

Psalm 103:1–14

- ¹ Bless the LORD, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name!
² Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits:
³ Who forgives all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases,
⁴ Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,
⁵ Who satisfies your mouth with good things, So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.
⁶ The LORD executes righteousness And justice for all who are oppressed.
⁷ He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel.
⁸ The LORD is merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.
⁹ He will not always strive with us, Nor will He keep His anger forever.
¹⁰ He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor punished us according to our iniquities.
¹¹ For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him;
¹² As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.
¹³ As a father pities his children, So the LORD pities those who fear Him.
¹⁴ For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.

“Forgetting Not”
Psalm 103:1-14

INTRO:

This is the weekend before Thanksgiving. I know that we as God's people are thankful for many things our God has done. Providentially, in this country we have one day a year set aside to express our thanks to God. We must not forget all that God did for us. In the **103rd Psalm**, David wanted us to remember some things we are all too prone to forget.

I. We Need To Remember What God Does For Us (v. 1-7)

II. We Need To Remember How He Treats Our Sin (v. 8-14)

I. We Need To Remember What God Does For Us (v. 1-7)

A. **Psalm 103:1–2** *“Bless the LORD, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits.”*

David's song begins with a reminder of how important it is to bless the LORD. He called himself to personal praise to worship and praise. In the Hebrew parallelism the phrase *“O my soul”* and *“all that is within me”* are equivalent statements.

1. Do we recognize how important proper praise of God is? Both Isaiah and the Lord Jesus, Himself, warned the people about the importance of worshipping from the heart. Jesus rebuked the Pharisees saying,

Matthew 15:7-8 *“Hypocrites! Well did Isaiah prophesy about you, saying: These people draw near to Me with their mouth, And honor Me with their lips, But their heart is far from Me.”*

God was not ever interested in praise that came only from the lips, and liturgy, which was external worship only. The living God desires our hearts to be tuned to Him.

2. David's worship and praise had a focus. David's worship was not just warm and fun feelings, it was proclaiming the wonder of Who the Lord Yahweh is and what He is like!

B. In **verse 2** David carries the theme forward by beginning to give a reason for his whole person to praise and bless God! Here is the theme of our study – ***“Forget not all of His benefits.”*** Okay, David, what blessings are we not to forget?

1. In **(vs.3-4)**, we find the greatest benefit, the first in the list. Without this benefit we could have no relationship at all with the thrice holy God.

v.3 ***“He forgives all our iniquities.”***

I love what Charles Spurgeon observed in his comments on this verse. *“Babes may praise the divine goodness, but fathers in grace magnify His holiness.”* The scriptures do not down play the importance of this blessing to us. And to those who recognize they have been forgiven much, this is the greatest of all possible blessings. Indulge me just two verses.

1 Timothy 1:12 *“And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord who has enabled me, because He counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry, although I was formerly a blasphemer, a persecutor, and an insolent man; but I obtained mercy because I did it ignorantly in unbelief. And the grace of our Lord was exceedingly abundant, with faith and love which are in Christ Jesus. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.”*

Ephesians 1:7 *“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.”*

C. David wrote how He has not only delivered us from the guilt and penalty of our sin, He has changed our lives.

v.4 ***“He delivered our lives from destruction.”***

This can speak of eternal death. Separation from God in Hell for all eternity is no longer our destiny. The other side of that coin is that He has made our lives a display for His steadfast love and mercy.

v.4 ***“Who redeems your life from destruction, Who crowns you with lovingkindness and tender mercies,”***

D. Not only does He save us and forgive us, He also constantly shows His compassion and kindness toward us in this life. He fills our lives with physical blessings too.

v.5 *“Who satisfies your years with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle.”*

What are those things? Start doing what the song says, *“Count your blessings name them one by one/ and it will surprise you what the Lord has done.”*

E. In (vs.6-7), *“The LORD executes righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed. He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the children of Israel,”*

David thinks about the blessings that God has shed on His people as a whole. He recognizes that historical blessings showered upon God's people are blessings upon him personally too! We often forget we are corporately a part of what God did in the past. We reap a blessing from God's faithfulness to those who have gone before us. David recognized that he needed to not forget to bless God for the benefits that He gave to His people in the past. God will give justice to the oppressed. God did this in the past for Israel, and He will do it in the future for all of His people.

II. We Need To Remember How He Treats Our Sin (v. 8-14)

Psalm 103:8–14 *“The LORD is merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy. He will not always strive with us, nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor punished us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father pities his children, So the LORD pities those who fear Him For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.”*

A. Having thought through a short list of what he should be blessing God for, David turned to the way God deals with our sin. God dealt with our sin in a legal way when He saves us, but we did not stop sinning the moment we were saved. So, while God's dealt with sin once for all in our salvation, He also deals with our sin in a practical day to day way. That is what David is thinking about in these verses.

B. We find in **verse 8** that as God deals with us, His sinful children, day by day, He is *“merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.”* God responds to us first in mercy and grace. Praise God. If He acted in His justice, we would be constantly in the divine woodshed.

C. **Verse 9** speaks of when He gets angry with us. God does not stay angry with us for long. There is a great verse on this in another Psalm.

Psalm 30:5 *“Sing praise to the LORD, You saints of His, And give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name. For His anger is but for a moment, His favor is for life; Weeping may endure for a night, But joy comes in the morning”*

Aren't you glad that God does not remain angry with us, His children, when we sin? I am so glad that we can count on the joy coming in the morning.

D. The reason that He does not remain angry with us, who are His people, is found in **verse 10**.

“He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities.”

This verse is for us who know Him. It is very true that He has not deal with us according to our sin. If He did we would be dead and in hell at this very moment. The Psalmist asks in **Psalm 130:3**,

“If You, LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?”

God does not mark our iniquities and hold them against us.

E. Instead, He removes our sin from us. Look at **verses 11-12**.

“For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.”

1. How immeasurable is the grace and mercy of God extended to us? I love this word picture. How far is the heaven above the earth? That is the extent of the mercy of God extended to us. But again the Psalmist is concerned we understand this is not to everyone. It is, ***“toward those who fear Him.”*** While His wrath falls in judgment on others, He spares us because He has saved us.

2. And because He saved us, **verse 12** is true. You can only travel so far north before you are traveling south, but you can go east forever and never be going west! I think of the other wonderful promises of forgiveness God gives to us who know Him as Savior. This reality is what causes Paul in **Romans 8:33** to ask, ***“Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies.”***

We can sing “My sins are blotted out I know/ My sins are blotted out I know/ they are buried in the depths of the deepest sea/ my sins are blotted out I know.” But do you really know that?

F. I want to end by meditating a moment upon **verse 13**.

“As a father pities his children, So the LORD pities those who fear Him.”

The picture is precious. I understand it because I am a father. When my kids were small, I took care and provided for each one. God does a far better job of this for us than I ever was or am. He understands our weakness and He helps us grow as we should.

Let us remember what the Son of God who died for us accomplished. Let us be following David's advice today.

v.2 *“Bless the LORD, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name! Bless the LORD, O my soul, And forget not all His benefits.”*

Hymn #202 ***Amazing Grace***