

**God Provides:
March 29, 2026**

I don't want to tell this story.
Because... it's humiliating.

You know... like most people...
I like to fix my problems...
All by myself.
I don't need no stinking help.

But that's not how this story goes.

I was pulling a U-Haul trailer... **[1 U-Haul]**
Behind my most excellent Jeep...
We had finished unloading the trailer...
So it was completely empty.

But parked precariously...
On a pretty serious incline.
And to my discredit...
I did not adequately...
Block the tires.

The trailer moved...
And started to roll... down the big hill.
I was stuck... on the wrong side...
Of a downward rolling metal cube...

Janet yelled... don't try to stop it.
I wasn't trying to stop it.
I was trying to get out...
From in front of it.

I was like Indiana Jones...
Running from that big rock...

Now. This all took place out in the country. **[2 Colorado Dirt]**
So... there weren't other vehicles...
Other houses... other cars... Nothing.

Except a dirt road... and a big old ditch.
More like a cliff that opened to a ravine.

Obviously I got out of the way...
I'm here... and lived to tell the story.
But the U-Haul...
It kept going.

I knew for sure... it was going to flip over the bank...
And end up... at the bottom of the ravine.

To my surprise... it did not.

The tongue of the U-Haul...
Dug into the dirt edge of the road...
And buried there.
About 3 feet deep...
And it came to a sudden stop.

It stopped.
Thank you God.

Then... Janet and I looked at each other...
And said... now what?
How are we going to get this massive thing...
Unstuck. Unburied.
And hitched onto the back of the Jeep.

Right about then.
A man... that we knew...
Unexpectedly pulled onto the road.
He stopped and talked to us...
For just a little bit.

While we were standing...
At the point of impact.
He was just talking...
About the day... the weather...
Whatever. No clue that something...
Had just gone terribly wrong.

And I wasn't about to admit it...
I was embarrassed.
And humiliated.
That I had made...
Such a big mess of everything.

He didn't notice.
Until he did.
Then he said...
In the nicest way possible...

Are you stuck?
Do you need help?

Yes. I am stuck.
Yes. I need help.

And with a mighty arm... **[3 Strong]**
Literally... this guy had more muscles...
In his pinkie...
Than I have...
In my whole body.

So with his mighty arm...
He yanked... the tongue of the U-Haul...

Right out of it's earthly tomb...
And hitched it...
Onto the back of the Jeep.

And that was it.
It was done.
It was no big deal for him.
Because he was strong.
When I was weak.

In essence.
He saved me. Right?
He fixed the problem...
That I could not fix.
He restored me...
To wholeness.

And I was sincerely thankful.

Now... we just read a very long...
Very powerful... gospel lesson.

And the reason we read this... **[4 Holy Week]**
On Palm Sunday...
The reason we read the whole Passion...
Is because... not everyone can come...
To all the worship services...
During Holy Week.

And if you can't come to Maundy Thursday...
And Good Friday...
Then you don't hear the story...
Of Jesus making his way to the cross.

You get Palm Sunday... when we cry...
Hooray Jesus... we love you.

Then we skip straight to Easter...
The Resurrection of our Lord...
And we cry...
Hooray Jesus...
He is risen...
He is risen indeed.

We go from one happy day... to the next happy day.
Without going to the cross.

So... that's why... we read the whole story today.
Because something big happened...
By his wounds... we are healed.
We were saved. Restored. Fixed.
And we know... our salvation... was a hard road.

So today... we take time... to appreciate everything...
That God has done for us...
Through Jesus.
We read aloud and relive...
The whole ugly story...
About how he suffered... and died.
For our sake. For our sake.

I can kind of... get my head around...
The idea that it's supposed to be... more personal than that...
That he suffered and died... for ME.
Even though.. I don't deserve that...

I know me. I am not worthy...
Of that kind of extreme love...
That kind of cosmic effort...
That kind of overwhelming mercy.

But God did not ask my opinion...
It doesn't matter what I think.
Or if I understand...

My appreciation... does not change the fact...
That God chose to do all this...
For me... and for you.

And I don't know...
If we can fully embrace the real idea...
Of Holy Week... and Easter...

But the bottom line of the story is... **[5 God Wins]**
The greatness and the faithfulness... of God...
AND the knowledge that... God always wins.
That's what it means...
When we say... that God is all powerful... omnipotent.

It means that God is the most powerful...
Even over the things we fear...
Including death.

God wins.
It's part of what makes God... God.

But listen... the lesson we read... from Philippians says...
That Jesus... even though he was in...
The form of God.

He didn't use that divine nature... to his advantage...
He didn't exploit God's power...
Instead... he emptied himself...

And because of that... he didn't win.
Not in the normal sense of the word.

He chose... a different path. **[6 Trusted God]**
He chose to put himself in our position...
Of weakness and need.
And in that weakness...
Jesus had to trust... that God...
Would save him.

When he was betrayed...
And arrested in the garden.
He trusted God.

When he was being...
Whipped and beaten.
He trusted God.

When he was forced...
To carry his own cross.
Through the streets... of Jerusalem...
He trusted God.

Even when the nails...
Were driven through...
His wrists and his ankles.
He trusted God.

And when he took his last breath...
He said... into your hands... O God... I commend my spirit.
With his last words... he trusted God.

So. See what Jesus did.
The Philippians lesson said...
He emptied himself.
Of power.
Of strength.
Of his God-like nature.

In essence... he said...
If I am going to be saved...
If I have any hope at all...
It's not within me.
I am empty.

He poured himself out.
With the trust...
And the confidence...
And the hope...
That God will win.

Not Jesus mind you.
Jesus did not raise himself...
From the dead.
God did that.

Jesus lived his life...
And died his death...
With hope.
That God would... save him.

HOW could he do that?
Don't tell me...
It's because he is God...
Or the Son of God...
Or has super human strength...
Or any other kind of...
Supernatural ability.

I don't believe...
That's why he trusted in God.

He could do it...
BECAUSE... of what he knew. **[7 God Provides]**
He knew God... was faithful.

Jesus saw God at work...
In his life...
Every.
Single.
Day.

Jesus could see...
That God provided.
What he needed.

God provided... the physical miracle...
To turn water into wine.

God provided... the divine power...
To heal the sick.
And raise the dead.

God provided... the unnatural ability...
To walk on water.

God provided... faith in people's hearts...
When Jesus spoke..

God provided.
Every step.
Of his journey.
Every day.

So. Why would it be any different now?

I saw an interview with Savannah Guthrie... **[8 Nancy Guthrie]**
About the kidnapping of her mother... Nancy.
She talked about her mom's faith.

And how... when Savannah's father died...
And her mother had three kids...
Depending on her....

She had to get a job... and care for the kids...
And take care of all the details of life... by herself...

A friend asked her how...
How did you keep your faith all these years?
And Nancy Guthrie said...
Where else would I go?

Jesus knew... even when he...
Emptied himself out.
Made himself a slave.
Humbled himself.
Became obedient.
Unto the point of death.

Jesus knew.
God would provide.

Now. We get to the problem... for us.
Paul wrote in the Philippians lesson... **[9 Same Mind]**
Let the same mind...
Be in YOU.
That was in Christ Jesus.

SO Paul is telling us...
To do what Jesus did.
To empty ourselves.
To humble ourselves.
To take the form of a slave.
To be obedient to God...
Even unto death.

Be like Jesus.
In our trust and hope.

Part of humbling ourselves...
Is coming to the conclusion...
And really believing...
That not everything...
Depends on us.

To be humble... means...
That we fully embrace...
Our own weakness...
Our own need.

That we need God...
To help us get through...

That God is our only source of life.

Not us.
Not our accomplishments.
Not how much work we get done... in a day.
Not how important we make ourselves... to other people.
Not how smart we are...
Not how right we are.
None of that.
It's not about us.
God is our life.

And despite what we do...
Or what happens to us...
During the course of this life...

We believe that God provides.

And it may be hard to see...
When we are suffering or sick.
But God does provide.

It may be hard to believe...
When we face losses...
Of our home and our jobs and our resources...
But God will provide.

Even when death comes knocking...
On our doors...
It may be hard for us...
To trust... and to hope...

That God will win.
That God will raise us from the dead.
That God will give us new life.

But that is the promise.
The promise **IS** that God will provide.

And so. **[10 The End]**
As we move through this hard week...
Toward the cross and the end...
For our beloved Jesus.

Just remember...
We know how this story ends.
For Jesus. For you. For me.

God's love and power... will once again...
Overwhelm death and the grave.

And... God will win...
Again. And again. And again.

Thanks be to God.
Amen.