

Today I spent the day in my back yard with the leaf blower, a rake and a old sheet from one of the girls beds – I believe *Beauty and the Beast* to be exact... Last Wednesday I had spent the day raking and finishing up my Mom's place and yesterday was time for my own yard to get finished before the snow starts flying... I had help from both Rebekah and Kaila. It was so awesome spending the afternoon out in the yard with my girls, working hard beside me to get all the leaves into piles and removed from the yard. When the last leaf pile was picked up about 6 hours after we started, there was a great sense of relief and having done a good days work – I'm hopeful it will become a favorite memory from them as we worked together and talked about life and stuff like that...

We all were tired and sore from our work-day in the back yard – But it reminded me of a passage that has blessed my heart in the past...

*“The Sovereign LORD is my strength; he makes my feet like the feet of a deer, he enables me to go on the heights...” (Habakkuk 3:19)*

It reminds me of my relationship with Jesus Christ, that He is my strength and that He will carry me when I cannot go any further... See, I'm reminded, that I was too weak and sinful to save myself, on my best day I was a dirty dish cloth in the throne room of God...

*“All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.” (Isaiah 64:6)*

The Bible teaches us that Jesus became my righteousness: *“God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” (2 Corinthians 5:21)* and carried me out of sin, shame and guilt into a brand new life: *“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!” (2 Corinthians 5:17)*

Today, if **ANYTHING** significant happens in my life – it's because He carries me. I cannot love my wife without Him carrying me. I cannot be a good father without Him carrying me. I cannot preach without Him carrying me. I cannot lead the church without Him carrying me. I cannot do **ANYTHING** without Him carrying me!

*“I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5)*

Sure, at times I try to escape His handle on my life and make it on my own – and every time I do so results in pain and regret. Yet, for some reason, even when I walk away – He's always there, waiting to take me back and carry me some more.

I am so thankful for a God who isn't yelling *“do more, try harder”* at me, but rather a Father who is willing to pick me up and carry me – I am useless and helpless without Him.

**Be Strong, Be Courageous, Be Fearless – and remember...**

**Christ IS All!**

*Pastor Mark*