THE POWER OF COUNTING
OUR BLESSINGS
Psalms 103:1-22

Have you ever stopped to seriously consider what your mind and mouth were ultimately made for? Have you considered the purpose of your mouth and mind when it comes to praising, blessing and adoring the God that lives, and reigns from on high?

In truth, there would be no reason to give thanks if we didn't have the type of God that we do! Imagine if the God of the universe was one that desired to hurt His creation! Imagine if He was one that was insensitive to our lives and to our needs! Imagine if God was One who simply put your life in motion and then backed off of your life!

The wonderful truth of Scripture is that God is intimately concerned about our lives. Our God is the God of all love, mercy, grace, kindness. He loves to give us what we don't deserve (heaven) and not give us what we do deserve (hell).

When you look at Psalms 103, you find the psalmist shouting praises to the Lord God with all his being. This chapter relays some vital truths to us as God's people that we need to reincorporate into our lives. Because the sobering truth is, many have forgotten to do exactly what the psalmist says.

1. WE ARE TO EXALT THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD. First let's explain what an "attribute" is. An attribute of God is His "character". They are His "traits". In other words, His attributes are what make God…God. They are the internal, external and eternal nature of His Being.

If we have a distorted understanding about God, then it will be very hard to praise Him and worship Him, properly. The reality of so many who even name the name of Christ, is that they have a distorted view of God, and a warped understanding of who He is, and why He does what He does. When the psalmist praised the name of God, he was praising all that God is. To "bless the holy name of God" is to bless and praise God for His eternal nature.

Second, we are to exalt His Being and not forget who He is. There is a great connection between faith and fear. When our faith in God is high our fear is low. When our fear is high our faith is low. Our faith often is low, because we "forget" to praise God for His glorious things He has done for our lives. Praise is a call to be reminded of God's nature, character and ways, because His nature is changeless. David directed his "soul" to bless the Lord. We too can call on our soul to bless the Lord just like David did.

If you will notice the text, the psalmist was reminded of all the "benefits" that the Lord has done for His life. The Living Bible reads this way in v.2, *"Yes, I will bless the Lord and not forget the glorious things he does for me."*

The psalmist knew that God was an extremely personal God. God has always and for all eternity been extremely personal. All that He does to and for our lives, will always be extremely personal. When He reveals His love for us, we can't help but be humbled with tears. Why? Because of the personal nature of God. However being human means that we can also forget the blessings and goodness of God.

2. WE ARE TO LIST THE BENEFITS AND BLESSINGS OF GOD. One of the realities of our sin fallen lives is that we fail to remember and itemize the benefits, blessings, and goodness of God. When we fail to do so, we are the ones that live in pain, worry, misery, agony and so much more. It is to our personal benefit and blessing to name the benefits of God. We can do so in prayer. We can do so out loud! We can also do so on paper! When we itemize the blessings of God, we are giving our soul a reminder of the intimate love and concern of God over our lives. It is a tragedy that so many who name the name of Christ will walk through this one earthly life thinking that God isn't concerned with them, when nothing is further from the truth. Consider some of the blessings of Holy God unto our lives.

Consider the personal blessings of forgiveness. The first benefit that was mentioned was *"forgiveness of sins"*. The blessing that God showers over our lives is that He has by His holy way, justified us and forgiven us of all our sins when we place our faith in Jesus Christ. He has placed all our sin on Jesus and we stand pardoned.

There is great wonder and joy in knowing that our lives have been pardoned by the blood of Jesus Christ. If our sins were not pardoned, God would stand against us, and announce

condemnation on our lives. He would banish us into eternal torment for all eternity. You may be struggling in one way or another, but there is wonder in knowing our sins are forgiven.

Consider the blessing of personal restoration. The psalmist declared, *"Who heals all my diseases" (v.3).* The thought here has to do with more than physical sickness, it carries the idea of moral defilement. Before God we have been healed of our moral defilement through the blood of Christ. We may have times of sickness in our lives. We are not promised a life apart from pain and problems, but to be forgiven, restored, renewed before the God of heaven is something we need to continually thank God for. Because we are cleansed, we have a hearing before the God of all the universe. Because we are cleansed, we are assured that He hears us as we pray and we have answers from heaven. How wonderful to bow, and know that the God who created us is ready to hear us and answer our prayers.

Consider the personal blessing of elevation. Think about this for a moment, your life has been given elevation by the most High God. David knew that He has been saved from destruction by the hand of God on many occasion, but we are saved from eternal destruction through Jesus Christ. We won't live with the demons, devil and all sinners, but we are given a place, a new name because of God's grace and goodness. God loves to give His people a position of elevation to reveal how much He loves us. We are called "sons and daughters of God". What an amazing title through the blood of Christ.

Someday we are going to see how "elevated" we will be as we travel through the skies into heaven. We are going to see the place of heaven, and live in the place of heaven, all because God desires to do so through Christ. Paul put it this way…being *"made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (Eph 2:6)*

Consider the personal blessing of coronation. God loves to crown our lives with lovingkindness and tender mercies (103:4). David could face life with all its difficulties because he knew he had the blessing of God's lovingkindness on his life. It is an amazing reality when we stop and declare verbally, *"Lord God, you created heaven and earth and you love to express Your loving kindness to me, intimately and personally."* It is motivation to live and walk godly, and it gives strength to our bodies.

Consider the personal blessing of complete satisfaction. *Psalm 103:5 (KJV) [5] Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.* It is the nature and character of God to satisfy His children with all that they need in life. He not only satisfies our lives but wants us to enjoy those things He has given to us. Just as any good father will satisfy the needs of his children, so does the Father in heaven do so with each of us. This is not a temporal truth, but an eternal truth.

God has supplied for all His children in the past. He will supply for all His children in the present, and He will supply for His children in the future.

There is also the blessing of His righteousness and justice for all the oppressed. There is the blessing of His mercy and graciousness. God is slow to anger and abounding in mercy (v.8). The psalmist declares: 1) The mercy of God's patience. 2) The mercy of God's pardon. 3) The mercy of God's pity. Like a father pities his children, it is the nature of the Lord to show pity to our lives. He knows that we are frail, human, fallen, and that our frame is weak.

3. GOD HAS A PROPER WAY THAT WE ARE TO BLESS HIM. To utter *"Praise the Lord"* apart from a life of obedience is foreign to the heart of God. While God calls us to praise Him, He takes no delight in words that are not accompanied by a life of obedience.

Blessing the Lord involves obedience. David declared that the angels bless and praise the Lord, but they don't simply offer lip service. Angels do the commands of God. Angels are diligent at following the directives of God. If we desire to bless the Lord, we can only do so properly when our lives give evidence of obedience.

Blessing the Lord involves hearing His voice and His Word. Imagine your children shouting, "I love you", but never taking time to listen to you as a parent. Sadly, that is the case often times in our relationship with the Lord. We say, "Lord, I love you" but take no time listening to Him through the pages of Holy Scripture. No proper praise comes apart from hearing His Word. Do you have a relationship with God that enables you to bless and praise Him for His wonderful goodness and grace?