

“Goodness and Love”
Psalm 107
(Preached at Trinity, June 10, 2012)

I’m supplying these notes for the benefit of busy pastors who may be engaged in bi-vocational work, feeling the pressure of preparing to preach twice on the Lord’s Day while trying to balance full-time secular work as well as caring for their families. While the notes of another man are no substitute for personal study, I pray that these may aid in the process of preparing to preach.

Disclaimer: These are the actual notes I bring with me to the pulpit, which I follow loosely. They are not designed for publication. While I try to make every effort to give proper credit to my sources from the pulpit, adequate citations will sometimes be absent from my notes. If anyone feels their intellectual material has been used without adequate citation, please contact me and I’ll make immediate correction giving credit.

1. With **Psalm 107** we come to Book Five and the final book of the Psalter. Book Five covers Psalms 107-150. **Psalm 107** describes God’s deliverance from several different forms of difficulty.
 - a. Each section ends with the expression:
"Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!"
 - b. They may be specific to Israel but they could refer to anyone. They speak of life’s experience.
2. Particular to Israel it could be referring to their return from Babylon. It has a liturgical feel, as perhaps something to be chanted in the Hebrew worship. **Verse 1** is a typical call to worship:
Psalm 107:1 KJV - "O give thanks unto the LORD, for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever."
It is found in 1 Chronicles 15; 2 Chron. 5; 2 Chron. 7; Psalms 106, 107, 118, 136
The word for “give thanks” is the same as the word “praise” in **Verses 8, 15, 21, 31** - יהַלֵּל
3. While this could be the experience of all men, it draws particular cords of praise and thanksgiving from the redeemed for we have experienced personally the wonderful goodness and love of God.
4. **Psalms 105-107** have often been looked to as a trilogy:
Psalm 105 recounting Israel’s experience as God’s covenant people from Abraham to the entrance into Canaan.
Psalm 106 serves as a chronicle of Israel’s unfaithfulness during the same period and their years of exile in Babylon.
Psalm 107 praises God for their deliverance from the Babylonian exile.
5. We’ll divide this psalm into three parts:
 - I. **Verses 1-3** – A call to praise – the recognition of God’s goodness and love
 - II. **Verses 4-32** – A catalogue of peril - the human experience
 - III. **Verses 33-43** – A conclusion of provision – God’s sovereignty in human affairs
- I. **Verses 1-3** – A call to praise – the recognition of God’s goodness and love
 - A. A familiar theme
 1. The psalms continually call us to praise and thanksgiving
Psalm 100:4 KJV - "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, *and* into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, *and* bless his name."
 2. All of humanity should rise up to praise God with great gratitude.
But of all humanity, the redeemed should be filled with this gratitude
Psalm 107:2 KJV - "Let the redeemed of the LORD say so"

3. Israel knew personally of God's redeeming grace
Verse 3 declares how God brought them out of captivity.
But how much more do we understand God's redeeming grace?
 4. If most of humanity remains silent in praise, how shall we respond to God's wondrous grace and mercy? Are we not overwhelmed with gratitude? Does it not cause our hearts to explode in praise?
- B. The psalmist gives the two primary categories of gratitude
God's goodness and God's love - all of God's blessings flow from these two infinite wells of grace.
1. We also saw this in **Psalm 100**
Psalm 100:4-5 KJV - "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, *and* into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, *and* bless his name. ⁵ For the LORD is good; his mercy is everlasting"
 2. These two wonderful gifts of God are expressed in endless ways
 3. The remainder of this psalm will catalogue some of the marvelous ways God demonstrates His goodness and love.
 4. Of course, the greatest demonstration of God's goodness and love for us is Christ.
 5. The most probing question you can ask is, Am I among the redeemed?

II. **Verses 4-32** – A catalogue of peril - the human experience

It is divided into four sections

A. The wilderness wandering – **Verses 4-9**

- Psalm 107:4 KJV** - "They wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in."
1. The "wilderness" is an apt metaphor of this earthly life. It is a life of looking and longing for heavenly Canaan. It is a life of hungering and thirsting after righteousness and seeking the presence of Christ.
 2. It is a "solitary way" because it is a narrow way that few enter.
It is a "solitary way" because everything has been left behind.
It is a "solitary way" because it is a separate way, a way contrary to this world.
2 Corinthians 6:17 KJV - "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean *thing*; and I will receive you,"
It is a "solitary way" because it is the way of pilgrims and strangers
Hebrews 11:13 KJV - "These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of *them*, and embraced *them*, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth."
1 Peter 2:11 KJV - "Dearly beloved, I beseech *you* as strangers and pilgrims, abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the soul;"
 3. **Verses 5-6** describes their hunger and thirst, how they cried out to God and He heard them

4. But their ultimate hunger transcended the basic need of physical provision. God satisfied our innermost hunger
Psalm 107:8-9 KJV - "Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men! ⁹ For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness."
 5. He satisfies the longing soul with Himself. He is our ultimate food. Spurgeon: "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 joys; and if fainting leads to crying it is better than the strength of the mighty,
 6. This can only lead to one thing – praise and thanksgiving
Psalm 107:8-9 KJV - "Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men! ⁹ For he satisfieth the longing soul, and filleth the hungry soul with goodness."
- B. Prisoners released – **Verses 10-16**
1. **Verse 10** describes it as "darkness" "bound in affliction and iron"
 2. **Verses 11-12** – describe the cause of their peril – sin
Psalm 107:11 KJV - "Because they rebelled against the words of God"
 3. This is the common lot of humanity – rebellion against God has resulted in the terrible bondage of sin
 4. And to make matters worse: "and *there was none to help*" (**Verse 12**)
 5. There is always good news and hope to all who repent
Psalm 107:13 KJV - "Then they cried unto the LORD in their trouble, and he saved them out of their distresses."
Psalm 107:14 KJV - "He brought them out of darkness and the shadow of death, and brake their bands in sunder."
 6. This describes in detail the mighty work of God in delivering sinners from the pit of darkness and despair; from their bondage to sin and Satan.
 - a. John Bunyan saw **Verse 16** as descriptive of his own deliverance from sin.
 - b. Charles Wesley wrote in the beautiful hymn, "And Can it Be"
*Long my imprisoned spirit lay
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray,-
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.*
 7. Again, for all who have experienced this marvelous redemption the only response is great praise and gratitude
Psalm 107:15 KJV - " Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men!"

- C. The sick restored – **Verses 17-22**
1. The issue is that their sickness was the result of their iniquities. Sin results in all manner of sickness
Psalm 107:17 KJV - "Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted."
 - a. Notice they are described as fools
 - b. Who but a fool could look at the goodness of God and respond with wicked rebellion?
 2. Their sickness was so severe that they lost all appetite and were on death's door.
 3. And the indication is their suffering is self-inflicted.
 4. And once again, we find the goodness of God to the repenting soul
Psalm 107:19-20 KJV - "Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, *and* he saveth them out of their distresses. ²⁰ He sent his word, and healed them, and delivered *them* from their destructions."
 5. And for all who have experienced His healing touch of redemption the only response is great praise and gratitude
Psalm 107:21-22 KJV - "Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men! ²² And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing."
- D. The storm tossed are rescued – **Verses 23-32**
1. These verses describe a ship in a violent storm – tossed too and fro
The sailor's hearts melt in the fear of the tempest
Psalm 107:26-27 KJV - "their soul is melted because of trouble. ²⁷ They reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wits' end."
 2. And again, they cry out to God and find Him sufficient
Psalm 107:28-30 KJV - "Then they cry unto the LORD in their trouble, and he bringeth them out of their distresses. ²⁹ He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. ³⁰ Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven."
 3. The only response to such mercy is praise and gratitude
Psalm 107:31-32 KJV - "Oh that *men* would praise the LORD *for* his goodness, and *for* his wonderful works to the children of men! ³² Let them exalt him also in the congregation of the people, and praise him in the assembly of the elders."
- E. The common element in all of these is the helplessness of man and the all powerful provision of God. Only those who recognize their absolute need find help.
Matthew 5:3 KJV - "Blessed *are* the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."
- III. **Verses 33-43** – A conclusion of provision – God's sovereignty in human affairs
- A. In all of these perils God is proven sufficient

1. **Verse 33-35** – God is the author of the barrenness – but He is also the source of every life-giving flow. He makes the barren land fruitful and fills the dry land full of life-giving springs
 2. **Verses 36-38** – He makes a fruitful habitation for the hungry to be filled and blesses them with fruitfulness.
- B. **Verses 39-42** – Again, we see God’s sovereignty over the affairs of men
 He raises up the righteous and brings low the wicked.
 He raises up the poor and brings low the great
- 1 Samuel 2:6-9** - "The LORD killeth, and maketh alive: he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. ⁷ The LORD maketh poor, and maketh rich: he bringeth low, and lifteth up. ⁸ He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, *and* lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set *them* among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory: for the pillars of the earth *are* the LORD'S, and he hath set the world upon them. ⁹ He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail."

Conclusion:

1. **Verse 43** provides the wonderful close.
 Compare it with **Verse 17**
Psalm 107:17 KJV - "Fools because of their transgression, and because of their iniquities, are afflicted."
Psalm 107:43 KJV - "Whoso *is* wise, and will observe these *things*, even they shall understand the lovingkindness of the LORD."
2. The wise do not close their eyes to the goodness and love of God.
 - a. They are not among those who forget but of those who understand God’s great goodness and love.
 - b. They are not among those who fail to recognize their absolute dependence upon God.
 - c. They are those who shout forth God’s praises.
Psalm 107:1 KJV - "O give thanks unto the LORD, for *he is* good: for his mercy *endureth* for ever."