

# So Do Not Fear

by Alistair Begg

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*God's presence and power are our anchor in times of chaos and uncertainty, and we can distinguish ourselves from the world by recognizing our identity as children of Abraham, chosen by God for his love and purpose.*

**Duration:** 43:41

**Scripture:** Psalm 23:4, Isaiah 41:10, Jeremiah 29:11, Matthew 6:33, John 14:27, Romans 8:28, Philippians 4:13

**Topics:** "Fear"

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## Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes that believers should not hide or be silent in the midst of chaos. Instead, they should proclaim the good news of God's grace to their friends and neighbors who are living in chaos. The speaker encourages believers to acknowledge their own weakness and rely on the power of God to transform their lives. The sermon also highlights the uselessness of idols and the plight of the pagan world. The speaker reminds believers that God is in control of every event and ruler in human history.

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## Transcript

Now I invite you to take your Bibles and turn again to Isaiah chapter 41. Before we turn to the Word of the Lord, let's turn to the Lord of the Word and ask him for his help. Father, we pray, make the Book live to me, O Lord.

Show me yourself within your Word. Show me myself, and show me my Savior, and make the Book live to me. Amen.

My text this morning is the tenth verse of Isaiah 41. So do not fear, for I am with you. Do not be dismayed, for I am your God.

I will strengthen you and help you. I will uphold you with my righteous right hand. One of the most familiar of the verses in the Old Testament to any who are familiar with the Old Testament at all.

On account of that, it is a well-loved verse, and it is also potentially a dangerous verse in this respect. But while it is always possible for us to take a verse and enjoy its immediate benefit because we understand the essential truth it contains, it is also possible for us to wrest it from its context in such a way that whatever benefit we do gain is mitigated by our lack of understanding of where the verse comes, in what context it comes, to whom it was spoken, and why, in that historic context, it was given at all. And I think

you know, because of the way in which we go through the Bible, verse by verse and book by book, that we're seeking to encourage one another to become students of the Bible--not in a way that treats the Bible as a kind of promise book, whereby you just let it fall open wherever you choose and stick a pin in and determine that that's your verse for the day--certainly, God is able to overrule even that kind of thing--but that rather, we would be encouraging one another to read the Bible and to understand the context in which it was set.

That's why you always read a verse within the context of the surrounding verses, the surrounding verses within the context of the chapter, the chapter within the context of the wider chapter, the chapters within the context of the book, within the genre, and so on. These things are not irrelevant. They are important.

And especially when you come to a verse that you can find stamped on all manner of material--pieces of leather, pieces of carpet, pieces of wood, Bibles, and everything else--whenever you come to one of those verses, and Isaiah 41.10 is one of those verses, it is a good idea to go back to find it in its context and try and understand what is being said. Because you will notice that the verse begins with the word so. And the so is there because what is being said in what follows is in light of what precedes it.

Well, if we do not know what precedes it and why it precedes it, then the so is irrelevant, because it bears no bridgehead for us in the progression of our thinking. And so, what I want to do is to set the verse briefly in its context and then have it reinforced for us again in our lives this morning. "Be silent,' says the prophet of God, before me, you islands, and let the nations renew their strength." What you have here is a call to the Gentile world to share in the blessings of the God of Israel.

The word goes out through the world, and instead of responding to that wonderful word of invitation, we discover that the nations, the islands, flee to the apparent security of idolatry. God issues this wonderful invitation, and they run away and divorce themselves from the true and living God, and they take to themselves idols. And what you have in these opening verses, indeed throughout this whole section, is an indication of what we might refer to as the heart of world history.

If you like history at all, as I do, then you will enjoy reading about the great movements of time, the turntable events of history as they've been chronicled for us, the rise and fall of empires, battles, and so on. And all of these are of import. But when the believer reads of the movements of men and women, of the turning of world events, the believer learns to read those secular records in light of what he knows or she knows to be true in the divine record.

Because absent the worldview which is provided for us in the Scriptures, we are then left with the forlorn idea that somehow or another the events of our days--past, present, and future--are being determined as a result of simply human ingenuity and the results of men's desires and plans and initiatives. And when we read our Bibles correctly, we discover that the heart of world history is grounded in the character and purpose of God--that the Lord is the initiator, that he purposes and he achieves what he purposes, and everything that he pursues is in accord with his righteous nature and his righteous policies. That's the significance of verse 2, when he talks about handing nations over to this one who has risen in the east, and the subduing of kings, and turning them to dust.

All of this, incidentally, is leading us forward till it finally forms itself in the servant of the songs, the Lord Jesus Christ. When you turn over to page 42, you have the first of the servant songs, Here is my servant whom I uphold, my chosen one in whom I delight, speaking of one who is mysterious even to Isaiah, one of whom the prophet spoke without yet fully understanding of whom he spoke, but he recognized that he

was receiving revelation from God and passing it on, and that the stage of world history was moving towards a great and pivotal and cataclysmic event, in the coming of this one who would not bruise the broken reed and who would not snuff out the smoking flax. And when, unto the stage of world history, comes the Lord Jesus Christ, God incarnate, the angels sing and the shepherds worship, and the earth shifts, and in his death the earth moves, and there is darkness over the face of the earth, and in his ascension history moves on, waiting now for the great cataclysmic event of the return of Christ Lord and Savior from the heavens for those who are his own.

And that is why, when we read of what is happening in this city or that city or with this nation or that, we recognize that it is all happening under the orb of a God who is sovereign over the affairs of all of time. And this God has spoken out into his world, and he has called the islands, and he has called the peoples, and he calls the nations to come and reason together with him. But, as you will see from what we read, having been called collectively and individually to come to him, these islands, these peoples have chosen to run collectively to the making of idols.

And they encourage one another in their produce. In verse 7, these idols are the product of human skill. And the craftsman encourages the goldsmith, who in turn encourages the one who smooths with the hammer, who in turn spurs on him who strikes the anvil.

And they finally look at the welding and say, It is good, and then the creator of it nails down this little effigy to make sure that it won't topple and that the people who buy it and worship before it will not be disappointed. Why would they turn away from the voice of God to such stupidity? Why ever? And yet they do. It's not simply they did.

It is they do. And these idols are not simply the product of human skill, they are the product of human fear. The islands have seen it, it says in verse 5, and they fear, and the ends of the earth tremble, and they approach and they come forward.

They know they don't have the answers. They know that there is something more. They know that there is something in the call which is wrung out, but it is only done enough to stir them to fearfulness.

And their response to fear is to set up idols for themselves as a kind of defense mechanism against life's challenges. And everywhere we go, we see the same. And there will be some who have come to worship this morning, and your interest in religion is nothing other than an idol, and you have set it up, and it falls over, and you reset it, and it falls over.

You have begun to amass tapes and books and an interest in spirituality, but it remains an idol to you. At your very best, it affords you nothing in terms of peace, nothing in terms of forgiveness, nothing in terms of a future. And you wonder at this, and the more you fear and the more you tremble, the more you return to it.

But it's superstition. It's as superstitious as the burning of the apples and the oranges in the taffeta paper that is taking place right now in the city of Hong Kong. Oh, that may have to do with Confucius, it may have to do with Buddhism, it may have to do with Taoism.

But the fact of the matter is that when men and women tremble because of fear and when they know that all is not well with their souls, their natural inclination is not to run to God. It is to make gods for themselves. And that is why there is such a proliferation of interest at this point at the end of the twentieth

century in Western culture--why there is such an amassing of spiritual trinkets and gizmos.

Every place you go and every high street of significance is marked by all these things. And God says to the islands and the peoples, Be silent! And they tremble, and they turn from him, and they turn to the matters of their own creation. Eighty-six-proof anesthetic crutches prop them to the top, where the smiles are all synthetic and the ulcers never stop.

They bury themselves in the internet. They bury themselves in possessions. They bury themselves in intellect.

They bury themselves in building their bodies. And the prophet pursues them through the corridor of time and says, Let not the wise man boast in his wisdom, it's an idol that'll fall over. Let not the strong man boast in his strength, you will be reduced to nothing, it will fall over.

Let not the rich man boast in his riches, because you won't take them with you in your coffin. But let him who boasts boast in this, that he knows me, the living God. That's why I say to you, loved ones, that what you have here is a great expression of the heart of world history--men and women, in verse 6, turning to each other and helping each other.

It's not that they're unhelpful to each other. Pagans are often very helpful to one another. In fact, they will often tell you that in the pub or down the street or in their club they found themselves helped to a far greater degree than when they got amongst these smug Christians, who didn't seem to be so helpful at all.

They remember the days when they ran with a different crowd, who seemed to really cry when they cried, who seemed to really care when they cared, who seemed to really say, "Atta boy!" when they did well. And it's a strange thing for them to have come amongst this group with this great code of behavior and to find the behavior so subsequent to the code. Oh, it's not that they're unhelpful people.

I have many pagan friends, many unbelieving friends, and I know they help each other.' And they say to each other in verse 6, "Be strong! Be strong!" Of course, they can't be strong. But they think that in the besaying of it they might be able to conjure it up. Don't worry, be happy." Australia, everywhere you go, they say, "Now worries, mate.

Now worries.' The fact is, life is full of worries. But they always say to the islands, "Oh, no problem, man. No problem, man.

They're no problem, man." The place is full of problems. Their lives are full of problems. They help one another.

They say to one another, "Now worries, mate. No problem, man. Be strong.

Have a good day. Everything's fine." Turn the stereo up. Do something.

Drop out. Make your existence work. That is the world.

That is our culture. It is total futility. He nails down the idol so that it will not topple.

Look at the final verses of chapter 41. I look, but there is no one, no one among them to give counsel, no one to give an answer when I ask them. See, they are all false.

Their deeds amount to nothing. Their images are but wind and confusion. What a sorry picture of the pitiable plight of our culture! He says they need a voice from outside, but the voice that I have sent from outside they will not listen to.

They need a power beyond themselves, but the power that I have provided they will not acknowledge their need of. And the people bowed and prayed to the neon god they'd made. And the sign flashed out its warning in the words that it was forming.

And the sign said, The words of the prophets are written on the subway walls and the tenement halls, and are whispered in the sounds of silence. And God says, Be silent, ye islands! Listen to me, ye peoples! Come to me, ye ends of the earth! Come, let us reason together, says the Lord. And without a sure voice they turn to idols that cannot speak, and they live in chaos.

Now, that is the chaos that is described there in verses 1-7. It's a chaos that is exemplified by the uselessness of other gods, and it shows to us the plight of our pagan world today. Now, it's within the framework of that chaos that the believer expresses their confidence.

And that's why in verse 8 you have this statement, But you, O Israel, my servant. In other words, he says, Now I want to distinguish between the description that I have just given and those who are my own. And the one who speaks, remember, is the ruler of the world.

Every event, every actor on the stage of human history has been initiated and controlled by his bidding. If you doubt that, you turn to verse 23 of the previous chapter, and you read that he brings princes to nothing. He reduces the rulers of the world to nothing.

No sooner are they planted, no sooner are they sown, no sooner do they take root in the ground than he blows on them, and they wither, and a whirlwind sweeps them away like chaff. In the course of my travels in these days, I went by the little white house of Harry Truman on Key West, and all they could tell me about him as I drove around was how much he liked to booze it up with the guys down on the Air Force base, and how he concealed the tabletop with another tabletop so that his wife, when she came down to the Air Force base, she wouldn't see what happened when he went to the Air Force base on his own. See how the rulers of the world come to nothing.

And to the home of Ernest Hemingway, for whom the bell most tragically tolled, when despite all of his God-given ability with a pen, despite all of the accolades that followed him, despite the four marriages and all of his chaos, he takes a shotgun and blows his head to bits in the large foyer in his southwestern mansion. I am amazed at the privilege of having my eyes open to the truth of God's Word. I do not know what it is like to waken up to a lousy, rainy Sunday morning and to have nothing to look forward to, save the newspaper and all its futility, a bite of lunch, a snooze, a remote-control button for the TV, a tumble-down sleep as I bash my pillow and agonize my way to another Monday morning, to go and fasten my idol with another little rivet to prevent it from toppling.

This is no time for the believers to run into caves and hide. This is no time for those who know the good news to go around with a frown on their faces. This is no time for those who have begun to understand the Bible and God's grace and all of its wonder and of its truth to be silent.

It is a day of good news, and we dare not hold our peace, because our friends and our neighbors around us are living in this chaos. That is where they live. They are without God and without hope in the world.

And some of you may be here this morning, and you're saying, What right is he to say that of me? My dear friend, it is the Bible that describes you, and your experience confirms it. Unless there has come to your life this great distinction that is there in verse 8, whereby we are described as the children of Abraham. Oh, he says, Israel, my servant Jacob, whom I have chosen, you descendants of Abraham, my friend.

I loved when I found children years ago, and I was singing that song. I had no clue why they did the actions they did, but, Father Abraham, as many sons, whatever they did, many sons as Father Abraham, I am one of them, so are you. So let's just praise the Lord.

Two, three, four, da-da-da-da-da, Father Abraham. And I said, This is a good song! I like this song! You can tell how much I like it, because I am a child of Abraham. I want to tell my Jewish friends that.

I want the opportunity to tell them, Listen, I'm one of Abraham's boys. They say, No, you can't possibly be. Yes, I say, I have it on the strongest authority.

Yes, I am. I am a child of Abraham. I want you to know that.

Galatians chapter 3, consider Abraham. He believed God, verse 6. It was credited to him as righteousness. Okay.

Verse 7. Understand, then, that those who believe are children of Abraham. Those who believe are the children of Abraham. The thing about being Abraham's child was not the mark of circumcision.

It was the circumcision of the human heart. That's why the prophet Jeremiah says, I'm going to come, and I'm going to create in you a new heart and a clean heart. And he chided those who were merely Jews outwardly, who had all of the rigmarole, but none of the reality, in the same way as religious people all around us find themselves in the same predicament.

But he is not speaking to the mere formalist here in verse 8. He is speaking about the wonder of his divine choice. But you, O Israel, my servant, whom I have chosen. You go back, and for your homework, read Genesis 17 and the call of Abraham.

And read the explanation of the call of God's people in Deuteronomy 7. See, I have not chosen you because you were greater or larger than any of the other peoples, he says, but I have chosen you because I loved you. And on what was the basis of the love? Because he found them attractive? No. Because he loved them.

You say, I don't understand that. I only know somehow or another to love in response to that which I see to be attractive. I have no ability to simply and purely initiate love in and of myself.

That's correct. We love because he first loved us. Now, I want to say to you this morning, dear friend, that if you are in Christ, these are the things that you need to anchor around you in your days.

As you face the chaos and the confusion, as you bump into the idols and as you trip over them, and frankly, as we are tempted to go chasing down after them, or to erect them in our own homes, or to try as the Jewish people did of old--and that is, have a little paganism and a little worship of God, and somehow to keep the Asherah pole and yet our family altar--here's what's true of you. I have chosen you, he says. Look at these wonderful verbs in verse 9. I took you from the ends of the earth.

I took you from the ends of the earth. Abraham, in Ur of the Chaldees. Here, come here.

Jacob in Egypt. Jacob, we're leaving. Corrie ten Boom in Holland.

Corrie, I love you. Jim Elliott in the Midwest. Jim! Elizabeth! Mary! Kevin! Tom! Alice! I called you! Is this not amazing? Amazing love! How can it be that thou, my God, would die for me, when I'm tempted to think that my existence has somehow or another to do with what I am, or what I've achieved, or where I've been, or where I'm going, or how much I've made, or haven't made, or any of the rest of it? These are irrelevancies! Here is the great truth.

O my servant, whom I have chosen, I took you from the ends of the earth. I spoke with a young lady in between the services here this morning, and in the course of the conversation. She previously, with her husband, was here when he was a surgeon at the Cleveland Clinic.

And she said, you know, the amazing thing--she said to Sue and I--the amazing thing is this, that both this man and I came to this place unbelieving and unknowing of Christ or of one another. And God, as it were, called to us from the ends of the earth, and he called us to himself, and he called us together. God does that.

My life is not haphazard. In all the chaos that I create, still he says, I took you, I called you, I said of you, you're my servant. I've chosen you, and I have not rejected you.

My belief, my involvement in God, my being laid hold of is not as a result of my wishful thinking or well-founded human opinion. No, he says, I have chosen you, and I have not rejected you. Oh, there's the great line, is it not? I have chosen you, and I have not rejected you.

You know the old line, have you ever considered divorce? No, I've never considered divorce, but I have considered murder. Because the longer you live your life, you look at one another and you say, you know, it is a wonderful thing that we have chosen one another, and it is an equal wonder that we have not rejected one another. Why? Because we give to one another the grounds for such rejection, do we not? By our selfishness and by our pride, by our ugliness and by our disappointing behavior.

And many a spouse has had to take all of that before the throne of God and say, No, I have chosen him, and I have not, and I will not reject him. And in doing so has aped the very character of God. Have you not given God grounds to reject you? If somehow or another his covenant was a trivial thing, that one day you could be in and the next day you could be out, which of us would be in for more than twenty-four hours at a shot? Not many of us.

We'd be bouncing in and bouncing out. We'd be all over the place. But here's the wonder.

I took you. I called you. I said of you, I have chosen you.

And then--and only then--do you come to the tenth verse. We say, The sermon's just starting. No.

But I can do that if you want. But the fact is, only now do you come to the verse, because now the soul makes sense. So do not fear.

You see, this is the antidote to fear and anxiety. It's not a little mantra that you say to yourself, So do not fear and do not be dismayed, da-da-da-da-da--stuff like that. That's paganism! I am freed! I am fearful! I am dismayed! I am discouraged! I am frustrated! I am anxious! I don't know what to do! I called you.

I chose you. I love you. I have not rejected you.

Yeah, that's true. Now let me give that to you again. And then again he comes to reinforce it, and again to reinforce it, to give substance to the exhortation.

There's always grace before obedience. It's always grace before experience. These sermons that simply go, So don't be afraid, so don't worry, so don't, so don't, so do, so do, so do, and it calls to obedience, calls to experience.

And people say, How in the world do you ever do this stuff? So always grace, then obedience. So always grace, and then application. Because I have said all of these things to you, he says, Now I don't want you going around worrying.

I know you worry. I don't want you going around dismayed. I know you are dismayed.

But I want you to focus on this. I am with you, and I am your God. I am the God whose truth does not change.

The grass withers, the flowers fall, the word of God stands forever. I am the God whose purposes don't change. Ephesians 1.11, he is working everything out according to the purpose of his will.

I am the God whose Son does not change. He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. Hebrews 13.8, and so on.

And I, this unchanging God, am the one who is with you. I'm with you. I know people make fun of some of these old songs, and sometimes I do myself, but there is a great truth in the lyric, I come to the garden alone while the dew is still on the roses.

The voice I hear falling on my ear, the Son of God discloses, and he walks with me, and he talks with me, and he tells me that I am his own. Do you know that experience? Oh, I don't mean that you hear voices in your head--most of them you ought not to listen to, ninety-nine percent of them. But I mean, do you have that sense of the Spirit of God bringing a word of God home to you and saying, You know what? That is for you.

Do you know what, loved one? That is true of you. Do you know what? That's what I've been saying to you. I know that you're going through it.

I know that you feel yourself to be impoverished. I know sometimes that you can't go on, but I am with you, and I told you I love you, I chose you, and I haven't rejected you. I'm here with you.

Three times my children have gone under anesthetic--actually, more times than that, but three that I've been there. And on two out of the three occasions, I have gone into the operating room to hold their hands while they went under. The fact is, I needed Sue to hold my hand while I held their hand, but that's a different discussion.

But it meant something to them to know that I just held them by their hands. And as they drifted off into semi-consciousness, they did so in the awareness that although somehow or another, as they went into this darkening tunnel, they knew that their Father was with them. Now, the promise that he gives of divine help--he just heaps three phrases on each other, let me mention them, and I'm through.

He says, I don't want you to fear because I'm with you. I don't want you to be dismayed, for I'm your God. And we've seen the confidence that is found in contrast to the chaos that's around.

He says, I will strengthen you. I will strengthen you. Verse 29 of the previous chapter, he gives strength to the weary.

He increases the power of the weak. That's why tough guys seldom know much of God. People who are very confident in their own abilities, confident in what they've done, what they've achieved, what they've built, what they've made, what they've earned--it's easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for such individuals to enter the kingdom of heaven.

Why? Because before you discover God's power and strength in all of its fullness, you're brought face to face with your own total abject poverty and weakness. When Paul faced up to this in 2 Corinthians 12, he tells, quite honestly, that he had some predicament that he asked the Lord to free him up from. He'd asked him on three separate occasions, and three times he'd heard as a no, no for an answer.

And that's hard, and we go through things in our lives, and we find that, again, the answer comes back, and it is one that we do not want. And it crushes us, and it reduces us, and it breaks us. And God says to us, as he said to Paul, My grace is sufficient for you, for my strength is made perfect in weakness.

Paul then does the logic on it, and he says, Okay, given that, I will therefore glory in my weakness, for when I am at my weakest, God is at his strongest. You spend all your life trying to be strong. I've got to be strong for this person.

I've got to be strong for that person. I've got to hold it together for this one and hold it together for that one. And I'm sure I can do this.

Listen, loved ones, you cannot do it. But if you will acknowledge just how desperately weak you are, you will be amazed at the power of God unleashed within your life. It is the power that is able, in the verses that follow, in a dramatic mixture of metaphors, to transform a worm into a threshing sledge.

Look at verse 14. Do not be afraid, O worm, Jacob, O little Israel. What's a worm? I'm a worm.

You said you're a child of Abraham. Yes, I am, but I'm a worm. You said you're part of the creation of God.

Yes, I am, but I'm a worm. In the scheme of things, I'm a worm. Inferior to the task, aware of weakness.

You see the worm down there in the grass and the lawnmowers coming? What can the worm do? That's right. So what does it need? It needs a pair of eyes that can see its extremity, and a pair of knees that will stoop to its predicament, and a hand that will pick it up out of its potential disaster. That's the God I serve.

With eyes that see me, with knees that stoop to me, and with a hand that reaches up to strengthen me. Some of us this morning are physically and emotionally and spiritually totally drained. Well, then, allow the Spirit of God to minister this truth to your soul.

God comes with his strength for our feebleness. I will strengthen you. I will help you.

I'll certainly help you, he says. Got any rivers you think are incrossable? You got any mountains you can't tunnel through? You got a new task awaiting you and you're afraid? Have you got a predicament that just bugs you, that rides on your shoulder all your days, that the challenges don't dissipate, that the difficulties are continual? Listen, not only is God able to pick up the worm and make it useful, but he is able to plant pines in the wasteland. Look at verse 19.

I will put in the desert the cedar and the acacia, the myrtle and the olive. I will set pines in the wasteland, the fir and the cypress together, so that people may see and know, may consider and understand that the hand of the Lord has done this. In other words, that people would look at the very vegetation, and they would say, What an amazing thing that God would do this! Look at all of this finery! The problem with some of us is we don't go in the garden for long enough.

We don't sit under a cloudless sky at night long enough. We don't pore over this book long enough. He's able to plant pines in the wasteland, to make the rivers run in the deserts, and he can transform your heart and your life and your attitude, even when he chooses not to transform your circumstances.

And finally, he says, I'll strengthen you, I'll help you, and I will uphold you. I will uphold you. How? With his righteous right hand.

The hand, you see, is the organ of personal action. It is the indication of powerful enabling. The idols topple, the people tremble, the Lord upholds his people.

If God be for us, who can be against us? Do you look at people's hands? I look at hands all the time. You can tell a lot about hands. From hands.

In fact, I can't remember whose hand I was looking at, but I was sitting next to a man the other day, and I was looking at his hands, and I said, they're pretty broad between here and here. And I looked at mine, I said, that's not much of a hand compared to his hand. I was thinking, well, maybe I could get a hand like his, but then I'd have to chop mine off.

That's not a good idea. So I'll just stick with the ones I have. But there's a lot you can learn about hands.

Your father says to you, Don't let me take my hand to you! Your father also reaches down and says, Can I give you a hand? Some of us are here this morning, and we're living in that chaos. We got idols all over the place. They topple, we put them up.

They topple, we put them up. We think we're tough. We're not.

But we're not prepared to admit we're weak, so we'll never know God's strength. We're not prepared to admit we're helpless, so we'll never know his power. And we're like the people who walk down the steps here into the baptismal pool regularly, although I tell them all to say, I will offer you my hand.

They just go, Hey, I'm okay. I'll be fine. Don't worry about me.

Yeah, no, I'm fine. Sure you're fine, clown. You just baptized yourself.

You want to do that? Just do a dive bomb from the side, for goodness' sake, but you don't need to humiliate yourself. I'm giving you my hand to steady you. Do you ever put your hand in the hand of the man who stilled the water? To quote the old Campus Crusade songs, you put your hand in the hand of the man who calmed the sea? And if not, why not? You want to go back out and live with those same silly idols? Today, if you hear God's voice, do not harden your hearts.

Let us pray together. O God, our Father, grant then that in the hearing of your Word we will be caused to acknowledge how easily we depend upon idols that are crafted by human ingenuity, how prone we are to turn from you, the living God, and to go it on our own. But we thank you that you call out to the islands and to the peoples.

We thank you for the wonderful change that you bring about in the lives of those upon whom you set your hand. So then, come to our fear and to our dismay. Grant us a sense of your presence and your power.

Grant to us strength in our weakness. Help in our distress. And uphold us, Lord, for another day, for another journey.

And we will praise you. And now unto him who is able to keep us from falling, to present us faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God, our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, tonight, today, and forevermore. Amen.

That concludes this message. Thanks for listening to Truth For Life. If you'd like information on ordering additional messages from Alistair Begg and Truth For Life, then call our resource line at 1-888-58-TRUTH, write to us at Post Office Box 39-8000, Cleveland, Ohio 44139, or visit us online at [truthforlife.org](http://truthforlife.org). Truth For Life, where the learning is for living.

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