

Bless the Lord, O My Soul!

(Psalm 103)

If you've missed last couple weeks, we're doing a bit of a 'different' mini-series... Typically at GBC, we preach through books of the Bible in context, chapter by chapter. But for 3 Sundays we're considering precious truths **{DP}** of *3 different songs*, preached by *3 different pastors* of the GBC network, rotating through each campus.

We've each picked a worship song that is not only important *theologically*, but meaningful to us *personally*. **{DP}**

- Music can help stir God's truths in the **heart**.
It's one of God's most powerful gifts to *stoke up* cooling embers of our zeal!! **{DPe}**
- Music can help embed God's truths in the **mind**.

When our daughter was young, lots of family Scripture memory came courtesy of Colin Buchanan songs, which was great.

But for memory purposes, it doesn't even need to be **good** music, really. Any **catchy** music can make lyrics or Bible verses unforgettable.

I'm not "recommending" you use **80's Swedish rock** to memorise Scripture, but some tunes just help!

Many of us would remember a group called *Europe* and their hit, 'The Final Countdown' For some reason that tune was in my head 1 night as we **struggled** with our memory verse, Mark 1:1. Lo and behold!, The Final Countdown helped lock it in **FOREVER!**

{Clip} then **{Demo}**

Music is a POWERFUL tool . . .

- Music can be **controversial!** But,
- Music is **biblical** for sure, to aid our worship of God.

In Colossians chapter 3, the Bible says, **{DP}**

"Let the Word of Christ dwell richly among you . . . teaching and admonishing one another THROUGH psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts.

The Bible recognises that as we sing praises, we are **reinforcing** truths to one another. How important, then, to have solid worship songs!

I chose a song from Psalm 103 **{DP}** *Bless the Lord, O My Soul!* – actually medley of 2 songs – *Bless His Holy Name & 10,000 Reasons* – **2 songs, sung 2 ways** not only because that phrase is used **repeatedly** in the first and final verses of Psalm 103, but more because I'm a **slow** learner, & I'm **not good** at sustained thankfulness & gratitude that leads to blessing So I need to sing *2-songs-worth* for it to **sink in!**

I have a **personality** that instant sees what needs "fixing" (in things & people). I have a **job unlike**, say, an Accountant's: *"The books are balanced! Done!"*

Or tradies: *"You beaut! The house is finished!"*

My job description is never finished!: *'God's will be done no earth as it is in heaven!'*

So when I take my eyes of the BLESSINGS of the Lord, I 'go grumpy', I become '**Darkside Dave**' or '**Downcast Dave**', full of

"woe is me, woe is me!" instead of *"How good is He! Look what God's done for me!"*

{DP} Psalms 103 – a psalm Counting God’s many Blessings – is such a good elixir for me, and I hope it will be for you.

Even if your personality is not like mine, the longer I’ve been a pastor, the more I’ve realised that I’m not the only one struggling with godly gratitude!

Do you ever have trouble thanking God for your lot in life?

*Do you sometimes **not** “FEEL” like exalting God’s name?*

*Do you ever get so **discouraged** that you **don’t even want to go to church?***

*...so **downcast**, that even if you’re here, you feel unable to **sing** the hymns & choruses?*

Maybe that is where you find yourself this morning . . . or this month, or this millennium!
if it’s been a tough decade or so.

King David of Israel, who wrote Psalm 103, was no stranger to *downcast days & discontent!*
David had his fair share of trials:

- Fleeing from King Saul under repeated death threats, leaving his homeland
 - David experienced the harsh consequences of his own sins with Bathsheba & Uriah
 - David’s kingship undermined/usurped by his own son, Absalom. stolen
- David knew downcast days & discontent! And so he penned Psalm 103.

While some “psalms” (OT Songs) are **addressed to God:**

Psalm 3: “You, O Lord, are a shield around me – You’re my glory and the lifter of my head!”

Some psalms are addressed **primarily to others:**

Psalm 95: Come, let us shout joyfully to the Lord . . . Come, let us worship and bow down.

But in Psa 103, David first addresses **David** – HIMSELF – before enlarging his audience:

{DP} Bless the LORD, MY soul,
and all that is within me, bless His holy name!
Bless the LORD, MY soul (he repeats)

You see David had walked with the Lord long enough to learn that first & foremost, {DP} **Heartfelt Praise comes from Counting God’s Blessings**

That’s this morning’s Main Message.

OUTLINE: {DP}

- Bless God **Personally** for His benefits (vv. 1-2)
- Bless God **Specifically** for His benefits (vv. 3-18)
- Bless God **Collectively** – *with Reinforcements!* (vv. 19-22)

BTW, “to bless” is not as narrow/limited as we often think of the word “blessing”...

We tend to think of a very formal pronouncement or promise from an authority:

“You have our blessing; you can marry our daughter.”

“The LORD bless you & keep you”

While “blessing” can sometimes mean a formal pronouncement,

“to bless” is not narrowly restricted to mean the opposite of a “curse”:

*“May your children’s children have a **face full of zits on their wedding day!**”*

Generally in the Bible, to bless means to **PRAISE**, to **speak of the excellence** of someone.
 When Abigail brought food to David & his hungry men, David said to Abigail,
"Blessed be the LORD God who sent you today!" (1 Sam 25)

In Psalm 103, to **bless** is something for **ALL** of us: *to praise God's name in thanksgiving.*

And David realised he must first talk to Himself . . . {DPa}

BLESS GOD PERSONALLY FOR HIS BENEFITS (VV. 1-2)

So David is to personally bless God for God's blessings to David.

And David is to personally bless a **personal God** . . .

UNlike Irving Berlin's song, popularized by singer Bing Crosby in the 50s: {DPb}

If you're worried and you can't sleep

Count your blessings instead of sheep!

When my bankroll is getting small

I think of when I had nothing at all

I think about our nursery and picture curly heads

And one by one I count them as they slumber in their beds

And I fall asleep counting my blessings instead of sheep

It's really good to be *thankful!*

But what's the **big difference** between Psalm 103 and Irving Berlin's song?

. . . God is ABSENT in Berlin's song?

David is not just counting His blessings

(Isn't my car a ripper! Isn't my child adorable!).

David is God-centred in counting His blessings! {DP}

*My soul, **bless the LORD,***

*and all that is within me, **bless His** holy name!*

My soul, bless the LORD,

*and do not forget all **His** benefits!*

He forgives . . . **He** heals... **He** redeems . . .

He crowns . . . **He** satisfies you . . .

Although counting blessings instead of sheep might be well *reasoned* – and a step in the right direction compared to chanting "Ommm" aligning oneself with an energy force and smiling in gratitude – both are **idolatry**, in the of form of {DP} "**Blessings Plagiarism**":

Enjoying Blessings without crediting the *Source* of the Blessings! {DPb}

Worshipping the **Gifts** instead of the **Giver**.

Like your child wanting your "stuff" but no relationship with you.

Parents, how does that make you feel when you experience that?

We should have "10,000 Reasons for my heart to sing Bless the Lord, o my soul!"

But notice the one reason for the wickedness described Psalm 28: {DPa}

Do not drag me away with the wicked,

who speak in friendly ways with their neighbours

while malice is in their hearts.

BECAUSE they do NOT consider what the LORD has done nor the work of His hands.

The NT says the same thing in a more famous passage, Romans 1 {DPb}

Through what He has made, God's invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen since the creation of the world. As a result, people are without excuse. For though they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God or show gratitude. (Rom 1:20-21)

That's heart of idolatry: "**Plagiarised Blessings**"

Thanksgiving is not optional!

When we credit God as the good Giver of our gifts, we exalt His Name {DP}

Not only that, recognising a gift from our *Creator* remind us He gives gifts for a **purpose**

- The **shelter** God has blessed you with is to also meant for discipleship: *hospitality & loving counsel & evangelism*. So many times in the Bible the Gospel is shared over meals. We're looking for a house in Logan, and I've been thanking God not only for the house we're selling, but remembering the Gospel purpose of the house we are moving to.
- The **child** God may have blessed you with is also meant for discipleship: *to raise in God's ways & to set apart for God's purposes*. This is what separated Hannah from Rachel. Hannah finally received a child, and **gave** young Samuel to God's service. Rachel finally received a child, and named him "**Add another**" (Joseph) – *I want **MORE!***

God had *great purpose* for Joseph – rescuing his extended family from death by famine, protecting the seedline of Messiah! But this purpose was not at all in Rachael's mind at Joseph's birth. She simply wanted more . . . more "gifts" . . . *gimme, gimme, gimme!*

Remembering God's good PURPOSES for His gifts *prevents idolatry & protects praise!*

May this 'slow-learner' add, thanksgiving is crucial not only for God's glory but our good!

I call this The '**Forgotten Philippians 4 Factor**' . . . FFFF! {DP}:

Philippian 4 has a famous verse about peace & prayer.

Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. (Phil 4:6-7)

I've taught this before . . . but I need to teach it **again** – to MYSELF!!

I wrestle with anxiety, trying to turn my mind off, with so much always to be done.

As a uni student, I memorised this verse.

And when anxious, I would often recite this verse, and remind myself to pray . . .

expecting the surpassing peace of God to guard my heart and mind in Christ.

. . . but this peace *often did NOT come!*

It took me **years** to realise WHY: God had not broken His promise!

In my practice of prayer, I unintentionally skipped over a **key phrase** in the verse – a phrase I deliberately left out as I just cited it. Here is the entire verse: {DPa}

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition **WITH THANKSGIVING**, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus*

Practically speaking, I skipped right past "with thanksgiving" every time I recited it/prayed.

Studying the context of the verse helped me to see the phrase “w/thanks” is **CRUCIAL**:
Immediately before, Paul says, **{DPa}**

“Rejoice in the Lord always! I’ll say it again, rejoice!” (v.4)

My joy is to be “in the Lord”! He is my starting point for thanksgiving!

Immediately after Phil 4:6-7, in verse 8-9, Paul writes, **{DP}**

Finally, brothers & sisters, whatever is true, whatever is noble, right, pure, lovely, admirable — if anything is excellent or praiseworthy — think about such things! . . . Put this into practice, and the God of peace will be with you.” (vv. 8-9)

How can I be ‘abounding in thanksgiving’ for the Lord,
 if I’m not **DWELLING** on Him who is morally excellent & praiseworthy, & what He has done?
 And If I am not abounding in thanksgiving for the Lord, *how then can I know His peace?*
Be worry-free?

In the West, we’re pretty good at “Please prayers” . . .

Please God, gimme, gimme, gimme!

Q: But how are you going at meaningful “Thank You” prayers of heartfelt praise to God?

Not only thank you God for stuff, but “Thank You, God, **for You!**”

God, how precious Your THOUGHTS are to me (Psa 139) GOD. Not just His “stuff”!

Heartfelt Praise comes from Counting God’s Blessings, uppermost being God Himself!

If being overjoyed with God & His blessings to you is not going well,

David gives us practical steps to make it so. **{DP}**

Transitioning from v.2, *remember ALL His benefits*, David gets specific w/a helpful list **{DP}**

BLESS GOD SPECIFICALLY FOR HIS BENEFITS (VV. 3-18)

Here David rehearses Reasons to Praise God, whether ‘10,000 Reasons’ or 10 Reasons!

Which makes sense, doesn’t it?

In any significant **RELATIONSHIP**, we **remember & rehearse** specific things about people we are thankful for.

With my wife, I consider what she’s done . . .

- She’d moved countries & continents with me for ministry
- She’s carried and given birth to our child
- She been a devoted homemaker, chef, teacher’s aid, seamstress, chauffeur, chaperone, and comforter to our daughter.
- To me, she’s been my best friend, confidante, and ministry partner.

When I am busy or distracted or frustrated or whatever,

I know I need to rehearse what she has done for me, and **specifically** so . . .

And so it is with God – even more so, because He is **invisible**, though his blessings are not.

"Forget none of His benefits!", and David lists a fair few! **{DP}**

*He forgives all your sins;
He heals all your diseases.
He redeems your life from the pit.
He crowns you with love and compassion.
He satisfies you with good things;
your youth is renewed like the eagle.*

David recognises BOTH:

- **Eternal** blessings:
- **Earthly** blessings:

For the Penitent: God pardons (v. 3)

For the Patient: God heals (v. 3)

For the Pauper: God lifts you from the Pit and crowns you as a Prince (v. 4)

For the Pensioner: God *satisfies* and renews your strength (v. 5)

No matter your age or stage, God's benefits are incomparable!

Our song **10,000 Reasons** takes Psalm 103 verse 8: **{DPa}**

*"The Lord is compassionate and gracious,
slow to anger and abounding in faithful love."*

and puts it into lyrical form . . . **{DPb}**

***You're rich in love
And You're slow to anger
Your name is great
And Your heart is kind
For all Your goodness
I will keep on singing: Ten thousand reasons for my heart to find!***

David could go on & on . . . and He does!

Some of the language moves from the **personal** to the **national**, as word like "redeem" and justice for the those oppressed revealed to Moses and all Israel in verses 6-7, link back to God's *deliverance of Israel from Egyptian bondage*.

By the very end of the psalm, David takes us from the **personal** to the **national** to the **universal**: **{DP}**

*Bless the LORD, all his **angels**
Bless the LORD, all his **works**
in all the places where He rules.
My soul, bless the LORD!*

The call to Bless God is there even in a fallen world when much does not *feel*/like 'Blessing'. As another hymn puts it:

***When upon life's billows you are tempted tossed;
When you are discouraged, thinking all is lost,
Count your many blessings, name them one by one,
And it will surprise you what the Lord has done!***

Maybe you're not "Feeling it" . . . instead your feeling abandoned . . .
Deep PRAISE mostly comes from **deep TRIALS** . . . being lifted out of the pit by God.

Laura Story Elvington is a Christian songwriter.
 Her most famous song is *Indescribable*.

But possibly her most powerful song is called **Blessings: {DPa}**

We pray for blessings, we pray for peace

Comfort for family, protection while we sleep.

We pray for healing, for prosperity, We pray for Your mighty hand to ease our suffering . . .

The song is about her husband, Martin Elvington, **{DPb}** athlete & honour student on a scholarship at university, where she met & married him – who soon developed brain tumour.

She writes, **{DPC}**

*"Most **newlyweds** don't imagine their spouse being kept alive by breathing machines, or journeying through post-operative vision & memory loss."*

So the Chorus of her song Blessings, goes like this: **{DPd}**

But what if your blessings come through rain drops

What if Your healing comes through tears

What if a thousand sleepless nights are what it takes to know You're near

What if trials of this life are Your mercies in disguise?

She said after that extended trial,

"now, we have a voice that wasn't there prior to this suffering . . . a Gospel voice."

They gained the ability to sympathise with hurting people; their joy in the Lord despite enormous difficulty gave credibility to point others to their GREAT Sympathiser, Jesus!

*What if Your healing comes through **tears** . . . ?*

Jesus is the **"man of sorrows, acquainted with grief"** wrote the prophet Isaiah.

Not only is Jesus the Great Sympathiser, He's the **Great SAVIOUR:**

"He was pierced for our transgressions!"

Recall the Wicked **{DP}**:

"Do NOT consider what the LORD has done

Jesus quoted Psalm 118: **{DP}**

*The stone that the builders rejected
 has become the cornerstone.*

THIS is what the Lord has done

*and it is **WONDERFUL** in our eyes!" (Matt 21:42)*

Jesus is applying this truth to Himself, the Cornerstone . . . CRUCIFIED for us, taking on our sin, rescuing rebels at His own expense! **Cursed** so we could be **Blessed!**

Is this news **WONDERFUL** to you?!

'Now, we have a voice that wasn't there prior to this suffering': JESUS!

Do you understand the MOST praiseworthy event in history?: *God Himself . . .*
took on flesh
to walk in our shoes
to die in our place
to save us from sin!

If you understand this, are you FULL of praise to God for this?

My Heart Is Filled with Thankfulness, of Him who bore my pain
Who plumbed the depths of my disgrace, and gave me life again!

We long for the hope of Psalm 103:6 says,
"The LORD executes acts of righteousness & justice for all the oppressed."

But this is **super important**:

Not until the New Heaven & Earth will earthly justice be **perfect**, in "*the home of righteousness*" as the Bible calls it.

So when "bad things happen", or when "healing" does not come now . . .
 This does not mean God is impotent.

It means the wicked still walk the earth!

It means we **continue to pray**:

"Your Kingdom come. Your will be done on earth, as it is in Heaven"

It means the heart of God is long-suffering with us sinners.

It means it is **not too late** – TODAY is still the day of salvation!

Not until the New Heaven & Earth will earthly justice be perfect.
 . . . Good thing, too, since we are all sinners!

No one would be standing or breathing if God imposed full Justice on us!

But on the cross, Jesus stopped breathing, so that you & I could breathe spiritually/eternally!

Rejoice in the Lord, again I say rejoice!

Have you repented & trusted in Jesus as your Lord & Saviour?
 Again, I say TODAY is the day of salvation.

Earthly blessings are great! But eternal blessing far surpasses them all.

For those ALREADY God's children, HOW ENCOURAGING are verses 10–13 {DP}

He does not treat us as our sins deserve

or repay us according to our iniquities.

For as high as the heavens are above the earth,

so great is his love for those who fear him;

as far as the east is from the west,

so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

As a father has compassion on his children,

so the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him

When God allows trials to come upon His children, we know he means it to refine us!

When God disciplines His children, we know is chastising, not condemnation, it will give way to forgiveness & restoration.

*I was an orphan lost at the fall
Running away when I'd hear your call
But Father, you worked your will*

*I had no righteousness of my own
I had no right to draw near your throne
But Father, you loved me still*

*And in love before you laid the world's foundation
You predestined to adopt me as your own
You have raised me up so high above my station
I'm a child of God by grace and grace alone*

Let's get Practical, Specific: {DP seq}

- Keep a list of God's Blessings to count and Praise him for! When you wake at night and cannot fall back asleep, read that list, and praise Him in thanksgiving-filled prayer. Have that list on your **smart phone, {DP}** "ready to read"
- **Listen** to songs of thanksgiving. Have a **PLAYlist** of songs of praise that minister.
- **WRITE songs or poems** of personal thanksgiving . . . don't need to be professional.
- List precious verses of Scripture that renew your ❤️ in His glorious character, goodness.

One of my "go to" passage is Revelation 5, where despite weeping in heaven, God is the centre of all things . . .

*"Do not weep! See! The Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, has triumphed!...
He are worthy to open the scroll, because you were slain,
and with His blood He purchased for God
persons from every tribe & tongue & nation.*

*In a loud voice they were saying:
"Worthy is the Lamb, who was slain"*

The Lion became a sacrificial Lamb for us, restoring all hope, removing all tears.

BLESS GOD COLLECTIVELY - WITH REINFORCEMENTS! (vv. 20-22) {DP}

After David calls upon his own heart to praise the Lord for his many blessings, he then calls upon all to do the same.

(we've already read the verses or national and universal praise).

Ascending up Mt. Zion to various worship festivals, Israel would *singing to one another* the truths of God's redemption . . . and continue to do the same at the top in Jerusalem. So must we, church!...coming with a song of praise on our hearts . . . leaving with news songs of praise on our hearts.

What really helps us when we gather, and in conversations before and after church? While there is a time for stern reminders, it might lead you to despair if I said to you,

"Snap out of it, you dull brother! You slack sister! Look at what the Lord has done for you!"

But if instead I spoke passionately,

"Look what the Lord has done FOR ME!"

That tends to be contagious! God-reorienting. Hope-inspiring.

What are you thankful for?

What can you speak about today, after service, to praise God, saying,
“Look what the Lord has done . . . for me this week/this month!”

WE NEED Each other to turn our thoughts to God!

I need you to turn MY thoughts Christ-ward!

You see, without Jesus, it really is *“woe is me”*, because God is Holy and I am not!

Believers throughout the Bible express this . . . Isaiah, Moses, Peter . . . **{DPa}**

***“Woe is me! For I am a man of unclean lips,
 and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord!”*** (Isaiah 6:5)

“Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God!” (Exodus 3:8)

“Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man.” (Peter, in Luke 5:8)

Without Jesus, we rightly expect this from a holy God: **{DPb}**

“BE GONE you wretch! Retreat in Shame!”

BUT because God sent His Son, instead He says to the repentant:

“COME HERE, my love! I bore the blame!”

The sinful ‘woman at the well’ was ‘outed’ by Jesus:

a wake of moral failure behind her, with 5 past husbands!,
 and moral failure in front of her, shackled up with a guy not her husband.

YET Jesus offers her true satisfaction of “Living Water”, and identified Himself as her hope, her holiness . . . they supplier of her real needs. The penny drops for her:

She realises Jesus is Messiah! The promised One to make things right, even us sinners. Having “appraised” Jesus, she runs into town, despite her reputation, declaring:

***“COME, see a man who told me all that I ever did!
 Can this be the Christ?”***

They went out of the town and were COMING to Him.” (John 4:28-30)

They ended up trusting in Jesus, too, because she ***declared to others*** “what Jesus has done for her”! As a worshipper (worth-shipper), she served as a worth-appraiser.

Like those ‘appraisers/estimators’ from the TV series **Antiques Roadshow {DP}**

Let’s say they cruise through Brisbane with a camera crew, and have a table set up offering “free appraisals” on anything.

Your wife (who loves the show) spontaneously decides to get her wedding ring valued, since she heard from your *grandma* it was a family heirloom she wanted to pass along.

This news fills you with abject horror, since *grandpa* was at the same time secretly whispering in your ear that he thought it was probably cubic zirconia (fake diamond) ... a detail you never passed along to wifey! After all, who were you to pass up a free wedding ring! But *now* you will be outed – and on national television!

You are sweating profusely, as your wife happily hands over her ring to the antique valuer/estimator – who puts on his monocle magnifier, and breathes out a *strange* sigh.

As you ready yourself to grab the crew's video camera and make a run for it to save your reputation! . . . the awestruck estimator, explains this jewel & setting was not only hand-crafted by the most famous jeweller of centuries gone by, it's of **royal** lineage!

All of a sudden – *everything changes!*

Actually, the RING has not changed. Only YOU have – your Valuation/Appreciation of it
The cost associated with “maintaining” it – cleaning it, insuring it – is NOTHING compared to its value!

With great THANKSGIVING, you tell others of its worth and rejoice!

So it is with the **good news of Jesus** – the pearl of greatest price, the treasure hidden in a field! It is worth EVERYTHING to gain that treasure:

eternal pardon & peace with God – in His very presence, in a new heaven & earth, the Home of Righteousness!

Of all God's blessings, the most important is the most lasting:
the ETERNAL blessing of HIMSELF. As so we sing, {DP}

*And on that day When my strength is failing
The end draws near And my time has come
Still my soul will Sing Your praise unending
Ten thousand years And then forevermore!*

And so we must tell others!

Not only the world in evangelism . . . but one another **every Sunday**, SINGING heartily of God's worth: *BLESS THE LORD, o my soul!*

In doing so, we become Value Estimators/Re-Estimators, freshly pointing each other to Jesus and his worth . . . even amidst our trials.

*“I consider that the **sufferings** of this present time are not worth comparing with the **glory** that is going to be revealed to us!” (Romans 8:18)*

I was humbled and my life impacted by a man in Bible College whose life – by the world's account – would be considered CURSED by God.

He was a sickly man with coke-bottle glasses, extremely crooked yellow teeth.

He stood *maybe* 5 feet tall. And one leg was so much shorter than the other, the sole of his right shoe had a 12cm add-on to level his legs. He was unmarried, deemed unmarriageable.

If you'd expect anyone to be **bitter** . . . it would be him!

But **every** Sunday, and even during the week when I was paired with him for counselling training, I heard nothing from him except the GOODNESS of God to him in many ways!

I so NEEDED his perspective, his praise to God, his “valuation” of all things in Christ. I STILL need it. And likely you do to!

After service, can we please tell one another,

“Consider what the Lord has done for me!”

Bless the Lord, O my soul!

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Main Idea:

Heartfelt Praise comes from Counting God's Blessings

- Bless God ***Personally*** for His benefits (vv. 1-2)
 - 1a] Why do you think David begins this psalm by addressing himself?
 - b] Do you ever address yourself? When/Where? What does it look like?
 - 2] How would you unpack what the preacher called "*Blessings Plagiarism*"?
 - Why is it important to "credit" the Giver of gifts?
 - How does Remembering God's good PURPOSES for His gifts *prevent idolatry & protect praise*?
 - 3] The 'Philippians 4 Factor'
 - Considering Phil 4:4-9, how *should* THANKSGIVING impact the peace of God in our lives?
 - How *is* it impacting the peace of God in your life? [what does your thanksgiving look like?]
 - Share a time when praying with thanksgiving made a difference in your life.
 - What *changes* do you think you need to make to in your life re. thanking God for His blessings?
- Bless God ***Specifically*** for His benefits (vv. 3-18)
 - 4] What are some specific blessings David lists?
 - 5] Do you have a list? What does your list look like? (Please share an item or two from it!)
 - Is your list ever-expanding?
 - How will Beholding God in the *Word* help it expand? (what favourite verses can you go to?)
 - How will Beholding God in His *World* help it expand? (see Psalm 8:3-8, Psalm 19:1-6)
 - How will Beholding God in *Worship* help it expand? (what *songs* renew your heart/mind?)
- Bless God ***Collectively*** – *with Reinforcements!* (vv. 19-22)
 - 6] Why is the Eternal blessing of God worth more than all His Earthly blessings combined?
 - Are you confident that you've personally repented and trusted in Jesus?
 - 7] Why do we need each other for "reinforcement" of God's Blessings?
 - [lots of reasons here: our suffering, our sin, our forgetfulness, our focus]
 - What are some practical ways this "reinforcement" can express itself, as we help one another appraise & re-appraise the worth of Christ?