

“Thanksgiving”

Special Service

Introduction

Each November this country celebrates Thanksgiving. It is our privilege to pause and gratefully acknowledge everything that God has blessed us with. Of course, it is easy to be thankful when we are surrounded by our family, enjoying a bountiful meal. But our thankfulness to God must be based on more than our temporary circumstances. The Psalms reveal David’s heart of thanksgiving to God, even in his times of deepest trouble. They direct our gaze away from our problems and on to the solution, God, who is always worthy of our thanks and praise.

Ice Breaker (Optional):

How will you celebrate Thanksgiving this year?

Study Questions (45 MIN)

Lament to True Thanksgiving

Q1. Read Ps 57:1

Perhaps you are most familiar with David’s great victories. But when Saul turned out to be an unstable and jealous ruler, David feared for his life and fled to the hills. In verse 1 of Psalm 57, where does David look for his refuge? Even though he was hidden in a cave, he realized it was God, not the cave that provided protection from Saul. Has there been a circumstance in your life that you felt threatened in your finances, health, relationships or something else? What are some of the things we might mistakenly put our trust in during such times? What have you done to find refuge from the storms you’ve faced?

Q2. Read Ps 57:2-6; Philippians 1:6; James 1:12 We find in Ps 57:2 that David recognized God’s position of power and that he had a purpose for David’s life. How did Paul express this same attitude in Phil 1:6? In the midst of struggles and difficulty it is important to focus on this truth. What the truth about trials is explained in James 1:12? How does this perspective help us to be thankful in the midst of suffering through difficult times?

Who not Why

Q3. Read Ps 57:7-9

In verse 7 of Psalm 57 we find David has made a deliberate decision to trust fully in God and focus on Him rather than on his circumstances. In verses 8 and 9 David is talking to himself as he directs his attention off of Saul and back on God. What does he determine to do in these two verses? At no point in this Psalm does David ask “Why me?” or “Why did this have to happen?” Rather he looks to the one who is truly in control. What would you say to yourself, to keep your focus on “who” rather than “why” when things feel out of your control?

Bringing Glory to God

Q4. Read Psalm 57:9-11; 1 Corinthians 10:31

Even from the depths of the cave, David is intent on bringing glory to God. How does his vision to glorify God reach beyond an isolated cave to a greater audience? How does 1 Cor 10:31 tell us we can bring glory to God? What is one specific way that you might bring Glory to God this Thanksgiving season?

Wrap-Up

It is not easy to overcome discouraging circumstances and maintain an attitude of true thanksgiving. We may be tempted to: 1) seek refuge in things or people other than God, 2) to question why these things are happening, and 3) to miss the truth that Almighty God is our refuge and will complete the work He began in us. When we focus on God and not our problems, we find cause to be truly thankful and bring glory to Him.

Memory Verse

9 I will thank you, Lord, among all the people. I will sing your praises among the nations. 10 For your unfailing love is as high as the heavens. Your faithfulness reaches to the clouds. Psalm 57:9-10

Prayer (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life and other needs (see space to write on back).

Challenge: Reach out to support one another in your group this week with encouragement to stay focused on God no matter the circumstances. A word, call, text or email can provide the help that keeps us on track.

Q1

Psalm 57:1 NLT - 1 *For the choir director: A psalm of David, regarding the time he fled from Saul and went into the cave. To be sung to the tune "Do Not Destroy!"* Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy! I look to you for protection. I will hide beneath the shadow of your wings until the danger passes by.

Q2

Psalm 57:2-6 NLT -2 I cry out to God Most High, to God who will fulfill his purpose for me. 3 He will send help from heaven to rescue me, disgracing those who hound me. Interlude My God will send forth his unfailing love and faithfulness. 4 I am surrounded by fierce lions who greedily devour human prey--whose teeth pierce like spears and arrows, and whose tongues cut like swords. 5 Be exalted, O God, above the highest heavens! May your glory shine over all the earth. 6 My enemies have set a trap for me. I am weary from distress. They have dug a deep pit in my path, but they themselves have fallen into it. Selah

Philippians 1:6 ESV - 6 And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.

James 1:12 ESV - 12 Blessed is the man who remains steadfast under trial, for when he has stood the test he will receive the crown of life, which God has promised to those who love him.

Q3

Psalm 57:7-9 NLT - 7 My heart is confident in you, O God; my heart is confident. No wonder I can sing your praises! 8 Wake up, my heart! Wake up, O lyre and harp! I will wake the dawn with my song. 9 I will thank you, Lord, among all the people. I will sing your praises among the nations.

Q4

Psalm 57:9-11 NLT - 9 I will thank you, Lord, among all the people. I will sing your praises among the nations. 10 For your unfailing love is as high as the heavens. Your faithfulness reaches to the clouds. 11 Be exalted, O God, above the highest heavens. May your glory shine over all the earth.

1 Corinthians 10:31 NLT - 31 So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

Prayer Notes cont.
