Spiritual Exercise
Gratitude - Psalm 103

Spiritual Exercise on Gratitude: Psalm 103:1-5

Focusing Prayer: The LORD who is good and blesses me with abundance in every meaningful way.

Desire: For awareness of His benefits, goodness and love to me past, present and future. To respond with a deep sense of gratitude in all things.

What does it mean to "Bless the LORD?" The word "bless" here, means giving thanks and praise to the LORD. When the name LORD (YHWH / YAHWEH / JEHOVA) is used it specifies an immediacy, that He is present, accessible, and near to those who call on Him for deliverance, forgiveness, and guidance. David is proclaiming thanks and praise for this precious nearness of the LORD past, present and future. The LORD has been intimately involved in every aspect of his life. As he recounts these intimate encounters and evidences of God's grace, love and mercy, he experiences deep gratitude, satisfaction and renewal.

Psalm 103:1-5

"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 iniquities,
Who heals all your diseases,
Who redeems your life from destruction,
Who crowns you with loving-kindness and tender mercies,
Who satisfies your mouth with good *things,*
So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's."

Engaging the Scriptures

Do a slow reflective reading of this text. You should read it a couple of times slowly and prayerfully, noting what stands out to you. I'm inviting you to move into some specific places of reflection, acknowledgement and prayer with the following questions. You may want to provide a devotional time to each one, or do a couple in one sitting or provide a longer time to work through all of it.

1. ***"Bless the LORD, O my soul; And all that is within me, bless His holy name!"***
    a. What does it mean for you to bless the LORD?
    b. Have you? What has this looked like? Will you? What might this look like in the days to come?
    c. Offer a prayer of desire for this to increase in your heart and life.

Spiritual Exercise
Gratitude - Psalm 103

2. ***"Forget not all His benefits"***
    a. Name His benefits to you. Allow the Holy Spirit to work in your heart. Name these things before God, acknowledge them and proclaim the LORD as your Divine Giver.
    b. Think of relationships, gifts you've been given, how God was present in circumstances etc. Give thanks...

3. ***"Who forgives all your iniquities"***
    a. What sin and wrong doing has been forgiven?
    b. What is in need of forgiveness? Be specific. Name these before the LORD.
    c. Pay attention to the word "all", what does this mean to you?
    d. Give thanks...for His unfailing love and grace upon grace in forgiveness.

4. ***"Who heals all your diseases"***
    a. Think of physical illnesses.
    b. Think of spiritual illnesses, weaknesses, disablements, lack of maturity.
    c. Think of mental anguish, challenges, turmoil within and despairs.
    d. Give thanks...for the healing that has come from each recollection.

5. ***"Who redeems your life from destruction"***
    a. Where has he redeemed and restored you?
    b. Think of bad choices, sinful choices, broken relationships restored etc.
    c. Give thanks...

6. ***"Who crowns you with loving-kindness and tender mercies"***
    a. Consider the imagery of a king over a large kingdom. You are standing before this king who has full authority over you, your actions and service. He looks into your eyes with tender mercy and places upon you loving-kindnesses with His expression, touch and words. No condemnation but tenderness and loving-kindness.
    b. What kindness has He crowned you with?
    c. What compassions has He given to you?
    d. Give thanks...

7. ***"Who satisfies your mouth with good things"***
    a. What good things has He given to you practically speaking?
    b. How has He provided for your needs?
    c. Give thanks...

8. ***"So that your youth is renewed like the eagle's***
    a. How has the LORD brought renewal in the last weeks?
    b. How is He inviting you into renewal now?
    c. Given thanks for the renewal you are experiencing with Him.

Developed by Chad Hollowell