

Series: Psalms

Title: God's Love Toward Us

Text: Psalm 103: 10-18

Date: July 16, 2020

Place: SGBC, NJ

Psalm 103 is a Psalm of David. The entire Psalm is so good, every word is wonderful. But for now I want to look at verses 10-18—

Psalm 103: 10: [The LORD] hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

Paul's prayer was that we might know the love of Christ.

Eph 3: 18: May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19: And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

Our text gives those dimensions of Christ's love

- The height of God's love—**v11: For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.**
- The breadth of his love—**12: As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.**
- The depth of his love—**13: Like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. 14: For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.**
- The length of his love—**15: As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. 16: For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. 17: But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; 18: To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.**

Subject: God's Love Toward Us

Before we look at this passage, we need to find out who the "us" are. Notice **V11: great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; V13: the LORD pities those who fear Him; V17: the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear Him**

"Fear" is a God-given reverence for God. This is not for those who excuse their sin. It is not for those who justify their sin by their sin, saying, "We all sin every day so this is just one more sin that I am going to commit." This is to those born of God, who have a God-given reverence for God so that they hate their sin. They mourn their sin. They do not want to sin because they know their sin is against the God they love and revere. This is for those who are born again of God the Holy Spirit in whom he has created a new heart that desires to be found only in Christ because we see something of God's holiness and our sinfulness. This is for those who desire not to sin against God but to obey him out of reverence for God.

Then notice this is written **v18: To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.**

Christ is the Covenant—God said, “*I have given thee for a Covenant of the people*” and Christ fulfilled the covenant for God and for his people (Is 49:8). By God’s grace we keep his covenant and do his commandments by believing on Christ. This is to them to whom God has granted faith in Christ in whom the Spirit has produced true love, charity and fear of God.

Now, if that does not describe you, I urge you to pay attention to this gospel. Oh that God would grant someone repentance and faith in Christ this hour.

Subject: God’s Love Toward Us

Proposition: God deals with his elect in everlasting love in Christ his Son and saves all his elect.

THE “NOT” OF GOD’S LOVE

Psalm 103: 10: [The LORD] hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.

First, we see God’s love in how God has not dealt with us. If God dealt with us after our sins, if God rewarded us according to our iniquities, if God paid us the wages of sin what would happen to us? He would have left us in our sins, spiritually dead. God would have left the world in our hearts so that we would have ran after this world and our sins all our lives. Then in the end God would reward us with eternal, just, condemnation.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Like all other sinners, God’s people have never done anything but sin against God: *before* we knew him and *since* we’ve known him. We deserve nothing from God but condemnation. That is one reason why our text remind us that *God hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities.*

We see an obvious, immoral, sinner—a rotten scoundrel. Sadly, it is our fleshly way to deal with them according to their sins. We turn up our nose. We say, “I never.” But brethren, before God, in ourselves, we are that rotten scoundrel. Yet, God hath not dealt with us after our sins. Lord, make us deal with one another the way you have dealt with us. Do not let us rejoice in judgment, make us rejoice in mercy. Make us deal with our brethren in love the way you have dealt with us.

THE HEIGHT OF GOD’S LOVE

Psalm 103: 11: For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.

Think of God’s mercy throughout the ages to his elect.

Adam sinned against God and plunged the entire human race into sin. We have heard of awful serial killers. But Adam killed every person every born. Will such a murderer of souls be granted mercy by God? Christ sought him out. He brought Adam to confess his sin. Then our Lord clothed him and saved him. Oh, the height of God’s loving mercy!

God delivered Noah from the flood of God's justice. God shut Noah up in the ark so that not one drop of justice fell on him, only on the ark. Noah was shown a vivid type of Christ who bore the justice of God in place of his elect. Yet, Noah was not on the ground very long at all and we find him passed out in his tent drunk. Still, God showed Moses mercy for Christ's sake and holds him up in the scripture as a trophy of his grace.

Abraham denied Sarah was his wife in order to save himself, allowing her to be preyed upon by pagan kings. Yet, in great mercy, God chastened Abraham, kept him looking to Christ and commends Abraham in the scriptures for his faithfulness.

Lot went to live in Sodom. Ultimately, he had to be dragged out by the Angel of the Lord. Yet scripture calls him just Lot. It is because Lot was robed in Christ's righteousness and God declared him a righteous man. Do you see God's mercy?

David committed adultery with far more than Bathsheba. He had multiple wives and concubines. David committed murder far more than Uriah. David numbered Israel and caused 70,000 to die at one time. Yet, God called David a man after his own heart. It is because in mercy God created in David a new heart in which was no guile, only the true holiness of Christ. It is because Christ was David's righteousness. Oh, the great love and mercy of God!

Solomon sinned so greatly that some do not even think Solomon was a believer. He had 700 hundred wives and 300 hundred concubines. They were pagan, idolatrous wives which was against the law of God. Solomon even allowed his wives to bring their idolatrous worship into Israel and he joined them. Yet, God says there is none like Solomon for wisdom because in mercy God made Christ his Wisdom and God viewed him in Christ. Oh, what mercy! Oh, the height of God's love!

That is only a few men and only a few of their outward acts of sins. They were guilty of far more sins of the heart. And that is true of you and me who God shows continual mercy! How could God speak so highly of his saints in the scriptures?—*For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is his mercy toward them that fear him.*

I want to love my brethren in mercy as God loves me. James said, *"In many things we offend all" or "in many things we all offend" (Ja 3:2)*. Our unity depends upon Christ constraining us to show mercy when we offend one another or when we are offended. The moment we cease showing mercy everything will become about "me"! We will see only faults in others. But we will not see one fault in ourselves. We will become so lifted up in self-righteous pride that no one will be able to convince us that we are the problem. It will make us feel judged by our brethren. Eventually, it will consume us until we separate ourselves from our brethren while putting all the blame on them. But God in mercy continues to show us his great love and mercy by constraining each of his children to never cease being merciful to one another. We are sinners: proud Pharisee's by nature. So we may fall into self-righteous pride. But if we are God's child, God shall chasten us by reminding us that the only reason we are not in hell this moment is God's free and sovereign mercy toward us. By this God will break his child's heart and make us delight in mercy even as God delights to show us mercy.

THE BREADTH OF GOD'S LOVE

Psalm 103: 12: As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.

This picture is of the *infinite removal* of all the transgressions of all God's elect. If you travel north eventually you go south, vice versa; the distance between north and south can be measured at around 12,000 miles. But the distance between east and west cannot be measured. God hath so far removed our transgressions from us—that it is infinite and immeasurable. That is the breadth of God's love in Christ.

But God is holy. He will not clear the guilty! All his people are guilty and must die. So how did God remove all the transgressions of all his people? Oh, the breadth of love! God came down and became a Man. Christ the Son made himself a servant to serve God as his people under his own law. Christ became us on the cross: by bearing all our sins in his own body on the tree then by bearing all our curse, all our judgment, all God's wrath unto death. Now, we are seated with Christ, perfectly righteous, at God's right hand. Justice is satisfied toward all God's elect. Our body of sins has been crucified. In Christ we have no sin for God to remember. Look at verses 1-4.

Psalm 103: 1: Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name. 2: Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: 3: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases; 4: Who redeemeth thy life from destruction...

Believer, God has forgiven all thine iniquities. They do not exist before God. God so completely pardons that not one iniquity remains. Henry Law said, "Forgiveness gloriously shines in the splendor of completeness." Christ has healed all our diseases. Oh, we get sick and die but only our sinful flesh; our new man is healed because with his stripes ye are healed. Christ redeemeth thy life from destruction—the price of his precious blood purchased us from eternal destruction.

Believer, here is heavenly arithmetic: no sin plus Christ's righteousness equals eternal life! Christ said, "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life*" (Jn 6:47). Believer do not be afraid of physical death. It will be the greatest day of our life. Immediately we will be with our Lord.

THE DEPTH OF GOD'S LOVE

Psalm 103: 13: Like as a father pitieth *his* children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. 14: For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we *are* dust.

A father pities his children with deep, deep tender affection. We have deep love, deep compassion, deep empathy for our children. Our hearts go out to them. Our hearts break for them. Well, God our Father pitieth his child infinitely deeper. "Pitieth" is close to the word "merciful" in *v8*. It means loving compassion. It is so good to know that God's mercy is from a heart of compassion toward us. A president can show mercy to a convict without loving compassion. But God's mercy is full of love and compassion toward his children.

He knows our frame; he remembers we are but dust. He created us from dust. Therefore, when dead in our sins what did our heavenly Father do for us? Notice verses 4-5.

Psalm 103: 4...who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies; 5: Who satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.

In loving compassion, God took us from the dung heap and set us among princes. He crowned us with his lovingkindness and tender mercies—Christ made us kings and priests unto God in his precious blood.

In loving pity God gave us life, revealing Christ in us and *satisfied thy mouth with good things*. “O taste and see that the Lord is good, blessed is the man that trusteth in him” (Ps 34:8). You who are born of God have “tasted the good word of God” (Heb 6:5). “If so be that you have tasted that the Lord is gracious” (1 Pet 2:3). God gave us a hunger and thirst after righteousness—Christ’s righteousness.

By his continual compassion *youth is renewed like the eagles.*” Christ has made us a new creation; eternally youthful; eternally alive. And in pity God continually renews our inner man day by day by Christ our Life!

Psalm 103: 6: The LORD executeth righteousness and judgment for all that are oppressed. 7: He made known his ways unto Moses, his acts unto the children of Israel.

Knowing we are dust, in endless, loving pity God governs this entire world for his weak children. God compassionately protects you and I who are his as his own inheritance, as the apple of his eye.

Deuteronomy 32: 9: For the LORD’S portion *is* his people; Jacob *is* the lot of his inheritance. 10: He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye. 11: As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: 12: *So* the LORD alone did lead him, and *there was* no strange god with him.

God showed pity to Moses in his protection to his elect in Israel.

1 Chronicles 16: 20: And *when* they went from nation to nation, and from *one* kingdom to another people; 21: He suffered no man to do them wrong: yea, he reproveth kings for their sakes, 22: *Saying*, Touch not mine anointed, and do my prophets no harm.

In pity to his people all who oppress his people shall receive just retribution at the hand of God.

Deuteronomy 32: 35: To me *belongeth* vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in *due* time: for the day of their calamity *is* at hand, and the things that shall come upon them make haste. 36: For the LORD shall judge his people, and repent himself for his servants, when he seeth that *their* power is gone, and *there is* none shut up, or left.

Psalm 103: 8: The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy. 9: He will not always chide [rebuke]: neither will he keep *his anger* for ever. 10: He does not deal with us after our sins...

Since he pities us in love, knowing we are but dust, when he corrects his child for our sins, he does so compassionately in love. Christ put away the wrath of God toward us. So God our Father chastens us in love. And God gets the job done! He does not rebuke always: he effectually grants repentance, effectually changes our heart toward our sin making us loath ourselves and effectually turns us to Christ. But then the rebuke is over. He does not destroy, he restores us; he does not judge us, he loves us to Christ. And because he knows we are but dust, he does not give us more than we can bear.

Isaiah 27: 8: In measure, when it shooteth forth, thou wilt debate with it: he stayeth his rough wind in the day of the east wind.

Oh bless God for the depth of his love—*like as a father pitieth his children, so the LORD pitieth them that fear him. For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.*

THE LENGTH OF GOD'S LOVE

Psalm 103: 15: As for man, his days are as grass: as a flower of the field, so he flourisheth. 16: For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more. 17: But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children; 18: To such as [believe on Christ and love one another]

Our love for each other ends: our flesh is as grass. But God's love, his mercy, is from everlasting to everlasting.

Hebrews 13:5: Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: [be content in whatsoever state you are in] for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

Christ told his disciples that they would all forsake him. But Christ declared that he was not alone because the Father was always with him. Brethren when you feel forsaken by all—when you are forsaken by those you love most who you thought would never forsake you—rest assured, Christ is with you!

Isaiah 49: 15: Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee. 16: Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me.

The soul that on Jesus hath leaned for repose
I will not, I will not, desert to his foes;
That soul, though all hell should endeavor to shake,
I'll never, no never, no never, forsake!

I ask God to make me love my brethren at least in some measure the way God loves me, don't you? I do not want to deal with you after your sins because God has not dealt with me that way. I want to rejoice in mercy toward you as God has been merciful to me. If God has forgiven and forgotten your sins then let me forgive and forget. I want to show you mercy with loving pity and compassion, I want to hurt when you hurt and show you compassion as God does me. I want to do so for everlasting to everlasting—and brethren by God's grace we shall—charity never faileth! When we no longer have faith and hope we shall still love Christ and love our brethren. Oh, the deep, deep love of our Lord Jesus toward sinners like us:

Could we with ink the ocean fill
And were the skies of parchment made
Were every stalk on earth a quill
And every man a scribe by trade

To write the love of God above
Would drain the ocean dry

Nor could the scroll contain the whole
Though stretched from sky to sky

Amen!