

Sneller Salute



At the top



Relaxed

THE UNION

By Rebecca Sneller

I watched a big-winged bird one day
As I looked up in the sky. My head tilted,
Eyes squinted. I watched that bird

Spread open its dark-tipped wings, catch a breeze
And freeze, like a statue made of feathers.
Without effort, he climbed an imaginary ladder
Through the clouds. Then they held him
Like an anchor, tethered to the wind.

And in his post, he was balanced,
Without motion. Suspended,
As if held by puppet strings
Across the sky. He sat on air, still

With angled wings open. Force against force,
Resistance lifted him upward. And he rested
In the union. He could enjoy the view
From up there. Now here

I stand, transfixed.
And I wonder what it would be like to soar.

Dear ministry partners,

In September, I had the gift of stepping away to attend a men's conference for global workers in Interlaken, Switzerland. The setting was stunning—mountains, stillness, and space to reset. The sessions were refreshing, but some of the most meaningful moments came in the quiet in between.

One afternoon, an unexpected opportunity came up—something that seemed, at first, easy to dismiss. But the more I tried to talk myself out of it, the more it stayed with me. What began as a simple decision turned out to be a vivid picture of discipleship, trust, and surrender.

Here's what happened.

I spent my free time trying to convince myself I didn't need to go paragliding. It was intriguing, but impractical. Surely there was a better use of time and money. It would be quite the experience, but I could be content—or so I thought . . .

I told my family how I had observed the paragliders. Telling them made the decision. Their accountability brought action. I searched for excuses, finding none. After booking, I walked toward Interlaken, sack lunch in hand.

I sat on a bench two hours early watching paragliders land—uninterrupted observation. The relaxed recreation of watching was gone. Time was transfixed on the task at hand. There was only the thing that would be.

When the van arrived, pilots and passengers piled in. The pilots contrasted their passengers—they were cool and calm. The youthful passengers selected the youthful pilots. I was paired with the silver-haired senior. His longevity of life assured me.

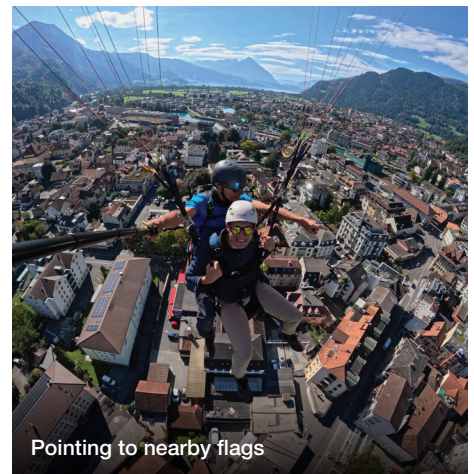
The pilots relayed the instructions in a relaxed manner. I was serious. The pilots bantered, the song "Bad Boys" blared through the speakers, and the passengers were silent. The van curved around and up the steep slope. It was us and the cows at the top.



Taking it all in



Smiling but unsure



Pointing to nearby flags

I was strapped in and prepared to run until I was told to stop. Within a few steps, we were airborne. I sat, hands in my lap—a posture of peace. Relaxed. I asked a few curious questions but otherwise sat.

The sage then put the reins in my hands. My heart beat fast. At his prompts, I went left and right. It was fine near the lake, but toward the town, I felt resistance. I asked if it was me or the wind. The voice of experience explained that the wind had shifted.

The wise one resumed control. I was free to enjoy—even the tricks over town. No fear. We came close to buildings, but I was calm. Pointing to nearby flags, he showed how the wind changed course. He adapted our landing accordingly.

On the ground, I thanked my guide and wished him well. He appeared older and wiser than he had earlier. I was grateful to have him. On my long walk, the experience caught up with me.

Why would I want to have control anyway? I was at peace up there. All worries evaporated. I was relaxed. There was peace and joy. The experience was over too quickly.

What a contrast when I was given control. I didn't fully trust myself. I lost sight of how I could still trust my sky pilot. He was right there, after all—and I was strapped to him. He knew what he was doing and had done it all before. I could have trusted throughout, even when I was told to steer.

Lessons I want to learn with Jesus:

1. Don't rationalize away the adventure I actually desire.
2. Don't waste time on worry.
3. Relax in His presence. Enjoy it.
4. Stay curious. Look around.
5. Watch the wind. Follow it.
6. Trust myself like He trusts me.
7. Remember who I am strapped to.

Thank you for reading my reflection. That moment in the mountains reminded me how often we resist the very things that invite us into deeper trust, peace, and joy in Christ. I want to keep saying yes to those moments with Jesus, and I hope you do too. I'm grateful to be on this journey together.

Much love and God bless,

Deric Sneller



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