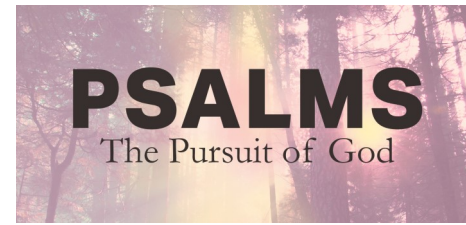


NOTES:



Groups Sermon Study Questions

FINDING HOPE

February 11, 2018

Message Summary

The city of Jerusalem is situated on a high hill. Jews traveling to Jerusalem for one of the three main annual Jewish festivals traditionally sang these songs on the “ascent” or the uphill road to the city. According to some traditions, the Jewish priests also sang some of these Songs of Ascent as they walked up the steps to the temple in Jerusalem. While on the journey, the psalmist noticed temples to Baal (pagan deity). The culture of the day coined the popular expression, “look to the hills,” because that is where Baal would be. This false god would bring a false comfort to people, but they continued to worship up high on the hills. The Jews did not worship these pagan gods, so they were persecuted for their faith. This psalm really challenges the popular beliefs of the culture. Our society today has its own false idols, (money, power, popularity, etc.) This psalm helps us to see very clearly that the Lord is our answer, so we should find hope in Him alone rather than turning to worthless idols.

Consider This

How would you define the word “hope”?

Where do you think today’s culture looks to find hope?

Why do you think people tend to look to these things/people/etc. to find hope?

Read Psalm 121.

1. Where does the Psalmist look to for help? Why is it so important to do so?
2. If you were honest with yourself, where do you turn to for help?
3. How does the Psalmist describe God in this Psalm? (both His character and His actions)
4. List descriptions found in Psalm 121 of God's character/nature. *(i.e. verse 2 describes God as Maker of heaven and earth. It is in His nature to create.)*
5. List descriptions found in Psalm 121 of God's actions *(i.e. verse 2 describes God as Maker of heaven and earth. He created the universe.)*
6. What strikes you about these observations you made about God's character/nature and His actions?
7. Does your view of yourself/your situation change when you reflect on who God is and what He has done? If so, how would you describe that change?
8. How does knowing who God is and what He has done help us to find hope?

Read Romans 5:1-5; Ephesians 1:18; Colossians 1:27; Hebrews 6:19-20; 1 Peter 1:21

9. As Christians where can we ultimately find our hope?
10. How does our hope, anchored in our faith in Jesus Christ, allow us to stand firm amidst difficult circumstances?
11. How does our hope in the coming glory of Jesus, affect our actions (what we do) and our interactions with others in the here and now?
12. Our hope is fully anchored in Jesus, in His sacrifice for us on the cross and the communion with Him in glory that is to come. What is one way you can be encouraged this week to live the present with this hope guiding you?

Moving Forward

Lift My Eyes Up

Psalm 121:1 says "I lift my eyes up." It is figurative language to describe a longing towards God and a confidence in Him. This week, I encourage you to use the space below to write out your own psalm, if you will, focusing on expressing your longing for God and your personal confidence in Him.
