



## PSALM EMOJIS (Week 3) - Thanks

### Welcome Prayer:

To all who are weary and need rest. To all who mourn and long for comfort. To all who feel worthless and wonder if God cares. To all who fail and desire strength. To all who sin and need a Savior. This church opens wide her doors with a welcome from Jesus Christ, the Ally of His enemies, the Defender of the guilty, the Justifier of the inexcusable, the Friend of sinners. Welcome.

- Laments often lead to thanks (because the prayer of lament is answered).
- Thanksgiving is often argued to be a subcategory of praise. So, thanksgiving is

a praise given to God in response to a specific answer to prayer.

- Praise is in response to who God is whereas thanksgiving is in response what God has done. God does what He does because of Who He is. Actions are driven by character. So, this Psalm begins:

## **Psalm 118**

118 Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;

**We're thankful for who God is. He did what He did because of Who He is.**

So, this is a praise in response to God's character and nature — He is good. But the psalmist is thankful because the reason God helps us is because He is good.

Goodness is any type of excellence. Anything that is favorable, useful, pleasant, agreeable, skillful. Of course goodness also refers to moral goodness — virtuous, right, kind, etc.

What does it mean that God is good?

1. If God is good, then good is defined by God. This makes goodness the revelation of a Person and not an abstract concept.
2. God created a good earth. (Gen. 1:31) So, inanimate things can be good (useful, etc.)
3. Good is the opposite of bad. (Gen. 31:24)
4. Good is also how God treats us.

## **Genesis 32:9**

9 And Jacob said, “O God of my father Abraham and God of my father Isaac, O Lord who said to me, ‘Return to your country and to your kindred, that I may do you good,’

5. **God's commands are for our good (Deut. 10:13)**

## **Deuteronomy 10:13**

13 and to keep the commandments and statutes of the Lord, which I am commanding you today for your good?

6. **Good people obtain favor from the Lord (Prov. 12:2)**

# Proverbs 12:2

2 A good man obtains favor from the Lord,  
but a man of evil devices he condemns.

- An explanation of why moral goodness isn't good enough to obtain salvation
- God created the world good. He created man and woman and they were good in every way including morally perfect.
- Then there was the fall — man and woman turning away from all that is good, first and foremost the good God who created them.
- Humanity turned away from God as the definer of goodness. This is why there are people now who call what is evil good.
- So, in humanity we find this remnant of the good state in which God created us along with this fallenness that is the opposite of goodness. And we each find this in ourselves.
- We have turned away from God's definition of goodness. That is the

definition of sin — when humans decide goodness on their own.

- And the wages of sin is death — spiritual separation from God and all that is good for eternity. There is a way that seems right to a man but that way ends in death. It seems good to us as we define it, but it's death.
- God will not (for the sake of the universe) condone even the tiniest rebellion against His goodness. This is why your moral goodness will not win you a ticket to heaven. Because in the end, your moral goodness is completely tainted by your sin.

**This is why the psalmist then says:**

for his steadfast love endures forever!

2 Let Israel say,

“His steadfast love endures forever.”

3 Let the house of Aaron say,

“His steadfast love endures forever.”

4 Let those who fear the Lord say,

“His steadfast love endures forever.”

Steadfast love does not vary.

Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father,  
There is no shadow of turning with Thee;  
Thou changest not, Thy compassions, they  
fail not  
As Thou hast been Thou forever wilt be.

## **Malachi 3:6**

*6 “For I the Lord do not change; therefore you, O children of Jacob, are not consumed.*

“I have a steadfast love toward humanity — that is why you’re not consumed right now.”

God is often accused on two levels. First, people often ask, “If God exists, why does He allow these bad things to happen?”

What they are really accusing God of is being soft on sin. God could have given humanity exactly what we deserved. But then none of us would have ever existed.

The flood during the time of Noah would have been a just end for the human race. But because God had a plan for generations and generations of people to become part of His family, He was patient with those in

rebellion against Him and His ways. He has a steadfast love for us from before the foundation of the world.

He didn’t destroy the world because He had you in mind. So, God is accused of being unjust primarily because He is merciful.

But on the other hand, when we say that God punishes sin, He is accused of being unmerciful.

But in the gospel, in Christ’s death to pay the penalty for your sins, God shows Himself not only merciful, but just.

This is a refrain that you find often in the Psalms — “His steadfast love endures forever.” The biblical writers found this important to remember because they believed their sins were worthy of damnation. The greater the sin, the greater the redemption. The greater the forgiveness, the greater the praise.

If your sin is just a minor thing, no big deal really, then the death of Christ in your place for your sins is certainly an overreaction by God. Unless your sins are truly worthy of your just condemnation before the holy and

righteous God of the universe, which they are. Then the death of Christ both highlights the justice of God (that He will not let sin go unpunished) and the mercy of God (that He has punished your sin in Christ).

**Because God is good and loving...**

5 Out of my distress I called on the Lord;  
the Lord answered me and set me free.

The prayer of lament leads to thanking God for the answer, for helping, for responding. God interacts with His creatures. Have you experienced this? If you've never experienced God interacting with you personally, that means you're probably not taking your troubles to Him. You have to speak to God to receive His help. That's what prayer is. "What if reading became a form of praying and praying became a form of reading? Reading is the way you get through the Bible, prayer is the way you get the Bible through you."

- 3000 promises

**The psalmist is sure that God will help him.**

6 The Lord is on my side; I will not fear.

What can man do to me?

7 The Lord is on my side as my helper;  
I shall look in triumph on those who hate me.

**God is on our side. He is our helper. We don't have to manipulate a situation because God is the One who is going to take care of it.**

8 It is better to take refuge in the Lord  
than to trust in man.

9 It is better to take refuge in the Lord  
than to trust in princes.

**In other words — don't trust in mere men, but not only that, don't even trust in powerful men.**

## **Hebrews 13:6**

*6 So we can confidently say,*

*"The Lord is my helper;  
I will not fear;  
what can man do to me?"*

## **Hebrews 4:15-16**

*15 For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need.*

**Now, I don't know what your situation is, but listen to the situation of the Psalmist.**

10 All nations surrounded me;

**Have you ever felt like the entire world is against you? Well, here is a situation where that is actually the case.**

in the name of the Lord I cut them off!

11 They surrounded me, surrounded me on every side;

in the name of the Lord I cut them off!

12 They surrounded me like bees;

they went out like a fire among thorns;

in the name of the Lord I cut them off!

13 I was pushed hard, so that I was falling,

but the Lord helped me.

**In the name of the Lord is a phrase that carries with it the full weight of God's character. It's shorthand. Instead of saying the all-powerful, all-knowing, everywhere at once, good, loving, kind, righteous, holy, just God, he simply says, "In the name of the Lord." That's shorthand for who God is.**

**When Paul writes in Romans that "everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved" he means exactly the same thing.**

**That if you call upon the Jesus who lived a sinless life, the Jesus who is the image of the invisible God, the Jesus who died in your place and rose again from the dead for your justification, if you call upon that Jesus you will be saved. That's what "in the name of the Lord" means. It's shorthand for who Christ is.**

14 The Lord is my strength and my song;

he has become my salvation.

15 Glad songs of salvation

are in the tents of the righteous:

**We want Pentecostal people to walk into our church during worship and think they're in a Pentecostal church.**

"The right hand of the Lord does valiantly,

16 the right hand of the Lord exalts,

the right hand of the Lord does valiantly!"

**Valiantly is like saying, "God acts with determination for us."**

17 I shall not die, but I shall live,

and recount the deeds of the Lord.

**People need to hear stories about God acting in our lives.**

18 The Lord has disciplined me severely,

but he has not given me over to death.

**The Lord will take you down, as far down as you need to go, to find what's best for you.**

19 Open to me the gates of righteousness,  
that I may enter through them  
and give thanks to the Lord.

20 This is the gate of the Lord;  
the righteous shall enter through it.

**So, this is the entrance to God's kingdom. Who gets to enter? The righteous. Who are the righteous? Well, in the span of the entire Bible story we find that "there are none righteous, no not one. There are none who seek after God." So, who can enter through this gate?**

## **John 10:9**

*I am the gate; whoever enters through me will be saved. They will come in and go out, and find pasture.*

21 I thank you that you have answered me  
and have become my salvation.

22 The stone that the builders rejected  
has become the cornerstone.

## **Isaiah 28:16-17**

*16 therefore thus says the Lord God,  
"Behold, I am the one who has laid as a foundation in Zion,*

*a stone, a tested stone,  
a precious cornerstone, of a sure foundation:*

*'Whoever believes will not be in haste.'*

*17 And I will make justice the line,  
and righteousness the plumb line;  
and hail will sweep away the refuge of lies,  
and waters will overwhelm the shelter."*

## **Ephesians 2:19-21**

*19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.*

23 This is the Lord's doing;  
it is marvelous in our eyes.

24 This is the day that the Lord has made;  
let us rejoice and be glad in it.

**Can you get up on any day and not be in a day that the Lord has made? Then you should always be rejoicing. "Again, I say rejoice."**

25 Save us, we pray, O Lord!  
O Lord, we pray, give us success!

26 Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!  
We bless you from the house of the Lord.

27 The Lord is God,  
and he has made his light to shine upon us.

Bind the festal sacrifice with cords,  
up to the horns of the altar!

28 You are my God, and I will give thanks to you;  
you are my God; I will extol you.

29 Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good;  
for his steadfast love endures forever!

## Prayer of Confession

# Psalm 51

To the choirmaster. A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet went to him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.

51 Have mercy on me, O God,  
according to your steadfast love;  
according to your abundant mercy  
blot out my transgressions.

2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,  
and cleanse me from my sin!

3 For I know my transgressions,  
and my sin is ever before me.

4 Against you, you only, have I sinned  
and done what is evil in your sight,  
so that you may be justified in your words  
and blameless in your judgment.

5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity,  
and in sin did my mother conceive me.

6 Behold, you delight in truth in the inward being,  
and you teach me wisdom in the secret heart.

7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean;  
wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

8 Let me hear joy and gladness;  
let the bones that you have broken rejoice.

9 Hide your face from my sins,  
and blot out all my iniquities.

10 Create in me a clean heart, O God,  
and renew a right spirit within me.

11 Cast me not away from your presence,  
and take not your Holy Spirit from me.

12 Restore to me the joy of your salvation,  
and uphold me with a willing spirit.

13 Then I will teach transgressors your ways,  
and sinners will return to you.

14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God,  
O God of my salvation,  
and my tongue will sing aloud of your righteousness.

15 O Lord, open my lips,  
and my mouth will declare your praise.

16 For you will not delight in sacrifice, or I would give it;  
you will not be pleased with a burnt offering.

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit;  
a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.

18 Do good to Zion in your good pleasure;  
build up the walls of Jerusalem;

19 then will you delight in right sacrifices,  
in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings;  
then bulls will be offered on your altar.