

# On a Rock in a Hard Place

by Jack Hayford

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*The sermon emphasizes the importance of deep spiritual roots developed during dry times for thriving in faith amidst life's challenges.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 1:3, Isaiah 43:2, Jeremiah 17:8, Colossians 2:7

**Topics:** "Faith And Trust", "Gods Providence"

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## Description

Jack Hayford reflects on the survival of a young redwood tree in the midst of a powerful creek, drawing parallels to our own lives and the dry seasons we face. He emphasizes the importance of going deeper in our faith during challenging times, trusting in God's providence and grace to sustain and anchor us for the future. Hayford encourages listeners to see beyond human interpretations of chance or fate, recognizing God's hand in planting us where we are for a purpose.

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## Transcript

We stood on a little bridge spanning the trickling creek. The calm flow of water in late September in no way resembled the surgings and torrents that gush through that site when the spring thaws come to Yosemite.

Looking downstream, Anna and I observed the mighty boulders scattered along the length of the stream bed, mute evidence of the explosive power of that creek at floodtime. As we did, I mused over a young redwood tree, standing right in the middle of the creek. On a slight, rocky rise around which its gnarled root system clung, it had somehow found a way to begin its life on that perilous perch.

That it had begun didn't surprise me, in spite of the difficult granite footing, for seedlings are born by the millions and swept away in the flush of the spring tides. What did surprise me, was that it had survived. I wondered how that happened there in the middle of a stream. If the surging waters hadn't washed it away, surely the crashing boulders should have crushed it.

But there it was. Tall. Serene. Probably ten to twelve years old, and clearly destined to stand for decades, if not centuries, to come.

I drew a conclusion on my own. That tree's survival was related to a drought.

I can't prove that, but there is no way in the world the young tree could have survived its setting if there had not been a two or three year period when the spring thaw was light. It was obvious that during the tree's infant existence, the clawing fingers of the creek-become-river didn't reach as high or pull as hard.

The lower waters kept the annual floods and the rolling boulders from threatening its life.

But another factor came into play with the drought. The tree's roots searched more deeply for their supply. The dry spell was a blessing which not only allowed for survival, but which created the setting for firmer anchoring against the springtimes ahead. The rushings of the stream would be withstood because of roots sunk deep during dry times.

Then I thought about God...and about His providence. I thought about the fact that notwithstanding the human interpretations about "chance," "fate," "luck," and the sundry other terms of human incredulity, the Creator's hand had planted that tree. I thought about God's life and breath establishing that seed. About His foreseeing my wife and me standing on that little bridge someday, learning from His textbook of creation.

And I praised Him. I said, "Thank you, Lord, for the dry times in my soul-times when I think I would prefer surgings, but times when You are calling me deeper, deeper into a more thorough grasp of Your love and sustaining grace toward me." And I thought of the verse: "He shall be like a tree planted..."(Psalm 1:3)

Wherever you are and whatever seems to be lacking around you, go deeper. You aren't there by accident. He has you there on purpose. You'll not only survive by His grace, you'll thrive.

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