



Psalms of David (Part 7)
Praise for God's Mercy Psalm 103
Adam Donyes

Good morning, glad you are here. If this is the very first time you've set foot in here, welcome. You belong here and we are so, so glad that you are here with us.

We send out a message to all the teaching team when we are going to do a new series, so when Ted gave me Psalm 103, I was fired up! That's my jam! I don't know if you guys... Some of you young people don't understand this, but we used to drive in a car, and we had 8 tracks. Anybody in here have 8 tracks. My young friends have no idea. What about CDs? Any of you guys have a CD Player? Yeah, young people, it's this circular thing. it's crazy when I think about it. When we were growing up, when our jam came on, we were like turn that up, that's my jam right there. And then we would have to wait an entire hour for that thing to come back around so we could listen to it.

But now, with Spotify and Apple Music and all that, you don't have to wait anymore. Everything is instant gratification. As a matter of fact, you don't even have to wait for Christmas every day. It's called Amazon Prime. You get it the day you want it. There's no waiting anymore.

So, when I got Psalm 103, I'm like that's my jam. That is my mount Rushmore of Psalms would be up there. ***Blessed is the man who does not walk with the wicked or stand with the sinners, sit with the scoffers, but his delight is in the law of the Lord. And in this law, he meditates day and night. He's like a tree planted by streams of living water. Whatever he does prospers***

And then Ted threw a heater... Another word for heater, older people, is like a really good message. So, Ted threw a heater with Psalm 51, which is a repentance Psalm. It's

David saying Have Mercy on me oh God according to your unfailing love, according to your great compassion. Blot out my transgressions and wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. Then he says, create in me a pure heart and renew a steadfast spirit within me. He says restore to me the joy of your salvation.

Then he ends that Psalm and he says, “God you don’t delight in burnt offerings or sacrifices, the delight of God is a broken and contrite heart. God want’s our heart; he doesn’t want our efforts and our works. We call David a man after God’s own heart because of Psalm 51. I love it.

Psalm 139 Is on my mount Rushmore. No, Donald Trump is not on my mount Rushmore. Psalm 139 is Rushmore.9 is all about identity. It talks about if I make my bed in the depths, you are there. If I ascend to the heavens, you are there. He knit me together in my mother’s womb. His eyes saw my unformed body. Every one of my days was written by him. He ends that Psalm with one of those motivating or checking your mode of prayers you can have. Psalm 139:23 and 24 say this: ***search me, O lord and know my heart. Test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me and lead me in your way everlasting.***

Then the fourth of my Mount Rushmore Psalms is Psalm 103 and we get to look at it today and I couldn’t be more excited. I love this Psalm. I don’t know if a Psalm has been read and thought about more in my life. It’s a Psalm of mercy, a Psalm of Grace, a Psalm of Forgiveness, It’s a psalm of excitement, It’s a psalm of remembrance. It’s an amazing Psalm.

If you’re like, “Man, I’ve never read the Bible. I’m overwhelmed by reading the Bible, I don’t even know where to begin with reading the bible, the Psalms are a beautiful place to start. As a matter of fact, after we finish this Psalm today, we are going to jump into a Christmas series of Psalms. It’s an easy connection when you start thinking about prayer.

Every year, I start a program and at the beginning, I take my students and my athletes out to Martin’s Point. If you’ve never been out to Martin’s point, it’s this beautiful spot out on Table Rock Lake where it’s literally a point. On one side, you can go out there and see the sunset and on the other side, you can go out there and see the sun rise.

So, every year at the start of the year, I take them out there to see the sunrise. Well, this year, on the day when I was going to take them out to see the sunrise, it was really overcast, and it was raining. I looked at the radar and it didn’t look like it was going to

clear. And I know this seems like something really small, but I was like, “Hey, Lord, if you would, if you would just break the clouds for even like five minutes so this group of players could see a beautiful sunrise, I would be so thankful. I get out of my car and I’m out there before them. It’s about 5:30 am. I’ve got my North face Hoody jacket on to keep the rain off of me and I’m walking out to the point and it’s raining, and the other players and the coaches are about 20 minutes behind me. I just get out there and I just start praying in the rain. “Lord, would you just break the clouds. I know I’m looking at this radar and there’s no way it looks like the clouds are going to break, but God, you can do it and I believe and trust that you can do it.

It’s raining and the boys show up, and I can hear the van pull up in the pea gravel and they start coming down to the point with me and they get down there and they’re getting rained on a little bit and they’re like, *what is he dragging us out in the rain for?* You could tell it was starting to get bright even with clouds, you can tell when day is coming in and so the sun is starting to rise. Sure enough, the clouds start to break. This most beautiful sunrise starts to take shape. I start talking to these young men about God’s faithfulness and how he has brought them to this point in their life – 18- and 19-year-olds... Yeah, you’re really far. Wait until your fifty...

I started talking about God’s faithfulness and I talked about how that sun is going to rise tomorrow and that sun is going to rise the next day and that sun is going to rise November 16 and it’s still rising ever since they showed up to this program. And God’s faithfulness, and his mercies are new every morning. I’m talking about his faithfulness and about how maybe we weren’t even supposed to see the sunrise this morning, but he gave us the sunrise and just trust God’s faithfulness because he’s gotten you this far and he sees you.

As I’m talking and I feel like I’m throwing another heater, one of my coaches touched me on the shoulder and tells me to turn around. So, as I’m talking to them, showing this unbelievable sunrise. I turn around and I see a double rainbow. A double rainbow, and it turned into a single rainbow. So, I say to the fellas, as I’m talking to you about God’s faithfulness, do me a favor and turn around. And then see like 27 mouths drop. I was like, Yall, I didn’t do that. That’s not me. That’s your creator of the heavens and the earth.

I had to print out a canvass to remember because I’ll forget. As a matter of fact, my friend from New Zealand was here a couple of weeks ago. He does ministry in New Zealand. He said something that stuck with me. He said, “We are rubbish at

remembering. I'm rubbish at remembering." The older you get the more you have a problem remembering stuff. But I'm rubbish at remembering. I have a hard time remembering things. What's crazy is this whole Psalm we are about to jump into, at the beginning of it, it's God telling us to remember. And remembering is actually good for us. Lets check this out. Let's jump into Psalm 103: 1-2: Praise ***the Lord, my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name.***

² Praise the Lord, my soul,

and forget not all his benefits. If we were to replace forget not with one word, what would it be? *Remember.* It's synonymous. Forget not is the same as remembering. So remember all it's benefits, forget not all his benefits. You realize he has given us benefits all the time.

How many of you have ever made a fun Loving You List like Ted talks about? A fun Loving you List about your spouse. It's just a list that reminds you of all the things you love about your spouse. And just a reminder so that when you have a spat and the honeymoon is over, you have a list of all the things you love about your spouse.

I promise you can wake up in the morning, and you can decide to look at all the things you love about your spouse or you can decide to find all the things you are frustrated about your spouse. I find it's healthier when I look at all the things that I love about my amazing spouse. So, I took it a step further from Ted's advice. My wife and I have this thing that's called a remember board. This sits in our home office. It something for us to look at and remember how a faithful God has continually and constantly been in our life.

There are different things. We had a miscarriage. You never realize how many people have miscarriages until you have a miscarriage and then they all come out of the woodwork.

The bible says to Mourn with those who mourn. As I look back, it was one of the hardest seasons she and I went through. It was a brutal miscarriage. But we wouldn't have our sweet little Panda Bear... I can't imagine my life without my Sweet Panda Bear who is now 11 years old. Life without him would be so different. We never would have had him had my wife not had a miscarriage.

In that dark season of our life, it was really difficult, but it brought a really bright season into our life. We didn't see it at the time and now we do.

With the same little 11-year-old... We were on the Santa Monica Pier He's three years old. My wife thinks I've got him. I think she's got him and he's lost on Santa Monica pier. You talk about the scariest five minutes of both of our married lives, this was it. I don't know if you've ever been to the Santa Monica pier, but there are a lot of creepers and jeepers out there, okay. First we pray, "Lord, please help us find this child." It wasn't five minutes we found him tucked in one of those arcade games that's enclosed. He's just smiling away. We were like, "Oh, thank you Jesus."

Here's a picture of my buddy Joe Shoecart who has no mobility. He can't move his arms and his legs, and he just keeps praising Jesus, I was just with him at a wedding this summer. It was just unbelievable how faithful our God is. And then he just got diagnosed with cancer and he sends out an email to all his prayer warriors saying, Praise God that he would consider me worthy to suffer.

And here's a picture of me and my dad golfing this last week out at Cliffhangers. If you haven't played it, you've got to play it. These things I remember of God restoring and redeeming and doing all these amazing things in my life that I look back and I'm like, Oh my gosh, I forget those things. You and I forget those things. He's been so faithful to you. I'm not calling you guys out, but it doesn't look like very many of you are missing meals. He keeps providing for you. He keeps putting food on the table. He keeps putting a roof over your head. He has been so faithful in your life. He's got you to here.

Psalm 37: 25 says ***I was young and now I am old,
yet I have never seen the righteous forsaken
or their children begging bread.***

He is faithful. He says, Don't forget that. Here's what's crazy. He knew we were going to forget it. How do I know? Look what he told the Jews to do in the Old Testament.

By the way. There are Jews who still believe the Messiah is coming and then there are messianic Jews who believe Jesus is the Messiah and they still follow his amazing practices. It's amazing. So, Passover

– What is Passover? To remember God delivering Israel from Egypt. Think about it. Do you really need to be reminded... They knew what happened. They knew the Angel of Death that passed over the first born. He's like, no, you are going to remember it. You are going to have Passover. You're going to have the Sator meal every year. The feast of unleavened bread. This was to remember the haste which Israel left Egypt in the call to

purity. The festival of first fruits. That's why I love what we are doing in partnering with Convoy of Hope and One Day and everything we're doing to bless all over the world to remember that God gets the first fruits and our best fruits he doesn't get our leftovers. That's why they celebrate it. It's to remind ourselves that God gets our first and our best, not our leftovers.

Then they have the feast of weeks to remember the wheat harvest and God's provision, that he always provides in the wilderness. And they have the feast of trumpets. This was to call God's people to repentance and awe in anticipation.

The day of atonement is to remember God's mercy in providing an atonement for sin. The Feast of Tabernacles is to remember God's presence and provision during the wilderness wandering.

The Stones of the remembrance at the Jordan is to remember how God stopped the Jordan river and brought Israel into the Promised land. Think about this. Y'all just witnessed a river that flows 365 days a year, 24/7. And it parted and they walked through on dry land. Don't you think you would remember that without stones of remembrance? I would never forget that. That's a miracle. But it wasn't just for the people that witnessed it. Who else was it for? Their kids, their grandkids, their great grandchildren. Their great, great, great grandchildren to remember his faithfulness. Those stones weren't just about the people who witnessed it, those stones were about us and he calls us to put stones of remembrance in our life because we forget.

Do you know what happens when you forget? We get cranky. And when we get cranky, we're not very loving and we're critical and we become toxic. Then we come wanting and we come complaining. We do all those things when we forget all his faithfulness and we look on all the things we don't have rather than everything he's done in our life, it puts us in a critical, cranky place. God doesn't want us in a critical, cranky place.

Khurum – to remember God's deliverance of Israel from Haman's plot.

And then in the New Testament... We just celebrated baptisms this morning. That is a symbol of remembrance of Death to Christ and the life to my new self.

In the early church, Acts 20: 7 do you know why they celebrated church, do you know why they started meeting in church like we do every week?

To remember the resurrection. That's why we come every Sunday. That's why you guys are here. It's to remember what "Christ has done for us.

Communion – we take it once a month at Woodland Hills. This is my Body that is broken for you. Take this in... He must know we are really rubbish at remembering. We forget so often and so flippantly, I need to be reminded. I forget things. I forget my keys, my phone, my next meeting. I forget things all the time. Now, I'm ADD and I understand why I forget things. I forget things all the time, but we need to remember we need to be setting things up.

Look what it says in Numbers 15: 38-39: ***The Lord said to Moses, speak³⁸ "Speak to the Israelites and say to them: 'Throughout the generations to come you are to make tassels on the corners of your garments, with a blue cord on each tassel. ³⁹You will have these tassels to look at and so you will remember all the commands of the Lord, that you may obey them and not prostitute yourselves by chasing after the lusts of your own hearts and eyes. generations and put a cord of blue on the tassel of each corner. And it shall be a tassel for you to look at and remember all the commandments of the Lord to do them not to follow after your own heart... Key there is follow the Lord, not your heart, your heart is deceitful. Not to follow after your heart in your own eyes, which you are inclined to whore after.***

So, I got all of you a gift. Just blue tassels. Just like this passage. They are just blue tassels. A little blue tassel. This is what I'm praying this blue tassel is for you. Whether you put it on your gear shifter in your car or put it on your key chain. It's just a reminder. When you feel like giving that person, when you're driving, that one finger wave, think how you are one of 10% of people in the country that have a car. Or when you find yourself quick to complain, be thankful that you had a meal today and you have a roof over your head.

It's just a reminder for you to look at and remember God has been so faithful in your life. As I look back, yes, there have been some hard seasons, yes, there have been some ups and downs. You might be in a down right now. He's faithful. Look back at your remember board, look back at your blue tassel and remember God has been so good to you. He never not shows up. Maybe not in my timing, but he never not shows up and it's always in his perfect timing. So, if you want one of these as just a reminder of God's goodness and faithfulness in your life and to look to him and not the world for your completion, your wholeness, and your satisfaction, please grab one.

So, Psalm 103 goes on to say, ***who forgives all your iniquity? Who heals all your diseases?...***

I want to stop here for a second. Some of you remember Billy Graham. Keep your hand up if you've heard of Chuck Templeton or Byron Clifford. Here's what's crazy, Byron Clifford and Chuck Templeton were forecast to be better preachers than Billy Graham, but you've never heard of them, and you've heard of Billy Graham. Here's Why. Byron Clifford became an alcoholic and walked away from the faith. Chuck Templeton couldn't get over this, and this is what this is... He couldn't get over kids starting diseases, suffering all the pain. He thought if God is so good, why does he allow all these bad things to happen to good people, so he walked away from the faith. We have to understand you might have been diagnosed with cancer right now someone you love might be going through cancer. You might have lost a loved one in the last year and you're like Why didn't he heal, my mom? You tell me God heals our diseases, but he hasn't done it.

He actually did it. Look at what John Piper says. God does heal, but the final promise of no more death and no more disease will come in the future. So, you might be diagnosed with cancer right now and God may heal you on earth and he might not. He might give you another 15 years, but I promise you that if you are a follower of Jesus, you will be healed forever and ever and there will be no crying, no suffering, no pain, no cancer, no disease, no illness.

We can stop in the moment and be like *God gave me 15 years of cancer, how is that a good God?* Yeah, but he gave you eternity of no cancer ever. And that's the eternal perspective we need to have. Once again, when we stop remembering his long-term faithfulness, big picture and we get caught up in our small bubble, that's when we start complaining and doubting. God's like *I got you*. He didn't promise a calm passage; he promised a safe landing. And that's a part of his faithfulness in our life.

It goes on to say in Psalm 103: 4-7 ***who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion,***
⁵ who satisfies your desires with good things
so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

My wife shared a phenomenal story with me. How many of you have read *The Hiding Place* by Corrie Ten Boon. Corrie Ten Boon was hiding Jews during World War 2 in the Netherlands. Eventually, she and her sister, Betsy got caught hiding these Jews.

Followers of Jesus, loved Jesus, and are hiding all these Jews in their house and she gets caught. They take her to Ravensbruck, one of the most intense concentration camps. Somehow, miraculously a Bible gets smuggled into this concentration camp, where Corrie Ten Boon and her sister, Betsy are inevitably going to face death. They are journaling in there and it's why we have The hiding place. And all this stuff takes place. While they are in there, her sister reads 1 Thessalonian 5: 16 – 18, which says be joyful always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances for this is God's will for you in "Christ Jesus.

So, Betsy goes to her sister and goes, "Corrie, we need to thank God for the flees." They were infested with flees in this barrack. She was like, "There is no way I'm going to thank God for the flees. You can not bring me to a place where I'm going to thank God for the flees. I'm itching 24/7 and it's annoying and obnoxious. There's no way God wants me to thank him for the flees."

She goes; we must thank him for the flees. Corrie and Betsy start witnessing and sharing and worshipping and they are praising Jesus in there. They are getting to do all of this in this barrack, and the guards never go in there to bother them. They leave them be, they let them worship and have their bible study. And then word gets back to Corrie. Do you know why the guards aren't coming in here to bother us? They don't want to mess with the flees and the lice. They don't want to get flees. Corrie says, "Okay, I can thank God for the flees."

You might see the flees in your life and don't realize that God's actually protecting you from something else. Sometimes you just see the shortcoming problem. You don't understand God sees the big picture and he sees the good in that. ***God works all things for good for those he's called according to his purpose.*** Romans 8: 28. So you might not see the good he is working in your life right now, but he's working it for good, and for your good if you'll trust and press into him. It goes on to say

⁶ The Lord works righteousness and justice for all the oppressed.

When I was a young believer, I was like, *I just wish God would speak to me in a burning bush like he spoke to Moses. I wish I could go up to a mountain and he would just speak to me like he did Moses. But he even knew Moses would forget because what did he do with the tablets? He wrote it down for him. Literally, the finger of God in stone. Here you go. I know you're going to forget so I wrote it down for you.*

And the holy Spirit spoke through all these guys who wrote the Bible because he knew they would forget. So, ***He made known his ways to Moses, his deeds to the people of Israel:***

How does God make himself known to us today. We don't need a burning bush. You want to know God? Spend time in the bible. This is how he makes himself known to you.

You want to know him more? Spend time you your Bible? You want to hear the audible voice of God? Read the Bible. You have access to know him and to know his ways. You have access to that. It's called his Word. Mosses didn't have the whole big picture. You and I get the whole big picture to see his faithfulness. The stones of remembrance, all those things... here it is as a reminder of how faithful he's been in our life.

It goes on to say in Psalm 103: 8-10 - ***The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love.***

⁹ ***He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever;***

¹⁰ ***he does not treat us as our sins deserve.*** This is really powerful and here's why. Have you ever heard say to somebody "How it going? How's you're day going?" and they are like "Better than I deserve. What do we deserve? Death. I deserve death. Or to put it another way, I deserve to go to hell. That's what I deserve. That's what my sins deserve. That's what the Bible says, not what I say. The bible says my sins deserve death. And because I know my sins deserve death, and I knew that Jesus was the only way that let me out of what I deserve and what his death on the cross represented, what that empty tomb represented, what the resurrection represented, and him coming back while he's sitting on the right hand of the throne of God represents, and I trusted in him, I don't get what I deserve. Because I've acknowledged him as my Lord and Savior of my life and I'm going to live for him and not for myself. I don't get what I deserve and neither do you if you put your faith and trust in Jesus.

Now, if you haven't put your faith and trust inn Jesus, the bible says there is an eternal separation from God. But if you put your faith in him and you live for him, none of us get what we deserve. That's great news. That's really good news. So, hey, how are you doing today, Woodland hills. Beter than you deserve for those of you that are in Jesus. It could be your worse day I would still believe God is treating me better than I deserve because my wife and both my boys have professed faith in Jesus and I know that I will be reunited with them. So even in your worst season, your worst day, turmoil, divorce

hardship. All those things. It's hard to see but I promise you because that of God's grace and what the cross represents, he's treating us all better than we deserve.

That gives you perspective. That wakes you up in the morning thankful rather than resentful. That wakes you up in the morning with joy rather than bitterness. When you remind yourself of the gospel every single day. Man, you know what I actually deserve today? Not to be in Southwest Missouri. Southwest Missouri is a pretty sweet place. I grew up San Diego. I'll take the hillbillies. There are really nice people here and we get a lot of tourists, and they are really nice. They don't drive well, but they are really nice. And we are so glad you're here.

We've got it so good. We have it so good and we forget that we have it so good. So, when we forget that we have it so good, we start to complain and then our co-workers start to complain. And we create this cesspool of complaining. God is so good to our family. Remember when he brought us through that difficult season. God is so good to us.

It goes on to say, and this is beautiful because if you understand what's going on here from Psalm 51, which was by far David's lowest point. He blew it. He was following God and he blew it. He had an affair with Bathsheba and then he killed his best friend and he blew it. Then a couple of psalms later, he pens this and God literally answered his prayer and in that prayer of Psalm 51, here's the callback to it ***Restore to me the joy of your salvation.*** And now he's writing and experiencing something far greater than he thought he was going to get to experience. It's unbelievable. ***For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love towards those who fear him. As far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us.*** I love that amen from the seats, but I don't think you understand the significance of that. David was feeling guilt, shame, whatever it was, he was wallowing in that. Sackcloth and ashes mourning. He was feeling the weight of making a really dumb decision.

We've all been there. I've made really dumb decisions in my life. And he was in that decision and he said, "Lord, I've made a really dumb decision. I do not feel the joy of your salvation. I do not feel your presence. Would you restore it to me. Would you bring me back into relationship with you. Would you bring that intimacy I once knew with you back? That's what sin does. It separates us from God. And we see it. This is what's so amazing about this verse. This is my favorite verse and my favorite Psalm right here and you are about to see why. As David penned this, you notice what he doesn't say here.

He doesn't say as far as the North is from south. He says as far and the east is from the west. If I got on a plane and I started going north, I would eventually be going south. North has it's limits and south has it's limits, but he said as far as the east is from the west, which has no border. So, you see his mercy knows no boarder. His grace is limitless.

What this means is there is no past, present, or future sin of yours that has more power than the cross of Jesus Christ. That's great news because I made a really dumb decision when I was 12 years old and Jesus says *as far as the east is from the west, so have I removed that from you*. I made dumb decisions when I was in college and God says *as far as the east is from the west, so I have removed that from you*. It gets removed when we step into a personal relationship with Jesus, when we recognize we need those sins removed as far as the east is from the west, when we recognize that we need his grace. When we recognize we need his forgiveness. It's found by putting your faith and hope in Jesus. It's found in recognizing you need a savior and you cannot save yourself.

Back to Psalm 51, that call back, David understanding this... Ted did an amazing job illustrating it. At the end of that Psalm, it says He does not delight in burnt offerings or sacrifices. The delight of God is a broken and contrite heart. This is what he wants. He doesn't want your works, he doesn't want effort. He doesn't want your efforts. He doesn't want your habits. He wants your heart. And when he has your heart, Lord, I confess my sins. And against you and only you have I sinned and done what is evil in your sights. I believe and trust that you are the only sufficient sacrifice to remove my sins as far as the east is from the west, and I want a relationship with you. I believe you died on the cross for my sin. I believe you defeated the tomb, and I believe you are coming back. I'm asking you to be the Lord and savior of my life. I want to live for you and not myself.

And then you start remembering from that day that you surrendered your life to Jesus. You start putting pictures on you own remembering board. You start glancing back on your own blue tassel and you start looking back at these 25 years. I came to know the Lord 25 years ago in college and I look back at his faithfulness in my life, in my families life, and his goodness and over and over again, I look back and I'm like God, you've been so faithful. You've been so good. There have been hard seasons. There have been miscarriages. There's been reconciliation in families that need to take place, but God, you have been so faithful. Forgive me when I get so forgetful and I stop keeping the main thing the main thing. By the way, we don't celebrate Thanksgiving for food and family. We celebrate Thanksgiving to remember Plymouth Rock. We don't celebrate Christmas for presents and lights. We celebrate Christmas to remember the birth of Jesus Christ.

We don't celebrate Easter for easter eggs. We celebrate Easter to remember the resurrection of Jesus "Christ.

That's why all these things are in place. We are rubbish at remembering. If you've never placed faith in Jesus, and you feel like he wouldn't forgive you, yeah, he will. As far as the east is from the west, he removes your sins from you.

Father God,

Thank you so much for this church and it's leadership and it's team. I just pray for any hearts in here that aren't yours and they still think they have to clean themselves up, Lord. Let them know that Grace is free. It cost you your life, but you give it willingly and you laid it down willingly. Thank you that you remove our sin as far as the east is from the west. I need it. Lord, I'm rubbish at remembering. Help me to remember your goodness. Help me to remember all the times you continually provide meals and a roof and transportation and all the things you continually provide for us. We are so, so thankful for you Lord and this church and this place and these people.

It is in your mighty and matchless your powerful and your pure name of Jesus we pray.

And all God's people said... Amen