

Happy

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Preacher: James Barnett

[0 : 00] That is such a fun and contagious song. I was having trouble standing up here and not dancing along to that. It's just happiness and joy.

I'm a little surprised nobody's doing these ones. It's hard not to hear that song and want to clap along for joy with the singer who wrote that song, Pharrell Williams.

Nothing is going to bring him down, even if he's in a room without a roof. And he invites us to clap along, share in my joy and happiness.

Now, you know of the three songs that we've looked at in this heart song series, this is the one that has the least information. We don't know where his happiness comes from. He just says that he is happy and he wants to share it.

So, how do you react when you are happy? I don't often stop and reflect on what brings me happiness and joy.

[1 : 05] Very rarely will I actually stop and give thanks to God. You know, God, thank you for my kids. Thank you for this day. You know, yesterday we were spending some time with friends.

I didn't stop in the middle of it and just, you know, start singing, I'm happy. You guys should clap along. I'm so happy. And somebody's laughing at how ridiculous that would be. Very rarely do I actually stop and reflect on the joy that is around me.

On Monday is a public holiday. My family and most other people in the Sutherland Shire decided to go to the Royal National Park. We went for a bushwalk.

And there is a waterfall called Winifred Falls that's about a K and a half in. And we bushwalked in. It took us about 40 minutes to do this bushwalk. It was really lovely. Nice warm day. And there's waterfalls and then there's a river at the bottom.

And there's boats that can get to this part of the river as well. And we get in. And I dived in and I swam in. And then Micah, our youngest, came in the water with his floaties. And then it was a little bit cold.

[2 : 10] So, you know, he does the thing that little kids do is they get in the water and then they get out straight away. And then they get back in, that kind of thing. But he got out and he stood in front of Alyssa crying. And so Alyssa looked over and saw that his foot was pouring out blood.

Because as he was climbing out, he'd cut his foot on an oyster. And so what was a nice relaxing day turned into, we need to get this child to hospital because he has a deep cut.

And I swam over to a boat trying to get some first aid. Another boat kindly came and offered their services. And so Alyssa and Micah went off in a speedboat to go to Sutherland Hospital.

And I was left with two other kids heading out of the national park, feeling, welling up inside me, frustration, anger. And we had this perfect day planned.

We'd done all this hard work to get there. And now I'm just frustrated. I'm annoyed. You know, my kids are saying things like, oh, you know, it's so sad that we had to leave.

[3 : 18] So sad that we've missed out on swimming. You know, I feel like we've missed out. And I saw and felt a pull to ingratitude.

But instead, I realized where I was going and had a moment to rebuke and encourage my own heart and my kids to be thankful to God for what we have.

So that because we have much that we have to be happy about. We have a good medical system. So that now, you know, Micah will get his stitches out tomorrow. He'll be fine. And he can, you know, finally have a bath again.

Praise the Lord. But, you know, thankfully, we could go for a bushwalk. Praise God that God has richly blessed us with kind people who happened to just have a speedboat so that they could speed Micah out to a hospital.

God has richly blessed us even if it was not exactly as we wanted. When things go wrong, when the oyster cuts of life surprise us and cut us, and cut us deep, feelings of resentment, anger, frustration can well up inside us towards God.

[4 : 29] Today, as we continue in our heart song series, David has written another song that should penetrate our heart. Psalm 40 shows us how and why to combat those feelings of ingratitude towards God.

And today, we're going to see why we should have gratitude towards God, how to do it, and how it grows a deeper relationship with God. So as we have a look at Psalm 40, please pray with me. Heavenly Father, we thank you again and again and again that you are a good and loving and generous God. God, thank you that we can spend time in the Psalms.

Lord, we ask that we would learn how to read these, that we would be people who love to read your word, and that we would love to read your Psalms because they just resonate with all parts of life, Lord.

Amen. Please have a look with me at verse 1. We're starting Psalm 40, verse 1. It will be in your Bible. It will be on your phone and the St. Paul's app.

[5 : 35] Psalm 40, verse 1. I waited patiently for the Lord. He turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the slimy pit, out of the mud and mire.

He set my feet on a rock and gave me a firm place to stand. Last week, we looked at Psalm 141, where David is crying out to God for help.

God, come to me quickly. I'm about to sin. Put your hand over my mouth. I need your help. I'm in desperation. I don't want to sin. And Psalm 40 reads like a sequel to last week.

I really love it. I really love how this is accidentally lined up. Psalm 141, David is crying out to God for help. Psalm 40, David says, I waited for God.

He heard my cry and he came and helped me. God has responded to David's cry for help. He's pulled him out of danger, out of the slimy pit and put him on solid ground.

[6 : 32] There is no oysters here for David. He's on solid ground. God has put a new song in David's mouth and he sings praise to God, verse 3. He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God.

Many will see and fear the Lord and put their trust in him. And David is going to respond to God's goodness by singing to him. And people are going to hear, they're going to trust in God because God has been good to David.

And David continues to meditate on how he has been blessed by God. Verse 4, Blessed is the one who trusts in the Lord, who does not look to the proud, to those who turn aside to false gods.

Blessed is the person who turns to God because this God is real. He is not fake. He is not a man-made idol. He is not a God of our own devising that we worship just with our hearts or a God made out of a piece of wood.

He is a real God who can help, who does help his people. So why should we have gratitude to God? David says because he is a real God.

[7 : 40] He is the one who helps. He is the one who works. David recognizes who this God is. He is the one who is in control. He is the one who works.

Verse 5, Many, Lord my God, are the wonders you have done, the things you have planned for us. None can compare with you. Were I to speak and tell of your deeds, they would be too many to declare.

This God that David is showing his gratitude to, this God saves. Many are his wonders. So many that David couldn't speak of all of them. This is who our God is.

1 Corinthians 4 reminds us about how we should be grateful to this God. Verse 7, What do you have that you did not receive? And if you did receive it, why do you boast as if you did not?

Paul in Corinthians is calling us to remember who God is, that he is the one who is in control of all things. A book I have been spruiking for the last couple of weeks is Tim Keller's Reflections on the Psalms, My Rock, My Refuge.

[8 : 49] And it says, one of the things he says in there, is that every day that your heart keeps pumping, your country is not invaded, and your brain keeps functioning, is wholly an undeserved gift of God.

Every day your heart keeps pumping, your country is not invaded, and your brain keeps functioning, is wholly an undeserved gift of God. We have been granted so many wonderful gifts by God, and

yet we can fail to recognize them.

David starts by assigning praise and gratitude to God in the right direction. He doesn't reflect on his own happiness and joy, his salvation from the pit, as if he's climbed out himself.

It's not his own gifts or talents or his own ability. It's all from God. And this is true of our own lives and our own salvation. We don't contribute anything to salvation, except our own sin and our need for God to work to save us.

We should give thanks to God for every single moment of our lives. If you get good marks at school, God has given you a stable schooling system, a brain to learn, teachers to educate you, and if you've had a good school holidays, if you've had a bad school holidays, you should be thanking God that you have a school and you can have holidays.

[10:15] If you have a job, you should be thanking God for low unemployment. Succeeding in your job, you should thank God for your health, which hasn't impacted your ability to work. If you don't have a job, but we have a social system with a job seeker at the moment, and there are jobs you can apply for, you should be thanking God.

If JobKeeper is currently keeping you in a job, you should thank God. If we have religious freedom to praise God, you should thank God. If you're able to get out of the house and come to church this morning, you should thank God.

Our government has recommended that we should wear masks to ensure that we are as safe and healthy as possible, you should thank God. There are so... I could list. As David has said, he could declare the wonders of God, and on and on and on.

Anything, any single moment of your day, you've had breakfast, you've chosen not to have breakfast, you've breathed in the last five seconds, thank God. Tim Keller, again, reflects in My Rock, My Refuge that ingratitude is the root of all human sin.

We read that as a staff team on September 30th. If you want to read his reflection on that, let me encourage you to, when I give you an option later, to come up and get this book, go back to September 30th and read it.

[11:30] It was a cracker. And I've been wrestling with this idea that ingratitude is the root of all our sin. Ingratitude forgets who God is and what He has done.

Ingratitude doesn't thank God, but it shifts the gratitude to someone who doesn't deserve it. I take the place of God, and I praise myself. Ingratitude is the rejection of God as God, and it makes something else God.

It leads to pride and arrogance, not giving thanks to God for every single second that we live and breathe and work and go to school. We deserve nothing from God, and yet He still makes the sun rise on us, and He continues to bless us.

The sin of ingratitude gives us the delusion that we have the ability to hold our own lives together, that we are somehow responsible for anything good in our lives, whereas every minute is an undeserved gift.

We are stewards of the time, the talents, and the treasures that God has given us, and it's up to us to choose how to respond to God.

[12:46] How are we going to respond to what God has given us? Will we wisely use it to bless others and love others, or will we just love ourselves?

Will we use our time, talents, and treasures with a recognition of where it has come from, or will the sin of ingratitude poison our hearts?

There is a very real danger of assigning too much praise to ourselves, where ingratitude says, God, I don't need you. I'm getting further and further away from my teenage years, but I still remember what it was like to be a surly teenager.

Does anybody remember what it was like to be a surly teenager? Does anybody have a surly? No, don't answer that question. The surly teenager says really unhelpful things, like, Mom and Dad, I don't need you.

You know, I'm 15 now, I know how the world works. I can do everything on my own. Stop holding me back. Even though, you know, at 15, you know, 20 years ago, even though at that point where, you know, I'm developing in my independence, I still had to realize how dependent I was on my family for, you know, food, a roof, clothes, pretty much everything in my life.

[14:10] But imagine saying that to God. You know, God, I've got this. Leave me alone. I know how to control my life. I can keep my own heart beating and my own brain functioning. I can do that myself.

I don't need you, God. David has reminded himself about how dependent he is on God, on God's grace for his life. And that's why we should have gratitude.

Because God is incredibly generous and he has blessed us with every single moment. David not only recognizes what God has done and meditates on it, but he goes out and declares it.

This is the key way on how to have gratitude. So firstly, we've seen the why of gratitude, because God has blessed us with every moment. And how are we to have gratitude? Well, David starts by speaking about all that God has done.

Verse 9. I proclaim your saving acts in the great assembly. I do not see all my lips, Lord, as you know. I do not hide your righteousness in my heart. I speak of your faithfulness and your saving help.

[15:14] I do not conceal your love and your faithfulness from the great assembly. David is out there proclaiming God's saving acts. He doesn't complain that God had let him fall into the slimy pit in the first place, but he proclaims in front of everyone that God saved him from it.

We saw last week that David was calling out for God to come and close his mouth, but now he is saying, I am not going to have a closed mouth, because now I am proclaiming about what you have done, God.

And he contrasts what he might have been tempted to do with what he actually does. I might have been tempted to seal my lips, Lord, and not give you the gratitude, but he doesn't hide his gratitude.

He doesn't hide God's righteousness in his heart, but he tells everybody about God's character.

Because this is God. He is righteous. He is pure and good. He is faithful. He always saves.

He always cares. And he loves. This is the word we saw last week, *chesed*, which is loving kindness. And David has entered into a cycle.

[16:22] We saw a cycle a couple of weeks ago. Ali's going to put a picture up on the screen for us. We see another cycle here, where David in the top corner has called for help.

God, I need you to come and help me, save me. God has saved, and then David is showing gratitude. The call for help is his problem, whatever that is.

God comes and saves him, and then David reflects on all the good that God has done. And I think this is a really helpful cycle for us. The God saves gives us context for our whole life, and all that God has done and blessed us with.

And I'm trying to do this with my kids at the moment. On Thursday, school holidays, trying to keep our kids busy. You know, couldn't, you know, go to a swimming pool with Micah.

We had stitches in his foot. So we strapped him in a pram, and we went to the zoo. And at the zoo, there was a couple of moments where temptation to be overwhelmed with ingratitude was welling up, because we missed out on seeing the seal show twice.

[17:30] And if you've ever been to Taronga Zoo, you know that the seal show is pretty good, right? Yeah, thanks. And we missed out on it, but there was a moment where there was this problem, the call for help, I suppose, from one of the people in my family.

I won't tell you which person it was. If you put that image back on the main screen as well. So there was a problem. We missed out on the seal show. And I tried to give context.

Yes, we've missed out on seeing the seal show, but we've seen lions and tigers and bears, oh my. I just couldn't help myself. We've seen zebras, and we've seen the seals, and we've seen penguins, giraffes.

We've seen these ten things, and we missed out on this one thing. Now, what are we going to focus on here? Are we going to focus on the one thing that we've missed out on, or are we going to show gratitude for the ten things?

Taking a moment to have context. Let's go slowly over all that's happened, and not just take this incident out of context. And it's easy to do that with God, where we have this problem, and we forget the context of who God is.

[18:50] Where we forget who this God is, who loves us and saves us and does so much for us, and so we don't then get to gratitude. Gratitude looks like remembering all that God has done, not just in saving us from death and damnation, not just bringing us into his family, giving us the Holy Spirit to grow as his children, but God has blessed us with a community of believers.

We live in Australia, where we have religious freedom. Even when we are in strict lockdown, our church had the ability to quickly move to online streaming, where we continue to do that to bless the people who are not able to be with us.

God blesses us every day with rains, with the sun, with flowers and parks to see his goodness in every single moment. In the Old Testament, when God's people had taken him for granted and didn't show him gratitude, God would often take away his blessing for a period. You see it in the book of Judges, where God's people forget him, and they go and start worshipping other gods that they've made. And they forget the one who gave them their homes, gave them their land, gave them their families, and they start worshipping somebody else. And there's this repetition in the Old Testament. I am the God of your fathers who brought you out of Egypt. Remember all I did for you. Remember the context. [20 : 14] There's this problem. And then God says, remember who God is. And that leads to gratitude, thanks and praise.

You can take it down now, thanks. Gratitude looks like remembering, reminding ourselves of the context of the life that we live in. But we can also take God for granted in the nicest of ways. We can take him for granted that he will forgive us. And we can forget the cost of our sin. We can take for granted that he is loving, and that he won't withhold any of his blessings from us. We can take for granted that he listens to us, and wants to answer our prayers. And the antidote to that is remembering, and speaking, and meditating on all that God has done for us. It reorients our lives to be thankful to all that God has done for us, and for who he is. So why have gratitude to God? Well, God has blessed us with every single moment of our lives. [21 : 18] And how do we show gratitude? We remember that God is responsible for all of the good. David closes asking for more help.

Just like in that cycle that we saw, he starts with the problem, he reminds himself of who God is, and then he ends up praising God in gratitude. It then encourages him to call out again to God for help. It's a wonderful cycle where he has seen God save him, he praises God for that, and it encourages him to trust in God more and more. Have a look at verse 13 and verse 17 with me. Verse 13. Be pleased to save me, Lord. Come quickly, Lord, to help me. Verse 17. But as for me, I am poor and needy. May the Lord think of me. You are my help and my deliverer. You are my God. Do not delay. By going through this cycle of a problem, and then God saving him, and then David realizing that God has saved him, and then meditating on that, and then growing again to call for God to help, and dependence on him, his trust has grown. [22 : 28] He's growing closer to God because he has saved him. Imagine if David had forgotten who God was. If he'd seen a problem, called out for God to help, and then is saved, pulled out of that miry pit, and then didn't reflect on who saved him.

He just took it for granted. Could end up disillusioned with God, no gratitude, no thanks, and then in the future, attempt to do it in his own power. I was saved last time. I was fine. I can do it again, instead of it being God who saves. David takes good from God, and he gives him the glory. He doesn't forget God and get puffed up. He doesn't become self-sufficient and arrogant, but has a good, growing relationship with God. Ingratitude, like any sin, grows when we feed it, and shrivels when we don't.

Once we start noticing these thoughts of ingratitude in us and around us, we can start replacing them with thoughts of thanks and praise and gratitude towards God. [23 : 36] Thoughts that say, yes, do you know what? The tire in my car has been, you know, punctured, and I need to buy a new one, but thanks be to God that I have the blessings of a car and a spare tire that I can put on right now so I can get it to a mechanic.

Yes, I sin, but God has so blessed me with a Savior who has died for me. Yes, there is these issues in my life, but God is so much bigger than these problems. When we do this, we walk closer with God. That way we can cultivate a life of gratitude to God for all that He has done, and call people to do what Pharrell Williams did in that song from earlier, to encourage people to be happy, not just because they are in a room without a roof or whatever He was talking about, but because there is a God who saves, who listens to us, who loves us, and we can show gratitude to Him. I've been throwing around books for the last couple of weeks. I've been encouraging this book over the last three weeks, and somebody who's been reading this is Hedy, so I'm going to invite Hedy to

come up right now.

Let's welcome Hedy as she comes up. Thank you. You hold that one, dear sister.

[24 : 56] So three weeks ago, you came up here, you grabbed this book. Have you read any of it?

Yes, sure, I have read it. Okay. Tell us, how have you found it?

I found it very helpful, and I have recommended for my community group to read the books.

Wonderful. Because it gives so much pleasure, and it gives so much guidance to us.

I know that God is good. God is love. He loves us, and you can find all His love in the book. So I'm very thankful for James to give me the book.

I hope you will all have opportunities to find God's love so that you'll be happy, joyful in the Lord.

Thank you. Wonderful. Thank you, Hedy. Thank you. Wonderful encouragement.

The Psalms are a wonderful place to spend time, and Keller's reflections on the Psalms are a real encouragement. So here's a book. Does somebody want it? Yes.

[26 : 02] Here you go, Barbara. Let's give Barbara a clap. There you are. As I said last week, there might be strings attached to that.

This series has been an encouragement for me personally, as we've been reading through these three Psalms, as they resonate with the songs of our emotions throughout our lives.

As they help us to move closer to God when we feel distant. But this God is always close. He is there. To cry out for help when we are tempted and to live a life of gratitude to God for all that He has done.

Let me pray that we would be people who love this God, who loves us and calls us to be close to Him. Dear Heavenly Father, I thank you so much for all of your goodness to us.

Lord, thank you for David's reminder to us today about how you saved Him and you saved us in Jesus. Father, for every single moment of our days, we have so much to give you thanks for.

[27 : 18] But Lord, we can fixate on the troubles and the things that can threaten to bring us down.

Lord, give us context to our days.

Remind us of all of your blessings for every single moment. That we deserve nothing good from you but you pour out your blessings on us, Father. Help us to have gratitude to show it to you and to speak of it to all of the people around us, Lord.

We ask this in your Son's name and for your glory. Amen. Amen.