

SPIRITUAL AMNESIA (Psalm 106)

It is the time of year when pundits, politicians, and preachers remind you to remember your nation's past. Just a little over a week ago we celebrated Independence Day and we were encouraged to recall the struggle for liberty and to commemorate our independence. It was a time for celebration, for patriotism, a time for parades, and picnics. It was a time *to memorialize* all that is good.

For some, however, it was also a time to reflect on what is not so good. For those who are not so happy with America, or with the President, or with the ongoing war, it was a time to criticize. It was a time to block out memories of those good men and women who have given their lives so we might enjoy freedom, and to murmur and complain. It was a time *to forget* all that is good and to dwell on what is bad.

It would seem that many are suffering from the disease called *cultural amnesia*. When a culture *chooses* to forget its past, it always leads to a crisis for the following generations. This is true in every sphere of life: in the economic sphere, in the political sphere, and certainly in the moral or religious sphere. My concern this morning is to consider the last of those, the moral sphere. I know from the scriptures that nations perish for lack of vision;¹ and they have no vision because they have forgotten the past. Therefore, I fear for the future if we don't do something to cure this disease of collective, *spiritual amnesia*.

Our text this morning, Psalm 106, surveys the history of the nation of Israel from the Exodus to the time of the Exile. It is an interesting survey, full of key historic events — markers for the mind. This morning I want to point out certain concerns from this Psalm and make some application. First, the Israelites had *A Problem with Amnesia* as do many today. Second, because they forgot, they paid *The Penalty for Amnesia* and I'm afraid many will suffer judgment in our day. However, for those who will heed God's Word, there is, third, *A Prescription for Amnesiacs*, and it is my greatest desire that many will follow the instructions of this Psalm and seek God's favor for healing from sin. I will close with a consideration of *A Cure for The Disease*.

1. *A Problem with Amnesia*

There is a problem when the people of God forget the mighty acts of God.

The Israelites had *A Problem with Amnesia* as do many today. There is a problem when the people of God forget the mighty acts of God. When you read through Psalm 106 this is one of the first things you notice. Look at verse 7: *Our fathers in Egypt did not understand Your wonders; They did not remember Your abundant kindnesses;* and, again, in verses 12 to 13: *Then they believed His words; They sang His praise. 13 They quickly forgot His works;* and again, in verse 21: *They forgot God their Savior, Who had done great things in Egypt.*

The Psalmist makes this point so clear. It is alarmingly easy to forget the ways and wonders of God. This is the special problem of collective amnesia. Forgetfulness is a problem, but I want you to notice the Psalmist's emphasis on *what* they were forgetting. According to the verses just mentioned, they were forgetful of two things: God and His wonders.

¹ Proverbs 29:18.

Consider the latter of these two: God's wonders - His mighty acts. What kind of wonders did they forget? Well, there were not small things they were forgetting; there were mighty things, miraculous things, plague things, parting-Red-Sea things, cloudy-pillar-by-day things, manna-from-heaven, water-from-rock things. These were the mighty acts of God, the wonders wrought by the mighty hand of providence, supernatural works of the omnipotent God of the universe. One would think that it would be difficult to forget such awesome acts of God; but it seems that it was easy, alarmingly easy, to do so, for they kept repeating the forgetfulness.

Now lest you assign blame too quickly to the Israelites, ask yourself the question: How often do I consider the works of God? Remember the reading from the Call to Worship --- Psalm 145:4-6? *One generation shall praise Your works to another, And shall declare Your mighty acts. On the glorious splendor of Your majesty And on Your wonderful works, I will meditate. Men shall speak of the power of Your awesome acts, And I will tell of Your greatness.* How often do you meditate on His wonderful works?

What about these *works*? What qualifies as God's mighty works? Psalm 105, verse 5, says: *Remember the wondrous works that He has done, His miracles, and the judgments He uttered.* The Psalmist gives us three categories: the wondrous creative works of God, His miracles, and His judgments. It is absolutely amazing to me to read in the Psalms how much attention is given to contemplation of these three categories.

If time allowed, we could also consider the works and miracles and judgments done by our blessed Lord Jesus Christ. And then we could recall the mighty acts of the Spirit of Christ accomplished by the Apostles.² Let us remember God's creative handiwork; let us remember His miracles; let us remember His judgments! That is the concern of this Psalm and if we learn its lesson, we will be enabled to worship the omnipotent God!

There is a problem when the people of God forget God Himself.

Worse than forgetting the mighty acts of God is forgetting the God who performed those mighty acts. *They forgot God their Savior who had done great things in Egypt.* Look at verse 7 of our psalm: *Our fathers, when they were in Egypt, did not consider Your wondrous works; they did not remember the abundance of Your steadfast love, but rebelled by the Sea, at the Red Sea.* Oh, how we should contemplate the character of God, the attributes of God. The Puritans were masters of meditation on these things; we are but pigmies, dwarves, hobbits when it comes to thinking about God. We forget our Creator, we forget our Redeemer, our Deliverer, our Savior. We forget His love, and mercy, and grace, and kindness, and goodness. We forget His covenant, His law; we forget Christ's suffering, His cross, His death. Let us remember! Let us worship the Lamb of God!

We are so prone to forget; yet God remembers, so the Father reminds us to keep His covenant; and Jesus reminds us when we partake of the Lord's Supper; and the Holy Spirit is given to us to help us in our weakness; and Peter reminds us in both his letters; and Paul reminds us to look forward to what lies ahead. We are no different than the Israelites of old. Theirs was a deliberate forgetfulness of God as well as His ways, and so it is with us. Some of us may have *Short-term memory loss*, some of us may have *Long-term memory loss*, but all of us are too forgetful.

With this in mind it is easy to understand the rhetorical question of verse 2: *Who can speak of the mighty deeds of the LORD, or can show forth all His praise?* The rhetorical answer is: no one can remember the way they should; but the real answer is: only those who have seen and understood and have considered the mighty deeds of the Lord. Only those can *speak of His deeds and show forth all His praise*

² If you ever want some help with this, read C.H. Spurgeon's sermon, *The Mighty Acts of God*.

Why is it so important to remember the past, and to speak about the mighty deeds of the LORD? I think that the psalmist writes these things because of the relationship between memory and ethics, between spiritual memory and sanctification. Those who remember will be more inclined to keep the ways of the LORD; and according to verse 3, those who keep the ways of the LORD are blessed by God. *How blessed are those who keep justice, who practice righteousness at all times!*

Those who forget the mighty acts of God are also prone to forget God Himself; and those who forget God are prone to wander and to persist in their sin.

Forty-eight years ago, Nancy and I traveled to Europe on a college study tour; and one of the most traumatic things I experienced was during a visit to Dachau, one of the many concentration camps. It was a somber visit, walking around the camp, seeing the showers that were used to gas the Jews. And there was the museum itself, full of pictures of inexplicable human suffering; life size pictures with eyes and faces scratched off so there could be no facial recognition.

At the entrance to the camp was the famous quote from George Santayana, *"Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it."* I have to admit, nearly thirty years later, that I cannot forget the horrific scenes; I cannot blot out of my mind the pictures of death; I still feel in my stomach the queasiness that I felt so long ago.

Why did the administrators of the camp choose that quote? Obviously, they want us to remember the atrocities of the Holocaust, but why? The end of the quote reminds us: lest we repeat the atrocities of the past. There can never be a good reason to repeat the evil that occurred. So let us remember, remember even the most horrific evil, so that we might persevere in doing that which is good.

Oh, how feeble are our memories! Instead of the slogan, *Lest We Forget*, we constantly try to excuse our behavior by saying, *I Forgot*. The Israelites did not learn their lesson in Egypt, nor in the wilderness, nor in Canaan; so how can we expect to learn the lesson if we are constantly forgetting. *Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.*

Do you remember the words of the hymn, *The King of Love My Shepherd Is*? Do you remember the verse that starts: *Perverse and foolish oft I strayed*? That's the theme of the middle section of the psalm. There is one, long litany of perverseness and foolishness because of forgetfulness. I am not referring to *natural* forgetfulness, but to *intentional* forgetfulness. This is *a condition* that psychiatrist M. Scott Peck rightly suggests is *deliberately sustained* (Rom. 1:18).³

In verse 6, the psalmist forces the singers of this psalm to consider just how perverse and foolish they had been during their long history and to own up to their sins and to confess them before their God: *Both we and our fathers have sinned; we have committed iniquity; we have done wickedness*. Please notice how important this verse is! Verse 6 sets the tone for the passage. Although it is chiefly about what *our fathers did* and the recurring pronoun is *they*, it begins with *we*.⁴

In what way did they sin? This is spelled out in verses 7-42. There we see the experiences of a people prone to forgetfulness. These include the experience of unbelief in Egypt; then there are six cameos of unbelief in the Wilderness; followed by their sinful failure in Canaan.

The first experience was in Egypt (7-12) – Unbelief at the Red Sea. There they forgot His works and forgot His abundant love and rebelled against God. God should have judged them, but He saved them instead that He might make known His mighty power. After amazing grace was bestowed upon them they remembered to trust in God and praise Him; yet, no sooner than they had finished singing, they forgot what He had done.

³ David Wells, *Virtue*, 148

⁴ Eric Lane. *Psalms 90-150*, 74.

The next set of experiences were seen during the Wilderness (13-33). The psalmist connects discontent to envy; then envy to idolatry; then idolatry to disobedience; then disobedience to apostasy; and, then apostasy to rebellion.

Discontent in the Desert. Notice first that they forgot His will and became dissatisfied with their lot – they could not accept the sovereignty of God in their lives. They were discontented in the desert. They were always lusting for something else. They were full of greed, of insatiable desires (vv. 13-15). “When men begin to distrust God's promise—then they quarrel at His Providence. When faith grows low—murmuring grow high.”⁵

Envy in the Camp: Korah's Rebellion. Next, consider their envy. Verses 16-18 details how ambition and jealousy were so strong that it caused them to rebel against their leaders.

Idolatry at Mount Sinai: The Golden Calf. Then in verses 19-23 we see that their envy led to idolatry. The provoked Aaron to make a god out of gold in the form of a calf, like one of the gods in Egypt.

Disobedience at Kadesh: The Report of the Spies. In verses 24-27 we notice that when they arrived at the border of the land of Canaan they acted out of unbelief (v. 24) and disobedience (v. 25).

Apostasy in Moab: The Baal of Peor. In verse 28-31 we see that years later they reached Moab, right on the entrance to Canaan. Here they committed apostasy. Numbers 25 reminds about Balaam and the Moabite and immorality and idolatry. Here it was not a god of their own making, a representation of the Lord, whom they worshipped, but *the Baal of Peor*, a heathen idol.

Rebellion at Meribah: Punishment for Sinful Quarreling. Finally, we see the sin of Moses when, in anger at the people, he struck the rock. This time both Moses and the whole nation were guilty of rebelling *against the Spirit of God* (v. 33).

The third experience was their Failure in Canaan (34-42). There they forgot His commandments, despite Moses warning because they were a prosperous people. They were overly self-sufficient, and their prosperity led to a decline of spiritual concern. Even though they had been warned, they still mingled with the nations, adopted their customs, which led them to worshipping their idols, and offering human sacrifices. Instead of making the land holy, they *desecrated* it (v. 38), and *defiled* themselves (v. 39).

You would think after all of those years they would learn their lesson! But they did not learn it in Egypt, nor in the wilderness, nor in Canaan. I wonder: How long does it take to learn the lesson to remember God and His ways! We are so like the Israelites. Like they hymnwriter says, *Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it; Prone to leave the God I love.*

Now I know that the Psalmist is concerned that you should not only be *aware* of this persistent problem; you should also *acknowledge* the sins, you should *confess* them. Consider again verse 6: *Both we and our fathers have sinned; we have committed iniquity; we have done wickedness.* The Psalmist does not want you to think only about the sins of the fathers; he wants you to understand and acknowledge that you also have sinned.

Think about what we just surveyed. Is there any unconfessed sin? Is there any rebelliousness (7), any impatience (13b), lusting (14a), jealousy and envy (16), greed (19-23), murmuring and complaining, or anger? Have you acknowledged these sins to God? If you do not confess these sins, you will persist in them; if you do not confess these sins, you will suffer in them; if you do not confess these sins, you will pay a penalty for them that is worse than the sins themselves.

If any of these things are present in your behavior you have forgotten God and His ways. Those who do not remember the ways of the LORD will not be blessed; they will not practice righteousness; but, rather, they will begin to sin, and will continue on in unrighteousness and ungodliness, and suffer the just judgment of God.

⁵ Thomas Watson, *The Mischief of Sin*, 1.

2. A Penalty for Amnesia - There is a penalty for the foolish that persist in their sin.

That is my second point: the Psalmist also mentions *the consequences* for their sinful, forgetful behavior. There is *A Penalty for Amnesia*. If the psalmist simply suggested a penalty for one sin, that would be enough for admonishment; but he again piles example upon example to force us to come to grips with the seriousness of God's judgment against sin. *There is a penalty for the foolish that persist in their sin. It is a fact: God punishes sin.*

The proverb is true: *whatever a man sows he also reaps*. And how does the punishment fit the crime? For unbelievers: *the wrath of God is being revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who by their unrighteousness, suppress the truth (Rom. 1:18)*. For believers, God promises chastisement: *For the Lord disciplines the son He loves, and chastises every son whom He receives (Heb. 12:6)*. No matter how you view the ways of God, there is a penalty for sin; *There is a judgment for spiritual amnesia*.

That being granted, how does God penalize the people of God for their sins? Look at the psalm again, and notice the litany of judgments by God against sin. Consider verse 15, and notice the judgment God gave to them for their wanton craving in the wilderness: *God gave them their request, but He sent a wasting disease among them*. Again, in verses 17-18, in answer to envy and jealousy, God judged them with an earthquake: *the earth opened and swallowed up Dathan, and engulfed the company of Abiram, and a fire broke out in their company, and consumed the wicked*.

Again, in verse 23, as a result of their rebellion and idolatry at Mt. Sinai, God warned them that *He would destroy them, had not Moses His chosen one stood in the breach before Him, to turn away His wrath from destroying them*. Again, in verses 26-27, when they despised the generous gifts of God, including the pleasant land, and when they murmured and were disobedient, *God raised His hand and swore to them that He would cast them down in the wilderness and scatter them in the lands*. Again, in verse 29, when they joined themselves with idol worshipers and provoked the Lord to anger with their deeds, *the plague broke out among them*. Again, in verse 32, when the people embittered Moses to speak rashly with his lips, God judged Moses, the servant of God, and *it went hard with Moses on their account*.

And, finally, in verses 40-43, after they compromised and mixed with the nations and learned to do as they did, then *the anger of God kindled: He abhorred His inheritance; He gave them into the hand of nations, and those who hated them ruled over them; their enemies also oppressed them (42a); they were brought into subjection under their hand (42b); they rebelled in their counsel (43a); they were brought low for their iniquity (43b)*.

Don't miss the end of verse 43. According to the Puritan, Thomas Watson, one of the penalties for persistent sin is found in that verse: Sin brings a person low. Watson states it like this. Sin is the great leveler. He goes on to illustrate *How Many Ways Sin Brings A Man Low*.⁶ He elaborates on nine ways that sin brings a person low! Sin is not something to toy with – to play with.

Paul teaches us this lesson too in 1 Corinthians 10:1-12: *1 For I do not want you to be unaware, brethren, that our fathers were laid low in the wilderness. 6 Now these things happened as examples for us, so that we would not crave evil things as they also craved. 7 Do not be idolaters, as some of them were; as it is written, "THE PEOPLE SAT DOWN TO EAT AND DRINK, AND STOOD UP TO PLAY." 8 Nor let us act immorally, as some of them did, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day. 9 Nor let us try the Lord, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the serpents. 10 Nor grumble, as some of them did, and were destroyed by the destroyer. 11 Now these things happened to them as an example, and they were written for our instruction, upon whom the ends of the ages have come. 12 Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed that he does not fall.*

If there is a lesson to be learned from all of this, it is this: Let there be self-judgment instead of God's judgment. Let there be some serious self-examination. Let there be recollection of sin, recognition of sin, and repentance of sin. As David Wells writes in his book, *Losing Our Virtue*, lest there be a penalty for our current forgetfulness, let us move "from amnesia to memory".

⁶ Watson, *The Mischief of Sin*, 1ff.

3. A Prescription For Amnesiacs - There is a place for Repentance, and for Prayer, and for Praise.

Lest we suffer the penalty for amnesia, let us consider *A Prescription For Amnesiacs*. What keeps you from forgetting? The psalmist mentions three things: *There is a place for Repentance, and for Prayer, and for Praise*. That is the prescription given by God to help you with your collective, spiritual amnesia.

There is a Place for Repentance

Verse 3 promises blessing to those who *Do right; Blessed are those who keep justice; (Blessed is) he who does righteousness at all times*, but, since you cannot, then turn from sin and confess your sin.⁷ In the worst of times God is still working, and in the worst of times God is still with those who want Him and love Him. He has not forsaken those who truly seek His face.

What do you do when you discover your sinfulness? You flee to God for grace. And why? Because of the compassion of God. Verse 43 *Many times He would deliver them; They, however, were rebellious in their counsel, And so sank down in their iniquity.* 44 *Nevertheless He looked upon their distress When He heard their cry;* 45 *And He remembered His covenant for their sake, And relented according to the greatness of His lovingkindness.* 46 *He also made them objects of compassion In the presence of all their captors.*

It is because God is the God of compassion that you should repent and turn from your sins. Remember the hymn I mentioned earlier. Here is the rest of the verse:

*Perverse and foolish oft I strayed,
But yet in love He sought me
And on His shoulder gently laid
And home rejoicing brought me.*

Look again at verse 44: *Nevertheless...He looked; He heard; He remembered; He relented; He made them.* Thank God for that "nevertheless"! God is gracious; God is faithful. Because He is so, then turn from your sins. Return to the Lord your God. Listen to Jeremiah 3:21-23: *A voice on the bare heights is heard, the weeping and pleading of Israel's sons because they have perverted their way; they have forgotten the LORD their God.* 22 *"Return, O faithless sons; I will heal your faithlessness."* "Behold, we come to You, for You are the LORD our God. 23 *Truly the hills are a delusion, the orgies on the mountains. Truly in the LORD our God is the salvation of Israel.*

There is a Place for Prayer

When you turn from your sin, then cry to God for mercy and for grace. But be careful what you pray for, cf. v. 15, *And He gave them their request, but sent leanness into their soul.* If you ask God to let you continue on in your sin, He probably will let you; but know that God is not mocked! You will receive the penalty for your sin; but thanks be to God, He has shown us a better way. We can pray for grace and mercy.

There is something absolutely unique about verses 4 and 5 in this Psalm. Notice that those verses speak about the Psalmist himself. "*Remember me, O Lord, when You show favor to Your people; help me*

⁷ See Spurgeon's sermon, *God's Remembrance Of His Covenant*.

when You save them, that I may see ..., that I may rejoice ..., that I may glory ...". It's all in the first person. He is applying the lessons of history to himself.⁸

Then in verse 47 we find the prayer "for which the entire historical reminiscence has prepared us." Christopher Ash suggests that "One of the great purposes of the psalm is to authorize the church of Christ to pray this prayer. The verse returns to first-person speech (us) for the first time since 106:6. All that was said about 'the fathers' in 106:7-46 is relevant to us today, both in its relentless expose of sinfulness and in its counterpoint of saving love, which breaks through the clouds with streams of light. In every age of the church, this prayer should be prayed".⁹

I thank God for that personal prayer, but I also thank Him for the prayer found in 47. It is a corporate prayer. It is the prayer of the people of God who understand their sinfulness, who individually pray, but also who come together to seek the mercy of the Lord. 47 *Save us, O LORD our God, And gather us from among the nations, To give thanks to Your holy name And glory in Your praise.*

Let us pray like the hymnwriter, J.H. Gurney, who wrote in his poem, *Great King of Nations*:

*Great King of nations, hear our prayer, While at Thy feet we fall,
And humbly, with united cry, To Thee for mercy call.
The guilt is ours, but grace is Thine; O turn us not away,
But hear us from Thy lofty throne, And help us when we pray.
Our father's sins were manifold, And ours no less we own;
Yet wondrously from age to age Thy goodness hath been shown:
When dangers, like a stormy sea, Beset our country round,
To Thee we looked, to Thee we cried, And help in Thee was found.
With one consent we meekly bow Beneath Thy chastening hand,
And, pouring forth confession meet, Mourn with our mourning land.
With pitying eye behold our need, As thus we lift our prayer:
Correct us with Thy judgments, Lord, Then let Thy mercy spare.*

There is a Place for Praise

You have noticed that I jumped right over the beginning of the psalm; but I wanted to set the context for the argument of the psalmist. He begins with an emphatic note of worship: *1 Praise the LORD!* Only those who remember God and His ways can worship Him, and it is obvious the Psalmist does remember; for he sings at the top of His lungs: *Praise the LORD!* It is obvious that he has considered the lovingkindnesses of the LORD, because he jubilantly says, *Oh give thanks to the LORD, for He is good; For His lovingkindness is everlasting.* No one can worship like that unless they spend time rehearsing in their mind the past ways of God! O, let us reflect on the history of the *besed* of God.

And, notice verse 48: *Blessed be the LORD, the God of Israel, From everlasting even to everlasting. And let all the people say, "Amen." Praise the LORD!*

Why? Because you have experienced the return of your prayers: The favor of God. Therefore, sing, give thanks, praise God! If the worship of God is not a delight, it is because of sin, because of forgetfulness. If it is a delight it is because you have experienced the goodness of God, His mercy that endures forever, His blessings of grace that bestows everything that is necessary for life and godliness.

⁸ from, Maurice Roberts, *Covenant Love, Psalm 106*, vv. 4-5: www.bible-sermons.org.uk/text-sermon/979-covenant-love/download/

⁹ Christopher Ash, *Psalms*, 105.

A Cure For The Disease

I believe that I have substantiated my argument that there is a problem today with spiritual amnesia, and that there is still a penalty for those who persist in their forgetfulness and sin. And I have given you the scriptures' prescription for amnesiacs. The only question remaining is: Is there *A Cure For The Disease*?

While we are on this earth we will struggle with the problem of forgetfulness. That being said, we do not have to persist in our sins. Christ is the Cure. The remedy requires keeping your spiritual memory active through fixing your eyes on Jesus, reading His word, remembering Who He is and what He has done, praying, all of the spiritual disciplines. Paul instructs the Colossians to *keep seeking the thing above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things, not on the things that are on earth.*¹⁰ That's it; take the encouraging advice from the writer of Hebrews to continue on in perseverance by *looking only unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.* And again: *Fix your eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith.* God has always given us help to do this. For the Israelites the Passover was a memorial feast; for Christians the Lord's Supper is a memorial feast. *Do this in remembrance of Me.* Paul exhorted Timothy: *Remember Jesus Christ, raised from the dead, descended from David, as proclaimed by my gospel.* He is the cure. Remember Him! Rehearse the Gospel.

In a few moments, after we have prayed, we will stand and sing our closing hymn: *Come, Thou Fount Of Every Blessing.* I hope that the words of this wonderful old hymn will have new significance to you as you sing. Let me close by reminding you of one of the verses. *Here I raise my Ebenezer; Hither by Thy help I'm come. And I hope, by Thy good pleasure, Safely to arrive at home.* That is the original version. The words come from 1 Samuel 7:19. Samuel took a large stone and placed it between the towns of Mizpah and Jeshanah. He named it Ebenezer – “the stone of help” – for he said, “Up to this point the Lord has helped us!” My prayer is that today you will raise up your own Ebenezer, a stone of remembrance, a stone that reminds you that all you need for help and mercy and grace and love and praise is found in Jesus Christ!

Let us pray and then stand and sing *Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing.*

Psalm 106 summons us to thanksgiving, to praise, to commitment, to petition, to confession of sin, to the call for help in the light of the past history of salvation: thanksgiving for the goodness of God, which continues with respect to his people into eternity, which also we contemporaries experience as did our fathers; praise for the miracles which God works for our benefit, from the redemption of his people out of Egypt all the way to Golgotha; commitment to keep the command of God more faithfully than before; petitions concerning the grace of God according to his promise; confession of our own sins, unfaithfulness, and unworthiness in the face of such compassion; call for help concerning the final gathering and redemption of the people of God.

We pray this Psalm [these Psalms] when we regard all that God does once for his people as done for us, when we confess our guilt and God's grace, when we hold God true to his promises on the basis of his former benefits and request their fulfillment, and when we finally see the entire history of God with his people fulfilled in Jesus Christ, through whom we have been helped and will be helped. For the sake of Jesus Christ we bring God thanksgiving, petition, and confession.¹¹

¹⁰ Colossians 3:1-2.

¹¹ Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Psalms: the Prayer Book of the Bible*, 34-35