



Bethany Lutheran Church  
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## Viewpoints

*Observing events in our modern world from the viewpoint of our ascended Savior.*

### What A Friend ~ September 21, 2016

This friend won't let you die from embarrassment.

[Online Version & Archive](#)

Earlier this month cable cars in the Swiss Alps malfunctioned. The cables that move the passenger pods abruptly halted, suspending the motionless cars over the snow-covered terrain. Rescue crews were able to remove some passengers before sundown, but about three dozen people remained trapped overnight in their cabins.

Can you imagine spending the night in a confined space that you can't get out of because you're suspended dangerously high in the Alps? Strangers are suddenly your overnight guests, whether you like it or not. Food and drink becomes a concern. And somehow using the restroom eventually overcomes the embarrassing necessity. Oh, and it gets very cold at night at 12,000 elevation while suspended over an icy glacier!

All of which is why the company that operates the cable cars equips them with an emergency kit consisting of water, cereal bars and survival blankets. (And I presume some bathroom essentials, but that was never mentioned.)

But the most important item that helped these trapped people was not found in a survival kit. He crawled to them.

Rescue workers were suspended by helicopters "over the cable cars, harnessing themselves to the cables, climbing along to the cars and then dropping through the car's hatches." Isn't that awesome? A highly-trained rescuer crawled down from above, to spend the night in each car with those trapped passengers. He brought along extra survival gear. And perhaps more importantly, he provided the knowledge and ability to help the poor souls get through the dangerous cold—one elderly man suffered hypothermia-- and to negate the embarrassment of spending a night in mixed company in a very confined space.

Have you ever found yourself in a situation where the source of your greatest panic was embarrassment? If researchers are accurate when they say that some people would rather die than speak before a large crowd, then it's probably also true that many of us consider some things capable of "embarrassing us to death."

I have my fears of embarrassment, too. So as I ponder what it must have been like to spend the night in one of those cable cars, I can't help but think of the most embarrassing situation in all of history. To be stripped naked, impaled to a cross, and then mocked and jeered-- this

has to be unlike any embarrassment you and I could ever encounter. But then, to be the innocent Son of God who left his home of perfection and peace, and to carry all the gross and despicable sins of humanity in his flesh... as he's stripped naked, impaled to a cross, and mocked and jeered...? That, my friends, is more than a rescuer. That's your Friend for Life!

Jesus crawled down from heaven to erase all your sins so that you can stand before God in total peace and security, without a smidgen of embarrassment. And he's the one who will also come crawling down from above to help you in your time of need. Whether you're about to die from embarrassment. Or you've been shoved out from your family or friends to freeze in the cold of rejection. Or you're hungering to be needed and desired. Jesus is the Rescuer of rescuers. **"What a Friend we have in Jesus..."** penned the hymnwriter, and rightly so. For Jesus will cover your embarrassment with garments of righteousness. He will wrap his arms around you with forgiving warmth. He will point you to the blood he shed while suspended above Golgotha to assure you that you are wanted and loved. How can you be sure of this? Because our Lord teaches us: **"Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you." So we say with confidence, "The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?"** (Hebrews 13:5-6). ☩

*Source Material (Links may become inactive over time.)*

[Fifteen Hours Hanging Over the Alps](#) @ NewYorkTimes.com

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*Blessings to you and your loved ones, Pastor Mike Nitz*

