

He never lets go of me

Host

Ladies and gentlemen, honoured guests and dignitaries, I'd like to welcome you all to the opening session of the most important investigative committee of our time, the Muler Commission.

We have before us today a very important question – 'is that true?' We've just sung a song<sup>i</sup> that says 'You never let go of me;' is that true? Is it true that 'through every storm of life, my God is by my side?' We will find out today.

We've gathered together a series of esteemed Bible characters who all have experience with this question and we'll hear first-hand testimony from them to see if it's true that God never lets go of us.

Our first guest today is a man who walked side-by-side with Jesus, **the apostle Peter**. (*Peter enters*).  
Welcome Peter, thank you for joining us today.

Peter

You're welcome. Glad to help out on this important question.

Host

Now I see here that you've brought a prop with you to illustrate your case.

Peter

Yes, indeed, I have. This was the paddle I used that night when God never let go of me.

Host

Great. Tell us about it.

Peter

As I recall, Jesus had had a busy day of teaching. *Everyone* wanted to hear Him, to talk to Him, to touch Him, and sometimes He just liked to get away to pray. He told us to head across the lake and he'd meet us later, then He went up the mountain to pray.

Host

So that's why you had the paddle? You were on a boat that day?

Peter

Yup, I remember it like it was yesterday. The rest of Jesus' disciples were packed into the boat with me when all of a sudden, things got out of hand. The wind started to blow, the waves started slamming into the boat and we all got pretty scared.

Host

Well, hold on there, Peter. You say you were scared, and yet, if I recall, you are a fisherman by trade right? You fish for a living; you spend your life on the water. And yet you were scared?

Peter

That's true, I DID spend my life on the water, but THIS was a storm like no other. Huge waves, wind howling like a pack of wolves. I thought for sure we were going down. And yet that wasn't the scariest thing.

Host

Really, what could be scarier?

Peter

A ghost.

Host

A ghost? You saw a ghost?

Peter

Well, we thought saw a ghost, but with all the wind and the rain and the darkness it was hard to be sure. And we were terrified. UNTIL it started to talk to us.

Host

It started to talk to you? The ghost started to talk?

Peter

Well, yes and no. Because it turns out it wasn't ghost. It was Jesus. He said 'Take courage! It is I. Don't be afraid.' I'll never forget it; He came walking across the water, as sure as if He was walking on land, and said 'Take courage. It is I. Don't be afraid.'

Host

Wow! Amazing.

Peter

I'll say! There we were, terrified in a little boat, and there He was, walking on the water like it was no big deal.

Host

What happened next?

Peter

Well, I don't know what took hold of me, but I got it into my head that I should go overboard and walk with Jesus. I threw my paddle to the side and said 'Lord, if it's you, tell me to come to you on the water.'

Host

You did what? You stepped out of the boat and into the waves?

Peter

(chuckling in disbelief) Yup, I did. Jesus said 'Come' and so I did. I got down out of the boat and took a couple of steps on the water... but then I got afraid. I took my eyes off Jesus and thought about the storm. And I started to sink. 'Lord, save me!' I cried. (pause) Jesus reached out and pulled me to safety. 'Oh Peter, why did you doubt?' He said. 'I will never let go of you.' And with that, the storm stopped. He walked on water, stilled the storm and kept me safe throughout.

Host

Wow, that is fascinating.

Peter

Yeah and it's a true story. When I was afraid, He never let go of me.

Host

What a powerful testimony Peter – when you were afraid, God never let go of you. Wow. That's very helpful. Thank you Peter for sharing your testimony with us. And we'll be right back after this pause for praise.

Host

Well, our next guest is someone who needs no introduction. If you said you didn't know who he was, I think you'd be *lion* (lyin') ;) Straight from Babylon, **it's Daniel!** (***Daniel appears***)

Daniel

Thank you, thank you. Thanks for having me.

Host

I'll bet you've never heard that 'lion' joke before.

Daniel

*(looks awkward and uncomfortable because he's heard it WAY too many times)*

Host

*(realizing that the joke has bombed)* Well, let's get to business. I see you've brought a prop too Daniel. Not a real one, thankfully.

Daniel

No, real ones are a lot scarier. And more dangerous. That I know.

Host

Tell us what happened.

Daniel

Well, my people were taken prisoner in a foreign land. We were carried away from our homes and made to live in this strange new world. And yet even there, God was with us. I knew He was faithful and so I never stopped being faithful to Him. No matter where I was, I knew He was listening and so I prayed to Him three times a day, every day.

Host

That's a good thing to do. But where do the lions come in?

Daniel

Good question. Not everyone thought my prayers were great. And in fact, because of God's favour, I was given a lot of authority in the land and because of that, there were a lot of people who had it out for me. They decided to turn the king against me and tricked him into signing a law that people could only ever pray to him, or else they'd be thrown to the lions.

Host

Well, what did you do? You didn't want to get thrown to the lions!

Daniel

No, but I didn't want to stop praying either and I decided that even when I was in danger, God would never let go of me. I trusted God more than I feared the lions so I kept on praying.

Host

Wow! *(clearly in admiration)* I take it though that you still got caught?

Daniel

Yep, I went up to my room to pray three times a day, every day, just like I always did and those weasels went and reported me to the king. He knew he had been tricked but couldn't cancel the law, so he agreed to throw me to the lions and see what happened.

Host

So, what happened? *(eating popcorn)*

Daniel

I'll never forget it. The king of the land came down to see me and said 'May your God, whom you serve continually, rescue you' and then they put a stone over the mouth of the den.

Host

That's terrifying.

Daniel

Well, yes, but I knew that when I was in danger, God would never let go of me. It was a loooooong night, but just as they shut the mouth of the den with that big old rock, God shut the mouths of the lions so they couldn't get me. They're actually big softies, once you get past the bone-crushing jaws.

And the king, he was so impressed by it all that he made an announcement all throughout the land that all people should honour God, because He rescues and saves, but I already knew that.

Host

You knew that when you were in danger, God would never let go of you?

Daniel

Yep, that's right. When I was in danger, God never let go of me.

Host

Wow, what a powerful testimony. Thank you Daniel for being here today to tell us about it.

Daniel

Thank God! I'm here today because of Him!

Host

Well said, Daniel. Well said. And we'll be right back after a pause for praise.

Host

Welcome back to the Muler Commission. Today we are investigating the claim that God never lets us go – He always takes care of us – and we've heard two testimonies so far that say that that's true. When we're afraid, God never lets us go; when we're in danger, God never lets us go. Let's hear now from our third witness, **the prophet Elijah. Welcome Elijah.**

Elijah

Hello.

Host

*(after a pause, anticipating that Elijah will say more but he doesn't)* Well, Elijah, what can you tell us about your experience with God?

Elijah

My experience with God was intense. High highs and low lows.

Host

What do you mean by that?

Elijah

One day, the king accused me of causing trouble for Israel, but I said 'NO, YOU'RE the one causing trouble for Israel with all your idols and false gods' and so I challenged his gods to a showdown with the LORD. I told him to bring all his people and all his false prophets to the mountain and we made offerings to the gods to see who was real.

Host

Wow. That's pretty intense.

Elijah

Yes. Intense. *(pause)* Me versus eight hundred false prophets, the LORD versus the Baals. Those eight hundred liars made an offering to their gods – they set up an altar and put a bull on it and danced around it and called out to Baal and even cut themselves to try to get his attention. I said 'maybe he's too busy sleeping or doing his taxes; better try harder.' But nothing worked. No god answered, all day long.

Host

Because there was no god, right?

Elijah

Yes, that was the point. Only Yahweh exists; only Yahweh can answer and so I showed *them*. Everybody else was so enamoured with Baal; I alone rebuilt the altar and dug a trench and arranged the wood and put the bull on the altar. And the people poured huge jars of water on the offering, three times over so that water splashed everywhere.

And then I stepped forward and prayed "O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac and Israel, let it be known today that you are God in Israel and that I am your servant and have done all these things at your command. Answer me, O LORD, answer me, so these people will know that you, O LORD, are God, and that you are turning their hearts back again."

And just like that, the fire of the LORD fell and burned up the sacrifices, the wood and the stones and even the water that had filled the trench. The people cried out – 'The LORD, He is God! The LORD, He is God!'

Host

That's incredible! What a triumph! You must have been ecstatic!

Elijah

Actually I was quite depressed. What good is it when I'm the only one faithful to the LORD? What good is it when I'm all alone? I went out into the desert and prayed 'I've had enough LORD. Take my life. I am no better than my ancestors.'

Host

Wow, you weren't kidding when you said 'highest highs, lowest lows!'

Elijah

How would you like it if you were all alone, the only one in a nation of ingrates trying to honour the LORD for all that He is? It was frustrating, it was discouraging, it was... lonely... (*pause*), but when I was alone, God never let go of me.

I woke up from a sleep and there was a loaf of bread baking on hot coals and a jug of water and an angel saying 'Eat, drink, for you have a long journey ahead.' Forty days later I was at the mountain of God. And do you know what He said there?

Host

What?

Elijah

He said 'I know things have been tough and I know that you feel like you're all alone. But you're not Elijah. I am with you every step of the way and there are *seven thousand* more in Israel who have not given their allegiance to Baal. It may feel like you're all alone Elijah. But you're not. The faithful GOD and your faithful brothers and sisters stand with you.'

It was all I needed to hear, to know that I was not alone.

Host

So, when you were alone, God never let go of you?

Elijah

(*Thinking for a minute*) Yes, that's true. When I was alone, God never let go of me. Knowing that I was not alone gave me courage to do what God called me to do.

Host

Well, thank you Elijah for sharing these insights with us and we'll be right back with one more witness when we come back.



Host

Welcome back, ladies and gentlemen, to the Muler Commission. As you recall, we are investigating the idea that God never lets go of us. From Peter, we heard that when he was afraid, God never let go of Him. From Daniel, we heard that when he was in danger God never let go of him. From Elijah, we heard that when he was alone, God never let go of him. I can hardly wait to hear what our final guest has to say. He's no stranger to danger; **please welcome the apostle Paul!**

Paul

Hello! Thank you!

Host

Well Paul, so far, we've heard some stunning testimony of the ways that God never lets go of His people. When they're alone, in danger, afraid, God never lets them go. I can't wait to hear from you - maybe 'when you're worried or sad or overwhelmed,' God never let go of you?

Paul

Well, those things are true, but I was actually thinking I would take a different approach. 'Even when I sinned, God never let me go.'

Host

Wait, what? Even when you sinned, God never let you go? That doesn't make any sense? If you sin, you are going against God's will; why would He stick with you even then?

Paul

That's the great mercy of God at work and I know it firsthand. See, when I first heard about Jesus and His followers, I hated them. They went around saying that God accepted us by grace through faith and not by the mountain of good works I had worked hard to accumulate. I couldn't stomach the idea and I was eager to keep the Law of God and so I persecuted these Christians.

Host

Hold on, you persecuted the Christians? Like, went after them to get them? You? Paul, the super apostle?

Paul

Oh, yeah, big time. I got letters from the high priest to go from town to town, arresting believers and chaining them up and dragging them back to Jerusalem for trial. I'm ashamed to say that some believers might even have died because of me. *(pause)*

And yet, even then, God didn't let go of me. I was off on one of my manhunts up in Syria when all of a sudden, a brilliant light from heaven flashed all around me. I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?' 'Who are you Lord?' I asked. It was Jesus! He told me to go into town and wait there. The people with me could hear His voice but couldn't see anyone. When I stood up, I realized I couldn't see anyTHING!

There were these things like scales on my eyes that made me blind *(put on eyepatch)* and so my companions took me into town. For three days, I ate nothing, I drank nothing until one day a disciple named Ananias came to me. He said 'Get up Paul, wash away your sins and put your faith in Jesus for He has a mission for you to reach the world.' And so I did. Counting everything else as a loss, I put my faith in Jesus and gained everything. And when I did that, the scales fell off my eyes and I could see! *(take off eyepatch)* And that's how I became a missionary to the world.

Host

Wow, Paul! And to think that that began even when you were still a sinner!

Paul

That's right. That's the mercy of God. Instead of discarding me when I was a sinner, He redeemed me and gave me a job and a purpose.

Host

But why would He even do that I wonder?

Paul

I've spent a lot of time thinking about that question. I actually wrote about it in my first letter to my friend Timothy - 1 Timothy 1:16 - I think I was shown mercy so that Jesus could always point to me and say 'If I can be merciful to HIM, the WORST of sinners, I can be merciful to you!'

Host

So you're saying that even when we're sinners, God never lets go of us? He redeems us and puts us onto the right path?

Paul

That's right. Amazing, isn't it?

Host

I'll say, and I'm so glad to hear it! I haven't mentioned it yet but my name is Balaam and I have a similar story to yours!

Paul

Really? Let's hear it.

Host

I thought I knew what I was doing, paying no attention to God and this king Balak hired me to curse God's people. I tried to do it, but time and again, I couldn't. God actually sent an angel to stand in the way of my donkey so I couldn't get through. The donkey even talked, telling me to stop what I was doing! This commission is actually named after him - the MULE r report.

I'm so thankful that God never let go of me - He kept me from the worst of my sin and gave me a second chance.

Paul

God is like that, thank goodness.

Host

Well, I think we've heard enough. When we are afraid, God never lets us go. When we are in danger, God never lets us go. When we are alone, God never lets us go. And even when we have sinned, God never lets us go. He is faithful, all the time, everywhere.

Thank you for joining us for the Muler Commission and God bless!

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<sup>i</sup> Shipwrecked VBS|Group publishing, 'Never let go of me,' [https://youtu.be/WJgIPk\\_NkZY](https://youtu.be/WJgIPk_NkZY)