

BEAUTIFUL THINGS

Title: Part 3 – “Rescued from Rock Bottom”

Date: August 31, 2025

As we continue in this moment of worship let's all stay standing for the reading of God's Word. For six weeks we are camping out in just one passage of Scripture from Psalm 103 and my hope, and prayer, is that by the end of this we can all memorize these 5 verses. Not because we have to, but because they are too good to forget! Your soul is gonna need these in the days to come.

So, let's all read these together out loud. Psalm 103, verses 1 through 5:

¹ Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. ² Praise the Lord, my soul, and ***forget not*** all his **BENEFITS**—³ who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, ⁴ who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion, ⁵ who satisfies your desires with good things so that your youth is renewed like the eagle's.

David is directing his own soul to remember what we are so prone to forget. In verse 4 he says that God is the one who redeems your life from the pit. How many of you have ever felt like your life was in a pit? Maybe it was of your own making, maybe it was circumstances out of your control, but you felt trapped.

Today I want to preach a message I'm calling:

Rescued from Rock Bottom

I don't know about you, but I am forever grateful that God rescued me from the depths! Let's invite Him to speak to us and open our hearts to what He wants to do today. Pray with me.

[PRAYER TIME]

Hey before you grab a seat take a :30 seconds and say “Hi” to some people around you. While everyone here in the house is saying “Hi” to each other I want to say “Hi” if you are joining us online or on our app, thank you for spending some time with us! We think you are a part of our church family so let us know how we can pray for you or serve you—we'd love to walk alongside you in any way that we can.

Well today we are in the third installment of a collection of messages called “Beautiful Things” that opened with this uncomfortable question we all wrestle with:

What am I living for?

When you wake up in the morning, when you're stressed, when you need comfort, when you feel like you're failing at life, what makes you think you're going to be OK?

The problem is that most of us, Christian, skeptic, don't know what you are, most of us are living for things that are unreliable, temporary, or completely out of our control. We're living for career success. We're living for relationships. We're living for our health. We're living for financial security. We're living for the American Dream.

AND when those things get threatened or taken away, we panic. We despair. We think our lives are over!

Remember that song "Beautiful Things" by Benson Boone that was everywhere? He sings, **"Please stay. I want you; I need you, oh, God. Don't take these beautiful things that I've got."** That song topped charts in 19 countries because it captures something we all feel—gratitude for the good things mixed with fear of losing them. We're all looking for beautiful things in our lives.

But we're looking in all the wrong places. We think peace of mind comes from having enough money in the bank. We think healing comes from the right doctor. We think hope comes from the right politician. We think love comes from finding the right person.

BUT King David discovered six beautiful things that are different. They can't be taken away! They don't fluctuate with the markets! They don't depend on your performance or other people's behavior! They survive every storm, outlast every crisis, and satisfy every longing.

David says in Psalm 103, verse 1:

¹ Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name. ² Praise the Lord, my soul, and **FORGET NOT** all his benefits...

That phrase "forget not" is crucial. David is commanding his own soul to remember what he's prone to forget.

AND the things he wants to remember aren't just nice religious concepts. These are life-or-death necessities. Because when we forget God's benefits, we start trying to find these same things in other places. But it doesn't work. It never works. There are some things that only come from God.

Things like **FORGIVENESS**. Not partial, not conditional, but complete forgiveness that transforms your broken things into beautiful things.

Then last week, the second beautiful thing is **HEALING** for all your diseases—not just treating symptoms, but restoring you to your original design of wholeness.

If you missed any of this you can get caught up on our app or website, but today we're talking about the third benefit that David lists and this is for those moments when life doesn't just get difficult—it gets devastating. I'm talking about **the God who rescues us from the pit.**

Speaking of being stuck in the pit. Last summer we were in the mountains at the most remote cabin we have ever stayed at. From the time you left the pavement it was about 20 minutes of gravel and clay switchbacks mostly up a mountain and in some places the road was beginning to washout. And once you left the pavement you also left all cell service. Which is kind of the point, right? Until you actually need cell service.

The first time we headed up the mountain it was so sketchy that the rest of the family basically said, “We are not going back down that road until we leave, you have to go get all the supplies on your own!” Even our dog wasn't having it! BUT honestly, that trip to get supplies was fine. I even made another trip out and back while we were there.

But the day we left we got Cheryl's Acadia packed up, I could tell the tension was building, and we began making our way out. AND maybe it was my own cockiness or maybe it was because I was trying to be kind to the other passengers but instead of going for it in one of the washed-out areas I tried to crawl through it. BIG mistake! We started to lose traction and slowly began to slide off the road. This next part is kind of a blur of everyone screaming, mud flying, and disbelief. Thankfully we slid towards the mountain and not off the other side over the ledge. But what did happen is we got all four tires stuck in a ditch full of mud. So, much so that everyone had to climb out of the passengers side door because you could not open any of the other doors.

As we all stood there looking at the mess and I'm thinking about next steps we realized we had no cell service, so even if we could get a tow truck up here, we had no way of calling them. And the road was so narrow and the drop off so steep that I didn't want the rest of the family hiking it because if another person came down you'd have no where to go. Basically, we were just stuck there. **There was nothing we could do in our own power to get out.**

Have you ever been in a situation like that? Maybe not literally stuck in a muddy ditch on a mountain, but stuck somewhere in life where you realized your own power, your own resources, your own efforts just weren't going to be enough? Where you felt trapped and helpless, and no amount of trying harder was going to change your situation?

Maybe it was financial. The bills piled up, the debt mounted, the repo man came, and you found yourself thinking, "How did I get here? How will I ever dig out of this?"

Maybe it was relational. Your marriage ended, the kids stopped calling as much, the friendships dissolved, and you found yourself completely alone thinking, "Will anyone ever love me again?"

Maybe it was professional. You got fired, your business failed, your reputation was destroyed, and you found yourself wondering, "Will I ever amount to anything?"

Maybe it was physical. The diagnosis came back, the treatment wasn't working, the prognosis was grim, and you found yourself asking, "Is this how my story ends?"

Maybe it was emotional. The depression hit, the anxiety overwhelmed, the trauma surfaced, and you found yourself drowning thinking, "Will I ever feel normal again?"

Or maybe it was spiritual. You made choices you never thought you'd make, you wandered further from God than you ever imagined, you hurt people you never meant to hurt, and you found yourself in the darkness thinking, "Can God ever forgive this? Can I ever come back from this?"

Here's what I want you to understand: pits are real. Amen? And the Bible doesn't pretend they don't exist. David, who wrote this psalm, spent years hiding in literal caves while his father-in-law tried to kill him. Joseph was thrown into an actual pit by his brothers, then sold into slavery. Jeremiah was lowered into a cistern and left to die. The psalmists repeatedly talk about being in "the pit of destruction" or "the miry clay."

Pits happen. Sometimes because of our own poor choices. Sometimes because other people sin against us. Sometimes it's because we live in a broken world where bad things happen to good people.

BUT here's the beautiful thing David discovered: **God specializes in rescue.** In fact, when David says in verse 4 the God:

⁴ who redeems your life from the pit...

When he writes that he's using a very specific Hebrew word that will blow your mind when you understand what it means. Before we talk about it, write this down, point number one if you are in a pit today:

You have a kinsman redeemer.

Some of you are like, "Well I am so glad... what the heck is a kinsman redeemer?"

The Hebrew word David uses for "redeems" is {ga-AHL} ga'al (גָּאֵל). AND this isn't just any other word for rescue or salvation. This is a very specific legal term that refers to the role of a kinsman redeemer.

In Hebrew culture, if a male family member fell into devastating circumstances—lost their land, fell into slavery, couldn't pay their debts, died—the nearest male relative had the legal obligation to step in and buy them back or take on their family. This relative was called the kinsman redeemer.

But here's what's crucial: the redeemer had to meet three qualifications:

- First, he had to be related to the person in trouble—you couldn't redeem a stranger.
- Second, he had to be willing to pay the price—redemption always costs something.
- Third, he had to be able to pay the price—you couldn't redeem someone if you were broke yourself.

When David says God "redeems your life from the pit," he's saying that God has made Himself your kinsman redeemer! AND what does that mean? It means God has chosen to be related to you! God is willing to pay the price for your rescue! And God is able to pay whatever it costs!

Think about what this means: your rescue isn't an act of charity from a distant deity. It's a family obligation from your Heavenly Father. God doesn't save you because He feels sorry for you. He saves you because you're family! Because you are a son or daughter of the King!

This is why the incarnation is so crucial. When Jesus became human, He literally became our kinsman. He took on flesh and blood so He could qualify as our Redeemer! Hebrews 2:14 says:

¹⁴ Because God's children are human beings—made of flesh and blood—the Son also became flesh and blood. For only as a human being could he die, and only by dying could he break the power of the devil, who had the power of death.

Jesus became our flesh and blood brother so He could redeem us from the pit.

SO... back to my family stuck in that muddy ditch on the mountain? I know some of you are still wondering how we got out. Well, here's what happened. Like many of us in our lives, my first thought was to try and get out of this in my own power. I saw a fallen log about 6 feet long nearby, so I wedged it under the left side tires hoping I could back down the mountain and get free from the ditch. AND this worked for about 30 feet until I came to crashing halt in an even deeper mud pit. And instead of just having a dirty SUV, I now had a scratched up left side and bent transmission mount. In other words, I basically made things worse. I had literally reach rock bottom now.

So, how did we get out? Long story short, a local finally came by and radioed their friend who owned a big diesel 4×4 to see if they would be willing to come save us. A few minutes later Rich shows up, hooks his wench to our car, and drags us out of the pit we were in. Then he made sure we were able to get to more stable ground.

Just like we needed someone with the right equipment, the willingness to help, and the ability to reach us, we all need a kinsman redeemer who can reach into whatever pit we've fallen into, and His name is Jesus!

Number 2:

Your pit doesn't disqualify you.

Someone needs to hear that today! In God's upside-down Kingdom, here's something that might shock you: **the deeper your pit, the more qualified God is to rescue you.**

In the Old Testament, there's this incredible story about a woman named Ruth whose husband died, leaving her widowed and destitute in a foreign country. Picture this: you're a young woman who moved away from everything you knew to marry the love of your life. But then disaster strikes—not just your husband, but your father-in-law and brother-in-law all die, leaving you with nothing but grief and two other widows.

You're in ancient Israel with no social security, no life insurance, no job prospects. As a foreign woman, you don't even have family connections to fall back on. Your mother-in-law Naomi is so bitter she literally changes her name to "Mara," which means "bitter," because she says God has dealt harshly with her. She's planning to go back to her hometown, and she's basically telling you, "Save yourself. Go back to your people. Find another husband. Don't tie yourself to my sinking ship."

But Ruth makes this incredible choice. Look at this: (Ruth 1:16)

¹⁶ But Ruth replied, "Don't ask me to leave you and turn back. Wherever you go, I will go; wherever you live, I will live. Your people will be my people, and your God will be my God."

She's choosing loyalty over security, love over logic.

So, she goes to Bethlehem as a poor foreign widow with an elderly mother-in-law to support. Picture yourself in her sandals: you wake up every morning not knowing where your next meal is coming from. You have to go out into the fields and pick up leftover grain that the workers missed—basically surviving on scraps. You're doing backbreaking work from sunrise to sunset just to gather enough barley to make a small loaf of bread. Every day you're one step away from starvation, one accident away from complete disaster. She was as low as you could get—no money, no family, no hope, no future. If there was ever someone who had legitimate reasons to be bitter, to give up, to say "God has forgotten me," it was Ruth!

BUT God provides a kinsman redeemer named Boaz who not only rescued her from poverty but married her and brought her into the family line of Jesus Christ! Ruth's pit became her platform for God's glory!

Or think about the story of Hosea and Gomer. God told the prophet Hosea to marry a prostitute to illustrate His love for unfaithful Israel. When Gomer ran away and ended up enslaved, Hosea had to buy her back. The deeper she fell, the more powerfully her redemption illustrated God's love!

Here's what I need you to understand:

- Your pit doesn't disqualify you from God's love!
- Your abuse doesn't make you unreachable!
- Your failures don't make you unredeemable!
- Your mistakes don't put you beyond the reach of God's grace!

In fact, the opposite is true. The Bible is full of people who did their greatest work for God after they'd been rescued from their deepest pits.

- Moses murdered someone and fled into the wilderness for forty years before God called him to lead Israel out of Egypt.
- David committed adultery and murder before he wrote some of his most beautiful psalms.
- Peter denied Jesus three times before he became the leader of the early church.
- Paul persecuted Christians before he became the greatest missionary in history.

God doesn't redeem you despite your pit! He redeems you through your pit! He takes the very thing that was meant to destroy you and uses it to display His glory!

BUT here's what we forget:

Redemption always costs something.

Redemption always comes at a price. It's never free for the redeemer, even though it's free for the redeemed.

When a kinsman redeemer rescued someone from slavery, he had to pay the full debt. When he bought back the family land, he had to pay market price. When he married the widow, he had to take on all her obligations.

Redemption is costly. And the deeper the pit, the higher the price.

So, what did it cost God to redeem you from your pit? What price did your kinsman redeemer have to pay?

It cost Him His Son. Romans 8:32 says:

³² He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all—how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?

God didn't send an angel. He didn't hire a consultant. He didn't delegate the job to someone else. He sent His own Son to pay the price for your redemption.

Jesus descended into the deepest pit possible—spiritual separation from the Father—so that you could be lifted out of yours. He experienced the ultimate darkness so you could walk in the light. He was forsaken so you could be forgiven.

On the cross, Jesus cried out, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" He experienced the pit of God's wrath against sin so you would never have to.

The price of your redemption was the blood of Jesus Christ. And when Jesus said, "It is finished," He was announcing that the full price had been paid. Your redemption is complete.

AND while that might make you feel shame or sadness, here's something that might challenge your perspective, number 4:

God sees your pit differently than you do.

God doesn't see your pit the same way you do.

You see your pit as evidence of your failure. God sees it as an opportunity for His glory. You see your pit as the end of your story. God sees it as the beginning of a new chapter. You see your pit as punishment. God sees it as preparation.

Joseph, from the Old Testament, understood this. I mentioned a minute ago his brothers put him into a pit. But then they felt bad, so they sold him into slavery. AND after years of betrayal, slavery, false accusation, and imprisonment, he could have been bitter. But when he was finally vindicated and promoted to second-in-command of Egypt, he said to his brothers: (Gen 50:20)

²⁰ You intended to harm me, but God intended it for good to accomplish what is now being done, the saving of many lives.

God took Joseph's pit and turned it into a platform. He used Joseph's suffering to position him to save his entire family—and the nation that would become Israel—from famine.

Your pit might feel like a dead end, but God sees it as a detour that's leading somewhere beautiful. Your setback might feel like defeat, but God sees it as a setup for comeback. Your breakdown might feel like the end, but God sees it as the beginning of breakthrough.

Isaiah 61:3 says God gives:

...a crown of beauty instead of ashes, the oil of joy instead of mourning, and a garment of praise instead of a spirit of despair.

SO, what does this mean for you and I practically? How do you live this out while you're still in the pit or just climbing out of it? A few thoughts I put in my notes:

First, change your **PERSPECTIVE** on your pain. Instead of asking "Why is this happening to me?" start asking "What is God wanting to do through this?" Instead of seeing your struggle as a dead end, start seeing it as a detour that's leading somewhere beautiful. Your current chapter is not your final chapter.

Second, **DOCUMENT** your journey. Write down what you're learning, what God is showing you, how you're growing. Take notes on the prayers God answers, the people He brings into your life, the small victories along the way. You're going to need those notes later when you help someone else through the same thing.

Third, look for the emerging **TESTIMONY**. Even while you're still hurting, start paying attention to how your pain is developing compassion, how your struggle is building strength, how your pit is teaching you to depend on God in ways you never did before. These aren't just side effects of suffering—they're the raw materials of redemption!

Fourth, **RESIST** the temptation to waste your pain. Don't just survive your pit—study it. Don't just endure your struggle—extract wisdom from it. God doesn't waste anything, but you can waste what God is trying to teach you if you're not paying attention.

And finally, start believing that your mess will become your **MESSAGE**. That broken relationship could become the foundation for a ministry to other hurting couples. That financial failure could become the basis for helping others with money management. That addiction could become the platform for setting others free. That depression could become the doorway to helping others find hope.

AND that leads us to this:

Your redemption story helps others.

I don't know all the reasons why God allows pits and then redeems us from them. BUT I do know this, when He does, we can now help others who are going through the same thing.

The Apostle Paul says in 2 Corinthians 1:3-4, this is actually one of my life's anchor verses, he says:

³ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, ⁴ who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God.

God doesn't waste your pain. He recycles it into purpose! He doesn't waste your pit. He transforms it into a platform!

Some of you today, this is your story! You could tell us first hand that the very thing that was meant to destroy you becomes the very thing God uses to help destroy the same thing in someone else's life. Your mess becomes your message. Your test becomes your testimony. Your breakdown becomes your breakthrough—not just for you, but for others.

Think about it:

- Who's going to be more effective in helping someone overcome addiction—someone who's never struggled with addiction, or someone who's been to the bottom and been redeemed?
- Who's going to be more credible helping someone through depression—someone who's never been depressed, or someone who's walked through that valley and found healing?

God allows you to go through things so you can help others go through things. He redeems you from pits so you can become part of the rescue team for others who are still trapped. Amen?

I wish I had more time to unpack this, but one more and we are done. The final thing we need to know today is this:

The rescue mission is already complete.

If you don't get anything else I say today, I pray you get this: **if you're in Christ, your redemption is not future tense—it's past tense.** You're not hoping to be redeemed someday, you've already been redeemed!

Colossians 1:13-14 says: **For he has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the Son he loves, in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.**

“For He has...” past tense!

- You have been rescued!
- You have been redeemed!
- The transaction is complete!
- The price has been paid!
- The chains have been broken!
- The pit has been conquered!

Some of you are sitting in here today thinking you're still in the pit. You're still living like a *slave* when the papers of your freedom have already been signed! You're still acting like a *prisoner* when the cell door has already been opened! You're still believing you're *stuck* when your kinsman redeemer has already bought you back!

God sent me to tell you, the PIT doesn't define you anymore! Your PAST doesn't determine your future! Your MISTAKES don't disqualify you from God's purposes! Your FAILURES don't put you beyond the reach of God's grace!

You have been redeemed! Not because you earned it! Not because you deserved it! Not because you cleaned yourself up first! But because Jesus qualified as your kinsman redeemer and was willing and able to pay the price! Give Him a shout of praise in the house if you are thankful for Jesus, your kinsman redeemer!

As we begin to close, maybe you feel like you're in a pit right now. Maybe you feel trapped by debt, enslaved by addiction, imprisoned by depression, bound by shame, stuck in a situation that feels hopeless.

But I want you to know that your kinsman redeemer has already paid for your freedom. The rescue mission isn't coming—it's already been accomplished. You don't have to wait for God to notice your situation. He's already seen it and already acted.

Your job isn't to earn your way out of the pit. Your job is to accept the rescue that's already been provided. Your job isn't to prove you're worth saving. Your job is to believe that Jesus already proved it on the cross.

Maybe you feel like your pit is too deep, your situation is too complicated, your past is too ugly. But remember: **the deeper the pit, the more glorious the rescue**. The darker the circumstances, the brighter the light of redemption shines.

God doesn't redeem easy cases to show off His power. He redeems impossible cases to show off His grace.

I want to end with this promise: God is not done with your story. The pit you're in is not your final destination. The chapter you're living through is not your conclusion. God is writing a redemption story with your life. He's taking every broken piece, every painful experience, every devastating setback and weaving it together into something beautiful. Your greatest ministry will come from your deepest pain. Because that's what redemption does—it takes what was meant for evil and uses it for good.

I want you to walk out of here with this truth firmly planted in your heart: you have a kinsman redeemer who was willing and able to pay whatever it cost to rescue you from whatever muddy ditch you've fallen into.

You are no longer defined by your pit—you are defined by your redeemer.

Let me pray for you.