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SERMON TITLE: *Rescue Us from Our Enemies Lord!*
SCRIPTURE: Psalm 106:1-12
DATE: January 10, 2021
View online service at www.fpcd.org/live-stream

Read also John 8:12-16, 2 Corinthians 4:4, re-read Daniel 9

Last week we spoke about Daniel, a man who lived in a dark time but whose approach was to talk to God, trust God, and as a result, he saw the true God clearly over all the temptations to follow false gods. For example, he was valued by the kings—it would have been tempting to make his job number one in his life.

How do we get to that place where we understand, like Daniel, that it is an utter loss to follow the false gods of this world? How do we build in ourselves such great respect for God that we can stand steady and even move forward in hard times?

The goal is to seek the right source in hard times. For example, what will really rescue us from the enemy of the plague which has daunted us with its relentless persistence for nearly a year now? We look to science and politicians. What are we missing? If your answer is God, how do we seek God so that it matters?

How do we remember what God has accomplished so vividly that we stay connected to God's power and "realness" (presence) even when the world around us fails?

- For God is here, and trusting that fact gives us peace;
- We trust God enough that we are willing to move forward with courage in the midst of danger.

This is the subject matter of today's Scripture. Let's read it. PSALM 106:1-12

Psalm 106 is a *Hallelujah* Psalm. Is there anything you shout hallelujah about?

It is a Psalm to pray in hard times because it bolsters our view of the bigness of God. To see God's bigness, we must **REMEMBER**. *What has God done for you?* You must continue to remember and be grateful.

This Psalm gives accolades to God for what God has done.

Daniel remembered everything that happened to him in prayer. He remembered the visions he was given, the answers he received, the fiery furnace and his friends' triumph. He remembered the lion's den.

These things were light for Daniel. God was near! To remember them was to live in the light. Babylon's laws against prayer to God were darkness. The fear of the governmental edicts could have stopped him but each miracle brought more light into the exilic existence.

Do you remember some of the miracles God has done for you?

- ✓ Was there an illness God brought you through?
- ✓ An emergency, financial crisis, or tragedy God helped you overcome?
- ✓ What about the positive outcomes of the work of this church?
- ✓ Do you remember miracles in other people's lives?

What do you **REMEMBER**?

The *Hallelujah* Psalm teaches this kind of confession we need to make. Let's try it now. What are four reasons we in this congregation have to praise God? Let's begin like Psalm 106.

PRAISE THE LORD! GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD! WHO CAN EVER PRAISE HIM ENOUGH? For God has

- Given us a church family to help one another;
- Good health;
- The church has been open and is financially sound;
- Answered prayer;

These things bring light and overcome our enemies.

The Psalm lists truths about God that we know:

Vs. 1 – He is good! His faithful love endures forever.

Vs. 2 – He does glorious miracles

Vs. 3 – Living his way in righteousness and justice brings joy.

Vs. 4 – We can call on him to show favor, come near, rescue us, and bring prosperity.

This is a positive confession. We are confessing the positives of following God. We need to shout this light to encourage ourselves, each other, and those who are in the world to hear.

When we "confess" a positive, it builds confidence in God. Why would we be overcome with fear in this pandemic when we have God to lean on? Should we not call on him to show favor, to come near, to rescue us and bring prosperity? Should we not ask him how to carry on? Should we not expect him to make a way in this difficult time? Why should the work of the church be put on hold? Let us not shrink back!

When we ask these questions, it brings up another subject: We forget. We forget the power of God; we forget what God has done in the past; we fall into fear. It's human nature.

Now the *Hallelujah* Psalm says there a second kind of confession we need to make. We are more familiar with it. It is to

confess our wrongs and seek pardon. That's why the Psalmist says "we have sinned" (v. 6).

Sin is universal and systemic. (Systemic means it is general and persistently present among humans and human systems.) So the Psalmist admits:

"Like our ancestors, we have sinned. We have done wrong! We have acted wickedly! Our ancestors in Egypt were not impressed by the LORD's miraculous deeds. They soon forgot his many acts of kindness to them. Instead, they rebelled against him at the Red Sea." (v. 6-8)

We strive to make things right through political and social action and that is important. But the Bible says the solution is far larger than we ourselves can achieve and it says we are part of the problem due to sin! We need a bigger solution: connection with God. And, we need to know the character of God to see it.

When we praise God, we respect God. When we praise God we see God's acts better. God's actions are wonderful. Here we are rebelling, not being impressed by his miracles, and doing wrong. But here's the wonderful thing:

EVEN SO, HE SAVED THEM – That's grace! That includes you and me!

God did this to defend the honor of his name and to demonstrate his mighty power. Then others might turn to him and believe. Others might desire his miracles. Others might love God.

Let's think about this.

- They walk through on the floor of the Red Sea and it is as dry as a desert.
- Their enemies are all drowned.
- They go into the desert and not once did anyone attack them while they were there.

So **HE RESCUED THEM FROM THEIR ENEMIES** and redeemed them from their foes.

Let's think about our enemies. How shall we think about it?

- We might say it is the pandemic.
- We might say it is our circumstances or health or lack of wealth or _____?

Where are you going for light?

Once there were some scribes and Pharisees who brought a woman caught in bed with a man who was not her husband to Jesus. They charged her right in front of him. What do you say about this? She should be stoned! But Jesus found a way to save her life and her enemies dropped their stones.

Surely she considered this a miracle. Surely it molded her life in the future as she remembered how Jesus saved her from her enemies.

Then he said to the accusers. "I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life."

Let's say that the woman was so surprised that a Jewish man, a teacher, saved her life even though she had sinned. If she left that place and followed him as a believer, and remembered what he did for her, and praised and thanked him each morning when she awoke and said her prayers. And if, during dark times, she remembered how he saved her and it lifted her spirits and set her on a better path.

What do you need to remember? There are many stories in your lives. Pick one today. Relish in it. Be thankful. Sing his praise.

This is God's message to you today.

"Then God's people believed his promises. Then they sang God's praise."

AMEN