

Bless the Lord

Psalm 103

Bless the Lord Introduction

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- Words like *sin* and *iniquity* are lacking favor in our culture.
- The Bible uses them often – so there is no need to shy away from them.
- Besides – until we see our sin as sin and ourselves as sinners we cannot become *sinner saved by grace*.

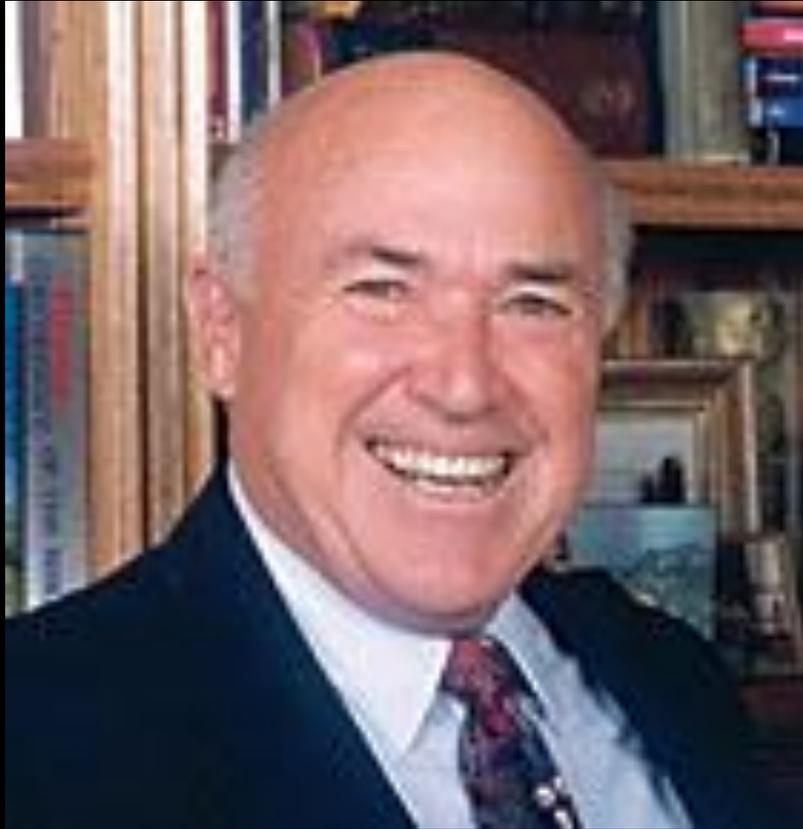
Bless the Lord Introduction

- David reminds us of our sin in **Psalm 103**.
- **In context, it is not a negative thing at all.**
- He uses sin, iniquity, frailty and need as a starting point to praise the Lord for his goodness, mercy and love.

Bless the Lord Introduction

- The result is one of the most worshipful hymns of praise that we find in the Bible.
- God's people in every age have turned to it as a means of cultivating an attitude of praise.

Bless the Lord Introduction



Psalm 103 is a beautiful song of praise to the Lord. David often talked to himself, exhorting and encouraging himself. Here he said, “Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name!”

– Chuck Smith (1927 – 2013)

Bless the Lord Psalm 103

- Read the psalm through.

God's Goodness Psalm 103:1-5

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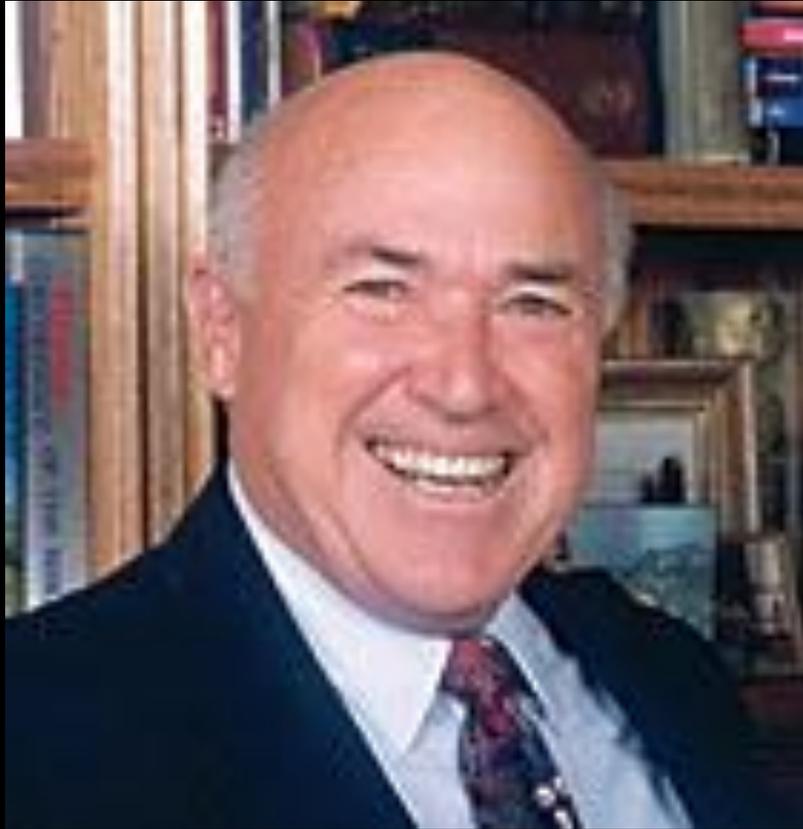
- To be **blessed** is a rich form of happiness.
- When we bless others, we wish them happiness, goodness and all that we be for their best.

God's Goodness Psalm 103:1-5

- When we bless God, it is a form of thanks, praise or worship.
- When we consider all of God's gracious acts, praise and thanks are the only suitable response.

God's Goodness

Psalm 103:1-5



The word “bless” is a stronger word than “praise.” It is praising with adoration and thanksgiving, from a heart of deep love.

– Chuck Smith (1927 – 2013)

God's Goodness Psalm 103:1-5

- David reminds us that God gives us good things and does good things for us.
- God is good.

God's Goodness Psalm 103:1-5

- Wayne Grudem explains,

The Goodness of God means that God is the final standard of good and that all that God is and does is worthy of approval.



God's Goodness Psalm 103:1-5

- For all of God's goodness David reminds us to **bless the Lord!**
- Because sometimes we forget.

God's Mercy Psalm 103:6-14

God's Mercy Psalm 103:6-14

- Again, Wayne Grudem,

God's mercy, patience, and grace may be seen as three separate attributes, or as specific aspects of God's goodness.



God's Mercy Psalm 103:6-14

- Again, Wayne Grudem,
God's mercy means God's goodness toward those in misery and distress.



God's Mercy Psalm 103:6-14

- Again, Wayne Grudem,
God's grace means God's goodness toward those who deserve only punishment.



God's Mercy Psalm 103:6-14

- Again, Wayne Grudem,

God's patience means God's goodness in withholding of punishment toward those who sin over a period of time.



God's Mercy Psalm 103:6-14

- For the people of Israel, the primary example of God's mercy was found in his faithfulness toward them despite their rebellion in the wilderness.
- Their sin did not change the fact that they were his people.

God's Mercy Psalm 103:6-14

- David also knew the reality of personal forgiveness of sins.
- See **Psalms 32 and 51**.

God's Mercy Psalm 103:6-14

If God were to punish us for everything we did wrong or in proportion to our sins, none of us would survive for even a minute. But the Lord is patient with us. He forgives us in his Son. Instead of directing his anger at us, God often showers us with love and compassion.

– Zamani Kafang,
ECWA Theological Seminary, Nigeria



God's Love Psalm 103:15-19

God's Love Psalm 103:15-19

- The final attribute we will mention is **God's love**.
- In this case, he is not only loving, but the Bible tells us that **he is love** – love in its purest form.
- This might also be said of other attributes of God, but the Bible doesn't always say it so explicitly.

God's Love Psalm 103:15-19

1 John 4:7-8 (ESV) Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. 8 Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love.

1 John 4:16 (ESV) So we have come to know and to believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and whoever abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.

God's Love Psalm 103:15-19

- Before God ever created an object to love, his love was expressed among the persons of the Trinity.
- **John 17:24** (ESV) Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world.

God's Love Psalm 103:15-19

- Here is a little more:
- **John 3:35** (ESV) The Father loves the Son and has given all things into his hand.
- **John 14:31** (ESV) but I do as the Father has commanded me, so that the world may know that I love the Father.

God's Love Psalm 103:15-19

- When God expresses love outwardly toward us, he is only doing what comes most naturally to him.
- He has been expressing love among his own persons from all eternity past.

God's Love Psalm 103:15-19

- This is the love with which he loves us.
- His love also shapes us as his children brought into his family.
- We are now privileged to share in the love that has always existed between the Father and the Son.

God's Love Psalm 103:15-19

God loves constantly, with an ardent, intense affection, which delivers from dross the heart that is yielded to Him, and secures at last its transformation into his own likeness.

– F. B. Meyer (1847 – 1929)



Bless the Lord Psalm 103:20-22

Bless the Lord Psalm 103:20-22

- The psalm begins with David reminding himself to bless the Lord.
- It ends with him calling the entire created universe to do the same.

Bless the Lord Psalm 103:20-22

When at last you have found your centre in God's love, a joy will arise within you, which will pour itself forth in blessing, and you will find yourself but one chorister among myriads in heaven and earth.

– F. B. Meyer (1847 – 1929)



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Conclusions

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- What we should do with **Psalm 103**:
 1. Listen to David. He reminds us to bless the Lord and we should do exactly that – with “**all that is within**” us.
 2. We should consider his works and his attributes. They will convince us to bless the Lord.
 3. We should consider our place in God’s family and the importance of our character conforming to his.

Bless the Lord Conclusions

- God's **goodness, mercy, grace, patience and love** are all among qualities that theologians (like Wayne Grudem) sometimes call *Communicable Attributes of God*.
- They are attributes which God shares with us and desires to see imitated in our lives.

Bless the Lord Conclusions

- **Ephesians 5:1** (ESV) Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children.
- We imitate God's goodness by being good and doing good.
- We imitate his mercy as we show mercy.
- We imitate his love as we love him in return and love others.

Bless the Lord Conclusions

- The third person of the Trinity, **the Holy Spirit**, is the one that imparts these characteristics to us.
- As we surrender to God's Spirit, dwelling within each of us who have received new life in Christ, we are transformed.

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- Final passage:
- Colossians 3:12-17