

Summer in the Psalms (2026)
Psalm 67
Missions Weekend - Blessed to be a Blessing

This is my message written prior to being preached. Please excuse the bullet point format and any grammatical mistakes. This is meant to be spoken.

TO THE CHOIRMASTER: WITH STRINGED INSTRUMENTS. A PSALM. A SONG.

***¹ May God be gracious to us and bless us
and make his face to shine upon us, Selah
² that your way may be known on earth,
your saving power among all nations.
³ Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!
⁴ Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide the nations upon earth. Selah
⁵ Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!
⁶ The earth has yielded its increase;
God, our God, shall bless us.
⁷ God shall bless us;
let all the ends of the earth fear him! (Psalms 67)***

Introduction

- How many of you were here last night for our **Missions Movie**?
- We learned about **William Carey**, the father of modern **Protestant Missions**.
- And this morning we joined together in prayer for our **Missionaries**.
- Brian led us in a game & presentation reminding us of **the missionaries we support**.
- We also **heard from one of those missionary couples, the Leatherwoods**.
- And we'll hear from our other **Members in Mission** during our **luncheon**.
- So, I hope it's clear to everyone that at Bridges Church, **we value Missions**.
- In fact, as Brian **points out almost every week in our announcements**,
- one of our 7 core values is **Engagement in the great commission**.
- We believe that as a church, and as individuals, not just one weekend a year,
- But every day we **must seek** to obey the **Great Commission**.
- We must take Jesus' command recorded in **Matthew 28** seriously...

¹⁹ Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, ²⁰ teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age." (Matthew 28:19-20)

- Now this command from Jesus, is certainly the most familiar **missions' passage in Scripture**.
- **But it's not unique**.
- **Missions did not begin with the Great Commission**.

- In fact, I would submit that the entire **Bible** is a **Missions Book**.
- It records **God's mission to bring redemption to a fallen world** through His Son **Jesus Christ**.
- And it also tells our part in **God's mission**:
- As his people we are to **proclaim His message of redemption to this fallen world**.
- So, with this entire **Missions Book before me**, I had a lot of choices for **today's text**.
- But I decided to limit myself to **the Psalms**,
- Because that's what we've been focusing on **this Summer**.
- And when I thought about missions and the Psalm,
- My mind immediately went to one of my favorite **Psalms, 67**.
- This is one of many passages in **the Old Testament** that make it clear **that...**
- **Missions is not a New Testament concept** that began with the great commission,
- But that **it has always** been at the heart of **God's plan of redemption**.
- **Psalm 67 is a missionary Psalm**.
- The **author** is unknown, but he understood the importance of **not only Israel...**
- but the **nations** (the Gentiles) coming to know and worship God.
- In his commentary on the Psalms, **J. J. Stewart Perowne** writes...

[Psalm 67 is] the joyful outpouring of a heart which longs to see the God and King of Israel acknowledged and worshiped as the God and King of the world. (J. J. Stewart Perowne)

- And so, as we walk through this Psalm,
- It's my hope and prayer that we will be **instructed, motivated, encouraged and inspired**.
- That like the psalmist, our hearts **will long to see our God and King (Jesus Christ) ...**
- acknowledged and worshiped as **the God and King of the World**.
- And that this **longing** would move us to grow in our commitment to **the great commission**.
- To engage in making disciples for **Jesus Christ in all nations among all peoples**.
- **So would you pray with me to that end**.
- **Psalm 67 is a missionary Psalm; however, it begins not with a call to missions, but...**

1. A Prayer for God's Blessing

- **Verse 1...**

¹ May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, (Psalms 67:1)

- This prayer comes from what is known as **Aaron's Blessing**.
- Aaron was Israel's first high priest and in **Number 6 God says to Moses...**

²³ "Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them, ²⁴ The LORD bless you and keep you; ²⁵ the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you; ²⁶ the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace." (Numbers 6:22-26)

- So, the psalmist begins by **recalling** this prayer of blessing **upon Isreal**.
- And at the **heart of this blessing**, he asks for God to...

make his face to shine upon us

- The picture is of God looking upon his people with **favor, acceptance** and **love**.
- His shining face is the opposite of an angry, **scowling face**
- or **a face that's turned away in rejection**.
- **So, to be blessed by God means more than God taking care of you or meeting your needs.**
- **It means being accepted into a loving relationship with him.**
- Knowing him and being known by him.
- So, **the psalmist** is asking for God to bless his people with **love and acceptance**.
- **But there's a problem when people pray for God's blessing.**
- The problem is that we're sinners.
- And as sinners, we **all deserve not God's blessings but His curses**.
- Paul **quoting** from **Deuteronomy** writes...

10 ... "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them." (Galatians 3:10)

- **Can you see the problem then?**
- Since no one **abides by all the things written in the Book of the Law**,
- Then everyone **deserves not blessings but curses**.
- But there is one exception.
- There is one person in all history **who abided by all things written in the Book of the Law**.
- There is **one person who lived in perfect sinless obedience to God**.
- **In fact**, of that person (Jesus Christ) alone, **God said...**

5 ... "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased..." (Matthew 17:5)

- And so, what that means is that **only Jesus deserves the blessings of God**.
- Only Jesus deserves **God's face to shine upon him**.
- Only on Jesus **could God look down from heaven with complete approval and acceptance**.
- So where did that leave sinners in Isreal, where does that leave sinners like us?
- **How can God bless those who deserve only curses?**
- Well, the gospel tells us that Jesus **offered himself** as the sacrificial **substitute for our sins**.
- So, through Christ, the blessings of God, that only he deserved, could shine on the people whose sins and curses he bore. **The apostle Paul explains...**

13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree" (Galatians 3:13)

- And so, the psalmist could pray...

May God be gracious to us and bless us

- That word **gracious** in the **Hebrew** means **to show favor, kindness, to have mercy**.
- The psalmist is not asking God to bless his people because **they deserve it**.
- He's asking for **blessing based on God's grace, mercy and kindness**.
- He was ultimately appealing for the saving grace that God would provide through the Messiah, who we know to be Jesus Christ.
- And what we should understand is that God **is merciful** to believers because **he showed no mercy to Jesus on the cross**.
- God **blesses us because he cursed Jesus** as he was **bearing our sins**.
- Instead of showing his face to Jesus, **the Father turned his face away**,
- so that his beloved Son cried in horror,

46 ... "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" (Matthew 27:46)

- Jesus then received **the full wrath of God** for our transgressions,
- He paid, **in full**, the penalty for our sin.
- Only in this way **could God graciously** turn a shining face **in acceptance of sinners**.
- Because **sinners who trust in Christ** are no longer **sinners, they are saints, holy ones**.
- For, as Paul wrote to **the Romans**, they have **received**.

22 the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. (Romans 3:22)

- This applies to the **Old Testament saint (like the psalmist)** who trusted that God would provide salvation through the coming Messiah.
- And it applies to **those who trust that God has provided** for their salvation through Jesus Christ (the Messiah who came).
- All who trust in Christ can pray...

May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us

- So, we've seen a prayer for God's blessing,
- And we've seen how this prayer **can only be answered through Jesus Christ**.
- And what does **this have to do with Missions?**
- Well listen up all of you who have, by God's grace through the sacrifice of his Son Jesus Christ, **received the blessing of his shining face (his love and acceptance) in your life**.
- You have received the blessing, and with the blessing comes responsibility.
- And that's what we find in **verse 2 of Psalm 67**, where the psalmist turns to...

2. The Purpose of God's Blessing

- Why does God bless his people?
- What is his purpose?

- Well, I believe **Psalm 67**, gives us two related purposes...
- **First when God blesses his people, it is to result in...**

A. The Proclamation of God's Saving Power (the gospel)

- Starting from **verse 1** again we read...

¹ May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, Selah

- That word **Selah** is a Hebrew musical term than means pause...
- So, **pause and think** about God's grace, ***his blessing his shining face upon you.***
- **Christian**, think about **the salvation that Jesus Christ** has provided **for you.**
- How he has **made you acceptable to God.**
- **Ask yourself**, why would he **bless me like that?**
- And you might think of a number of answers to that question.
- But the immediate answer the Psalmist gives in **verse 2** is...

² that your (God's) way may be known on earth, your saving power among all nations. (Psalms 67:1-2)

- God blesses his people so that **through them** he might reveal himself throughout the earth.
- This means that those who **have escaped the curse of sin through Christ's sacrifice,**
- Have a responsibility to **share this salvation message** with **their fellow sinners in the world.**
- This is a call to **missions given first to Israel.**
- Given through their father Abraham when **God, in Genesis 12, promised him...**

²...I will make of you a great nation, and I will bless you and make your name great, so that you will be a blessing. ³ I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed." (Genesis 12:2-3)

- From Israel's beginning, God's plan was to greatly bless them...
- So that they might be a blessing to all the families, **all the people of the earth.**
- But if you **read the OT** you'll find, **that Israel because of sin and selfishness,**
- **often failed to embrace this great mission.**
- And unfortunately, this same mission is not **always embraced by the church.**
- We Christians can become so sinful and selfish that we focus exclusively on our own issues,
- on the size of our churches, on the problems of our city, our state, our nation...
- that we forget **Jesus' calling to make disciples of all nations.**
- We forget what the psalmist knew.
- That the **Aaronic blessing, granting God's favor to Israel (God's people then),**
- was given so that the **Abrahamic promise of blessing** for the world may be fulfilled.
- ***in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.***

- And this **blessing and responsibility** has passed on to **God's people (His church) now**.
- Because God's blessing came to us and ultimately comes to all the families of the earth through Jesus Christ, **a descendent of Abraham**.
- **And** how will all the families of the earth receive the blessing of Christ.
- Well, according to Psalm 67,
- the blessing will come when God's blessed people seek to be a blessing by determining...

That God's way may be known on earth, His saving power among all nations.

- Now for Israel that meant living as an example among the nations.
- Living in trust and obedience to God's law.
- Showing the nations the ways of God.
- Showing the nations his saving power.
- Isaiah puts it well when he writes...

⁶ "I am the LORD; I have called you in righteousness; I will take you by the hand and keep you; I will give you as a covenant for the people, a light for the nations, (Isaiah 42:6)

- Living in God's righteousness, Israel was to be a **light for the nations**.
- Showing the way to God, **and the salvation he provides**.
- And in a similar way,
- Christians are to reveal God's ways and his saving power by proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ throughout the world.
- We are to be messengers of God's saving power in our neighborhoods and among the nations.
- As Paul wrote to the church in Corinth...

²⁰ Therefore, we are ambassadors for Christ, God making his appeal through us. We implore you on behalf of Christ, be reconciled to God. (2 Corinthians 5:20)

- **As ambassadors of Christ**, we are called to bring the message of reconciliation to a lost world.
- And our **message is summarized by John 3:16**.

¹⁶ For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. (John 3:16)

- Proclaiming the gospel message is every Christian's (blessed one's) calling and responsibility.
- This means we must make **God's ways and saving power known to the people we encounter in our lives**.
- And it also means that we must take part in...

making God's ways and saving power known among all the nations.

- This is what Jesus meant when in the Great Commission,
- He called his people **to make disciples of all nations**.

- So, the question is, since you have been blessed,
- **Are you playing your part in God's great work blessing the nations?**
- Have you **prepared yourself** to present the gospel?
- Are you **praying for God** to use you for the salvation of others?
- And are you **supporting, through prayer and finances and encouragement, those that God calls to cross cultural boundaries and proclaim the gospel in other nations to other peoples?**
- By Christ's death and resurrection God has blessed us with the light of his shining face.
- Now we have received **the same charge that Jesus gave to his disciples.**

⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you,

- You will be blessed with the power of God's Spirit, **why?** so you can be a blessing...

and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth. (Acts 1:8)

- So, we've seen the first purpose of **God's blessing his people.**
- That they might proclaim the gospel to the nations.
- But that is **not His ultimate purpose.**
- Yes, the purpose of our blessing is that we might proclaim the gospel.
- But **the purpose of proclaiming the gospel is for...**

B. The Praise of God by all Peoples

- The **heart of Psalm 67** and the psalmist's great desire is that God will be praised in all the earth.
- We see this clearly in **verses 3-5.**

***³ Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you!***

***⁴ Let the nations be glad and sing for joy,
for you judge the peoples with equity
and guide the nations upon earth. Selah***

***⁵ Let the peoples praise you, O God;
let all the peoples praise you! (Psalms 67:3-5)***

- In verse 4 the **psalmist** pleads for the nations to

be glad and sing for joy

- And he says that this will take place because **God judges the people with equity and guides the nations upon the earth.**
- And what this means is that as the nations (peoples) hear of **God's ways and his saving power.**
- And as they receive what they hear they will be blessed with **God's rule and guidance** in their lives.

- The psalmist looks forward to the time when the nations will be **glad and sing for joy because God is their King.**
- And this call to gladness and joy **in verse 4** is surrounded by **a call for God's praise.**
- For God's glory... verses 3 and 5 are the same...

Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you!

- This poetic repetition emphasizes the importance of this part of the Psalm.
- This is the **ultimate purpose** for both the **blessing from God** and the **proclamation about God.**
- Yes, we **go to our neighbors and the nations,**
- Yes, we **send and support missionaries because** we have **a heart for people who are lost without Christ.**
- We want people to experience what we have,
- The blessings of God's shining face, his love, forgiveness, acceptance.
- We want people to be saved from the wrath of God and be able to say to God with David...

in your presence there is fullness of joy; at your right hand are pleasures forevermore. (Psalms 16:11)

- So yes, we engage in missions for the sake of those who are lost without Christ.
- **But that must not be our final purpose,**
- Our ultimate goal must **be the praises, the glory of God.**
- And here's the thing, God's most effective servants have always had a passion for **both the salvation of people and the glory of God.**
- One great example of this was **Henry Martyn,**
- **Martyn** was a brilliant young scholar at **Cambridge University in the early 1800s.**
- And when he was converted, **when he was blessed by God's grace,**
- He became committed to the **twin purposes of proclaiming the gospel and Glorifying God.**
- He like others was inspired to enter **missionary service** by reading about **William Carey's early work in India.**
- But when he determined to **follow Carey to India,**
- his friends objected, **they said he was wasting his life by going to a poor and distant land,**
- **Martyn** replied with a passionate call to missions...

I am in the midst of dying souls, who are thronging to hell. How cruel, how impious to let a brother perish for want of warning. (Henry Martyn)

- Arriving as a pioneering missionary to India, Martyn was heartbroken at the idolatry he witnessed all around, writing:

My heart was ready to burst at the dreadful state to which the devil had brought my poor fellow creatures. (Henry Martyn)

- And so, he made every effort to learn the language and proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ.

- And his efforts were rewarded greatly.
- God used him to snatch many of his **poor fellow creatures from the devil...**
- bringing them into new life in Christ.
- But Martyn's heart was most burdened by the **sacrilege of idolatry**,
- and the dishonoring of God's name.
- In response to **Muslim blasphemies** directed toward **Christ**, Martyn exclaimed:

I could not endure existence if Jesus were not glorified; it would be hell to me if he were to be always thus dishonoured. (Henry Martyn)

- Because of **Henry Martyn's** passion for spreading the gospel to the lost,
- And his fervent desire for God's glory, **his life was remarkably useful for Christ**,
- and his example challenges us today to take up **Psalm 67's** passionate plea:

Let the peoples praise you, O God; let all the peoples praise you!

- We must understand that the highest motive for both local **evangelism and cross-cultural missions** is God's glory.
- And I know some of you are expecting a **John Piper quote here**.
- **But he's not the only one who understands this truth.**
- John Stott wrote...

The greatest incentive in all evangelism is not the need of human beings but the glory of God; not that they shall receive salvation, but that they shall give to God the honor that is due to his name. (John Stott)

- **And why is this the case?**
- Well, no one explains it better than John Piper who said...

Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn't. Worship is ultimate, not missions, because God is ultimate, not man. When this age is over, and the countless millions of the redeemed fall on their faces before the throne of God, missions will be no more. It is a temporary necessity. But worship abides forever. So worship is the fuel and goal of missions. Worship has always been and will always be the ultimate purpose of God in the universe. It has always been the fire that fuels our passion to reach peoples who do not worship the true God through Jesus Christ. (John Piper)

- So let your heart for **man's salvation** and **God's glory** fuel your passion to reach peoples who do not know Jesus Christ and therefore do not worship the one true God.
- OKAY, so, we've seen a prayer for God's blessing,
- and we have seen the purpose of that blessing.
- That the gospel might be proclaimed throughout the earth
- and ultimately that God might be praised by all peoples!

- Then the psalmist concludes with...

3. The Promise of God's Blessing

- In verse 6 we read...

⁶ The earth has yielded its increase; God, our God, shall bless us. (Psalms 67:6)

- Now this might not sound like a promise at first,
- but what the psalmist is doing is speaking of **future events** as an **already accomplished work**.
- He is certain of God's blessing his people in their work of making him known among the nations.
- He is saying **God shall bless us and therefore the earth will/has yielded its increase**.
- Maybe he is **remembering the promise given to Abraham...**

³ ...in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed. (Genesis 12:3)

- In the psalmist's mind the fact that God has promised a blessing to all the families of the earth,
- **Means it's a done deal.**
- In his mind God's salvation harvest is virtually an accomplished fact,
- simply because it is God who has promised it and God is at work to achieve his will.
- **And this is our confidence in spreading the gospel...**
- not confidence in **our own abilities, our passion, presentation or persuasion.**
- and certainly **not reliance on worldly appeals and manipulations.**
- But **confidence in a sovereign God** who blesses his people and promises ***the earth has yielded its increase***.
- The picture is of a **field made ripe for harvest by God through his blessed people.**
- People who in turn have become a blessing to the nations.
- So that throughout the world there are those who've heard and received the ways of the Lord and his saving power.
- Put simply when God blesses his people in their gospel-spreading work,
- A harvest of souls is guaranteed.
- The psalmist then concludes by again pointing to God's ultimate purpose for blessing his people.

⁷ God shall bless us; let all the ends of the earth fear him! (Psalms 67:7)

- The promise of God's blessing his people, **will result in all the ends of the earth fearing him!**
- The idea of fearing God includes revering him, standing in awe of him.
- The promise is this: there will come a day when **all peoples** throughout the earth will stand in awe and reverence of the **One True God**.
- **They will worship and glorify him above all else.**

- The book of Revelation records **the fulfilment of this promise**.
- In John's vision he...

⁹ ...looked, and behold, a great multitude that no one could number, from every nation, from all tribes and peoples and languages, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed in white robes, with palm branches in their hands, ¹⁰ and crying out with a loud voice, "Salvation belongs to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!" (Revelation 7:9-10)

- And what this means is that **the promise given to Abraham will be fulfilled**.
- All the families of the earth will **be blessed through Abraham's descendent Jesus Christ**.
- And the promise **given in Psalm 67 will be fulfilled**.
- The earth will yield its increase through God's people making his ways and saving power known.
- People from all nations will be part of God's great harvest.
- And all the ends of the earth will fear him!
- God, will be praised, worshipped, honored, glorified by all peoples.
- These are the facts, based on the promises of God.
- **The only question is what part will we play in fulfilling these promises?**
- What part will we play **in the harvest of soul throughout the world**.
- What part will we play in **seeing God glorified by all peoples, as he deserves?**
- Let me give a few suggestions...
- You could begin by seeking to be a **loving witness of Christ to a friend or family member**.
- You could also become more **involved in sending and supporting a missionary with prayer and finances**.
- Writing to them, encouraging them in their work.
- You could set aside time to learn more about and pray for a particular nation or people group that God would bring revival to their land?
- You could befriend someone from another culture (nation),
- Allowing **them to see in your life what it means to follow Jesus**.
- You could even explore the possibility of going to a people group that has little or no Christian witness, becoming a missionary yourself.
- And I would encourage you to consider all of these and even more ways to involve yourself in **God's mission to bring redemption to this lost world**.
- But first, I would call you back to the beginning of **Psalm 67**.
- This is clearly a missionary psalm,
- The psalmist has both a heart for the nations and for God's glory.
- But he doesn't begin with a call to evangelism or missions.
- **He begins with a prayer for God's blessing.**

¹ May God be gracious to us and bless us and make his face to shine upon us, Selah (Psalms 67:1)

- And so, I would challenge each one of us, no matter where we are in our understanding and involvement in missions **to begin with or continue in earnest prayer.**
- Pray that you will receive the blessing of knowing God in such a way that his face shines upon you!
- Pray that you know and experience his grace, mercy, love, acceptance and forgiveness.
- Pray that God would reveal himself to you, transforming your heart,
- **giving you the twin passions for proclaiming the gospel and God's glory.**
- And I would remind you that God has chosen to reveal himself,
- and transform hearts through his word.
- So along with prayer, commit yourself to spending time reading and studying the Bible.
- For as you do, as you are blessed, through prayer and God's word,
- As you see the glory of his shining face and allow his glory to transform your heart.
- You will not only grow in your relationship with God, **but you will be compelled to...**

make his way known on the earth, his saving power among the nations.

- If you will diligently seek the blessings God has for you?
- God will use you to be a blessing to your family, neighbors, friends, co-workers and **to all the families of the earth.**
- AND you will even be a blessing to God Himself as you are part of increasing...

All the peoples praising him.

Would you pray with me to that end...