"Recognizing God's Steadfast Love"
Psalm 107: 33-43

C.I.T.—Recognizing God's steadfast love provides an opportunity for thanksgiving.
C.I.S.—We should thank God when we recognize His acts of steadfast love.
Purpose—I want our people to be able to identify the works of God and to rejoice in them through thanksgiving.
Introduction—**Psalm 107:43**

- Hesed—steadfast love refers to God's faithfulness to His covenant people.
- The covenant relationship between Israel and the LORD goes back to the law of Moses.
- For Christians today, our covenant is based on our conversion to Christ—our relationship with Jesus engages us in a covenant relationship, and therefore engages the steadfast love of Jesus.
- When we recognize this steadfast love in our lives, this leads to thanksgiving.

I. ***We recognize His steadfast love when He exercises discipline.*** Vs. 33-34
   a. Description of the Lord's work to change circumstances.
      i. Rivers to desert
      ii. Springs to dry ground
      iii. Fruitful land to salt waste
   b. The evil of the inhabitants led to this practical disintegration of wealth and wellbeing for the community.
   c. Illus.—Back to the Future II—compare the cities in our state that have casinos to those that don't
   d. Application
      i. The sin and debauchery of a community results in the Lord's judgment against that city.
      ii. He does so to show His righteousness and to encourage people to come to him.
      iii. He also does so to show His steadfast love.
      iv. Side street—this is why we vote against moral issues in government
         1. Some say, "These moral issues are personal choices, why is it your business."
         2. It is my business because the Lord will punish the sin of the land, and that affects me and my family.
      v. When we see His punishment for sin, we know that He is revealing His steadfast love.

II. ***We recognize His steadfast love when He elevates the righteous.*** Vs. 35-38
   a. He does the opposite for those in covenant.
   b. He elevates their circumstances.
      i. Desert to lake of water
      ii. Dry Land to springs
      iii. Hungry dwell and get a city
      iv. Sow/plant and harvest abundantly
      v. They have children and multiply greatly
      vi. Herds also multiply.
   c. These are the hungry—depicted as those who have been redeemed by the Lord.
   d. Illus.—Kerala vs. the rest of India,
   e. Application
      i. Christians are to be the salt of the earth, and everything is blessed because of the steadfast love of Christ for his covenant people.
      ii. This extends to the nations and the communities in which they live.

iii. You cannot convince me that our nation has not receive this type of blessing because of the presence of Jesus people.
iv. When we see someone come to Christ and the Lord begins to work in their lives to bring flourishing, it serves as evidence of His Steadfast Love.

III. ***We recognize His steadfast love when He executes justice.*** Vs. 39-42

a. Situation of oppression and evil.
   i. This represents the submission of the beloved.
   ii. This could be through the judgment of God or the oppression of God haters—persecution.
b. The Lord will respond against the oppressors.
   i. Pours contempt—humiliates
   ii. The nobles—those setting themselves as the fat cats—in a position of power
   iii. Go astray to trackless wastelands
c. The Lord will respond for the oppressed.
   i. Sets high—elevates them instead of humiliating them
   ii. He becomes their personal shepherd and takes care of them
d. Different reactions to the LORD activity.
   i. The upright—those on the side of justice—they will rejoice
   ii. The unrighteous—the oppressors will shut their mouths.
e. Illus.—Police officer can be a good thing or bad—it is determined by if you are breaking the law.
f. Application
   i. Let me be clear, this is different from Social Justice and the Social Gospel.
      1. The social justice position is that this oppression applies to anyone in a position of weakness.
      2. Therefore in order to have justice, these groups must have equality.
      3. Some Christians will take this position as well, and point to a passage like this.
      4. That position comes from a different worldview altogether.
      5. This Biblical teaching concerns those who are oppressed because of their relationship with Jesus, not their social status.
   ii. The Biblical view of justice is not connected to life circumstances, but to a covenant relationship with God.
   iii. When we see God execute justice for the "upright" and against the "unrighteous", that is when we see His steadfast love, and we should be thankful.

Conclusion

- When we see these things, it should invoke thanksgiving.
- But how should we thank God? Just say "thank you."
  - Vs. 2—Testimony—of what He has done.
  - Vs. 22—Worship—offer Thanksgiving sacrifices
  - Vs. 32—Witnessing—exalt Him to others
  - Vs. 43—Personal Devotion—contemplating
- Ultimately, our greatest thanksgiving is placing our faith in Christ alone and following Him.