

“We Become Eagles”

Message by DD Adams

Providence United Methodist Church

Scout Sunday

September 28, 2014

The Old Testament lesson for today is taken from the book of Isaiah, chapter 40, verses 28 through 31. I'll be reading from the New Revised Standard Version. “Have you not known? Have you not heard? The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth. He does not faint or grow weary; his understanding is unsearchable. He gives power to the faint, and strengthens the powerless. Even youths will faint and be weary, and the young will fall exhausted; but those who wait for the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.” This is God's word for God's people. Thanks be to God.

Let's pray. God of hope and strength, give us ears to hear and provide strength as you give to all who would listen. Help us to receive hope from your word this day. Amen. Over and over again believers in God hear the world crying out for help, but the world doesn't see or hear the answer to its problems. Wars continue, the homelessness in America and all over the world continues to increase, and the discontent and anger against America intensifies. Most of the world seems to have their ears covered and their eyes shut. Hope and peace within our hearts can take a nose-dive because the world's state of affairs is not well.

It's not a secret, people have to be taught and continually reminded about the need for God in their lives. In life we can feel a weariness and exhaustion that seems to overtake us, and we feel God may have forgotten us. It's part of being

human, but we must be reminded and remember that God is at work despite how we feel or what we see. God hasn't forgotten the world or left us on our own.

In the verses read today, this is how Israel felt. They thought God had abandoned their world. They felt weak and powerless. To make matters worse, the prophet Isaiah saw a time when the Babylonians would destroy Jerusalem and take the Jews captive. The king of Persia, a man named Cyrus was the predominant world ruler then. But Isaiah also saw events that would result in the Jews returning to Jerusalem to rebuild and restore their nation. The Jews felt weak and powerless, but Isaiah reminds them, God reenergizes those who look to him for strength.

So Isaiah cries out to the Jews and reminds them who's in charge. He reminds them that God is working despite what they see. Isaiah reminds the people that there never was a time when God didn't exist—the world is his and there isn't a place where he isn't present. His strength never grows weary, and he's never limited in anything, and his understanding is perfect in every possible way!

To all the young people here today who wear a uniform—to all the older folks who don't wear a uniform—there will be times you want to give up, crawl under a rock, and just isolate yourself from the world because your problems just feel *WAY—TOO—CHALLENGING*. You're tired, you're weary, and you're exhausted. Life can have a hardness about it. God knows our condition and the weakness we feel at times. But in this passage, God speaks to you young men and provides a solution to your feelings of weakness. God says that those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength!

Hope . . . it's this certainty we can gather from God that he's present with us to help and provide the direction and resources we need. Hope . . . it means we wait patiently and trustingly rest that God is with us. Hope . . . it means to put on afresh and to *keep* putting on fresh strength. It's like we become eagles.

It's a divine strength! It happens when we look to God to energize us and keep us moving in the right direction. We actually exchange our lack of strength for God's strength. God's strength—it *never* is weary or feels faint. And throughout all the demands that life brings, we can run through the worst of times. And we can walk through the ordinary daily grind of living because of God.

Scouts know something the rest of the world with all its trouble and strife may not—include God in your life. Look to God. Do your duty to God. Rely on God to give you the strength when your strength is gone. An Eagle Scout is the highest rank attainable in the Boy Scouting program, but only about 5% of Scouts attain that level. Listen to some of the eagle's qualities and characteristics—**the bird that is!** No other bird can go to the height of the eagle. Eagles have a strong and sharp vision. They have the ability to focus sharply on what they want. Without vision we all lack direction. We've gotta know where we're going!

Another notable quality of eagles is that they don't eat anything that's dead. They only eat live prey. They're careful what they feast on. They set their eyes on what's helpful not hurtful. Strength depletes quickly when we entertain things that hurt us. Be careful what you hear, look at, and entertain in yourself and others. Others can lead us astray sometimes.

Eagles take advantage of a storm. They use the wind to fly higher and be lifted above where they were. They see it as an opportunity rather than something that's negative in their life. They turn challenging situations in a direction that's positive. They rise to greater heights and become stronger than they were before the storm.

There's something about our partnerships in life that can make us stronger or make us weaker. Listen to how the eagle decides about who they hang out with and hitch up to. When a female eagle meets a male and they want to mate, she flies

down to earth with the male pursuing her, and she picks a twig. She flies back into the air with the male pursuing her.

Once she's reached a height high enough for her, she lets the twig fall to the ground and watches it as it falls. The male chases after the twig. The faster it falls, the faster he chases it. He has to catch it before it falls to the ground. He then brings it back to the female eagle. The female eagle grabs the twig and flies to a higher altitude and then drops the twig for the male to chase. This goes on for hours, with the height increasing until the female eagle is assured that the male eagle has mastered the art of catching the twig which shows commitment. Then and only then, will she allow him to mate with her. Bottom line is this, when we choose our companions carefully we need to know if they're trustworthy to make the kind of commitment we're looking for in life. It matters who we hang with.

All of us here today need to be reminded to take courage and to look to God when we feel weak. To consider the habits of an eagle, and to remind ourselves that God is with us despite our circumstances or how we feel about the situations we're in. Don't lose hope, for God is our strength as we exchange our lack of strength for his unlimited strength. God *will* strengthen us to fly as eagles and to run and not grow weary. A young believer in God will mount up with wings as eagles. An adult believer will run, and a mature aged believer shall run.

Let's pray. Strong and hopeful God, remind us of our need to look to you when we lack the strength to be who we need to be and to do our duty to God and others. Bring back to our remembrance the faithfulness of God who instills within us the energy, the hope, and the faith we need throughout our lives. Amen.