

All to Us
Psalm 103:1 – 5
New Life Assembly
October 5, 2014

Main Idea: Our greatest treasure in facing trials is our relationship with the God who is everything to us.

Introduction

whether you are Christian for a short time or you have been a Christian for a very long time, Jesus actually promised us that we would see persecution in trials and tribulations. Because we go through trials, the Bible, especially the New Testament, highlights how to deal with trials. As I am going through a Job trial of my own, one of the premier Scriptures that sticks out in my mind and in my heart is Psalm 103.

This Psalm speaks to us about the benefits of our salvation. Because we don't Jesus he takes care of us in ways that no one else can. So today I want to apply the blessings of our salvation to those moments when our trial seems the darkest. No matter what the trial is, light or heavy, we know that in our darkest hour Jesus' blessings are readily ours. These blessings keep us from feeling like it is the end. He is always there at the end of the tunnel. But even better than that, he walks with us through every bit of that trial. Here are the trials we face throughout life and the Savior who walks through them with us and brings us the victory.

Text – Psalm 103:1-5

OF DAVID. **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 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.

I. Remember to Praise Him (vv. 1 – 2).

A Praise leads us into the battle.

- 1** When we are faced with trials of various kinds, we find ourselves in a battle for our faith. We must stand firm against all odds. But we do not do this alone. God walks with us through the battle.
- 2** One of the greatest weapons that we have and we don't even realize it is praise. All too often within the midst of adversity we are not thinking about praise but about our problems and our worries.
- 3** As David starts out this Psalm he has to encourage himself to praise the Lord. In fact, he does it twice. When we are in the midst of spiritual

warfare, we are so distracted by our surroundings that we forget the power of praise.

- 4 As David begins he starts with the word bless. This word is a word that calls us to lavish our worship upon God for his goodness and the greatness of his power. He both does great works and is a great God.
- 5 When David says “oh my soul” he is giving himself and internal command. We are usually not ready to praise the Lord in the midst of adversity. Our mind even will go to a place where we blame God for that adversity.
- 6 We allow the problems and surroundings around us to make us easily forgets that our God is greater than any circumstances we face. When we forget this, we are already giving up ground to our trials.
- 7 **Illustration:** Instead, we need to turn to praise. We need to prompt ourselves internally to ignore the trials and push forward and praise. The tribe of Judah and Israel was the tribes that was musical and led worship. When Israel went into battle, Judah led the tribes and worship was the first step in the battle.
- 8 Blessing the Lord is not just a matter of the heart. It is the matter of the whole body and soul. It takes our well-being to properly bless the Lord. This means that we do not have any faculties to deal with our trials when our eyes are focused on Jesus in praise.
- 9 We have no time for the trial and all of the temptations of brings because we change our focus to the benefits that God brings to us. We have good reason to praise the Lord in every circumstance.
- 10 We do not ignore the issues that are brought by the trial. We do not ignore reality. Changing our focus is not meeting we shut out reality. It means that we embrace a different reality that God’s kingdom over our trial.

B Praise keeps our eyes on Jesus.

- 1 The interesting thing about the word for benefits is that it originates in the idea of retribution. Retribution can be positive and negative in the Bible. If we are not following God in his covenantal commands, retribution can be negative for us.
- 2 But when we are following the Lord and loving him and doing this commandments, his visitation and retribution are positive in the form of benefits. The Israelites knew that they could both live and die by the commandments. When they did not follow them, they could expect that God would deal harshly with them.

- 3 But when they were in proper covenantal relationship with God, vibrantly abiding in their walk with him, they would experience the blessings of this covenant, the good things that he wanted to pour out on their lives.
- 4 We get so distracted by our trials and by every little mountain that comes our way that we do not use praise to fight these battles. And yet we can learn a lot from those who understand exactly how to fight their trials.
- 5 (Acts 16:25 – 34) Beaten and flopped for preaching the gospel in the city of Philippi, Paul and Silas sat in the dark dank Roman prison, shackled to the wall with their feet in stocks.
- 6 Wrongly accused and him properly panelized before getting into prison, Paul and Silas had much to not only be upset about, but retaliate for. They were Roman citizens and should not have been flogged or imprisonment. They had rights.
- 7 Righteous anger would not of been in the improper response to their circumstances. But this is not how they reacted to the trial. If you were there that night you would have heard the voices of two men singing to their Lord praises and hymns because of his goodness to them.
- 8 This does not square with their trials and their circumstances. But Paul and Silas learned long ago from Psalm 103 that whenever you face trials you must encourage yourself with everything that you have to refocus on God's blessings rather than your trials.
- 9 Paul and Silas knew that only praise would bring the results of God's power into their trial. And indeed it did. There was a great earthquake and all the prisoners were set free. As a result, the jailer and his whole family were saved! All of this happened because they hated the words and practiced David's tactic to bless the Lord with everything in him.

II. Remember to Thank Him (vv. 3 – 4a).

A He always forgives you.

- 1 We will set up a three part process in which God will continually bring more and more good things to the worshiper. We will see one of the Old Testament generalizations that sin leads to sickness and then to death.
- 2 We start with forgiveness of sins. When God forgives us the idea of this word to forget is the idea that he no longer pays attention to our sins. He does not count them against us, such as in a court of law.
- 3 The word that describes iniquity is the idea of misdeeds were crooked behavior. But it is not just the behavior itself but the guilt that comes with it. Sinning against the Lord is more than just the act. It also encapsulates the guilt that we feel.

- 4 When God forgives us, sometimes the guilt still remains. It is not until Jesus dies on the cross and forgives sins, also getting rid of the guilt. Guilt could be a good thing because it brings us to a place of repentance.
- 5 But once the sin has been forgiven, the guilt that remains is not from God. He takes care of all of that. If we feel guilt, what we are feeling is the separation from God.
- 6 The greatest thing about God is that he forgives sins. And don't miss the very important word "all." God's unconditional love boots way past one or two offenses. He forgives every offense that we commit against him.
- 7 (Matthew 18:21 – 22) "Lord, how many times must I forgive?" Peter's curiosity got the best of him during one of Jesus' teachings. He just had to know what was expected of him.
- 8 Notice the words that Peter used. Just like any of us he wanted to know when he could stop letting people off the hook for their injustices against him. After all, justice must eventually be served.
- 9 But that is not how the kingdom of God works. Jesus forgives everything that we do a matter how much we do it. That is how much he loves us. And we can't understand why he would do that so much.
- 10 We have become so used to the way the world works. We cannot recognize God's grace and kindness and his willingness to continue to forgive. The best part about the kingdom of God is that we learn how to be like him.
- 11 God's forgiveness becomes contagious and passed on to his children. We become like God, in that we learn to forgive every offense just as he does. He leads us by example and Jesus teaches not just Peter but all of us that we will spend most of our lives forgiving offences that he will take into account at the end of time. This is the time of grace. Jesus forgave us; now we forgive others.

B He always heals you.

- 1 If we continue with the generalization in the Old Testament that sin leads to sickness and simplest leads to death, we continue in the Psalm to praise God for the benefits of his goodness to us.
- 2 After God forgives all of our sins and iniquities, he then heals all over diseases. Throughout the Old Testament, God has promised to be "the Lord your healer." This promise came in the first five books of the Bible.
- 3 One of his names is indeed that: Yahweh Raphikah or more commonly known as Jehovah Raphah. "The Lord who heals you." God's names demonstrates his character. He is by nature a healing God.

- 4 Within God's names is the experience that others and we have had with him. When God would demonstrate his healing power, the people would know him as the Lord your healer. The reason God has so many names is because he does so many things for us.
- 5 There are so many examples of God's feelings throughout the Scriptures. Everything from making barren women able to have children to specific healings like the man who had to dip in the dirty Jordan River.
- 6 (John 9:1 – 7) you're hanging out at one of your favorite places because this place has the most people around. You settle in your favorite corner and you wait, sticking out your tin cup and hoping for kindness and charity.
- 7 All your life to support yourself and help the family with the extra costs that your blindness incurs, you have sat here and in a few other places. All day long you hope that people will be kind to you. You cannot work for yourself because you cannot see. Sight is required for most jobs in the time that you live.
- 8 This is all you know. One day as you're minding your own business you hear people talking about you. Oh, this is nothing new. People have been talking about you since the day you were born. You're used to it. They are asking their Rabbi if it's your fault or your parents' that you are born blind.
- 9 You listen with mild interest because you have read every explanation under the sun. Until now. This Rabbi is different. He doesn't blame your parents and he doesn't blame you. "Who's left to blame?" you think. And then he surprises you. He claims that it was for God's glory that you were born blind!
- 10 While you ponder this new claim, you hear someone spit and your eyes are all of a sudden wet with mud! Then the Rabbi says to you, "go and wash in the pool of Siloam." Well, you're not just going to sit there. Your mom would never let you return home all muddy. So you take him up on his offer.
- 11 When you come up out of the water something is different. The world around you is illuminated with images and you can see for the first time! Then you realize what the Rabbi meant when he talked about God's glory and you. You must go back and praise God for this man! That way God will receive the proper glory from your life. For the first time in your life, you can understand the words of King David long ago, "he feels all your diseases."

C He always saves you.

- 1 After forgiving sin and healing from disease, God finalizes the fullness of his salvation in us by redeeming our lives from the pit. We don't deserve any of these things he does.
- 2 It's interesting that salvation is presented in a very cultural way. The idea of the Redeemer or the blood avenger shows up in this word "redeem." Within God's law is given the option of the blood avenger who can seek to avenge a family member's death by taking the member's murderer's life.
- 3 This idea also found its way into the economy where a person might buy back a slave who put themselves in that position to get out of debt. They could be redeemed or bought back.
- 4 We all start out not truly belonging to our Maker because of the results of The Fall and sin. Because we sin so early in our lives we belong to wickedness and evil. We start out in the pit. We try to dig ourselves out but nothing we do on our own ever gets us close to the surface.
- 5 But then one day, the Maker shows up and looks down in that pit. He sees his beloved creation struggling amidst the dirt and clay. He longs to take us out of there and clean up his creation and begin a relationship. He buys us back from our sin and shame wickedness as we beg him for help. And that was all they needed to hear.
- 6 (Genesis 37:18 – 28) so you try to think back on what exactly you did wrong so that your brothers would throw you in this pit. Could it have been the first dream you had in the way you sort of rugged in their faces a bit?
- 7 You guessed that the second dream and the way you rubbed it in their faces again probably didn't help. But it's not your fault that God gives you dreams about ruling over them. And it's not your fault that your father makes you more than them.
- 8 It's starting to get cold as the night sets in. Your throat is getting dry as you yell for help. You have no food. And the worst part: no one answers your cries for help. You are truly alone. Some people dig holes for themselves and how they speak to each other. No matter how much they try to make amends, they just did deeper holes. You guess that's where the phrase, "burying yourself" comes from.
- 9 But you are sitting in a literal pit. And, you remember, you're not really alone. God is here with you. Even if you die in this pit and it becomes your grave you will still be with the Lord. He never leaves you no matter what you have to put up with. He is always with you.

- 10 You hear voices and get excited until your brothers pull you out of the pit, take some payments from slave traders and hand you over to them. It seems your journey into the depths is not through just yet.
- 11 But you never forget how God pulled you out of the pit. While your brothers accept payment for you, someday God will redeem you, by you back from that pit experience. One day you will think back to the day you could not crawl out of the pit as you stand on the largest mountain in Egypt as the second-in-command of the vast land.

III. Remember to Adore Him (vv. 4b – 5).

A He abounds in love and mercy.

- 1 There is a slight break here in the way that the writer goes with this song. We are done with the things that we need from God that he gives when he saves us. That alone is gracious of him to do.
- 2 But now he goes beyond that into his lavish blessings. We didn't deserve salvation, but that was just the start of it! He aims to bless our socks off as his children. That's the kind of love he has for us. And that's the reason that we have an abundance of gratitude for him.
- 3 Two of the most coveted gifts of Yahweh for Israel are his steadfast love and his mercy. That steadfast love is a special word in your language, *cheded*. It refers to his loyal love for you and the Israelite people.
- 4 It is that kind of love that it allowed him to initiate a covenant with your father Abraham. It is that covenantal love that brought you the promised land. God's blessings flow over Israel because of his loving kindness.
- 5 Mercy is a very special word in your language as well. The root of mercy is the same root that used for the word "womb." The best way to describe God's mercy is to think about what it's like for a baby in the womb. Every single need is provided for without question. Whether it's sustenance will want, every basic need is met. While you don't deserve it, it is given to you out of great love by your mother's body. She takes great pains to make sure you will be healthy when you are delivered. That is God's mercy. He lavishes it on you and takes care of every need even before you know you have it.
- 6 (Genesis 37:3) his dad loved him so much more than the other sons that he just could not resist making him special. Of course, he could've made it less obvious. But that's not the kind of dad he is.
- 7 Now this is a good go over very well with your eleven brothers. They are out in the fields all day long and they come home to seeing you dressed in that outfit. You feel their red-hot anger on the back of your neck. Life is not going to be easy for you anymore.

- 8 Some call the coat of many colors and others think that refer to the long, royal sleeves of your robe, but the fashion statement means much more than you look pretty. It essentially is calling you a prince among your brothers. You have pretty hands because you don't have to work in the dust of the day.
- 9 To make matters worse, your dad sends you out there on a regular basis to check on them and let him know that they're doing their job. This has show off written all over it. The problem is, it begins to get to you. You begin to think you're better than them anyway. You're going to have dreams that will prove it. You become too conceited for your own good and you're about to be humbled for it.
- 10 We all know the story of Joseph very well. But there is something Joseph had right. His father loved him with an undying love. And the Lord himself does the same. His love for us is unmatched and he has no trouble doting over each one of us.
- 11 The problem is that we are not used to wearing crowns that he gives us. We are not used to being treated like princes and princesses. But as children of the King, that's exactly what we are. We need to do better job than Joseph of it and keep ourselves humble. But, God does love us with an undying love and his mercy for us is beyond measure. It's good to be children of the King!

B He abounds in life and joy.

- 1 Another way in which the Lord goes beyond the basics is that he gives us long life. And this is not just life itself, the rigmarole of doing the same thing every day and every night. This is every good thing added on to us.
- 2 God does not give us a day in day out kind of life. Our life is filled with adventure in him and great things that we do not even know exist yet. He goes beyond what we could imagine.
- 3 This is the Creator of the Universe were talking about here. He does not do so – so. He does excellent. He does magnificent. He does “beyond your wildest dreams.”
- 4 We have gotten used to blasé and rigmarole. But when we serve the King of the universe his lavish and glorious best can be ours. Now we must be careful here. We have had an overdose of “worm theology.” This is the idea that, “woe is me! I am not worth the ground I walk on.”
- 5 We need to have a healthy understanding that we may not receive much of our inheritance here on this earth in this lifetime. Most of our inheritance will come to us in glory in heaven. But that does not mean we live on this earth like vagabonds.

- 6 God wants to bless us with a good life and good things. And having expensive things and lots of money does not mean that we have the good life. How many rich people commit suicide or live and do shells and existences?
- 7 It's not about stuff. It's about having a relationship with the greatest person in the world, and beyond the world. The fact of the matter is that God treats us better than the world ever could.
- 8 This kind of good life starts with having the energy and strength of the youth. God makes sure that life is not just life but that it is strong and energetic. Isaiah 40:29 – 32 tell us about this same God who is willing to make us feel like we were young again. Not only does he give us the life we have, but he gives us abundant life here and in eternity. And he makes sure that we enjoy it with energy and strength.

Conclusion

it is impossible for me to under emphasize the blessings and benefits that come with our salvation. God not only takes care of every single need that we have from dealing with sin to dealing with sickness and giving us a way out of debt, but he goes above and beyond that with giving us his steadfast love and mercies. He makes us feel like we are young again and gives us the best life that we could possibly imagine here on earth, and even greater things to come in heaven itself. Who would not want this God as king in their lives? If you are missing any of these wonderful benefits it is time to seek God because he is ready to give them to you and has already promised them. Let us live like our God is King because he is.