

Series: Psalms

Title: Blessed Ongoing Renewal

Text: Psalm 103:1-5

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Carnal writings become old when repeated but not the gospel. It is because of what we see in this passage—the Lord continues to renew us in the inward man. It is why Paul said,

Philippians 3: 1:...To write the same things to you, to me indeed is not grievous, but for you it is safe.

When I was at Franklin, after hearing my pastor preach a message, I would get the cassette tape and listen to it 2-3 times again. I was thankful for faithful preachers of the past and their sermons and thankful for other current pastors. But the Lord provided that pastor for me—the Lord gave the word for that hour for me and the brethren in that congregation.

From time to time, brethren call me from other congregations who are having some difficulty. My word to them is always the same: I am thankful they call and thankful they listen to our messages. But I tell them to go listen again to the last 2-3 messages their pastor preached and listen to the next 2-3.

The Lord is ministering to his people the word we need through the pastor he has provided for us. When I listened to the messages my pastor preached a second or third time, the Lord never failed to bless things to my heart that I did not hear the first time and the Lord always ministered to my need.

As we saw in Psalm 102, the Lord sends the trial. He brings us to be like a pelican in the wilderness crying for mercy. Then Psalm 103 shows us where he brings us.

Psalm 103: 1: «A Psalm of David.» Bless the LORD, O my soul: and all that is within me, *ble*ss 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; 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.

I am not familiar with eagles but I am familiar with ducks—and I have read that eagles molt like ducks. When a duck molts they shed their old feathers and put on new feathers. Their old feathers become dull and motley colored. The bright colors of the male become the same color as the female. A mallard greenhead will look just like a mallard hen. They cannot fly while molting.

It is good picture of how we become when we are in the trial like Psalm 102—we are cast down, depressed, weak—like a pelican in the wilderness. But as the eagle sheds its old feathers, new colorful feathers replace them. They put off the old and put on the new. They are renewed. Then they take to the sky with new life with a new song.

That is what God works in his child through the molting season of trial. In the trial we cannot fly, we are weak, weighed down by the sins of our old man of flesh.

Psalm 102: 3: For my days are consumed like smoke, and my bones are burned as an hearth. 4: My heart is smitten, and withered like grass; so that I forget to eat my bread. 5: By reason of the voice of my groaning my bones cleave to my skin. 6: I am like a pelican of the wilderness:...

But at the Lord's set time, he arises because:

Psalm 102: 17: He will regard the prayer of the destitute...19—he looks down from the height of his sanctuary from heaven...20: he heareth the groaning of the prisoner; to loose those that are appointed to death. 21: To declare the name of the LORD in Zion, and his praise in Jerusalem.

Psalm 103: 5: [So he] satisfieth thy mouth with good *things*

He feeds our inward man with fresh views of Christ and all his benefits to us.

Psalm 103: 5...so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's

“Youth” refers to the new man born again of God. When God first creates his elect anew in regeneration and brings us to believe on Christ, God not only creates a new man within us in regeneration, the Spirit continues to renew our inward man. He keeps Christ and the gospel forever new. The Spirit gives us willingness to believe on Christ and keeps us willing. The Spirit keeps faith and zeal in the new heart to obey Christ forever. He renews our youth. He feeds our inward man with fresh views of Christ and all his benefits to us. Our inward man is renewed like when God first revealed Christ to us. Thus he makes us to put off the old man by renewing the inward man with Christ our Life, our Strength. Our inward man is renewed like when God first revealed Christ to us. Thus he makes us to put off the old man by renewing the inward man with Christ our Life, our Strength.

In Hosea 2, Christ promises to do this for his bride, for you who are his. Gomer is us. He said that in Hosea 3. This is the love of the Lord toward his elect.

Hosea 2: 14: Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness...

The wilderness is where the pelican was in Psalm 102. He brings us into the trial to discover to us our lewdness, to cause our mirth to cease. But God said,

Hosea 2: 14...and speak comfortably unto her. 15: And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope:

In the valley of trouble, God renews in us the fruit of hope in Christ, along with faith and love. By renewing us inwardly God makes us behold Christ and his never ending mercy. Here is the result.

Hosea 2: 15...and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt.

Brethren, regeneration is one time but the renewing of the Holy Ghost is ongoing.

Isaiah 58: 11: And the LORD shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

Then again our strength is renewed like the eagles as in the days of our youth when Christ first delivered us out of bondage. Through giving us the trial, the trouble, the Lord humbles us from our self-sufficiency of sin and self-righteousness. He renews faith to believe the Lord and love our brethren as we did in the very beginning. By this renewing, God makes us return to our first love and do the first works (Rev 2: 4-5). He does it by renewing our new man to behold Christ and all God's benefits to us as we beheld him in the first hour. That first love is called here “the days of our youth.”

Then again we worship God in spirit and in truth from the heart, singing, “*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:*”

To "bless" is to praise with affection and gratitude, from the new man, in spirit and truth—“*all that is within me, bless his holy name.*” It is true worship only Christ can produce. It is not only his benefits for which we praise him, it is “*his holy name*”—God our Savior himself! In the face of our sin, self-righteousness, and unworthiness, beholding how God is just to show us mercy due to Christ laying down his life for us, we praise him for the perfections of His holy name. All his benefits are given in perfect holiness in harmony with all his attributes—*bless his holy name!* It is this ongoing renewing of the Spirit of God by which God will not let us forget him and all his benefits to us in Christ. Prosperity and other things cause us to forget. Moses said,

Deuteronomy 8: 12 Lest *when* thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt *therein*; 13 And *when* thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; 14: Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy

God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; 15: Who led thee through that great and terrible wilderness, *wherein were* fiery serpents, and scorpions, and drought, where *there was* no water; who brought thee forth water out of the rock of flint; 16: Who fed thee in the wilderness with manna, which thy fathers knew not, that he might humble thee, and that he might prove thee, to do thee good at thy latter end; 17: And thou say in thine heart, My power and the might of *mine* hand hath gotten me this wealth. 18 But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for *it is* he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as *it is* this day.

"Forget not all his benefits." Do we forget? Yes, indeed! How are made to remember? It is by the renewing of the Spirit that God will not let us forget all his benefits to us. The preaching of the gospel is to put his people in remembrance of him and his benefits. Paul told Timothy to put the brethren in remembrance of God's benefits by preaching the gospel of Christ to them. The Lord gave us his table, commanding, "This do in remembrance of me." Likewise the trials that God sends, by God renewing us in grace, is God keeping himself in our remembrance.

Psalm 102: 11: My days *are* like a shadow that declineth; and I am withered like grass. 12: But thou, O LORD, shalt endure for ever; and thy remembrance unto all generations. [here is how we are kept remembering] 13: Thou shalt arise, *and* have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea, the set time, is come.

Each time the Spirit renews us inwardly, it is like being converted all over again. Remember, the apostle Peter? He was a believer. But at the beginning of his trial, the Lord said, "Peter, the devil has desired you that he might sift you as wheat. But I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not. And WHEN THOU ART CONVERTED strengthen your brethren." Peter strengthened us by telling us what he learned. Peter wrote in 1 Peter 5: 5-7, "God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble. Humble yourselves therefore under the mighty hand of God that he might exalt you in due time. Casting all your care on him for he careth for you."

Believer, as one who has fallen and been renewed, hear this word. If you are suffering in the valley of Achor take comfort in this. The trouble is of the Lord because it is how he will renew you to behold him and all his benefits. So wait on the Lord, look to him, cast all your care upon him.

Isaiah 40:31: They that wait upon the LORD shall RENEW STRENGTH; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; *and* they shall walk, and not faint.

RENEWED TO REMEMBER FORGIVENESS

Psalm 103: 3: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases;

Notice these benefits end with the suffix "eth" meaning they are ongoing, continual. The Spirit of God renews us to remember the benefit of complete and continual forgiveness--"*Who forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases.*"

"Diseases" refers to our sins. Indeed, God alone heals our bodily diseases. If we are healed of physical diseases, God is the first cause. If we are not healed of physical diseases, God is the first cause. We give God the glory because it is right either way. But this refers to "iniquities"—our sins. The benefit is God healing our souls by forgiving all our iniquities by the blood of his Son.

We live in a day when we have automatic soap dispensers, automatic water faucets, automatic paper towel dispensers. We are more cautious and sanitary than ever before. Yet, here we are in a pandemic. How careful the population has become concerning bodily disease. Oh, that men and women were as concerned about the disease of sin as they are physical disease!

Christ is the great Physician. The Balm of Gilead—the great Vaccine that healeth all the diseases of sin--is administered by Christ through the preaching of the gospel. Are we as concerned about this soul-destroying disease as we are the disease that merely destroys the body? If our soul is healed, all will be well even if God is pleased not to heal our body.

God continually renews his child to make us know Christ has put away all our sin and we are forgiven for Christ's sake. By one offering on the cross, Christ Jesus perfected his sanctified people forever. He bore all our iniquities and satisfied God's justice for his people—"with HIS STRIPES we are healed."

But when we are sin-sick, diseased by our sin-nature, sick by our sin and self-righteousness and vain self-sufficiency, God puts us in the wilderness to strip us. But then he renews us so we know that he continually *forgiveth all thine iniquities and healeth all thy diseases*. Indeed, God alone heals our physical diseases. But this healing of the soul comes by the forgiveness of our iniquities. (Is 33:24)

Isaiah 33:24: And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick: the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.

This was typified in the person with leprosy. The leper had to come to the high priest. So the sinner has to come to Christ our High Priest. By his renewing, throughout scripture, we find believers coming to Christ our High Priest. David cried out,

Psalm 25: 11: For thy name's sake, O LORD, pardon mine iniquity; for it *is* great...18 Look upon mine affliction and my pain; and forgive all my sins.

Psalm 51: 9: Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. 10: Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.

Forgiveness of sin and healing go together. Only Christ can heal us of the spiritual disease caused by our sins. It is by Christ speaking into the court of our conscience, declaring anew, that "*he forgiveth all thing iniquities; with his stripes thou art healed*" The blood of Christ did not bring pardon for some of our sins some of the time—but *he forgiveth ALL thine iniquities*—all the time—sins past, present and future, least to greatest—*he forgiveth continually all thine iniquities!*

Then it is well with our soul! Then we mount up as eagles and worship and praise our Lord from the heart! Do you remember, how new and strong and zealous we were when God first revealed he had given us peace and pardon in Christ our righteousness? Do you remember how your strength was new when God first revealed that "With his stripes we are healed?" Those first days is what our text calls "*our youth*."

But we forget. So God sends trouble. But when God has put us in the valley of Achor then renewed us to see our sins today, to see our need of God's free forgiveness today, then God makes us behold how God has forgiven all our sins in Christ. This is how our new man is strengthened as in our youth, as in that first hour we believed.

Child of God, there is a continual flow of pardoning grace in the heart of God toward his children for Christ's sake. It is in the face of our sins that this comes as the greatest news we ever heard. It is beholding our sins anew and beholding Christ anew that this good news is as new today as it was the first time we heard it. We cry out with joy, saying, "*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 forgiveth all thine iniquities; who healeth all thy diseases.*"

RENEWED TO REMEMBER REDEMPTION

Psalm 103: 4: Who redeemeth thy life from destruction;

In that first hour, the Spirit made us behold our sins and know we deserved the destruction of the second death—the curse and condemnation of the law. But he revealed in our new man that Christ has redeemed all God's elect from the curse of the law being made a curse for us on the cross. He redeemed our life from the pit, from the second death, from sin, death and hell, even our own fleshly pit of corruption.

By this ongoing renewing, he makes us know repeatedly that he continually "*redeemeth thy life from destruction*." God is continually saving us from us and from everything that would destroy us by separating us from him, including ourselves. David was a believer when he wrote Psalm 40.

Psalm 40: 1: I waited patiently for the LORD; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. 2: He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, *and* established my goings. 3: And he hath put a new song in my mouth, *even* praise unto our God: many shall see, and fear, and shall trust in the LORD.

David had many marvelous deliverances from destruction. But all these lesser deliverances keeps us remembering he has redeemed us from eternal destruction by his precious blood.

RENEWED TO REMEMBER LOVINGKINDNESS AND TENDER MERCIES

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.

The Spirit of God renews us to behold that God constantly, continually "*crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies.*"

Christ made us kings unto God by his blood. God's children are given a crown. Christ has made us kings and priests unto God by his blood. God "crowneth" us continually with his lovingkindness and tender mercies. "The sure mercies of David" are the lovingkindness and tender mercies we have in Christ our King.

God "*satisfieth thy mouth with good things; so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's.*"

In the face of our sins in grievous trials, when your life abhorreth earthly bread and all dainty meat, when you are so weak you draw near the grave and destruction, then the Spirit renews you inwardly to behold Christ and confess your sins and need for him to be your All!

Job 33:24: Then he is gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him from going down to the pit: I have found a ransom. 25: His flesh shall be fresher than a child's: he shall return to the days of his youth: 26: He shall pray unto God, and he will be favourable unto him: and he shall see his face with joy: for he will render unto man his righteousness. [Christ's righteousness] 27: He looketh upon men, and *if any* say, I have sinned, and perverted *that which was* right, and it profited me not; 28: He will deliver his soul from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light. 29: Lo, all these *things* worketh God oftentimes with man, 30 To bring back his soul from the pit, to be enlightened with the light of the living.

The Holy Spirit regenerates one time in the new birth. But let us thank God that the renewing of the Holy Ghost is ongoing throughout the life of faith. He keeps his mercies new unto us:

Lamentations 3:23: *They are* new every morning: great *is* thy faithfulness.

It is how Christ grows us to trust him more and ourselves less. It is how he grows us to love our brethren as Christ loves us. He never stops crowning us with these benefits of grace, even when we demerit each one. So believer, remember, God sends the trial for your good, keep looking to Christ even when you don't feel assurance.

Isaiah 40:31: they that wait upon the LORD shall renew *their* strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; *and* they shall walk, and not faint.

But he keeps us knowing that his renewing is the only way we faint not—the only way we continue trusting Christ and loving our brethren. He sends the trial and...

2 Corinthians 4: 8: *We are* troubled on every side, yet not distressed; *we are* perplexed, but not in despair; 9: Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed;..[it is because by the Spirit of God renewing us, the life of Christ is manifest in us anew]...16: For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward *man* is renewed day by day. [then we know and thank God] 17: For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding *and* eternal weight of glory; 18: While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which

are not seen: for the things which are seen *are* temporal; but the things which are not seen *are* eternal.

Amen!