

Find Hope in Christ's Majesty

LHC: Message Seven (980405AM)

Week 7: Find Hope in Christ's Majesty

(Revelation 1:9)

As the end of days approaches, you can find hope as you discover Christ's majesty!

SUNDAY: When You Feel Abandoned

*I, John, . . . **was on the island** . . . called Patmos for the word of God and for the testimony of Jesus Christ.*

—Revelation 1:9, emphasis added

John felt alone when he was exiled to Patmos, but Christ became nearer to him than he had ever experienced before. The more of Christ's majesty that we too experience, the nearer He will become to us so that we can walk securely in hope at the end of days.

John was not the first of God's servants to feel alone and in need of Christ's majestic presence. Three thousand years ago, another of God's faithful servants had that same hope. His name was David, and his life is the single most-recorded life (over 140 chapters) in God's Word. As we look at David's life, we will discover how to find living hope for anything we may face ourselves.

Everything was going so well for David for a long time: after defeating Goliath, he became worship leader for the king, a great warrior, a member of the king's cabinet, and the king's son-in-law. But then everything fell apart.

In the lives of believers, there can come a point so low that we actually feel that everyone, even God, has abandoned us. That is how David felt in Psalm 13. In Psalm 13 we see that Christ cannot be our refuge if we do not hear His invitation to flee to Him, or if we do not even remember He is there. Sometimes we have to hit bottom, go through dark waters, or face incredible convulsions in our lives to see Him, even though He's been with us all the time.

I learned that lesson well at 27,000 feet. While flying home from a Shepherds Conference in Los Angeles, I received an insight I will never forget. Having flown enough to have heard the pre-flight safety lecture dozens of times, I usually read and ignore it all, never thinking about anything other than what I need to do before we land.

This particular flight was uneventful. I had an empty seat beside me that became my desk, and as the world slowly drifted by outside my window, I worked. After a bit, clouds began to darken the sky, and I had to turn on the light to see, but I kept on studying.

Suddenly a reminder to fasten seatbelts caught my attention. I began to listen intently when the plane did its first roller-coaster move. Soon we were dropping, and then we were going straight up like an elevator. After that, a very hard jolt knocked open a few overhead compartments and things fell out. Throughout the plane, there were some scattered cries of fear.

From that moment on, all I thought about was this: *Who exactly is up front flying this plane? How much experience does he have? How skilled is he in thunderstorm management?*

What tremendous lesson did I learn about flying? That we don't pay much attention if all goes smoothly. After all, who gives the pilot a thought unless the weather gets rough? But when the world around us jolts, jumps, rocks, and swerves unexpectedly, all we can think about then is this: *Who is steering this careening machine?* We are forced to realize how important the pilot really is, and that our lives are in his hands.

The same is true in our spiritual lives: the fewer bumps, the more we ignore the pilot, our Lord. The smoother the ride, the more we forget the One whose hands hold our lives. But let the rough family times come, the roller-coaster ride of our emotions, the crash of our finances, or the sudden plummet of our health, and then we think about the pilot.

David experienced many a bumpy ride in his lifetime, and at times even became fearful, but consistently he chose to put his trust in the pilot of his life. As we continue to focus on how to find living hope for the end of days, we can learn a lot from how David handled his tribulation periods, especially during times of great loneliness.

After the Lord rescued him from Gath (1 Samuel 21:10–15), David fled to the wilderness and lived in a cave. (Compare 1 Samuel 22:1–5 with Psalm 57 and 142.) During his cave time, David went through a period of feeling abandoned by God. But in that dark hour he found hope. How did he do that? Troubles, trials, tests, and temptations always pushed David toward the Lord. God was his choice; God was his habit; God was his desire because David supremely loved the Lord with all his heart. Those dark times simply exposed the reality, deep down in his soul, that David had entrusted his life to the Lord.

Throughout the Psalms, David made confessions about the Pilot who was flying his plane during the turbulent and stormy skies of his life. As you go through this week, I pray that you will discover, like David, that even if you happen to feel abandoned right now—God is still there flying you safely through!

My Prayer for You This Week: *Father in Heaven, I pray that we would cultivate those holy habits energized by Your Holy Spirit that make us useful. Make us those who want to give our lives back to You. May even our habits revolve around You so that we are disciplined, trustworthy, responsible, and obedient. We want to be energized by Your Spirit to honestly say, "Lord, I'm Your servant." We are a testimony, an advertisement. What are we advertising? Anything that is out of control—be it our tongue, our finances, or our calendar—is just a testimony that You are not in control of that part of our lives. Help us to not think so highly of ourselves that we do not put everything under Your*

Lordship. May every part of our lives honor You, and testify that we are Your servants. For that is what we want to be. Jesus, Lord, be our Master; hear our hearts as we whisper back to You. For we give ourselves to You in the name of Jesus. Amen.

MONDAY: Common Causes for Cave Times

*We are **hard-pressed on every side**, yet not crushed; we are perplexed, but not in despair.*

—2 Corinthians 4:8, emphasis added

As a pastor, biblical counselor, and a follower of Christ for over forty years, I am convinced that feelings of abandonment are very common among believers, no matter how mature they might be in the Lord. Both the apostles John and David knew what it was like to feel alone and in desperate need of Christ's presence. Look at David's opening words in Psalm 13:1–2: *How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? How long will my enemy be exalted over me?*

David experienced many such cave times, and it is likely that we will also. What are some common causes of cave times—those periods in life when we feel utterly abandoned by others as well as God?

Cave times may start through a protracted illness that seems to never end, when strength never comes, when future plans fade, and so does hope. If hope is lost, uncontrolled emotions can wreak havoc not only in the ill person's life but also in the lives of his or her family.

Another common cause for feeling abandoned is a sudden loss of income, when financial needs become difficult, and eventually seem overwhelming. This type of trial can place a great deal of stress on a marriage and family. So can a demanding and unreasonable boss, a grueling and unending schedule, or a jealous, spiteful, and injurious coworker. Wayward children also cause immeasurable pain to believing parents, as does an alcoholic or abusive spouse, or unsaved family members.

Usually, times like these make us feel that no one really cares about us. So more and more we start to feel rejected by others, which then starts the downward spiral into thinking that God has abandoned us as well. David experienced such a depth of feeling abandoned that in Psalm 13 he cried out to God as if he could no longer hang on.

Amazingly, there is little said or written in Christian literature about helping believers who feel abandoned by God. Even D. Martin Lloyd-Jones didn't cover this topic in his classic work entitled *Spiritual Depression: Its Causes and Cures*.¹

Why do you suppose this is? I think it is because we have been taught that Christians are not to experience such things, that we are only to have "life more abundantly" or to "live victoriously." . . . The dying French atheist Voltaire . . . said, "I am abandoned by God and man."

We are not surprised to hear an unbeliever say that. But if any of us should admit to such feelings, many of our friends would look askance [disapprovingly] at us, shake their heads, and wonder whether we are Christians. Isn't that true? Isn't

that the chief reason why you do not talk to other Christians about this or about many other problems?”²

Aren't you glad that a spiritual giant like David did not hide his negative feelings? He did not mind being thought of as weak, failing, or troubled; he just unashamedly cried out to God for help.

This David—the psalmist, the king God chose, the man God said was after His own heart—was not embarrassed to bare his dark struggles of the soul for all to see! In fact, he wrote more psalms during his cave times than at any other period in his life (Psalms 4, 13, 40, 57, 70, 141, 142). All were lessons on how to overcome feelings of loneliness and abandonment when far from help or away from home.

If you feel unable to go on, like David did in Psalm 13, I encourage you to read through his cave-time psalms. Meditate on how he responded to God in his difficult times! If you do, you'll not only be blessed but also better understand what made David “a man after God's own heart.”

TUESDAY: Where Are You, God?

How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever? How long will You hide Your face from me? How long shall I take counsel in my soul, having sorrow in my heart daily? How long will my enemy be exalted over me?

—Psalm 13:1–2, emphasis added

At the beginning of Psalm 13, David was feeling abandoned and dejected. The first two verses express the depths of his soul in four cries of anguish. Each cry is a figure of speech called *erotesis*, which is asking questions without waiting for or even expecting an answer. These cries also represent a second form of speech called *anaphora*—when the same word is repeated at the beginning of successive sentences.

David's repetitive cries pleaded with God for an answer: “*How long . . . ?*” He didn't even pause because he was so overcome with sorrow, grief, and a feeling of being totally alone and abandoned. By repeating himself four times, David revealed how deep this feeling ran as he cried out to God: “I just can't go on any longer!” As we consider his confessions carefully, some may strike a chord in your own heart.

My life feels like an endless struggle: *How long, O LORD? Will You forget me forever?* (v. 1a, emphasis added). Everyone had left David. He was hunted by his own family, his own fellow people of God, and was being threatened by his enemies. And now, on top of all that, he had stepped into a bleak desert region. With every fiber of his being, David felt humanly dejected and abandoned. One commentator writes:

Well must David have understood what this was, when, hunted by Saul, he knew not where to betake himself, at one time seeking refuge among the Moabites, at another in the wilderness of Ziph; now an outlaw hiding himself in the cave of Adullam, and anon a captain in the service of the King of the Philistines; and amid all his projects haunted by the mournful conviction, “I shall now one day perish by the hand of Saul.”³

My life seems to have lost God's blessing: *How long will You hide Your face from me* (v. 1b, emphasis added). David was saying, “Nothing is like it used to be.

Every part of my life is troubled and seems to lack Your blessing.” So he cried out to God: “I don’t see *You* anymore in my home, my work, or my life!” Think about how that might feel:

- **My family doesn’t seem blessed anymore:** “The early joys of being a newlywed have long since faded as the reality of personality differences stress our relationship. And now, our formerly quiet, content children are growing into selfish and rebellious youths. The joy of home life has been replaced with the tension of confrontation, correction, and sorrow. Has God ceased to bless our family?”
- **My work doesn’t seem blessed anymore:** “The early days of idealism, creativity, and boundless energy leading to growth and success in my career have been replaced with constant obstacles and personal stagnation. Has God ceased to bless my work?”
- **My ministry doesn’t seem blessed anymore:** “The spring in my step is gone; my feet have felt like lead as I’ve crossed the parking lot to serve in my ministry at church! I have lost all my former joy and purpose! Has God ceased to bless my ministry?”
- **My spiritual life doesn’t seem blessed anymore:** “The Word seems stale; my singing is lifeless; coming to worship is drudgery. My sins feel unforgiven, and my past is coming back to haunt me. I can’t escape feeling so stained . . . so distant from the Lord . . . I feel like no one—not even *God*—cares about my soul! Has God ceased to bless me?”

Should any of these feelings reflect your own life, remind Jesus of His promise: “*Come to Me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest*” (Matthew 11:28)! Ask Him to speak His sweet peace to your heart, and then cling to Him in hope, trusting that He who cares so deeply for you will lead you safely through the difficult challenges you face. He is only a prayer away!

WEDNESDAY: Feeling Dejected and Abandoned?

*For we . . . are **always delivered to death** for Jesus’ sake, that the life of Jesus also may be manifested in our mortal flesh.*
—2 Corinthians 4:11 emphasis added

David had dark thoughts and uncontrolled emotions. He loved the Lord, but all the stress of his terrible plight had drained him of peace and joy. As we continue to study David’s Psalm 13 confessions, perhaps you can identify with how deeply wounded he felt.

My mind seems so troubled: *How long shall I take counsel in my soul, **Having sorrow in my heart daily?*** (v. 2a, emphasis added). David was swept away by his emotions, which is a common experience. He couldn’t calmly reflect on God’s faithful hand in the past so that he could be comforted by trusting the future to Him. David had ruminated so long on disaster after disaster that he was feeding on the dark thoughts of hopelessness. So he cried out in anguish again, “God, I can’t stop these feelings of dejection and abandonment!”

Usually, there are some clear causes for these feelings David confessed: emotional temperament, physical weakness, and “let down” are often at the root of discouragement. David was probably of the temperament that is more prone to discouragement. As Lloyd-Jones writes in the opening pages of his monumental book, “foremost among all causes of spiritual depression is temperament.”⁴

James Boice says that “A plunge into disquieting thoughts and emotions can be caused by physical factors—illness, for example. Charles Haddon Spurgeon was one of the greatest evangelical leaders of the [nineteenth] century, but he suffered from severe bouts of depression. Why? The main reason is that he suffered from gout, marked by painful inflammation of the joints and an excess of uric acid in the blood. It was common in the [nineteenth] century, and it drained Spurgeon’s energies.”⁵ At times of illness or extreme fatigue, we are more vulnerable to the devil or our flesh trying to push us down.

A weak time called “let down” often follows great events. For example, after Elijah’s great mountaintop experience, he felt so low that he was ready to die. But God took him away to a quiet place to feed him, refresh him, and meet with him (1 Kings 18–19). It is helpful to remember that *Elijah was a man with a nature like ours* (James 5:17a). Even Jesus retreated from the crowds after big events like the feeding of the 5,000 and preaching campaigns because He needed extra time alone with God to refresh and renew His life. Since Elijah, Jesus, and David all needed to exercise care to protect themselves from let downs, we should not be taken by surprise when we face similar experiences in our own lives.

My life seems to have lost God’s victory: How long will my enemy be exalted over me? (v. 2b, emphasis added). David soulfully concluded, “It’s no use. Saul is going to win. He has all the troops, resources, and time he needs. He will end up destroying me!” So, once again, David cried out in anguish, “God, I am constantly defeated!”

Most of us probably do not have literal human enemies, at least not serious enemies. But if you are a Christian, you do have one great spiritual enemy who is worse than any human enemy imaginable. This is the devil, whom the apostle Peter compared to “a roaring lion looking for someone to devour” (1 Peter 5:8).⁶

The devil [is] the adversary of our souls. He can use our temperaments and our physical conditions. He so deals with us that we allow our temperament to control and govern us, instead of keeping temperament where it should be kept. There is no end to the ways the devil produces spiritual depression. We must always bear him in mind.⁷

David survived his cave times by choosing to live in hope, and not the pits. In verses 3–6 of Psalm 13, he looked to the Lord, who alone could rescue him: **Consider and hear me, O LORD my God; Enlighten my eyes, lest I sleep the sleep of death; lest my enemy say, “I have prevailed against him;” lest those who trouble me rejoice when I am moved. But I have trusted in Your mercy; my heart shall rejoice in Your salvation. I will sing to the LORD, because He has dealt bountifully with me** (emphasis added).

David prayed, “**Look at me!**” (v. 3a). He felt that God had turned His back on him, so He asked the Lord to turn around and **consider him** by paying attention to how much he was hurting. When I am overwhelmed, my sweet wife Bonnie will come and sit down to talk with me. If I do not respond, she says, “Look at me, Honey.” She then gently puts her hand under my chin and lifts my face up to look at her eyes of love and smile of comfort. That is how God wants to encourage us as well. He says, “Look up at Me, My child!”—and when we do, His eyes of love and smile of comfort beautifully minister to our wounded spirit.

David prayed, “**Answer me!**” (v. 3b). He felt that God had stopped talking to him, and he wanted God to **hear him**. This Hebrew word for “hear” literally means “answer.” David was asking the Lord to let him hear His voice just as he did in former days. When we face times like that, we need to take God’s Word and say to Him, “Open Your Word to my heart again. Let me cling to Your truth. Help my unbelief!”

David prayed, “**Restore me!**” (v. 3c). David needed God to **enlighten him** because he believed that he was going to die, and never be king. Thus he asked God to do what He had promised. When we are discouraged, we should boldly say to the Lord, “You promised to never leave me, so I need to sense Your presence again! You told me that You loved me to the uttermost, so I need to sense Your power again! You said that You would comfort me, so I need to sense Your peace again!”

Think on this:

To be abandoned means that once you were not. For the true child of God, there is always some awareness of this truth, regardless of how deep his or her depression may be. We may be depressed even to the point of feeling utterly abandoned, but the fact that we even feel abandoned means that we really know God is there. To be abandoned, somebody actually needs to abandon you. Because we are Christians and have been taught by God in Scripture, we know that God still loves us and will be faithful to us, regardless of our feelings.⁸

THURSDAY: The Most Incredible Treasure of All

*“Did not our heart burn within us while . . . **He opened the Scriptures to us?**”
. . . And He opened their understanding, **that they might comprehend the Scriptures.***

—Luke 24:32, 45, emphasis added

The owner of the universe has given something priceless to us. First, God let Jesus reveal himself personally to the apostle John. Then God the Father gave a gift—The Revelation of Jesus Christ—to the Son. Next, God the Son shared that gift with the Apostle John, the last living apostle. Finally, John wrote it down and shared it with us. And that is the truest of treasures!

I remember a time when I thought I had a treasure. Shortly after my family moved to New England, every resident received a lottery ticket certificate in the mail. When I was growing up, swearing, smoking, chewing, drinking, and the lottery were all sins. With trepidation I therefore opened up the envelope and read: “You’re a winner!” I rushed to the nearby gas station where there were banners proclaiming a multi-million dollar jackpot. After the ticket printed out, I checked the numbers. The first matched,

then the second, third, and fourth—all the way to the \$1,000,000 level. I had won the grand jackpot! The attendant was so excited that he was getting ready to call the radio, the newspaper, and the TV station, but then we looked at the bottom of the ticket. It was just a demonstration copy. That was as close as I ever got to an earthly treasure.

Even if I had actually won that jackpot, it could never compare to my delight in God's heavenly treasure: *I . . . count all things loss for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord* (Philippians 3:8). Seeing the glorious majesty of Jesus Christ in the Scriptures is the most incredible treasure we could ever possess!

The Apostle John's Cave Time: Have you ever thought about what disturbing days John was going through when he received the Revelation? Near the end of the first century, he lived alone in a world violently hostile to Christians.

The Roman emperor was personally committed to finding Christians and erasing their influence. He had captured and killed Paul and the other apostles, and now he was hunting John, the last living apostle. Twenty-five years before John wrote out the Revelation, the emperor dipped Christians in tar. Then he tied them to posts, and lit them on fire to light his gardens at night. That is how bad the world was in John's time!

The Roman world sent infiltrators into the church. In Acts 20:29 KJV, Paul called them "grievous wolves" because they secretly reported what was said at the intimate church fellowship meetings. Some Christians even defected to the world—false doctrine, materialism, and immorality. The Roman government also allowed its citizens to break in and rob believers' homes. In fact, this was so common that the writer of Hebrews spoke of Christians who "*joyfully accepted the plundering of [their] goods*" (Hebrews 10:34).

As the only surviving apostle, think of how discouraged John must have felt. For he had heard about or seen all his dearest friends savagely murdered. According to traditional church history, Peter had been crucified in Rome with his head upside down because he felt he was unworthy to die in the same manner as Christ; Andrew had been crucified at Edessa near modern Russia; James, brother of John, had been slain by Herod's sword; Matthew had been beheaded in Ethiopia; Thomas had been thrust through with a spear in India; Simon the Zealot had been crucified in Briton; Thaddeus had been crucified at Edessa; Bartholomew had been beaten and crucified in India; Philip had been crucified at Heliopolis in Phrygia; and James the Less had been clubbed to death in Jerusalem.

Although John was not under an immediate threat of death when he was first sent to Patmos, he knew that his turn would be coming soon. (Some records indicate that he was horribly martyred by being cast into boiling oil, but no clear account of his death has survived.) What a nightmare to be living through!

Jesus is with us always. The promise Jesus gave to His disciples at the Great Commission never changed. Jesus accompanied each of His beloved apostles as they entered the fiery furnace of troubles. He stayed beside them "*to the end*" (Matthew 28:20). When it was their "appointed" time to die, the Good Shepherd walked each disciple through the valley of death's shadow. As promised, Christ took them all home safely.

Do you also know that Jesus is with you? Are you able to trust Him to see you through—even to the end of the age?

FRIDAY: Christ's Majesty—God's Answer for Bad Times

“Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.”

—John 14:1, emphasis added

Although those were very dark and disturbing days for John, they were also very dangerous times for Christ's church. This period in time was the closest, I believe, to the church ever becoming extinct.

Paul had founded the church at Ephesus, but Timothy pastored it until he was brutally martyred by a mob. After that, until he was taken prisoner by the emperor and banished to Patmos, the Apostle John shepherded that great Ephesian church, which had become the largest in Asia Minor (about 5,000 saints!).

How painful it must have been for John when it appeared that his family, the church, was falling apart under the vicious attack from without, and rotting from the decay of false teaching within! Knowing that he was the last living witness of Christ—the last link to His earthly life—must have given him cause for great concern. For he was the only one left who had actually seen Jesus walk on the water, feed thousands, and raise dead corpses to life by a word!

What was God's answer for this aged, weary, distressed, saddened, frightened, and troubled servant? God made him take a long look to discover anew and afresh the most beautiful picture there is in all the Scriptures—Jesus Christ. Revelation is all about teaching us to do just that.

There is no more beautiful or more clearly painted portrait of Jesus in the whole Bible than the first chapter of Revelation. It is here that we discover Jesus revealing His glorious majesty so that we can see Him as He is (1:1–20)! If you want to discover the magnificent sovereign majesty of Jesus Christ, you need to get into the habit of looking for Him throughout the Scriptures. Make that your heart's desire, for He can be seen all the way through the Bible.

One night, I came into the church building where my wife was attending a ladies' salad supper. I needed to talk with her for a moment. Scores of women were milling around, so I just stood there in the doorway looking across the room. I kept looking until I saw my Bonnie, and my eyes locked on her. Later, someone said to her, “That was so sweet! I saw the look on your husband's face when he finally saw you.” And that is the kind of look you should have in your heart when you read the Scriptures. You should not be content until you see Jesus every time you get into His Word. Every time!

If you are going through disturbing, dangerous, despairing days in your life, *look for Christ*. His purpose is not that we should primarily fear Him, but that we should *trust* Him. For **Christ is in control**. That is why we believe that His church will not be subjected to all the turmoil and death of the Great Tribulation: *For God did not appoint us to wrath, but to obtain salvation through our Lord Jesus Christ* (1 Thessalonians 5:9).

Hope for the End of Days: Revelation is a book that offers a hope that is the answer to all fears: thinking the world is “going down the drain”; economic instability and future economic upheavals; friends turning their backs on Christ; potential terrorist acts and global plagues; and any other trouble, trial, or upset we may face.

Are all the closest people in your life dying, getting weak, or going through terrible times of physical, emotional, or spiritual oppression like the Apostle John experienced? Instead of weakening in those times, that is a call of God for you to take a careful look at Jesus. Ask Him to allow you to see Jesus like never before (Psalm 119:18).

Are you trusting Jesus? As the hoof beats of the horsemen of the end are heard louder each day, I pray that your heart will rest in the One who holds you securely!

SATURDAY: Find Hope in Christ’s Reign of Majesty

*And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead. But **He laid His right hand on me, saying to me, “Do not be afraid; I am the First and the Last.”***

—Revelation 1:17, emphasis added

Chapter after chapter of Revelation, God’s final book, is one of the amazing discoveries about the Christ who is beyond the capacity of human minds to fully comprehend! The first chapter alone far exceeds any ideas we may have previously formed of this One we call Jesus. For it is here that we discover Christ revealing His glorious majesty so that the scales fall off our eyes, and we are able to see Him as He truly is: “the Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End,” the One “*who is and who was and who is to come*”—the almighty God (1:8)!

In chapters 2:1–3:22, we see Christ’s glorious majesty challenging His church universal through special messages to the seven churches of Asia Minor. And the Lord says, “*He who has an ear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches*” (2:7, 11, 17, 29; 3:6, 13, 22). His admonitions to each church also have a direct application to our generation as we face the soon return of Christ.

In chapters 4:1–16:21, we learn that Christ’s majesty is controlling His cosmos. Suddenly John is caught up into heaven where he sees a vision of God Almighty on His throne being worshiped by all of Christ’s followers and the heavenly angels (4:1–11). But then John sees God give a scroll with seven seals to the worthy Lamb, Jesus (5:1–14). As the Lamb begins to open the seals one by one, a new vision appears, and God’s wrath and judgment associated with each seal is unleashed upon the earth’s inhabitants (6:1–16:21).

In Revelation 17:1–20:15, we see Christ’s majesty conquering the rebellion on earth. During this period He unmask the apostasy and reveals His own saints.

In Revelation 21:1–22:5, Christ’s majesty unveils His paradise. As we discover the husbandly love of Jesus and the wonders of what He has prepared for His bride, the church, we can find hope in all His plans and adore Him as our future husband!

In Revelation 22:6–21, Christ’s majesty is again seen in the extravagance of His salvation offer to all who come to Him: *Let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely* (22:17).

But Christ also gives this ominous warning to those who read Revelation: *If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book; and if anyone takes away from the words of . . . this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things . . . written in this book (22:18–19).*

In light of all these wonders of Christ's majesty, may you be able to genuinely pray, like John: *Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus (22:20).*

Make a choice to live in hope: Worship Jesus in the splendor of His redeeming love, His perfect patience, His perfect holiness, His perfect redemption, His perfect justice, and His perfect wrath!

Ask God to open your eyes to see Jesus in all His glorious majesty! Adore Him for who He really is, *For of Him and through Him and to Him are all things, to whom be glory forever. Amen (Romans 11:36).*

Like David, cry out, *I will bless the LORD at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. . . . Oh, magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together (Psalm 34:1–3).*

May the words of this wonderful song become the deep prayer of your heart:

Praise to the Lord, the Almighty

*Praise to the Lord, the Almighty, the King of creation!
O my soul, praise Him, for He is thy health and salvation!
All ye who hear, Now to His temple draw near;
Praise Him in glad adoration.*

*Praise to the Lord, who o'er all things so wondrously reigneth.
Shelters thee under His wings, yea, so gently sustaineth!
Hast thou not seen How thy desires e'er have been
Granted in what He ordaineth?*

*Praise to the Lord, who doth prosper thy work and defend thee;
Surely His goodness and mercy here daily attend thee.
Ponder anew What the Almighty can do,
If with His love He befriend thee.*

*Praise to the Lord, O let all that is in me adore Him!
All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before Him.
Let the Amen Sound from His people again,
Gladly for aye we adore Him.*

—Joachim Neander (1650–1680)

Tr. Catherine Winkworth (1827–1878)

¹ Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1965.

² James Montgomery Boice, *Psalms: An Expositional Commentary: Volume 1: Psalms 1–41* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), p. 1–6.

³ J. J. Steward Perowne, *Commentary on the Psalms Vol. 1* (Grand Rapids: Kregel, 1989), p. 181.

⁴ Lloyd-Jones, p. 14.

⁵ Boice, p. 109.

⁶ Ibid., p. 110.

⁷ Lloyd-Jones, p. 19.

⁸ Ibid., p. 111.