

Small Group Resource Guide

November 3-5, 2020

Psalm 103

OPEN IN PRAYER

INTRO: The historical context is the setting or who, when, where, and what was going on. We don't have a lot to go on but the superscript tells us David is the author. Charles Spurgeon hypothesizes that this is near the end of David's life given his reflection on the brevity of life. And what do we know about David? He was a murderer and adulterer, yet God called him a man after God's own heart. A man who had to reconcile the truth of his sin with the truth of God's love for him. With this in mind, let's read Psalm 103 together.

REFLECTION (3-4 min): Play [Before the Throne of God Above](#) by Sovereign Grace while journaling your initial response to this passage.

GROUP DISCUSSION

• VERSES 1-5 (12-15 min)

- What repetitions do you notice?
- Explore the meaning of "bless the Lord" using the Psalm and these passages that have the same root Hebrew word. How does the context enrich the meaning? What are some synonyms we could use?

Gen 24:48: Then I bowed my head and worshiped the Lord and **blessed** the Lord, the God of my master Abraham, who had led me by the right way to take the daughter of my master's kinsman for his son.

Deut 8:2-10: "And you shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you...And he humbled you and let you hunger and fed you with manna...Know then in your heart that, as a man disciplines his son, the Lord your God disciplines you. So you shall keep the commandments of the Lord your God by walking in his ways and by fearing him....And you shall eat and be full, and you shall **bless** the Lord your God for the good land he has given you.

Neh 9:1-5: Now...the people of Israel were assembled with fasting and in sackcloth....And the Israelites separated themselves from all foreigners and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers. And they stood up in their place and read from the Book of the Law... they made confession and worshiped the Lord their God....Then the Levites... said, "Stand up and **bless** the Lord your God from everlasting to everlasting. **Blessed be** your glorious name, which is exalted above all blessing and praise.

Ps 103:1a (AMP): **Bless and affectionately praise the Lord**, O my soul, And all that is [deep] within me, bless His holy name.

- What images does David use? Why might he use them?
 - David says God forgives *all* our iniquities and heals *all* our diseases. Does this absolute statement encourage you, frustrate you, or raise doubts?

• VERSES 6-13 (15 min)

- What do you recognize from our study of Psalms in this section, especially in verses 8-10? What do you

think these ideas might have meant to David?

- Consider the imagery in verses 11-13. What kind of response do these images evoke for you? Are there other passages or songs they bring to mind? What do they teach us about God's relationship to us?

- **VERSES 14-19 (10 min)**

- Compare man and God in these verses, exploring the imagery as you go.

Man	God

- This praise of God's everlasting love and compassion on man's sin and short lives culminates in vs. 19. Is this a surprising conclusion? How might it be a fitting finale to this praise? How does it connect to verses 20-22?

- **PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER (10-12min)**



Big Idea: What's the big idea of the passage? What is David emphasizing *most*? It's okay to disagree!



Gospel Connection: Take your big idea (or one of them) and explore how it connects to Jesus. You might:

- Ask how Jesus' life, death, and resurrection connects, changes, or adds to it.
- Ask what we know about the big idea that David wouldn't have known fully.
- Look at New Testament passages using cross references or the concordance at the back of your Bible which gives you verses related to key words/ideas.

WRAP-UP VIDEO (13min)

APPLICATION (5-10min):

1. Do you self-talk? What does it usually sound like? How might David's example help?
2. What fights for your affections? What are you worshipping? Or enslaved to?
3. Are you trying to earn your status as a child of God or are you accepting the crown he freely gives?
4. Do you believe God has forgiven your sin completely? Or do you think He's still holding it against you?
5. Look back at your journaling from the reflection time. Has your response to the passage changed as your understanding has grown?

PRAYER REQUESTS (10-15min)

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Further worship: [Psalm 103](#) by Indelible Grace

[You Say](#) by Lauren Daigle

Further study: Any of the bullet points your group didn't get to.

Encouragement: Micah 7:18-20; Matthew 6:28-30 (We are but flowers swept away by the wind, yet how does God care for even the flowers?)

Apply: Choose a verse to memorize as a way to speak truth to yourself.

Reflect: Pray this Psalm using the following *paraphrase*.

Adore the Lord on bended knee, O my soul,
my heart, strength, and body, praise his holy name!
Worship Jehovah, O my soul,
and remember *all* He's done for me,
who forgives *all* my sin,
who heals *all* my diseases,
who redeems my life from the pit,
who crowns me with steadfast love and tender mercy,
who satisfies me with good
so that my youthful strength is renewed like the eagle's.

The Lord works righteous acts
and fitting judgments for *all* who are oppressed.
He made known his ways to Moses,
his acts to the people of Israel.
The Lord is merciful and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.
He will not always chide,
nor will he maintain his anger forever.
He isn't dealing with us according to our sins,
or repaying us according to our guilt.
For as high as the heavens are above the earth,
so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him;
as far as the east is from the west,
so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

Like a father showing compassion to his children,
so the Lord shows compassion to those who revere him.

For he knows our purpose;
he remembers that we are dust.
As for us, our days are like grass;
we flourish like a flower of the field;
for the wind passes over it, and it is gone,
and its home remembers it no more.
But the steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to
everlasting on those who fears him,
and his righteousness to our children's children,
to those who keep his covenant
and remember to do his commandments.
The Lord has established his throne in the heavens,
and his kingdom rules over *all*.

Praise the Lord, *all* you angels,
you mighty ones who do his commands,
obeying the voice of his word!
Exalt the Lord, *all* you angel armies,
his subjects, who do his will!
Bless the Lord, *all* his created things under his rule.
Bend your knee and adore the Lord, O my soul, my life,
my desires, all that I am.