

Grateful, prayerful, proclaimers – We go to them! - Psalm 105:1-5

“Oh, give thanks to the Lord; call upon His name; make known His deeds among the peoples!”

These are the words of the first verse of Psalm 105.

And they’re the words that form the theme for the year at Sunraysia Presbyterian Church in Mildura, where I serve 50% of my time as a Home Missionary.

2025 has been a year of challenge to the folk there as we’re all being reminded of our mission statement which says, “*Knowing Christ and making Him known*” but which now has the tagline, “*We go to them!*”, added.

This is what Alison and I, are about in our PIM work. And frankly it’s what all believers should be so excited about that we shouldn’t need to be reminded, as **we**...know the best news ever: Jesus Christ saves! He has done it all and we are simply, by repenting and believing in Him. The beneficiaries of His grace, God’s mercy and forgiveness.

So, it’s my prayer today that by God’s grace we may take the lesson in just this first verse of Psalm 105 and refine or even change our **habits** across into the future to be more Christ focussed; more God focussed, in our lives as we place Him **first** in all things.

My prayer is that through this through examining just these few words we will strengthen our commitment to God and in that strengthen our commitment to His church as well.

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So where to start?

Well, I think I’ll start with a brief grammar lesson – as you do!!

In the original language in this verse there are three words that are written in what's called the "imperative", and what the word "imperative" means is, basically, it's written as an **order** or a **command**.

Think of the armed services and the sergeant giving orders to his platoon which he wants obeyed. Think of when he gives orders like "Attention!" or "Fall In!" or "Right Dress!" or something like that. They're orders, the soldiers are expected to obey.

Well, the three words in the original Hebrew in our text, given as orders, translate to three ideas in English. And they'll form the basis of my message today.

The orders are firstly: "*give thanks*" or putting it another way...**be grateful**. Then secondly, "*call upon His name*" or, again, putting it another way **be prayerful**. Then thirdly, "*make known His deeds*" or **be representatives; proclaimers**, who tell others of what God has done!

Now before I get into looking at these three points, I need to stress, these orders, these "*imperatives*", are not orders given to Christians **for** their salvation.

They're not orders given that if you fail to obey them, even if you have a living faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that will mean...you'll be rejected on Judgement Day.

NO! Always remember that it is by the grace, or the gift, of God that you are saved, not by works and not by what you do. So, just keep believing that.

But... I put it to you that as we go through the text today you'll see that obeying these orders, **in love**, is the appropriate response when you consider Christ, when you consider what God has done for you.

So, I have just three points today:

Firstly, be grateful. Then secondly, be thankful, in prayer. And finally, be proclaimers, a people who present God before this fallen world. Let the world know the things **He** has done!

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So, my **first** point: **be grateful** or being thankful.

The first thing I think we should know is that being **grateful** or being **thankful**...is an attitude of heart, and yet it's something that **can** and **should be** learned. Believe it or not, thankfulness is **not** an automatic response for fallen humanity!

I remember when I was a child if we visited my grandparents, my mother would always remind me to go and say thank you to them, for having me stay with them. She taught me the habit of remembering to say thank you whenever someone did something for me, either in putting themselves out or giving me something, or even saying nice things about me.

I learned from my earliest days to remember to **say**...my "*pleases*" and "*thank yous*".

So, as I got older saying thanks or being "grateful" became almost automatic.

Yet...it wasn't insincere!

It wasn't false tokenism!

When I said, or say, thank you, I don't say it because "*it's the right thing to do*". Rather, as I learned that my grandparents had put themselves out for me, and therefore, learned to be thankful for what they'd done...well I'd come to know that when others put themselves out for me, it took them effort too. And sometimes it cost! So, I really was or am **thankful**, because I've benefitted in some way from their efforts.

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But my point is that gratefulness is not automatic!

It's a learned trait!

The facts are that in this self-centred world that we live in **thankfulness**...is often forgotten! Or worse still it's **deliberately** not thought of or even considered. Unfortunately, all too often, people these days feel **entitled**... or think the world owes them a living or something.

The phrase, “*You oughta...do this, or that, for me!*” is unfortunately, if not spoken in words, well it’s spoken of in action, or lack thereof!

Well David, the psalmist here, as inspired by the Spirit of God, begins this whole Psalm with an exhortation or this imperative to “*give thanks...to the Lord.*”

For us, as believers, gratitude or being thankful to God, is not merely to be taken as a “*polite*” response to God's blessings; it’s an essential aspect of our faith.

Ingratitude leads to spiritual barrenness. But thanksgiving opens our hearts to the fullness of God's grace. When we remember God's past mercies, we cultivate a heart of gratitude that sustains us through trials and tribulations.

Gratitude, thankfulness, is a powerful antidote to the entitlement and the dissatisfaction that often plagues our hearts or the hearts of many who don’t know God, in this world today.

When we acknowledge God's provision in our lives, we’re reminded, as James says, in chapter one of his letter, that “*every good and perfect gift is from above*”. So, therefore, let’s be a people who continually give thanks to God. And in doing so, let’s continually recognise that God is the ultimate source of all that we have and all that we are.

Even your next breath, whether in or out, is a blessing from God. Your next heartbeat is a blessing from God and yes even your death is a blessing too, for those who know Christ.

Remember what the Apostle Paul said, “*to live is Christ and to die is gain!*”

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So, if you’re not someone who gives thanks to others who do things for you, well, start to do so now!

I’m always reminded that perhaps the most ungrateful people can be those nearest and dearest to us, if we haven’t taught them to say the “*thank yous*” as a child. So, since as believers we are God’s adopted children we

should recognise, that in this short verse, He is teaching us as we would teach any child. He is teaching us to be grateful and to express that gratefulness in saying thankyou.

So perhaps pause now and consider what you as an individual or even us as part of God's church, can and should be grateful to God for.

Is it friends? Is it your possessions, the things He has provided for you? Is it the food you eat?

Yes, we should be grateful to God for all of those things. But more so, shouldn't we be continually thankful for His merciful grace to us? We sin every day, yet in His grace, His Son has already paid the price for our sins.

We, in and of ourselves, are unrighteous! But Christ gave us His righteousness and took our unrighteousness upon Himself. We should be thankful to God, who so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son for our sakes.

We **deserve** to live for an eternity in hell, for the evil rebellion we have shown, and possibly will continue to show...in our lives. And yet...God who chooses to show mercy to whom He will show mercy, has shown us mercy and promised us new resurrected bodies equipped for eternity.

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Yet there's another aspect of thankfulness I haven't dealt with here. And that is that it's not just how you say thank you, but how you **show** you're thankful.

So often, when people are grateful or truly thankful, they are at a loss as to how they can adequately express their thankfulness in words, so they also resort to actions.

Again, I think again of family members, when they grow up: **how** do they express their thanks without words or **in** words and deeds to their parents? Well, when they visit, do they help the "olds" by mowing the lawn or getting the meal or perhaps quietly going around the house doing some unnoticed cleaning or something?

Or another one do they “pay it forward” some of you will remember the movie some years ago where a boy developed the idea of paying forward what you can’t pay back. Well, that too, is a means of expressing gratitude to God...by being a blessing to others in faith.

However,...I don’t think actions should replace words of gratitude...to God, but they can be proof of the sincerity of your gratitude.

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So, my question to you is: if you’re not grateful to God, or you don’t think you are “grateful enough”, in your lives, will you change your habit... such that gratitude to God will be a lifelong and indeed an eternity long habit?

Give thanks to God. Be grateful! Give thanks by what you say...and what you do!

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Now to my **second** point: be prayerful – call on His name.

Just turning to this point, did you notice the order here?

Did you notice what came first and what comes second?

Firstly, you should be thankful or grateful for God’s blessings and **then** you should call upon His name or be **prayerful** and take your requests before Him.

Once again here I think you should be aware that calling on God’s name in faith, is **not** an automatic response...**even for believers**.

If you were to turn back to the book of Genesis, at Genesis 4:26, you read there that it wasn’t until Adam and Eve’s son Seth, the one born after Cain killed his brother Abel, well it wasn’t until Seth had **his** son Enosh that people began to call on the name of God. Based on the Biblical genealogies that was at least 235 years after creation.

So here, in our verse today the verse continues with the words "*call upon his name*."

Prayer, ultimately, is the lifeline of the believer.

It's through prayer that we communicate with our Heavenly Father as we bring our confessions, our praises and our needs and yes even our wants before Him.

In prayer, we are acknowledging our dependence on God. And we're inviting His presence and power into our circumstances.

Calling upon the name of the Lord is more than just uttering words; it's an act of worship; it's an act of trust. It means we are, or at least should be, recognising God's sovereignty and placing our faith in His perfect will.

So, in every situation, whether in times of joy or sorrow, poverty or wealth, let's be diligent in seeking the Lord through prayer, knowing that He hears and answers His children.

Praying is not just about "me, me, me". Prayer is also for others. Prayer is for equipping us so we can do God's work.

- Prayer is...or **should be**...humble, because we 'e asking God, the creator and sustainer of all things, to use His discretion in supplying what we think are our needs and our wants.
- Prayer should be faithful! It should be trusting as we know that God knows our needs even before the words are on our lips.
- Prayer **shouldn't** be selfish, greedy or sinful in any way. How could you expect God to respond to your prayer with "Yes and Amen" if in essence your requests are seeking to use Him as a "genie", some sort of a mystical slave, who does your every bidding, whether righteous or not?

Yet having said that...we should be truly prayerful. Be someone who truly calls on the name of the Lord.

If you need to strengthen your personal prayer life, then change your focus. Be like a world class athlete. They had to start somewhere, well in prayer start in the simplest way – not with thee's and thou's but with humble faithful requests.

Allocate time to pray. Make a list of things you want to call on God for. So, for example:

- Pray for yourself – that you’ll grow in faith and love and that God will provide for you.
- Pray for others.
- Pray for loved ones.
- Pray for those who are near and dear to you and yet now reject Christ. Pray that they’ll be given life in the Spirit, to come to faith.
- Pray for peace in this world.
- Pray for those serving in our community.
- Pray for God to revive His church here in this place.
- Pray that God will give you courage to share of the hope found in His Son alone!
- And pray that Christ will return soon.

They’re just some of things you can pray for, as you call on the name of the Lord.

So, as you re-focus, as you consider this verse, call upon the name of the Lord...in prayer!

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So, **thirdly**: be proclaimers – be a people who tell others of God’s deeds.

Some of may know that Alison and I have a granddaughter named Olivia.

Well, some months ago now, she came to visit us in Mildura. And Alison and I had planned some things so that Olivia wouldn’t be bored whilst she was with us. Well on one of the days she was with us we took out a kit I’d bought at a shop called “JayCar” – an electronics shop in town. It was a kit to make a radio in a cardboard box.

So, we sat down with Olivia helping her to build it. But part way through, she raced off into her room to get the iPad Tablet that she’d brought up with her. And she went on to Apple’s Facetime Ap and connected with two of her friends as 11 year olds do these days.

They watched as she finished putting together this radio and when she finally turned it on, and tuned in a station, and turned up the volume, they

thought how really cool Olivia was and how cool the radio was. Basically, they wanted one as well.

Olivia became the best advertisement for the JayCar cardboard box radios that you could ever get!

Well, the third “imperative” or the third “command”, in our text today, is to be God’s representatives or a people who will proclaim God before the people.

We’re to tell people of God’s “deeds” or what He’s done.

As recipients of God's grace and mercy, we do have a responsibility to share His goodness with others. And frankly, like Olivia, we should be excited about it. We shouldn’t be caught up in society’s effort to make us ashamed. We shouldn’t be just speaking in hushed tones, hoping no one else will overhear.

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Y’see...our **testimonies** of God's faithfulness, our testimonies of what God has done, can inspire hope and faith in those around us. The proclamation of God's deeds is an act of evangelism. Being prepared to represent our great God by declaring His greatness to a world in need of His saving grace, is an essential attribute of earnest, passionate believers in Christ.

In this, we’re reminded of the Great Commission which our Lord gave to all disciples as related in Matthew 28:18-20. There Jesus commands us to go and make disciples of all nations – even in Australia!

So, my challenge to you is to refocus or sharpen our “*God focus*”, or how we prioritise God in our lives. Let’s be bold in sharing the story of God's love, His redemption, and the Salvation that we have by faith.

Let’s be confident that God’s word will not return void but will accomplish the purpose for which it was sent. Just saying that I’m reminded of the words of the prophet Isaiah at Isaiah 55:10-11.

There it says, “¹⁰ *“For as the rain and the snow come down from heaven and do not return there but water the earth, making it bring forth and sprout, giving*

*seed to the sower and bread to the eater, ¹¹ **so shall my word be** that goes out from My mouth; it shall not return to Me empty. But it shall accomplish that which I purpose, and shall succeed in the thing for which I sent it.”*

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When you faithfully proclaim God’s word, always remember, you’re acting as God’s mouthpiece when you’re telling others of His “*deeds among the people*”. And further, if you are faithful and obedient, it will always achieve God’s purpose...which may or may not necessarily be your purpose, because, as Isaiah says, the word sent shall succeed in the thing for which **God** sent it; it will **never** return to Him empty.

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So, what can you take home from today?

Well, Psalm 105:1 is a powerful reminder of what should be our response to God's goodness. Our response should be one of gratitude, prayer, and presenting God’s deeds before the people.

As we give thanks to the Lord and call upon His name, and make known His deeds, we fulfill our calling as His people, bringing glory to His name and drawing others into His marvellous light.

May the Holy Spirit empower us to refine our “**God focus**” so that we will live out these truths of gratefulness, thankfulness and proclaiming God’s deeds...daily, so that our lives may be a testament to the greatness of our God.

As you re-focus on God, place God **first** in your life. And watch Him use your efforts to His glory as He builds His church in this place.

Amen.