

“A Laundry List of Thanksgiving”

What does the phrase, “Laundry List” mean? Like, “He’s got a whole ‘laundry list’ of things to do today!”

Obviously, the phrase derives from the professional garment cleaning industry. When a customer brought in a parcel of laundry the lowest level worker was given the job to carefully inspect and sort the parcel, using specific terms popular in that industry.

For example. “Blue Jeans.” To the cleaning company there were no such thing as “blue jeans.” There were pants, of course, and blue jeans were “denim pants”, more specifically, either “coveralls” and “overalls.” Denim coveralls had arms and overalls did not. Blue jeans were categorized as a ‘bibless overalls’, and a pair of jeans was to be listed as half an overall. If there were, say, three pair of jeans, you wrote “3 HALF” next to overalls, on your “laundry list.”

So a Laundry List is a carefully constructed inventory breaking down a broad category, “Laundry,” into specific items ... “the list.”

Here’s a “Laundry List” of Thanksgiving taken from Psalm 103:

Psalm 103:1-22

¹ Let all that I am praise the LORD; with my whole heart, I will praise his holy name.

² Let all that I am praise the LORD; may I never forget the good things he does for me.

1. God is my Forgiver and Healer.

Psalm 103:3, He forgives all my sins and heals all my diseases.

2. God is my Redeemer and Rewarder.

Psalm 103:4, He redeems me from death and crowns me with love and tender mercies.

ILLY: The best job ever must be that guy that delivers those Sweepstakes Prize Checks to families! That’s kind’a what God gets to do every day!

3. God is my Filler-Upper-er and Renewer.

Psalms 103:5, He fills my life with good things. My youth is renewed like the eagle's!

4. God is my Great Equalizer.

Psalms 103:6, The LORD gives righteousness and justice to all who are treated unfairly.

5. God is my Teacher and Example.

Psalms 103:7, He revealed his character to Moses and his deeds to the people of Israel.

6. God is my Merciful Punisher.

Psalms 103:8-10, The LORD is compassionate and merciful, slow to get angry and filled with unfailing love. ⁹ He will not constantly accuse us, nor remain angry forever. ¹⁰ He does not punish us for all our sins; he does not deal harshly with us, as we deserve.

God isn't a big heavenly scoop of Unicorn Flakes and Positronic Energy Plasma, He is a real, actual Diving Being with expectations for my life, and when I cross the line, there are consequences.

7. God is my Stain Remover!

Psalms 103:11-12, For his unfailing love toward those who fear him is as great as the height of the heavens above the earth. ¹² He has removed our sins as far from us as the east is from the west.

You'd expect a "stain remover" on a laundry list, right?

8. God is my Tender-hearted Heavenly Father.

Psalms 103:13, The LORD is like a father to his children, tender and compassionate to those who fear him.

- What He gives: tender compassion.
- What He gets: respect.

9. God is my Matter-izer.

Psalms 103:14-16, For he knows how weak we are; he remembers we are only dust. ¹⁵ Our days on earth are like grass; like wildflowers, we bloom and die. ¹⁶ The wind blows, and we are gone— as though we had never been here.

In spite of my weak, withering nature ... God makes my life matter, now, and for eternity!

10. God is my Covenantal Partner.

Psalm 103:17-18, But the love of the LORD remains forever with those who fear him. His salvation extends to the children's children ¹⁸ of those who are faithful to his covenant, of those who obey his commandments!

11. God is my Ruler.

Psalm 103:19, The LORD has made the heavens his throne; from there he rules over everything.

ILLY: One job of a "ruler" (show measuring stick) is to determine the "units of measurement."

12. God is my Commander.

For this last one I want to go back, briefly, to the beginning of the Psalm 103:2, Let all that I am praise the LORD; **may I never forget** the good things he does for me. Don't forget! How? With all the distractions of daily life, how do we "not forget" this laundry list? Verse 20-21 answer this:

Psalm 103:20-22, Praise the LORD, you angels, you mighty ones who carry out his plans, listening for each of his commands. ²¹ Yes, praise the LORD, you armies of angels who serve him and do his will!

- Are you on mission carrying out His plans?
- Are you actively listening for the voice of God?
- Do you see yourself on the front-lines of His "army"?
- Are you serving God and doing His will?
- Do you praise Him? Do you rehearse internally and with your voice who He is to you?

These are the ways you "don't forget."

Now, we are at the last verse: Psalm 103:22, Praise the LORD, everything he has created, everything in all his kingdom. Let all that I am praise the LORD.

Everything includes me, right? Absolutely!

Personal Testimony: This Psalm, and especially verse 21 (KJV), *Bless ye the LORD, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure ...* is the verse that God used to call me into the Ministry. I was at a Youth Retreat in Gatlinburg, TN ... and during a worship time my Bible fell open to this verse and I clearly heard God saying, "Alan, this is for you." I was literally speechless. I had my life all mapped out, I wanted to be a math teacher. And that would have been fun and rewarding for me. But, God had a different path marked out.

MAIN POINT: You hear God most clearly in the context of praise and thanksgiving.

A closing prayer ... "Dear God, our ask today is that You would reveal Yourself to us this Thanksgiving and Christmas season. Show us Yourself, in all of Your praise-worthy Glory. In Jesus' name, amen."