

**Text: Psalms 107 (Pew Bible, pg.600)**

**Title: “Faith Sings ... God is Good!”**

## **INTRODUCTION**

Turn to Psalm 107. And as you're turning I want to let you know that in our church conference last Wednesday night our church voted overwhelmingly to accept the offer of Wal-Mart to purchase our South Complex. I am grateful for the spirit of unity displayed by our church as we move through this process. While we are waiting for Wal-Mart to complete their feasibility studies we will proceed with developing the detail plans for Phase I of our new master plan, which is the construction of a new building connected to the west side of our sanctuary which will provide educational space for our senior/progressive adults, new dining facilities and new music rehearsal facilities. We'll also be working on the plans for a new community ministries building which will be located just across Lipscomb to the west. We'll be unveiling those plans hopefully by the end of next month.

**Psalm 107:1 (NIV) - Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.**

**ILLUSTRATION** – When we think about giving thanks I thought you'd enjoy seeing this little girl's expression of thanksgiving. Show video.

God is great, and He is good!

Many of the psalms are “Faith Songs” composed for the purpose of thanksgiving ... personal thanks and corporate thanks. There are times when our “Faith Sings ... God is Good.” Now we're not told specifically what the occasion was that called for this thanksgiving psalm, but clearly the psalmist is scanning back through the history of God's people and He is moved as He considers the activity of God in behalf of His people. Most believe it was sometime after the Israelites returned to their homeland having been under the discipline of God during their time in captivity in Babylon. In spite of their hard times and rebellious ways, God has been good to His people.

**Psalm 107:1 - Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.**

All through this psalm you're going to see reference to God's love or His “unfailing love.” This is the Hebrew word *hesed*. It's one of the most important words on the OT. This is the loyal, committed, gracious activity of God toward His people. He will never give up those whom he has chosen for himself.

One of the ways that God's gracious love is shown is in redeeming His people.

**Psalm 107:2 - Let the redeemed of the LORD say this— those he redeemed from the hand of the foe,**

**Psalm 107:3 - those he gathered from the lands, from east and west, from north and south.**

The “redeemed” are mentioned twice in v.2 and it takes us back to a very important concept in the OT, the concept of what is called the “kinsman redeemer.” The kinsman redeemer is the next-of-kin

who was responsible take responsibility for you when you could take care of yourself. For instance, the Bible in Leviticus 25 explains how that if there is an Israelite who becomes so poor that he has to sell the family home place, the kinsman redeemer, the nearest relative, is responsible for buying it back to keep the property in the family. To redeem means to “purchase back.”

So when God redeems us, He purchases us back off of the slave market of sin. And He did that by sending His Son Jesus Christ to die on a Cross to pay the price for our sin, so that we could be redeemed for God.

So God has a magnificent track record of goodness. The psalmist invites us to remember the ways God has revealed His goodness and grace in the past. God’s goodness and grace show up in the emergencies of life ... four distressing situations that can happen to all of us. Here’s the first thing about God’s love:

### **1. GOD’S GRACIOUS LOVE SATISFIES THE NEEDY (vv.4-9).**

Now before I explain this I want you to see that there is a cycle of grace that God intends to complete. And we see this pattern repeated throughout these four emergencies. The psalmist first describes their *grief* ... the emergency that brought them to the point of desperation. Then he describes their *groan* or their cry to the Lord to deliver them. Next he describes the *grace* shown them by the Lord as He rescued them. Then he describes what should be their response ... their *gratitude*. Apparently, the gratitude is the hard part, the oft-neglected part, because the psalmist has to exhort them ... “Let them give thanks...”

And this pattern is repeated throughout each of these emergencies described. So God’s gracious love satisfies the needy.

#### **THE GRIEF**

**Psalm 107:4 - Some wandered in desert wastelands, finding no way to a city where they could settle.**

**Psalm 107:5 - They were hungry and thirsty, and their lives ebbed away.**

There are times when we are like helpless, hopeless, homeless wanderers ... overwhelmed by the things that have happened to us and our lives are fainting away. We lose our way, and there’s no place to turn.

Friends, that’s our condition apart from Christ ... we are lost. Spiritually we are hungry and thirsty, and we cannot satisfy ourselves. And, then on top of that situations can happen where we face situations where we’re so weak, we don’t think we can take another step.

What do we do? Well the next step in the cycle is...

#### **THE GROAN**

**Psalm 107:6 - Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble...**

**ILLUSTRATION** – Last week I read about a passenger jet bound for Indonesia. One of the engines caught on fire and the plane began to shake and the lights went out. There was a news reporter on board the plane. He said he could hear people crying out in prayer, “God, save our flight! Give us your protection!”

Aren't you glad that God hears our groans? Sometimes we can't even put them into words. The Bible says that in times like that the Holy Spirit interprets our groans to the Father. And God hears. The next step in the cycle is...

## **THE GRACE**

**Psalm 107:6 - Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he delivered them from their distress.**

**Psalm 107:7 - He led them by a straight way to a city where they could settle.**

Before they were going in circles, getting nowhere, then they cried out to the Lord and He led them straight to where they could find His help. Friend, God knows exactly where you are in the wilderness.

**ILLUSTRATION** – Not long ago I was going somewhere and I was running short on gasoline. I worried that I wouldn't make it to a filling station. I have an app on my phone that tells you where the nearest gas station or restaurant or theater is located. You see, there's a satellite up there in space that sees where I am, and it also knows where my need can be met, and it charts a course for me to get from here to there. Friend, you may be lost, but God knows exactly where you are. And He knows what you need most and how to get there.

Next in the cycle of grace is ...

## **THE GRATITUDE**

**Psalm 107:8 - Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men,**

**Psalm 107:9 - for he satisfies the thirsty and fills the hungry with good things.**

I'll come back to this in a moment. Now there's another life emergency where God intervenes in His love.

## **2. GOD'S GRACIOUS LOVE DELIVERS THE CAPTIVES (vv.10-16).**

And once again we see the cycle of grace that should be completed.

## **THE GRIEF**

**Psalm 107:10 - Some sat in darkness and the deepest gloom, prisoners suffering in iron chains,**

Now here is a picture of some people who are captive in a deep, dark prison. They are captives behind bars and in chains, and they cannot escape. And the next verse tells us how they got that way.

**Psalm 107:11 - for they had rebelled against the words of God and despised the counsel of the Most High.**

Why were they in this condition? They had rebelled against the Lord, and specifically, against His Word and His counsel. You see, if we ignore God's wisdom in His Word it will lead to bondage in some way or another. And God may not shield us from the consequences of our rebellion.

**Psalm 107:12 - So he subjected them to bitter labor; they stumbled, and there was no one to help.**

There are times when God, in His love, disciplines us and allows us to drink the full cup of our disobedience to where we will see that it is always best to follow Him.

This is exactly what happens when people suffer from addictions. They are captives to alcohol or drugs or sex or food or whatever. Is there any hope?

**THE GROAN**

**Psalm 107:13 - Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble...**

And here is God's gracious love...

**THE GRACE**

**Psalm 107:13 - Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress.**

**Psalm 107:14 - He brought them out of darkness and the deepest gloom and broke away their chains.**

I'm telling you today, God sets captives free. Cry out to Him.

**THE GRATITUDE**

**Psalm 107:15 - Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men,**

**Psalm 107:16 - for he breaks down gates of bronze and cuts through bars of iron.**

Again, I'll come back to this in a moment. But there's another way God's gracious love is shown.

### **3. GOD'S GRACIOUS LOVE HEALS THE AFFLICTED (vv.17-22).**

#### **THE GRIEF**

**Psalm 107:17 - Some became fools through their rebellious ways and suffered affliction because of their iniquities.**

Note: Again they are afflicted "because of their iniquities." Do you see that there is so much affliction we bring on ourselves because of our foolish rebellion against the Lord. What are we to do?

#### **THE GROAN**

**Psalm 107:19 - Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble...**

#### **THE GRACE**

**Psalm 107:19 - Then they cried to the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress.**

**Psalm 107:20 - He sent forth his word and healed them; he rescued them from the grave.**

God gives grace when we don't deserve it. There are times when we act foolishly, yet God has mercy on us and shows us grace.

God's Word is what we cling to in times like this. You see we get into trouble when we foolishly rebel against God's Word. And when we repent and cry to God for mercy, it is His Word that shows us the way back.

Friends, there is grace in this Book. Run to it.

#### **THE GRATITUDE**

**Psalm 107:21 - Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men.**

**Psalm 107:22 - Let them sacrifice thank offerings and tell of his works with songs of joy.**  
Now there's another way God shows His love.

### **4. GOD'S GRACIOUS LOVE PRESERVES THE WEARY (vv.23-32).**

Now here is yet a different emergency in life.

#### **THE GRIEF**

**Psalm 107:23 - Others went out on the sea in ships; they were merchants on the mighty waters.**

**Psalm 107:24 - They saw the works of the LORD, his wonderful deeds in the deep.**

**Psalm 107:25 - For he spoke and stirred up a tempest that lifted high the waves.**

**Psalm 107:26 - They mounted up to the heavens and went down to the depths; in their peril their courage melted away.**

**Psalm 107:27 - They reeled and staggered like drunken men; they were at their wits' end.**

So these sailors are out on the sea going about their work and marveling at the works of God on the sea. Suddenly there's storm ... the Lord stirred up a tempest. Yes, He will do that occasionally. And their ship is tossed around like a paper cup. And these guys are scared out of their wits. They stagger from sea sickness.

Note: Apparently this is not something that they brought on by their sin against God. But the solution is still the same.

## **THE GROAN**

**Psalm 107:28 - Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble...**

**ILLUSTRATION** – Years ago, when our daughter Allison was just a little girl, she came into our bedroom late one night and awakened us. I could tell she was scared. She said, “Dad, there’s something under my bed.” I thought she was just having a bad dream and I told her to go back to bed. She said, “Really, Dad, there’s something under my bed. I heard it.” So I got up and went into her room and turned on the light and I immediately saw what she was talking about. Our little hamster had gotten out of this cage and somehow made his way back to Allison’s room. She could hear him running around on a piece of poster board under her bed. Well the chase was on. For the next hour we chased that little rat all over the house. Finally, we caught him and got him back in his cage and Allison back in her bed. As I laid back down I began to think about a frightening situation that caused little hamster to run *from* me, and a frightened daughter to run *to* me.

God hears our cries.

## **THE GRACE**

**Psalm 107:28 - Then they cried out to the LORD in their trouble, and he brought them out of their distress.**

**Psalm 107:29 - He stilled the storm to a whisper; the waves of the sea were hushed.**

**Psalm 107:30 - They were glad when it grew calm, and he guided them to their desired haven.**

## **THE GRATITUDE**

**Psalm 107:31 - Let them give thanks to the LORD for his unfailing love and his wonderful deeds for men.**

**Psalm 107:32 - Let them exalt him in the assembly of the people and praise him in the council of the elders.**

“*Let them give thanks...*” It isn’t automatic. We have to be reminded to thank God. We race by this.

**ILLUSTRATION** – A parent says to a child who has just received something, “What do you say?” The cycle isn’t complete until we have returned to say thanks to God, and offered ourselves in greater commitment to Him.

Note: We know about grief. We know about groaning. We know about God’s grace. But do we know about gratitude?

## **CONCLUSION**

**ILLUSTRATION** – Luke 17 tells us that one day Jesus was about to go into a village when he was met by 10 lepers. They stood at a distance and cried out to Jesus that He would take pity on them and heal them. Jesus told them to do something rather unusual; they were to go and show themselves to the priests. They asked no questions, but did just as Jesus had told them. And as they did they were immediately cleansed and healed. One of the ten, who happened to be one of those “undeserving” Samaritans, when he saw the miracle that had happened to him, turned around and went back to Jesus. The leper, praising God for what had happened to him, threw himself at the feet of Jesus and thanked him. Then Jesus asked a provoking question:

**Luke 17:17-18 - Jesus asked, “Were not all ten cleansed? Where are the other nine? Was no one found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?”**

So often we commit the sin of presumption. We presume on the grace of God, when we should be praising for the grace of God.

I want to give you a moment to give thanks to God. Will you take some quiet time right now with your head bowed and give thanks to God for:

- When you were needy and He satisfied you
- When you were a captive and He delivered you
- When you were afflicted and He healed you
- When you were weary and He preserved you