

FLY WITH EAGLES WINGS FOR JESUS! (1)

Isaiah 40:27-31 – Pastor Richard P. Carlson

Youth Snow Retreat – Uinta Youth Camp--Meeks Cabin – 2011

As we begin this series of messages, I welcome all of you to our 2011 snow retreat. It's a joy to be a part again, and thanks, Pastor Will Cornell and youth for inviting me to come to preach this series of 4 messages. As we start this series of messages on eagles, just know that eagles have much to teach us. Some of the character traits of eagles are five—**(1) Eagles have amazing strength.** Nature observers have witnessed them carrying well over their body weight of up to 12 pounds, even carrying a baby lamb to their spectacular nests. I came upon a golden eagle some years ago that killed a fawn pronghorn antelope. It was very young, but the eagle killed it out south on Aspen Mountain. Eagles can kill foxes, coyotes, and they fear no other animal when they sit on top of their prey at the site of their kill. **(2) Eagles have incredibly keen eyesight, they can spot a rabbit 2 miles away.** (They have 270 degree peripheral vision.) Eagles have acute depth perception. They have a clear membrane that protects their amazing eyes that see 8-10 times more than we as humans can see. **(3) Eagles have swiftness—they are fast.** Some verified reports are that they can reach flying speeds of 150 miles per hour and dive at speeds of 200 miles per hour. When an eagle dives, it pulls in its wings to let the law of gravity take over. All a falling eagle needs to do to catch his fall is to stretch out his wings. Eagles' wings are designed by God to soar continually. With a wing span of up to 7 feet, eagles can glide effortlessly up to ½ mile above the mountain top where they nest. They can soar almost motionless in the face of hurricane force winds. They don't flutter their wings like a humming bird; no, they ride the wind. They know how to spiral in the heavens to find and catch an updraft. They can fly higher because they catch the power of these turbulent wind drafts. **(4) Eagles have courage.** They nest in the highest, most precarious places on earth, where no enemy can reach their young. Since they mate for life, give the eagle credit for having the courage to stick it out with the same partner. If you ever see an eagle, wait and watch. Soon you will see there is another eagle that comes into the picture. They have courage to stay with their partner. **(5) Eagles know and show and have the character trait of freedom.** Eagles know what they want to eat. Since they see so clearly, they can choose if it's a mouse they want for dinner, a rabbit, a squirrel, a snowshoe hare, a coyote, or even a young lamb or antelope fawn. Eagles know where they want to fly, and fly they do, who knows where to, why, or when. Few animals exhibit such a rich and beautiful

example of freedom as they do. As I begin this series with this beginning message on eagles, you may wonder why we start with the fastest pace—flying, and don't work up to this message for the end. Biblically, there is a reason. Our text in Isaiah begins with this flying pace, and the last picture Isaiah gives is walking without fainting. In our series, we are going to make the last picture and message come from Ephesians 6: 10-19 on standing. Today, I would wish for each of you to know Jesus and knowing Him, to have character strengths like the eagle, to be strong in the Lord, to have keen eyesight for Jesus, to have an ability to be swift to do God's bidding in obedience, to be filled with divine courage, and to know freedom in the spirit, so that you will know where to fly, and to cherish the joy of freely flying for Christ in your lives.

As a young eaglet grows up, something happens that threatens its development. The mother's expectation is that the eagle must learn to fly. But sitting around in a huge deep eagle's nest makes the eaglets grow fat. In many cases, the eaglets appear to be too fat to fly. Eaglets get used to their homes, which are huge at times, virtual mansions. Some nests can last from 20 to 50 years. The nests can become quite large. The largest known bald eagle nest ever found was in Florida. It was 9.5 feet across, 20 feet deep and it weighed more than 2 tons. Nests however are typically about 5 feet wide and 3 feet deep. What eaglet in its right mind wants to venture out of such a mansion in the sky to try to fly? Eaglets don't want to fly, but mother and father eagles start putting the food at the edge of the nest and over the edge so the eaglet will finally face the fact—It's time to grow up a bit and it's time to fly. Sadly, eaglets face a 70-90% death rate in their first year. And amazingly, 40% of eagles die on their first flight. They just don't do what they hoped would happen. Something goes wrong on the way down. All of this background I have given you to set you up for our message tonight. If we are going to grow as Christians spiritually, we have to give up the world we have known and fly out into God's great world by faith, looking to Jesus. That's the thrust of my message tonight. What does God want to do in your life to take you out of your comfort zone in your nest to fly by faith for Him? I want to share tonight three traps in our spiritual eagle's nests that keep us from becoming what God wants us to be. What are they?

TRAP # 1 –WE GET COMFORTABLE LETTING OTHERS FEED US SPIRITUALLY, RATHER THAN LEARNING HOW TO SPIRITUALLY FLY AND FEED OURSELVES. (I.) Isaiah 40: 27 declares, “Why do you say, O Jacob, and assert, O Israel; My way is hidden

from the Lord, And the justice due me escapes the notice of my God.” In modern English—let’s read it. It may be comfort city for many of you who say, (This is my paraphrase, in essence.) “I am successfully hiding out. Leave me alone, Pastor. I am comfortable. I get all the church I want when my folks make me go to church. God has bigger things to do than worry about me. He doesn’t care about my troubles. He ignores my rights and my needs. He doesn’t care if I skip the flight lessons you say He has called me to take.” Recently, I read a little poem by Edward Sanford Martin. The title of the poem is “My Name Is Legion.” It seems like a strange way to describe how eagles get fat and comfortable in the nest. Yet this poem fits eagles, and it fits us and our theme tonight about flying with eagles wings for Jesus in 2011. It’s good for you to take excellent notes at snow camp, and I am going to try to feed you good spiritual food again this year. Yet, I not only want to go catch fish and bring them to you for a fish fry. I want to teach you how to catch fish for yourself. I not only want you to see me flying with eagle’s wings for Jesus at snow camp. I want each of you to fly with eagle’s wings for Jesus yourself, learning to read your own Bible for yourselves, learning to pray, learning to witness to others, learning to say no to the enemy with his barrage of temptations. In scripture, Jesus met a man who got comfortable. He gave the devil opportunities in his life, and soon he was loaded with demons—legions of demons. His name became Legion. One day, Jesus cast out all those demons and set him free. That day, I believe that Legion started to fly with eagle’s wings for Jesus. This poem, “My Name Is Legion,” shares the personal struggle we share as Christians when we get caught in life’s struggles, saying yes to the wrong things, being befuddled, bewildered, confused, immobilized and even paralyzed by our own problems in our nest. Listen to the words.

“Within my earthly temple there’s a crowd;
There’s one of us that’s humble, one that’s proud,
There’s one that’s broken-hearted for his sins,
There’s one that’s unrepentant, sits and grins;
There’s one that’s loves his neighbor as himself,
And one that cares for naught but fame and pelf.
From much corroding care I should be free
If I could once determine which is me.”

Do you ever feel this way? Are you defeated over your struggles in your spiritual life? Do you ever get sad and feel revolted by the truth of what you think, what you fantasize, your actions and your reactions? Do you ever get afraid of calling yourself a Christian because some days and weeks and months, there is so little of Jesus’ peace and power and love in your life? Do

you ever wonder who you are, for sure? Believe it or not, Paul the apostle had this struggle. He had to be unshackled from the nest he had learned to live in. He needed to be set free. Listen to Paul in Romans 7: 14-8:2 (NLT)

“The trouble is with me, for I am all too human, a slave to sin. I don’t really understand myself, for I want to do what is right, but I don’t do it. Instead, I do what I hate. But if I know that what I am doing is wrong, this shows that I agree that the law is good. So I am not the one doing wrong. It is sin living in me that does it. And I know that nothing good lives in me, that is in my sinful nature. I want to do what is right, but I can’t. I want to do what is good, but I don’t. I don’t want to do what is wrong, but I do it anyway. But if I do what I don’t want to do, I am not really the one doing wrong; it is sin living in me that does it. I have discovered this principle of life—that when I want to do what is right, I inevitably do what is wrong. I love God’s law with all my heart. But there is another power within me that is at war with my mind. This power makes me a slave to the sin that is still within me. Oh, what a miserable person I am! Who will free me from this life that is dominated by sin and death? Thank God! The answer is in Jesus Christ our Lord. So you see how it is: In my mind I really want to obey God’s law, but because of my sinful nature, I am a slave to sin. So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus. And because you belong to Him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you—(MADE YOU FLY LIKE AN EAGLE FOR JESUS) from the power of sin that leads to death.”

Consider this weekend as God’s time to lovingly push you out of your nest so you can fly for Him. Let God’s Holy Spirit tell you, “Quit making excuses for living off of your parent’s faith alone, and living off of Pastor Will’s faith or Pastor Carlson’s faith. Get down to business. Jump out of the nest this weekend. Fly to the Word of God. Read it for yourself. Soar into the heights of joy as I speak to you, YOU, yes, YOU, as you pray to Me alone, because you’re flying, and you love Me. Quit living on other’s apron strings and other’s faith. Jump by faith into My waiting arms. Underneath all your fears are My everlasting arms.” (Deuteronomy 33: 27) Secondly,

TRAP # 2 –WE ARE LAZY AND TIRED IN OUR NEST AND DON’T WANT TO RISK FOR JESUS BY FLYING TO HIM AND FOR HIM.

(II.) Look at Isaiah 40: 28-30. “Do you not know? Have you not heard? The everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth does not become weary or tired. His understanding is inscrutable. He gives strength to the weary, and to him who lacks might, He increases power. Though youths grow weary and tired, and vigorous young men stumble badly...” No generation has had it easy to live for God. Young people by the thousands in America, pray to receive Christ, and then grow tired trying to live for Jesus, wanting the strength to fly for Him. Notice in v. 29, Jesus gives strength to the weary and He increases power to those who lack might. Paul says to us in II Corinthians 12: 10 that Jesus says, “My power is perfected in weakness.” To fly, you must admit you can’t fly on your own. Admit that

you faint, get overwhelmed, done in, give up, tire from thinking about a flight lesson for Him. Who wants to memorize God’s Word? It’s a flight lesson we all need. Who wants to obey your parents? It’s another flight lesson we all need. Isaiah is saying—lean on Jesus. He doesn’t get weary or gasp for breath or get exhausted or short of breath or worn out or faint. v. 28. But He does give power to those who confess they have no power. God sees it when young people v. 30 stumble badly, totter, tire, waver in weakness, and are out of breath, exhausted. Stop being trapped in looking to your own strength and measuring what you think you can do. Let me give you a new verse the Lord gave me to the Song, “Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus, Look into His Face. Michael Hansen wrote the song in 2000.

Written by Michael Hansen

G Gsus G Gsus
 Turn your eyes upon Jesus
 C Csus C Csus
 Look into His face
 G Gsus G Gsus
 And turn your eyes upon Jesus
 C Csus C
 And give Him praise
 Csus G Gsus
 And give Him praise

C G-D-C
 And give Him praise
 C G-D-C
 And give Him praise

“Fly like eagles to Jesus. Fly on wings of grace. Fly like eagles to Jesus, Where we see His face, And give Him praise...repeat.” 3rdly,

TRAP # 3 –WE ARE TOO STUBBORN TO WAIT UPON THE LORD FOR WINGS TO FLY. (III.)

Isaiah 40: 31 is clear. “Yet those who wait for the Lord will gain new strength; They will mount up with wings like eagles.” Waiting on God to fly for Him is all about **qavah**. **Qavah** is the Hebrew word for wait. It is unique. It means to braid or bind together by twisting. It means to collect into one focus upon God, straining our mind in His direction with an expectant attitude and a forward look of assurance. We want to be in control so often. We don’t want God’s timing. We want to call the shots. God is calling us tonight by His Spirit saying, “Braid your faith and love for Me, with your doubts and fears, into one braid, saying, “Lord, I believe. Help my unbelief. Here I come. Catch me. I’m listening to Your voice. I’m braided to You, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I’m bound to You, Jesus. I unbind myself to my will. I’m flying to You/Your will. Amen.”