**October 11. 2026**

## Psalm 103

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 iniquity, who heals all
your diseases, 4 who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with steadfast love
and mercy, 5 who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.
6 The Lord works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed. 7 He made known
his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel. 8 The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. 9 He will not always chide, nor will
he keep his anger forever. 10 He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us
according to our iniquities. 11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his
steadfast love toward those who fear him; 12 as far as the east is from the west, so far does
he remove our transgressions from us. 13 As a father shows compassion to his children,
so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him. 14 For he knows our frame; he
remembers that we are dust. 15 As for man, his days are like grass; he flourishes like a
flower of the field; 16 for the wind passes over it, and it is gone and its place knows it no
more. 17 But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who
fear him, and his righteousness to children's children, 18 to those who keep his covenant
and remember to do his commandments. 19 The Lord has established his throne in the
heavens, and his kingdom rules over all. 20 Bless the Lord, O you his angels, you mighty
ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word! 21 Bless the Lord, all his hosts,
his ministers, who do his will! 22 Bless the Lord, all his works, in all places of his dominion.
Bless the Lord, O my soul!

Scriptures for further study:
Psalm 104

Psalm 145

John 17:3

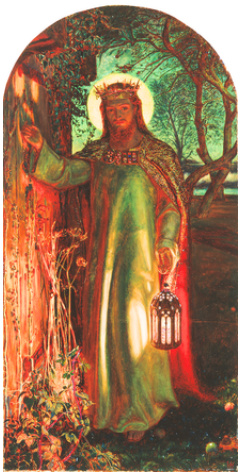
2 Peter 1:3-4

Exodus 34:6-7

Ephesians 3:14-21

"The psalmist praises the Lord by reciting the Lord's actions...also recites God's attributes...This is praise: confessing who God is and what he has done in our lives...and in doing so gives Him honor."
- Mark Futato

"God knows us to the bottom yet nevertheless loves us to the skies - literally."
-Tim Keller



**Knowing and Praising God**
**Psalm 103**

**BIG IDEA:** Because of the new life that God grants through faith in Jesus, we may know God and live a praise-filled life as God designed.

## OUTLINE

- Personal Praise (v.1-5)
- Praise Him for His Slow Anger and Immeasurable Love (v.6-12)
- Praise Him for His Eternal Love (v.13-18)
- All Creation Praises the Lord (v.19-22)

# DISCIPLESHIP DURING THE WEEK

These “Sermon Discussion Questions” are designed for study during the week for believers in a wide variety of ages & stages in their walk with Christ.

1. Are you a forgetful person, or do you know someone who is? What are some things that you or someone you know forgets often?

2. How do we know who God is and what He is like?

3. Who is David talking to in verses 1-5? Why is he doing that?

4. What are the benefits of knowing God listed in this psalm? What do these benefits look like in your life? Does our reception of these benefits mean that we will no longer go through any struggles in life?

5. How long does God’s love last for His followers?

6. What does David want us to understand about God's love in verses 11-12?

7. Who is called to praise God in verses 19-22?

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

This hymn of praise reflects on the faithfulness and goodness of God, who delivered Israel from Egypt under Moses (vv. 6–7), and calls His people to praise Him for His continued mercy and sustaining grace. The theme is announced at the outset: "Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits" (v. 2). Those benefits reach from physical healing and well-being to spiritual forgiveness, peace, and hope, all grounded in God's covenant faithfulness (vv. 3–5). Even God's discipline gives way to restoration: "He does not deal with us according to our sins" (v. 10) but removes them as far as the east is from the west (v. 12), because our Father knows our frame (v. 14). Our lives are frail and fleeting (vv. 15–16), but His steadfast love is from everlasting to everlasting (v. 17). In light of such mercy, all creation is summoned to bless His name (vv. 20–22).

— adapted from the ESV Gospel Transformation Study Bible

***Praise to Jesus –*** Lord, we bless Your holy name with all that is within us. You forgive all our iniquity, You heal all our diseases, You redeem our lives from the pit, You crown us with steadfast love and mercy, and You satisfy us with good. You work righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed. You are merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love. You do not deal with us according to our sins; as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is Your love toward those who fear You. You remove our transgressions as far as the east is from the west, and You show compassion to Your children as a father does. Your steadfast love is from everlasting to everlasting. Praise the Lord!

***Repent through Jesus –***Lord, we confess that we so often forget Your benefits and take Your forgiveness, Your grace, and Your presence for granted. We carry shame and guilt for sins You have already forgiven, and we withhold forgiveness from others when You have not withheld it from us. We lean on the security of our bank accounts, relationships, status, position, and accomplishments — all as fleeting as grass, and none able to give what Your steadfast love, from everlasting to everlasting, provides. Lead us, Lord, to true repentance and heart transformation through Jesus Christ.

***Consecration for Jesus –***Because the Lord forgives completely, pities us as a Father, and reigns over all, we remember His benefits, we rest in His compassion, we rely on His everlasting love, and we rejoice in His reign — now and forever, through Jesus Christ. Bless the LORD, O my soul!

## FOR FAMILIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN

These questions are written to aid parents in leading family devotions with their children.

1. What is something important that you have forgotten? (The opening of this psalm is King David preaching to himself not to forget who God is and what He has done in his life. The psalm is a reminder of the importance of praising God in our lives. This psalm warns us not to forget the gift of God's grace and mercy.)

2. Who is David talking to in verses 1-5? Why is he doing that? (He is talking to himself because he must've been prone to forget about the blessings that God has given to us. In some form or fashion, we all struggle to not forget who God is.)

3. What are some things that you know about God, such as His character and what He has done for His people? (You can tell your children that what God is like are His attributes. Some examples of His attributes are His love, grace, mercy, justice, righteousness, and holiness. Some of the things that He has done that are recorded in the Old Testament are His rescue of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt, He provided for them in the wilderness wandering, He settled the Israelites in the Promised Land, and in many other ways He has protected the Israelites from their enemies. Then in the New Testament we see God the Father sending God the Son (Jesus) to earth, filled with the Holy Spirit, to seek and to save the lost. We also read of the sending of God the Holy Spirit as God formed His church to proclaim the gospel and to make disciples of all the nations.)

4. Take some time as a family to write down the blessings listed in this psalm. Then praise God for those things in prayer together.

Scriptures for further study:
Exodus 34:6-7

John 17: 3

Ephesians 3:14-21

Scriptures for further study:
Exodus 34:6-7

John 17:3

Ephesians 3:14-21

Romans 8:1

2 Peter 1:3-4

Hebrews 12:5-11

## FOR STUDENTS

1. David opens by preaching to himself - he tells his own soul to bless the Lord and then lists specific benefits so he does not forget them. What does it say about us that we need to be commanded not to forget what God has done? Make your own list: what specific things has God done for you that you are most in danger of taking for granted right now?

2. The psalm grounds God's mercy in history - he made his ways known to Moses, his acts to Israel. God's love is not abstract; it has a track record. What is your personal history with God? Where have you seen him act on your behalf in a way you could point to and say, “That was him?”

3. God is slow to anger, abounding in steadfast love, and does not deal with us according to our sins. As far as the east is from the west - that is the distance your sin has been removed. Be honest: do you actually live like someone whose sin has been removed that completely? Or do you carry guilt and shame for things God has already forgiven? What would it look like to believe verse 12 today?

4. God's compassion is compared to a father's - and it is grounded in the fact that he knows our frame; he remembers we are dust. He is not disappointed by our weakness; he already knew it. How does it change the way you come to God in prayer to know that he is not surprised by your struggle, your failure, or your frailty?

5. Human life is like grass - here today, gone tomorrow. But God's steadfast love is from everlasting to everlasting. The repentance section names the temptation to lean on bank accounts, status, relationships, and accomplishments instead. What are the things you are most tempted to build your security on right now? How does this psalm expose the fragility of those things?

6. The psalm ends with a call for all creation - angels, heavenly hosts, all his works - to bless the Lord. Jesus is the one through whom every benefit of this psalm reaches us: our sins forgiven, our lives redeemed, the Father's compassion made visible in flesh. How does the gospel make Psalm 103 not just a beautiful poem but a personal declaration? And is blessing God with all that is within you actually the posture of your life right now?

## FOR NON-BELIEVERS OR NEW BELIEVERS

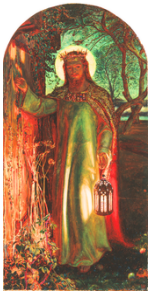
1. Who?
Psalm 103 beautifully teaches us about all the many benefits God provides for the individual (verses 3-5), as well as for the community of people (verses 6-19).
Question: Who specifically are these benefits for? (See verses 11, 13, 17, 18)

2. What?
Question: What exactly are these good benefits? (See verses 3-5)

3. Why?
Question: Why does God provide all these benefits? Not because of who we are, but because of who he is! (Take a look at some of his wonderful qualities as they are highlighted in verses 8, 11, 14, etc.)
Question: Does this picture of God in his amazing grace and fatherly kindness square with the "God" you thought he was? The "God" you grew up hearing about? Or the "God" others had told you about secondhand?

4. Response
Question: Given all the benefits that God wants to shower you with, would you now trust him and believe in him and freely receive these blessings?!
Question: Verses 20-22 are an invitation for every living thing to praise God. Do you realize that praising God for who he is and all that he has done is the sole purpose of your life, the primary reason God created you? Are you living out that purpose?

# The Blessed Life: A Study of the Psalms



*"The Light of the World" (1851-156) by William Holman Hunt*

**Psalms Introduction**

The Book of Psalms is the sacred place where the living God meets His people in the most intimate and personal of ways. He invites them to know Him not merely as an idea, but as their refuge, portion, shepherd, and King. From the opening doorway of blessedness in Psalm 1 to the climactic Hallelujahs of Psalm 150, the Psalter reveals that the truly happy life is one rooted in the person and work of Almighty God, whose steadfast love holds His people through every season of the soul.

As the Psalter moves from anguish to adoration, from darkness to dawn, it becomes a mirror of the Christian life itself. It teaches us to pray honestly, to hope stubbornly, and to sing faithfully, even when night seems long. In the deepest valleys, the Psalms give voice to the church's groan; on the highest heights, they train the church's doxology. And in every line, every cry, and every hallelujah, Christ Himself comes near, revealing the light of the world in the dark night of the soul and leading His people into the blessedness that only His grace can give.

– Pastor Bill

**About the artwork and artist.**

The Light of the World, 1851-1853, is an iconic allegorical painting by William Holman Hunt.

The painting depicts Jesus Christ as a regal figure in flowing robes, wearing a crown of thorns, holding a glowing lantern, and preparing to knock on a weed-overgrown wooden door with no external handle. This illustrates Revelation 3:20 from the Bible: "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hears My voice and opens the door, I will come in to him..." The artist William Holman Hunt is showing us that Jesus is the divine door to the living God who meets His people in the most intimate and personal ways. The closed, overgrown door → representing the human soul or "obstinately shut mind" that has long ignored spiritual calling. There is no handle on the outside → the door can only be opened from within, emphasizing free will and personal invitation to faith. The lantern → Christ as the light of the world (John 8:12), illuminating darkness and offering salvation. The work marked Hunt's deepening Christian faith (from earlier agnosticism) and became one of the most reproduced and devotional images of the Victorian era, inspiring oratorios. hymns, and widespread popular piety. It's often called a visual sermon on personal salvation.