

**Psalm 103: 1-18; “Forget not all His Benefits”, A Message Delivered
by Pastor Paul Rendall to those gathered at the Premier Estates Nursing Home
on November 15th, 2015, in the Afternoon.**

Usually when you think of blessing, you think of God’s blessing His creature man with blessings. He is the God from whom all blessings flow. He is the One who gives them, and we the ones who receive. But here the Psalmist David is exhorting his own soul to bless God (to give God glory and thankful praise) by listing to himself what God had done for him during his life. I pray that each of us would give this consideration; that this is what God is looking for from us, at whatever stage of life that we are in. A person who knows the Lord ought to praise the Lord, if he or she can do nothing else for Him. Psalm 147: 2 says praise is comely; that is, that it is beautiful in the mind and sight of God. David is teaching us here that all that is within us ought to bless His holy name. In verses 1-10 we find the blessings of life and eternal life listed for us here. In verses 11-14, we find the blessings of God’s mercy listed. In verses 15-18 we find the awful shortness of man’s life contrasted with the wonderful unending length of God’s blessings upon those who are true believers. Let us receive the truth this afternoon, that each of us should bless the Lord with all that is within us.

1st of all – The blessings of life and eternal life recounted.

We are here told not to forget all God’s benefits. “Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless His holy name!” “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.” There is a tendency in many people to do this; even the most godly. David, who was the “man after God’s own heart” must have had times himself when he forgot God’s benefits, or was tempted to do so because of the adverse circumstances that he was in. But he addresses his own soul not to do so. Is this something that you do, dear ones who are here today? Do you exhort your own soul not to forget all that God has done for you? I hope that it will come to light for each us, on the Judgment Day which is most surely coming, that we were a people who reminded ourselves often of God’s many blessings to us. It is only those who cannot bless the Lord for the gift of Christ who will end up missing out on the blessings of eternity, and end up suffering in the everlasting lake of fire. Whatever circumstances that you are in, you should bless the Lord. The greatest of these benefits is placed at the top of the list. “Who forgives all your iniquities”. God really does forgive the guilt of all of your sins when you believe in Jesus Christ.

When you stop to think of the first and greatest commandment, that you should love the Lord your God with all of your mind, with all of your heart, with all of your soul, and with all of your strength, it would only be expected that part of all of that holy activity which goes on in your heart would be the praising and blessing of God. If you love God you will praise God; and that, not occasionally. And when you think of the second commandment which is that you shall love your neighbor as yourself, should it not be characteristic of a believer to praise God before other people that they might meet; that He has forgiven you all of your sins. Should we not greatly desire to tell other people about what Christ has done for our soul? It should not be a difficult thing for us, if we have found grace in God’s sight, to speak to others in praise of the mercy of God towards us, unworthy and undeserving sinners. We should bless the Lord in our prayer times in private, and we should bless the Lord in the midst of the great congregation in the church, and we should bless God for forgiving us all of our many sins, when we are with neighbors, relatives, and friends. We should be eager to tell them that God does forgive the guilt of our sin through what Jesus Christ our Lord on the basis of what He has done for us at the cross. But first and foremostly of all, everything that is within us, should praise and bless His holy name. There ought to be the repeating of what He has done for us, on a regular basis, in forgiving us and choosing no longer to hold our sins against us.

Let us think about the fact that the first 4 of these blessings enumerated here are all related to the death of our Lord Jesus on our behalf. They have to do with God's having given us the free gift of salvation and eternal life on the basis of the redemption in Christ. God forgives all of your iniquities, He heals all your diseases, and He redeems your life from destruction, or the pit. If the 2nd of these blessings only relates to the healing of the body in this present life, then what is being said here cannot be true, because the disease which leads to our death will not be healed. But when we think of this verse as relating to sin being the worst of our diseases, and how the great physician Jesus Christ has made us whole and well, spiritually, by giving us eternal life and the new birth, then we can truly rejoice and praise God. When we remember that the final, complete, and total healing of our body will take place at the Resurrection of the Dead, then we can truly bless the Lord with our whole soul. Yes, it is true, we will die physically someday, but we will never die spiritually. And one day, this same body in which we have lived and died, shall be resurrected and shall be more beautiful and strong than it ever was here in this life. Bless the Lord, O my soul. The body shall not be lost forever, and the soul shall be healed and never perish.

Have you believed in Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and have you come to know the touch of His Spirit in your heart, taking away the dominion of this greatest of diseases? Have you come to know and realize that Christ Himself is giving you spiritual life and peace day by day? Then bless the Lord, O my soul. He has redeemed your life from the pit. By His death He has purchased you back out of the slave market of sin. Through this means He has purchased the New Birth for you, and in giving it to you in regeneration He has set you free from the law of sin and death. You no longer walk according to the flesh, but you are now walking in the Spirit. God has, and He will indeed crown you with lovingkindness and tender mercies for Jesus sake. Will you not bless the living risen Christ, O my soul, for all these saving mercies and grace? And will you not also remember what God has done for you on hundreds and thousands of days of life, in this life? Will you not praise Him that your youth has been renewed like the eagle's on so many occasions? Will you not bless Him for being able to live in a free country where you can worship Him in spirit and truth? Will you not praise Him for His patience toward you; His being slow to anger and abounding in mercy. Bless Him that although He may be angry with you as a believer, for a moment, that His favor is for a lifetime. He lovingly chastened you at times because you were not keeping His commandments in a way that was bringing Him pleasure, but He graciously did not deal with you according to your sins, nor did He punish you according to your iniquities. All of this, instead was laid on Christ.

2ndly – We find the blessings of God's mercy elaborated upon.

“For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; as far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.” You should bless the Lord this afternoon if you know Him, that your sins and transgressions of God's holy law have been removed from you and they have been removed completely, never to be brought up again for all eternity. God has placed the remembrance of them in the deepest sea. He has cast them behind His back. He has blotted them out of His book of judgment. He chooses to remember them no more. Even more than this; He has chosen because of Christ, to spiritually adopt you and bring you into His family, as full grown sons and daughters through Jesus Christ. You have an inheritance that is laid up for you in heaven, which is imperishable and undefiled, and which will not pass away.

God was indeed your Father before you were converted to Christ, but only in the sense that He created you. During that time you were still a child of wrath, even as all the rest who are unbelievers. His wrath and anger were upon you continually. until the moment that you believed. He was merciful to you; He was gracious to you, and now you have found Him to be slow to anger, and abounding in mercy. When He sees you backsliding in your heart, He strives

with you to bring you back. But even in this striving He will not keep His anger forever. He does not deal with you according to your sins, nor does He reward you according to your iniquities. It is because He has saved you for Jesus' sake. He has taken pity upon you and He has set His love upon you, and He has lifted you up out of the mire of sin. Since He has saved you, He will continue to show you mercy for Christ's sake and pity you as a father pities His children. He will love you and care for you and provide for you in every way to get through this life; lavishing His spiritual blessings upon you. He knows your weaknesses and that you still cannot keep His commandments perfectly. But He has put the fear of Himself and the love of Himself within your heart. He remembers that you are dust, and yet in your weakness He will make you strong in grace.

And then finally - In verses 15-18 we find the beauty and the glory of the Covenant mercies of God.

“As for man, his days are like grass; as a flower of the field, so he flourishes.” “For the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more.” “But the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him, and His righteousness to children's children, to such as keep His covenant, and to such as remember His commandments to do them.” It is good for every person to come to realize how short life really is. When you are young, the days seem long, and a summer is like a year in time; but then you get to be 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, and you wonder where all of the days and all of the years went. You cannot even remember them all clearly. If you do know not the Lord, I am sure that it can be very discouraging to get old. And it may be a very fearful experience not knowing what will happen when you die. But listen to me dear ones; if you believe in Jesus, the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him. And Christ's righteousness will do you and your children and grandchildren good. If you believe in Jesus, and your children and grandchildren believe in Jesus, it will keep you and them in the favor and blessings of God all the way through this short life, and into eternity where we all are heading.

For the person who fears God, loves God, and blesses God for all the blessings of salvation in Jesus Christ, there is nothing to fear. You can embrace your future and look forward to what lies ahead. God is waiting for you with outstretched arms saying, “Come my children; inherit the kingdom which has been prepared for you from the foundation of the world.” The proof that you will be welcomed into heaven is that you are now remembering by grace, the grace of Christ, to keep God's commandments to do them. You know that you are not saved by keeping them; you are saved by Christ, but your faith in God and Christ will go about to do them. Faith without works is dead. “But blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from this time forward,” it says in Revelation 14: 13, for they rest from their labors, and their works do follow them.” “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget none of His benefits”. If you remember to bless the Lord for His benefits which He has bestowed upon now, through Jesus Christ, you will have all of eternity to praise and bless God and it will be none too much.