

WORSHIP

SUGGESTED WORSHIP SONGS:

Bless the Lord, Never Once, 10,000 Reasons

WELCOME

If there was a song that characterizes this season of your life, what song will that be?

WORD

PSALM 103:1-10

Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name² Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget none of His benefits;³ who pardons all your iniquities, who heals all your diseases;⁴ who redeems your life from the pit, who crowns you with lovingkindness and compassion;⁵ who satisfies your years with good things, so that your youth is renewed like the eagle. ⁶The Lord performs righteous deeds and judgments for all who are oppressed. ⁷He made known His ways to Moses, His acts to the sons of Israel. ⁸The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness. ⁹He will not always strive with us, nor will He keep His anger forever. ¹⁰He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. (Continue reading the entire psalm).

Psalm 103 is one of the many psalms that David composed throughout his lifetime. But unlike his previous psalms that were composed based on what David was going through, we do not know the context in which Psalm 103 was written. Yet this psalm is probably the most worshipful psalm in the entire collection! This simply reminds us that whatever our circumstances may be, we are to bless, praise and thank the Lord.

There are no petitions recorded in this psalm, just praises to God. In fact, the very first verse shows how David has made a choice to bless the Lord with all of his being. It is a decision not based on what is happening around him, but on who God is—a holy God (**v.1**). “Holy” refers to God being “set-apart”—there is absolutely no one like Him, he is in a category all by Himself in this universe that He created!

The psalm can be divided into two parts: **The Benefits of God’s Charity and The Beauty of God’s Character**. Blessing the Lord is the appropriate response to who God is and to what God does. **Psalm 103:2** admonishes us not to forget God’s benefits and the best way to do this is to simply count the blessings that He has showered on us! The blessings that we receive from the Lord is purely by His grace, we do not deserve any of it. Just as there are unique benefits that you will enjoy if you belonged to the British royal family, so are there are far greater benefits for that those who belong to God’s family will enjoy. The Bible tells us that through Jesus, we are spiritually reborn into God’s family when we choose to believe in Christ (**John 1:12**). We are adopted as God’s children into the most royal family in the entire universe (**Ephesians 1:5**)! Psalm 103 gives us some of these benefits:

1. BENEFITS OF GOD’S CHARITY

Pardon from all our iniquities (v.3) to be spared from the ultimate penalty of sin, which is death or eternal separation from God. The guilt and shame and stigma aspects of sin were also covered by this pardon. So next time you are haunted by these

negative feelings because of your sinful past, remember that through Jesus, we have received the benefit of God’s pardon or forgiveness for all our sins. Now once our sins have been resolved through God’s pardon, we are now free to live the abundant life that Jesus desires for us. **1 Peter 3:18** also tells us that Jesus died once for **all** our sins—past, present and future. As we all know, we still sin even after putting our faith in Christ as our Savior. That’s why **1 John 1:9** instructs us to confess our sins to God, with the assurance that He continues to forgive our sins and cleanse us from unrighteousness. Though our relationship with God in Christ is permanent, we should not let unconfessed sin get in the way of our fellowship with God. Restore your intimacy with the Lord by humbly admitting your sin, and by faith thank God for the pardon you have already received in Christ.

The second part of **verse 3** gives us the benefit of **healing from all our diseases**. We can think of four ways through which God heals us: our body’s God-given ability to heal itself, through medicines and doctors, God’s miraculous healing, and finally, our total and ultimate healing when followers of Jesus will be translated into heaven where there will be no more death, tears, mourning, crying or pain (**Revelation 21:4**). We have also been “**redeemed from the pit**” (**v4**), and you probably know, this refers to our being saved from eternal death. But this can also mean being rescued from tragic consequences of sin in this life—broken marriages, devastated health, a squandered future. **1 Corinthians 15:50-52** promises us that our earthly, corruptible bodies will someday be exchanged for incorruptible bodies that will be fit for heaven. Not only have we been redeemed from a hopeless spiritual state, God also **crowns us with lovingkindness**. This is all by grace, we are undeserving recipients of the kindness of God. Let this truth strengthen and protect your heart from the anxieties of this world.

WORD (cont'd)

God's benefits continue: He satisfies our years with good things, so that our youth is renewed like an eagle (**v.4**). When eagles fly, they stretch out their wings, riding on the power of the wind to carry them to greater heights. When we stretch out our wings of faith and let God carry us, we will not get tired but feel renewed every new day of our lives. In **verses 6 to 7**, David addresses the nation of Israel as he recounts God's righteous deeds and judgments. In fact, Moses desired to know God, and not to simply receive His blessings. To know God's character is the greatest blessing we can ever receive.

2. BEAUTY OF GOD'S CHARACTER

Psalm 103 enumerates some of God's amazing attributes: He is compassionate, gracious, merciful, etc. (**vv. 8-14**). **Verse 10** notes how God has not **dealt with us** according to our sins. But how has He **dealt with our sins**? **Isaiah 53:6** tells us clearly that Jesus carried our iniquities, the punishment for our sins fell upon Christ. God has indeed shown us His mercy, just one of the many reasons we can bless the Lord for.

As we learn more about God's character, we ought to pattern our lives after Him. **James 1:19-20** gives us one of many ways we can do this. As we continue to adjust to various changes and

disruptions to our "normal" lives, how are we with our patience and temper towards our families? How are the words that come out of our mouths? David goes on to praise the greatness of God's lovingkindness and grace (**vv.11-12**) that cannot be measured, His compassion (**vv.13-14**). God hates sin not only because He is holy, but also because as a loving Father, he hates the effects of sin in our lives.

Finally, the Lord is mindful of how fragile and fleeting people are (**vv.14-16**). One of these days, our lives will be over, but God's assurance is that He will complete the good work that He has started in us. When our work on earth is done, God's work will continue in the generations that come after us! He is faithful to keep His covenant (**vv. 17-18**). So then, our part is to be faithful to God, who is the everlasting God who is in control of everything in heaven and on earth (**vv. 19-22**). The psalm now concludes the same way it opens: praising God and blessing Him for who He is and what He has done and continues to do: **Bless the Lord, all you works of His, in all places of His dominion; bless the Lord, O my soul (v.22)**. Indeed, "the chief aim of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever" (Westminster Shorter Catechism).

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

(Leaders: Please choose questions that are appropriate to the level of spiritual maturity of your members)

1. How can you make blessing the Lord a habit? How will you start? How will you sustain it?
2. What specific blessing from God can you thank God for right now?
3. Which of God's character traits is most meaningful to you? Why is that so?

WORKS

PRAY CARE SHARE IN ACTION

Pray for people in your life to open their hearts to our great and amazing God who is worthy of all our praise! Share with at least one person this week of the benefits you have received from the Lord, and one attribute of God that has been real to you at this time. Share the gospel to someone this week so that they too can bless the Lord with all that is within them!

WEEKLY PRAYER POINTS

I. Thanksgiving

- Worship God for who He is, what He has done, and what He will do in our lives

II. Country and the World

- Compassion and godly wisdom for government leaders
- Repentance and Salvation

III. Church

- That CCF Members would honor and love God and make disciples
- Elders, Pastors, Leaders, and Families
- Ministries and Churches worldwide

IV. CCF Facilities

- Worship and Training Center
- Prayer Mountain

V. Personal Concerns

- Deeper intimate relationship with God
- Righteous living
- Salvation of family and friends