

## **LOOK UP**

On Monday, Premier Doug Ford announced that we would be heading into lockdown for 28 days beginning December 26<sup>th</sup>. We were warned about this possibility last weekend, but it was still hard to hear. The first lockdown was difficult in so many ways, but we endured and enjoyed the loosening of restrictions over the summer and fall. We hoped we would never have to endure another lockdown but here we are again. At least we have experience on our side this time and know what to expect. It does not make the current reality any easier though:

- ***Wondering if certain stores or businesses will survive this second lockdown?***
- ***Wondering if the lockdown will be more like two or three months as opposed to 28 days?***
- ***Wondering whether this new strain that has been occurring in parts of Britain is already here?***
- ***Wondering if our hospitals will be overwhelmed or not?***
- ***Wondering how we and others will cope through this financially, emotionally, and spiritually?***

This pandemic has been a reminder to us that life here on Earth is not always Heaven but Hell at times. I was reminded of this earlier today eating breakfast as I was watching a portion of Dolly Parton's Christmas movie *The Coat of Many Colours*. If you have watched this special, you will recall the scene when Dolly's grandpa was preaching at church. He commented that seasons of drought and failed crops for farmers, failed relationships, sickness, death, and other losses can be a reminder for us that life here on Earth can be hell at times. He followed this up by saying when situations of hell-on-earth drive us to our knees, there is only one direction to look and go and that is UP. As we look up, he reminded the congregation, our focus is on Jesus and with our Saviour in our life, we can get through these situations of hell-on-earth.

The preacher's words from Dolly Parton's movie were timely for me to hear and hopefully for you as well right now. There was no pandemic going on when the preacher made these comments. His message I feel would have

been the same if he were to preach during this pandemic. There have been moments in this journey that have driven us to our knees:

- *A missed celebration with loved ones,*
- *The loss of comfort from hugs from our loved ones.*
- *Separation from people and activities that fulfill us and bring joy and satisfaction.*
- *Moments when this journey becomes too overwhelming for us.*

In the moments when this pandemic drops us to our knees may we remember the preacher's words:

**THERE IS ONLY ONE DIRECTION TO GO FROM THERE AND THAT IS UP.**

Let us look up to Jesus to be uplifted by the truth that with His help and guidance we will get through this experience of hell-on-earth. As you look up and see Jesus may these words from Psalm 121 be the comfort you need to get you through this time.

***<sup>1</sup> I lift up my eyes to the mountains— where does my help come from? <sup>2</sup> My help comes from the LORD, the Maker of heaven and earth. <sup>3</sup> He will not let your foot slip— he who watches over you will not slumber; <sup>4</sup> indeed, he who watches over Israel will neither slumber nor sleep. <sup>5</sup> The LORD watches over you— the LORD is your shade at your right hand; <sup>6</sup> the sun will not harm you by day, nor the moon by night. <sup>7</sup> The LORD will keep you from all harm— he will watch over your life; <sup>8</sup> the LORD will watch over your coming and going both now and forevermore.***

When COVID-19 drops us to our knees a preacher and a Psalmist would both say:

**LOOK UP BECAUSE IT IS THE ONLY DIRECTION TO TURN.**

An important reminder for us as we enter this upcoming lockdown.

Keep Safe & God Bless

**Pastor Dean**