

The Believer's Benefits

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Date: 17 November 2024

[0 : 00] We're going to begin by singing to God's praise in Psalm 130, the Scottish Psalter Version, Psalm 130, page 421 of the Psalm 103.

The benefits that we have through the Lord's graciousness towards us, and one of these is seen very much so in this Psalm when we have the assurance of the forgiveness as we cry out to the Lord.

Psalm 130, Lord, from the depths to thee I cried my voice, Lord, do thou hear, and to my supplications voice give an attentive ear. Lord, who shall stand if thou, O Lord, should mark iniquity, but yet with thee forgivenesses that feared thou mayest be?

We'll sing the whole of this psalm, the tune is Martyrdom, and we'll stand to sing. For from the depths to thee I cried my voice, Lord, do thou hear, Until my supplications voice give an attentive ear.

Lord, who shall stand if thou, O Lord, should mark iniquity, A gently forgive, for forgivenesses that fear thou mayest be?

[2 : 20] I wait for God, my soul not wait, my hope is in His fire.

More than may not for morning watch, my soul wait for the Lord.

I say, Lord, may not for morning watch, my soul wait for the Lord. I say, Lord, may not for morning watch, the morning light to see, Let Israel open the Lord, for with Him mercy be.

Unplenteous redemption is ever come within, And from all His iniquities, He is the shall redeem.

Let's bow our heads in a word of prayer. Let us pray. Lord, our gracious God, as we come, uniting our hearts in prayer at this time, We thank you for the very great bonds that there are even in that, That we come, not just with one or two, offering up a word of prayer, But that together we come, offering up all our hearts' desires to you.

[4 : 41] We come lifting up our voices to you in song, Thankful for the great joy that there is in praising you. The delight that there is in knowing that we can sing to you of the great blessings that are ours Through your word and through your spirit, Through all that we have in Christ, That we have so much to give thanks for.

And so that that leads us in then to praise you in our prayers. And all of us together at this time, We can all perhaps number the benefits that are ours in Christ. Some of them will be the same.

And for some of us, the benefits will be quite different. And yet each of us has that great reason to rejoice in you and to give thanks to you. And we pray that this evening we will be able to find that sense of thanksgiving, And that encouragement that comes through hearing your word and reminding us, Lord, Of your gracious benefits towards us.

And we pray, Lord, this evening that that sense of the power of your word will be present with us. For we know it's not just our words that we say together, But that we come hearing your word, your truth, speaking to us and ministering to us.

We thank you that we are reminded so much of that. And even the psalm that we have sung, we sing there of waiting on the Lord, Our soul waiting, because our hope is in your word.

[6 : 15] And that is what we come to do this evening, to wait upon you in that way, With our very souls praising you for the joy that there is in your word.

And so may you bless your word to us as we read it, And as we come to consider it together. We thank you that it is a word that speaks into our lives, Not just for this time of worship, But it is a word that goes with us even into the week ahead.

We thank you that your word is on our lips throughout each day of our lives. For we come to read it in our own quiet times. We come to meditate upon it in our own different ways, even during the week.

We thank you to be able to listen to others preaching your word. We thank you to be able to listen to so much that leads us into your words, With a variety of podcasts available for our teaching.

We thank you for so many ways that your word goes out, Even over the radio when we think of a thought for the day each morning. We thank you that there is still that instruction from your word in many places.

[7 : 27] We thank you for your truth that is read at particular times, Even in a nation that has turned away from it so much. We look back on this past week of remembrance, And we know that your word was read and heard in so many different places, By so many different people.

And we thank you for all the means that there are for the word of truth to go out, With that great promise that your word does not return empty, But accomplishes so much for your purpose.

And we pray, Lord, that even in these days ahead, That your word would go out with that power. For it is your word that is able to convict and to convert The soul that lies in sin, as the psalmist says.

And so we pray that your word will just resonate with people, Near and far. It doesn't take much, O Lord, for we know that even in our own experience, How even just a sentence or even one word can be used by you.

It can stop us in our tracks. It can challenge us. It can remind us of our greatest need in this world. And that we have a Lord who is Jesus Christ.

[8 : 48] One before whom all must appear. And give an account, whether for good or evil. And even these words themselves, they can resonate in our ears.

And they can speak to us. They can remind us, Lord, that although our days seem to go on as normal, As we go into a new week, it just seems like any other week.

And yet your word reminds us that the Lord will come like a thief in the night. And that we are to be prepared for that day. For it could be at any moment. We thank you that even the word eternity has such a powerful ring to it.

It reminds us that despite so many who say we live and die and that is it, That there is an eternity for us all. And we pray that every word that has come through you to this world, down through all the generations, That you would use it even in these days, O Lord.

That your word would bear much fruit. We do ask, Lord, and thank you for those who translate your word. We marvel at the number of languages that there are in the world.

[10 : 03] How many different tongues there are to speak. So many we don't understand ourselves. So many are beyond us.

And yet, O Lord, you have your people through all corners of the world. And we thank you that there are many who are being used by you to translate the word of God into all the different languages of this world.

And we pray for that endeavor to be blessed by you and for people to receive the word with great gladness. And we thank you that throughout the world you are building your church.

And that we have that great assurance in your word that you are one who is working to bring your kingdom power into the midst of this world.

Where there's a power beyond any other. Even when we think of the powers of this world and the power that they seem to have at their fingertips in many ways.

[11 : 02] And yet it is nothing compared to your power over us. And so, Lord, look down upon us this evening. We pray, O Lord, that you will have mercy upon us.

And as we were singing this morning from that Psalm, Psalm 67, that is our prayer again this evening. Lord, bless and pity us.

Shine on us with your face. We pray that even now, Lord, that you would do so. And we ask, O Lord, that you will meet us in all our different needs at this time.

We thank you for the gathering of your people here. We thank you for the means to broadcast through the internet as well. We thank you for all who are tuning in at home.

And we thank you for the great way that we are able to share together around your word. And we pray that those who would be able to be out would be encouraged to do so.

[11 : 58] That there would be finding a fellowship with one another. Not just in coming to sit in the pew, but in coming to sit with one another and share with one another. Even to have a word among ourselves as we leave this place tonight.

Lord, we thank you that so often there are words of encouragement. And even if it's just, hello, how are you? We thank you for the bonds that exist. That there is a care and a concern for one another.

We pray that you would bless our fellowship. That you would help us to encourage one another. To strengthen one another. To love one another. To pray for one another. That we would find ourselves as a people having our bonds in Christ strengthened day by day.

And we ask, oh Lord, that you would go before us in all that we do as a congregation. We think of the vacancy at this time. And the vacancy meeting on Tuesday.

We pray for your wisdom. For your guidance. For your help. For us as a congregation. And as we're reflecting this morning for many others who are vacant congregations throughout our presbytery.

[13 : 05] And throughout our land. We thank you that you are Lord of the harvest. And able to provide. And send out laborers into the harvest field. And we continue to pray to see your hand upon us for good in that.

We continue to pray to see your work of salvation in our midst. As we think of another communion time soon to be with us here as a congregation.

As we come to, in a special way, remember the Lord's death till he come. And we thank you that we can come and prepare ourselves even now for that. And ask that there will be many who maybe have not sat at the Lord's table as yet.

Who would have their hearts touched and convicted. And know that they have an assurance from you that you will be with them. That that is a promise that you give.

For you say you will never leave us or forsake us. And that is one thing that is true as we take a step in faith. That you will be with us to uphold and to strengthen. And so we pray Lord that we would be encouraged in all of these things.

[14 : 08] We pray too for those who are struggling in different ways. Remember those who are grieving. We know that seldom a week goes by when there is not sad news for somebody within our congregation.

Sometimes it can be seen coming and other times it comes so unexpectedly. But we know Lord that we are in your hands for these things. And we pray that you will help those who need you in that way.

Remember those who are unwell in hospital or homes. Or even their own homes Lord. Surround them with your love and your grace. And we pray Lord that you will help us to remember one another in these times.

Lord continue with us in our worship at this time. Go before us and help us in the week ahead. To go on in your strength. Even the strength of the eagle as we read in your word.

That we would have it renewed within us Lord. That you would encourage us and build us up in our faith. And help us to be strong in the Lord. To be courageous. To be bold for you at all times.

[15 : 10] And to all around us. That you would help us to be that salt and light in this world in which we live. So Lord bless us. Go before us now. Hear us in all our prayers. Hear our confession of sin.

And you Lord as we confess that we fall short of your glory so often. But thankful for these words that we have sung. That yet there is forgiveness with you. So Lord cleanse us from all our sin.

And guide us in all our thoughts now. And in the reading of your word. And in all we do. May it be to your glory. And we ask all of these things in the name of our precious saviour Jesus Christ.

For his sake and glory. Amen. We'll again sing to God's praise. This time in Psalm 92. And let's sing Psalms version.

This is Psalm 92a. Page 122 of the Psalm books. We're going to sing. We're going to sing from verse 5.

[16 : 11] Down to the end of the Psalm. Psalm 92a. Page 122 of verse 5. The tune is free church. How great are all your works.

O Lord. Your thoughts. How deep and grand. The senseless one does not perceive. Fools do not understand. Although the wicked spring like grass. The foolish do not see.

That all who flourish in their sin will die. Eternally there's that warning to us there. But then in verse 8. But Lord you are forevermore. Exalted very high.

We have a Lord who we look to. Who is there over all things. And so we pray that we may know his blessing with us in these things. We sing from verse 5 down to the end of the Psalm.

We stand to sing to God's praise. Amen. The senseless one does not perceive.

[17 : 29] Wholes do not understand. Although the wicked spring like grass.

That foolish do not see. That God who punishes in their sin will die eternally.

But Lord you are forevermore. Exalted very high.

All evil who hurts will be crushed. Your foes will surely die.

You make me strong. That voyque voyque voyque voyque voyque voyque voyque voyque
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voyque voyque voyque The leaders flourishing, the righteous soul will be.

[19 : 29] And planted in the house of God, will grow abundantly.

Though in old age they still bear fruit, they will stay fresh and strong.

They will proclaim the Lord his just, my all who does no wrong.

Amen. 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?

[21 : 01] 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 eagles?

The Lord works righteousness and justice for all who are oppressed. He made known his
ways to Moses, his acts to the people of Israel.

The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love. He will
not always chide, nor will he keep his anger forever.

He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities.
For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love towards
those who fear him.

As far as east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. As a
father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who
fear him.

[22 : 07] For he knows our frame, he remembers that we are dust. As for man, his days are like
grass, he flourishes like a flower of the field.

For the wind passes over it, and it is gone, and its place knows it no more. But the
steadfast love of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his
righteousness to children's children, to those who keep his covenant and remember to do
his commandments.

The Lord has established his throne in the heavens, and his kingdom rules over all. Bless
the Lord, O you his angels, you mighty ones who do his word, obeying the voice of his
word.

Bless the Lord, all his hosts, his ministers, who do his will. Bless the Lord, all his works, in
all places of his dominion.

Bless the Lord, O my soul. Amen, and may God bless that reading from his word. And
before we come back to look at the beginning of this psalm, we're going to sing again to
God's praise.

[23 : 23] Psalm 128, in the Singed Psalms version, page 172. Psalm 128, page 172.

The tune is Duke Street. How blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk the way that he
has shown. Success and blessing will be yours.

You'll eat the fruit that you have grown. Your wife will be a fruitful vine, and round your table will be placed. Your children, like young olive shoots, thus he who fears the Lord is blessed.

May you behold Jerusalem's good from Zion. May God's blessing flow. Your children's children. May you see, may God on Israel, peace bestow.

A short psalm, but a psalm that's filled with so many of the blessings that arose from the hand of God. Psalm 128, and we'll sing the whole of the psalm to the tune Duke Street.

[24 : 20] We stand to sing. How blessed are all who fear the Lord, who walk the way that he has shown.

Success and blessing will be yours. You'll eat the fruit that you have grown.

Your wife will be a fruitful vine, and round your table will be placed.

Your children, like young olive shoots. Thus he who rears the Lord is blessed.

May you behold Jerusalem's good from Zion.

[25 : 48] May God's blessing flow. Your children, may you behold Jerusalem.

May God on Israel, peace be so. May God on Israel, peace be so.

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 eagles. Forget not all his benefits.

And then the psalmist here goes on to list for us a number of benefits. And it's these benefits that we're going to consider together this evening. The psalms are always very personal for us.

[27 : 20] And they speak to us in so many different ways. Speak to us of day-to-day experiences that we go through. They speak to us about so many different things that are going on around us as well.

And so we can often see the psalms speaking outwardly for us. But as you look at the psalms as well, you find that there are also times, and I'm sure you know this, that they speak within us as well.

They remind us of just what's going on in our hearts. What's going on inside us. That there is nothing hidden from the Lord. And sometimes you see the psalmist bringing many complaints.

But before God, you see him coming to the Lord with a burden. You see him coming, as we might say, he's coming with a bit of a moan towards God. Psalm 13, for example.

The psalmist begins the psalm saying, How long, O Lord? Will you forget us forever? How long will you hide your face from me?

[28 : 23] So the psalm, psalmist comes with a complaint to God. And you find that occurring regular throughout the psalms. And we can often be very thankful that that's there, because so often that reminds us of what goes on within our own hearts as well.

How often we're coming before God, and it is a bit of a complaining attitude towards him. We all have days like that. But also we see in the psalms, and here in Psalm 103, we're given the other side of the coin, as it were, as well.

That we shouldn't always be like that. David's own relationship with God was one where, yes, he came so often with complaints, but more so he came recognizing his dependence on God, and very much his thankfulness towards God.

He recognizes God's great steadfast love, as it's often called, that covenant love that God has shown towards him. And he comes with much thanksgiving for that, and he comes praising God.

And that's what we see in this psalm, Psalm 103. He's very much coming to God with a sense of thanksgiving, the sense of praise towards God.

[29 : 47] Bless the Lord, he says, Oh, my soul, and all that is within me. It's like he's coming to the Lord and saying, Please don't just see me as someone who's always complaining.

Don't see me as someone who's just always got something to moan about. Because I know that there are many things that I should be thankful for.

And that speaks to our hearts as well. It certainly speaks to my own heart. There are times when I feel all I'm doing would be complaining, or grumbling, or moaning about something.

Even to God, just bringing complaints to him. And I have to come and say, Lord, please don't see me as someone who's always complaining, who always sees the sense of almost being unthankful for life and all that it entails.

I recognize, and we should recognize, just like the psalmist, that we have so much to remember and give thanks to God for, and to praise his goodness towards us.

[30 : 53] Bless the Lord, O my soul. He goes on to say here in verse 2, And forget not all his benefits. Forget not all his benefits.

How easy it is for us to forget his benefits. And yet, when we see in this psalm, he reminds us of all the benefits that are ours through his grace towards us.

Now, when you think of the word itself, benefits, in our day and age, it maybe automatically takes our minds towards something like child benefit, or support benefits when we're out of work, that kind of help that we get in time of need, which can often be seen in a negative sense.

But there are benefits there for the good of people in times of need. And that's what we see here with the Lord. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits, is recognizing our dependence on him.

There are times when we are struggling, times that we are in great need, times that we see that our strength is failing, and yet we are reminded, don't forget the benefits of the Lord.

[32 : 11] So if we are feeling that sense of discouragement, if we are feeling that sense of putting ourselves down and just seeing ourselves as a people who are always grumbling about something, then we come like David and say, but Lord, look, we have so much to be thankful for, and we are.

And we see your benefits, and we don't forget your benefits, because we remind ourselves of them again and again. And so his benefits are then outlined for us here in verse 3 to verse 5.

And it's these benefits I want us to touch on, just to go through them one at a time. And there are five benefits for us here that he outlines to us.

We see forgiveness. We see healing. We see redemption. We see crowning. And we see satisfying.

You see the word who there in verses 3 to verse 5. And it's, and who does all of these things for us? Who gives us these things, these benefits?

[33 : 24] It is the Lord. And it is the Lord that we are to be thankful for, for all of these things. And so it says, Bless the Lord, O my soul.

Forget not all his benefits. And then we see the first one. Who forgives all your iniquity. Forgiveness is there, almost as you would say, top of the list.

Forgiveness. That the Lord is the one who is able to forgive. And what a benefit that there is in that for us. Even in our grumbling, even in our moaning towards God, he is able to forgive us in that.

And there are so many times when we feel like poor Christians. There are so many times when we feel overwhelmed by different things in this world.

And as the hymn writer says, when Satan tempts me to despair. There are these times, and the psalmist sees it himself in his experience.

[34 : 30] When there are times when you feel just that sense of despair, when you feel at your most wretched point. Is there a better benefit to remember than who forgives all your iniquity?

The hymn says this, when Satan tempts me to despair and tells me of the guilt within. Upward I look and see him there who made an end to all my sin.

Because the sinless Savior died, my sinful soul is counted free. For God the just is satisfied to look on him and pardon me.

Who forgives all your iniquity? How there is that wonder of how God is able to look on him, to look on Christ and pardon me.

That there is forgiveness in the midst of all our sin. And David himself knows what it is to confess sin. He goes through his life confessing so many different sins in his experience.

[35 : 44] But he also knows how precious forgiveness is. We sang of it in Psalm 130. If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, who could stand?

But yet there is forgiveness with you that you may be feared. The wonder of forgiveness. The wonder of the one who forgives all your iniquity.

Is there a greater benefit than that? There was a story at the time of Robert the Bruce, the one who would become the king of Scotland.

But before that, he was so often fighting in different battles. And the English were often after him to prevent him from coming to take the crown. And there was a time when they were after him, chasing him.

And he was just himself and one of his servants with him, running away from them. But they were getting closer and closer. And there was no getting away from them because they had these hounds that they were using to pick up his scent and chase him.

[36 : 48] And so everywhere he went, the dogs were picking up his scent. He just couldn't get away. And they were running and running and running. And eventually they came to a point where they were stopped.

And the servants said to him, we just can't go on. There's no escaping these dogs. Then Robert the Bruce remembered that just further on, there was a river flowing through an area of the land that they were running across.

And what dawned on them was that if they could get across or into that river and through that river, across the other side, that they could possibly get away from these dogs that were chasing them.

And so they made their way to the river and they waded in and made their way upstream walking through the water. And then they moved up some way and then came out on the other side.

And on the other side, close by, was a forest which they ran into and made their way further into the forest. And just as they looked back, what they could see was the dogs coming to the edge of the river and they were stopping.

[37 : 54] And no matter how much the English tried to drive on the dogs and pick up the scent, the scent was gone. The scent had been taken away by the river. There was no scent to smell.

There was no way of finding that track to follow. It had been washed away. And as we think of the one who forgives all your iniquity and the one who tempts us to despair, where do we come to but to the cross?

That place where our sin is forgiven, where the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin. So that even the one who tempts us to despair, we are beyond his reach.

We are beyond him because he cannot touch us. Because God looks on him who was crucified and pardons me. Therefore, we are able to see the great benefit that there is for us in that, the one who forgives all your iniquity.

So that when there are times when you feel that sense of despair, when it's like those dogs who are just picking up the scent, when Satan tempts you to despair, you remember that you are forgiven.

[39 : 12] And as you believe in the Lord Jesus, as you put your trust in him, that he is able to cleanse you from all your sins. The trail is broken by the blood of Christ that takes away our sins.

As somebody put it like this, the purpose of the cross is to repair the irreparable. What we couldn't repair ourselves, the cross takes care of as we put our trust in him.

we know that great benefit that he forgives all your iniquities. Then secondly, we see here the one who heals all your diseases.

Our bodies are so often afflicted by sickness and disease. It's part of life, sadly. It's part of what sin has brought into this world.

And we would love to see healing for all our diseases. But the reality is that that doesn't always happen.

[40 : 20] We know it. But he's not referring here to the sense of all our diseases in this life, all the things that cause us great pain and that bring death, that they will be healed.

But he's reminding us of the one who heals all your diseases as he speaks of the soul here. The soul, the one who is able to restore us not in a physical way but in a spiritual way.

The one who is able to heal us in that sense of all the damage done by sin in our lives. You think of all the things that go on in your heart.

The diseases that are there. Hate, greed, jealousy, anger, discouragement, despair, guilt, doubt, all of these things that so often just weigh so heavy upon us.

And yet here we are reminded of the great benefit of the one who heals all your diseases. The psalm, Psalm 23, another psalm we sing so often.

[41 : 30] It reminds us of that restoration that he gives. In verse 2 and 3 it says, He makes me lie down in green pastures. He leads me beside still waters.

He restores my soul. He leads me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. That wonder of the one who heals all our diseases, who restores our soul.

What a great benefit that there is in that for us as well. The remedy to all the diseases of our soul is found with him.

And the word is that remedy for us. And it's like God, someone described it like this, like God is the doctor who's on his rounds on a daily basis.

Visiting all his patients and making sure that all his patients are being cared for, that their soul is being restored.

[42 : 36] And that's the great relationship that we have with God as we come to him on a daily basis, as we come to his word, as we come to him in prayer, as we come to look to him and trust in him, we are reminded that daily he graciously cares for us.

That is what the Psalm 23 is saying. He leads me beside still water. She is with me. He restores my soul. He leads me in the paths of righteousness.

This is ongoing. This is the shepherd's care for his sheep. That daily he gives us all these benefits. And so, we know that he is with us.

But in order to know this benefit, we must take our medicine. Psalm 107 is another psalm that speaks of our experiences in life.

In verse 19, it says, So as we cry to the Lord, as we hear his word, he is able to heal us, deliver them from their destruction.

[43 : 46] That is what the Psalm 107 says. But then it goes on to say, Let them thank the Lord for his steadfast love, for his wondrous works to the children of men.

So as we see God doing that for us, as we cry to the Lord in our trouble, and as he delivers us from distress, as he sends out his word that so often heals us, it reminds us that with him we have so much of these benefits that our soul that is so bitter at times that he is able to make it rejoice in him again.

So how could we ever forget the way the Lord treats us like that on a daily basis? The way he tends to us, just like a doctor looking after his patients daily, the Lord looks after his people on a daily basis.

And for that we can say, bless the Lord, oh my soul and all that is within me. That we know the great benefit that there is in the Lord who heals our soul.

And thirdly, we see there in verse 4, the one who redeems your life from the pit. Yes, you could say it's quite similar to the one who forgives all your iniquity.

[45 : 14] But there's a reminder there again of the cost. The one who redeems your life from the pit. The one who has given everything to bring your life, to free you in your life from the consequences of sin.

There was a great price paid for us that God has given his son, the redeemer, so that our life may be spared from the pit.

What a benefit there is there for us as well. The one who gave life, but the one who redeems our life. There was a story of a little boy who made this model boat.

He built it himself, he made it himself, and he was so proud of this little boat that he'd made, and he went out this day to play with it in the river and tied a bit of string to the boat and let the boat out bit by bit.

And there he was, so pleased with what he had made, and he watched this boat just going in the water. But then suddenly the wind got up a bit and it started to pull on the boat, pull it further away from him and as he tried to pull the boat back in, the string that he had on it snapped.

[46 : 38] And the river took hold of this boat and took the boat away from him. The boy, he tried to chase this boat, but it just got further and further ahead of him. He lost sight of it and the boat was gone.

And he was so despondent at this. Well, a few weeks later, after having searched for this boat for so long, he had given up hope until a few weeks later he was walking through the town where he lived and in the window of a shop he saw this boat and it was his.

And he couldn't believe it that this boat was there for sale. And he went into the shop and he said to the shopkeeper, that's my boat, that belongs to me. And the shopkeeper said, well, no, it doesn't, it's mine now.

And if you want it, you'll have to pay for it. And the boy, he couldn't believe it. But he said he wanted his boat back and so eventually he paid the price for the boat.

And as he was going out of the shop, he was there holding the boat so closely to him, looking at it so longingly, the boat that he had made and he said, now you're mine twice.

[47 : 57] First I made you and now I've bought you. And that is how we are with God. The one who redeems your life from the pit is the one who made you.

But you were lost. You were lost in this world. And so being lost as we all are, what did the Lord do for us? He redeemed your life.

He made you and yet he bought you and bought you at a price. He gave his own son. And so as we think of this benefit, we see it is the Lord who has made us.

It is the Lord who gives us the breath of life. It is the Lord who gives us all that we enjoy in this world. And yet in our lostness we just go our own way.

But the Lord has come to redeem us, to buy us back to himself. And when we see the price of that, that Jesus had to die for our redemption, that it is through faith in him that we are redeemed, we see the gracious benefit of God in that.

[49 : 18] He didn't leave us. He didn't abandon us to be lost. lost. You think of the Hebridean Isles that was in Stornoway this last while and has now gone away not to come back to Stornoway again.

It's done its time, it's served its purpose and what now lies in store for the boat? To be scrapped. Just to be put away, to be abandoned, to be left in the scrap heap.

That's the way the Lord could be with us. That's the way the Lord could be with you and me. We've done enough in this world, we've gone our own way.

The Lord could just say the scrap heap. Let him go, let her go, that he served nothing else. But the Lord in his grace towards us doesn't want us just to be left on the scrap heap.

He wants to redeem your life. And that's the purpose why he sent his son. And so if we look to him, we are redeemed.

[50 : 27] We are assured that our life is not worthless, but it is precious to him, the one who gave his son that we might have life through him and life eternal.

So there is the benefit that we have in faith in Christ. He redeems your life from the pit. The fourth thing we see here is who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy.

Who crowns you? Now we think of a crown, you think of a king or a queen. And who here feels like a king or a queen.

And yet here we have that's one benefit that we receive from him. He crowns you with steadfast love and mercy. He's giving us a share in his kingdom.

He's giving us a part in the royal family that belongs to the Lord as our king. God crowns his people with the blessings of being part of his kingdom.

[51 : 38] him. He crowns his people his children with steadfast love and mercy. And these two things they need to be unpacked a little.

What do we get in this? He crowns you with steadfast love and mercy. Steadfast love here really corresponds to what the Lord calls grace in the New Testament.

He crowns you with grace upon grace always giving his grace to you. He crowns you with it. And this is almost like on a daily basis he presents this on a daily basis to us.

His faithfulness which is new every morning it is his grace that he gives again and again. 2 Corinthians 12 verse 9 where it says to Paul but he said to me my grace is sufficient for you for my power is made perfect in weakness.

He crowns him with grace the grace that is always sufficient. And so that is what we experience too. He crowns us with his steadfast love that unchanging love that we know in his grace.

[53 : 03] grace. And he also crowns us there with mercy. Mercy day by day. His mercy that is always more.

The mercy that keeps us. The mercy that is with us daily. That he is there in this way. God is so often seen in different ways in the scripture.

we think of the Lord is seen as a shepherd as we see in that psalm. We think of the way the Lord is seen as a farmer.

We think of the harvest field, the harvest which is plentiful. But as we look here and see the one who crowns us with mercy, it's a reminder of God in another way, in a gentle!

way. In a compassionate way, it's almost just like the Lord in the sense of a mother loving her children.

[54 : 07] That's what's behind it here. It's like the tender mercy of a mother towards her children. There was a feature on maybe a few months ago now and I just caught a little bit of it and it was about Princess Diana looking back on her life and she was speaking in this program about the importance of the human touch and if you ever saw Princess Diana doing her charity work wherever she went she would often be seen among the people very often even having young children sitting in her lap or playing around them or doing something with them because she saw that as so important that human touch it didn't matter that she was royalty it didn't matter that people would be afraid maybe of allowing this to go ahead but she just saw it as so important that she would show that tender compassion and care and concern for those around her that human touch and that's what's behind this care that the

Lord has for his people here who crowns you with steadfast love and mercy psalm 139 speaks of it as well when you look at that psalm it speaks of wherever you go in this world in verse 10 or verse 9 if I should take the wings!

of dawn and dwell beyond the sea there also you would be my guide your right hand holding me there is this tender touch of God that he is always having this concern for his people this mercy that is his hand upon us for good that he never lets us go and so we have that benefit too he crowns you with steadfast love and mercy the final benefit we see here then is in verse 5 the one who satisfies you with good so that your youth is renewed like the eagles he satisfies you with good this is one of his benefits too that satisfaction he gives whenever we have use of a product or a service so often you're asked now will you take a short survey at the end you may be dealing with a phone company you may be dealing with a product you've bought and you're often asked to take a survey and the questions are asking are you satisfied with the service are you satisfied with the product and behind that is just a desire to know how can things be improved and there are plenty of times we might say we're unsatisfied we're not happy with the service or the product but that will never be the case with

God he is the one who satisfies you with good the rolling stones want sung that song I can't get no satisfaction there's almost nothing in this world that they could see that could give them satisfaction and that's the song of so many in this world just whatever I do I just can't get that satisfaction but that's not our song that's not the song that the Lord gives to us because he satisfies you with good his tender mercies his tender steadfast love and his mercy he's crowned you with all of these benefits he satisfies you with good and so yes there are times when we grumble and moan there are times we have things that we're not happy with but it's of ourselves because

God satisfies you with good and he satisfies you in this way where he says that your youth is renewed like the eagles it ties so much in with Isaiah chapter 40 as well with Isaiah speaking about those who faint and are weary even young men shall fall exhausted but they who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength they shall mount up with wings like eagles they shall run and not be weary they shall walk and not faint we have that same kind of idea here so that your youth is renewed like the eagles it's to do with the strength and the power of the eagle and if you ever see eagles you see that they have that power and you think of the way they swoop down maybe they catch an animal even a fish out of the sea and yet you see the power that they have not just to catch that animal but to lift off again and fly up into the sky to soar up into the sky and carry that food with them it's incredible the power that they have and yet here we are being reminded the one who satisfies you with good and who renews your youth like he means that he gives you strength to go on he keeps you going in so many ways and again we just think of that great benefit of knowing the

[60 : 18] Lord who is with us when we are feeling weary in life when we feel exhausted by things he satisfies you with good and when we see that it reminds you of the strength and the power that is yours through faith in Christ that all that you have in him is all his gracious benefits and they are ours through faith some of we once said we have a long memory when it comes to our hurts our sorrows and our burdens But a very short memory when it comes to recalling just how good the Lord has been to us that's the kind of thing we see here David himself knew times when he was forgetful and so do we but we can come and say bless the Lord praise the Lord and let's not forget all his benefits the one who forgives our iniquities the one who heals our diseases the one who redeems our life the one who crowns us with steadfast love and mercy the one who satisfies us with good the benefits that are ours by faith when we know these benefits our soul can do nothing but praise him and rejoice in him who has remembered us who has redeemed us and we are his let us not forget all his gracious benefits let us pray our father in heaven we do thank you for your remembrance to us that you are a

God who is with us that you are a God who is near that you are a God who has given us your gracious benefits help us to remember them and continue with us now in Jesus name Amen we're going to conclude by singing these words from Psalm 103 page 369 the Scottish Psalter version Psalm 103 we'll sing from verse 1 to verse 5 O thou my soul bless God the Lord and all that in me is bestid it up his holy name to magnify and bless we'll sing from verse 1 to 5 the tune is Kilmarnock and we'll stand to sing O thou my soul bless

God the Lord and O that in me is!

God! God God! God God!

Bless, O my soul, the Lord thy God, hath not forget for thee.

[63 : 55] Of all his gracious benefits he hath bestowed on thee.

All thine iniquities, Judah, most graciously forgive.

Where my deceit, said soul, and grace, doth heal and deliver me.

Who doth redeem thy life, that thou to death may stop your time.

Who thee with loving kindness, thou hath tender mercy strong.

[65 : 20] Who with abundance of good things, thou satisfy thy mind.

So that we must be, O Saint, bring you this time.

After the benediction, I'll go to the door to my right. We'll close with the benediction. Now may grace, mercy and peace from God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit be with us.

And upon us, now and forevermore. Amen. Amen.