# 2026_11_08_UpliftingMessage

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Date: 08 November 2026

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[0:00] I've got a lot of messages from different people at the church and you know as a pastor have that chance to go through God's word and God's word speaks to all of life. It really does.

But at the same time you know I think it's important to kind of gauge what's going on in your specific community and specifically your church and take times to whether address issues or just provide encouragement based on what's happening either in the church or in the culture at large and I thought it would be important to do that this morning. You know so what I've seen is there's many many people discouraged after the elections of this last week. You know we have certain values things that we value as Christians. Matters of righteousness and justice in the world.
Just a love for our country and wanting to see our country prosper and grow and have safety and security. Lots of different things and those things are at stake in you know election season deciding who is going to govern whether it's states or at the federal level.
And at least from the perspective of many Christians things did not go in a positive direction this last week. People are heartbroken, frustrated, sometimes feeling dejected, hopeless.
Some people say you know oh you don't need to worry about what's going on in Washington or in politics or government. We just need to keep our hope focused on eternal things. Now that is true.
[2:15] We do and that's really a large part of what we'll be talking about this morning. But it's also important you know what goes on when it comes to you know who governs and how our nation is governed. God speaks to those things about righteousness and justice when it comes to those who he says. He says that people who are rulers are his servants. Right? And we want servants who will serve well.

But I wanted to turn to God or God's word this morning and just give some words of encouragement and really where our focus should be through all of these things.
This is a little bit of a...so I said this morning I kind of changed directions just this morning and think well how did you put together a message in just a few hours? Well just a few...just about a month ago there was a family conference that I spoke at and I thought well that message that I gave I can probably just reuse that this morning. I think it's relevant and just change it up just a little bit for this morning.
And so that's kind of where it's coming from. This is something that I shared at this family conference. So some of you may...this may be somewhat of a repeat for many of you. I'll tell a story just a few...just over a month ago we got internet installed at our house. We're out in the country and so our internet situation has been so sketchy for the last seven or eight years.
And finally we've got high-speed fiber internet. They laid cables in our neighborhood and I was so excited. A guy came out from Spectrum and he was installing and I could tell from his accent that this guy's from Africa somewhere.
[4:10] I got to talking to him. He had a cross on his neck. Nice big one. And I thought okay this guy must be a Christian. I got to talking to him asking him about his cross and if he was a Christian. And he got very excited and was happy to talk to me.

And told me his whole life story. He said he's from the nation of Cameroon which has had lots and lots of trouble over the years as many African nations have.
But said that God called him to come to America as an evangelist. He said he got saved while he was working in Dubai. Saudi Arabia of all places. He got saved there and he said the Lord called him to be an evangelist and eventually he felt called to come to America.
And so he actually you know takes opportunities as he gets them to share the gospel whether it's you know through because he meets lots of people in in his work as he goes doing these installs at different houses.

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And he'll use these opportunities to talk to people about the Lord. But he was talking about America as a nation and how it is unlike any other nation in the world from his perspective.
[5:24] When it comes to liberty and peace and prosperity America is really the greatest nation in the world. But he also made another observation and his view was that America's prosperity has led to people the people of America trusting more in treasure in their prosperity than in the Lord.

And it has caused many many people in this nation to turn away from the Lord and to trust in other things. And I thought that that was a a wise observation.
I think that is true. You know going back to the history and the founding of our nation at the close of the constitutional convention where they were deciding what kind of nation are we building here? Are we going to have a monarchy or are we going to have something else? And of course we had just come off the come off of the British monarchy and people were not very happy with how that went.
But at the close of this constitutional convention there was a woman of high social standing and this was recorded by somebody who heard it and she said yeah out in public there to Benjamin Franklin she says well doctor what have we got a republic or a monarchy?
[6:52] And he is recorded as saying a republic if you can keep it if you can keep it. And I think that question still stands can we keep the republic that we have?

It's been a 250 year experiment that's actually a word that George Washington used in one of his speeches called this an American experiment.
But really for many people in this church I think it felt like this week that there was just another crack in that dam of upholding liberty in this nation.
Liberty justice and righteousness. John Adams is famous for saying this about our constitution he said our constitution was made only for a moral and a religious people.
It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other. Ronald Reagan back in 1982 said this in one of his speeches he said it was once written that America is great because America is good and if America ever ceases to be good America will cease to be great and that is true of any nation.
[8:20] The Bible the scriptures say blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord. and there are other scriptures that speak to when a nation is good and righteous it leads to good things prosperity justice liberty but when a nation goes in a different direction seeking after its own lusts pleasure wanting other people's money things like that it goes towards destruction.

so America's greatness in the past I think really is found in her goodness and of course goodness is a relative thing Jesus himself said there is none good right except for God but when people turn to the Lord there is more goodness at hand and so the problems that we find in our nation aren't necessarily you know in the elections themselves but we have we have a moral problem in this country and unfortunately when we have elections they don't change anyone's hearts now again that doesn't downplay the importance of who rules because you know liberty and freedom and those kinds of things are important regardless of what's in people's hearts but as far as changing the future of our nation I think a change needs to come first in the hearts of the people of our country but what is it that you know in a lot of ways it feels like well there's a failure you know a lot of people feel like we didn't win is that what's important is it important that we win you know a lot of ways you know we read the Bible the Bible points to hey in the end
God wins and we who are part of his family we win and so as we look to eternal things and we ought to we can have that as our hope but what about right now in this life in the situation and the nation that we're in and the culture that we live among we want to be able to win influence we want to be able to win power we want to be able to you know see people come to the Lord turn to 1st Corinthians chapter 4 and I want to look at what Paul said about what we should be doing and where our focus ought to be you know Paul is the we've talked about this he's the apostle to the Gentiles that's us many of us anyway and he said many times he said to the people that he brought to the Lord he said I want you to imitate me and in one place he said imitate me as I imitate the Lord follow me as I follow the Lord you know Paul mentions that he was entrusted with this stewardship from God he was given this gospel of the grace of God he called it a mystery and he was made a steward and a steward is somebody who is responsible for something steward in biblical terms the primary kind of steward was somebody who was in charge of a household maybe a wealthy household you have one person there in charge of administrating the household they're the steward they have charge over maybe the money purse and the household goods and a lot of those kinds of things and you know they're responsible for what is put into their hands Paul was

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given a message a message to the Gentiles of the gospel and this is what we've been talking about in Galatians that Jesus Christ died for our sins and that we are justified now not by the law but by Jesus Christ and his death or through his death on the cross and Paul was an absolute nut he was totally fanatical about this stewardship that he had been given and so this is what he says in 1st Corinthians chapter 4 let a man so consider us as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful and then he continues on but with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by a human court he said it doesn't matter what other people think about me I this passage with this then each one's praise will come from
[13:41] God and that is really what we are all looking for ought to be looking for is that our praise for how we live this temporal life on earth that our praise would come from God and not from men but notice what he says that is required of students or excuse me not students it is required of stewards that you win is that what he says no he said is required of students that you be found faithful not that you become popular but that you become that you are faithful it doesn't matter whether you win or whether you lose and sometimes we don't even know what that means what does it mean to win what does it mean to lose when it comes to these earthly matters but it is required that one be found faithful so that our praise will come from God there's a lot of focus on winning in our lives right everybody likes to win everybody wants to get that first place trophy nobody wants to

I remember when I was a kid I was in a bowling league and my brother he got a trophy right whether you win or not and our team was the very last and we got a loser trophy and you know didn't feel good to be at the bottom of the bottom of the league there we all like to win and we like to win elections and we like to have political power and we like to win the culture war that's out there we want to win popular opinion you know we want everybody to agree with us we want everybody to agree with the Bible and what it says with our values we want to win influence in the world but you know what we are not called to win that's not what God calls us to he calls us to be faithful sometimes we win and sometimes we don't but regardless we do what is right and we do what is good and we just leave the rest up to
God you know in Hebrews chapter 11 you can turn there I'm going to read a section from Hebrews chapter 11 here this is called the hall of faith by many people it is a list of old testament saints who served the Lord in faith and they are given credit for being faithful!
but how things turned out for each of these individuals was different Hebrews chapter 11 we'll start in verse 30 by faith the walls of Jericho fell down after they were encircled for seven days Joshua and Israel they went into the promised land and they were faithful to do what the Lord asked them to do they circled the walls of Jericho for seven days and those walls came tumbling down by faith the harlot Rahab did not perish with those who did not believe when she had received the spies with peace and what more shall I say for time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah also of David and Samuel and the prophets who through faithful faith they subdued kingdoms they worked righteousness they obtained promises they stopped the mouths of lions they quenched the violence of fire escaped the edge of the sword out of weakness they were made strong they became valiant in battle they turned to flight the armies of the aliens or the foreigners! one but then he continues on but others were tortured not accepting deliverance that they might obtain a better resurrection still others had trial of mockings and scourgings yes and of chains and imprisonment they were stoned they were sawn in two they were tempted they were slain with the sword they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins being destitute afflicted tormented of whom the world was not worthy they wandered in deserts and mountains and dens and caves of the earth and all these having obtained a good testimony through faith did not receive the promise God having provided something better for us that they should not be made perfect apart from us he's saying these people did not receive what was promised to the fathers at least at that time but those blessings!
[18:32] came later through Christ is what but regardless of all these people listed you know these were people who received a good testimony not just from the world in fact they didn't receive a good testimony from the world right they received a good testimony from God himself back to that verse their praise came from God and it says of whom the world was not worthy of of whom the world was not worthy but regardless of the men who received victory in their faithfulness or those who really were subject to defeat God considered all of them to be faithful and so how do we

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respond when things don't go our way not just elections by the way when the culture kind of turns against

Christians and against Jesus Christ and the Bible and that's been happening for a long time and it's not like this is anything new how do we respond to kind of the loss of Christian influence in our country and in other parts of the world well not with despair I want to look at Paul just the life of Paul again he said imitate me so we can look to him as somebody that we can imitate in his life Paul had a ministry he had a ministry had this stewardship to take this message to the world but his ministry was filled with conflict all the time there were people plotting to kill him especially the Jews he had to be rescued from people wanting to kill him in many situations both Jew and Gentile he was stoned at one point left for dead in Philippi he was beaten with rods and he was run out of town by mobs in
Ephesus the whole city erupted into a riot he said this he said in labors more abundant in stripes above measure in prisons more frequently in deaths often that's he described his ministry then he after all of his missionary journeys he kind of makes one last journey he goes down to Jerusalem and while he's there he has become quite a controversial figure and the Jews there they seize him and they start beating him intending to kill him he's rescued by Roman soldiers he was going to be scourged or beaten or whipped by the Romans one of the things that he uses by the way throughout his ministry is his Roman citizenship to help him avoid certain things in his ministry but he's standing before the Sanhedrin there's lots of dissension he's almost pulled to pieces by this mob and ultimately the
Romans they lock him in the barracks to keep him safe from the mob and lying there at night bruised all by himself probably a prisoner it seems like things are not going so well but the Lord comes and visits him this is in Acts chapter 23 verse 11 it says this the following night the Lord stood by him and he said be of good cheer Paul for as you have testified for me in Jerusalem so you must all bear witness so you must also bear witness at Rome notice what he doesn't say he doesn't say oh your troubles are all over your enemies were defeated Jerusalem is going to repent Paul you know the very next day there's a conspiracy to kill him 40 men take a vow that they will not eat anything until he is dead why in the world would he be of good cheer all of these there's lots of bad things it seems like things are going south real quick there in
Jerusalem and Jesus comes the Lord comes and says to him be of good cheer Paul hey just as you've been faithful here in Jerusalem I'm going to allow you to be faithful in Rome and if you know the rest of the story how do things go as he travels to and makes his way to Rome he's shipwrecked along the way there's all kinds of trouble and by the way he's a prisoner this whole time that journey was full of conflict and danger he's bitten by a snake shipwrecked again I said deserted on an island but regardless as he travels in chains and even while he is in in
[24:02] Rome continues to be in chains at least metaphorically as he's under house arrest and while he's there in Rome in chains under house arrest he writes a letter to one of the churches that he had visited one in the Philippi so he writes to these Philippians and he says this to him but I want you to!

Philippians chapter one verse twelve but I want you to know brethren that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard and to all the rest that my chains are in Christ and most of the brethren in the Lord having become confident by my chains are much more bold to speak the word without fear because of all be and really is in a very real way negative things is turned out for good because he was faithful a few verses later he says this what then only that in every way whether in pretense or in truth Christ is preached and in this I rejoice and I will rejoice he says we have a reason to be happy to be joyful to rejoice because regardless of all of these things happening in the world happening around us happening to us we can rejoice in this case because the gospel is going out you know regardless of what happens in any election you know there are many they we talking about the power of
God that provides us with our salvation and our eternal life talking about the power of God he says this power which he worked in Christ when he raised Jesus from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places far above all principality and power and might and dominion and every name that is named not only in!
age but also that seat was not up for vote and it still isn't and that seat will never change Jesus will continue not only in this age but in that which is to come to maintain that seat of power and

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dominion over all of the world he is still our head the head of the church and by the way one day he will actually take earthly power when that kingdom of Israel is restored which the prophets have promised will happen when the church is raptured away and there will be a time of tribulation on the earth and Jesus will come down the Bible says from the clouds and he will stand on the earth and he will be declared king not just of Jerusalem not just of Israel but the king of all kings and the lord of all lords and he will reign for a thousand years and he will not allow injustice to reign in the world he will rule the
Bible says with an iron fist and ensure that righteousness reigns in the earth itself but for us the Bible says that we have a citizenship that is beyond our earthly!
[28:23] citizenship and it's not that our earthly citizenship doesn't matter it does but our earthly citizenship really pales in comparison to our heavenly one in Philippians chapter three Paul says this verse twenty for our citizenship is in heaven from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior the Lord Jesus Christ to Titus he says Titus 2 13 look for that blessed hope and glorious appearing of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ we're not looking for an earthly kingdom now now we have friends there's a debate among Christians about the future and future things and so there are those who believe that Christians are supposed to restore a kingdom through political power in this earth now this church we do not teach that and so we call them post millennial it's a big word you don't have to understand what that necessarily means but they're looking for a future earthly hope of

Jesus Christ gaining earthly power through Christian believers and so for those folks this is especially a discouraging elections are especially discouraging but for us and what we teach here we do not look for that earthly hope we are looking for a heavenly hope one that will come ultimately in the future there will be an earthly kingdom but for now our citizenship is in heaven we never promised that we're going to win the culture you know in times past like America America used to be culturally Christian it is not anymore at least in large degree there are pockets for sure but in large degree we have slid away from having a more Christianized culture and so losing ground in that respect is disappointing but it's not like it's a broken promise God doesn't promise us and when we look around most of the rest of the world it is certainly not that way
Christians are in most of the world certainly a minority and many times an oppressed! Minority So what does the future of the United States look like? You know what?
Nobody knows It could be that America crumbles into ruin because of their immorality and lust and selfishness maybe it splinters into fractured nation states maybe it will be like the Roman Empire it will just last for hundreds and hundreds of years whether for good or for ill maybe there would be a revival of faith and virtue in this nation and that's what I would pray for that's what I would love to see but regardless of what actually happens our job does not change we are just asked to be faithful and by the way not just when it comes to the culture at large or you know vying for some kind of political power we also have responsibilities to be faithful in our church and even with our church it doesn't matter whether our church becomes thousands of people it just matters that we remain faithful to preach the scriptures to preach the word of
God to preach the gospel as God has given it to us even when it comes to preaching the gospel you know we may not have a national revival you know we've seen kind of pockets of what you might call revival in the past where lots of people came to the Lord really that's only small pockets of the history the last 2000 years of Christianity there's not really been a lot of revival Christianity has mostly grown through just like lots of just people being faithful and sharing the gospel with this person or that person and just kind of a slow growth of getting the message out and just small little pockets of people who have decided to trust in the Lord while many continue to reject and pursue life lived their own way so whether we have a revival or not that doesn't matter either what matters is that we remain faithful one of my favorite movies is the patriot now this is a rated
[33:15] R movie and it's kind of a little bit you know risky for me to talk about movies it's rated R for violence by the way and by the way we should use discernment in what we watch so we actually use our family uses filtering services to remove language and anything else that would be offensive and by the way our movies if you go back 50 years ago when we were making movies they were like war movies but they weren't so gory nowadays they like blood everywhere and stuff like that and this movie actually has some of that and so I would not necessarily recommend it for especially for everyone and if you have the opportunity to filter some of those things out I think that would be more healthy for our souls but regardless it really is a tremendous story that is told through that movie it's about the American war for independence and at the end of the film and if you're not

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familiar with this movie!

what's the actor's! Mel Gibson Mel Gibson and there's a at the end of the film there is this decisive battle happening between these fledgling American troops and the British army and this ragtag group of American soldiers are overwhelmed and they've suffered many casualties and confusion is reigning in the battle and many of the soldiers are falling back and the men are starting to retreat they're turning around and they're running the other way and Mel Gibson looks and he sees what's happening and he looks over and he sees lying on the ground an American flag that is muddy and tattered and torn the stars and stripes of this fledgling nation and he runs over and he picks up the flag the standard for this new nation he picks it up and he holds it high and he rushes and runs towards the enemy and the whole time he's shouting hold the line hold the line and as he does that the other soldiers the
American soldiers look and they see the flag and they see Mel Gibson and him running toward the enemy and they kind of in their dazed confusion and they're not sure what to do and they see that flag and they look towards it and they turn around and they follow him and they run towards the battle instead of away from it in Isaiah Isaiah the prophet said this when the enemy comes in like a flood the spirit of the!
will lift up a! against him and God follow and what is that standard it's his word it's his scriptures the instructions that he gave us how we ought to live our life as Christians the message that we ought to preach to our neighbor his righteousness his justice his truth his salvation to all the world and we take that standard and we hold it high there is this concept among kind of political theory in political theory and also social theory called the Overton window has anybody ever heard of that and the idea is that there's this whole landscape of ideas and you might consider them left to right or conservative to liberal or there might be other ways you might describe that wickedness to righteousness and sometimes you know not that those things are always the same but there's this window this frame for any nation or group of people in which that window kind of pinpoints the accepted ideas for that culture and that window is shifting over time of what is accepted and it certainly has shifted for our nation you know this spectrum is things you know things that are considered like policy or popular or sensible and then it can shift to acceptable or maybe an idea that seems radical and then even ideas that seem unthinkable you know teaching the
Bible in schools used to be just the standard of how everything was done in this country and today that Overton window has shifted to where among the culture it is almost unthinkable that a teacher would open up a Bible in our school the idea of abortion committing an act of violence against a little tiny baby boy or girl in a mother's womb Seemed in this nation years ago to be unthinkable today it is policy it's considered a right and that window continues to shift in our nation and sometimes it seems like oh it might be slowing down or maybe even going back the other direction but you know what it doesn't matter where that window is it doesn't matter to us as Christians I mean it matters to the world in a lot of ways but for us as
[38:59] Christians and what we are called to it doesn't matter where that window is we are called not to follow the window of human opinion but to look to God's word to ground us something that does not move something that remains fixed that's what God has called us to Ephesians chapter 4 verse 14 Paul says this that we should no longer be children tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the trickery of men in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting we are to hold the ground to ground our lives in the foundation of God's word and to hold up that word as a standard for others to see we are to hold the line with God's standard it doesn't matter what's happening in the world it doesn't even matter what other churches are doing because there are many churches that are not holding the line they are compromising on fundamental matters of morality they've decided to go the way of the world they want to be in that overton window because they want to be popular maybe if they're popular they can have a little bit of influence they can grow their numbers but this church we will not be moved

Paul says this to the Colossians chapter 1 verse 23 if indeed you continue in the faith grounded and steadfast and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel which you heard we are going to hold our ground on the gospel and its message that gospel that says hey it's not of works you are not saved by doing good works we're saved through the work of Jesus Christ and him crucified and that's what we put our hope and our trust in there are battles for the scriptures battles again these battles and churches other churches are spending time you know teaching self help messages living your best life now coming to the influence and opinions of the world but we need to hold the

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line and carry forth the crucial doctrines of God's word regardless of whether they're popular or not by the way when it comes to morality you know sexual morality is a huge problem today and today in popular opinion sex is now treated as a cheap commodity just do whatever feels good just follow your lust give yourself over to every lust and perversion that might make you feel good and we as Christians will hold the line reserving our bodies for a husband or wife so that we can honor the Lord in marriage the world really doesn't think so much about marriage you've seen the decline of the marriage rate people are just not interested in getting married anymore and then of course we've had problems with divorce for so long and you know we teach in this church sometimes divorce is necessary in certain circumstances Jesus himself says that there are certain times in grave circumstances of grave sin when divorce might be necessary but we have this problem of what we call no fault divorce well we're just not getting along you know as the world goes that way and they have this low view of marriage we as Christians will hold the line and we will be faithful in our marriage regardless of how things are going of how much we're getting along how we might feel in that marriage and not only will we hold the line by the way but we will pass on our faith and our values to our children we will get up every morning and teach the faith once and for all delivered to the saints we'll teach them to our children we'll teach them to our children's children we'll teach them when we'll teach them when we'll teach them when we walk walk along like the
Lord said to Paul be of good cheer his faithfulness was not wasted and neither his ours Paul said to the Corinthians chapter 15 verse 58 1 Corinthians 15 58 therefore my beloved brethren be steadfast be immovable always abounding in the work of the Lord knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord even if it looks that way doing all these things I'm sharing the gospel with my neighbor nobody's listening to me you know we try to influence the world towards righteousness and truth it seems like nobody wants to listen but know this continue to be steadfast continue to be immovable unwavering your labor is not in vain whether it's an election lost whether it's a culture that mocks and ridicules you whether no one notices at all someday the Lord is going to come he's going to come and he's going to bring to light by the way all the hidden things of darkness you know there's people talk about deep state things and all there's conspiracies and some of them may be totally false and some of them may be true and we don't know a lot of times there's a lot of hidden things and darkness and all those things will be revealed one day but we don't necessarily need to worry about them now those things will be brought to light but we are called to be faithful to be of good cheer to never retreat to never surrender but to hold the line amen amen let's end with the word of prayer father we can go through discouragement you understand
I know that you understand I mean I think about the time that our Lord Jesus that you spent on the earth here there was a lot of discouragement in your ministry and your death but you remained faithful you remained faithful to endure a cross for us that we could have hope an eternal hope by putting our faith and trust in you and we ask that you would give us the strength to remain faithful to put our hope and our focus on eternal things ultimately that we would with joy with joy and with zeal continue to be faithful in our Christian lives to do what is right to live lives that are pleasing to you and also to continue to carry forth that message of the gospel letting the whole world know that they can have eternal life in you if they'll just trust in the death burial and resurrection of Jesus [46:40] Christ help us give us the strength through your grace today and tomorrow and each day after we ask for these things in Jesus name amen amen thanks for everybody go ahead and stand up on your feet we are going to end with the doxology amen amen

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