The Loving Kindness of God

Adam Willingham · Psalm 103

INTRODUCTION

- What I want to do this morning is focus on a text that tells us the true nature of the God of the Old Testament that is also the God of the New Testament.
- You could also summarize it as bless the Lord, O my soul. Because this psalm begins and ends with that statement.
- God exercises tremendous loving kindness to those who fear him. And his loving kindness is shown in his patience, in his mercy, in his forgiveness, and in his compassion.

1 Compassionate and Gracious, Slow to Anger

Psalm 103:8; Exodus 34:6–7; Numbers 14:17–19

- This verse succinctly encapsulates the very essence of God's love toward those who fear him.
- This is his name, that he is compassionate, that he is gracious, slow to anger, abounding in loving kindness and truth. That is his character.
- Did the people deserve to be forgiven? They didn't deserve it. But our God is slow to anger, abounding in loving kindness and truth.
- Why should people repent? Because the God who commands you to repent is slow to anger and abounding in loving kindness.
- He longs to forgive. He doesn't want to punish. He doesn't want to destroy. He wants to save.

2 What God Does Not Do

Psalm 103:9–10; Romans 6:23

- He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. This passage tells us what God does not do.
- If God dealt with us according to our sins, what would be our state? We would all be dead.
- Thankfully, God does not give us what we deserve. Thank God for what he does not do.
- This actually is a negative statement that makes a positive statement about God's mercy.

3 A Vertical Comparison

Psalm 103:11

- For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his loving kindness toward those who fear him.
- The point is it's immeasurable.
- The idea here that God's love is as high as the heavens are above the earth, is the idea that his loving kindness is infinite.
- It's an unfathomable amount of love toward those who fear him.

4 A Horizontal Comparison

Psalm 103:12; Isaiah 1:18; Micah 7:18–19

- As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.
- Though we might tend to hang on to past sins that we've committed and repented of, God doesn't hang on to them.
- Though your sins are as scarlet, they shall be white as snow.
- Yes, you will cast all their sins into the depth of the sea. Who's going to go get them? They're gone.

5 A Relational Comparison

Psalm 103:13; Hosea 11:3; Luke 15:11–24

- Just as a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him.
- What a beautiful description this is, then, of the love that God has for his people.
- Yet it is I who taught Ephraim to walk. I took them in my arms.
- While he was still a long way off, his father saw him and felt compassion for him and ran and embraced him and kissed him.
- When he turns in humility, in repentance, with a sense of unworthiness, and chooses to come back to God, that God receives him with open arms.

> THE CHALLENGE
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> **So why don't you come with a humble heart to our God? Not just in one step of coming to the Lord and becoming a Christian, believing, repenting, confessing, and being baptized, but give him your life of service, a life of fearing him.**

MY NOTES