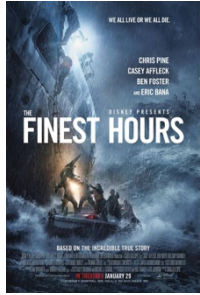


# The Finest Hours

*"You have to go out, you don't have to come back."*



What Bernie Weber, Richard Livesey, Andy Fitzgerald and Ervin Maske accomplished on the night of February 18, 1952 is considered the greatest small boat rescue in United States Coast Guard History. They rescued 32 stranded crewmen from the SS Pendleton, a T2 Tanker after it split in half during a raging snow storm off the coast of Chattham, MA. The rescue boat was designed to hold 12-18.



**SHEPHERD  
CHURCH**

1. The rescue was motivated by a Coast Guard saying "You have to go out, you don't have to come back."
  - This regulation places the highest **VALUE** on the life of those in need of rescue.
  - Jesus made those who need rescued the church's highest **PRIORITY**.  
**Mark 16:15 (NLT)** <sup>15</sup> *And then he told them, "Go into all the world and preach the Good News to everyone.*
  - **2 Corinthians 1:10-11 (MSG)** <sup>10</sup> *And he . . . rescued us from certain doom. And he'll do it again, rescuing us as many times as we need rescuing.* <sup>11</sup> *You and your prayers are part of the rescue operation . . .*
2. People in need of rescue want to be saved but **CANNOT** save themselves.
  - The crew of the SS Pendleton wanted to be rescued and were 100% **DEPENDENT** on someone else helping them.
  - I believe that 100% of the people who realize their eternal destiny without Christ want to be rescued, but are **DEPENDENT** on someone to help them.
    - Many don't know how or are **DECEIVED**, making them dependent on someone to help them.
3. When an effort is made to rescue someone, there will be **CHALLENGES** to overcome.
  - The obstacles the Coast Guard faced was a terrible storm, and getting over the bar (shoal).
  - In our attempt to rescue others spiritually, we face many obstacles:
    - **FEAR**
    - **EXCUSES**
    - **SPIRITUAL WARFARE**  
Ephesians 6:12 (NIV) <sup>12</sup> *For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.*

4. Rescuing people always **COSTS** something!

**John 3:16 (NLT)** <sup>16</sup> "For God loved the world so much that he gave his one and only Son, so that everyone who believes in him will not perish but have eternal life.

**John 15:13 (MSG)** <sup>13</sup> This is the very best way to love. Put your life on the line for your friends.

5. The Church is the last best hope to rescue those who are lost.

- What if the eternal fate of lost people is in the hands of the **CHURCH**?
  - **65%** of practicing Christian millennials believe that being a witness about Jesus is part of their faith.
  - Only **56%** of practicing Christians have had a conversation about their faith with a non-Christian during the past year.
  - **47%** of practicing Christian millennials believe it is wrong to evangelize.
  - **48%** of current churchgoers have never invited someone to attend with them.
- If the church does not rescue those in need of spiritual rescue, who will?

6. Every person in need of rescue has someone waiting and praying for them to make it Home.

- It is God's desire that **EVERY** lost person be rescued.

**Galatians 1:4 (MSG)** <sup>4</sup> . . . Jesus Christ rescued us from this evil world we're in by offering himself as a sacrifice for our sins. God's plan is that we all experience that rescue.

**2 Peter 3:9 (NLT)** <sup>9</sup> The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent.
- When we finally make it to heaven, will we be arriving **ALONE**, or we will there be **OTHERS** that are there because of our efforts?

**My Next Steps:**

- Ask the Lord to lay one person on your heart that He is working to rescue and agree to join Him.
- Pray for God to give you the courage to overcome any fears that you may have that prevent you from sharing the Gospel with others.
- Decide today to be willing to pay whatever cost there may be to share the Gospel.