

A Faint Call Over the Water



The land in the extreme northwest corner of the continental United States exists almost in the same condition it did long ago. Tall evergreens reach hundreds of feet upwards. Bear, cougar, and elk make their homes there. Pacific rollers, after traversing the largest ocean in the world crash onto the beaches and rocky cliffs of the coast. No roads extend to much of this remote area.

On one morning of August, 2002 a fog had settled over the region. Two sport-fishermen had put their 19-foot boat in at Neah Bay, a small Indian fishing village on the Strait of Juan De Fuca. They motored through the Strait and rounded Cape Flattery, entering the Pacific Ocean. While they were passing between the Cape and Tatoosh Island, a freak accident happened. The bow of the boat was cutting neatly through the waves when all of a sudden out of the fog a 'rogue' wave several times bigger than normal struck the boat.

The wave's crest curled over and crashed down upon the bow of the boat. The force of the impact slammed the bow down and the aft of the boat was lifted sharply out of the water. The fisherman in the front was tossed out of the craft while the man in the rear of the boat only stayed in the boat by clinging to the rails. The boat was swamped with water. The man who stayed in the boat had the presence of mind to throw a boat cushion to his friend in the water. He then found a buoy for himself before the boat sunk.

Neither of the men wore life jackets. The water is so intensely cold in this part of the world that in only minutes hypothermia can rob a person of the use of their arms and feet. The fog, although beginning to thin, made it unlikely that they would be spotted. The current was carrying the two men further apart. They were in trouble indeed.

Glen Phillips, a retired gentleman, and his partner had just arrived to fish this area. He was getting his equipment ready when he heard a faint sound over the water. Listening closely he thought it might be a call for help. He asked his partner to listen also. This man thought it was only some distant seals barking. This didn't satisfy Glen. He started his engines and motored in the direction he thought the sound was coming from. He motored about four hundred yards and stopped the engines and listened. This time the cry for help was heard distinctly and they were able to locate the man clinging to a buoy. They hauled him into the boat where he collapsed. He only had enough strength to mumble 'my friend' and point in the general direction of his friend. Glen understood by this that someone else was in the water and searched until they found him too. When they rescued this man he was in worse shape than the first. The two were saved by the narrowest of margins. Only a few more minutes in the water, they would have perished.

'Help,' came the call over the water and Mr. Phillips heard it. There is one who hears every call for help no matter how faint the call. He never fails to respond and this one who always hears is God. Have you called on him? You ought to. He made you and knows all about you. In fact he knows you better than you know yourself. He knows what will make you truly happy as well as any pain or sorrow that you feel. Not only does he know you, he loves you. Because he loves you he sent his Son to Calvary's cross. It was there that Jesus, the one dearest to God's heart, suffered, as none ever will. 'Christ also hath once suffered the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God.' (1Pet.3.18).

Because of their sins, men need to call on him. They are in danger of perishing. God is holy, just, and good, but the human race comes up short in all these things. 'God is light,' declares the Bible, while it also says of men 'They have loved darkness.' Because they love darkness, they will be consigned a lost eternity of darkness, as a fit and just punishment for their sins. This is why it is so important for men to call on God. 'Whosoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved.' (Rom. 10.13.)

Don't let the fog of unbelief keep you from calling on the Lord for salvation. Thousand upon thousands have already called on him. He has heard each one and never refused any. Don't be left behind but call on Lord and receive the salvation he offers today.

That if you confess with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Romans 10:9 (NIV)