do. You see, even more so than our leaders today, He ruled supremely over Egypt.

And Egypt was the superpower of the world then. And He had supreme authority on the level of the gods. He was seen and worshipped as a god. He possessed the authority of the gods.

So literally no one, not even a lesser god, could tell Pharaoh what to do. Let alone the god of these slaves. And so that's his reaction.

No. You can't tell me what to do. But that is exactly what God of the Israelites, Who later, of course, turns out to be the God of creation, And the God of all supreme authority.

[5 : 27] And yet He did. He needed, as we'll see in the chapters to come, He needed to be convinced that that was the God He was dealing with. But God knew what He was doing, And He knew that it would confront Pharaoh's authority.

Pharaoh says, No one can tell me what to do, But that's exactly what God was doing. And so hostility, now in this story, is inevitable. It's going to happen. Hostility is inevitable.

It's like picking a fight with Ibn Ezebeth. You know hostility is inevitable. God knew that this would cause trouble.

And He had warned Moses of this just a few chapters before. You'll remember from chapter 3, verse 19, He said, However, I know that the king of Egypt will not allow you to go, Even under force from a strong hand.

Because it's a clash of authority. God knew. When He intervenes in the situation of the Israelites to save them, It's going to cause trouble because it's a clash of authority. But you see, whenever God rescues, in any age, It's a confrontation of authority.

[6 : 36] It's a clash of authority. It was true then, and it's true today. The news of Jesus Christ, Who is the only means of rescue from sin, Is great news.

It's good news. And yet so many people don't like it, Because it is not just news about how we are saved. It is news about who's in charge. It is a claim of authority.

The news of Jesus Christ is a claim of authority. Because you can't be saved by Jesus as Savior, If you don't also listen to Him as Lord. Just as much as you can't be saved out at sea, By a lifeguard, If you don't listen to what that lifeguard says, right?

The lifeguard swims towards you, And you're floating around in the ocean, And you need help, And the lifeguard says, Okay, now I need you to listen carefully. Grab on to this thing, And then you go, No, no, no, no. I'm going to do what I want.

You don't do that when you're being rescued, right? And yet we think we can do that when we're being rescued by Jesus. We think we can go, Oh, yeah, Jesus says that. I'm going to do what I want. It doesn't work that way.

[7 : 38] You know, If you think that in any way you can benefit From the amazing things Jesus did to save you, But if you think you can benefit from that, If you're not willing to also submit to His authority, Then you're wrong.

And that is the reason the gospel is uncomfortable. That is the reason, Even though it is the best news the world has ever heard, You've got so many people who don't like hearing it. Because it's a claim of authority.

But also, That is the reason society gives Christians, Those who have submitted to that authority, Such a hard time. Have you ever wondered why Christianity Is the most persecuted religion In history, In the world, Even today?

And it is statistically, Historically, Christianity Is by far the most persecuted religion in the world. Have you ever wondered that? It's not necessarily that Christians are that irritating, Or that they do bad things.

The reason why Christianity Is the most persecuted religion in the world, Is because Christians submit to another authority, Which is not the world's. And we see that in the story of Acts.

[8 : 53] So the book of Acts is the record Of the growth of the early church In the first century, After Jesus Died, rose, and ascended. And in Acts, We read of the Christians Doing awesome things for their neighbors And yet still being persecuted for it.

And some of them are taken to court In Acts chapter 7, Sorry, Acts chapter 17. And the charge that is laid against them, Revealing to us why people Didn't like the Christians, And still don't, Is in verse 7 of Acts 17.

And this is it. This is the charge in court That's laid against the Christians. They are all acting contrary To Caesar's decrees Saying that there is another king, Jesus. That's why they didn't like the Christians.

Because they were submitting To another authority. And every century since then, The problem people have with Christians At its heart, Is that they don't align With society's narrative of the day, Whatever that is.

They align with God's narrative. And society doesn't like that. Whether it was the society Of Egypt, Not aligning with Pharaoh, Whether it was the society Of the first century, Not aligning with Caesar, Or whether it's the society Of 2022, Not aligning with The sexual liberation agenda.

[10 : 20] Today. Because Christians Irritatingly uphold God's design for sex. And nobody likes that Because you're not aligning With the agenda. You're not listening To the narrative. But Christians never do Because they align To one agenda.

God's agenda. And that, Ever since Egypt, Is a major reason Why being saved Is uncomfortable. Why it will always cause A clash Of authorities.

That's why Jesus says That his coming, These are his words, Will not bring peace, But a sword. What he meant by that Is even though He has come to do Amazing things, Save people from their sins, Bring them back Into relationship with God, It's going to bring a sword.

It's going to bring hostility Because he knew It would be a clash Of authority And it's going to cause Relationship problems. It's going to cause Family problems. Between those who follow Jesus And those who don't. And so don't be surprised If you're a Christian, If you face hostility For being a Christian, It's inevitable.

Because being saved Means being under God's authority. And the world Doesn't like that Any more than Pharaoh liked it In Exodus. And that's why As we read the story Further, He went on To make life Very difficult For the Israelites.

[11 : 43] Did you see that? He, They were already slaves, So life wasn't Peachy Already But the one thing They had Was straw They didn't have much else But they had straw Which helped them To make their bricks So back in those days You needed straw For a chemical reaction And a binding agent To make bricks To do their work Otherwise, You know, They'd get whipped for it So Pharaoh, What does he do?

He takes their straw away And says, See how you do now. See, He's punishing them For thinking That they can be rescued From him But then as we read on In the story We see their reaction The Israelites themselves The foremen Who were Israelites We see how they reacted And there we learn Another reason That being saved Will not be easy Not just because The world from outside Will push against us But because Those being rescued Often push against Their own rescuer People resist Their own rescuer For various reasons We see that in the story I don't know if you know But lifeguards When they're trained To rescue people In the ocean Are trained To expect Sometimes The people they're rescuing To resist them When they're flailing Around the ocean And panicking Sometimes the people Being rescued Will actually Endanger the lifeguard Trying to rescue them They'll push against him

And so the lifeguards Have to be trained To expect People to fight Against them Well Moses wasn't Expecting that But that's exactly What happened Here in this story Have a look From verse 19 The Israelite foremen Saw that they were In trouble When they were told You cannot reduce Your daily quota Of bricks When they left Pharaoh They confronted Moses and Aaron Who stood waiting To meet them May the Lord Take note of you And judge They said to them Because you have Made us wreak To Pharaoh And his officials Putting a sword In their hand To kill us Okay so here The Israelites themselves See what they're doing They're fighting Against their own rescuer The one God Has appointed To work through To rescue them Out of Egypt They are now Fighting against The very one God has sent To rescue Because they didn't Expect it to be So hard To be rescued And of course That's exactly

What Pharaoh Wanted Isn't it He wanted To set The Israelites Against each other We see this In verse 9 Just read earlier Verse 9 Pharaoh is explaining To his henchmen What his plan is To make life More difficult For the Israelites And he says In verse 9 Impose heavier work On the men Then they will Be occupied With it And not Pay attention To deceptive Words He didn't Want them To listen To Moses He knew That was dangerous He knew If they listened To Moses And his words Of liberation And rescue Then he'd be In trouble And so he gave Them more work To distract them From Moses Words And therefore From God's Words To distract them From their own Rescue And he'd Made life More difficult For them So that they'd Resist To their own Rescuer And that is The very same Thing we are All at risk Of today Especially in Our frenetic

Demanding world We are also At risk Of being Distracted From our own Rescue Because of All the Difficulties Of life Listen to How Jesus Puts it Again in Matthew 13 That Dylan Read for us Earlier Jesus is here Explaining the Parable of the Sower One of his Most famous Parables Of how Different people Respond To God's Word When they Hear it And then he Talks about Different seeds As illustrations And then Listen to in His explanation What he says In Matthew 13 From verse 20 And the One And the One sown on And the One One And the One He has No root And is Short lived When distress Or persecution Comes Because of the Word Immediately He falls Away Because of the Word Trouble Because of the Word So when Trouble Comes The trouble That comes With being Rescued That is one

[16:07] Of the Things that Makes people Go oh No I Didn't Expect that That's not For me Thank you Very much And they Push against The rescuer But also That's not The only Reason The next Verse He says Now the One sown Among the Thorns This is the One who Hears the Word But The worries Of this Age And the Deceitfulness Of wealth Choke the Word And it Becomes Unfruitful In other Words The distractions That the World Distracts Us With Whether it's The negative The worries Of life Or the Stress Or the Demands Or positive What the World can Give us The wealth The pleasures Of the World Whatever it Is there's Distractions All around That Jesus Says that Also make Us push Against the Rescue We need To be Rescued God has Done everything To rescue Us and yet So few People Come and Embrace that Rescue Because of All the Distractions And because Of all the Trouble that

That might Bring into Their life I can't Come to Church I'm too Busy I've got Really important Things to Do I've got More important Things to Focus on Than being In church On a Sunday Morning Really More Important Things Than being Saved From your Sin Against your Creator And its Eternal Consequences Do you Have more Important Things than That There's Nothing More Important Than being Rescued From sin And death And that's Why we Can't allow Ourselves to Be distracted You mustn't Fall for the Enemies tactics To keep you Away from God's word Even if Listening to It and Submitting to It is Going to be Difficult Because it's Not easy To be Saved It's not Easy to Be rescued That's what We learn In this Chapter It costs

To come Under the Authority Of Christ It is a Cost To come Into God's People And come Under the Authority Of Christ For little Joshua too It's going To cost him To be Part of God's People Joshua is Also going To have to Go to the Dentist One day And he's Going to Cry Do you Remember your First trip To the Dentist I don't Have great Memories Of it And he's Going to Cry and He's Going to Wonder why His parents Have allowed Him to be Put through Such torment Such discomfort Just as we Wonder of God Don't we And he's Going to Have to Learn that Principle of Life That for Things to Get better Often they Need to get More uncomfortable First And that is Something we All need to Realize about Following Christ So that when Trouble comes We will Also do What I Prayed for Little Joshua Earlier Not be Ashamed To confess The faith

Of Christ Crucified And to Fight Bravely Under his Name Against Sin The world And the Devil And to Continue Christ's Faithful Soldiers And servants To our Life's End Will you Do that Come What May Let's Pray Yes Lord We thank You for Inspiring This Chapter to Be written And preserved For us So that we Could be Warned Of the Trouble That comes With being Rescued But Lord We thank You that You have Provided a Rescue In the Lord Jesus Christ A rescue From Slavery To sin That you Have provided A way for Our sins To be Atoned For For us To come Back into Relationship With you And to Have the Hope of Resurrection Eternal Life But Lord Help us To realize That being Part of Your people Is Not a Walk in The park It's Not always Easy Help us

Not to Be Distracted By what The world Offers us Or the Troubles The world Throws in Our path But help Us always To continue As Christ's Faithful Soldiers Till the End In Jesus Name Amen