

Sermon Title: **"BLESSED: LIVING A GRATEFUL LIFE IN...!"**

Sermon Text: **Psalms 103**

*Introduction:*

**GOOD MORNING TO ALL!** We praise the Lord for another beautiful Sunday morning that He has given us. We thank the Lord for our guests joining us this morning in person & online! For the information of those coming for the first time, we are studying the Book of Psalms under the theme **"PONDERINGS THE PSALMS: FINDING MEANING & PURPOSE IN THE PANDEMIC."** Last Sunday, we tackle a very interesting psalm, Psalm 92, and we discovered the secret to **"LIVING A FLOURISHING LIFE IN THE MIDST OF A PANDEMIC/CRISIS"** – AN ABUNDANT LIFE AMIDST ADVERSITIES OF LIFE, AND THE KEY IS BEING **"ROOTED OR DEEPLY & FIRMLY PLANTED IN THE LORD!"** NOW, THIS ENTAILS **A FOCUSED HEART & A DISCIPLINED LIFE OF WORSHIP!** Today, we are going to look at Psalm 103, a familiar psalm, and we are going to discover why we should live **"A GRATEFUL LIFE" or "A LIFE OF PRAISE"** EVEN IN THE MIDST OF A PANDEMIC! CAN WE PAUSE FOR A WHILE AND COMMIT TO THE LORD OUR STUDY THIS MORNING...**LET'S PRAY!**

**A. DAVID EXHORTS ALL GOD'S CREATION TO PRAISE HIM!**

**PSALM 103 IS AN EXHORTATION OF DAVID CALLING ON ALL GOD'S CREATION TO BLESS OR GIVE PRAISE TO THE LORD!**

**THE FIRST THING THAT I WOULD LIKE US TO SEE HERE IS DAVID CALLING & EXHORTING ENTITIES/BEINGS TO GIVE PRAISE AND GLORIFY THE LORD. THERE ARE FOUR ENTITIES OR BEINGS THAT ARE BEING CALLED UPON BY DAVID TO BLESS OR GIVE PRAISE TO GOD. TAKE NOTE THAT TO "BLESS" MEANS TO PRAISE, TO WORSHIP OR GLORIFY. NOW, THE FIRST ENTITY TO BLESS OR GIVE PRAISE TO THE LORD IS MANKIND.**

**1) All His people is to praise the Lord!**

**"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."**

**(Psalm 103: 1-2, CSB)**

***“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...” (vv. 1-2, ESV)***

**AS REPRESENTED BY DAVID, BELIEVERS, HIS PEOPLE SHOULD BE THE FIRST TO BLESS & GIVE PRAISE TO GOD AND MAKER. DAVID WAS ACTUALLY DOING A POSITIVE SELF-TALK. HE IS EXHORTING HIS SOUL TO “PRAISE THE LORD!”**

**NOW, NOTICE THE PHRASE – “ALL THAT IS WITHIN ME/ WITH ALL OUR INMOST BEING...” (v. 1). THIS MEANS THAT WE ARE TO PRAISE THE LORD WITH OUR CORE BEING. THE BIBLE TEACHES US THAT WE ARE MADE UP OF THE MATERIAL (VISIBLE) AND THE IMMATERIAL (INVISIBLE). THE MATERIAL IS THE BODY AND THE IMMATERIAL ARE THE SOUL AND SPIRIT. SO, IF WE ARE MADE UP OF THREE PARTS, TWO THIRDS OF US WHICH IS THE CORE OF OUR BEING ARE TO PRAISE GOD. IN SIMPLE WORDS, WHAT DAVID IS TELLING US IS THAT WE ARE TO PRAISE GOD WITH ALL WE’VE GOT, WITH ALL OUR BEST EFFORT.**

**CHURCH/FRIENDS, ARE WE LIVING OUR LIFE RIGHT NOW, WITH A CLEAR GOAL OF GIVING PRAISE AND HONOR TO HIS NAME? ARE WE LIVING FOR HIM, TO GLORIFY HIM? ARE WE GIVING YOUR BEST SHOT FOR THE LORD?**

**2) All His mighty angels are to praise the Lord!**

***“Bless the Lord, all his angels of great strength, who do his word, obedient to his command.” (v. 20)***

***“Bless the Lord, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his word!” (v. 20, ESV)***

**THE SECOND ENTITY THAT DAVID CALLS TO PRAISE THE LORD ARE THE MIGHTY ANGELS. I THINK THEY REFER TO THE ELITE ANGELS WHO ARE ACTUALLY MINISTERING AND SERVING THE LORD IN THE HEAVENLY COURTS. THESE ARE THOSE WHO ATTEND TO THE LORD AND ARE TO PERFORM SPECIAL & IMPORTANT OTASKS OR ORDERS GIVEN BY THE LORD.**

THEY REMIND US OF **ANGEL MICHAEL** WHO FOUGHT DEMONS IN ORDER TO BRING TO PASS THE PRAYERS OF DANIEL IN **DANIEL 10**. IT ALSO REFER TO **ANGEL GABRIEL** WHO BROUGHT THE NEWS TO ZECHARIAH AND ELIZABETH THAT THEY ARE GOING TO HAVE A SON AND THAT THIS SON WILL MINISTER IN THE SPIRIT AND POWER OF ELIJAH AND PREPARE THE WAY FOR THE MESSIAH (LUKE 1). HE IS THE SAME ANGEL TASKED TO TELL JOSEPH AND MARY THAT THEY WERE CHOSEN TO BE THE HUMAN PARENTS OF JESUS, THE MESSIAH, OUR EMMANUEL. **(LUKE 1 & 2)**

3) All **heavenly hosts** are to praise the Lord!

*“Bless the Lord, **all his armies**, his servants who do his will.”*  
(v. 21)

*“Bless the Lord, **all his hosts**, his ministers, who do his will!”*  
(v. 21, ESV)

THE THIRD ENTITY THAT DAVID CALLS TO PRAISE THE LORD IS **ALL HIS ARMIES OR ALL THE HEAVENLY HOSTS**. THEY REFER TO ALL THE **ANGELIC BEINGS** IN THE HEAVENS. THE BIBLE TEACHES US THAT THE LORD CREATED **MULTITUDES** OF ANGELS IN HEAVEN BUT THAT ONE THIRD OF THEM REBELLED WITH LUCIFER/SATAN & ARE NOW CALLED **DEMONS**.

I REMEMBER THE LORD JESUS WHEN HE WAS ARRESTED BY ROMAN SOLDIERS AS INSTIGATED BY THE RELIGIOUS LEADERS AT THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE. THE EVER IMPULSIVE APOSTLE PETER STRUCK WITH HIS SWORD ONE OF THE SERVANTS OF THE HIGH PRIEST TO PREVENT THE ARREST OF JESUS. BUT OUR LORD SAID THESE **AMAZING STATEMENT** WHICH IS EITHER TRUE OR HE WAS JUST BLUFFING. HE SAID,

*Then Jesus told him, “Put your sword back in its place because all who take up the sword will perish by the sword. **Or do you think that I cannot call on my Father, and he will provide me here and now with more than twelve legions of angels?** How, then, would the Scriptures be fulfilled that say it must happen this way?”*  
(Matt. 26: 52-54)

NOW, A **LEGION** DURING THAT TIME IS EQUIVALENT TO **6,000 SOLDIERS** BUT IT COULD ALSO MEAN “**MULTITUDE**.” SO, JESUS CAN CALL **72,000 ANGELS OR A MULTITUDE OF ANGELS** IN AN INSTANT. THAT’S HOW POWERFUL JESUS IS! AND THAT’S BECAUSE HE IS GOD! HE CAN COMMAND ANGELS TO SERVE HIM AT ANY MOMENT, ANYTIME. BUT HE DID NOT BECAUSE HE CAME WITH A DEFINITE PURPOSE – TO DIE FOR OUR SINS ON THE CROSS & PROVIDE **ATONEMENT OR RANSOM OR PAYMENT** OF OUR SINS- **JESUS’ SINLESS & PRECIOUS BLOOD!**

4) **All His works** are to praise the Lord!

*“Bless the Lord, **all his works** in all the places where he rules. My soul, bless the Lord! (v. 22)*

*“Praise the Lord, **all his works** everywhere in his dominion. Praise the Lord, my soul.” (v. 22, ESV)*

**FINALLY, DAVID CALLS ON ALL GOD’S WORKS OR CREATION TO PRAISE HIM.** DAVID UNDERSTOOD THAT ALL GOD’S CREATION WERE MADE TO BLESS OR GIVE PRAISE TO THEIR MAKER AND CREATOR. **ALL CREATION ARE MEANT TO BE GIVERS!** AND THIS IS ESPECIALLY TRUE OF MAN BECAUSE HE IS THE CROWNING GLORY OF GOD’S CREATION (PS. 8). WE ARE EXPECTED TO GIVE THE HIGHEST PRAISE AND GLORY TO GOD BECAUSE WE ARE THE ONLY CREATION THAT WAS MADE IN THE VERY IMAGE OF THE LORD & HAS THE CAPACITY/ABILITY TO DO SO.

B. DAVID **EXHORTS** GOD’S PEOPLE TO **FORGET NOT** HIS **BENEFITS!**

**NOW, THIS LEADS US TO OUR SECOND POINT OR HALF OF OUR MESSAGE TODAY– DAVID EXHORTS GOD’S PEOPLE TO FORGET NOT HIS BENEFITS OR BLESSINGS!** OBSERVE THAT AMONG THE ENTITIES ONLY MAN, PARTICULARLY GOD’S PEOPLE, WAS COMMANDED TO FORGET NOT THE BENEFITS OR BLESSINGS OF THE LORD TO THEM.

THIS REMINDS ME OF MOSES’ EXHORTATION & COMMAND GIVEN TO THE ISRAELITES BEFORE THEY ENTERED CANAAN.

*“You may say to yourself, ‘My power and my own ability have gained this wealth for me,’ but remember that the Lord your God gives you the power to gain wealth, in order to confirm his covenant he swore to your ancestors, as it is today. **If you ever forget the Lord your God and follow other gods to serve them and bow in worship to them, I testify against you today that you will certainly perish.**”*

*(Deut. 8: 17-19)*

*“My soul, bless the Lord, **and do not forget all his benefits.**” (v. 2)*

**C. DAVID ENUMERATES THE LORD’S BENEFITS TO HIS PEOPLE!**

**NOW, The NEXT THING THAT WE SEE DAVID SHARES TO US IN THIS PSALM IS THE LORD’S BENEFITS TO HIS PEOPLE IN VERSES 3-19!**

**1) The Lord is our SAVIOR & REDEEMER!**

*“He forgives all your iniquity...” (v. 3a)*

*And the Lord God commanded the man, “You are free to eat from any tree of the garden, but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, **for on the day you eat from it, you will certainly die.**” (Gen. 2: 16-17)*

*“And when you were dead in trespasses and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, **he made you alive with him and forgave us all our trespasses.**” (Col. 2: 13)*

**THE FIRST REASON IS BECAUSE HE FORGIVES OUR SINS BY HIS DEATH ON THE CROSS & ASSURED US OF ETERNAL LIFE & INHERITANCE BY HIS RESURRECTION! WE LEARNED FROM GOD’S WORD THAT MAN’S GREATEST PROBLEM IS OUR SINFUL HEART OR NATURE (GEN. 2:16-17; ROM. 3:23. JER. 17:8,10). BUT THE LORD PROVIDED A SAVIOR FOR US. THE ONE WHO WOULD LIVE THE LIFE THAT WE CAN NOT LIVE & DIE AND SUFFER THE PUNISHMENT THAT WE ARE SUPPOSED TO SUFFER.**

CHURCH/FRIENDS, JESUS IS OUR REDEMPTION, OUR FORGIVENESS, OUR ATONEMENT & OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS!

*“He made the one who did not know sin to be sin/sin offering for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.”*  
(2 Cor. 5: 21)

THIS REASON ALONE IS ENOUGH REASON FOR US TO PRAISE THE LORD BUT DAVID TEACHES THAT THERE ARE MORE REASONS WHY.

2) *The Lord is our PHYSICIAN & HEALER!*

*“...He heals all your diseases.” (v. 3b)*

THE LORD IS OUR JEHOVAH RAPAH, THE ONE WHO HEALS OUR DISEASES. IMAGINE IF WE DON'T GET HEALED EVERY TIME WE GOT SICK. IMAGINE IF THERE IS NO VACCINE FOR COVID VIRUS. WE ARE HOPELESS & DOOMED! BUT THE LORD HEALS! IN FACT, THE LORD WOUNDS BUT HE ALSO HEALS. WE WILL NOT DIE OF SICKNESS UNLESS THAT SICKNESS IS GOD'S TOOL OR INSTRUMENT/AGENT TO BRING US HOME IN HEAVEN. REMEMBER THAT SICKNESS AND DEATH ARE PART OF THE CYCLE OF LIFE HERE ON EARTH. FOR BELIEVERS DEATH IS OUR VERY GATEWAY TO HEAVEN!

THAT'S WHY I BELIEVE THAT WE SHOULD ALWAYS PRAY FOR HEALING AND EXPECT TO BE HEALED EVERY TIME WE GET SICK. CANCER IS NOTHING IF IT IS NOT YET GOD'S WILL FOR YOU TO DIE. I SAY TO YOU AGAIN PERHAPS, YOU ARE SICK TODAY OF CANCER OR A TERMINAL ILLNESS, BUT IN CHRIST JESUS - “YOU ARE IMMORTAL UNTIL GOD'S PURPOSE IS DONE IN YOUR LIFE!”

3) *The Lord is our DELIVERER & LOVER!*

*“He redeems your life from the Pit; he crowns you with faithful love and compassion.” (v. 4)*

who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion..." (v. 4, ESV)

THE NEXT REASON IS BECAUSE THE LORD IS OUR GREAT DELIVERER AND LOVER. NOW, DO YOU KNOW WHAT IS THE MOST HATED NAME OF A WOMAN DURING THIS PANDEMIC IS "JUDITH" OR "DUE DATE"? THIS VERSE TELLS US THAT JUDITH HAS A RELATIVE AND HIS NAME IS "PIT." "PIT" HERE REFERS TO TROUBLE OR DANGER OR CRISIS. BUT PRAISE THE LORD BECAUSE HE ALWAYS SAVE US FROM BOTH OF THESE – "DUE DATE" AND "PIT." AMEN!!!

JOSEPH FROM GENESIS LITERALLY EXPERIENCED THIS "PIT." HIS BROTHERS THREW HIM IN A PIT AND PRAISE THE LORD OUR GOD IS MERCIFUL AND COMPASSIONATE, HE RESCUED JOSEPH USING JUDAH AND LATER THE ISHMAELITES. GOD BEING LOVING AND COMPASSIONATE ALWAYS SAVES US FROM OUR PIT.

NOW, THIS PIT ARE SENT BY SATAN BUT SOMETIMES WE MAKE OUR OWN PIT. BY DISOBEYING GOD'S WILL/COMMAND AND THEN SUFFERING THE CONSEQUENCES OF OUR SIN. THEN, WE CALL ON THE LORD TO SAVE US FROM THE PIT WE CREATED. AND OUR LOVING GOD COMES TO RESCUE US. PTL!

4) *The Lord is our PROVIDER & BENEFACITOR!*

"He satisfies you with good things; your youth is renewed like the eagle." (v. 5)

"Who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's." (v. 5, ESV)

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change." (Jas. 1: 17)

THIS TEXT TEACHES US THAT THE LORD IS OUR GOOD & GENEROUS PROVIDER & BENEFACTOR! WHEN DAVID CHALLENGED THE PEOPLE TO GIVE TO THE BUILDING OF THE TEMPLE IN 1 CHRO.



29, THE PEOPLE RESPONDED ENTHUSIASTICALLY & GENEROUSLY THAT THE GIFTS WERE OVERFLOWING. THIS PROMPTED DAVID TO PRAISE THE LORD & SAY THESE WORDS.

*“But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able thus to offer willingly? **For all things come from you, and of your own have we given you.**” (1 Chro. 29: 14)*

5) The Lord is our **JUDGE & AVENGER!**

*“The Lord **executes acts of righteousness** and **justice** for all the oppressed.” (v. 6)*

*“The Lord **works righteousness and justice** for all who are oppressed.” (v. 6, ESV)*

THE LORD IS OUR **RIGHTEOUS JUDGE & OUR AVENGER!** IN DUE TIME THE LORD WILL RIGHT THE WRONG & AVENGE ALL THE WRONGS DONE TO HIS PEOPLE! THERE WILL BE NO PERFECT JUSTICE IN THIS BROKEN WORLD BUT A TIME WILL COME WHEN THE LORD WILL MAKE ALL THINGS RIGHT!

*“Behold, the Lord comes with ten thousands of his holy ones, **to execute judgment on all and to convict all the ungodly of all their deeds of ungodliness that they have committed in such an ungodly way,** and of all the harsh things that ungodly sinners have spoken against him.” (Jude vv. 14-15, ESV)*

*“Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave it to the wrath of God, for it is written, ‘Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.’ ...Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”  
(Rom. 12: 19, 21)*

6) The Lord is our **Covenant-making & Promise-keeping God!**

*“He revealed his ways to Moses, his deeds to the people of Israel. **The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger & abounding in faithful love. He will not always accuse us or be angry forever. He has not dealt with us as our sins deserve or repaid us according to our***



***iniquities***. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his ***faithful love*** toward 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. For he knows what we are made of, remembering that we are dust. As for man, his days are like grass—he blooms like a flower of the field; when the wind passes over it, it vanishes, and its place is no longer known. ***But from eternity to eternity the Lord's faithful love is toward those who fear him, and his righteousness toward the grandchildren of those who keep his covenant, who remember to observe his precepts.***” (vv. 7-18)

NOW, I THINK THE KEY IN UNDERSTANDING THESE SECTION OF THE PSALM IS WHEN DAVID INTRODUCED ***MOSES & HIS LAWS OR PRECEPTS*** (vv. 7 & 18). AND THIS TELLS US THAT DAVID WAS REMINDING THE READERS OF THIS PSALM (THE JEWS AT THAT TIME & US TODAY) THAT THIS GOD THAT WE WORSHIP IS A COVENANT MAKING GOD & A PROMISE-KEEPING GOD. REMEMBER THAT THE LORD MADE A COVENANT WITH MOSES & GAVE THEM THE LAW WHICH WILL GOVERN THEIR WAY OF LIVING IN THE LAND HE WILL GIVE THEM, CANAAN, THE PROMISED LAND, AND THAT THE KEY TO THEIR PROSPERITY IS OBEDIENCE TO HIS LAWS OR PRECEPTS. AND WE ALSO KNOW HINDSIGHT THAT THE LORD WAS TRUE & FAITHFUL TO THEM BUT THEY WERE NOT & WERE EVENTUALLY DESTROYED. BUT WE HAVE SEEN THE FAITHFULNESS OF THE LORD AS TESTIFIED BY JOSHUA HIMSELF WHEN HE DECLARED THAT ALL THAT THE LORD PROMISED THEM HE DELIVERED! (Jos. 23).

7) *Because He is the* ***SUPREME & SOVEREIGN RULER*** *of the universe!*

*“The Lord has* ***established his throne*** *in heaven, and his* ***kingdom rules*** *over all.”* (v. 19)

*“The Lord has* ***established his throne*** *in the heavens, and his* ***kingdom rules*** *over all.”* (v. 19, ESV)

FINALLY, WE ARE TO BLESS & PRAISE THE LORD BECAUSE HE IS THE **SUPREME & SOVEREIGN RULER** OF ALL. THE LORD RULES THE UNIVERSE & HE RULES MY LIFE! THEREFORE, I AM UNDER HIS PROTECTION & CARE! AND THIS MEANS THAT AS LONG AS I PLACE MY LIFE UNDER HIS RULE, NO ONE & NOTHING CAN TOUCH OR HARM ME! FOR THE LORD OUR GOD IS THE KING OF KINGS & LORD OF LORDS! THE ALPHA & OMEGA! BLESSED BE HIS NAME FOREVERMORE! AMEN! AMEN! AMEN!

### **PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS:**

(1) AS A **FORGETFUL** PEOPLE, LET US INTENTIONALLY **COUNT THE LORD'S BLESSINGS** IN OUR LIFE **ALL THE TIME** & **IN ALL SITUATION!**

TAKE NOTE IN OUR THIS PSALM THAT DAVID EXHORTS US TO FORGET NOT BUT DELIBERATELY COUNT OR REMEMBER THE LORD'S BENEFITS OR BLESSINGS IN OUR LIFE! WHY? BECAUSE WE HAVE THE TENDENCY TO FORGET! IF YOU HAVE BEEN READING THE OLT TESTAMENT, YOU WILL AGREE WITH ME WHEN I SAY THAT ONE OF THE MOST COMMON ACCUSATION OR INDICTMENT BY GOD TO GOD'S PEOPLE WAS THAT THEY HAVE FORGOTTEN HIM! JUST IN THE BOOK OF JEREMIAH, THE LORD KEPT ON REPEATING THESE SAD WORDS (SEE ALSO CHS. 2:32, 3:21, 13:25).

*“Does the snow of Lebanon ever leave the highland crags? Or does cold water flowing from a distance ever fail? **Yet my people have forgotten me.** They burn incense to worthless idols that make them stumble in their ways on the ancient roads, and make them walk on new paths, not the highway.” (Jer. 18: 14-15)*

IN FACT, PAUL & THE REST OF THE NT WRITERS, KEPT ON REMINDING US THAT THE NT WAS WRITTEN TO REMIND US OF WHAT HAPPENED TO GOD'S PEOPLE IN THE PAST THAT WE MAY NOT FOLLOW THEIR PATH BUT GLORIFY THE LORD.

***“For whatever was written in the past was written for our instruction, so that we may have hope through endurance and through the encouragement from the Scriptures.** Now may the God who gives*

***endurance and encouragement grant you to live in harmony with one another, according to Christ Jesus, so that you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ with one mind and one voice.***

***(Rom. 15: 4-6)***

***“This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me.” In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, and said, “This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.” (1 Cor. 11: 24-25)***

**WE TEND TO FORGET & SO WE SIN AGAINST THE LORD. THEREFORE, CULTIVATING A LIFE OF GRATEFULNESS IS THE ANIDOTE TO THIS EVIL OF FORGETFULNESS. IT IS A CLEAR EVIDENCE OF THE REMAINING SIN IN OUR HEARTS AND THE DEVIL WORKS TO OPPOSE US.**

***(2) AS A BLESSED PEOPLE, THERE IS NOTHING THAT SHOULD HINDER US FROM BLESSING/PRAISING THE LORD EVERY MOMENT OF OUR LIFE!***

**DAVID UNDERSTOOD THAT ALL CREATION WERE MADE TO GIVE PRAISE AND GLORY TO THE LORD AS THEIR CREATOR & GOD. PARTICULARLY, MAN WAS CREATED TO GIVE ETERNAL PRAISE AND WORSHIP TO HIS MAKER & GOD!**

***“Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”***

***(1 Thess. 5: 16-18)***

- **ARE YOU IN PRISON TODAY OR IN A VERY DIFFICULT SITUATION?**

***“After they had severely flogged them, they threw them in jail, ordering the jailer to guard them carefully. Receiving such an order, he put them into the inner prison and secured their feet in the stocks. About midnight Paul and Silas were praying and singing hymns to God, and the prisoners were listening to them.” (Acts 16: 23-25)***

- THE APOSTLE PAUL & SILAS SANG SONGS OF PRAISE & WORSHIP & WORSHIP THE LORD IN THEIR PRISON CELL! (Acts 16). WHAT ARE WE DOING NOW IN THIS PANDEMIC?
- ARE YOU FACING A FAMILY OR PERSONAL CRISIS TODAY? LIKE DIVORCE OR CONFLICT OR LOSS OF JOB OR LOSS OF GIRLFRIEND/BOYDRIEND OR YOU STILL HAVE NO ONE! OR YOU JUST LOSS YOUR HOUSE OR A LOVED ONE!
- JOB LOST ALL HIS PROPERTIES, ALL HIS CHILDREN, & ACQUIRED A VERY ICHTCY SKIN DISEASE BUT HE STILL PRAISED & BLESSED THE LORD!

*“Then Job stood up, tore his robe, and shaved his head. He fell to the ground and worshiped, saying: ‘Naked I came from my mother’s womb, and naked I will leave this life. The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away. **Blessed be the name of the Lord.**’” (Job 1: 20-21)*

CHURCH/FRIENDS, THERE IS NOTHING IN THIS LIFE WHETHER CRISIS OR TROUBLE SHOULD OR CAN STOP US FROM BLESSING & PRAISING OUR GOD! I PRAY THAT IN THE MIDST OF THIS CRISIS OR PANDEMIC YOU ARE STILL BLESSING THE NAME OF THE LORD!

**CHURCH/FRIEND, ARE YOU LIVING SUCH KIND OF LIFE TODAY?**

ONE OF THE QUESTION BELIEVERS ARE TO ANSWER & WRESTLE WITH DURING THIS PANDEMIC IS THIS – **WHY THE LORD ALLOWED THIS COVID PANDEMIC TO HAPPEN?** SINCE THIS VIRUS DID NOT COME FROM THE LORD BUT IS A RESULT OF MAN’S SINFULNESS, WHY DID HE PERMIT IT TO HAPPEN? OR TO PUT IT IN ANOTHER WAY, **WHAT IS THE IMPORTANT LESSON THAT WE CAN PRAISE THE LORD FOR BECAUSE OF THIS PANDEMNIC? WHY PRAISE THE LORD IN THE MIDST OF THIS PANDEMIC?**

IN ONE CHRISTIAN BLOG THAT I READ SOMETIME THIS MONTH, I THINK HE GAVE AN ANSWER THAT SATISFIED ME. I DON’T KNOW ABOUT YOU. BUT THIS WAS WHAT HIS ANSWER. HE WAS ACTUALLY SHARING TO HIS READERS THE IMPORTANT LESSONS THAT HE LEARNED FROM THIS PANDEMIC.

**HE SAID THIS THIS PANDEMIC DEMONSTRATES TO US THE "SEVERITY OF GOD'S MERCY!"** LET ME EXPLAIN WHAT HE MEANS. JUST LIKE IN HEALING OR CURING A DEADLY DISEASE OR SICKNESS LIKE CANCER, THE PHYSICIAN OR DOCTOR SOMETIMES HAS TO DO THE MOST PAINFUL PROCEDURE (OPERATE TO REMOVE THE TUMOR OR CANCER CELL OR REPLACE AN ORGAN) IN ORDER FOR THE SICK PERSON TO RECEIVED HEALING. IT WAS PAINFUL BUT IT WAS THE ONLY THING THAT CAN SAVE THAT PERSON.

I REMEMBER AGAIN THE STORY OF THAT LITTLE BOY WHO WAS SUFFERING FROM LEUKEMIA & HAS TO BE OPERATED BUT BEFORE THAT CAN HAPPEN, HE HAS TO BE INJECTED IN THE BACK (THE MOST PAINFUL THING). SO HIS MOTHER & NURSES WOULD ENCOURAGE HIM, THE DOCTOR HAS TO HURT YOU FIRST FOR TO YOU BE GET HEALING. AND AFTER THE DOCTOR HAS INJECTED HIM, WITH STILL TEARS IN HIS HE TOLD THE DOCTOR, "THANK YOU DOCTOR FOR THE HURTING!"

CHURCH/FRIENDS, THIS IS THE PURPOSE THIS PANDEMIC! FOR US TO SEE SELF-CENTEREDNESS OF OUR LIFE, THE FUTILITY OF TRUSTING IN THINGS & POSSESIONS & PEOPLE AS WELL AS THE EMPTINESS OF OUR LIVES THAT WE ARE HIDING IN OUR WORK, IN OUR FRIENDS/FAMILIES & ACTIVITIES. THE LORD HAS TO TAKE SOMETHING SO THAT WE MIGHT REALIZE THAT OUR HOPE IS NOT FOUND IN THIS WORLD BUT CHRIST!

**"SOMETIMES GOD'S BLESSINGS ARE NOT IN WHAT HE GIVES BUT IN WHAT HE TAKES AWAY!" (ANONYMOUS)**

IN THIS PANDEMIC, THE LORD TOOK AWAY THE COMFORT & CONVENIENCE OF OUR SOCIAL LIFE FOR US TO LEARN THAT HE ALONE CANNOT SATISFY THE GREATEST LONGING/DESIRE OF OUR HEART – TO BE LOVED & ACCEPTED OR APPROVED. THE LORD ALONE CAN GIVE REST TO OUR RESTLESS SOULS! AND THAT ALL OTHER THINGS & RELATIONSHIPS THAT WE POSSESS ARE FLEETING & TEMPORARY!

**(2) AS A BLESSED PEOPLE, LET US FULFILL OUR CALLING TO BLESS OTHERS ESPECIALLY THOSE WHO HAVE NOT YET HEARD THE GOSPEL OR GOOD NEWS OF THE LORD JESUS CHRIST!**

**The Lord said to Abram: “Go from your land, your relatives, and your father’s house to the land that I will show you. I will make you into a great nation, I will bless you, I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, I will curse anyone who treats you with contempt, and all the peoples on earth will blessed you.”**  
(Gen. 12: 1-3)

**“Who then will harm you if you are devoted to what is good? But even if you should suffer for righteousness, you are blessed. Do not fear them or be intimidated, but in your hearts regard Christ the Lord as holy, ready at any time to give a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you. Yet do this with gentleness and reverence...”. (1 Peter 3:13-15)**

**NOW, PETER IS TALKING ABOUT OUR TESTIMONY HERE TO OTHERS. HE IS TEACHING US THAT WE ARE BLESSED BY THE LORD TO BE A BLESSING! TO GIVE HOPE TO OTHER THRU THE GOSPEL OF CHRIST & OUR LIFE IS A MAJOR FACTOR IN FACILITATING THE WINSOMENESS OF THE GOSPEL. REMEMBER THAT OUR TESTIMONY IS A FOR OF PRAISE & HONOR TO THE LORD!**