

A story concerning divine intervention

There was once a terrible flood, and among the people stranded by the rapidly rising waters was a man deeply confident that God would save him from the impending disaster. Presently, when he was standing in knee-deep water, a rowboat came by and offered to give him a ride. "Oh no," he said, "God will save me." Soon the water was waist-deep, but when a motorboat approached and proposed to pick him up, he again declined, offering the same explanation. Finally, when the water was up to his neck, a helicopter appeared and offered to lift him to safety. But it, too, he waved off, saying again, "God will save me." In minutes, however, he was overwhelmed and drowned in the flood.

As soon as he reached heaven, he asked to see God. "What happened, God?" he said, "I trusted you to save me, and I never doubted that you would." "Well," God answered, "I don't really know what happened. I sent two boats and a helicopter, and you rejected all of them!"

14 November 1998 (a story told by Red Skelton during a Royal Command performance in London on his 70th birthday)