

9/9/2018

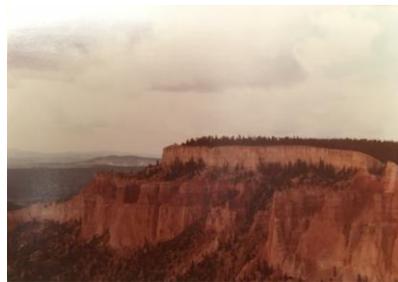
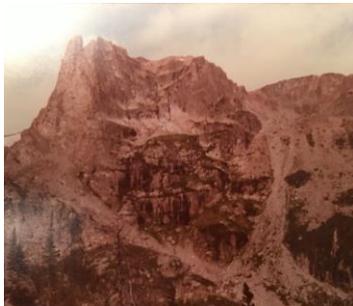
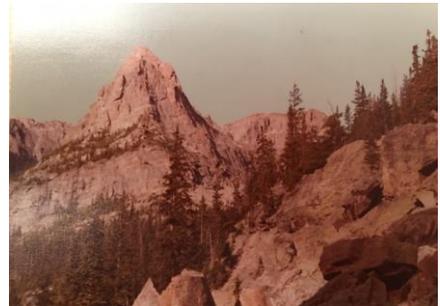
“Mountain Sunday: Protection and Care”

Scripture: Psalm 125

Series: Season of Creation

† **We are called to trust God’s protection and care for us; and to care for and protect others and the earth as good stewards of creation.**

I know that some of you have heard me talk about my mountain adventures and peak experiences. I like to talk about them, because they still mean so much to me. And, in case you don’t believe me, here’s a few pictures ☺





Now, I've never attempted Devil's Tower in Wyoming or Half Dome in Yosemite. But, I've still been to some wonderful places and even hiked or backpacked others.

And, as the bible points out, mountains don't have to be enormous to be significant.

Mountains have an important place in the Bible. Many key encounters with God and transition events for God's people and humanity took place on mountains.

Think about it:

Mount Ararat is the mountain where Noah and the Ark landed after the flood. This is where Noah saw the rainbow of God's promise. This is the mountain where the people came off the ark and praised God. It is the mountain where God made a covenant never to destroy the earth again.

God provided a sacrifice for Abraham, instead of his son on a mountain (Moriah).

God, as a burning bush, called Moses to free God's people from slavery on a mountain (Horeb).

God gave the Ten Commandments to Moses on a mountain (Sinai).

God gave Moses a glimpse of the Promised Land on a mountain (Pisgah).

It was on a mountain (Carmel) that the great prophet Elijah proved to the people that his God is the one true God.

Jesus was led into the wilderness to fast for forty days; then was led up to a mountain (known as the Mount of Temptation), where he resisted Satan's temptation of worldly power and subservience to him.

It was on a mountain (possibly Mount Hermon, the highest in the area) that Jesus was transfigured and showed the glory of God to some of his disciples.

When Jesus was struggling with the task before him, he went to a mountain (Olives) to pray, "Father if you are willing, take this cup from me; yet not my will but yours be done" (Luke 22:42).

And, although the exact location of Golgotha (or Mount Calvary) is not known, Jesus gave his life for the sins of the world.

And, in Revelation, The Lamb of God stands on a mountain (Zion) and shows us the ultimate destination for those who are faithful.

It could be said that mountains are a special place between heaven and earth, where God meets and "does business" with humanity, as one writer puts it. Those who have driven, hiked, ridden a train, biked, or navigated to the top (or close to) of any mountain and looked out at the majesty of creation from that lofty perch probably felt like they, too, have encountered God.

When we stand upon the solid ground, with lofty grandeur around us, there is a sense of security, strength and protection. There is also a realization or sense of expansive possibilities before us.

And, when we realize that it is God who caused and causes all that to be, we can come down from the mountain and rely upon that knowledge and spirit that fills us wherever we are!

As the psalmist said . . .

Psalm 125:1 *"Those who trust in the LORD are like Mount Zion, which cannot be moved, but abides forever."*

Let's think about what this means. Mount Zion is where God's temple was built in Jerusalem. Strong mountains surround it.

In a similar way, God is present with us and God's love surrounds us. This is true for each person, our congregation and all of God's people everywhere. Every person who trusts in God stays calm, and steady, and peaceful. When we focus on trusting God in our heart, we don't let anything make us wobble or wander or give up. Trusting God helps us to keep going the way we should.

(Rev. Ryan Bennett and Heather Bennett; UMC Discipleship Ministries)

Psalm 125:2 says . . . “As the mountains surround Jerusalem, so the LORD surrounds his people, from this time on and forevermore.”

Friends, trust in God’s protection and care!

And now, to consider how we are called to join in the protection and care of creation, I’ve asked Andy Stansfield to share his testimony, after I saw something about it from a recent article in the Cecil Whig. . . . (Where you work, and some of what you’ve done, etc.)

+ + +

Questions for Reflection:

How have or do you place you trust in God’s protection and care?

Can you think of some ways that remembering to trust God could help you stay steady for a tryout, a test, a game, a performance, an interview, or other experience?

How can or does trusting in God help you to care for other creation as well?