

Joyful in Hope – Day Eleven, March 30, 2020, (thoughts and ideas to encourage and challenge)

“Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.”
Romans 12:9

First off, thank you all for being so patient yesterday, as we worked through what seemed like an eternity of technical difficulty, trying to simply get the Sunday Morning Worship video to upload onto our YouTube Channel. If you haven't had a chance to watch it yet, please do so. I hope it is a blessing. Cole, Chase and I are still trying to work out all the bugs. It sounds like we will have several more Sundays of online Worship, so we ought to be pros at this by the time we stop.

Yesterday was pretty breezy, wasn't it? In fact, at about 4 PM, I received a call from the Clawson Police, saying that one of trees in the back of the church building had blown over and was leaning against the building. My first thought was, “Oh no, our new roof!” Fortunately, the damage is pretty minimal. No punctures that I see. The tree removal crew is coming tomorrow.

Here's the deal – the wind was strong enough, and the ground around that tree was soft enough, that the roots didn't have any staying power. That forty-foot-tall tree was literally pulled out of the ground, roots and all!



Having deep roots in solid ground is so important. Jesus talks about solid ground in his story of the wise and foolish builders. “The rains came and the winds blew . . .” There are probably a lot of people who are feeling pretty shaky right now. The daily updates concerning the coronavirus just seem to paint a dismal picture. Things are going to get much worse before they get better, we are told. There is so much that seems so unsure right now.

Here's one thing I know for sure. My God reigns! Satan would convince us that the situation is hopeless, and yet around the world, people who have their feet on solid ground, on the Rock - those people live in hope. They are testaments to the steadfast love of an all-powerful and forever faithful God. That is our heritage, as followers of Jesus Christ.

Before David became the great king of Israel, he had some challenging days and some powerful enemies. Despite having favor with God, there were a lot of forces working against him. At a time when things looked particularly bleak for David, God took care of him over and over again. David writes this song to God, in Psalm 18;

*I love you, O Lord, my strength,
The Lord is my rock, my fortress, and my deliverer,
my God, my rock in whom I take refuge,
my shield, and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold.
I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised,
so I shall be saved from my enemies.*
**Strength. Rock. Fortress. Deliverer.
Refuge. Shield. Salvation. Stronghold.
That's our God!
He is worthy of our praise.**