

**Wednesday, May 27, 2020**  
**Devotional Thoughts from Pastor Jim Murr...**

**"Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!  
Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, who forgives all your iniquity,  
who heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit,  
who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy,  
who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's."**

*Psalm 103: 1-5*

Psalm 103 encourages us not to forget "the benefits" of our relationship with God. Is it actually possible to forget the "benefits" of knowing God, and of being in a close relationship with Him? I think it might be. We tend to pay close attention to the benefits of other things in our lives. Most of us go to bed every night because we know the benefits of a good night's sleep. We eat food every day because we know the benefits of eating. If we are still in the working phase of our life, we keep going to work because we know the benefits of having a job.

We are actually pretty good at doing things that "benefit" us. But we know something is off when someone stops doing even the most basic things that are a benefit to them. If someone can't sleep, or chooses not to sleep, we know something is not right. If someone won't eat, we know something isn't right. If someone purposely doesn't go to work anymore, it's obvious that something is amiss.

David says in Psalm 103: "Don't forget the benefits of God." He forgives you. He heals you. He gives you good things and He renews your strength. And yet some people choose not to go anywhere near God, or they only have a very casual relationship with Him. Why might this be? I think David may be onto something when he says, "Don't forget the benefits of God."

It's hard to forget to sleep or eat, since we have a constant reminder from sleepiness and hunger. They are built-in reminders of our need for sleep and food. Is it easy to forget our need to be close to God? It might be easy to feel the need for something special in our lives, but it may not be so easy to realize that it's God we need.

In Psalm 103, David tells us that that "something" might be intimacy with God. He has everything we need: forgiveness, healing, love, and strength for life. He's a loving God who reaches into your life and "satisfies you with good things."

So, how do we experience all of these benefits? We remain as close to God as possible by being in His Word every day. That's where His benefits come to meet us. If you're tired, you go to bed. If you're hungry, you eat food. If you need God, you go where He promises to meet us: in His Word.

God's peace!  
Pastor Jim