

We must be willing to let go of our rope for His hand

A story is told about a mountain climber who liked to climb tall mountains for fun and to impress his friends.

After years of preparation and training, he felt he could handle any mountain terrain in the world, regardless of the degree of difficulty.

During a climbing trip with five other men, he decided he would make the final climb to the summit solo, so he could get there first and claim the glory, while the others slept.

After the rest of the climbing party turned in for the night, he put on his climbing gear and headed toward the summit. As he started his climb, he was very glad there was a full moon to help him see where he was



steve rains

● moments from calvary

going.

Although it was foolish to climb at night alone, he did use a rope and put in good piton protection as he climbed. With the benefit of the full moon, he made rapid progress up the mountain, in spite of the fact he was climbing at night.

His confidence soared as he neared the summit, but unfortunately, thick clouds were starting to build around the mountain, and vis-

ibility was deteriorating rapidly, as a winter storm developed.

In just a few minutes, visibility dropped to almost zero as heavy clouds and fog surrounded him. It was now too late to turn back, so he continued to climb up the mountain, hoping the storm would blow by quickly.

While moving along a narrow traverse, now in total darkness, he got into some "rotten rock" and slid down the side of the ridge and over the edge of a cliff. The good news is the protection he put in held, and he was still alive after the fall; although

he now found himself dangling in the air, suspended from his rope, unable to see anything around him.

The bad news is he had loosely tied his outer heavy parka across the top of his backpack while he was climbing, and he now discovered he had lost it during the fall.

Slowly the cold night air from the storm began to chill him to the bone through his lightweight inner jacket. After struggling to turn himself around in a circle and not finding anything to grab onto, in desperation he cried out, "Oh dear God in Heaven, please help me!"

Suddenly, from above he heard a strong deep voice boom out, "Cut the rope!"

"What?!"

As the climber listened over the wind, once again he heard a deep voice say, "Cut the rope!"

Except for the wind, silence followed, as the climber continued to hang onto the rope, while hoping to be able to grab onto something that would enable him to climb to safety. Unable to see his true situation, the climber concluded, as most people would, that hanging onto the rope was his only hope.

The following day, the rest of his climbing party discovered him frozen to death, still dangling from his rope only eight feet above a large out-cropping of rock. Had the climber cut the rope, he would have dropped down to a relatively safe area, where he could have built a

fire, using some of the surrounding scrub brush and probably survived the night.

From this tragic, hopefully fictional story, we can learn about trusting God. Do you look for security in a "rope" of some form? Or, are you willing to trust God with the many things in life beyond your knowledge or control?

Try to always remember: "For I am the Lord, your God, who takes hold of your right hand and says to you, Do not fear; I will help you." Isaiah 41:13.

Steve Rains is the pastor at the Calvary Gospel Church, Fourth and College. Go to the church's web site at calvarygospel.net or e-mail Rains at calvarycolumn@st-tel.net.

Planting depth and seed size can affect sunflower stands' start

Planting depth and seed size can have a clear impact on getting sunflower stands off to a good start, according to the second year of observations in an experiment at the dryland research site west of Goodland.

Colorado State area agronomist Ron Meyer looked at sunflowers' type (confection vs. oil), seed size (small vs. large) and planting depth (one, two and four inches deep).

Sunflowers were planted June 6 at 17,000 seeds per acre. Soil moisture conditions were ideal. Same seed lots were used for the large and small seeds, and germination was about 85 to 90 percent for both oil and confection types.

Three key observations were



jeanne falk

● agron notes

found with this experiment. Overall, the oil type emerged better than the confection type.

Both the oil and confection type emerged best from the shallow planting depths and worst from the four-inch depth. In fact, sunflower emergence from the four-inch depth was about 50 percent that of the shallow planting depth for oil and confection types.

The larger seed versus the smaller seed size from the oil type emerged similar with no statistical differences found. However, the smaller

confection seed size emerged significantly better than the larger-sized seed.

Results in 2006 were similar to 2005. Meyer speculated that emergence might be more of a struggle for the larger, woody shell of the

confection seed, especially under dry soil conditions.

Emergence at the one-inch depth was good in both research years, however, this may be too shallow to recommend for planting.

"These last two testing seasons

have had ideal soil moisture at planting, which aided emergence from the shallow depth," Meyer said. "However, if the weather gets hot and dry, that top one inch is the first to dry out, which will actually reduce the stand."

The general recommended planting depth is 1.5 to 2.5 inches.

Jeanne Falk is an area crop production and economics specialist for Sherman, Cheyenne and Wallace counties with Kansas State University Research and Extension.

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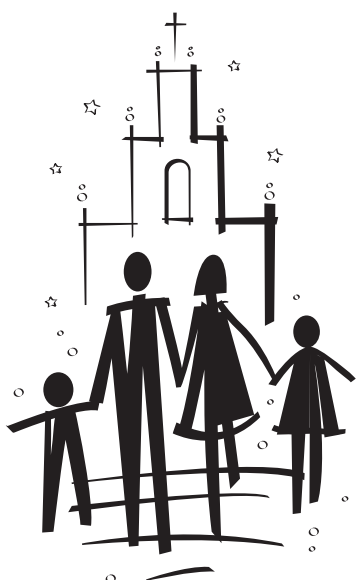
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