

"Praise Psalms" by Rev. John C. Tittle

Scripture Reading: Psalm 103 NRSV

¹Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. ²Bless the Lord, O my soul, and do not forget all his benefits—³who forgives all your iniquity, who heals all your diseases, ⁴who redeems your life from the Pit, who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy, ⁵who satisfies you with good as long as you live so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's. ⁶The Lord works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed. ⁷He made known his ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel. ⁸The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. ⁹He will not always accuse, nor will he keep his anger forever. ¹⁰He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. ¹¹For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; ¹²as far as the east is from the west, so far he removes our transgressions from us. ¹³As a father has compassion for his children, so the Lord has compassion for those who fear him. ¹⁴For he knows how we were made; he remembers that we are dust. ¹⁵As for mortals, their days are like grass; they flourish like a flower of the field; ¹⁶for the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more. ¹⁷But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children's children, ¹⁸to those who keep his covenant and remember to do his commandments. ¹⁹The Lord has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all. ²⁰Bless the Lord, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his bidding, obedient to his spoken word. ²¹Bless the Lord, all his hosts, his ministers that do his will. ²²Bless the Lord, all his works, in all places of his dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

Discussion Questions:

1. What do you love to share about with other people? (i.e. favorite books, movies, restaurants, etc.) Why do you like to talk about what you like?
2. What jumps out at you about this Psalm?
3. What does it mean to bless the Lord?
4. C.S. Lewis provides a number of great quotes about praise in the Psalms, what do you think of them?
 - a. *"To fully enjoy, is to glorify."*
 - b. *"Praise not only expresses our joy, it completes it."*
 - c. *"praise seems to be inner health made audible."*
 - d. *Not to praise "is to have lost the greatest experience, and in the end, to have lost it all."*
5. What do you bless the Lord for?
6. How can praise take us out of ourselves and see the bigger picture?
7. How can praise help you get through challenging situations you find yourself in?
8. Praise is one of the primary ways that we experience God's goodness. In what ways have you found that to be true in your personal experience?