

***Theme for 2018***

**WE ARE THE ARMY OF GOD &  
WE ARE ARMED AND DANGEROUS!**

*“For though we live in the world, we do not wage war as the world does. The weapons we fight with are not the weapons of the world. On the contrary, they have divine power to demolish strongholds. We demolish arguments and every pretension that sets itself up against the knowledge of God, and we take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ.” 2 Corinthians 10:3-5 (NIV)*



***This Week’s Thought – April 15, 2018***

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*“But I will hope continually and will praise you yet more and more.” Psalm 71:14 (ESV)*

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For a lot of people, hope seems to be elusive and conditional. They may feel hopeful on a certain day or in a season of life, yet circumstances and situations can change that cause hope to dissipate; quickly being replaced with their doubts and fears. How can we join the psalmist in this bold proclamation that we will “*hope continually*”?

Hope is not the denial of pain or sorrow, but is the steadfast belief that our fears do not have the last word. Christians are not asked to ignore or dismiss the reality of suffering and injustice in this world and in our own lives. We are never asked to simply put on a happy face and pretend all is well. Especially as people who follow Jesus in the way of the cross; to be with Jesus is to be in places of chaos and brokenness. He invites us into these places to join Him in speaking life where there is death, proclaiming hope where there is despair.

We grieve and we cry out for justice, but we hear St. Paul’s words to us, reminding us that we “*do not grieve like the rest of mankind, who have no hope.*” (1 Thessalonians 4:13)

Christians follow a crucified Lord who took every fear, every pain, and every doubt upon Himself on the cross. Yet, we also follow a resurrected Savior, one for whom the cross was not the end but the culmination of His mission to bring hope to the whole of creation.

April 15, 2018

Hoping continually in all times, places, and circumstances is not blind optimism or wishful thinking, but is rooted in the death and resurrection of Jesus. Paradoxically, it is the celebration of our limitations! For hope to be genuine—a Christian hope and not simply positive thinking—we must embrace our inability to heal our own wounds or free ourselves from the things that bind and enslave us. Hope is surrender, turning to Jesus and asking Him to work in our lives a freedom and a hope that we are powerless to do in our own strength.

Look to Jesus today and rejoice in the glory of the resurrection. As you do you will find strength for the journey and a hope that will never fade!

*“The LORD delights in those who fear him, who put their hope in his unfailing love.”* (Psalm 147:11)

**Application:** Where have your circumstances caused you to lose hope? How can your reflection upon the Lord and His unfailing sacrificial love bring you hope into even the darkest of places?

**Words from the Master during your time of reflection this week:** “Stay conscious of Me as you go through the day, remembering that I never leave your side. Let the Holy Spirit guide you step by step, protecting you from unnecessary trials and equipping you to get through whatever must be endured. As you trudge through the sludge of this fallen world, keep your mind in heavenly places with Me. Thus, the Light of My Presence shines on you, giving you a Hope, Joy and Peace that circumstances cannot touch.” (Psalm 18:30; Isaiah 41:13; Psalm 36:9)

*“And then God answered: “Write this. Write what you see. Write it out in big block letters so that it can be read on the run. This vision-message is a witness pointing to what's coming. It aches for the coming—it can hardly wait! And it doesn't lie. If it seems slow in coming, wait. It's on its way. It will come right on time.”* Habakkuk 2:2-3 (MSG)

Yours in Christ, Pastor King