

LifeLines January 15, 2024

Today's Scripture: 1 Verse

Psalm 103:1

Bless the Lord, O my soul, & all that is within me, bless His holy name.

(1. FYI, on 9/26/22, our LifeLines verse was Psalm 103:2! 2. Let's talk about the punctuation.)

WHY WE'RE HERE

2 Timothy 3:16-17, All scripture is inspired by God & is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, & for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work.

CONTEXT

In this psalm of David, he's actually speaking to himself, commanding his inner being to praise God & remember! He's summoning, encouraging, calling on his soul - mind strength & heart to praise God. In this psalm, David's also calling on the people & even the angels & hosts of heaven to bless God & praise! David is praising God for who He is, for His influence & His goodness to Israel.

Biblical commentator Charles Spurgeon suggests this psalm was written in David's later life when he had a keener sense of his own sin & weaknesses & had developed a higher sense & appreciation for the richness of God's grace & mercy. Others agree it's a hymn of praise & thanksgiving for anyone who has been helped by God. (Doesn't that apply to each of us?)

Definitions:

Bless – to make or pronounce to be holy; a term for expressing gratitude to God

Exalt – to lift up, praise highly; glorify

Extol – to proclaim holy & glorify

Exult – to rejoice exceedingly

Praise – to boast about; revere, glorify; often accompanied by the word, thanksgiving

DIFFERENT VERSIONS (Versions not listed are similar to the NRSV.)

AMP

Bless & affectionately praise the Lord, O my soul, And all that is [deep] within me, bless His holy name.

CEB (Common English Bible)

Let my whole being bless the Lord! Let everything inside me bless His holy name.

CEV (Contemporary English Version)

With all my heart I praise the Lord, & with all that I am I praise His holy name.

CSB (Christian Standard Bible)

My soul, bless the Lord, & all that is within me, bless His holy name.

ERV (Easy-to-Read Version)

My soul, praise the Lord! Every part of me, praise His holy name!

GNT

Praise the Lord, my soul! All my being, praise His holy name!

MSG

O my soul, bless God. From head to toe, I'll bless His holy name! O my soul, bless God, & don't forget a single blessing!

NCV

All that I am, praise the Lord; everything in me, praise His holy name.

NIV

Praise the Lord, my soul; all my inmost being, praise His holy name.

NLT

Let all that I am praise the Lord; with my whole heart, I will praise His holy name.

SELAH

BREAKING DOWN THE VERSE

Bless the Lord... To bless God is to praise Him, thank Him, & acknowledge who He is as the Creator & ruler of the universe. It's offering humble adoration, praise & worship & thanksgiving for His love, Presence, provision - *all* He is & does. It's saying, "God! You are amazing! Unbelievable! You're so great! You're terrific! I'm crazy about You!"

Does God *need* our blessings & praise? God needs nothing, but when we don't acknowledge who He is & what He means to us *we* can become hard-hearted. We may begin to think we can do all things on our own. Over time, we may find ourselves not hearing the guidance of His Holy Spirit. We might begin slacking off in our worship, Bible study & prayer time. God deserves our best, our blessings & our praise.

Exulting His name & magnifying Him are ways we recognize & give joyful expression to God's magnificence.

O my soul... To bless the Lord is also to delight in Him with our whole being, with all that is within us – our spirit, soul & body. Our spirit communicates with His Spirit who entered us when we believed in & accepted Christ as our Savior.

Our soul (as we know) is our mind, will & emotions, & we can bless God with each of these. We can let Him take control of the plans we want to make for ourselves & allow Him to move in our lives in ways that please & glorify Him. We can renew our mind each day & fill it with His Word. We bless Him with our mind when we keep our intellect & thought processes stayed on Him.

We can bless Him through our actions, with our body. We can use our bodies to kneel in reverence when we pray or talk to God or listen for His counsel. We can use our bodies for good purposes as we help others; as we rest & renew our strength when we're tired. We use our voices to proclaim His name, to pray, to read His Word out loud. With all these, plus our intentions, desires (our will) & with the fullness of a grateful heart (our emotions), we have opportunities to bless the Lord.

& all that is within me... This means thoughts, emotions, words, physical being – everything in our soul, body *and spirit!* Everything about us! We should use our entire being to worship God.

Our praise of God should *not* be half-hearted! We can use our voice in speech or song. We can sway, dance, clap our hands, & use all our muscles, even lifting our arms to the sky. We can laugh with joy. We can close our eyes & breathe in His Presence which is so near. We are to praise God completely, intentionally, with a whole “heart” both inwardly & outwardly.

We can pray in the spirit to His Spirit, communicating in ways impossible to do with our carefully planned words. God is beyond words. When our words are not sufficient to proclaim Him, speaking & praying in the spirit can be the best way to bless His holy name.

bless His holy name... Blessing God doesn't increase His strength or make Him better at what He does! It's an exclamation of our gratitude for His bounty & blessings to us, & of our admiration & love! We not only bless & praise God for all He is, we also praise Him *because He is Holy!* God alone is worthy.

SELAH

RELATED VERSES (What other verses come to your mind?)

Deuteronomy 6:4, Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord alone. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, & with all your soul, & with all your might.

Deuteronomy 8:10, You shall eat your fill & bless the Lord your God for the good land He has given you.

1 Samuel 2:1, Hannah prayed & said, “My heart exults in the Lord; my strength is exalted in my God.”

1 Chronicles 29:10, Then David blessed the Lord in the presence of all of the assembly; David said: “Blessed are You, O Lord, the God of our ancestor Israel, forever & ever.”

Psalm 16:7, I bless the Lord who gives me counsel; in the night also my heart instructs me.

Psalm 28:6-7, Blessed be the Lord, for He has heard the sound of my pleadings. The Lord is my strength & my shield; in Him my heart trusts; so I am helped, & my heart exults, & with my song I give thanks to Him.

Psalm 33:3, Sing to Him a new song; play skillfully on the strings, with loud shouts.

Psalm 33:20-21, Our soul waits for the Lord; He is our help & shield. Our heart is glad in Him, because we trust in His holy name.

Psalm 34:1, I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth.

Psalm 34:3, O magnify the Lord with me, & let us exalt His name together.

Psalm 47:7, For God is the King of all the earth; sing praises with a psalm.

Psalm 72:19, Blessed be His glorious name forever; may His glory fill the whole earth. Amen & Amen.

Psalm 77:6, I commune with my heart in the night; I meditate & search my spirit.

Psalm 96:1-3, O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing to the Lord, bless His name; tell of His salvation from day to day. Declare His glory among the nations, His marvelous works among all the peoples.

Psalm 99:3, Let them praise Your great & awesome name. Holy is He!

Psalm 100:4, Enter His gates with thanksgiving, & His courts with praise. Give thanks to Him, bless His name.

Psalm 103:2, Bless the Lord, O my soul, & forget not all His benefits.

Psalm 103:20-22, Bless the Lord, O you His angels, you mighty ones who do His bidding, obedient to His spoken word. Bless the Lord, all His hosts, His ministers who do His will. Bless the Lord, all His works, in all places of His dominion. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

Psalm 104:1, Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, You are very great.

Psalm 115:17-18, The dead do not praise the Lord, nor do any that go down into silence. But we will bless the Lord from this time on & forever more. Praise the Lord!

Psalm 145:10, All Your works shall give thanks to You, O Lord, & all Your faithful shall bless you.

Psalm 146:1-2. Praise the Lord! Praise the Lord, O my soul! I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God all my life long.

Isaiah 6:3, And one (seraph) called to another & said: “Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of His glory.”

Isaiah 42:10a, Sing to the Lord a new song, His praise from the end of the earth!

Luke 1:46-47, And Mary said, “My *soul* magnifies the Lord, & my *spirit* rejoices in God my Savior.” (Italics added for our discussion.)

Mark 12:29-30, Jesus answered, “The first is, ‘Hear, O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one; you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, & with all your soul, & with all your mind, & with all your strength.’”

Romans 12:1, I appeal to you therefore, brothers & sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy & acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.

1 Corinthians 14:15, What should I do then? I will pray with the spirit, but I will pray with the mind also; I will sing praise with the spirit, but I will sing praise with the mind also.

Ephesians 5:19-20, As you sing songs & hymns & spiritual songs among yourselves, singing & making melody to the Lord in your hearts, giving thanks to God the Father at all times & for everything in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

SUMMARY

- We may not have the flawed track record David had, but we’ve all been forgiven of our sins (past, present & future) & experienced God’s mercy, grace & blessings in this life. *The Lord is worthy of our blessing & praise.*
- In our depths, we know things God has done for us, our friends & family. *The Lord is worthy of our blessing & praise.*
- As believers, we know God is always with us, hearing every sigh, every prayer, wiping every tear, watching over loved ones, giving everyone an opportunity to turn to Him. *The Lord is worthy of our blessing & praise.*
- Some of us still owe thank you notes for gifts & kindnesses shown. We procrastinate showing appreciation. We don’t mean to delay. We’re simply *busy* with other things. God is never too busy for us. *The Lord is worthy of our blessing & praise.*

- Some of us frequently say, “Bless you,” to friends & even strangers. *The Lord is worthy of our blessing & praise.*
- If we’re so ready to pay attention to or bless others, let’s be sure we extend the same sentiment to God, our Provider & Sustainer who formed & made us & never leaves us or forsakes us. Great is His faithfulness. *The Lord is worthy of our blessing & praise.*

CONCLUSION

If you’ve ever been to a football game or other sports event where you were pulling with all your might for your team to win, how did you display your enthusiasm? Were you animated? Would you say you put your whole self into supporting *the team*? Would you like to give us a demonstration???

Do we give our whole selves like that to *worship*? What would we do differently if we were attempting to bless & worship God with *everything in us*? How would that feel? What might *you* be willing to do differently in worship? Of course, quiet, solemn, humble worship continues to be a means of blessing, praising & honoring our God.

God deserves our very best. That’s what we expect from Him, isn’t it? He gives 100% every moment. He can’t do otherwise. That’s His character & nature. He can only give His best. That’s what He deserves from us. With every fiber of our being – our body, soul & spirit – we should learn to bless & praise our God.

Perhaps we should consider the value or benefit (to God & to ourselves) of upping our game when it comes to employing our soul & all that is within us to bless...

our Heavenly Father,
our Creator God,
our Source,
giver of the Holy Spirit
& Father of our Lord & Savior!

Just a thought!

***Bless the Lord, O my soul, & all that is within me,
bless His holy name.***

Let Psalm 103:1 be a *LifeLine* for you!

SCRIPTURE IS OUR –

LifeLine!

Take a minute or two & write something you want to remember about this LifeLine:
