

Give Thanks to the Lord

Psalm 107

Leader Discussion guide

Illustrations Used:

- Historical info on Thanksgiving
- Philanthropist builds a hospital vs. gives your kids college tuition
- Grand Canyon Story
- Mark has the inability to do two things at once

Ice Breaker Suggestion:

Share one thing you are thankful for from this year.

Comprehension and Application Questions:

1. Read Psalm 107 (Remind your group of the structure of the Psalm, 4 scenes with 4 steps in each)
2. What were the 4 scenes and where are they in the text?
 - a. v4-5 lost and thirsty people in the desert
 - b. v10-12 people suffering because of sin and suffering
 - c. v17-18 people afflicted because of their sin
 - d. v23-27 people suffering the effect of “natural disaster”
3. What were the four steps in each scene; what is the right response to trouble?
 - a. Right time: “in their trouble” they cried out. V13, 19, 28.
 - b. Right manner: “CRIED” out to God!
 - c. They were desperate
 - d. Right person: “Then they cried to the LORD.”
4. APP: These scenes are all of people who are in trouble. What kind of trouble have you had in your life?
 - a. APP: In the midst of trouble, which of the four steps do you find the most difficult?
 - b. Why is this difficult for you?
5. Spurgeon Quote: "Some men will never pray till they are half-starved; and for their best interests, it is far better for them to be empty and faint than to be full and stouthearted. If hunger brings us to our knees it is more useful to us than feasting; if thirst drives us to the fountain, it is better than the deepest draughts of worldly joy; and if fainting leads to crying, it is better than the strength of the mighty."
 - a. Why is this true?
 - b. Do you believe it is true for you? If so, what does this mean about trouble?
6. What does God do when we call out? What did he do in verses 6-7, 19-20, and 29-30?
7. What does this passage say about giving thanks? Read verses 1, 8, 22, 32.
 - a. Why are we commanded to give thanks to the Lord?
 - b. When you are doing well, what does it look like in your life to be consistently giving thanks to the Lord?
8. **Ending Exercise**
 - a. **Give everyone a piece of paper** and ask them to write as many as possible things they are thankful for. Give them the categories: Family, Provision, Church, Spiritual
 - b. Have people show their list after 5 minutes and tell how the exercise effected them.

Extended Outline:

Intro:

Illus: Historical info on Thanksgiving.

App: The action of giving thanks, especially to God, is a Biblical idea. It is an action all people are called to over and over again in the Bible. For example:

- The Bible describes a lack of thanksgiving as primary evidence for human idolatry. Romans 1:21. We are called to give thanks in all circumstances. Eph 5:20, 1 Thess. 5:18. It is presented as a key to overcoming anxiety, and experiencing the peace of God. Phil. 4:4-6.

Verse 1-3 are the intro to the Psalm. Tells us what the Psalm is about.

a.) v1 – a command: Give thanks to the Lord.

b.) v1b – a reason: “for He is good, For His mercy endures forever.”

c.) 2 – Flows out of experience – “Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.”

- those who have experienced His goodness and mercy in their lives give thanks.

Illus: Philanthropist – builds a hospital you never step in and you don’t thank them.

- but if he comes and says, “I want to pay your way through college...” you give thanks.

App: Same with God. If we just hear He is good, the preacher says He is good, we read of His goodness, and that’s it, we probably won’t give thanks. When we experience, we give thanks.

This Psalm is filled with experiences of God’s steadfast love. 4 scenes/stanzas. It is here so that we would remember His goodness to us or experience it now... and give thanks.

I. **People in trouble.** V2b – people redeemed from “trouble.”

a. **Verses 4-5 – lost & thirsty people.**

- Exp: May be describing the journey of Israel from Egypt or long and tiring journeys of travelers in the deserts of the Middle East.
- Verse 4 – wandering, lost, looking for a place to dwell.
- Verse 5 – hungry and thirsty
 - Illus:** Me at the Grand Canyon.
- APP:** This is also talking about a spiritual wandering and hunger.
 - Matthew 11:28-30.

b. **Verses 10-12 – people suffering because of their sin and rebellion.**

- Verse 10 – picture of a person in an old dark prison.
- Verse 11 – they are there because of sin.
 - The picture of a person who has rebelled and sinned against God – he has ended up in self imposed bondage.
- App:** Rebellion against God’s instruction brings bondage.
 - We think it will be freedom, but it doesn’t.
 - alcohol – need it, ruins relationships, lives
 - freedom to not to forgive – bitterness eats away at us.
 - sexual “freedom” – broken relationships, and more.
 - Money – rejecting God’s word can lead to debt, not satisfied.
 - Many people actually go to prison.

c. **Verses 17-18 – people afflicted because of their sin.**

- Sin against God has physical affects: affliction, loath food, nearing death.

d. **Verses 23-27 – People suffering the effect of “natural disaster.”**

II. **The right response to trouble.** (What do we do?)

Verse 6, 13, 19, 28.

- 1.) Right time: "in their trouble" they cried out. V13, 19, 28.
 - a. App: Don't think, "I got into this mess... or I can do this... or there is no hope... CRY OUT TO GOD!
- 2.) Right manner: "CRIED" out to God!
 - a. "cried" – shout, loudly call. Have you ever been so miserable, so overwhelmed that you didn't just pray - You CRIED/shouted out to God for help?!!
- 3.) ? Have you ever had that kind of desperation?
 - a. Spurgeon Quote: "Some men will never pray till they are half-starved; and for their best interests, it is far better for them to be empty and faint than to be full and stouthearted. If hunger brings us to our knees it is more useful to us than feasting; if thirst drives us to the fountain, it is better than the deepest draughts of worldly joy; and if fainting leads to crying, it is better than the strength of the mighty."
- 4.) Right person: "Then they cried to the LORD."

III. God answering our prayer.

Verses 6-7 and v 19-20 and 29-30.

- a. Notice how God gives His full attention to all these people.
 - a. **Illus**: I have an inability to do two things at one time.
 - b. **App**: God is able to hear every prayer.
- b. **App**: Even if you got yourself in the trouble, God is willing to get you out.
 - a. Verses 10-11, and 14. – Prison.
 - b. **Illus**: Prodigal son.
- c. God has the power to deliver you.
 - a. He led them, he can lead you. He filled them – He can fill you. He breaks the bonds in their lives. He can set you free.
- d. Heaven: Notice the theme of God bringing people through to a rest-filled home.
 - a. V 7 – He led them a city to dwell in. v30 "he brought them to their desired haven."
 - b. W. S. Plumer: "If home, even in prospect, is sweet to the weary traveler, how much more sweet ought the prospect of heaven to be to pilgrims on their way to heaven. There is a home for the saints, just such as they long for." v30 – he brought them to their desired haven. "If the desired haven is so pleasant to the tempest-tossed mariner, how sweet will heaven itself be to the poor soul, over which all God's waves and billows have passed!"

IV. We give thanks

- a. verse 8 - Give thanks to God. V1.
- b. Give thanks publicly.
 - a. Verses 22 and 32 – telling others about what God has done for you.
 - b. V 2 "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so!"
- c. Have you experienced this?
 - a. All have experienced God's goodness. But many haven't experienced His personal deliverance. Haven't cried out to God.
 - b. God sent Christ into the world to save sinners. But who experiences that salvation? Those who, in faith, call out to Him.
- d. **Go back to step 3. Cry out to God.**
 - a. **App: Relate to him personally.**
 - i. Don't be a second-hander when it comes to God.
 - ii. "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord, will be saved." Romans 10:13.
 - iii. **Illus**: Think of Jacob, Job, Jonah, Bartimaeus, etc.
 - b. Psalm 50:15 – "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me."