

May 29, 2020

Here's Hope

Following the Sun

On the coast of South Georgia the trees lean back away from the water. Endless breezes blow in from the water across the beach and through the trees. They lean away. Wind is not the only thing that makes things lean. Water may push us with its current one direction or another. Who has not experienced the push of the waves at the ocean beach? Most lives, also, have a lean. We even say "he leans left" (liberal), or "she leans right" (conservative). Sometimes we lean with the culture we inhabit. If everyone else is wearing a certain type of clothes, so do we. If everyone else in our neighborhood attends church, so do we. The word "proclivity" can also be used. My mother-in-law would often say about someone that he/she is "turned" that way. Some seem to have been born with a love for school, reading, and all things "educational." Some want to go through life "hands on," without books or school. I've noticed some people lean toward a religious life more than others. We all need Jesus, but some seem to "get it" easier than others.

With people, I've noticed the lean forward and the lean back. It's possible to lean back because of fear. Our troubles cause us to lean away from possible struggle and stress. Our past failures make us reluctant to take on a new challenge. Regrets cause us to lean back. You can go through your whole life regretting a mistake or a wrong choice. We all make wrong choices, but for some they seem to always pull us back into a past that cannot be changed. Failure is the same way. The only person who does not fail is the person who tries nothing. In that trying, however, we are sometimes going to fail. That may mean we quit trying. We might adopt an attitude that expects the worst instead of one that presses for the best. Do you expect the best or the worst?

Guilt leans back. Fear leans back. Failure leans back. Jesus leans forward. Following Him we're constantly looking forward. For one thing, if you're following that means you have to look at someone else leading. *You're* leaning in whatever way *He* leads. We pray and then expect what He's going to do. By asking, we then live expectantly. We know that He will not positively answer every prayer. At least we know He'll not always answer the way we want. Having brought our need to the throne, however, we listen and look for how He answers and leads. You never know what He's going to do, but as you follow you're leaning in His direction. We always have something to look forward to because even at the end of our lives there's heaven.

We ought always be like sunflowers. They always lean toward the sun. The face of a sunflower follows the sun. The Sun is its focus. All day long sunflowers have one lean. It's always the sun. We too need to follow the Son. That's the direction of our lives. That's the focus of our attention. Following the Son, we're always leaning forward.

Focused on the Son,  
Jerry Rea