

**Joyful in Hope – 38 – April 30, 2020**  
**(thoughts and ideas to encourage and challenge)**

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

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Good morning, family,

Shout out to everyone who gathered on Zoom yesterday for Heritage Prayers. We shared some stories and some concerns. We spoke of dear friends who have lost loved ones, and we prayed for our leaders. We held first responders and medical personnel up to the Father. We prayed for healing and we prayed for peace.

As we were preparing to pray, we read from Psalm 63. In my daily Bible reading yesterday, I read about David, fleeing from his son, Absalom. All the things that David held dear – his home, his family, his kingdom – had been stripped from him, and he was on the run. But he knew God was with him. He finds himself on the other side of the Jordan River, in the wilderness. And he writes these words:

*O God, you are my God; I earnestly search for you.*  
*My soul thirsts for you; my whole body longs for you*  
*in this parched and weary land where there is no water.*  
*I have seen you in your sanctuary and gazed upon your power and glory.*  
*Your unfailing love is better than life itself; how I praise you!*  
*I will praise you as long as I live, lifting up my hands to you in prayer.*  
*You satisfy me more than the richest feast. I will praise you with songs of joy.*  
*I lie awake thinking of you, meditating on you through the night.*  
*Because you are my helper, I sing for joy in the shadow of your wings.*  
*I cling to you; your strong right hand holds me securely.*

I want to encourage you today, despite the restrictions and the limitations, and even the loss that you may be feeling right now, please understand and know that God is with you. His love is unfailing. And because he is our helper, we can sing for joy in the shadow of his wings. Cling to Him!

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Prayers for Heather and Eric Esshaki. Today, we will be holding the funeral for Heather’s grandfather. I would also ask for prayers for the family of Paul Huff, family friends from Tulsa Oklahoma. I grew up knowing Paul and Jean, and their children. Paul broke his hip earlier this month and went a rehab facility, where he contracted covid19. He passed away yesterday.

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***Your unfailing love is better than life itself; how I praise you!***  
***I will praise you as long as I live, lifting up my hands to you in prayer.***  
**Psalm 63**