

Intro: Couple of years ago I was asleep on the couch when my daughter Steph came home from work, woke me up Where have you been? I have been trying to call! When I left work (Arundel Mills Mall) heard loud bang under car, oil light Drove all the way home, car smells really funny...and it won't start up!

It had been a LONG week. Away, things in a dozen other areas were not going well...now this...

Went out...finally got it started..moved it across street...but it was not good...all could think, was engine ruined!

Next day I called Ed Thomas, came and picked it up, called me back, said, not a drop of oil in it, oil plug gone!

What do you do when you feel like your world is crashing in? When everything around you seems to be falling apart, no matter what you do, you can't seem to get things back on track! Where do you turn, how do you respond? How do you pray?

THAT is what David is writing to us about in Psalm 103: And this is what he tells us: Trust the Character of God!

When you don't know what's going on...when nothing seems to make sense, when everything looks bad...trust God!

But, he doesn't just say those words...David Gives us three very specific things we can do to build our faith and trust in God

Psalm 103 Page 428

1. Remind Yourself Of God's Past Blessings In Your Life.

Vs 1-5

David STARTS with praising God: Not our natural response in the midst of uncertain circumstances, but he is setting the tone Don't Forget His Benefits:

- **Don't Forget:**

~ To mislay:

To be so distracted by what is going on that you put it to side and can't find it

~ To be oblivious to:

To not see something...because you are focused elsewhere! (Problem)

~ To not pay attention to:

To neglect something, to overlook, to not take into account, disregard

- **Benefits:** the Actions, Benefits and Blessings of God!

~Forgives ALL your sins!

God releases them...we no long OWE Him for our failures, shortcomings, mistakes

~Heals:

Make Whole: Physical Healing: Emotional Healing: Spiritual Healing

~Redeems life:

Buys back from the pit! Justly deserved hell; pays price FOR you! FREE/ RANSOM

~Crowns with love/compassion:

Lit = to circle around with, to encompass you with love and compassion: Cover you

~Satisfies your desires:

To fill you up with good things: So you have PLENTY: ALL YOU NEED!

David says to us, Listen: When you are in trouble...and you aren't sure what is happening, REMIND YOURSELF Go back, rehearse in your mind all the times that God has been faithful to you, Count your blessings, Number them

Here is why I think David says that: We are broke, our minds and our hearts...we forget...the good leaks away, bad stays! I read this week someone that said it this way:

We TRASH the TREASURES...and we TREASURE the TRASH!

Good: We throw it out...we don't hold on to it...we forget it, mislay it, neglect it, don't pay attention to it, oblivious to it!

Bad: We hold on to it...treasure it. We nurture it, take care of it, take it out and turn it over and relive it!

Research: 1 in 5 or 1 in 10: Either way...we TRASH the TREASURES...and WE TREASURE the TRASH

David says: Don't do it! Instead, when the bad comes...REMEMBER THE GOOD, Don't forget God's Benefits and Blessings

2. Remember The Patterns Of How God Works In Your Life.

Vs 6-13

After he tells us to remind ourselves of God's work in our life David then moves on to tell us to Remember HOW God works Here what David is telling us is, Yes, you can build your faith by remembering WHAT He has done, but, you can ALSO build your faith by Remembering and Reviewing the ways in which God normally works.

Here is why that is important. When you know what to expect from God based on His character, it is much easier to recognize His work, and look for the places where He is most likely to be at work. When you know His character and patterns, See Him

Illus: Suppose you came to me and said, I was downtown the other day, met one of your daughters, started talking, so funny! She told me about her favorite places in Annapolis, about where she likes to go, what she likes to do...30 min convo: I would say, "What was Jennifer doing down her from Harrisburg? Because...that would NEVER be Stephanie!

When you know someone's character, then you KNOW what to expect from them! (11)

- **Made known His ways:**

Ways: Lit = Road, Path, Custom, Pattern of life or behavior

~ Compassionate:

God is always moved with compassion...He cares about what is happening in our lives!

~ Gracious:

Full of grace, unmerited favor and care...to be gentle spirited, kind to someone struggling

~ Slow to anger:

Long suffering...not quickly irritated or upset with or at us (Slow to breath hard!)

~ Abounding in love:

Overflowing, Abundant, Plentiful love for us: He doesn't run out quickly: (My last nerve)

~ Not accuse:

Never going to be a nudge: LOL, Not going to irritate you all the time!

~ Not harbor anger:

Doesn't guard, cherish, or nurture His anger! Not simmering in the background!

~ Not treat as deserve:

Doesn't bestow upon us what our sins deserve!

~ Not repay our iniquities

Doesn't reward us with what you have earned for our sin!

~ Unconditional Love

As limitless as the sky is the love of God (The Love of God) song

~ Removes transgressions

Lit = He DRIVES our sins away: (Scapegoat)

~ Father nurtures

Like a father comforts and nurtures his child Lit = as a father hugs brokenhearted kid

Illus: How do you get to know someone so well that you can tell what they are going to do...before they do it?
How do you get to know someone so well that you know whether or not they acted...when you didn't see it?
How do you know someone so well that you KNOW they didn't DO that...because that isn't their character!
You spend time with them. You hang out with them. You walk, and talk, and pray, and care, and serve...
You know them so well...because you have been with them!

David says, When life is falling apart...you can KNOW what God is doing...and HOW He will act...If you have been with Him
When you start to question, God, what are you doing, why are you allowing this...is this from YOU
You can know...If you know Him

You can know if you should go with it, learn from it, grow through it...or if you should reject it...because..
God DOESN'T work that way!

3. Rest In The Fact That God Remembers And Understands Your Limitations. Vs 14-22

The final thing David tells us about trusting the character of God is that we can rest in the knowledge that He knows us
He understands the limitations we have as sinful humans.

David isn't saying here that we have an excuse for acting any way that we want. He isn't giving us a pass.
What he IS saying is that God remembers that we are human, that we are sinners, that we are not perfect.

- God knows our limitations: Vs 14
~He Knows: Lit = *He sees, understands and discerns how we are put together. He KNOWS our limitations*
~He Remembers Dust: Lit = *He is mindful of the fact that as smart as we might be...Handful of dirt!*
~We are like Him...but we are NOT Him!
- God He knows we have a very limited perspective
~We are like the grass in the field: Here today, Gone tomorrow
Fragile, Limited, Everything seems so important...
Time seems so long...a year seems forever to us...but to Him a thousand years is like a day
God GETS us...and knows our limitations...
- God knows we are "trying" those who fear him, teach children, keep covenant
~I think part of what David is saying to us is, God is like a parent, discovers the child "helping" cook: Mess all over
~God gives us "credit" even when we mess things up...when our heart and our intention is right...it Counts!

CONCL: After I got the car moved I told my daughter...It's probably ruined...we will figure it out in the morning...Bed
Lying there...and I KNEW she was upset...I knew she was worried...I knew she was unable to sleep, I couldn't!
All I could do was toss and turn and try to think, where am I going to get 3-5 thousand dollars to fix that car
And as I was lying there...praying...God said...what are you worried about...spoke to my heart...and I got up went
downstairs...and I told her:

Don't worry. God has this. This problem isn't bigger than He is. Go to bed and sleep, it's ok.
Remember this. For the past 20 years you have grown up in a house that God GAVE us...never afforded it
Every single day of your life you have walked down a flight of stairs that I stood on when I looked at the house with your mom
And I laughed and said...there is NO WAY we could ever afford to live here...And you He was faithful to provide...He will

The next day, mid morning, Ed called back, said Pastor...I can't explain it. There is NO OIL Plug...and No oil in that car
She drove on the freeway for 20 miles from Arundel Mills. I told my mechanic, put a plug in it..fill it with oil, test drive
I had him check the compression on the cylinders...and they are fine!

All I can say is that somewhere out an angel has a black ring around his thumb and is going, "Ouch...that hurt!"

Today, if your world is falling apart...when you are struggling...don't understand what is happening or why

1. Remind yourself of His past blessing: Treasure the Treasures! (Go back and make a list!)
2. Remember how He works: Look for the well worn pathways of God's work. They are there, Know Him well
3. Rest in His understanding of Limits: He knows you are but dust

When you do those three things...You can stand regardless of what comes.

Maybe you don't Know Him that well? You can:
He is patient, longsuffering...He wants to KNOW you..
Come...Get to know Him...