

Rescued and Thankful

read

Psalm 107

think

The word *cliffhanger* originated in the 1930s to describe suspense-filled black and white movies known for depicting characters in desperate situations and in need of a rescue. All of us could list an almost endless number of books and movies whose plotlines included moments where someone close to death and unable to save themselves is rescued by a hero who shows up just in the nick of time after hearing desperate cries for help.

Psalm 107 takes us through four *cliffhanger* situations where God's people, the Israelites, found themselves, leaving them helpless and desperate for rescue. There were lost wanderers (verses 4-9), dying prisoners (verses 10-16), fools suffering sickness because of their choices (verses 17-22), and sailors at their wits' end while powerless against a raging storm (verses 23-32). Psalm 107 tells us that in each seemingly hopeless case "they cried to the Lord in their trouble." How did God respond? In each and every seemingly hopeless case, God, in His great mercy and never-ending love, "delivered them from their distress."

Because we live in world that's been broken by sin, our lives are bound to be visited by distress. All of us have felt like we are the one hanging from the cliff and in need of rescue. The reality is that just like God's Old Testament people, we *do* need God to intervene on our behalf. Because we have the benefit of The New Testament, know that God has intervened on our behalf by sending His Son, Jesus Christ, into the world on a rescue mission to snatch us off the precipice of death. . . that place where we hang helpless because of our rebellion against God. He not only rescues us, but promises to be with us always! When we consider the sacrifice Christ made on our behalf through His death on the cross, we can't help but shout the words of Psalm 107:1: "Oh give thanks to the Lord, for he is good, for his steadfast love endures forever!"

apply

- What are some *cliffhanger* movie scenes that you can recall? Describe the situation and the rescue.
- As you think about Psalm 107, what does the Psalm teach us about God and who He is? What does the Psalm teach us about who we are as human beings and our inability to save ourselves?
- Take time to go around the table, each one sharing a time when God answered your prayers by offering a way out of a difficult situation or confusing dilemma.
- Look at the last verse of Psalm 107. What are some practical ways we can "wise up" and "attend to these things" by regularly considering "the steadfast love of the Lord"?

pray

Heavenly Father, we thank you for your promised and realized steadfast love. Because of your steadfast love shown to us throughout the Bible and in Jesus, we have peace. You have promised that you will never leave us, forget us, or forsake us. May we rest in knowing that you are our trust-worthy and ever-present rescuer. Thank you, in Jesus' name we pray, Amen.

by **Walt Mueller**

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