

090118

- I. My Notes... WWC message 090218 – Sing Praise
- II. Series: A Summer of Psalms
 - a. Title: God Gets It Done
 - b. Text: Psalm 138
 - c. Quote: “Hardship often prepares an ordinary person for an extraordinary destiny.” – C.S. Lewis
- III. Introduction
 - a. Someone once said to me, “It’s easy to forget God in the middle of trouble or difficulty” – what a profound statement about the human condition. When struggles come, we tend to draw in and hold on in an attempt to endure. How many people do you know that are living like the kitten in that poster from the 1970’s “Hang in the Baby” ... hanging on to life by fingertips, just looking for a fairly easy place to land. Many seek recognition for getting through some rough places; even more feel they deserve something just for their presence.
 - b. As we have been going through the Psalms, one thing we have talked about is worshipping the Lord God in every circumstance and in all things. You have heard me say more than once that the Lord has a plan and He will accomplish His purpose. Last week, in the bulletin, I put this info, God is there – He made this promise throughout Scripture. Seek me and you will find me – cf. 1 Chron. 28:9, Prov. 2:1-6; I am with you always – cf. Matt. 28:20. God is there, all the time, in every situation. He knows the plans He has for our life (cf. Jer. 29:11) and He will complete those things in us.
 - c. The Psalm we are looking at today is a place I turn for inspiration and comfort at times of hardship. It’s because it ends with a great statement of

confidence. "The LORD **will** fulfill his purpose for me. LORD, your faithful love endures forever; do not abandon the work of your hands." (Psalm 138:8 CSB).

- d. We stress today – it seems to be the way we operate. Life can be challenging enough without adding to it (and we are very good at doing that). We have forgotten that the path and plans the Lord God has for us bring hope, they result in peace and right perspective. **In some ways, I think we battle issues of trust. Perhaps our view is a bit twisted. See, there are times in life those we HAVE trusted have let us down or hurt us. God says trust Me and we step into the relationship with the expectation of being hurt or disappointed.** And there is another side we deal with too... in doing our best to figure out life, to discover our place and purpose, making the right choice becomes a big load to bear. Being a believer, the choice to serve God and live by His ideals should be almost a given. But who, in their life, has been manipulated or controlled by someone (behind the scenes) for a different agenda? We see it in politics, it's observable in many families, and this can be the battle ground of some relationships. So, what if the Lord God is trying to manipulate me? Do I trust (believe) that His interests are the best thing for me? Can you see the dilemma?
- e. I want to tell you something I have learned. It comes from the school of hard knocks. Trust has been broken and I have come through it. Beliefs and ideals have been shattered and I have grown because of it. This is what I know to be true... God has a great plan for all of us, and He is committed to making that plan become a reality. You and I have a part in that coming to pass. It is a choice (as most things are) and we have the freedom to decide. Do I do what **I THINK** is right and accept the consequences for that choice? Or do I yield my will, and choose to serve the Lord God, do I live by His principles and precepts, and believe that He will protect me always?
- f. Allow me to show you what I have discovered...

IV. Text

a. Psalm 138:1-8 (MSG)

A David psalm... Thank you! Everything in me says "Thank you!" Angels listen as I sing my thanks. I kneel in worship facing your holy temple and say it again: "Thank you!" Thank you for your love, thank you for your faithfulness; Most holy is your name, most holy is your Word. The moment I called out, you stepped in; you made my life large with strength. When they hear what you have to say, GOD, all earth's kings will say "Thank you." They'll sing of what you've done: "How great the glory of GOD!" And here's why: GOD, high above, sees far below; no matter the distance, he knows everything about us. When I walk into the thick of trouble, keep me alive in the angry turmoil. With one hand strike my foes, With your other hand save me. Finish what you started in me, GOD. Your love is eternal—don't quit on me now.

b. There is a song that I truly enjoy..." I want to sing a song for You, Lord...

Lord, for You I want to sing a song - And I want to lift my voice to Heaven
And listen to the angels sing along" (Sing a Song, Third Day, 2003).

c. Our lives, the way we live, the attitudes we exhibit are a song to the Lord

d. Now, I'll have to admit, I don't always have the best demeanor (imagine that). In fact, in this very challenging week, I failed miserably and had to be called out to check myself

e. Our lives are not only a song to the Lord but a testimony of His grace and goodness.

f. There is a way to be so that we can show where our trust and confidence lies

V. Live Thankful, Let Your Praises Ring

a. Look at the way David begins... "LORD, I will thank you with all my heart; I will sing to you before the gods. I will bow down facing your holy Temple, and I

will thank you for your love and loyalty. You have made your name and your word greater than anything." (vv. 1-2 NCV)

- b. What a way to live – grateful
- c. If we never received another blessing, we could spend the rest of life thanking the Lord God for what He has done in the past
- d. But we ARE blessed, we are loved and treasured.
- e. We have something to be grateful for – think about it. Is there something in your life right now that you can say “thank you” for?
- f. Some translations say “thank you” and some say “give you praise”... praise and being thankful go hand in hand
- g. As you live grateful, as you carry that attitude of gratitude, you are living a life that praises the Lord.
- h. Do you remember the story of the 10 lepers in the NT (Luke 17: 11-19)?
- i. 10 men – diseased, kept away from society, unable to be around family or loved ones. Leprosy not only damaged the body, it hurt the heart and mind
- j. Jesus was passing by and they called out for help.
- k. Have you heard me say, the Lord hears us – He listens to our pleas and brokenness
- l. Jesus healed their bodies, He followed what the Jewish law required in telling them to go to a priest, and allowed them the freedom to go
- m. On the way to the priest, one realized what had been done, he returned to the Lord and fell in worship... this Samaritan was the only person to live grateful. To show his gratitude to the Lord brought him complete wholeness not just healing
- n. A story about ingratitude... Hot springs and cold springs are found side by side in some parts of Mexico. Because of the convenience of this natural

phenomenon, women often bring their laundry to such places so they can boil their clothes in the hot springs and then rinse them in the cold ones. A tourist who was watching this procedure commented to his Mexican guide, "I imagine they think Mother Nature is pretty generous to supply such ample, clean, hot and cold water here side by side for their free use." The guide replied, "No, Señor, there is much grumbling because she supplies no soap." (backtothebible.org/devotions)

- o. "Nothing cures ingratitude as quickly as a good memory." *Woodrow Kroll*
- p. So, what are you going to choose? Are you looking for someone or something to blame or a reason to make an excuse?
- q. Or are there reasons in your life to shout THANK YOU LORD?!!!

VI. You Aren't the Reason

- a. It isn't about you or I. Living with humility is living yielded to the Lord. It's trust that reaches down to the depths of your soul
- b. Humility says each person has value and worth. It chooses to do the best it can to see things the way the Lord sees them
- c. Jesus lived and ministered in a way that showed others were important. He didn't do things just to get people on "His side"
- d. Humility is serving, it's loving people right where they are
- e. Humility is something that is gained and practiced as we grow in wisdom and grace. Easton's Bible Dictionary defines "humility" as: a prominent Christian grace. It is a state of mind well pleasing to God; it preserves the soul in tranquility and makes us patient under trials
- f. In the days of self-reliance and self-sufficiency it is the person who seeks to serve and help that will be honored and valued. While we point out and

commend independence, it is interdependence that brings change and hope

- g. In Eph. 4 (the passage that inspired me all those years ago to begin doing this), the Apostle Paul instructs us to "... walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness..." (vv. 1-2 NASB)
- h. Humility is about knowing and understanding who you are and what choices you are making.
- i. **Serving others makes a difference. It is a demonstration of love and acceptance; often without needing to say a thing**
- j. Living a life of gratitude is living a life of praise. Living with humility allows you to remain submitted and focused on God's plan for your life. And because it's not about you, God is honored and glorified.

VII. No Matter What

- a. It's a common phrase we use...
- b. One of the big underlying questions, something I have not mentioned until this point, is to live this way requires trust.
- c. Do you truly trust the Lord? I'm not talking about lip service, about looking good or proving you are "holy"
- d. **Having a yielded heart means that you trust God, no matter what, if trouble shows up – trust; feeling weak and unable – trust; vulnerable and being criticized – trust; or when things are even worse than I mentioned - trust. You live with the assurance that says, "God will take care of me."**
- e. It's that realization, that God has my back, it's what I talked about last week from Psalm 121 – God will protect our lives, in every circumstance

- f. When I talk about trusting God, it's about putting your faith completely in Him, giving up your control and allowing the Lord control of your life, trusting the results are His, trusting Him to deal with whatever happens at any moment.
- g. Martin Luther said "Pray, let God worry"
- h. Tim Keller (Pastor, Author) said, "it's one thing to be grateful, it's another to give thanks. Gratitude is what you feel, thanksgiving is what you do."
- i. Trusting God, no matter what, will allow you to choose to live the way He wants you to.

VIII. Last Words

- a. So let's choose to find reasons to be grateful, not matter what circumstances look like. Let's choose to honor and glorify the Lord by expressing this gratitude by word or by action
- b. One day a father of a very wealthy family took his son on a trip to the country with the firm purpose of showing his son how poor people live. They spent a couple of days and nights on the farm of what would be considered a very poor family. On their return from their trip, the father asked his son, "How was the trip?"

"It was great, Dad."

"Did you see how poor people live?" the father asked.

"Oh yeah," said the son.

"So, tell me, what did you learn from the trip?" asked the father. The son answered: "I saw that we have one dog and they had four. We have a pool that reaches to the middle of our garden and they have a creek that has no end. We have imported lanterns in our garden and they have the stars at night. Our patio reaches to the front yard and they have the whole horizon. We have a small piece of land to live on and they have fields that go beyond

our sight. We have servants who serve us, but they serve others. We buy our food, but they grow theirs. We have walls around our property to protect us, they have friends to protect them."

The boy's father was speechless. Then his son added, "Thanks, Dad, for showing me how poor we are."

Isn't perspective a wonderful thing? Makes you wonder what would happen if we all gave thanks for everything we have, instead of worrying about what we don't have.

c. Let's Pray

d. In the dark and quiet moments, may you sense the Lords love and protection. May you share the joy that comes from knowing He is there with a simple expression of gratitude. And may you continue to celebrate all the good the Lord God has poured onto your path.