

AMAZING STORIES

Let the redeemed of the LORD tell their story... (Psalm 107:2, NIV)

I'VE ALWAYS BEEN A BIT CONCERNED about the use of "story" to describe the accounts we read in the Bible. As an editor, "story" causes me to think *fiction*. I hear a parent ask her child, "What was the Bible story in Sunday school today?" and it sets me to hoping that child doesn't form a categorical link between, say, David's triumph over Goliath and *Where the Wild Things Are*.

But in our time, the idea of story has taken root, especially when it comes to relating one's personal experiences. "Tell me your story," you might say to a new acquaintance, and you expect to receive something more than a few facts; you expect to hear something of the events that have shaped them. Golfers often tell stories of their on-course challenges and tournament successes, but even these stories don't dig too deep. When we speak now of telling our story, we are speaking of drawing water from a well far below the surface.

Those whose lives have been touched by the redeeming work of God, however, are not drawing ordinary water, even figuratively speaking. Rather, they express how the living water of Christ has restored the parched land of their soul.

As we read on in Psalm 107, we recognize that work of God, who redeemed his people from the hand of the foe, who gathered them from distant lands. The context is remarkably broad, reaching outside the confines of the Hebrew psalmist into the lives of each one God has touched with salvation. You have been rescued from the grasp of the enemy; I have been brought home from distant lands. And when we reflect on the course of our lives, we see God's guiding, guarding hand at every crossroads.

We are told in Luke 2 that as Mary watched the birth of Jesus and the days of his early life, affirmed as he was by shepherds and angels, she "treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart." Quiet reflection on the work of God is essential to our understanding and our worship.

But the psalmist made a different point. Those redeemed by Jesus, after reflecting on what God has done, must then speak up. They must "tell their story" (NIV), "speak out" (NLT), "say so" (KJV). They must take the time to remember their story, to write it truthfully and clearly (if only on the pages of their mind), and then to deliver it to those who need to hear that God is still at work.

Opening questions What is one of the best golf stories you have heard? How is this kind of story different than the broader stories of people's lives?

READING Psalm 107

Your story, touched by God

In verses 1-32 of Psalm 107, where do you find your own story of redemption, either literally or figuratively? Which part of your life story is hardest to tell? How does God's presence show up in your story?

God's blessings

In verses 33-42, we see the various works of God. How does God bless us in both difficult and easy times? How might we see him better in the midst of our circumstances?

Why God does what he does

What does the final verse tell us we are to consider when we look back at the work of God? How does this consideration change your view of what has happened in your life?
