

The Bridge

About twenty five or so years ago, when I was working in the Columbia Gorge area Parks out of Rooster Rock State Park, the crew and I had occasion to proceed up Latourelle Falls trail, one of our satellite parks, for the purpose of repairing an approximately twenty five foot long foot bridge which had been washed off its footings by a flooded stream to a new resting place some fifteen or so yards down the hill.

We loaded up all the tools we could think of, since the job by all estimates would entail a complete disassembly of the bridge and moving it piece by piece back to its original spot on the trail. This was estimated to take several “crew days” of arduous and time consuming labor. I suggested bringing along a double block and tackle we had in the shop. That was met with some resistance because no one thought it would be useful, and no one knew how to hook it up. I said I could hook it up so they acquiesced and brought it along.

At the job site on the trail the situation looked even worse than the crew had envisioned. I suggested that we “give it a shot” of pulling the total bridge as one integral unit up the hill and setting it in place on the existing footings with the use of the double block and tackle. After the laughter subsided, it was agreed that since we had it with us, and I knew how to hook it up, we might as well try. So, with the help of some comrades I hooked up the still believed to be useless piece of equipment. The others unloaded the disassembly tools needed to do it the hard way.

Once the double block and tackled was hooked up, with a half hearted effort several guys pulled on the end rope bringing tension on the equipment, and tightening the tackle. The next effort was with only a few guys, but it was with full effort. The entire bridge budged, just as it was supposed to.

The eyes of the entire crew lit up with encouragement and they pulled together and turned a labor intensive job of several days duration into one partial day, leaving the bridge back in place and fastened down by the time of the afternoon break. The full job was completed by the days end.

Originally this situation seemed ominous and foreboding. There was not much to be encouraged about. It seemed even more hopeless was when Jesus was told about His friend Lazarus’ illness; Jesus delayed coming to heal him. When Jesus at last arrived on the scene, the situation was seemingly worse than could be imagined; Lazarus was dead. In response to Mary and Martha’s questions about His delay, Jesus not only claimed to be the Resurrection and the Life[1], but also proved it by raising Lazarus from the dead[2].

Too often we tend to forget the power of the Resurrected Christ Who is open to our prayers for His help. We try on our own in pitiful futility, ignoring the power of the Holy Spirit of God living within us. He is ready, willing and able to deliver us. Like a “Spiritual Double Block and Tackle”, by our Faith placed in Him He will extract us from the quagmire of Sin and its sting. This is accomplished through His Grace, and by the richness of our Faith in Him[3].

[1] John 11: 25-26

[2] John 11: 38-44

[3] Ephesians 2: 8