

Theme: The psalms of confidence display the confidence God's people have in His loving care for them.

## I. Intro – The Importance of Remembering

- A. We remember important things
- B. Birthdays, anniversaries, holidays
- C. Remind us of what is important
- D. Help us to live by what is important
- E. Psalms of Remembrance

## II. Psalms of Remembrance

- A. The simple structure
  - 1. Command to praise/give thanks to the Lord
  - 2. Recite history as reason for praise/thanks
    - a. Often called great wonders
    - b. Sometimes God's creative acts
    - c. Sometimes God's covenant with David
    - d. Usually God's acts of salvation
- B. Examples of this structure (Ps 105:1-4, 5, 9)
  - 1. Command to praise/thanks (Psalm 105:1-4)
  - 2. Recitation of history (Psalm 105:5,9)

- 3. Same basic structure in Psalm 136

## III. Psalm 136: His Love Endures Forever

- A. The structure of Psalm 136
  - 1. Outline of structure
    - a. Call to praise (vv 1-3)
      - i. God's mighty acts of creation (vv 4-9)
      - ii. God's mighty acts of salvation (vv 10-22)
      - iii. God's mighty acts today (vv 23-25)
    - b. Concluding call to praise (v 26)
  - 2. Key points to notice in structure
    - a. Call to praise forms inclusion
    - b. Three sets of wondrous acts form center
    - c. Recurring refrain: God's hesed
      - i. Key idea is the steadfastness/unfailing nature
      - ii. God's love does not fade or change!
      - iii. It is eternal, enduring forever
- B. A look at the sections
  - 1. Give thanks to the Lord (vv1-3; 26)
    - a. One of most common forms of command

- i. Psalms 106:1; 107:1; 118:1-4
  - ii. 2 Chron 5:13; 7:3; 20:21
- b. 4 here identical except replace name with titles
- 2. God's mighty acts of creation (vv4-9)
  - a. Genesis terminology (spread out; great lights; govern)
  - b. Wisdom terminology (understanding; Pr 3:19)
  - c. God's hesed seen in great, wise, creative acts
- 3. God's mighty acts of salvation (vv10-22)
  - a. Exodus event
    - i. Plagues
    - ii. Red Sea crossing
    - iii. Wilderness guidance & victories
  - b. God's hesed seen in great acts of salvation
- 4. God's mighty acts today (vv23-25)
  - a. Shift in syntax, person
  - b. Now looking at God's actions today
  - c. Even giving food: providence
  - d. God's hesed seen in big & small events today

- A. The Importance of Remembering
  - 1. Humans need to work to remember
  - 2. Especially important today (Westermann)
  - 3. The importance of Sunday & small groups
- B. Remember God's mighty acts of steadfast love
  - 1. He lovingly made creation
  - 2. He lovingly worked salvation in Jesus
  - 3. He lovingly works in your life every day

### Remembrance: O God Our Help In Ages Past

Psalm 136

December 14, 2003

Response: O God Our Help OR Give Thanks to the Lord (Forever)

Benediction: Psalm 23:6 paraphrase

## IV. Conclusion & Summary

- ✓ Command to give praise/thanks to the Lord
- ✓ Recitation of God's past actions as a reason for praise/thanksgiving
  - Often called 'great wonders'
  - Sometimes God's creative acts
  - Sometimes God's covenant with David
  - Usually God's acts of salvation

**Give thanks to the LORD**, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done. 2 Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts. 3 Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the LORD rejoice. 4 Look to the LORD and his strength; seek his face always. Psalm 105:1-4

**Remember** the **wonders** he has done, his miracles, and the judgments he pronounced... 9 **the covenant he made with Abraham**, the oath he swore to Isaac. Psalm 105:5, 9

- a. Call to praise (vv 1-3)
  - i. God's mighty acts of creation (vv 4-9)
  - ii. God's mighty acts of salvation (vv 10-22)
  - iii. God's mighty acts today (vv 23-25)
- b. Concluding call to praise (v 26)

1 Praise the LORD. **Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.** Psalm 106:1

**Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.** Psalm 107:1

1 **Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good; his love endures forever.** 2 Let Israel say: "**His love endures forever.**" 3 Let the house of Aaron say: "**His love endures forever.**" 4 Let those who fear the LORD say: "**His love endures forever.**" Psalm 118:1-4

13 The trumpeters and singers joined in unison, as with one voice, to give praise and thanks to the LORD. Accompanied by trumpets, cymbals and other instruments, **they raised their voices in praise to the LORD and sang: "He is good; his love endures forever."** Then the temple of the LORD was filled with a cloud, 2 Chronicles 5:13

3 When all the Israelites saw the fire coming down and the glory of the LORD above the temple, they knelt on the pavement with their faces to the ground, and **they worshiped and gave thanks to the LORD, saying, "He is good; his love endures forever."** 2 Chronicles 7:3

21 After consulting the people, Jehoshaphat appointed men to sing to the LORD and to praise him for the splendor of his holiness as they went out at the head of the army, saying: "**Give thanks to the LORD, for his love endures forever.**" 2 Chronicles 20:21

We live in an age whose most distinctive and perhaps important characteristic is speed... **Corresponding to the pace of these developments is a great measure of forgetting, to a degree previously unknown in the history of the world.** Because people are limited in their ability to perceive and digest sensory perceptions, **the only way they can deal with today's constant stream of stimuli is by forgetting most of what they experience...** Yet because such a great ability to forget is unavoidable in our age, **the danger is ever growing that what we lose are the vital, overarching connections which integrate our lives.** Claus Westermann, *The Psalms*, 7