

Sermon 2017-09-17 - Year A - Pentecost 9-14

Sirach 27:30–28:7; Psalm 103:1–14; Romans 14:5–12; Matthew 18:21–35

## Introduction

- Benefits of living in Florida
  - 1) The Water 2) Florida Resident Discounts on Cruises and Attractions 3) The Weather 4) No State Income Tax 5) The Seafood 6) The Attractions 7) The Sports Teams 8) Publix, especially the Subs 9) Outdoor Activities 10) Great Universities with In-State Tuition Benefits<sup>1</sup>
- The book of psalms is the hymnbook of the Bible. Collection of songs intended for use both by individuals and groups to help them praise God and to teach them how to pray.
- In this psalm we are both praising God for all of his benefits, and simultaneously reminding ourselves of all of his benefits.
- At least four benefits are listed in this psalm.

## Forgiveness - *“He forgives all your sins”* (v. 3)

- When some people think of God, they picture an old man up in the clouds somewhere who is angry and aloof and waiting for us to sin so he can zap us with a lightning bolt.
  - This sounds more like the Greek god Zeus than the one true God of the Bible.
- It is true that God does get angry about sin. The biblical word for this is “wrath.”
  - “The anger of God is particularly related to the sin of his people, which pains and deeply displeases him (II Kgs 13:3). Sin offends and wounds his love.”<sup>2</sup>
  - God’s anger is unlike human anger because it is just and controlled
  - God is just, but he is also merciful.
- *“The Lord is merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love.”* (Psalm 103:8, ESV)
  - The cool thing about this verse is that it is not just the words of a man describing God, this is how God describes himself (Exodus 34:6). This same phrase is repeated 8 times in the OT.
- *He will not always accuse us, nor will he keep his anger for ever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us according to our wickedness.”* (Psalm 103:9–10, BCP 1979)
  - This is what we mean by the word grace.
  - How can God be both just and merciful at the same time? Jesus.
  - God is quick to forgive when we confess our sins and repent.
- Reminder about the opportunity to confess our sins during the Eucharist.
- You don’t have to fix your life to come to church. Jesus wants you to come as you are, and he will transform your life in his strength.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.denikerealty.com/10-reasons-live-florida/>

<sup>2</sup> “133 אָרָא,” ed. R. Laird Harris, Gleason L. Archer Jr., and Bruce K. Waltke, *Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1999), 58.

### Healing - ***“heals all your infirmities”*** (v. 3)

- God is truly a God of healing. This was well recognized in the Old Testament where we see many healing miracles. It is also very true in the New Testament where much of Jesus’ ministry was focused on healing and where the Apostles carried this on after Jesus’ ascension.
- When we have a need for healing, we can always bring our requests to God and know that he hears us. We can also ask our brothers and sisters in Christ to gather around us and pray for us.
  - James 5:13-15
- We have experienced some remarkable healings even over the last few months here at Good Samaritan. Jim Nelson.
- But what about when God doesn’t heal us? What can we make of that.
- We don’t always get to know the reason why, but we do know that ultimately everyone will be healed through resurrection.

### Life - ***“He redeems your life from the grave”*** (v. 4)

- “He redeems your life from the grave” (v. 4)
- Jesus didn’t just die on the cross for our sins, he also rose from the grave after three days, conquering death by death.
- Because Jesus rose from the dead, those who put their trust in him have the hope of the resurrection. Jesus promised that he would return for us.
  - John 14:1-3
- Truly earthly death is the ultimate healing. When someone dies after a long battle with some terrible illness, we are sad, but there is also a piece of us that is thankful that the person is no longer suffering.
- In death, all of the suffering of this earthly life comes to an end.
  - Revelation 21:3-4
- Abundant life starts now! John 10:10.

### Satisfaction - ***“He satisfies you with good things.”*** (v. 5)

- Westminster Shorter Catechism “Q. 1. What is the chief end of man? A. Man’s chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever.”
  - An electric weed trimmer looks a bit like a golf club, but you would have a terrible time playing golf with it!
- Augustine: “Thou hast formed us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless till they find rest in Thee.”<sup>3</sup>
- As we consider all the benefits of God, it brings us to our knees as we cry out:
  - *“Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name!”*  
(Psalm 103:1, ESV)
- “Today if you hear his voice, do not harden your hearts.” (Heb 6:7)

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<sup>3</sup> Augustine of Hippo, Confessions, 1.1.