



Mountain Climbing

Preview

Sometimes life situations become mountains of impossibility and jagged cliffs of defeat. This lesson examines how we can climb those mountains successfully.

Have any of you been rock climbing? Share your experience. What was the most important part of preparing for your rock-climbing adventure? (If no one has been rock climbing, ask the students to imagine what is the most important part of preparation.)

Praise

I've heard climbers say they think about God when they're on a mountaintop after a hike. Climbing a mountain successfully brings feelings of satisfaction, triumph, and camaraderie with fellow climbers. The same feelings come when God helps us to the top of the mountain in our life. Think about a difficult situation you have overcome. Praise God for helping you reach the top.

Parable

The peak of Mount Everest is the highest point from sea level in the world, almost 6 miles high. In the past many deemed climbing Mount Everest the ultimate challenge; others declared it impossible. In 1953, two men, Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay, were the first documented climbers to reach the top of Mount Everest. The climb took 7 weeks.

Nearly 30 years earlier, in 1924, climbers George Mallory and Andrew Irvine had attempted to reach the top of Mount Everest. They may have been the first to reach the top of the mountain, but no one will ever know because they did not make it back alive.

At least 240 people have died trying to climb Mount Everest. Severe conditions including freezing weather, high winds, and a lack of supplies or shelter can affect the most prepared climber. The high altitudes are so severe on the human body that once climbers reach the top of Mount Everest, they can only stay a little while, not even an hour. In 1953, Hillary and Norgay stayed at the top of the mountain for only 15 minutes.

Present



Difficult life situations can be like mountains in our lives. We can believe those mountains are impossible to climb, or we can prepare for the challenge.

When we are facing a difficult life situation, it is normal for us to experience anxiety, depression, or even anger. Feelings are normal. It isn't our job to stop our feelings from happening. It is our job to feel our feelings, let them pass, and move forward.

Paul the apostle experienced some difficult situations. Read **II Corinthians 7:5**. Paul didn't have it easy. Besides the care of all the churches he had founded, he faced discouragement, imprisonment, beatings, shipwrecks, snakebites, and people who hated him and tried to kill him. He had a lot of "mountains" in his way, but he learned to look beyond his circumstances. Read **II Corinthians 4:8-9**.

How did he do it? Paul shared the secret to his success in **Philippians 4:8**. We too can replace our negative feelings with praises to God by thinking about all of the good and lovely things He has done for us. Read **Psalms 61:2**.

Practice

Sometimes life is difficult to face on our own. But we aren't meant to handle it alone. Read **I Peter 5:7**. Jesus cares for us and provides help along the way. Read **Galatians 6:2-5**. Everyone is personally accountable to God, but He also expects us to help each other. Sometimes life's burdens are so big that we don't know how to help our friends—but we can find an adult who can help.

It wouldn't be safe to go mountain climbing without being prepared. You gather the supplies and tools and education you need to know the best way to survive. You may need a guide or a teammate who can help you along the way. It is okay to equip yourself and ask for help, especially when the mountain ahead is overwhelming.

Pray

God, thank You for the beauties and challenges life brings us. Help us to find ways to bring You glory as we face the mountains in our lives. Help us to use the Bible as our guide, and find friends and adults we trust to help us along the way. Help each of us to admit when we are facing a mountain that we can't climb on our own. Help us to help each other, and to use wisdom as we move forward. Help us to think on the good things You have done. In Jesus'



name, amen.

Plus

I challenge each of you to pray about the difficult situations in your lives, to ask God to help you to see the beauty in the situation, not just the challenge. If you or your friend are facing something that is too big for you alone or for you to help him with, I challenge you to be brave enough to ask for help both from God and from a caring adult.