

You Raise Me Up
Proverbs 3:1-10

Today we are celebrating Grandparents' Day. We are lifting up grandparents and celebrating grandparents and the role of a grandparent. I love the song, "You Raise Me Up," recorded by Josh Groben, and I would like to reflect on this song with the message for Grandparents' Day.

When I am down and, Oh my soul, so weary;
When troubles come and my heart burdened be;
Then, I am still and wait here in the silence,
Until you come and sit awhile with me.

You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains;
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas;
I am strong, when I am on your shoulders;
You raise me up; to more than I can be.

You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains;
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas;
I am strong, when I am on your shoulders;
You raise me up; to more than I can be.

There is no life –no life its hunger;
Each restless heart beats so imperfectly;
But when you come and I am filled with wonder,
Sometimes, I think I glimpse eternity.

You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains;
You raise me up, to walk on stormy seas;
I am strong, when I am on your shoulders;
You raise me up; to more than I can be.

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Last summer Sun and I had little guests in our house for a visit. They were two boys, five and seven year olds, who are brothers, adopted from Korea and raised by a lovely family. When the boys were adopted and brought to Denver, five years ago, the Stewart family was looking for a baby-sitter for the newly arrived boys. Sun was contacted by the Stewarts, and Sun was happy to take care of the boys.

After that, Sun became very busy for the sake of the boys. She cooked and packed lunch for the boys each day. Her role was not only baby-sitting, but also taking on the

role of grandmother to them and the family. She took them to the playground to play, shopping malls to buy them gifts, and restaurants on a special date with her on special occasions. She played with them, ate with them, and sometimes napped with them. She still prepares presents for their birthdays, Christmas, and other special occasions. She had been a true grandma for them until we moved to Cheyenne.

These little guests visited and stayed for a week. One afternoon, Sun and I took the boys to Lion's Park, and they enjoyed the playground. The most enjoyable play for them was on the seesaw. The brothers sat on each side of the seesaw, shifting and moving up and down. They enjoyed the seesaw so much. Watching them, moving up and down, enjoying and screaming, I said a prayer for them in my heart: "Lord, bless these boys, enjoying the ups and downs, each brother raising the other. Keep them close in relationship, helping each other and calling out to each other, brother to brother. Lord, let us be their grandparents, watching their happy life and supporting for them well."

There is a hymn that goes like this: "Sometimes, I am up; sometimes I am down, oh yes, Lord! Sometimes I am almost to the ground, Oh yes, Lord!" A life is like playing on a seesaw.

There is a principle in a seesaw –when one side goes up, then other side goes down, and again in turn. Today's scripture reading shows us the principle of seesaw play between God and us. Be humble when you are descending to the bottom, as that is precisely the time God is raised, and God will raise you up high in turn when you are ready to give up yourself for God.

The official flower for Grandparents' Day's is the "Forget Me Not!" Today's scripture's theme is also, "Don't forget my teaching!"(3:1) There are rules by which God raises us up. (3:4) Let us consider three ways in which God raises us up.

First, "Trust in the God with all your heart and do not rely on your own insight." (v. 5) Then God will raise you up. Trusting is a relationship between two parties. I will trust in you while you are trusting in me. That is a rule of trusting. When you trust God, then God will trust in you for His blessing on you.

When my daughter Esther was three years old in Korea, she was diagnosed with a type of hemophilia. A visible symptom the disease is a noticeable speckling of the skin with tiny purple dots as the patient loses platelets in the blood and blood vessels burst, a disorder that is generally incurable. The doctor told us that there was no cure, no hope. The only treatment he could offer was participating in a drug test being conducted from abroad. There was a drug that was being tested on third-world patients, there was no guarantee what the results would be, and there was risk of unknown side-effects. This was not much hope. However, this being the only thing the doctor could offer, we decided to have Esther participate in the drug test.

The drug ended up being a failure and was never manufactured as a treatment for the disease. The drug had terrible side-effects, and many participants eventually died, either

of the drug's side-effects, or of their own disease. After being on the drug for a few months, my daughter Esther began rapidly to gain weight, until she reached a dangerously abnormal weight for a three-year old. As this could lead to other dangerous side-effects, we decided to take Esther off of the medication. I told Sun, let's trust in God and wait and see how God will treat Esther.

Several months later, on a day when Esther needed to have her regular blood tests, we happened to be out of the city, and the only facility available was a military hospital where lab facilities were minimal. Since the lab technicians there did not know how to conduct the tests that were needed, Sun (who had been a hospital lab technician before marriage) volunteered to do the lab work herself and tested her own daughter's blood in the military facility. She found that Esther's blood platelet count had tripled since the last test! We continued to test Esther's blood weekly, and saw the platelet count stabilize within several months. It was a miracle that Esther was evidently cured completely. She has never had any recurrence of the disease since.

“Trust in God with all your heart and do not rely on your own insight.” Then, God will raise you up. Those who trust in their own selves are the most foolish. It is foolish that one trusts solely in one self.

If you trust in God with all your heart then wait for God's time, God will raise you up. “For to this end we toil and struggle, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Savior of all people, especially of those who believe.” (Timothy 4:10)

Secondly, “In all your ways acknowledge him.” Then, God will make straight your paths. (v. 6). Bible says, “The fear of God is the beginning of knowledge.” So it is the goal of human search for wisdom. Acknowledging God is the most important blessing that wisdom can bestow.

Recognition is important in human life. Everybody likes to be recognized by others. Being recognized by others is one of the most important activities in our lives. The Lord Jesus does not ignore the activity of recognition. Rather, Jesus encourages us how to recognize others. “Recognize others before being recognized yourself” is the rule of recognition. “In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you.” (Matthew 7:12) The Golden Rule is probably the most powerful human relationship strategy in the history of the world.

We recognize that knowledge is power. We believe that knowledge can be a weapon for protection and conquest in the battle of competition. But, the Bible reminds us that, “Most of all in knowing, self-awareness is more important than any other knowledge.”

What is self-awareness? The Apostle James tells us what kind of self-awareness we should recognize. “Come now, you who say, ‘Today or tomorrow we will go to such and such a town and spend a year there, doing business and making money. Yet you do not even know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? (For) You are a mist that appears for a little while and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, “If the Lord wishes, we will

live and do this and do that.” (James 4:13-15) Life belongs only to God. Life is not to be lived selfishly but to be given away.

The Psalmist confessed, “I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me.” (Psalm 51:3) In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths. (v. 6) We confess, “We are sinner or we can not live without God’s grace, forgiveness and blessing.” That is our self-awareness in front of God.

We believe that the Lord, Jesus Christ, is the Way to God. But, there is also the message in Christian believe that the Holy Spirit guides, makes, and directs our paths and walks the road with us as long as we acknowledge Him.

Lastly, “Honor the Lord with your substance and with the first fruits of all your produce.” (v. 10) The Bible teaches us that there is an economic principle in God’s commandments. “One man gives freely, yet gains even more; another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty.” That is the principle of the economy of God. “A generous man will prosper; he who refreshes others will himself be refreshed.” (Proverbs 11:24-25)

Some years ago, one who has been recognized as on of the best preacher in America, Harry Emerson Fosdick, preached a sermon titles “Are You Part of the Problem or Part of the Solution?”

Checkups are part of life. We go to doctors and dentists for periodic examinations. We take our cars to a mechanic for occasional tune-ups. Tests are given in school to be sure the students are really leaning. So, in our spiritual lives, we need a faith checkup every now and then.

A boy went into a drugstore and called a lady named Mrs. Johnson. He said, “Mrs. Johnson, do you need a good yard boy? I’m a hard worker.” Mrs. Johnson replied, “No thank you, I already have a fine young man who takes excellent care of my yard.” But the young boy persisted: “Does he get there on time? Does he charge a fair rate? Is he neat? Is he conscientious?” Mrs. Johnson answered, “I do appreciate your interest, young man, but I am most pleased with the yard boy I now have. He is exceptionally good!” The boy thanked her and hung up. The druggist had overheard the conversation and was impressed. He said, “Wait a minute son. I didn’t know you were looking for a job. I’ll hire you. I can give you a job right here in my drugstore!” To which the boy replied, “Oh, no, thank you. I already have a great job! You see, I am Mrs. Johnson’s yard boy. I was just checking up on myself!”

I am asking you, are you trusting in God in all your heart? Are you acknowledging Him in all you way? And, are you honoring the Lord with your goods? Are you part of the problem on these issues or part of the solution of your problem?

As Christian people, our calling is to be part of the solution. We are to use our energies not to cause problems, but to solve them. May you be a problem-solver by hearing the word of God which God intended for his blessing on you, raising you up! Amen.