

Psalm 105

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[0 : 00] Hey, good morning, everyone. Like Lisa said, my name is Jesse, one of the pastors here, and so glad to see very familiar faces and a lot of new faces. So welcome. Thank you for being here.

For those who are gonna be listening to this sermon later in the week online, what's up? Thanks for listening. If you're new, we have been going through the book of Psalms.

We've been doing a little series in that. If you have a Bible with you, you can open it to Psalm 105, or you could turn your Bible on to Psalm 105, whatever you wanna do. And before we get into it, like really what we have been hoping and our goal for this Psalm series is to really just encourage more prayer.

And throughout what we've been doing and looking at different Psalms is the different ways we can pray, right? It's not just going to God and saying like, it's all praise all the time, and sometimes you're in it.

Sometimes you're suffering. Sometimes life isn't going your way, and that could be a moment. It could be a prolonged season. And what prayer does, prayer is an act of faith. Prayer is saying like, God, I believe you are who you are, and therefore I'm gonna go, I'm gonna lay my request to you, or praise you, right?

[1 : 14] And it's also knowing who you are, that you don't have it all together. You don't have what it takes. And so it creates God dependence.

And that's what prayer is about, and that's what we're hoping that happens through this Psalm series is more prayerfulness, lives that are encouraged in more prayer.

And here's another thing that prayer does, which I think is very important. It helps us take the mask off. It's a practice of taking the mask off, coming to God with our authentic self.

We don't have to put any pretense. He knows who we are. He knows us inside and out. He knows what's going on in our hearts. We can't hide anything from him. And so we get to come to him. He's that safe place. We can throw anything at him and cry out to him or rejoice in him, whatever it may be, and it's okay. And so we want, man, you guys to grow in this authentic relationship with God and also with yourselves.

[2 : 13] And that's why prayer is so important. This Psalm today is a song prayer that remembers all that God has done for his people, the people that he loves.

We have to remember the Psalms are Psalms written by the people in the nation of Israel. And they were songs that were sung by the nation of Israel. It was their prayer book. It was their hymn book that they used all the time.

And it's our prayer book as well. And when you think about like, man, how do you write a Psalm about all the things God has done for you as a people? Well, no surprise, it's gonna be pretty big. And this is a long Psalm, 45 verses, but it's so good. Just hang in there with me. What we love about this is that like the Israelites realized through this Psalm is that they were not a nation unto themselves, like existing by themselves, sustaining themselves.

They were a nation that was called by God, created by God, sustained by God, dependent upon him. And it shows us that God isn't on the sideline of our lives.

[3 : 24] That's true for us today. He doesn't live on the sidelines. He's involved. He's always guiding. He's always directing us, both individually and us as a church as well. He does it for his church.

And that's what this Psalm is about. And it's important to look back and remember all that God has done. You know, interestingly, just thinking about the importance of doing this in community, I've been reading some interesting stuff about theology connecting with neuroscience.

Sorry, I'm gonna geek out on you right now. But trust me, it's like, it's amazing stuff. And what's happening is neuroscience is actually catching up with theology. That is what's happening. What they're realizing is there's this guy in UCLA who's been doing this amazing research for years now, Dr. Shore, and he's realizing that, you know what the brain is healthy? And what the brain was made for is joy. He's not a Christian. A healthy brain is a joyful brain. And guess what they say increases joy in the brain and increases the brain's joy capacity? It's stopping and remembering meaningful, happy moments. Isn't that amazing? And so we're about to go on a joy journey. Psalm 105, verse one.

[4 : 40] Oh, give thanks to the Lord. Call upon his name. Make known his deeds among the peoples. Sing to him. Sing praises to him. Tell of all his wonderful works, his wondrous works.

Glory in his holy name. Let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Seek the Lord in his strength. Seek his presence continually.

Remember the wondrous works that he has done. His miracles and the judgments he uttered. Oh, offspring of Abraham, his servant. Children of Jacob, his chosen ones.

He is the Lord our God. His judgments are in all the earth. He remembers his covenant forever. The word that he commanded for a thousand generations.

That's a long time. The covenant that he made with Abraham. His sworn promise to Abraham's son Isaac, which he confirmed to Abraham's great grandson and Isaac's son Jacob as a statute.

[5 : 42] And then on to Israel, the nation as an everlasting covenant, saying to you I will give the land of Canaan as your portion for an inheritance. When they were few in number, of little account, and sojourners in it, wandering from nation to nation, from one kingdom to another people, he allowed no one to oppress them.

He rebuked kings on their account, saying, Touch not my anointed ones. Do my prophets no harm. When he summoned a famine on the land and broke all supply of bread, he had sent a man ahead of them, Joseph, one of Jacob's sons, who was sold as a slave.

His feet were hurt with fetters. His neck was put in a collar of iron until what he had said, what God had said, came to pass.

The word of the Lord tested him. The king sent and released him. The ruler of the people set him free. He made him lord of his house and ruler of all his possessions to bind his princes at his pleasure and to teach his elders wisdom.

Then Israel, Jacob, and his little family at the time, they came to Egypt because that's where Joseph was. Jacob sojourned in the land of Ham.

[7 : 09] And the Lord made his people very fruitful and made them stronger than their foes. He turned their hearts to hate his people, to deal craftily with his servants. He sent Moses, his servant, and Moses' brother Aaron, whom he had chosen.

They performed his signs, God's signs, among the land of Egypt, among the people of Israel, and did miracles in the land of Ham. He sent darkness and made the land dark.

They did not rebel against his words. He turned their waters into blood and caused their fish to die. Their land swarmed with frogs, even in the chambers of their kings.

God spoke, and there came swarms of flies and gnats throughout their country. God gave them hail for rain and fiery lightning bolts through their land. He struck down their vines and fig trees and shattered the trees of their country.

He spoke, and the locusts came, young locusts without number, which devoured all the vegetation in their land and ate up the fruit of their ground. He struck down all the firstborn in their land, the firstfruits of all their strength.

[8 : 17] Then he brought Israel. He brought out Israel with silver and gold, and there was none among his tribes who stumbled. We're almost there.

Egypt was glad when they departed, for dread of them had fallen upon it. And he spread a cloud for a covering over his people and a fire to give them light by night.

They asked, and he brought quail and gave them bread from heaven in abundance. He opened the rock and water gushed out. It flowed through the desert like a river, for he remembered his holy promise and Abraham his servant.

So he, God, brought his people out with joy, his chosen ones with singing, and he gave them the lands of the nations, and they took possession of the fruit of the people's toil that they might keep his statutes and observe his laws.

Praise the Lord. This is God's word. What I love about this psalm, and it makes me think about, it's like opening up the family album, right?

[9 : 29] You go back and you open those family albums and you see the big moments, the fun moments, the weddings and the birthdays and the graduation, the graduations. This is God's family album happening right here on display.

And we need to open up that album regularly, and here's why. If you try, if you and I try to measure God's faithfulness moment by moment, it is easy to lose heart and to lose sight of his faithfulness. See, God's faithfulness isn't proven in a single moment. God's faithfulness is proven across generations. See, this psalm that we read, it covers all the stories that happen in the book of Genesis and Exodus, right?

And that's roughly 500 years of time, from the time God called Abraham until the time he brings his people into the promised land. In verse 9 and 10, it talks about how it began with this covenant promise that he made with Abraham and then affirmed it again with Isaac and then affirmed it and confirmed it again with Jacob.

That's three generations. So when you come to those verses that God says, I'm the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, he is saying, don't judge me by one person's lifespan.

[10 : 44] Judge me by generations. I'm a God of generational faithfulness. Each one of them had their moments where God stated his covenant promise to turn their family into a great nation that would inhabit that land of Canaan one day that they were wandering through at the time.

And they walked that out in faith, not ever having received the promise like Hebrews tells us, but still they did it in faith, believing that God, he was faithful, would make it happen.

Isaac, he could look back on his dad's life, hearing his dad's stories around the campfire, and he could see how God was faithful to call Abraham, his dad, and sustain him as a wandering pilgrim in a foreign land.

He knew God could do the impossible to uphold his promise to that because he was the evidence of it, right? Isaac himself was born to a mom and dad who were well past their prime and childbearing years.

Like when God told Abraham and Sarah, guess what? You're going to bear a child in a year. They thought that was pretty hilarious. It was an impossibility, but with God, all things are possible.

[11 : 59] He will do what he has promised to do. And then we see with Jacob, he was able to look back on the family album and see those moments as well. And he had his own.

He was chosen over Esau even though he wasn't the firstborn. God did a little surprise there, didn't play by the rules. And then we see throughout his life how God revealed himself to Jacob in multiple visions to show him, hey, I got you.

I want you to know me. And he ran to his uncle in a foreign country with nothing, afraid for his life because, as brothers tend to do, he upset Esau and Esau wanted to kill him.

But in that place, in that land with his uncle Laban, God established him and multiplied his fortune so that he came back home wealthy with a bustling household of 12 boys and a bunch of sheep and livestock and servants.

It's fun to look at our family albums and remember those big moments, right? Man, they stir up such fun memories. Those miracles when God came through.

[13 : 16] It's times. Like these right now, what we're experiencing right now, this is little, this is gonna be a little family moment in our little album that God is doing for One Harbor Church in New Bern.

But there are other parts of the family album we have to remember as well. The tough times. And we see in that psalm that God discloses those details.

There was tough times. But God brought them through. He protected and he provided for them. In verse 12 to 15, in summary, it says that while they were of little account, while they were powerless, while they were just this little fledgling family walking through the nations, mighty nations and kings and, you know, they could have easily been killed and all their possessions taken from them but God told those nations and their kings, it says, do not touch my anointed ones.

Do my prophets no harm is what God said to those mighty men and those mighty nations. And next, in verse 16, it says, God summoned a famine. It was all part of his plan.

And he sent Joseph, one of Jacob's 12 sons, ahead to Egypt so he could make storages of grain large enough to float Israel's household and many other people through that famine.

[14 : 34] and that's what God used. It was part of his plan. That's how he brought the family of Israel into Egypt. That was God's plan. He brought them in on good terms but it didn't stay that way as verse 24 points out.

There in Egypt, in the land of Egypt, it says, the Lord made his people very fruitful, verse 24, and made them stronger than their foes.

And so what he did, he turned the hearts of the Egyptians to hate his people, to deal craftily with his servants. We see Egypt here getting scared as Israel grows in power and in numbers.

They become a mighty nation and so Egypt hates them in their heart and oppresses them, treats them poorly. And in all of this, when you look at Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, the nation of Israel, what is happening?

What did they do when the going got tough? They didn't give up. They kept trusting in God and his promise despite the whole nation of Egypt hating them and oppressing them.

[15 : 37] We see that God didn't let them wipe them out. And as things got worse for Israel, God didn't forget. Here's what he said. Here's what he promised before he came in and did all those plagues that we read about in Psalm 105.

He says to Moses, Exodus 3, verse 7, then the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and have heard their cry because of their taskmasters.

I know their sufferings and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians. See, God never forgets us.

You may be in a moment right now where it feels like God's forgotten you. God hasn't forgotten you. He never forgets. He never stops looking at us. He never stops knowing what is going on in our lives.

He never stops loving us. He never stops hearing our cries. And so, we wait on God's faithfulness with patient endurance because of that.

[16 : 47] We can do that. Abraham and Sarah waited patiently to conceive Isaac. Joseph in Egypt. He had to endure a lot of suffering before these prophetic visions he had as a young boy were fulfilled.

God's faithfulness requires resilience because it's not always going to be easy. Jesus made some awesome promises to his disciples. I will always be with you.

I'll send you the Holy Spirit, the very presence of God. He's going to be living in you and he's going to be alongside you and filling you and guiding you and comforting you and leading you on. Jesus tells us and we know from Hebrews I'm going to be up in heaven.

I'm your high priest ever interceding on your behalf looking and seeing. Those are awesome promises. When he made some sobering ones as well to his disciples he promised them hey, in this world you will have trouble.

Not you might. You will have trouble. Jesus said to them again you will be persecuted and hated because of me. Like, was Jesus just a bad salesman?

[17 : 56] Nah man, he's telling us how it is. And we have to know our family history. We have to know what's going on. We've got to take the good with the bad. The photo album is full of these amazing moments of God's blessing but it includes times of significant suffering as well.

Joseph was locked up in a dungeon for years, right? It said his legs, his ankles felt the iron shackle and his neck did as well. Egypt enslaved Israel and treated them brutally for hundreds of years.

And you know, I would say this and it's easy for this to happen to any of us. The longer that you suffer, not just that you suffer but the longer that you suffer too, the more tempted you are to think that God has forgotten you.

And this is where our faith is really tested. Psalm 105 talked about that. Man, God tested their faith because genuine faith never, never stops believing in God's faithfulness.

No matter what you're going through right now, I want to encourage you to never stop believing in God's faithfulness. Faith doesn't let present circumstance dictate whether my trust in God is being vindicated or not.

[19 : 13] And in the season of trial or trouble, man, it can start to feel like, man, I've been a fool to trust in God. He is not coming through for me. This is so embarrassing and it's easy to get tempted towards doubt as well.

But the photo album tells us don't give in. God always vindicates our faith in his faithfulness. And this is the good news of the gospel.

His faithfulness isn't based on what we do. It's not based on our performance. It's not based on how good a little boy and a little girl of God we have been.

See, God cannot deny who he is. If he's made a promise, he is faithful. He isn't sometimes faithful. He is always faithful. And what he has promised, he will do.

He cannot deny himself. And when it feels like God's abandoned us, he hasn't. When you've been crying out, how long, Lord?

[20 : 14] I don't know if I could hold up under this anymore. He is faithful. He will vindicate his name. When you're waiting on God in the silence, in the suffering, it's common to start thinking how you can fix this.

Maybe I've messed up. maybe I've deserved this. Or maybe I've just backed the wrong horse here. Maybe God isn't real. But faith rests in God's tomorrow promises today.

And that's key. The assurance of what's coming gives you strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow, as the song says. Here's how this works.

Let me give you a little picture. I had a friend who did seminary in Germany. I think mostly because he liked good beer. Anyways. He was there.

And one day, his German professor told his class, on the weekend, we're going to go hiking and you're going to experience something amazing. So Saturday rolls around.

[21 : 22] They jump in the car. There's about 10 of them. And they start hiking this trail up this mountain. Oh, by the way, it's like cold and it's rainy. And they think like, well, you know, maybe we could do this.

No, no, no. Trust me. Let's keep going on. They wanted to turn back. No, no, no. We got to keep going, the professor saying. We got to push on. Trust me. It's just around the corner. It's just at the top of this hill. And so finally, they crest this mountain.

And what is waiting for them but this like beautiful chalet at the top of this mountain that they hadn't seen at the bottom. Warm fire inside. Some of the best food and beer, according to my friend, that he's ever had in his life.

And then just this breathtaking view. The professor's faith was vindicated. But what kept him from turning back in those horrid conditions?

What kept him pressing on and saying, no, come on guys, trust me, trust me. He'd been there before. He had already tasted and seen. He knew what awaited them.

[22 : 25] God's people trust in God's faithfulness because we've already tasted and seen it. If you've wondered, maybe you're here, you're not a Christian.

If you think we're a bunch of weirdos and wonder what makes us tick, hey, I get it. We are weird. But here's what makes us tick. And we're glad that you're asking that question.

See, Christianity is a truth that we can know with our minds. But it's much more. It's a truth you experience. It's a truth you live in. It's a truth you're baptized into.

You feel with your senses and your emotions. Our eyes have been opened to see who Jesus really is. And in that moment of salvation, everybody has been through this.

This is what happens. You stand before Jesus and you realize, oh my goodness, he's real. And you taste the misery and bitterness of seeing how sinful you really are.

[23 : 27] And deserving of the just wrath of God against that sin. But that's not where God leaves you, thankfully. Because next what comes is you taste God's love and mercy that is yours because Jesus died and rose again for you.

And when you drink from that cup of kindness, all the shame and bitterness of sin, all the pain you suffered and our suffering, all the wounds of life that you've been carrying and scarred with, they all dissolve in that sweetness of his glory and his grace.

and friends, that cup is just a sampling of what awaits us in heaven. We've tasted and seen, but we're still climbing that mountain.

We know what awaits us. Here in this life through faith in Christ, we get to come to him and we get to taste and drink of that cup of kindness and love and grace and mercy again and again and again and again.

Never give up on the faithfulness of God. Never stop celebrating and praising him because he cannot deny himself.

[24 : 53] We've tasted and we know. Look back and remember. Look at today and remember. And so we stand on his promises.

If I could have the band come up. How do we respond to this? If you're here and not a Christian again, man, we are so glad you're here.

but I want you to know today that God loves you and the question for you is have you tasted the salvation of Jesus?

Have you tasted of that sweetness? And God is offering you his cup of kindness today. The cup of his salvation through Jesus Christ who died for you in your place.

All it takes is faith in him. Faith that he is who he is. If you believe that in your heart and you confess it with your mouth, the Bible says you will be saved. And as you respond, if that's you, that's your response today is to say yes, simply, yes, Lord, I believe.

[26 : 02] Yes, Lord, I need your salvation. Yes, Lord, please make yourself real. I want to experience you. He is faithful. For all of us in the room who are already Christians, we have a lot to celebrate today.

We are standing in the evidence of God's faithfulness to us as a church. We look back and we see the evidence of his faithfulness to us over the last four years. Today is our four-year anniversary as a church, which is cool.

It hasn't always been easy, but he's always come through. God has always come through. And that should just add to our faith and praise.

And here's the thing, that psalm that we just read, it begins and ends with a call to worship. Praise the Lord. Right? Proclaim him to all the peoples.

Praise him together and make his works known to those who don't know him. let's push into that faithfulness, submitting and surrendering to his will, praising him and proclaiming his goodness as we go out of here to our neighbors and our jobs and even into the nations.

[27 : 24] And before we're going to begin with singing, I just want to give all of us a moment right now to just examine our hearts. And that examination is inviting the Holy Spirit to come and shine a light onto us and say, God, where have I doubted your faithfulness?

What area in my life am I not trusting in you for you to come through? Where am I not living in submission and surrender? And ask him to come and help you.

Help your unbelief in those areas. It doesn't mean you're no longer a Christian anymore. It's like, man, sometimes it's like that guy said to Jesus, Lord, I believe, but help my unbelief. That's all of us in this room.

We have those moments. We live that out. Ask God to help you. But I want to say the best cure for that is not a mindful of knowledge. It's experiencing God.

It's being in his presence. It's tasting and seeing he is good and he is there. That's where we taste of his grace and his goodness.

[28 : 32] And just ask the Holy Spirit to do that right now. Take a moment, silently, bow your heads, close your eyes. and Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Would you stand with me? We're going to respond. Take your communion cup as you stand up. For those of you who are new, if you haven't done one of these, they got a clever little wafer at the top, which is painful to get to, but apparently well worth it.

Just kidding. It tastes like cardboard. But we're going to do communion together. And this is what we do as Christians to, it's a reminder, right?

And it's kind of looking at the photo album in a different way because we get to interact with something that represents the body of Christ and the blood of Jesus.

[30 : 24] We get to be reminded that, you know what, a long time ago, before we knew who Jesus was, before maybe we were even alive, Christ died for you.

His body was broken and his blood was shed. And we get to eat and drink of his grace. We taste and see.

Let's eat and drink together in thankfulness. And now, let's sing of his faithfulness.

Guys, let's lift our voices and make him known. Let's sing of his faithfulness.