

LITTLE STACKS OF HOPE

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You know that same mountain I was surprised to see [unity](#) on? The one my enneagram 7 husband prompted that our family summit? There were little stacks of hope that met us there. And we needed them.

That morning we all piled into our minivan and drove out to the trailhead — which we nearly missed. If you want to witness a 7 really stress out, watch what happens when one of their experiences is threatened. It was a rare occasion that I was the calm one. But eventually, we made it. And we started plodding into the thick trees and foot worn trail that snaked us up the side of the mountain under the cover of limbs and leaves. Spirits were high, sour patch kids were being passed around, and we were ADVENTURING. Eventually the trees thinned and we trekked our way above the tree line... which in my limited experience I assumed that meant we had to be a great deal of the way into this little hike. I even laid eyes on what appeared to be the summit, and we thrust one foot ahead of the other, talking and sipping our waters, and enjoying the beauty of the view.

And then I saw it. The “summit” was not the summit. The impossibility that stretched

nearly beyond our view was littered with a trail of ants. At least, they looked like ants... and these people were headed toward the ACTUAL summit. After Brandon and I exchanged some furious sign language so as not to freak out our kids, we started inching our way up this rocky path with our people.

And there were the little stacks of hope. They were rocks distinctively stacked up on top of one another; left there by those who had gone before us, called cairns. They are used for milestones and navigation support when there's not much to mark a path. They were intermittently speckling the trail, and they became our tiny goals. "See that one? We can do it." And we'd make it to the next stack of hope and sit down, eat a sour patch kid, and rest. Until finally, there were no more stacks of hope, and we were left with the summit.

Could we have summited without those little stacks? Probably. But they became incremental doses of success. And when we looked back and saw the string of stacks we had already passed, they became reminders of what we had already done, and what we could do. They represented hope for what was still to come.

Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds..." — Hebrews 10:23-24

Sometimes in our lives it feels like we're bouldering and the summit seems unsurmountable. And we need little stacks of hope. And I think because we're a forgetful people, we can easily traipse into what's next without refueling with the memories of how God has demonstrated faithfulness along the way. And **these little reminders of his grace can be the very thing that breath hope into our horizons**; and when we loop others in on these whispered prayers and praises, we lend our little stacks of hope to those who are traipsing up toward the same summit.

So let's be a people who pauses long enough to build little stacks of hope. Even now, in the quietness of this very moment, **where have you seen evidence of God's grace?**