

**LETTERS FROM GRANDPA**  
**# 293**

Dearest grandchild,

Our last letter featured hope as an anchor of the soul. Isaiah 40:31 was mentioned toward the end of that letter. That verse reads in part: **“But those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles . . .”** This letter will focus on how our hope can help us to soar like an eagle.

In 1978 I purchased a 1964 Piper Cherokee 140 for \$6,250. It served me well for over 40 years making it possible to make mission trips to Mexico and conduct seminars throughout the midwest while still serving in a local congregation. The service ceiling of that particular plane is 14,300 feet above sea level. This means that it can fly at that altitude and still be able to climb at 100 feet per minute. Typically speaking if the engine is turbo charged you can add another 10,000 feet to the service ceiling.

The average airliner cruises between 30,000 and 42,000 feet MSL.

The Lockheed U-2 spy plane can fly at 70,000 feet MSL.

On Sep 07, 2018, however, the experimental glider Perlan 2, set a world record for high-altitude flight. It reached 76,100 feet over the El Calafate region in Argentina.

Please remember that a glider does not have a motor and cannot flap it's wings. This amazing high altitude record was achieved by taking advantage of an incredibly tall mountain and incredibly strong winds. No man or group of men created the mountain or manufactured the winds. God deserves the credit for both. Soaring in circles in a powerful updraft created by God made the record setting flight possible. The dictionary definition of “soaring” is to *“maintain height in the air without flapping wings or using engine power”*. This is precisely what an eagle does. It can circle effortlessly for hours and never flap it's wings. Spiritually speaking, we can do the same if we have hope.

The Psalmist said: **“Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we trust in the name of the Lord our God” (Ps. 20:7)**. When Moses was born Egypt was the most powerful nation on earth. Their army could defeat every other army no matter how numerous or well equipped. As you know, Moses and his ragged band of slaves achieved total victory over the Egyptians. This victory did not come because of man's wisdom or human strength. The victory came because God buried the Egyptian army with all their horses and chariots in the bottom of the sea (Ex. 14:26-31). Moses made it look easy like the soaring of an eagle.

A similar story involves the deliverance of King Hezekiah from the King of Assyria. This remarkable event is recorded three times in the Bible (2 Ki. 18,19; 2 Chron. 32; and Isaiah 36,37). The pitiful army of Hezekiah was so small and weak that the Assyrians offered to give them 2,000 horses if they could put riders on them (2 Ki. 18:23). Hezekiah, however, trusted in the Lord and this made his victory seem easy. It was not necessary for Israel's army to shoot a single arrow for God sent an angel and killed 185,000 Assyrian soldiers in a single night (2 Ki. 19:35). Because Hezekiah trusted in God the victory seemed as easy as an eagle soaring on a mountain breeze. As we have said before, scholars believe the 46<sup>th</sup> Psalm was composed to commemorate this victory. That Psalm begins with a reminder that God is our refuge and strength and a very present help in time of trouble!

My father, and your great grandfather (H. B. Mouton) worked as a fireman in Tulsa, Oklahoma. One of his assignments involved putting on a diving helmet and searching for the bodies of drowning victims. He said that usually by the time he arrived there was no need to hurry. After a very short time damage to the brain and other vital organs is irreversible. Certainly the disciples of Jesus knew this when they met in the upper room on the third day after His death. There was absolutely no hope in man's wisdom or medical science. There was, however, hope in the Lord. Without a single effort on their part, Jesus stood in their midst inviting them to examine the nail prints in His hands and the gaping wound in His side. Jesus made it look easy like soaring on wings like an eagle!

As long as you are healthy you can solve most of life's problems by yourself. As long as you are healthy you don't need God to tie your shoes or put on a pot of coffee. As long as you are healthy you can do most things by yourself. When a 104 year old woman was asked the secret of her long life she replied: "*Just keep breathing*"! Just think about it! Everybody wants to keep breathing, but everybody dies! While you may be able to handle today's problems today, there will ultimately come a time when you will face a mountain too big for you to move. When that time comes you can soar like an eagle if your hope is in the Lord.

I love you,

Grandpa Boyce