



Oh No! Here Comes a Shark!

God's Verse for the Rookie Rescuer

*"The Lord is my strength and my shield;
my heart trusts in him, and he helps me.
My heart leaps for joy and with my song I praise him."*

Psalm 28:7

Rookie Rescuer

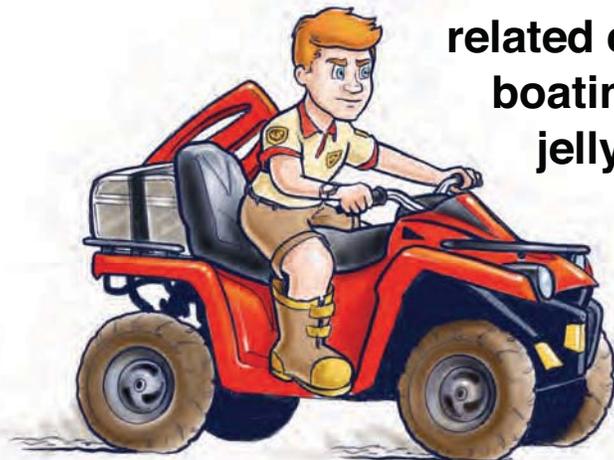
WORDS

*Water Rescue Buoy Beach Trailer
Splinting Quint ATV*

Did you know that a lot of fire stations are called upon for water-related emergencies, such as boating accidents, near-drownings, jellyfish stings and even shark bites?

Yes, that's right,

Rookie Rescuer
shark bites!



My fire department in Florida has two stations located right on the beach. One summer when I was assigned to one of these stations, we had several calls for shark attacks. In fact, Rookie Rescuer, the Discovery Channel came to our fire station and asked me lots of questions about what it was like to respond to shark attack calls.

There I was, Firefighter Tom, appearing on TV on “Shark Week!” It was exciting! We even recreated one of the shark attack calls that I had responded to.

Because this station is on the beach, we train a lot with the lifeguards, and we even carry water rescue buoys on our fire trucks. With our All-Terrain Vehicle (ATV), we are able to pull our special beach trailer on the soft sand and carry an injured person safely to our waiting ambulance. We used the beach trailer to respond to the following shark attack call that I want to tell you about.

It was a hot summer day. My 24-hour shift was going kind of slowly. During the morning hours, we mowed the yard and did a little training on Quint-9, our assigned fire truck. About noontime, as I headed inside the fire station, hot and sweaty, I thought to myself, “Wouldn’t it be nice to be swimming in the ocean across the street?” After all, it was a great day for boogie boarding since the water was very clear, and the waves were nice and big.

The afternoon was equally slow. “Are we gonna get anything?” I wondered. Then about 4:00 in the afternoon our alarm tones sounded!

“A man has been bitten by a shark,” the dispatcher announced.

When he told us the location, we knew it was only about a half-mile down the beach from our fire station. The victim was a 20-year-old man who was boogie boarding on the waves.

“A shark bite!” I said to myself as my heart started racing, and my mind was flooded with questions:

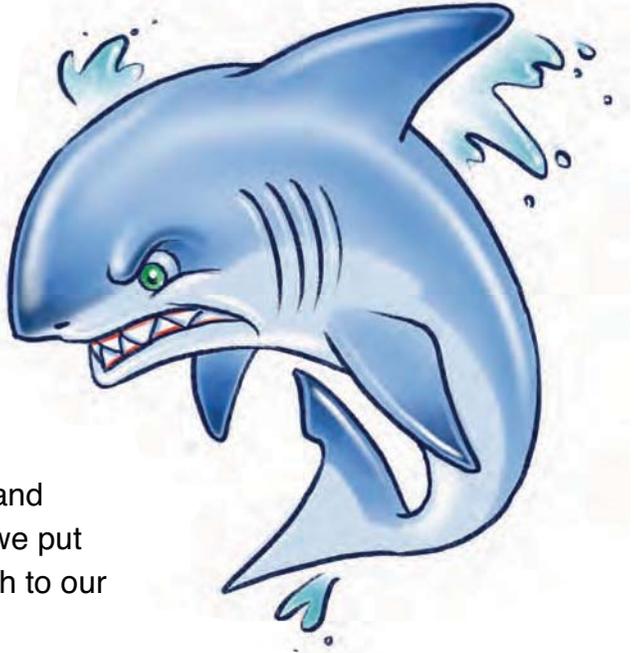
Was the victim still in the water?

How bad were the wounds?

Was there a lot of bleeding?



Two of our guys got on the ATV with the beach trailer and headed down the beach. My partner and I responded in the rescue ambulance. We found our shark-attack victim lying on the beach. He was bleeding badly from his lower leg. There was a large bite mark on one side of his leg and another large bite mark on the other side of his leg. The bites were from the upper and lower jaws of the shark's mouth.



Right away we put pressure dressings on the victim's leg to control the bleeding. He was awake and in a lot of pain. Carefully we splinted his leg. Then we put him on our beach trailer and drove him off the beach to our waiting ambulance.

"What do you remember about the shark attack?" I asked the victim.

"Well, I was waiting for a wave to ride when I saw about an eight-foot shark. It was really close to me," he said.

"How far away do you think it was?" I asked curiously.

"I'd say it was only about 30 feet away from me," he said. "I started swimming towards the shore as fast as I could. But it felt like I was swimming in slow motion. Then I felt the shark's jaws bite down on my leg."

"That must have really hurt," I said.

"It hurt so bad that even though I knew no one could hear me, I yelled 'Ouch!' at the top of my lungs."

"Then what did you do?" I asked

"I yanked my leg away from the shark as hard as I could and kicked the shark with my other leg. I knew I was hurt and bleeding, but I was determined to get to shore, so I started swimming again as fast as I could. When I made it to shallow water, I tried to stand and run the rest of the way in, but my leg hurt so bad, I had to crawl out of the water and onto the beach. But I made it," the man said.

I knew this was one fortunate man that we were treating because if he'd stayed in the water much longer, other sharks probably would have come and attacked him.

While he was telling me what happened, we gave him medication for his pain and took him to the hospital where the doctors used a lot of stitches to close his shark bite wounds.

This was an exciting call, Rookie Rescuer, and boy was I glad that he made it out of the water. 'Cause you see, if he hadn't, I probably would have needed to swim out into that shark territory with our rescue buoy to bring him in. That would have been really scary because I certainly didn't want to be attacked by a shark.

But, you know, Rookie, I wouldn't have been swimming out there all alone because I would have prayed first and then trusted God to watch over me as I did my best to help the victim. One thing to keep in mind about emergency work is that we never know what kind of situation we will be called upon to help someone. But one thing is for sure, God knows about each situation we are about to face.

If we trust Him to guide us and help us to do our best, He will give us the courage and strength to do the job before us.

Rookie Rescuer, I hope you are already trusting God to help you do the right thing in the situations you face every day. He is always there for us.



Rookie Rescuer Words

Being Ready for Many Types of Emergencies

Firefighters and paramedics need to be trained in many types of rescues. Since I live and work in Florida near the ocean, I need to know about water-related emergencies.

Water Rescue Buoy: A flotation device with two side handles and one end handle for rescuing people who are having trouble swimming or who are in distress. The water rescue buoy is attached to a short rope so it can be thrown to the victim. It is also called a “torpedo.”

ATV: ATV stands for All Terrain Vehicle. ATVs have many uses in the fire service. They are especially helpful when stations are located in areas where normal emergency vehicles have a difficult time getting to certain areas of their response zone. ATVs are also known as “four-wheelers.”

Beach Trailer: This is a special trailer that is towed behind an ATV for beach rescues. This trailer has special tires for soft sand. It can carry equipment such as water rescue buoys and backboards. The person needing to be rescued from the beach is strapped to the backboard and then the backboard is strapped to the flat part of the beach trailer.

Quint: A quint is a fire truck equipped with a 75 to 90-foot permanent ladder used for rescuing people. It has a large nozzle so it can also spray lots of water on large fires. This fire truck looks like a ladder truck but is called a quint because it has five things: An aerial ladder, a water tank, a hose bed, a water pump and a group of smaller ground ladders.

Splinting: Splinting means to use bandaging or padded boards in such a way to keep a broken bone or injured area from movement so that further injury will not occur.



Questions For The Rookie Rescuer

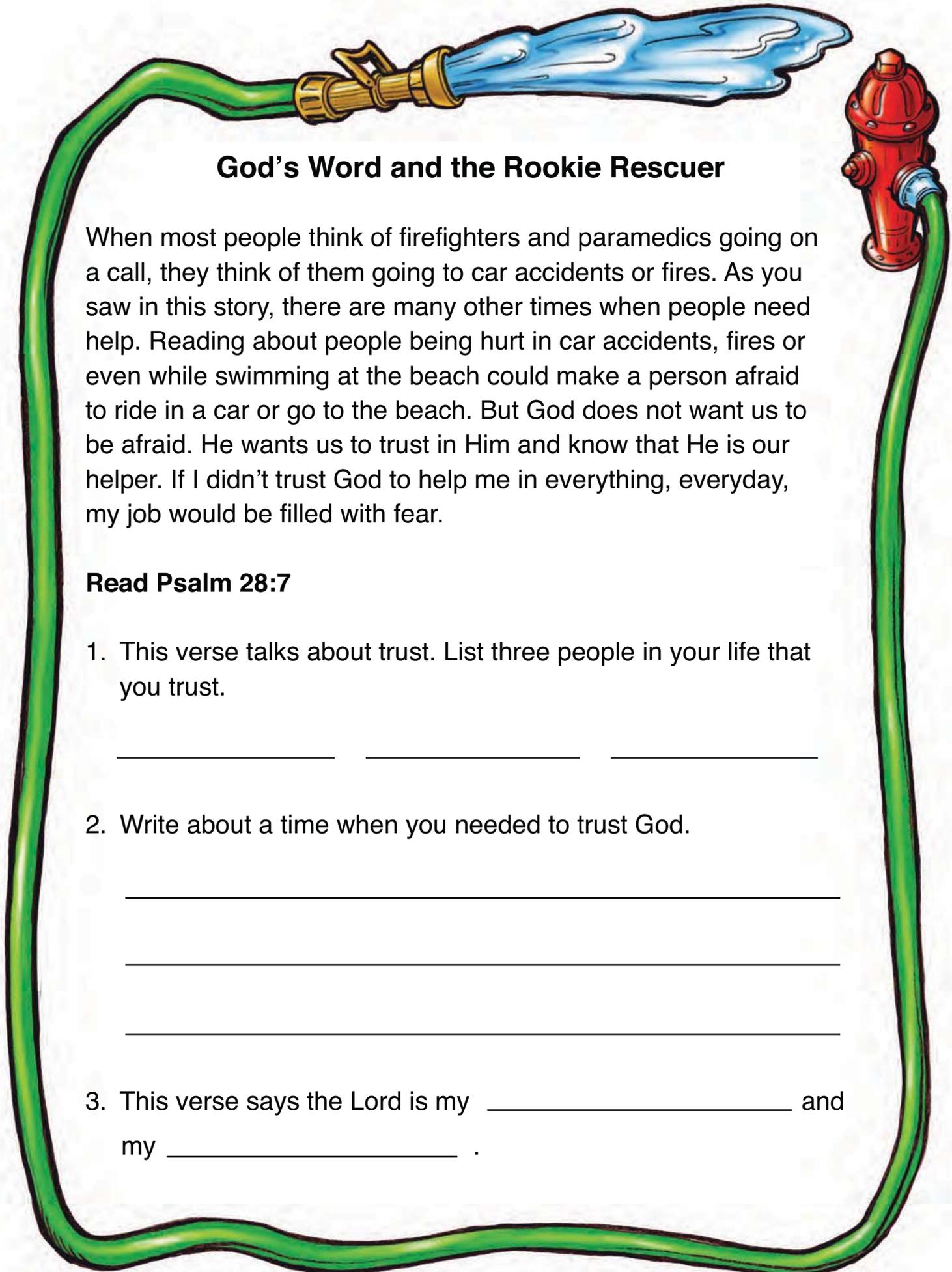
1. If people are having trouble swimming or are in distress what do emergency responders use to help them? Give both names for this item.

2. What does ATV stand for? What's another name for an ATV?

3. In this story I towed something behind our station's ATV, What was it? What does it have that is special for the beach? Name two things we carry on it.

4. List five things we carry on our quint.

5. Why would a firefighter or emergency worker use a splint?



God's Word and the Rookie Rescuer

When most people think of firefighters and paramedics going on a call, they think of them going to car accidents or fires. As you saw in this story, there are many other times when people need help. Reading about people being hurt in car accidents, fires or even while swimming at the beach could make a person afraid to ride in a car or go to the beach. But God does not want us to be afraid. He wants us to trust in Him and know that He is our helper. If I didn't trust God to help me in everything, everyday, my job would be filled with fear.

Read Psalm 28:7

1. This verse talks about trust. List three people in your life that you trust.

2. Write about a time when you needed to trust God.

3. This verse says the Lord is my _____ and my _____ .



God's word And The Rookie Rescuer

4. Our verse continues by saying 'my heart trusts in Him and He helps me'. What are some things that you can ask God to help you with everyday?

5. The last part of verse 7 states 'my heart leaps for _____, and with my song I _____ Him.'

6. Rookie Rescuer... when we sing songs that tell about God and His love do you realize we are actually praising and worshiping Him? Write down the name of a song (or some of the words) of a song that you like to sing. Write down why you like that song.



MEMORY VERSE:

*"The Lord is my strength and my shield;
my heart trusts in him, and he helps me.*

*My heart leaps for joy,
and with my song I praise him.*

Psalm 37:5