

Let the Redeemed of the Lord Say So

Psalm 107

Studies in the Psalms

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This study was originally delivered as a sermon
at Grace Baptist Church, Cape Coral, FL
July 9, 2014

Open your Bibles this evening to Psalm 107. Before we take time to pray together tonight, I want to read through this psalm with you and make some observations about the importance of **thanksgiving** in our relationships with God and with one another.

This psalm has several stanzas and each one concludes with a similar refrain. See if you can catch the words to the refrain as we read it together:

Psalms 107:1	Oh give thanks to the LORD, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!
2	Let the redeemed of the LORD say so, whom he has redeemed from trouble
3	and gathered in from the lands, from the east and from the west, from the north and from the south.
Psalms 107:4	Some wandered in desert wastes, finding no way to a city to dwell in;
5	hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted within them.
6	Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress.
7	He led them by a straight way till they reached a city to dwell in.
8	Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love, for his wondrous works to the children of man!
9	For he satisfies the longing soul, and the hungry soul he fills with good things.

Psalms 107:10 Some sat in darkness and in the shadow of death,
 prisoners in affliction and in irons,
11 for they had rebelled against the words of God,
 and spurned the counsel of the Most High.
12 So he bowed their hearts down with hard labor;
 they fell down, with none to help.
13 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
 and he delivered them from their distress.
14 He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death,
 and burst their bonds apart.
15 Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,
 for his wondrous works to the children of man!
16 For he shatters the doors of bronze
 and cuts in two the bars of iron.

Psalms 107:17 Some were fools through their sinful ways,
 and because of their iniquities suffered affliction;
18 they loathed any kind of food,
 and they drew near to the gates of death.
19 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
 and he delivered them from their distress.
20 He sent out his word and healed them,
 and delivered them from their destruction.
21 Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,
 for his wondrous works to the children of man!
22 And let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving,
 and tell of his deeds in songs of joy!

Psalms 107:23 Some went down to the sea in ships,
 doing business on the great waters;
24 they saw the deeds of the LORD,
 his wondrous works in the deep.
25 For he commanded and raised the stormy wind,
 which lifted up the waves of the sea.
26 They mounted up to heaven; they went down to the depths;
 their courage melted away in their evil plight;
27 they reeled and staggered like drunken men
 and were at their wits' end.
28 Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble,
 and he delivered them from their distress.
29 He made the storm be still,
 and the waves of the sea were hushed.
30 Then they were glad that the waters were quiet,
 and he brought them to their desired haven.

31 Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,
for his wondrous works to the children of man!

32 Let them extol him in the congregation of the people,
and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

Psalms 107:33 He turns rivers into a desert,
springs of water into thirsty ground,
34 a fruitful land into a salty waste,
because of the evil of its inhabitants.

35 He turns a desert into pools of water,
a parched land into springs of water.

36 And there he lets the hungry dwell,
and they establish a city to live in;

37 they sow fields and plant vineyards
and get a fruitful yield.

38 By his blessing they multiply greatly,
and he does not let their livestock diminish.

Psalms 107:39 When they are diminished and brought low
through oppression, evil, and sorrow,
40 he pours contempt on princes
and makes them wander in trackless wastes;
41 but he raises up the needy out of affliction
and makes their families like flocks.
42 The upright see it and are glad,
and all wickedness shuts its mouth.

Psalms 107:43 Whoever is wise, let him attend to these things;
let them consider the steadfast love of the LORD.

This is the Word of the Lord / Thanks be to God.

So then, what is the refrain?

What point is the psalmist emphasizing as he concludes each stanza?

You hear it in verses 8, 15, 21 and 31.

Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,
for his wondrous works to the children of man!

If you had to summarize the message of this psalm in one verse—this is it. We are to give thanks to God for His steadfast love in all the wonderful things He does as He is at work in our lives.

Psalm 107:8 Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,
 for his wondrous works to the children of man!
9 For he satisfies the longing soul,
 and the hungry soul he fills with good things.

What about the **second stanza**?

What circumstance are people facing in verses 10–11?

- They are in darkness
- They are in danger of death
- Even worse, they are unaware of their danger
- They are in bondage to sin

What happens in verses 12–13?

- God brings them low; He doesn't leave them in their sin
- God bows them down and brings them to the end of themselves
- They cry out to the Lord and He delivers them from their distress
- He breaks apart their bonds and frees them, brings them out of darkness

What then should they do? We see the answer in verses 15 and 16.

15 Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,
 for his wondrous works to the children of man!
16 For he shatters the doors of bronze
 and cuts in two the bars of iron.

Look at the **third stanza**.

What circumstance are people facing in verses 17–18?

- They are ensnared by sin
- They are acting foolishly
- Their lives are a mess

What happens in verse 20?

- They cry out to the Lord and He delivers them from their distress
- God gives them His Word.
- He heals them and delivers them.

And so what should they do? Look at verses 21–22.

Psalm 107:21 Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,
 for his wondrous works to the children of man!
22 And let them offer sacrifices of thanksgiving,
 and tell of his deeds in songs of joy!

And the **fourth stanza**?

What circumstance are people facing in verses 23–27?

- They were engaged in business; in ships on the sea
- Now they are in the midst of a storm and “at their wits’ end”

What happens in verses 28–30?

- They cry out to the Lord and He delivers them from their distress
- God stills the storm and brings them safely to port

What then should they do? The answer is in verses 31 and 32.

Psalm 107: 31 Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love,
 for his wondrous works to the children of man!
32 Let them extol him in the congregation of the people,
 and praise him in the assembly of the elders.

Do you see the pattern in all of these stanza?

In every situation and every circumstance, no matter how difficult or troubling; when those in distress cried out to the Lord, God heard their prayers and delivered them. Sometimes the deliverance was immediate as in the calming of the storm. Sometimes the deliverance was wrapped in increased suffering and distress as in stanza two where God humbled those in sin and brought them low. He helped them see their need by bringing them to the end of themselves. But God is always faithful and always at work.

And so in every case and in every place, we are to give thanks and acknowledge God at work among us.

The psalm closes with words of instruction and encouragement. Verses 33 to 43 remind us that God is in control of all our circumstances. He is ever working out His purposes. And He has all power and authority. He is able to deliver the needy from affliction. And He is able to bring down those who are rebellious and prideful.

Psalm 107 teaches us that we are to give thanks to the Lord. And we are to do so in the hearing of others: **Let the redeemed of the Lord say so!** In each stanza we see people in various afflictions and trials. And each time the Lord brings deliverance, each time we see His hand at work, we see an exhortation to give thanks.

In light of God's glory manifest in His work in us, we are to *speak* and *sing* and *pray* His praise. We are to encourage one another by giving thanks for what God has done and what He has promised to do. God intends that our words and our prayers strengthen those who are weak and feeble among us, that they might hear and have faith and persevere in prayer and hope.

The word that is translated "thanks" here in Psalm 107 is the Hebrew word *yadah*. Literally it means "to publically confess or acknowledge." **Thanksgiving** in the Hebrew understanding of the term was not a private affair. It was always public—making known what God has done. The verb *yadah* simply means to declare or recognize a fact, whether that fact is good or bad. When it is used in the context of sinful human beings, the verb denotes the acknowledgment of a person's character, most often in the context of confessing or acknowledging sin. When it is focused upon the glory and splendor of God however, it denotes the giving of thanks—a grateful acknowledgement and public confession of the greatness of God.

Having an attitude of thankfulness was not just for the Old Testament or worship in the temple. We see it in the New Testament as well, especially in the ministry of Paul.

Listen to what he writes to the churches:

To the church at Corinth:

1 Corinthians 1:4 I give thanks to my God always for you because of the grace of God that was given you in Christ Jesus

To the church at Ephesus:

Ephesians 1:15–16 For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers

To the church at Colossae

Colossians 1:12 giving thanks to the Father, who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints in light.

To the church at Thessalonica

1 Thessalonians 1:2 We give thanks to God always for all of you, constantly mentioning you in our prayers.

2 Thessalonians 1:3 But we ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers beloved by the Lord, because God chose you as the firstfruits to be saved, through sanctification by the Spirit and belief in the truth.

And remember, these were churches that were experiencing many problems and troubles. Paul writes long letters explaining how they are to live and serve together as sinners saved by grace. And yet when Paul thinks of them, he give thanks. He recognizes that each assembly is a miracle of the power of the gospel, a display of God's glory in changed lives. Here were people who had been in darkness, worshipping idols and false gods, and now they are serving Christ and giving glory to God. The transformation of their lives is amazing!

We need to keep this in mind as well—as we live and serve here at Grace—as we remember and think of one another. We are a testimony to the saving power of the gospel and we have every reason to give thanks.

Paul instructs the churches—including us:

Ephesians 5:20 [give] thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

Colossians 3:17 And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

1 Thess. 5:18 give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Let me encourage you tonight as we come to our time of prayer—take time to give thanks. Think about God’s work in your life and in the lives of brothers and sisters here in the church. Where you see evidence of God’s grace and mercy—**Let the redeemed of the Lord say so.**

Let us pray.

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