



## Climbing Life's Mountains

Recently our family had the great blessing of traveling together and being able to spend a great deal of time exploring God's creation. As part of our trip, we took on the challenge of several rugged hikes up a few mountain sides or climbing over rough and slippery large coastal rocks. Some of the trails were relatively easy while others were steep. Some of the 'trails' were nothing more than a marked section of rugged rocks that were quite challenging to ascend and descend. At times it was extremely hot, at times the rocks were extremely slick from water streams. Some parts of the paths required teamwork to navigate. There were some slips and falls and helping each other up. At times, one would help identify the places to step and where to avoid, while also waiting and extending a hand or shoulder for one another to grab hold of to steady and balance. And sometimes, someone just needed to stop and pause to rest and the others would break with them and then encourage them to go on.

As I reflected on these journeys, I was reminded about how similar our walks and climbs in life are sometimes. We travel on our life journeys with many challenges facing us each day. Sometimes we are faced with what seem to be daunting, rugged, jagged mountains to climb. While at other times, we are able to take a leisurely stroll across a smooth path along side the still waters. However, in both of these moments, we need to remember that we need one another as part of God's family. In those steep climbs and challenges we need our family to help guide the way, to lean on, to support, to encourage, to not let us give up on ourselves or on reaching our goal - the summit of making it to heaven. **Psalm 121:1-2** "I lift up my eyes to the mountains—where does my help come from? My help comes from the Lord, the Maker of heaven and earth." God uses his family as one of those sources of help and strength for one another.

But we also need each other in those calm, peaceful parts of life too. During those times we are helping each other become stronger, building connections and preparing for those tough times so that we can trust and rely on each other when we are being faced with life's most difficult challenges. **1 Thess 5:11** "Therefore encourage one another and build each other up, just as in fact you are doing."

Bottom line - we need our Christian family in easy times and in tough times and realize that we all experience different parts of the journey at different times. Take a pause and consider what part of the journey you may be on right now. If you are facing challenges - don't let Satan convince you to go it alone or to be embarrassed to let others know you are struggling - let someone know that you need help so that we can hold your hand, give you a shoulder to steady on, give you a push and encouragement in the direction you need to go. **WE ALL HAVE MOMENTS WHERE WE FIND OURSELVES CLIMBING AND FACING CHALLENGES THAT WE NEED HELP TO PUSH PAST.**

If you are on a smooth part of your life journey, look for others to connect with so that when the time comes to reach out to help, there is an element of trust, security, and reliability that we will feel comfortable asking for the help we need. If you find yourself on a smooth part of the journey with others that are as well, then enjoy together the blessings that God is presenting to you both and cherish those moments together. (Find your David & Jonathan - one to whom your soul's can be knit together with **1 Sam 18:1**)

-Derrick Savage