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The Upward Gaze

(October 19, 2025, Glen G. Scorgie)

Scripture Reading: Psalm 103

SERMON SUMMARY

Psalm 103 begins with a call to “praise the Lord.” It is an invitation to turn the gaze of our hearts *upward* toward God and away from our self-centered concerns and the many distractions and trivial pursuits that compete for our attention. To be able to make such a spiritual pivot, it helps to remember “all his benefits”—that is, all the ways God has already blessed, and continues to bless, our lives.

We will discover that such an upward gaze becomes a *transforming* one, and ultimately an *obedient* one. For to praise someone is to attribute worth to them, and a great spiritual principle running through the whole Christian faith is that we will instinctively imitate what we value and delight in most. Those who practice this adoring upward gaze toward God, which this Psalm calls for, will naturally find themselves imitating God in how they relate to others. There will be no place in their lives for bitterness, anger and revenge, nor will they support or tolerate such behaviors in others.

Among God’s many praiseworthy character traits, his *enduring love* and his *generous compassion* are highlighted here (vv. 4, 8). These are traits that were on fullest display in the way Jesus Christ—God with us—lived and died and rose again. The Psalm concludes by inviting us to join the chorus of heavenly beings and earthly creatures who are already praising God, and who are already living accordingly.

GROWING DEEPER (Reflection & Application)

1. What was your main personal takeaway from the message this week?
2. What spiritual truth(s) will the caret symbol (^) on your computer keyboard remind you of?
3. What does it mean to *praise* someone?
4. This psalm tells us to “forget not all his benefits.” Which benefits have you experienced, and which mean the most to you?
5. Summarize the spiritual principle that we become like who or what we admire most.
6. Discuss the significance of this Psalm highlighting God’s character traits of compassion, grace, forgiveness and love.
7. Discuss the wisdom found in the lyrics of an old hymn that says: “How quickly obedience answers love.”
8. Share any plans you have for practicing “the upward gaze” more frequently and consistently.