

I. Introduction

Psalm 136 is a psalm of thanksgiving that was sung in worship during Old Testament times. Its defining feature is that the reason for thanksgiving is rooted in God's steadfast love. "Steadfast love," hesed, refers to God's everlasting covenant love for His people.

II. Main Message

How can we give thanks in all circumstances and build the church into a community of thanksgiving?

1. When we give thanks for God's goodness and steadfast love, we can give absolute thanks in all things.

Daniel and Habakkuk were able to give thanks because they believed in God's steadfast love. What was the difference between Job—who praised God in suffering—and his wife, who complained?

Paul also believed in God's loving character and therefore rejoiced and gave thanks in hardship. David gave thanks in suffering because of God's steadfast love (Psalm 23:6; 53:7-11). Jeremiah also gave thanks even as the nation collapsed (Lam. 3:22-23).

2. When we understand God's steadfast love, we can give thanks even for past events.

Although the people of Judah complained at the Red Sea and in the wilderness, they now give thanks (vv. 13-16).

Even when we face events that seem unfair or incomprehensible, let us give thanks in advance according to His steadfast love.

The preacher shares testimonies of things he now gives thanks for, though he could not at the time.

Even when difficulties arise now, he gives thanks beforehand because he trusts in God's steadfast love.

Let us give thanks today for things in the past for which we once could not give thanks. The preacher shares 10 things he gave thanks for at his installation service.

3. Let us give thanks to God who created the heavens and the earth (vv. 4-9).

Give thanks to God for sunlight, air, water, night and day, the beauty of the heavens, and the seasons.

4. Let us give thanks even for the fact that nothing happened.

The preacher's personal testimony

5. Blessings that flow from continual thanksgiving and absolute thanksgiving

Thanksgiving is the key that opens the door to blessing.

God pours out greater grace upon those who give thanks.

Thanksgiving transforms a community into a taste of heaven.

Thanksgiving brings peace to the heart and even health to the body.

Thanksgiving guards our hearts from grumbling and resentment—it is our greatest watchman.

III. Conclusion

Two proposals for building a community of thanksgiving

First, Write a daily gratitude journal—this helps us recognize reasons and details for gratitude.

Second, Share your gratitude journal with close friends or your small group members.

Thanksgiving grows like a snowball as we share it.

Be careful not to use your gratitude journal to boast or draw attention to yourself.

**Bible
Memorization**

A VERSE FOR THIS WEEK

“So we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another.” (Romans 12:5)

**Bible
Reading**

| 11/24(Mon) | 11/25(Tue) | 11/26(Wed) | 11/27(Thur) | 11/28(Fri) | 11/29(Sat) | 11/30(Sun) |
|------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Acts 1-3 | Acts 4-6 | Acts 7-8 | Acts 9-10 | Acts 11-13 | Acts 14-16 | Acts 17-19 |

QT

Quiet Time Passage

| 11/24(Mon) | 11/25(Tue) | 11/26(Wed) | 11/27(Thur) | 11/28(Fri) | 11/29(Sat) | 11/30(Sun) |
|------------|------------|------------|-------------|------------|------------|------------|
| Acts 1-3 | Acts 4-6 | Acts 7-8 | Acts 9-10 | Acts 11-13 | Acts 14-16 | Acts 17-19 |

**Sharing
Questions**

1. Share one part of today's sermon that touched your heart or gave you grace.
2. Do you give thanks only when you have something obvious to be thankful for?
Or do you give thanks in all things, believing in God's eternal goodness and steadfast love?
3. Share something from your past that you could not give thanks for at the time,
but as time passed, you came to see God's steadfast love in it and can now give thanks.
4. Share any blessings you have received through giving thanks.