



## Dear Friends,

Earlier this week, parts of Queensland had an early start to their storm season. The heavy rain was a welcome relief in many places. But it was also accompanied by flash flooding in other areas which proved to be hazardous for locals caught unaware by the severity of the downpour.

One such person in Moreton Bay drove his pickup truck straight into a flooded area. It so happened that an ABC reporter and cameraman had set themselves up in a nearby park to report on and film the floods when the pickup truck got stuck. Within seconds of him driving into the floodwaters, the vehicle was flooded and began to float. The truck then started to sink.

Seeing what had just happened, the reporter, Will Murray, jumped into the floodwaters and swam to the driver of the truck. He was soon joined by a bystander, Daniel Hainey. Mr Murray placed his feet against the truck's passenger side and managed to slightly open the door. Water streamed through the door, helping it to open further, so that the driver could swim free. The three men then swam to safety.

What an amazing rescue! The kindness shown by two men for a complete stranger was equally amazing. These two men placed themselves at risk to save the driver. It is a wonderful story that demonstrates human goodness. In a world characterised by self-interest, meanness and cruelty, it's a joy to hear stories of people acting kindly in selfless and sacrificial ways.

Amazing human rescues remind me of God's great rescue. The Gospel is the story of how God chose, at enormous cost to himself, to rescue us from the guilt, misery and power of sin. Rescuing us cost God the Father giving up his Son. It cost Jesus his life. By dying on the cross, Jesus experienced God's wrath and judgment at our sin. The perfectly obedient Son was treated as a condemned criminal. At the cross, the beloved Son who had enjoyed life his Father's presence for all eternity felt relationally cutoff from the One whose will he was obeying.

This is what God has done for you and me. It's a jaw-droppingly surprising act of kindness. It's an act of love, an act of grace. That's because we are not simply strangers to God. We have treated him with hostility. We have rebelled against God. Romans 5:6-8 says:

*You see, just at the right time, when we were still powerless, Christ died for the ungodly. Very rarely will anyone die for a righteous person, though for a good person someone might possibly dare to die. But God demonstrates his love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us.*

I could end the newsletter at this point. But as I reflected on the kindness of these two men, it reminded me of the story of Ruth where people show kindness to "strangers" to save them. Ruth shows kindness to her widowed mother-in-law so that Naomi does not return to her hometown alone to fend for herself. Boaz shows kindness to Ruth, a migrant widow who is highly vulnerable eking out a living in a foreign land.

As Christians who have experienced God's loving kindness in Christ, it's helpful to realise that we are surrounded by people who, like the man rescued from the floodwaters, are in grave danger. Sadly, most aren't aware of it. They are in danger because they don't know Jesus. These people are family, neighbours, friends, work colleagues, or fellow students.

What can we do to rescue these people from God's coming judgment? To rescue them from the misery, power and condemnation of sin? The least we can do is pray for them to know Jesus. Look for opportunities to speak to them of Jesus by sharing our own experience of Christ and what he has done to save us. And finally, act with kindness in your relationship with them in all sorts of ways so that they come to know the One whose loving kindness is boundless.

God Bless,  
Mark Adams