

Psalms: The Emotions

Gratitude

(Ps 136:1-3)

INTRODUCTION

1. Good Morning,
 - a. Greeting...
2. Series of lessons on "Psalms: The Emotions."
 - a. Last week we took a close look at the basic information needed to understand the book of Psalms.
 - b. Today we are going to start looking at the specifics of the psalms I'm hoping to get across which is...
 - i. How the Psalms help us learn how to properly manage our attitudes.
3. Gratitude/Gratefulness/Thankfulness
 - a. What should come as second nature seems, in reality, to be a something we as humans must work on, which is gratitude.
 - b. Gratitude is, "the state of being grateful" (Merriam-Webster, I. (2003). *Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary*. (Eleventh ed.). Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster, Inc.)
4. How does one get to having "an attitude of gratitude?"
 - a. "You can live with a continual attitude of gratitude. No matter what your circumstances, you can—and should—live a thankful life." (Study Through The Bible by Peck, Timothy pg. 31)
 - b. It starts and finishes according to the Psalm by understanding God's steadfast love.
 - i. In **Ps 136:1-26** we read "His steadfast love endures forever" 26 times.
 1. With each verse it ends "His steadfast love endures forever."
 - ii. This psalm is unique in that it was written after the return from Babylonian exile about 400 years after David lived.
 1. It was written for the worship service of the newly rebuilt Temple.
 2. Today Jews sing this psalm at Passover.
 - a. A group sings the first line while the congregation sings the refrain.
5. **Ps 136** God's steadfast love.
 - a. If we want a continual attitude of thanksgiving and gratefulness we must "know" beyond a shadow of a doubt that God loves us.
 - i. The Hebrew word for love here is "חַסְדּוֹ" or "hasdo."
 1. This is a very deep word and rich word.
 2. "In general, one may identify three basic meanings of the word, which always interact: "strength," "steadfastness," and "love." Any understanding of the word that fails to suggest all three inevitably loses some of its richness... The word refers primarily to mutual and reciprocal rights and obligations between the parties of a relationship..." (Vine, W. E., Unger, M. F., & White, W., Jr. (1996). Vol. 1: *Vine's Complete Expository Dictionary of Old and New Testament Words* (142). Nashville, TN: T. Nelson.)
 - b. According to the psalmist here there are three ways in which we can "know" God loves us. God's love for us is seen in...
 - i. His creation
 - ii. His salvation

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- iii. His blessings
- 6. With that in mind let us now look at our lesson.

I. Gratitude: God's Love In Creation (4-9)

- A. God created everything around us
 - 1. If He created all around us than all of it belongs to God.
 - i. **Ps 24:1** "The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein"¹
- B. God's creation proves His steadfast love for us
 - 1. Can you imagine a more beautiful place to live?
 - 2. Can you imagine a more perfect place to spend each and every day?
 - i. From the clouds in the sky, to the rolling mountains, to the crashing waves of the ocean, there is nothing more beautiful than this earth in which we live.
 - 3. God did not create the earth for Him.
 - i. He is not in need of a physical earth, He is spirit.
 - a. **Jn 4:24a** "God is spirit..."
 - ii. He created it all for us.
 - a. My brother spent countless hours in the mind numbing heat of the summer last year to build his son a fire truck bed.
 - 1. He even took off an entire week to work on it.
 - b. He did not create this bed and work so hard at accomplishing it just because he was bored and had nothing else to do.
 - 1. He did it because he loves his son.
 - c. In the same way we see God's love for us in His creation of the physical.
 - 1. Think about this, it took God almighty 6 days to complete the universe and all that is in it, for us.
 - 2. Knowing God's omnipotence it is simply mind blowing to consider all this, yet it is without a doubt proof God loves us.
- C. Thus...
 - 1. We can be continually grateful, always giving God thanks, for the creation He created for us showing us His great love for us.

II. Gratitude: God's Love In Salvation (10-24)

- A. Every year Jews around the world at Passover eat a meal and retell the story of their salvation
 - 1. How God heard their cries for deliverance from the Egyptian bondage.
 - 2. How God lead their people to the Promised Land.
 - i. This is done as a reminder of God's steadfast love for them.

¹ All Scriptures are taken from the ESV unless otherwise noted. If other translations are used this is not necessarily an endorsement of the translation.

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- B. Every Sunday Christians are to partake of the Lord's Supper to remember their Savior and the reason they have salvation
 - 1. Jesus saved us from our bondage of sin.
 - i. **I Pt 3:18** "For Christ also suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive in the spirit"
 - ii. **I Jn 3:16** "By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us..."
 - 2. Jesus saved us from a guaranteed eternal abode in hell.
 - i. He brought salvation to everyone's doorstep.
 - a. **Ti 2:11** "For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men" (NKJV)
 - ii. He gave everyone this free gift.
 - a. **Ro 6:23** "...the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord."
- C. Thus...
 - 1. We can be continually grateful, always giving God thanks, for our salvation which God made possible by showing His love for us in Christ dying for us.

III. Gratitude: God's Love In Blessings (23-26)

- A. The psalmist is obviously thinking of his own circumstances as he writes this psalm
 - 1. He has returned from captivity.
 - i. **Ps 136:23-24** "It is he who remembered us in our low estate...and rescued us from our foes..."
 - 2. He has seen the provisions God has given him.
 - i. **Ps 136:25** "he who gives food to all flesh..."
- B. God has promised to provide of His creation
 - 1. That include both the righteous and unrighteous.
 - i. **Mt 5:45b** "...For he makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good, and sends rain on the just and on the unjust."
- C. God has promised more for the righteous
 - 1. This includes all our physical needs not just some.
 - i. **Mt 6:25, 33** "Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing...33 But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you."
 - 2. This includes all our spiritual needs as well.
 - i. **Ep 1:3** "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places"
- D. Thus...
 - 1. We can be continually grateful, always giving God thanks, for the blessings He has given us showing us His steadfast love for us.

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CONCLUSION

1. Someone once said, "gratitude can turn an ordinary meal into a feast, a house into a home, and a stranger into a friend."
 - a. An attitude of gratitude is a life well lived.
2. Question: Are you aware and thus grateful for all that God has done continually?
 - a. If so, continue therein and grow thereby.
 - b. If not, why not?
3. Invitation
 - a. For those that are Christians but are not living for Christ repent by confessing your sins to God that He may forgive you and dedicate your life/time back to Him.
 - i. **I Jn 1:7, 9** "But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin...9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."
 - b. For those that are not Christians or for those that think they are Christians and want to know for sure notice what is required to become a child of God or Christian according to God and God only.
 - i. Hear/Study **Rom 10:17; II Tim 2:15**
 - ii. Believe Jesus Is The Christ **Jn 3:16; 8:24**
 - iii. Repent/Turn To God **Ac 17:30; Lk 24:47**
 - iv. Confess Jesus As Lord **Mt 10:32; Rom 10:9**
 - v. Immersed For The Forgiveness of Sins **Ac 2:38; 22:16; I Pt 3:21**
 - vi. Live A Faithful Life **I Jn 1:7; Eph 5:8**