Thank Jesus When You Are Fearful of Death

Psalm 107:15–20
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Rev Joe Sanders
First Baptist Church Coshocton, Ohio

I love the Lord. Do you love Jesus? Does your tongue make your love known? Does Jesus hear your praise?

More than 500 years before Jesus, God's people were scattered around the world. They had been unfaithful. They had rejected the Lord as their God. They were judged by God. In Psalm 107 we find their story. They are gathering in Jerusalem to rebuild the Temple. They are called to give thanks to God.

Life's troubles are overcome when we begin by giving thanks to Jesus. The trouble may still exist, but you can overcome it as you say thank you Jesus. You find strength and hope. You discover peace and joy. You live in the power of the resurrected Savior and Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the greatest, most profound, the most magnificent picture of love for God and love for others. Regardless of the situation we face in life Jesus loves us. Regardless of how we act in the face of trouble Jesus loves us. You can be tall or short, thick or thin, able to sing or tone deaf and Jesus loves you. Your hair can be purple, red, green, and yellow Jesus loves you. You can be on the mountaintop with everything in life seemingly perfect and Jesus loves you. You can be afraid of the next bad thing happening; you can be fearful of enemies big and small; you can be anxious for the life of family or even yourself and Jesus loves you. You can be in the valley of the shadow of death, hungry, thirsty, beaten, defeated and Jesus loves you.

Psalm 107:15 (NLT) Let them praise the Lord for his great love and for the wonderful things he has done for them.

When you are in love it's easy to give thanks, the same is true for <u>loving God</u>. One of the illustrations in life that helps us understand true love happens in families. The relationship between parents and children, and between a husband and wife are good analogies for the meaning and the power of love. This is message is not about parents and children or about marriage. It is about Jesus' love for us and our love for Him.

We have all had someone in our life that we loved and we told them. It might be your kids or your parents. Remember back to when you were a child. You loved your parents and you told them, and they told you. That was true for many of us. I understand that may not have been true for everyone.

Deep inside of you, inside everyone is the need to love and to be loved. Your parents could have been quiet or outgoing, but you loved them. They might have been around you all the time or off working, but you loved them. They could have been busy parents or they may have spent lots of time you: you loved them. You may have been energetic or a sit on the lap cuddling child, your parents loved you. You could have been the child who rebelled or the always obedient kid, your parents loved you. You might have been the straight A student or the kid who was joking around, your parents loved. The same is true for God, no matter how He created you, Jesus loves you.

Those of us who have fallen in love, got married understand what it's like to say I love you. If your spouse works hard at a job or works at home, you love your spouse. When your spouse wrecks the car into the garage, your love doesn't end. If your spouse loves walks on the beach or through the woods, you go along because of love. When your spouse hangs out in the garage working on some project, love is still beating in your heart. The same is true for God, no matter what direction we go, Jesus loves you.

Love is faithfulness when there is no reason for faith. We too often think of love as affection, cute puppies, or a favorite food. Love remains faithful in every situation and circumstance. The love for a person, for your parent, your child or your spouse remains faithful even though your emotions swing from mad, bad, sad, or glad. Your child spills the milk or runs away you are faithful to love your child. Your parents become stern, enforcing the rules, you as the child faithfully love them. Your spouse makes mistakes with the money, you are still faithful in your love.

Love is helping when all that you do is help. Kids need lots of help, more so when they are young, but throughout life you love them. Parents don't think they need help, but as the child you're there, sometimes in the way, to help. You know as well as I do that your spouse is always in need of help, even when they don't ask, so you find those little things to do.

Love is making sacrifices because there is no other way. The thing about loving your child, your parent, your spouse is the sacrifice doesn't feel like a problem. You are willing to put aside your own needs, your own desires, because love empowers you to make the sacrifice. Whether we are the parent, the child, the husband or the wife we love and we say I love you. Regardless of their mental health, their physical health, their spiritual health, we say I love you.

The same is true for our relationship with Jesus. We say to Jesus, I love you. Our love for Jesus empowers us through every moment of joy and hope as well as through every moment of terror and hardship. We say to Jesus, I love you; thank you Jesus.

Psalm 107:16–18 (NLT) For he broke down their prison gates of bronze; he cut apart their bars of iron. Some were fools; they rebelled and suffered for their sins. They couldn't stand the thought of food, and they were knocking on death's door.

As we come near spiritual death we're starving for God's Word and not <u>knowing praising Jesus is the answer</u>. Remember I'm not talking about parents, kids, or marriage. They are merely illustrations to help us understand God's love and our need to say thank you. We can recognize the love of God for us in the truly loving relationships of our lives.

Likewise we also experience the absence of love in those same relationships. Then we project that upon our God. Thinking God has stopped loving us. That pulls us away from God. That makes us reject the food of God's Word and God's spirit. We draw close to spiritual death.

Remember, I am talking about saying I love you Jesus and thank you Jesus. I believe that you and I as believers grow in our relationship with Jesus as we tell Him we're thankful, and that we love Him.

Those who are disciples, believers who are willing to learn from Jesus, face everything in life with the love of Jesus in our hearts, minds, spirits, and bodies. Everything else feels like a prison, chained in irons that we don't have the power to break. God has the that power – thank you Jesus. God's power is released as we say I love you Lord.

We too quickly forget the love of God for us. Call it busyness, complacency, or tragedy we sometimes forget the love of God. Proof that you are loved by God is that He created you, breathed life into you, and gave you unique skills and traits. With each passing day we fail to say thank you. We forget to tell Jesus we love Him. They are such simple words but they don't roll off our lips. Thank you and I love you stop being part of our daily routine.

It can be true that we get so busy with our own activities that these words slip out of our vocabulary. If you are human then you will start to take for granted everything you have. That leads to being less thankful.

There are tragedies in our lives. There are those events that happen which shake us to our core. We not only we stop talking to Jesus, we get sick of our lives. We binge eat or we don't eat. We get busier or we get more lazy. We don't look to Jesus, we don't talk to Jesus, we just want to be done with God. In that situation we are drawing near to spiritual death.

Our spiritual situation impacts us mentally and physically. God has the power to break us out of this prison. God's power is released in our minds and our spirits as we say I love you Jesus. But until then our minds spiral deeper into selfish thoughts. We move to discouraging outcomes. We get trapped behind a wall of negativity. We focus more on our anxieties, worries, and fears. We still have the desire to be loved. We still have the desire to love others. But, we've lost touch with it simply because we don't say thank you Jesus and I love you Jesus.

This effects how our bodies feel. You know what I mean because you have been there. Your mind is a blur and your body is weak. No matter how much rest you get, you never have any energy. Nothing sounds good. Nothing tastes good. Nothing helps. The answer is not complex. Thank You Jesus. I love You Jesus. Two simple phrases change your spirit, your mind, and your body.

Psalm 107:19 (NLT)"Lord, help!" they cried in their trouble, and he saved them from their distress.

We move from near death to life as we <u>cry to Jesus with adoration</u>. We cry out to God. We tell Him our troubles. We need to tell Him we adore Him. We need to tell Jesus we are grateful for what He is about to do in our lives. When we cry to Jesus with adoration and love we are trusting Him as a child trusts a parent, as a spouse trusts their partner. That is an absolute trust, without knowing that doubt even exists. Knowing they are faithful, willing to help and ready to make sacrifices. That is true love.

Jesus is faithful to all of His promises. Jesus is willing to help. Jesus has already made the ultimate sacrifice for us. Our praise and affection for Jesus makes clear our absolute trust in Him. As we speak with words of gratitude we are saying that Jesus can handle our deepest fears. Our words of affection are saying that He is greater than anything we fear.

That sense of control slipping through your fingers is relieved by the faithfulness of God. When our fears of an unknown future, the certainty of death, are alleviated by God's willingness to help. Even the thought of or the anxiety about death is eased knowing Jesus has already sacrificed His life for you. In our moments of thanks and adoration we become willing to let Jesus help us. We are able to let go of the weight we carry, because Jesus has already picked it up. The anxieties, the fears are no longer relevant because Jesus has overcome everything that makes us afraid. As we feel the pressure of making one sacrifice after another, our declaration of love for Jesus empowers us. Burdens are no longer burdens regardless of the task, because Jesus is carrying them with us. Every

obstacle that once stood in our path, that once beat us down are no longer insurmountable, but have become an opportunity to praise Jesus.

Even death no longer has power or control over our lives because we love Jesus. Jesus died as our sin and rose as our new life. Jesus lived His life faithfully trusting God the Father. Jesus spent everyday willing to help others because He loves the Father and He loves each person. Jesus was the sacrifice that took away the power of death, the fear of death, from our lives.

We live each day calling out to Jesus, victorious over death and all the problems of this life. That is a reason to praise God. That is a reason to give thanks to the Lord. That is a reason to love Jesus with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. That is the reason to love your neighbor as yourself. We are no longer bound by the power of sin. We are bound by the power of Jesus' love for us. We are set free from the anxieties and worries of this life by the love of Jesus. Jesus loves you. Jesus has given you every victory in the past and in the future. You and I claim that victory each day by giving thanks to Jesus and proclaiming our love for Him.

Psalm 107:20 (NLT) He sent out his word and healed them, snatching them from the door of death.

Praise Jesus while you call upon Him to <u>heal your body, mind and spirit</u>. Even as believers we are in need of the healing power of Jesus. My house has been filled with stress recently. I give thanks to Jesus. Raising my sons many years ago was filled with a variety of good and bad events. I didn't always then, but I can now give thanks to Jesus. Helping my bride through over fifteen surgeries has been challenging. I didn't always then, but I can now give thanks to Jesus.

I have seen over and over again the power of Jesus and His love for me. I can look back over certain situations and see that God was snatching me from the door of death. I have always been one or two steps away from following my fears and anxieties. Without the love of Jesus in my life I might be at death's door.

Somewhere deep within me was cry to God for help. It didn't always begin with thank you or I love you. God answered. Too many times in my life after being rescued by God, I would still lean into my fears and anxieties. I believed that they were the normal part of life. I had accepted the idea that was how people were supposed to live.

But the more times God rescued me the more I realized how grateful I was. I recognized how much I loved the Jesus. I also become more aware of the truth that being mad, sad, bad, or glad are merely emotions that come and go. I saw that fear and anxiety were keeping me closer to death's door and further away from God's power, Jesus' love, the presence of the Holy Spirit.

I also came to a greater understanding that I need to start with thank you Jesus and I love you Jesus, instead of my problems, my fears, my anxiety. Jesus loves me and Jesus loves you in the midst of everything that you do and that happens to you. Jesus loves me and Jesus loves you regardless of your past. You can trust in your own word or you can trust in Jesus. I am far from perfect. I am not always faithful. Jesus loves me. You are not perfect. You are not always faithful. Jesus loves you.

Are you acknowledging His love by saying I love you Jesus? Are you embracing His love by saying thank you Jesus? Everyone, regardless of where they work or where they were born, or how much money they don't have, or how many problems they have needs to say to Jesus, I love you. Unless

you can tell Jesus you love Him you will never find release the chains and the iron bars that entrap you.

At the just the right moment Jesus came to save you. He paid the ransom for your life to redeem you from your sins, your fears, and even death. Jesus did this when He died on the cross as the person whose love and faith in God was complete. Jesus delivered you to a new life, where you can give thanks to Him for who He is and what He has done, by rising from the dead.

In your core you want to be loved by God. In your core you want to love God. Change the direction of your life by giving thanks to Jesus. Find the power, the hope, the peace, and the love you crave by saying I love you Jesus.