



CALVARY MONUMENT BIBLE CHURCH

LOVING, LIVING, LEADING FOR GOD'S GLORY

## GRAB HOLD OF HOPE IN THE MIDST OF COVID-19

Pastor Chris Lenhart | April 1, 2020

PSALM 30:5B (ESV) "WEEPING MAY TARRY FOR THE NIGHT, BUT JOY COMES WITH THE MORNING."

There is a pattern that has emerged from the consequences of this pandemic. Isolation gives way to fear, fear to loneliness, loneliness to anxiety, anxiety to despair, despair to mourning. We cannot hide from the realities of both physical and material loss that have manifested themselves as this virus has tarried in our towns and communities. Like a desperate climber reaching for a hold to aid and sustain her next move, we are grasping for meaning and only coming up with air. What is God teaching us through this?

The rock is strong, able to bear up with us in both our most confident moves and most feeble. But oh, how this rock exposes our weaknesses! This virus is like an immovable obstacle on a treacherous rock wall. Obstacles give us pause to stop and discern, sometimes even weep and despair over what the next best move might be. Below us lies a starting point. Above is a desired goal. Along the way are dangerous cracks and crevices that threaten to send us back to the beginning. However, when discerned and maneuvered properly, these cracks and crevices can be the very things that the rock provides to aid us in reaching our desired destination.

Our destination is to bring God glory in all things. So how do we do this in a new age of "stay-at-home" orders and bans on social gatherings? How can we love, live, and lead for God's glory when the rock produces a new and unusual obstacle? Climbers will tell you in difficult situations it is best to press into the rock, to get your body as close to the rock as possible and to look up or look around for the next best move. I like the idea of pressing in and looking up. These are biblical concepts that remind me, even in times like these, the Rock won't move.

PROVERBS 18:10 (ESV) "THE NAME OF THE LORD IS A STRONG TOWER..."

A few realities are certain in all of this. One is that our world will never be same again. Another is that our God remains unchanged. There are times, on the face of the rock, on the way to our destination, when the idea of falling or failing might overcome us, even causing us to weep or forget the nature of the Rock that is holding us. We may see no good way to go today, so we must wait, press in, and look up. There is security and there is hope when leaning into the Rock. Joy comes when the Rock reveals our next best move. So we carefully and humbly reach up, grab hold, and keep moving.

I'm not sure how you have continued climbing in the middle of this pandemic, but I pray that the Lord has revealed to you ways you can continue to grow in your love for him and your love for others, even in this season. If you are still feeling lost, lonely, sad, or anxious, press into the Rock of your salvation and look up for wisdom and guidance. He will guide you towards your next best move. Perhaps it's a phone call to a friend you haven't talked to in a long time. Maybe it's a letter writing campaign to global partners or missionaries that you support. Could you call or write to those living in retirement communities, unable to receive visitors? What can you create that might bring someone joy? Music, art, drama? Sidewalk chalk with Scripture verses in your driveway to provide hope for your neighbors who might be out for an evening walk? Joy comes in learning new ways to grow in love!

1 CORINTHIANS 15:58 (ESV)

"THEREFORE, MY BELOVED BROTHERS, BE STEADFAST, IMMOVABLE, ALWAYS ABOUNDING IN THE WORK OF THE LORD, KNOWING THAT IN THE LORD YOUR LABOR IS NOT IN VAIN."