

View

Climbing Mountains Draws us Closer to God

BY KENT HEATON SR

Life has been patterned as a journey and through our journey, we pass through valleys and over hills. Sometimes the valleys are deep and sometimes the hills turn into mountains. These are the challenges of life we must all face. The hills and mountains before us seem insurmountable. We look at the top and think it is impossible to reach. The valleys grow dark and forbidding and fear follows our every step. While Satan goes about like a roaring lion to cause dread and fear, God reminds us that He will not forsake us or leave us. These times of difficulty are to bring us closer to God.

With each step we take and each day we climb, the way seems hard and the burdens great. We strain as the loads of life bear down upon us. Some paths up the mountain are more difficult than others. Disease controls our body, frailties of life oppress us, doubts and worry overshadow our lives and forces around plague us. Our footsteps seem unsure and we fear for not knowing what lies ahead.

In the valley of shadows, we try to find our way through the ravines and chasms of tears and woe. Darkness closes around us and our hearts fill with doubt. The sounds in the valley send chills of fright through our bones and we are afraid. These are emotions born in us as we face life with its challenges and troubles. Death invades our lives, sorrow fills our cup and depression looms over our heads. Whether in the valley low or the mountain steep, a voice rings clear from the throne of God – “The Lord is my helper; I will not fear” (Hebrews 13:6).

For the child of God, climbing these mountains bring a peace that gives calm assurance to the journey. As we struggle with the difficulties of life, we know that we are drawing closer to God. Paul expressed this in 2 Corinthians 12:7-10 when he talked about his thorn in the flesh. He asked the

The church of Christ

Meeting at 900 E. Natoma
PO Box 492

Folsom, CA 95630

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David Posey: 530/676-9514

dpaulposey@mac.com

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Lord three times to remove the thorn but the Lord said that His grace was sufficient. The result was then that Paul used this mountain of difficulty to draw closer to God. He said, "Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong."

Paul was content in whatever state he found himself in. He did not give up nor think the way too hard - even though it was a difficult journey. His assurance came in the knowledge that as he climbed his mountain, he drew even closer to God. He understood the path through the valley was filled with fright and fear but his confidence in the power of God led him with every step. His strength came from his trials and his troubles. His power was not of his own but the power given to him by God.

Our lives are filled with many mountains and valleys. How we climb those mountains will determine our outlook in life. If we can but remember that climbing - facing the challenges of life - will bring us closer to God. It is only with the presence of God that we are able to climb. The valleys are only momentary pauses in our lives that we must pass through. The Psalmist de-

clared the wonderful love of the Shepherd in Psalm 23 that no harm would befall the child of God. "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for You are with me; Your rod and Your staff, they comfort me" (Psalm 23:4).

Brent Hunter once said, "Even if the outlook is dark, the uplook is always bright." Whether from the mountain top or the end of the valley, our God will be with us each step of the way. With each step, we draw closer to God - with each step we draw closer to our home where "God will wipe away every tear from [our] eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain, for the former things have passed away" (Revelation 21:4).

VIA, OUR HOPE

See It Through!

BY EDGAR GUEST

When you're up against a trouble,
Meet it squarely, face to face;
Lift your chin and set your shoulders,
Plant your feet and take a brace.
When it's vain to try to dodge it,
Do the best that you can do;
You may fail, but you may conquer,
See it through!

Black may be the clouds about you
And your future may seem grim,
But don't let your nerve desert you;
Keep yourself in fighting trim.
If the worst is bound to happen,
Spite of all that you can do,
Running from it will not save you,
See it through!

Even hope may seem but futile,
When with troubles you're beset,
But remember you are facing
Just what other men have met.
You may fail, but fall still fighting;
Don't give up, whate'er you do;
Eyes front, head high to the finish.
See it through!