

## Four Ways to be Lost and Found

### Psalm 107

Psalm 107 has one characteristic of God as its main theme: his steadfast love. And it tells us that this characteristic should result in another characteristic in us: thankfulness. Surprisingly, however, the psalm encourages us to see God's steadfast love and to respond with thankfulness in places you'd never imagine.

The psalm opens by telling us that we should be thankful because God has redeemed his people – rescued his people – from trouble. But what kind of trouble?

#### Four Ways to Get Lost

The writer describes four different types of people whom God has rescued. Probably all of us can find ourselves amongst them.

- **The Wanderer:** (v4-5). We long for a place to rest, where we belong. When we look for that elsewhere than in God we can find ourselves in a desert.
- **The Shadow Dweller:** (v10-11). When we throw off God's word because we think we will find freedom, we end up being enslaved. And individualism results in loneliness.
- **The Fool:** (v17-18). Our health, and the health of our marriages and families can suffer when we make less than wise choices.
- **The Overwhelmed:** (v23, 25-7). We can feel lost and overwhelmed in a storm of circumstances, over which we have no control.

But the great thing about this psalm is that it tells us that God doesn't leave us lost.

#### God of the Rescue

All good stories follow a death-resurrection pattern. Each of the four scenarios Psalm 107 gives do as well. Things get so bad that they each cry out to the Lord for rescue. When we reach that tipping point, God reaches out to rescue us: the Wanderer is brought to a city; the Shadow Dweller is released from captivity; the Fool is healed by God's word; the Overwhelmed finds a haven in the storm.

And it's all because of God's steadfast love for us.

But one unsettling this is that for two out of the four scenarios, God had to make things worse to bring the people to their senses. He may have to do the same with us. But even when life seems bad, God is good, and he is doing it for our good.

#### God of the Reversal

Wherever we find ourselves, Christ has plumbed the depths for us. He has entered the desert of the Wanderer, the prison of the Shadow Dweller. He knew what it was to be totally alone. He passed through the gates of death that the Fool only approaches. At the cross he threw himself into the storm of God's wrath. And he did it all because of his steadfast love for you.

He finds and brings us wanderers back, because he's the Way. He delivers us shadow dwellers from our prisons. His word brings healing into those situations we have created by our foolish choices. He stills the storm of the overwhelmed, and gives lasting peace of heart to all who will trust him.

As we grasp that love for us, thanksgiving and joy will indeed well up in our hearts, as the Psalmist says it should.