



INVESTIGATE

V19-22: Heavenly blessings: everything comes together to praise God

In these verses David describes God's eternal throne and then addresses the angels, heavenly beings, all creation, and finally his own soul. What is the common command?

How do you react to being commanded to praise God?

Like David do you need to speak to your own soul and encourage praise?



THINK IT THROUGH

As a group read together the verse of this old hymn:

*"Praise my soul the King of heaven
To his feet thy tribute bring;
Ransomed, healed, restored, forgiven,
Who like thee His praise should sing?
Praise Him! Praise Him!
Praise the everlasting King"*



TAKE ACTION

Why not use the words of this Psalm to help you when you are finding it difficult to praise God. It might be helpful to memorise a section of it.



PRAY IT THROUGH

- Pray that we shall not "forget all his benefits" but give praise for all He has done
- Praise God for his gracious, compassionate and everlasting love that does not treat as we deserve
- Praise Him for Jesus and His sacrifice that makes this possible
- Pray that whatever comes our way we shall keep giving God the praise He is due

Dipping into the Psalms

SMALL GROUPS SHEET
WEEK BEGINNING 9 SEPTEMBER 2012

Study 3 "Reasons to Praise" Psalm 103

Oakhall
CHURCH WELCOMES YOU



FOR STARTERS

Sometimes we can get so taken up by the circumstances of our lives that we find it difficult to praise God. At these times it's good to be reminded of the many reasons we have for praising Him. This Psalm, along with the two others we have looked at recently, puts things into perspective. It helps us to lift our eyes away from ourselves to our almighty God and to bring Him our praise.



BACKGROUND

After reading the first couple of verses of this Psalm you might conclude that David is riding high in his spiritual life and is on top of the world. In reality, David may have been feeling quite the opposite, having lost his spiritual passion. He may even have been the "afflicted man" of Psalm 102, crying out for help.

The key word is "praise"; it marks the start (v1-2) and end (v20-22) of the Psalm. The Psalm is split into three rounds of praise, originating from David's personal life, his nation, and heaven.

Read Psalm 103



INVESTIGATE

V1-5: Personal blessings: what God has done in David's life

V1 says that our praise should come from the "soul" and our "inmost being". What does this suggest about the nature and depth of our praise? Where is our praise directed first of all?

Make a list of the wonderful personal blessings that God has given David (and us!) in v2-5. Try and summarise in a sentence what each means:

V3a, V3b _____

V4a, V4b _____

V5a, V5b _____

Have we lost sight or taken for granted of any of these blessings?



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V6-18: National blessings: what God has done in the life of the nation

V7 looks back to God's dealing with Israel, his chosen people. As we recall their behaviour how meaningful would verses 8&9 be?

See the echo of v8a in Exodus 34:6,7a.

Think through some of the descriptions of God's character in v8, v10, and v12. What have we done to deserve such favour from God?

Read Lamentations 3:22-23. How should this encourage us to praise Him?

Which aspect of God's character is emphasised in v 8, 11b, and 17b? How does that make you feel?

What picture of God do you draw from v13? How does the fact that God "knows" and "remembers" us (v14) re-assure you and inspire praise?



THINK IT THROUGH

How do you react when you read David's description of how God deals with our sins (vs. 10 & 12)? How is this possible?

In many parts of the Bible, including this Psalm, God is described as loving in nature. But what is the pre-condition that the Psalmist gives in v11b, 17b & 18.

How can we fear God and, at the same time, praise Him?