



Pause for Prayer

Tuesday 16 June 2020

For many people ***Psalm 121*** is a favourite. In times of trouble or of need of assurance the familiar words of this Psalm bring comfort, hope and strength.

The opening words of the Psalm 'I lift my eyes to the hills- Where does my help come from? My help comes from the LORD, the maker of heaven and earth'.

Here are some thoughts from the great evangelist Billy Graham.

'Israel, the nation in which the bible is written, is a very "hilly" country. There are mountains and hills everywhere. In fact, the Bible speaks of going "up to Jerusalem," which is "a city set on a hill."

Throughout Scripture, there are references to these hills and mountains and encouragement to the Israelites to "look up" to the hills and to look up to heaven.

The disciples looked and saw the resurrected Christ ascending" to His Father in heaven. We are told that when Jesus returns, He will come in the clouds and we will see Him come just as He left us, from the sky. Looking upward takes the attention of men and women off their earthy circumstances. It changes their perspective.

If you have ever flown in an airplane, you will know that your perspective of what is on the ground is far different from what it was when you were on the ground. Pictures of the earth that have been taken from the moon and from space shows an earth that looks much different from our awareness of the planet while we are on it. This is the kind of perspective God wants us to give us of ourselves. As we look unto God instead of at ourselves and our circumstances, our perspectives change.

Do not be bogged down in the circumstances of life. Look unto the hills for the guidance of Christ'.



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Points for prayer taken from PCI Lets Pray

Worship and rest

- Pray for everyone who will engage in digital worship, asking that God will enable them to know his presence, respond with thankful and trusting hearts and receive a word in season for their present circumstances.
- Give thanks that so many people have been helped and blessed by the services we have produced in Ballygowan.

Witness for Christ

- Pray for congregations as they bear witness for Christ through initiatives in their local communities and online, asking that God would speak to many who previously had little or no contact with church.
- Pray for members as opportunities to share faith arise in conversation, asking that God would help us to always be ready to give an explanation to anyone who asks for a reason for the hope we have in Christ (1 Peter 3:15).

Restarting the economy

- Pray for leaders in the business and retail sectors as they navigate a path towards reopening, asking that God would give a necessary mix of restraint and resourcefulness in guiding return to trading.
- Pray for shop owners, managers and staff as they think through practical and financial implications for reopening, asking that God would enable them to arrive at arrangements for safe trading and feasible models for profitability.

Spiritual stamina

- Pray for the necessary perseverance to continue on the path set before us by the unexpected and unchosen circumstances of pandemic and lockdown, asking God for strength, patience and resilience.
- Pray for discipline in pursuing God in prayer, reading his Word, loving one another and being kind to those in need

Church finances

- Pray for congregational committees and their treasurers while the link between going to church and giving remains interrupted, asking that God would give them wisdom and peace in the responsibilities of overseeing finances, prioritising payments and making ends meet.
- Pray for those overseeing denominational finances, asking that God would lead and guide in managing budgets, creatively cutting costs and making maximum use of the government job retention scheme.

Global mission

- Pray for PCI global mission workers overseas as they continue to adjust to life and ministry in time of pandemic, asking that God would keep them safe and well and bless their work in every sphere in which they bear influence.
- Pray for PCI's mission partners around the world as they battle with the effects of the pandemic, asking God to strengthen, lead and guide efforts to share Christ's love in word and deed.