

November 22, 2020
Willerup United Methodist Church
Sermon Notes
Pastor Marvin Singh
Giving Thanks



Psalm 137:4

How can we sing the songs of the Lord, while in a foreign land?

Psalm 138:7-8

Though I walk in the midst of trouble, you preserve my life;

...

The Lord will fulfill his purpose for me; your love endures forever – do not abandon the works of your hands.

Psalm 116:3-4, 12-14, 16

³The cords of death entangled me, the anguish of the grave came upon me; I was overcome by trouble and sorrow. ⁴Then I called on the name of the Lord: "O Lord, save me!"

...

¹²How can I repay the Lord for all his goodness to me? ¹³I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord. ¹⁴I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people.

...

¹⁶O Lord, truly I am your servant; I am your servant, the son of your maidservant; you have freed me from my chains.

Giving Thanks

At a time of adversity, we must give thanks.

The Scripture says, “Give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus.” 1 Thessalonians 5:18

In Psalm 107, there are four situations/circumstances where people were forced to consider the issues of life:

- a. The travelers who lost their way in the desert of wilderness. They were thirsty and hungry and then called the Lord. He led them by a straight way to a city where they could settle.
- b. Captives who suffer in terrible prisons, covered by darkness and bound by chains.
- c. Those who were sick and facing the grave. This situation can lead people to sinful ways.
- d. The terror of sailors who are helpless before storms. The New Testament tells us how grace has helped in these circumstances.

- a. For the lost travelers in the desert, Jesus is both the Shepherd and the Way. John 10:11
- b. For captives in dark prisons. Jesus is the one who gives “deliverance to the captives.” Luke 4:18.
- c. Those who are sick. Jesus is the Great Physician who cared for the sick and healed those who came to him.
- d. And for those at sea who fear for their lives. Jesus is the one who spoke to the storm, “Peace, be still.” Mark 4:39

Psalm 116 is a Psalm for giving thanks.

Verse 12 asks “What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits?”

The writer was going through sickness and going through a deadly pestilence. Like we are going through at present. This morning (at the time of writing my sermon 11/17) we got the news of a very dear soul, (Nalini taught Jonathan Williams in sixth standard, around 11

years old), promoted to glory because of COVID. His parents ran a school, Mount Carmel School, very godly and mission minded. Many of the pastor's children studied there on scholarship. Our three children studied there. Nalini taught there for twenty-three years. I took morning devotions there with many servants of God. We also remember that this child once fell from the fourth floor to the ground and the Lord restored him to both physical and spiritual strength and provided a godly spouse (known to us personally) and two beautiful daughters.

This COVID is real and has touched many within our family too. In this midst of the pandemic how can we praise God?

What shall I render to the Lord? How do I repay the Lord for all his goodness to me?

The Psalmist gives us an answer as we continue to read verses 13-16.

1. Verse 13 – “I will lift up the cup of salvation and call on the name of the Lord.”

I will examine my heart to see the quantity and quality of gratitude. I will accept the provision of God provided to me through his grace and mercy. Whatever is my portion I will accept it and thank God for his help in lifting my burden of sin by providing me a Savior, who is none other than Jesus Christ. He went to the cross for my sins, trespasses, and debts, and paid the price for me. I will remember the sacrifice. ‘Do this remembrance of me,’ the command and the institution where he said, ‘My body is broken for you and my blood is shed for you for the remission of our sins.’

Remember he has not taken into our account all that we did to him, but instead he forgave us. “Father forgive them because they do not

know what they do.” He pleaded and interceded for us to the Father, who always hears his prayer.

I am accepting the provision of the Holy Spirit he has provided, which enables me: “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.” The spirit gives me strength in the most difficult times.

He said, “without me you can do nothing.” (John 15:5, The Vine and the Branches)

It is the “goodness of God” (see our devotions put on our WillerupUMC website and Facebook page). It is the goodness of God that leads to repentance, (Romans 2:4). The fear and scare does not last because we live by faith and not by sight.

Paul said, “I know whom I have believed, and am convinced that he is able to guard what I have entrusted to him that day,” (2 Timothy 1:12).

2. Verse 14 – “I will fulfill my vows to the Lord in the presence of all his people.”

I will continue to bring sacrifices of prayers of thanksgiving.

A seminary President was addressing the students about a medical doctor who had lost most of his investments. He was so discouraged and lost all hope. This President was also a successful pastor. He talked to him. “There is only one hope for you. You have majored on the material, and now that the material has gone, you have nothing left personally by way of resource. If you want deliverance, get down on your knees with me and promise that if God will give you strength for a comeback, you will dedicate a tithe for him of all that he gives to you ... This man and his entire life were changed. His family life straightened up and his medical practice was as good or better than earlier. Then he continued, I have since given one of his

sons two theological degrees from this institution. *Pastor's Annual*
pg. 356

What you have promised to the Lord, keep the promise.

3. Verse 16 – “I will be your servant forever.”

What is the purpose for which he placed us here? What are his plans for our lives?

“For me to live is Christ and to die is gain.” Philippians 1:21

Jeremy Taylor, “The private and personal blessings of immunity, safeguard, liberty and integrity, deserve the thanksgiving of a whole life.” *Pastor's Annual* pg. 357

Deuteronomy reminds us of this constantly.

Deuteronomy 8:11, 13-14

“Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day ... and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have multiplied then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery.”

“Count your blessings, name them one by one, and it will surprise you what the Lord has done.” (Song by Johnson Oatman Jr.)

“Gratitude is born in the hearts that take time to count up past mercies.” (Charles Jefferson)

Resources

Crabtree, T. T., Editor, *The Zondervan Pastor's Annual 2019 & 2020*.