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Hide Me, Rock of Ages

*O Thou blessed Rock of Ages,
(Rock of Ages, I am)
Trusting now, dear Lord, in Thee;
(Dear Lord, in thee I'm trusting)
Keep me till my journey's ended,
(journey's ended, keep me)
Till Thy blessed face I see.*

*Keep me when the storm clouds gather,
(storm clouds gather, keep me)
Till the sun comes shining thru;
(comes shining thru the shadows)
Keep me till my work is over,
(work is over, keep me)
Till I bid this world adieu.*

*When my journey is completed,
(is completed, Savior)
And there's no more work to do;
(no work to do, O blessed)
Savior, guide my weary spirit,
(weary spirit, to that)
Happy land beyond the blue.*

*Chorus: Hide me, O blest Rock of Ages,
(Rock of Ages, hide me)
Till Thy blessed face I see;
(Thy face I see, in glory)
When the storm around me rages,
(round me rages, blessed)
Rock of Ages, hide Thou me.*

Brantley C. George (words 1946)
Brantley C. George (music 1946)



*All I have seen teaches me to trust the Creator for all I
have not seen.*

Ralph Waldo Emerson
Decorative separator line



Rocks of Faith

My husband and I have been to the Holy Land and walked the streets of Jesus' day. We went to the town of Nazareth and saw a re-enactment of those early days. We saw a shepherd with his flock and a carpenter with his tools. It was not an easy life. We also noticed there are very few trees with which to build structures. Early shepherds used caves for protection, and houses were made of stone.

Because the people used stones for building, they could readily identify with the idea of Jesus being a "Rock." They understood that a structure had to have a solid foundation and that rocks had to be fit together to make it strong and secure.

Isaiah 26:3-5: "You will keep in perfect peace those whose minds are steadfast, because they trust in you. Trust in the Lord forever, for the Lord, the Lord himself, is the Rock eternal. He humbles those who dwell on high, he lays the lofty city low; he levels it to the ground and casts it down to the dust."

I Corinthians 3:10-13: "But each one should build with care. For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work."

Once we understand Jesus is the solid rock upon which we are going to build, then we must examine the stones. The first layer of stones must be large rocks of faith. There are some things that are unprovable by the scientific method which we learned in school. Some things have to be accepted by faith. By faith, we believe that Jesus was with God in the beginning and that He was actively involved in the whole creation process.

Genesis 1:26: "Then God said, 'Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness, so that they may rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky, over the livestock and all the wild animals, and over all the creatures that move along the ground'."

After man sinned in the garden, God already had a plan in place to bring us back into fellowship with Him. He planned to send an unblemished Lamb as a sacrifice. That Lamb, Jesus, was offered during a Passover festival as the one and only sacrifice needed to take away our sins.

John 1:29: "The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, 'Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!'"

After He was offered for our sins, God raised Jesus from the dead. He acts now as a go-between for God and man.

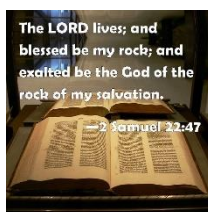
Acts 3:15: "You killed the author of life, but God raised him from the dead. We are witnesses of this."

I Timothy 2:5: "For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus."

When we have these rocks of faith upon our foundation of Jesus, then we realize how imperfect we are and that we need Jesus to save us. We learn what He would have us to do, and we are obedient to His will. We continue to build upon Him, uniting with other Christians until we are a complete house (or church) waiting for the day of His return.

Lorna Smith, Lubbock, TX

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Rock of Faith

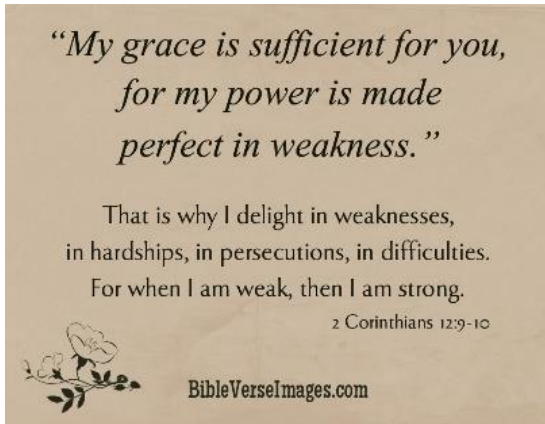
What do Thomas Edison, Steve Jobs, Tom Cruise, John F. Kennedy, and Cher have in common? They all have "dyslexia" (when the brain reverses words and letters, making reading difficult). As a child, Thomas Edison was sent home from school with a note from his teacher which said, "Your child is dumb. We can't do anything for him." Mrs. Edison responded, "You do not understand my boy. I will teach him myself."

My friend, Mark, has dyslexia. He is not famous like the others. Growing up in rural Appalachia, his dyslexia was discovered in the second grade. From second through fifth grade Mark needed special help to read.

One day in fifth grade, Mark returned from his special reading class to his regular class. Looking at the chalkboard, Mark was surprised to see his name listed on the board along with a few other students. Quickly he realized this was the list of students who made the honor roll. For once, Mark felt a sense of accomplishment. That feeling didn't last. What happened next left a deep scar on Mark. A student teacher had placed his name on the board. When the main teacher returned to the classroom, she began reading the names on the list out loud, giving recognition to the honor roll students. Coming to Mark's name, she paused, and then announced in front of the class, "He can't be on the honor roll; he has a learning disability." She proceeded to erase Mark's name from the chalkboard. His name was erased, but the deep sense of failure and embarrassment remained. Mark continued to struggle with dyslexia through grade school, junior high, and high school. Many thought he would not graduate from high school.

As a Christian, Mark believed God was faithful to His promises. The one promise Mark held on to was penned by Paul, a man who realized he, too, had a weakness.

"My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore, I will boast all the more gladly of my weaknesses so that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions and calamities. For when I am weak, then I am strong." (2 Corinthians 12:9, 10).



Mark depended on God. Mark says, "I have overcome many obstacles, but I don't believe I have greater obstacles than others. I choose to claim God's power and realize that in my weakness, God can do His greatest work."

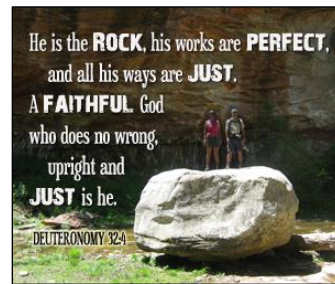
What is your obstacle, pain, suffering, trial, or weakness? God can be your rock of faith, in your difficulty.

Mark wanted to preach. He knew that meant a bachelor's and most likely a master's degree. He was told he would not do well in college and that he would never make it as a preacher. Others said if a church ever found out that he had a learning disability, he would be fired. Even his Bible professor discouraged him from going to graduate school. Trusting God and depending on Him, Mark went on to get a degree from college, and then a master's.

Today Mark has been in ministry over 25 years. He preaches for a large congregation in Appalachia. He teaches Bible classes and is an adjunct Bible professor at a Christian university. He has baptized over 50 people and written and published Christian books.

Mark says, "My help came from the Lord. When no one else seems to be there, He is always there for me." God truly is our rock of faith, and it is in our weaknesses He can do His greatest work!

Sally Shank, Oklahoma City



Portions of Psalm 18

A Song of Deliverance

David, the servant of the LORD, sang to the LORD the words of this song when the LORD delivered him from the hand of all his enemies and from the hand of Saul:



¹ I love you, LORD, my strength. ² The LORD is my rock, my fortress and my deliverer; my God is my rock, in whom I take refuge, my shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold. ³ I called to the LORD, who is worthy of praise, and I have been saved from my enemies.



³⁰ As for God, his way is perfect: The LORD's word is flawless; he shields all who take refuge in him. ³¹ For who is God besides the LORD? And who is the Rock except our God?



⁴⁶ The LORD lives! Praise be to my Rock! Exalted be God my Savior!



⁴⁹ Therefore I will praise you, LORD, among the nations; I will sing the praises of your name.



LORD, GIVE ME FAITH!

Lord, give me faith! – to live from day to day,

With tranquil heart to do my simple part,

And with my hand in Thine, just go Thy way.

Lord, give me faith! – to leave it all to Thee.

The future is the gift. I would not lift

The veil Thy love has hung 'twixt it and me.

—John Oxenham





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Three Things

*Three things in life that once gone, never come back –
time, words, and opportunity.*

*Three things in life that may never be lost –
peace, hope, honesty.*

*Three things in life that are most valuable –
love, self-confidence, and friends.*

*Three things in life that are never certain –
dreams, success, and fortune.*

*Three things that make a person –
hard work, sincerity, and commitment.*

*Three things in life that can destroy a person –
alcohol/drugs, pride, and anger.*

*Three things that are truly constant –
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.*

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A Rocky Subject

Once a young woman in our congregation fell on the stairs and broke her ankle. While waiting for emergency help, one of the men handed her a rock and said, "Hold this in your hand. Think about the rock. Concentrate all your thoughts and energy on the rock." His intention was to help her think beyond her pain by concentrating on the rock in her hand.

By concentrating on the Rock of our salvation, we can think beyond our present circumstances. The poorest of the poor can concentrate on the Rock and the richness of belonging to Him. The loneliest souls can concentrate on the Rock and find their loneliness eased by His tender love. The addict can lift his eyes and concentrate on the Rock to overcome enslavement to drugs, alcohol, or pornography. Cancer victims, by concentrating on the Rock, can find victory over disease, pain, and even death. Grieving hearts can find comfort in the Rock. The uncertain teen trying to find her way through those turbulent years can find solid footing by concentrating on the Rock. Frightened parents of rebellious teens can find strength and comfort in the Rock.

Jesus said in John 14:1-4: "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in me. In My Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, there you may be also." Also, in Matthew 11:28, He says, "Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

Even some of our songs talk about a rock (the Rock):

- Rock of Ages
- ...then to the rock let me fly..."The Rock that is Higher than I"
- He hideth my soul in the cleft of the rock
- Lean on His Arm (firm on the Rock of Ages stand)

By concentrating our hearts and souls on Him, we can be assured of a heavenly home for eternity. He is the Way, and no one comes to the Father but by Him.

Evelyn Waite, Rolla, MO

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