



June 18, 2017

Psalm 107

"The Goodness and Love of God"

Pastor Gary Hamrick

A big objection to Christianity that some people have concerns the goodness and love of God. Their skepticism is posed in a question like this: "How could a good and loving God allow such heartache and suffering in the world?" And yet, the psalmist tells us in Psalm 107 that *"the Lord is good; his love endures forever."* How do we reconcile these things? In today's message, Pastor Gary will help us learn about the goodness and love of God, and the wonderful ways he rescues those who cry out to him!

Historical Background

1. [Psalm 101:1](#) - *"Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever."*
2. The Hebrew word *hesed*, means, love, mercy, or kindness.
3. Pastor Gary said: "The love of the Lord is eternal, because it *"endures forever."* It is not restricted by space or time. It is not reserved for a select few people. God's love is for all and for all time. It is eternal and infinite, and you cannot separate the goodness of God from the love of God, which is why these two go hand-in-hand. God is good because he's loving; God is loving because he is good. And we need to understand and appreciate the love of God, which in some ways is really impossible in our human, finite minds, to grasp."
4. [Ephesians 3:17-19](#) - *"And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge - that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God."*

5. The Church should be actively expressing and declaring the goodness and love of God in the world today.
 - a. [Psalm 107:2](#) - *“Let the redeemed of the LORD [declare the goodness and love of God].”*
6. There are many who have a major objection, and therefore, a major stumbling block, and they will question the goodness and love of God, particularly when they ask: “If God is so good and loving, how could he allow _____ (insert cancer, murder, etc., etc.)?”
7. Pastor Gary, speaking of people who don’t know Christ as their Savior, said: “Their perception of God is skewed because of the evil world in which we live. [Then] they disparage the character of God, because they look around their world and they see painful things, and they see death, and they see disease... [Then] they connect [these things] with a loving God and it’s a disconnect... [Don’t] let a good and loving God be disparaged because we live in a very bad and unloving world. In fact, that’s the very reason he sent Jesus to die on the cross for us, to rescue us from this wicked, fallen world... Whatever goes on in the world doesn’t change the character of God. *‘Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good and his love endures forever!’*”
8. The psalm writer described four groups of people who all experienced the goodness and love of God: the wanderers, the prisoners, the foolish, and the weary.
9. There are four things that are common to each group:
 - a. They all suffered from some kind of distress.
 - b. They all cried out to God in their distress.
 - c. They were all delivered by God from their distress.
 - d. They all gave thanks to God.

The Wanderers - [Psalm 107:4-9](#)

10. Pastor Gary said: “These are people who seem to lack a sense of purpose or value. It’s a picture of hopelessness, and aimlessness, [and] desperate conditions. Now, all of us can go through desert experiences from time to time. There’s been a wasteland or two that you [have or] will encounter in the course of your lifetime. [There] are some people who just feel like they are stuck there, like they are living in a desert wasteland. When life seems so unfruitful or unfair... [These people] were going through the motions without the emotion. They longed for something more. They longed to be satisfied... In fact, [in] the

Hebrew [language of the Old Testament], it says they experienced dryness of soul...”

11. Those who were experiencing dryness of soul cried out to God, and *“he delivered them from their distress.”*
12. Pastor Gary said: “God is faithful to deliver us from our distress. I can’t tell you how he will do that. I can’t tell you when he will do that in your life. All I can tell you is that he will do that. And he will do that either by rescuing you from it or giving you the grace to go through it... Sometimes God is gracious enough to take whatever that trouble is [away], and other times he says, ‘I’m going to be with you, and give you the strength and the grace that you need to get through it.’ Whichever way he ends up helping us through our troubles, that’s up to [the Lord].”
 - a. [2 Corinthians 12:8-9](#) - *“Three times I pleaded with the Lord to take it [a reference to an unknown ‘thorn in the flesh’] away from me. But he said to me, ‘My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness.’ ”*

The Prisoners - [Psalm 107:10-16](#)

13. There are several words in these verses that help to paint a picture of these people, including: *“darkness, deepest gloom, prisoners, suffering,”* and *“no one to help.”*
14. Pastor Gary said: “Some of you have felt those kinds of things. You have felt like you were in a dark place, a very gloomy place, [and there’s] no one who can help. Now, I don’t think he’s [being literal regarding] prisoners, like people who are stuck in a prison cell. Although God [can meet us] there too. I think [the psalmist was] speaking more figuratively here, because all of us are prisoners [in] some respect... We were all prisoners of our sin. Or maybe at times we are prisoners of suffering... The dark places that can sometimes overshadow our lives. [These times] can [even be] debilitating for some people.”
15. [Luke 4:17-19](#) - *“The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to [Jesus]. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written: ‘The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed...’ ”*
16. Pastor Gary said: “God is the great bondage breaker, and whatever has you captive can be broken through the power and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ!”

The Foolish - [Psalm 107:17-22](#)

17. These people were regarded as being fools because of *“their rebellious ways”* and *“their iniquities.”*
18. These people had no one to blame for their troubles but themselves!
19. [Proverbs 13:15](#) - *“... the way of transgressors is hard.”* KJV
20. Even though these people sinned, which created the mess they were in, God heard their cry and he rescued them!
21. Pastor Gary said: “[The Lord] doesn’t just rescue the righteous. He rescues us when in our sinfulness, we cry out to him. When we acknowledge, ‘Lord, I’ve made a mess of my life; I’ve been a fool... rescue me!’ [And] God shows up!”

The Weary - [Psalm 107:23-32](#)

22. These people had an awareness of God, but they didn’t really know God.
23. These people were staggering from weariness, which came upon them because of the storms of life.
24. Like the people in the previous groups, they too were delivered by God!

Discussion Questions

1. Review the introduction to the study guide with your group to provide the appropriate background.
2. Read [Psalm 107:1-6, 10-13, 17-19, 23-28, 43](#) to provide the foundation for this study.
3. What are some of the objections people have concerning Christianity?
4. Read and discuss Pastor Gary’s comments about the love of God. (See #3, #6, and #7 above)
5. Read and discuss [Ephesians 3:17-19](#).
6. How would you describe your wandering experiences?

7. Read and discuss Pastor Gary's comments about wanderers. (See #10 and #12 above)
8. How would you describe your experiences of being a prisoner?
9. Read and discuss Pastor Gary's comments about being a prisoner. (See #14 and #16 above)
10. Read and discuss [Luke 4:17-19](#), and allow the people in your group to share their experience of being released and set free from their prison of sin or the prison of suffering.
11. How did your "*rebellious ways*" and your "*iniquities*" created a mess of your life?
12. Read and discuss Pastor Gary's comments about the Lord rescuing people when they cry out to him. (See #21 above)
13. How have the storms of life brought you into a season of weariness?
14. Spend time talking about the fact that all four groups of people were delivered by the Lord, and allow the people in your group to declare the goodness and love of God!
15. Close your time in prayer as the Holy Spirit leads.

* Unless noted, all Scriptures quoted are from the New International Version (NIV 1984).