

## Notes on Psalm 103:1-5

One of my favorite Movie Trilogies is the Lord of the Rings. The world of Lord of the rings intrigues me, it piques my curiosity, and the character development for each character and race is phenomenal.

I'm assuming everyone here is somewhat familiar with the trilogy. You have Frodo, he is a hobbit. Hobbits are small beings, but somehow he is tasked to take this ring, which is evil, to Mordor to destroy the ring. Throughout the story, there is this comradeship that evolves.

As the story develops, a creature emerges, which you later find out is/was a hobbit, named Smeagol, or Gollum. Gollum is obsessed with the ring. He craves the evil. He needs the ring, right? So, Smeagol and Gollum (same person) talk with one another, right? There is even a scene where Smeagol is crying and Gollum is comforting him(self).

Why do I tell you this? Is it just because I am a Lord of the Rings fanatic? No, let's flip over to Psalms 103:1-5.

### **Read Psalm 103**

#### **Pray**

David starts off this Psalm with "Bless the Lord." I really like what the NIV84 edition says, "Praise the Lord." Who is he writing this to or communicating with? Himself! David is talking with himself. This brings me to the first point of tonight:

#### **1. Talk to Your Self**

One of the many struggles people face, it seems to me, is that they listen to their feelings more than truth. This is a massive struggle for me. About 18% of all adults struggle with depression. I lean to think this number is low.

I'm not saying this is not an accurate number for reported cases, but what about all those who struggle with it but either don't talk to others or their doctor?

Regardless, what is the example of David?

"Bless the Lord, Oh My Soul..."

He is talking to himself.

*Soul, get it together! Bless the Lord. Come on, you! Praise God. Soul, do what I say...Not what I feel.*

Have you realized that most of your unhappiness in life is due to the fact that you are listening to yourself instead of talking to yourself? Take those thoughts that come to you the moment you wake up in the morning. You have not originated them but they are talking to you, they bring back the problems of yesterday, etc. Somebody is talking. Who is talking to you? Your self is talking to you. Now this man's treatment [in Psalm 42] was this: instead of allowing this self to talk to him, he starts talking to himself. "Why art thou cast down, O my soul?" he asks. His soul had been depressing him, crushing him. So he stands up and says, "Self, listen for moment, I will speak to you."-Martin Lloyd Jones

This is not easy. This is a daily battle for me, well, actually moment by moment battle.

David throughout this Psalm (and others), talks to himself. Fellow believers, it is good to talk to yourself. It may seem weird, but talk to yourself! Speak the truth!

Transition: Point one is to Talk to Yourself, and the second is

## 2. Focus on God

**Illustration:** Have you ever had it where you could not stop thinking about something? Maybe it was a paper you had to write for school, a sale you were trying to close, etc.

One of the many things that can consume my brain is my love for technology. It can be the new iPhone, Galaxy, iPad, the newest technology, you name it. It is on my mind. I must have it. I need it. How can I get it? How can I justify buying this. Look what I could do, etc.

While there may be some advice you would give to me when my brain is consumed with the newest technology, when you feel down or are down, David's example is to focus on God. What does he tell his soul to do? Bless the Lord. Praise the Lord.

Look at verse 2, It's like David is saying, "Soul, don't forget all his benefits." Which begs the question, what are the benefits?

"The "name" of the Lord calls to remembrance all of his perfections and acts of deliverance" - Expositor's Bible Commentary

"No man ever yet made a complete catalogue of the benefits he had received." - W.S. Plumer

How true is that. **The very fact that we have a Savior, who died for us. David on the other hand would be looking forward to a Savior coming, we have the Savior who has come. So Soul, DO NOT forget this! Because of Jesus I am adopted, justified, a child of God. So, Soul, praise Jesus. Even when I do not FEEL like it, yes. I'm talking to you and you will focus on Christ.**

**Transition:** So we have talk to yourself, focus on God,

## 3. Our God is a Redeeming God (VV. 3-4)

We must take a moment and focus on God's character. God is holy, that is set apart from us. But we also see that God is a redeeming God.

Focus on verse 3. Very Important. What does God do here? He forgives, right? What does he forgive? Our iniquity, right? That is our sin. Our offence against a perfect, holy God, an offence that deserves a cosmic death penalty, a awful offence that I should spend eternity in hell, forever separated by the Creator of the world.

But...

Verse 3 says that this Creator has forgiven ALL my sins. Every last one. The sins I committed in the past, the ones I am committing now, and the ones in the future. Wiped clean! Gone!

What an amazing God! What an amazing redemptive act on God.

The second part of verse 3 is confusing at first. MacArthur thinks we should look at it in light of Deut 32:39, essentially that this is not a promise and that God will not heal all diseases but that He is able and far superior than false gods. This sounds good, but it does not seem to fit the immediate context.

I tend to lean more with Peter Steveson that says the diseases here are spiritual in nature. It's a "parallelism" with the beginning part of the verse. So, the disease we have is one that will send us to hell if not forgiven as mention in the first part of the verse.

[The second part of verse 3 is a little hard to understand. This is not a promise that God will heal every one of our diseases. If that were the case, no Christian would be sick on this earth, unless you said they will be healed when they meet death or in the future.

I think I agree with John MacArthur that we should understand this verse in light of Deut. 32:39, which essentially is saying that God CAN heal, He is active, and is far superior than any false god.]--I think I should omit this

Let's continue, **read verse 4.**

We deserve the pit. Hell. It is what we deserve.

"Instead of allowing his beloved to be taken by adversity, the Lord redeems by exalting him to royalty..."-Expositor's Bible Commentary

Our Lord forgives and redeems us! **The pit is no longer waiting for us. The accusations of the devil are lies because of Jesus, because our Lord has forgiven us and redeemed us!**

Verse 4 does not stop there. God then crowns us with steadfast love and mercy. God could have said, "I redeemed them, that's good." That would have been more than enough mercy and grace. But He goes a step further and gives us loves and mercy! Amazing!

What an amazing redemptive God.

#### 4. Renewed (Verse 5)

**Illustration:** One of my sinful tendencies is to be lazy. You know, after a long day, I just want to come home and do nothing. I'm sure my wife has had an easy day at home, right? So, just let me come home and check out. It will feel so nice, so relaxing. Can any of you relate?

I mean, what's wrong with wanting to be refreshed? Can't I have a little break?

Now, there is nothing wrong with rest and even needing time. But I can often want this too much and I'm not longer sacrificing for my family. It's all about me.

Why do I tell you this? **Verse 5.**

*God satisfies me with God, and I am renewed. Fellow believer, you are renewed as well!*

Depressed? Anxious? Worries.

Do you desire satisfaction? God satisfies you with good! So that we are renewed. So that we can soar! God satisfies you!

Don't feel it? I get it. But what do we do? Point 1, Preach to yourself!

*Soul, God has satisfied me. You don't feel it. I don't care. I have something to say to you, I am satisfied, God has redeemed me and this alone should make my soul shout for joy!*

### ***Looking to Jesus***

I mentioned briefly earlier on, that David was looking to a future Savior, but we have the Savior. He has come. He has died. He killed death. We can look back now and say, "Yes, it is because of Jesus."

*Yet, when your Soul seems to speak louder than the truth, we must grab hold of that thought and combat it. When that happens, Preach to Yourself. Preach truth to yourself. Mediate on Scripture. Psalms 103 is a great passage to memorize. Romans 8:1 is helpful. Romans 5 talks about how God views us as if we have never sinned. The end of Romans 8 talks about how we can't lose God's love!*

*So amazing. How can this be? Because of Jesus. He has secured us, because Jesus died a perfect death, when God looks at me (and you if you are a believer), he sees a perfect life. Amazing! A miracle!*

*What grace! What love!*

This is the truth to preach to your soul. Believe it, fellow Christians. It's the Truth.

It's all because of Jesus.

**Let's Pray!**