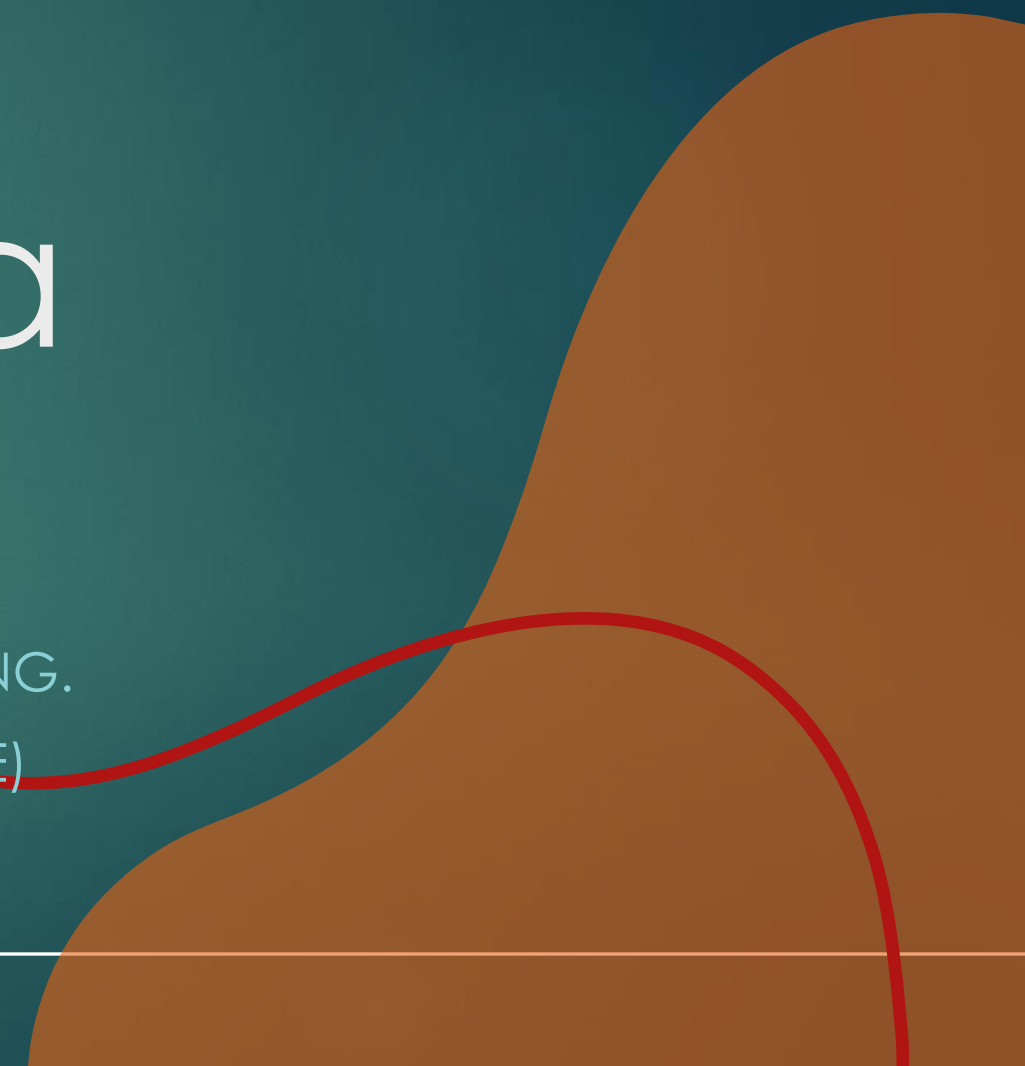
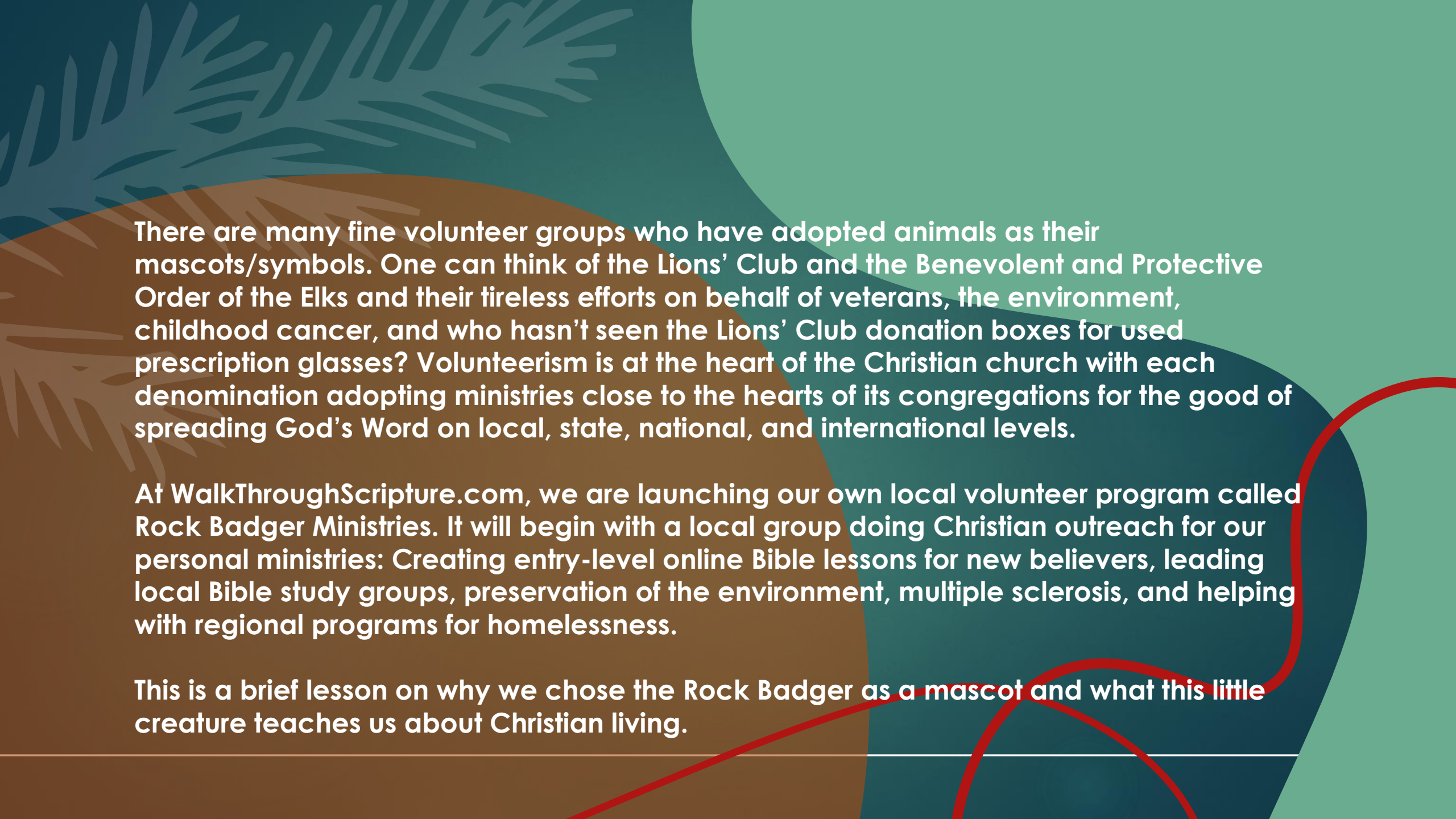




Lessons from a Rock Badger

AND WHAT THEY TEACH US ABOUT CHRISTIAN LIVING.
JANUARY 8, 2023 BY C.M. NUTTING (LEAD DISCIPLE)





There are many fine volunteer groups who have adopted animals as their mascots/symbols. One can think of the Lions' Club and the Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks and their tireless efforts on behalf of veterans, the environment, childhood cancer, and who hasn't seen the Lions' Club donation boxes for used prescription glasses? Volunteerism is at the heart of the Christian church with each denomination adopting ministries close to the hearts of its congregations for the good of spreading God's Word on local, state, national, and international levels.

At WalkThroughScripture.com, we are launching our own local volunteer program called Rock Badger Ministries. It will begin with a local group doing Christian outreach for our personal ministries: Creating entry-level online Bible lessons for new believers, leading local Bible study groups, preservation of the environment, multiple sclerosis, and helping with regional programs for homelessness.

This is a brief lesson on why we chose the Rock Badger as a mascot and what this little creature teaches us about Christian living.

Proverbs 30:26

“Hyraxes (Rock Badgers) are creatures of little power, yet they make their home in the crags”

The Rock Badger is a humble little creature (in fact, it's considered something of a pest in Israel). Smaller than a groundhog, they live in the rock-covered hills for protection because they have no natural defenses, strength, or cunning. Out in the open, they are vulnerable to all kinds of predators. They are also social creatures and live in communities of 2-26 badgers, communicating in a variety of sounds that include a noise quite similar to “singing”. In the Bible, they are mentioned as unclean animals (Deuteronomy 14:7-8).

Jesus Christ is the Rock upon which Christians can build their lives with assurance of His presence, help, and protection.

- ▶ **For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ (1 Corinthians 3:11)**
- ▶ **"He is the Rock, His work is perfect; For all His ways are justice, A God of truth and without injustice; Righteous and upright is He." (Deuteronomy 32:4)**
- ▶ **The LORD is my rock and my fortress and my deliverer; My God, my strength, in whom I will trust; My shield and the horn of my salvation, my stronghold." (Psalm 18:2)**
- ▶ **Whoever comes to Me, and hears My sayings and does them, I will show you whom he is like: He is like a man building a house, who dug deep and laid the foundation on the rock. And when the flood arose, the stream beat vehemently against that house, and could not shake it, for it was founded on the rock. But he who heard and did nothing is like a man who built a house on the earth without a foundation, against which the stream beat vehemently; and immediately it fell. And the ruin of that house was great." (Luke 6:47-49)**

The Bible has something to say about those who are meek, vulnerable, and humble.

- ▶ *"For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin." (Hebrews 4:15)*
- ▶ *"No temptation has overtaken you that is not common to man. God is faithful, and he will not let you be tempted beyond your ability, but with the temptation he will also provide the way of escape, that you may be able to endure it." (1 Corinthians 10:13)*
- ▶ *"Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others." (Philippians 2:3-4)*
- ▶ *"He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the LORD require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" (Micah 6:8)*
- ▶ *"But the tax collector stood at a distance, unwilling even to lift up his eyes to heaven. Instead, he beat his breast and said, 'God have mercy on me, a sinner!'. I tell you, this man, rather than the Pharisee, went home justified. For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but the one who humbles himself will be exalted." (Luke 18:13-14)*

Human understanding is limited. God is omniscient; His wisdom is without measure and His truth is reliable for our lives.

- ▶ **"For the LORD gives wisdom: out of his mouth comes knowledge and understanding." (Proverbs 2:6)**
- ▶ **"He that trusts in his own heart is a fool: but whoever walks wisely, he shall be delivered." (Proverbs 28:26)**
- ▶ **"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that gives to all men liberally, and upbraides not; and it shall be given him." (James 1:5)**
- ▶ **"And to man he said, Behold, the fear of the LORD, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." (Job 28:28)**
- ▶ **"Finally brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, thing about these things" (Philippians 4:8)**
- ▶ **"The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom: and the knowledge of the holy is understanding." (Proverbs 9:10)**
- ▶ **"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways submit to Him and He will make your paths straight." (Proverbs 3:5-6)**

We all have to acknowledge that we are helpless, especially in our sinful condition, without the grace, mercy, and forgiveness of God through Jesus Christ.

- ▶ ***"Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us." (Romans 5:1-5)***
- ▶ ***"I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life." (1 John 5:13)***
- ▶ ***"He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5)***
- ▶ ***For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39)***

Because of Christ's sacrifice for us, those who repent and believe on Him have been forgiven, redeemed, justified, and sanctified before God.

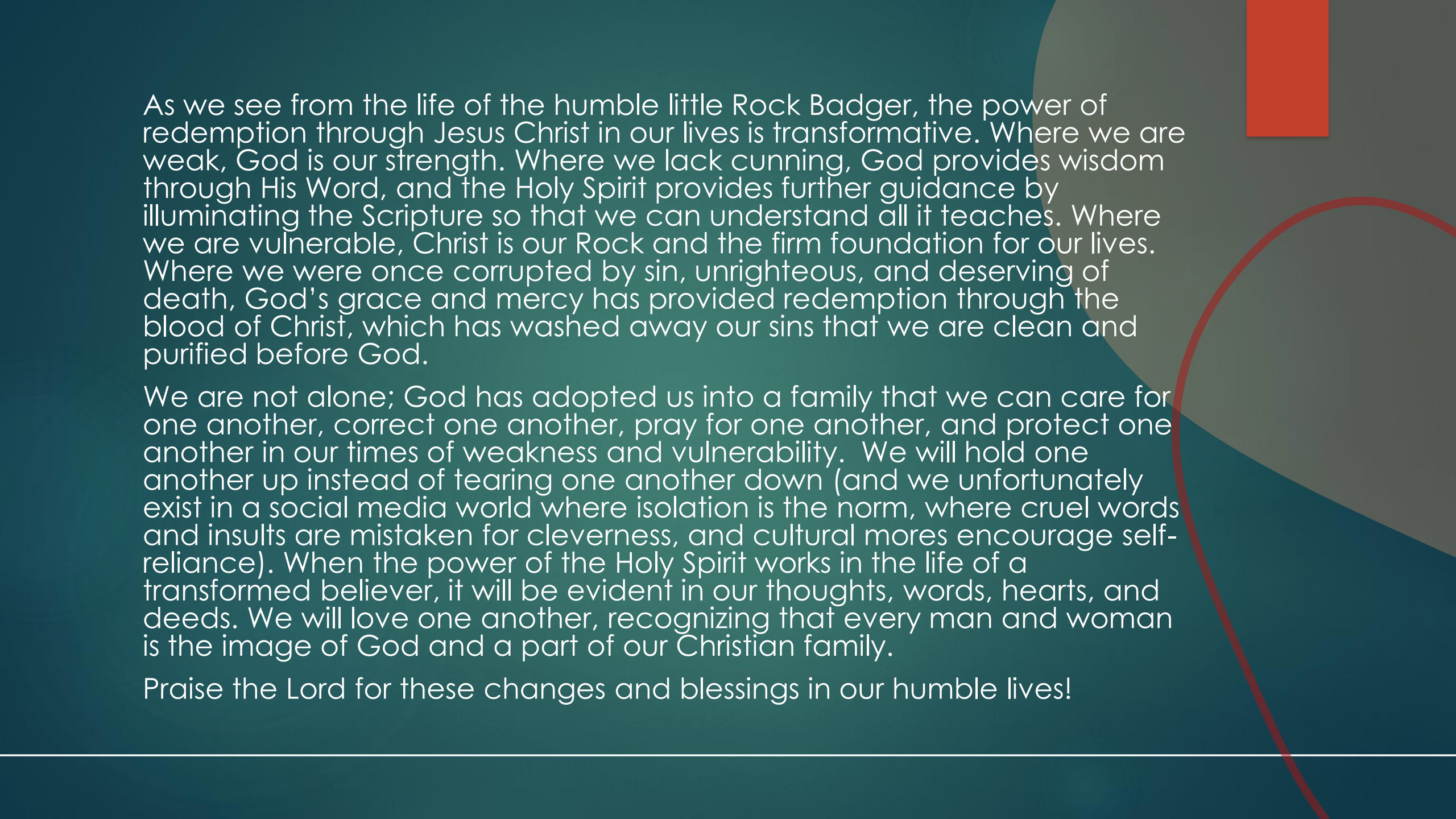
- ▶ ***"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness: (1 John 1:9)***
- ▶ ***"But the voice spoke from heaven a second time: 'Do not call anything impure that God has made clean' (Acts 11:9)***
- ▶ ***"Even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love." (Ephesians 1:4)***
- ▶ ***"For we also once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by His grace we would be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." (Titus 3:3-7)***

We have been adopted into a community known as the Church of Christ. In that community, God calls us to care for one another.

- ▶ **"A new commandment I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you also must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another" (John 13:34-35)**
- ▶ **"Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their labor. If either of them falls down, one can help the other up" (Ecclesiastes 4:9-10a)**
- ▶ **"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin." (1 John 1:7)**
- ▶ **"So in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others" (Romans 12:5)**
- ▶ **"Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective." (James 5:16)**
- ▶ **"Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you." (Colossians 3:13)**
- ▶ **"Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited." (Romans 12:16)**

Because we have been saved by God's grace through the sacrifice and blood of Jesus Christ, we can be joyful and praise the Lord as He deserves (in other words, we can and should sing, for God is worthy of our praise).

- ▶ **"When I think on my ways, I turn my feet to your testimonies: I hasten and do not delay to keep your commands" (Psalm 119:59-60)**
- ▶ **"Speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord" (Ephesians 5:19)**
- ▶ **"Shout for joy to God, all the earth; sing the glory of his name; give to him glorious praise!" (Psalm 66:1)**
- ▶ **"Oh sing to the Lord a new song, for he has done marvelous things! His right hand and his holy arm have worked salvation for him. The Lord has made known his salvation; he has revealed his righteousness in the sight of the nations. " (Psalm 98:1-4)**
- ▶ **"Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth! Serve the Lord with gladness! Come into his presence with singing! Know that the Lord, he is God! It is he who made us, and we are his; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise! Give thanks to him; bless his name! For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations." (Psalm 100:1-5)**



As we see from the life of the humble little Rock Badger, the power of redemption through Jesus Christ in our lives is transformative. Where we are weak, God is our strength. Where we lack cunning, God provides wisdom through His Word, and the Holy Spirit provides further guidance by illuminating the Scripture so that we can understand all it teaches. Where we are vulnerable, Christ is our Rock and the firm foundation for our lives. Where we were once corrupted by sin, unrighteous, and deserving of death, God's grace and mercy has provided redemption through the blood of Christ, which has washed away our sins that we are clean and purified before God.

We are not alone; God has adopted us into a family that we can care for one another, correct one another, pray for one another, and protect one another in our times of weakness and vulnerability. We will hold one another up instead of tearing one another down (and we unfortunately exist in a social media world where isolation is the norm, where cruel words and insults are mistaken for cleverness, and cultural mores encourage self-reliance). When the power of the Holy Spirit works in the life of a transformed believer, it will be evident in our thoughts, words, hearts, and deeds. We will love one another, recognizing that every man and woman is the image of God and a part of our Christian family.

Praise the Lord for these changes and blessings in our humble lives!