

HOW CAN YOU REPAY GOD?

Text: Psalm 116.1 - 19 (in pew Bible p. 605 / in large print Bible p. 943)

Intro:

-because God has helped in past times of trouble, we should always call upon him when facing future times of trouble.

- acronym ASAP = “As Soon As Possible” for many.
- but for Christians it can also mean “*Always Say A Prayer.*”

- **illust.** *String Of Snow Geese*

- look higher until you can see God.

Take Home Point:

-always call upon the name of the Lord.

SENSING YOUR GRATITUDE FOR GOD’S HELP

1. **Remember Your Trouble** (v. v. 1 – 4)

-remembering stirs up our love for God.

- “I love the LORD because ...” (v. 1).
- delivered from serious trouble / “snare of death” & “*suffered distress & anguish*” (v. 3).
- We love him because he first loved us (1 John 4.19).

• “I love the LORD because ...”

- answered my call upon his name (v. 4).
- that is why we do not want to use his name in vain.
- name = God’s essence & Person.

-God is so great!

- **illust.** *Close To Home*
- remember to call God in times of trouble.

2. **Remember God’s Mercy** (v. v. 5 – 11)

-**illust.** *Give Me A Hand*

-protects the simple / naïve (v. 6).

-dries our tears & steadies our feet (v. 8).

-walk before the LORD in the land of the living (v. 9).

-in distress & afflictions we learn true lessons of faith (v. 10):

- all others are liars and undependable compared to God (v. 11).

-in this Thanksgiving Season look back over your life and relive the goodness of God.

EXPRESSING YOUR GRATITUDE FOR GOD'S HELP

1. Call On God Whenever You Face Trouble (v. v. 12 – 16)

-in this Thanksgiving Season look ahead *and depend on the goodness of God.*

-how can we repay God for all of his bounty to us (v. 12)?

- some might say that this is a rhetorical statement = *no way to repay God.*
- however we can repay God by lifting up cup of salvation & calling upon the name of the Lord (v. 13).

-pay your vows (v. 14).

- the promises you made to God *during your time of testing.*
 - e.g. Jonah 2.9 = rescue from fish & pledge to go to Nineveh.

-remember - trust his cup of salvation & to call upon him when face new troubles (v. 13)

- three times death is noted (v. v. 3, 8, 15).
- be certain that the trouble / death is not taken lightly by God (v. 15).

-reach out to God:

- demonstrates that we take our relationship to God seriously.
- activates fresh blessings and deliverance from God.

2. Tell Others Of God's Mercy (v. v. 17 – 19)

-show others your love (v. 1) and gratitude for God's deliverance in tangible ways:

- earn the right to be heard.
- be willing to help others in similar ways.
 - then you can tell them how God has helped you.

-offer the sacrifice of thanksgiving (v. 17):

- be religious as well as spiritual.
- don't "cocoon" yourself in "hurt mode."
 - not only private reflexive prayer, but also the church's prayer ministry.
 - prayer chain, call upon the elders, Sunday worship service, mid-week prayer time.
- show your love and gratitude for God in tangible ways.

Let us continually offer a **sacrifice** of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that confess his name (Hebrews 13.15).

- Christian service & spiritual exercises.

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a **living sacrifice**, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship (Romans 12.1).

-this is how we can repay God.

Conclusion:

1. Know what God wants.

-God wants us to always call upon him for help (v.v. 4, 13, 17).

- this is a form of repayment for his goodness and care.

-God's telephone number = Jeremiah 33.3:

Call unto me and I will answer you, and will tell you great and hidden things that you have not known.

2. Know how to do what God wants.

-always look up to God and call upon his name.

- name = God's essence & Person.

-2 Chronicles 13.14 when Abijah was hard-pressed by Jeroboam, "[he] cried out to the LORD" and God defeated Jeroboam.

-2 Chronicles 14.4, 7 Asa commanded Judah to seek the LORD and purge themselves from idols. The result was that the land was still Judah's because they had sought the LORD.

-2 Chronicles 16.2, 7, 9 Asa failed to rely on the LORD in his campaign against King Baasha and instead hired Syria to help. He was rebuked by Hanani the prophet and reminded that "the eyes of the LORD range throughout the entire earth, to strengthen those whose heart is true to him."

-2 Chronicles 18.4, 31 when Jehoshaphat considered joining Ahab in a military campaign against a common enemy, he waited until they were able to "inquire for for the word of the LORD" and then during the battle he "cried out, and the LORD helped him.

-illust. Call Out to God In The Face Of Death

-God has given / done so much in sending his Son to live for us & die for us.

- let us not neglect his cup of salvation (v. 13).
- let us render thanks to God and always turn to him in faith and trust.

3. Know that you will do it.

- **Closing Hymn:** #556 Now Thank We All Our God

Close to Home

by Phil Callaway

During the height of the diamond rush in Africa, a farmer was intrigued by the promise of great wealth. Only one thing stood in his way. His farm had to be sold before he could set off. At last the deal was done and he was free.

The search was long and painful. Trekking across deserts, blazing trails through jungles and mountain passes, he searched for the elusive diamonds. But none could be found.

Back home, the man who had bought the farm was planting a crop and came across an odd-looking stone which he placed on his mantel.

One night a visitor saw the stone, examined it, and said, "Do you know what you have here? It's one of the largest diamonds ever."

Further investigation revealed the farm was covered with similar magnificent stones. The land sold by the first man turned out to be one of the richest, most productive diamond mines in the world.

Phil Callaway adds, I'm like the first farmer. So often I neglect to investigate what I already have. In my disappointment with the way things are, in my quest to get ahead, I fail to recognize the wealth in my own backyard. I end up walking over untold riches every day.

While speaking recently, I met Andrew. A successful insurance and investment consultant, he spent the last 20 years of his life searching for "diamonds."

Eighteen months ago, he made his way back home. But by then, his house was empty. His wife of 23 years had taken their teenage children and moved 1,000 miles away, leaving Andrew with a sprawling ranch, two speedboats, and an antique car collection.

"I have absolutely everything," he told me. "It's all paid for. But I've never been so empty. I didn't realize what I had, until it was gone." Six months ago, suicidal and desperate, Andrew fell to his knees and prayed, asking Jesus Christ to change him.

"This may sound crazy," he told me, "but since that day I've experienced more peace than I had during all those years of success.

"Every morning I take my worries and concerns to the living room and spend an hour on my knees trying to leave them with God. Sometimes I pick them up again, but I'm learning to trust Him to take care of my family just like He's taking care of me."

Today Andrew is doing all he can to reconcile with his family, but knows the road ahead is steep. "I thought I was giving them everything they needed," he says. "I guess what they really needed was me."

When I told Andrew about my book called Making Life Rich Without Any Money, he said, "I was so busy building an empire I forgot to build a home. I was so busy working on multimillion dollar

deals that I hardly had time to buy my friends a cup of coffee. I'd trade all this stuff in a heartbeat for a good marriage."

I wish I could turn the clock back for Andrew. And sometimes I'd like to turn it back for myself. But like Andrew, I'm learning it's relationships, not ranches, that make men rich. I'm learning that we make a living by what we get. We make a life by what we give.

What kind of treasure are you stepping over today?

Phil Callaway is the author of 'Family Squeeze: Hope and Hilarity of a Sandwiched Generation.' Visit him at www.laughagain.org.

Give Me A Hand

David H. Roper writes: "Recently I was fishing with some friends and waded into a current that was too strong for my old legs. I should have known better; it's a well-known fact that you can wade into flows that you can't back out of.

"I got that panicky feeling you get when you realize you're in deep trouble. One more step and I would have been swept away.

"I did the only thing I could think of: I called out to a friend nearby who is younger and stronger than I. "Hey, Pete!" I shouted. "Give me a hand, will you?" My friend waded into the current, reached out his strong hand, and pulled me into quiet water.

"A few days later as I read Psalm 119, I came across verse 173: "Let Your hand become my help." I thought of that day on the stream and other days when I have "waded" into difficult situations, overestimating my feeble abilities and putting myself or my loved ones in jeopardy. Perhaps you find yourself in that place today.

"There is help nearby, a Friend much stronger than you and I—one whose hand can hold us ([Ps. 139:10](#)). The psalmist also says of Him, "You have a mighty arm; strong is Your hand" (89:13). You can call out to God: "Give me a hand!" and He will rush to your side" (*Daily Bread* June 8 / 2010).

Call Out to God In The Face Of Death

Elisabeth Handley relates the following amazing account from Cardiologist Dr. Chauncey Crandall's new book *Raising The Dead*:

In 2006, auto mechanic Jeff Markin collapsed in the Emergency Room of the Palm Beach Gardens Hospital of a massive heart attack.

Dr. Chauncey W. Crandall was the cardiologist on duty, but by the time he got to the patient, the 53-year-old's extremities were black due to lack of oxygen.

“There was no EKG beep, no heartbeat,” says Crandall. “He was dead. There was nothing I could do.”

All the medical staff left except the nurse removing the various monitors and prepping the body. Dr. Crandall finished writing his notes and left the room when he heard a voice tell him to return and pray for the man.

When he heard it a second time, he went back in and stood next to Markin’s body.

“Father God,” he prayed, “I cry out for this man’s soul. If he does not know you as his Lord and Saviour, raise him from the dead now, in Jesus’ name.”

He instructed Markin be hit with the defibrillator one last time – after he had been dead for over 40 minutes. “Instantly a perfect heartbeat came back,” Crandall recalls.

“His hands and feet started moving and he started mumbling. The nurse screamed, ‘What are we going to do with him?’ We took him to intensive care.”

Dr. Crandall is a Yale-educated cardiologist and a man of science, is also a miracle-believing Christian who prays for each of his patients ... (Elisabeth Handley in *Saskatoon Living Light News* September / October 2010, p. 12)