



# The Christian Life Institute

Monday, April 6

Thank you for joining us today, as we continue our series, at the Christian Life Institute, presented through 15-minute encouraging messages three times per week, Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays at 12:45 Central time, on practical ways to grow forward in Christ in uncertainty, unpredictability, and upheaval.

This message is entitled: Eyes Up to Triumphant Hope

As we reflect on Palm Sunday, commemorating Jesus Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem and reflect on the events as depicted in the Bible during passion week, the week between Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday we are drawn to the suffering and death of Jesus Christ. This week's messages are based on the Triumphant Hope we have through Christ (today's message), the Abundant Life we have in Christ (Wednesday's message), and the Vanquishing Victory (Friday's message).

When these words came to me Sunday morning, I was drawn to the verses from Psalm 121:1-2, "I lift up my eyes to the hills. From where does my help come? My help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth." which then drew me to Psalm 46, verses 1-10:

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore, we will not fear though the earth gives way, though the mountains be moved into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam, though the mountains tremble at its swelling. There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the holy habitation of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved; God will help her when morning dawns. The nations rage, the kingdoms totter; he utters his voice, the earth melts. The LORD of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress. *Selah*. Come, behold the works of the LORD, how he has brought desolations on the earth. He makes wars cease to the end of the earth; he breaks the bow and shatters the spear; he burns the chariots with fire. "Be still and know that I am God. I will be exalted among the nations; I will be exalted in the earth!"

Christ is our ever-present help in time of need - in the here and now - in the moment. He also is our Eternal Hope and our Ultimate Victory. The words 'eyes up' to Triumphant Hope encompasses several great reminders on how then shall we live, including, aligning with Christ which produces an expectant eternal perspective which produces helpful Hope. As we choose to wait upon the Lord - knowing He is our source of strength, support, and sustenance we can focus our eyes, our minds, our hearts on our Risen Lord.

Before we celebrate the resurrection, which indeed we must, as Paul reminds us in 1 Corinthians 15: 12-19:

“Now if Christ is proclaimed as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? <sup>13</sup> But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then not even Christ has been raised. <sup>14</sup> And if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain. <sup>15</sup> We are even found to be misrepresenting God, because we testified about God that he raised Christ, whom he did not raise if it is true that the dead are not raised. <sup>16</sup> For if the dead are not raised, not even Christ has been raised. <sup>17</sup> And if Christ has not been raised, your faith is futile, and you are still in your sins. <sup>18</sup> Then those also who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. <sup>19</sup> If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied. we must walk the path of tumult and follow in the footsteps of Jesus.”

Let us first remind ourselves and others of the truth of 1 Corinthians 15:3-4, “for I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures.” Let us reflect on why we needed One who, was concerned that we have forgiveness and life. “Jesus said to her, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die. Do you believe this?” (John 11:25-26).

Do you believe? Scripture tells us that Jesus is our Way, our Truth, our Life (John 14:6). Jesus wants our hearts to not be troubled, and for us not to be afraid. As He is not only with us, no matter where we are, but He is coming again. “For the Lord himself will descend from heaven with a cry of command, with the voice of an archangel, and with the sound of the trumpet of God. And the dead in Christ will rise first (1 Thessalonians 4:16).

As we continue to be faced with uncertainty, unpredictability, and upheaval and as we, perhaps, struggle with the continued adjustment to these unfamiliar times we now that we have a Savior who, from before the foundations of the world, knew He would come, die, and rise again so that those who call upon the name of Jesus will be saved (Romans 10:13). Today, our encouragement is based on the Triumphant Hope, Who is Christ.

According to Baker's Evangelical Dictionary of Biblical Theology, hope is defined as "to trust in, wait for, look for, or desire something or someone; or to expect something beneficial in the future." Every day is a day we need hope. Every moment is a moment to choose to look up to know we have One who knows our hurts, our sufferings, our challenges, our joys, our every thought, and feeling and He above all wants us to know that He is here for us and because He is here for us, He knew He needed to die for us. In John 12:25-36, Jesus says:

"Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this purpose, I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your name." Then a voice came from heaven: "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." The crowd that stood there and heard it said that it had thundered. Others said, "An angel has spoken to him." Jesus answered, "This voice has come for your sake, not mine. Now is the judgment of this world; now will the ruler of this world be cast out. And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all people to myself." He said this to show by what kind of death he was going to die. So, the crowd answered him, "We have heard from the Law that the Christ remains forever. How can you say that the Son of Man must be lifted up? Who is this Son of Man?" So, Jesus said to them, "The light is among you for a little while longer. Walk while you have the light, lest darkness overtake you. The one who walks in the darkness does not know where he is going. While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light."

As we shared last week, as humans, it is not uncommon or unusual to be discouraged or troubled. Jesus, Himself, asked the Father to save Him from the hour of His death but He knew that it was through His death that you and I would have a triumphant hope – a confidence that can come only through Christ. As Jesus walked through passion week, He was questioned, betrayed, plotted against – he faced opposition – he faced death – yet He kept His eyes on His mission, as stated in verse 32, to draw all people to Himself. His

obedience to the Father was highlighted by John in John 6:38-40 “for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me but raise it up on the last day. For this is the will of my Father, that everyone who looks on the Son and believes in him should have eternal life, and I will raise him up on the last day.”

The challenge for us during these times, is to continue steadfast in obedience. To keep our eyes up - on our mission and to continue to walk through whatever comes upon us in His strength, His love, and His Truth. As we shared on Friday, we are connected to one another, bound in His love. As Paul writes, “and above all these put on love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body. And be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with thankfulness in your hearts to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Colossians 3:14-17).

So, as we shared on Friday, let us persevere and not forsake assembling (virtually). Let us as the Scripture reminds us stir up (exhort, encourage, move) one another to love. Let us minister to one another during these times and in all times and continue to build community and not fall prey to withdrawal and isolation but rather turn our eyes up to the One from whom our help comes from.

In this season, and life which is a journey of seasons, we as Christ-followers, have opportunities to, through His strength and His power reflect Him to a broken and hurting world – so, let us persevere and come together, even when technology weary.

Let us agree together to:

“Walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7)

“Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths” (Proverbs 3:5-6).

Thank you for joining us for Live Streaming on YouTube. Please join us again on Wednesday, April 8th at 12:45 CST. Please check out our other videos on YouTube and please subscribe to us on YouTube as we need 100 subscribers for our own YouTube channel.

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