

## Thank God (Psalm 103) November 28, 2021

- Thanksgiving has long been a special day to celebrate God's goodness in our country, and a divine duty to express for God's people (Psalm 100:4; 107:1; 1 Thess. 5:18; Eph. 5:20), and a great delight to our life and health.
- Psalm 103 is David's "*Hallelujah Chorus*" of praise and thanksgiving even though you won't find the word "*thanksgiving*" in it. There are no petitions for help or cries for deliverance, but a psalm bookended by words of passionate gratitude: "*bless the Lord Oh my soul*" (v. 1, 22)
- Two key focuses highlight the reason thanksgiving is so important. Understanding who God is and who we are. Without a proper and accurate understanding of these two truths, our thanksgiving will be very inadequate.

### ① Thank God for revealing His great perfections (selected references in Psalm 103)

- The words "*bless the Lord, Oh my soul*" verbally proclaims God's excellence with a wholehearted passion ("*and all that is within me*"). To "*bless His holy name*" is to recognize the totality of who God is.
  - God is "**holy**" (v. 1). He is totally set apart from the common as the only true God.
  - God is a **revealer** (v. 7). While there is plenty of mystery about God, He reveals what He wants us to know as He did with Moses and through His Word. He does not leave us in the dark about what matters.
  - God is **good** (v. 8-17) and communicates many features of His goodness (gracious, slow to anger, abounding in lovingkindness, doesn't punish us as we deserve, forgiving, mindful of our fragile life)
  - God is **loving** (v. 4, 11, 17). His "*lovingkindness*" or "*steadfast love*" is a loyal covenant love and it is lavish and eternal.
  - God is "**compassionate**" (v. 4, 8, 13). This reveals God's fatherly tenderness toward our weakness and need (Psalm 51:1)
  - God is **sovereign** (v. 19, 22). God's control is a great comfort in knowing that nothing or no one can thwart His plan to bless His people and bring His promises to pass.
- David reminds us to "*forget none of His benefits*"
  - The benefit of **forgiveness** (v. 3, 12). Sin turns us into prisoners, making us a slave to sin, but God releases us from all our guilt and sin by the death of Jesus Christ.
  - The benefit of **healing** (v. 3b). Sickness exists because of sin and the curse God placed upon this world. God can heal anytime He desires and is always the healer of all disease. One day all sickness will be healed due to Christ's death (1 Pet. 2:24) and God future promise (Rev. 21:4-5).
  - The benefit of **deliverance from death** (v. 4a: "*redeems your life from the pit*"). We are all subject to death due to sin, yet death is now a passageway to be present with the Lord.
  - The benefit of a **good life** (v. 5). Even though life is full of trials, God still provides many blessings (food, clothing, shelter, work, family, friends, peace, joy, etc.)

### ② Thank God for revealing our great imperfections (selected references in Psalm 103)

- David reveals three of our imperfections:
  - We are **sinful** (v. 3, 4, 8-10, 12). We have "*iniquities*" and "*sins*" (v. 3, 10). We are headed for the "*pit*" (grave). We were objects of God's wrath, but now objects of His love (v. 8-9).
  - We are **sick** (v. v. 3b). Sin has made a patient out of us as we are subject to disease being vulnerable and frail. Without warning, we can be fallen by an invisible virus or cancer or other sickness.
  - We are **short-lived** (v. 15-16). Our life is compared to grass or flowers that are here today and gone tomorrow. Our fleeting life reveals our desperate need for God and His saving grace and truth.