

**Just Stop, Will You?**  
Psalm 103:1-5, 11,12, 20-22 (NIV)

October 30, 1978 was a very special day in the Hair household. It was the day our daughter Jen was born; but only after some very long, long hours of labor . . . 26 hours to be exact. Gloria had gone into the hospital Saturday evening . . . well, it was Sunday morning; about one or two o'clock.

That same morning, about 7:30 a.m. I called my lay leader at church and told him, 'I've got good new and bad news. The good news is that Gloria is having our baby. The bad news is that you have to preach!' Graciously, he took care of everything at the church, and God took care of everything at the hospital.

**PP#1:** Picture of Dan holding Jen

I can't tell you how special Jen is to us. Because she was born Caesarian section, I was the first to see her, to *hold* her and to *talk* to her. Almost immediately I began to see the characteristics that my wife, Gloria, and I had passed on to her. She looked like a Cottrell. She had my wife's nose, and the tragedy of it all, she had my feet. Her feet were so big, they were almost out of proportion. It took her a year or more to have her body catch up to her feet!

When Jen was born, I learned some new words. There were words *to* say and *not* to say. But initially, there were no words. When I first saw her, there were *no words* to describe the incredible, phenomenal, wonderful gift that God gave, and that Gloria and I partnered with Him to create. I just sat, looked at her in silence, and cried. There were no words.

This year, the HCI committee and our church is trying to teach us to use new words regularly. They are "remember", "renew" and "rejoice". I'd like to suggest however you can't really use these words without learning and using a foreign word you may not recognize or know. It's a Hebrew word found in only two books in the Old Testament. It's used 71 times in the book of Psalms and three times in the book of Habakkuk.

**PP#2:** Slide for the word SELAH

Though it's not used here in Psalm 103, I think it should be. In Psalms like 84-89, the word "Selah" *is* used. There are several suggestions

as to what this word might mean.

**PP#3:** Direction given to musicians

Some suggest it was a direction given to the musicians who would sing or play as the Psalm was being used. Others have suggested a meaning I really like.

**PP#4:** Words “pause” or “stop” with picture

It might mean, “Pause”, or “Stop”. What has been just been written is so important, so wonderful, it’s possible there are no words. Just like when I saw Jen for the first time there just are no words that work when we read these words from the Psalm; we just have to stop, maybe shed a tear; but for sure just stand in wonder.

Let me suggest three places where I think such a word ought to be used in this Psalm. One place would be at the end of verses 1-5. David is saying, “Just stop, will you?”

**PP#5:** Remember what God has accomplished for you.

REMEMBER WHAT GOD HAS ACCOMPLISHED FOR YOU.  
Sometimes when I pray right before I go to sleep, I quote these words of verses 1 and 2. There is no way you can forget His benefits if I will just stop and remember.

Do you remember the benefits when God just spoke to you for the first time? Do you remember how you felt when God touched your child, or someone you love, and changed their life? Do you remember when you experienced the movement of God in this church in such a real and intangible way that there were no words to describe how you felt? Do you remember the first time someone in this church reached out and touched you, did a kindness for you or your family? Was there a time when God’s benefits came pouring in on you in such a ways that there was no way that you life could contain those blessing He just gave you?

**PP#6:** Pause . . . Selah . . . and thank.

Then just stop will you? Pause . . . Selah . . . and thank.

**PP#7:** Psalm 103:11-12

Verses 11 and 12 secondly tells us TO RENEW WHAT GOD ALLOWED IN YOU. Have you ever experienced God's mercy when you knew full well you didn't deserve it? Do you know what it's like to know how God renews you, or better yet lifts you out of your sin, and you experience the wonder of your sins forgiven, and a newness came over you for the first time? It is impossible to recall the renewal, to even think about the blessing the forgiveness gave to you until you just stop . . . pause . . . think about these things . . .

**PP#8:** Selah, with picture

Selah.

Oh by the way, here is another way God renews you. I am so glad God got His directions right. If David said, as far as the north is from the south, so far has he removed your sins from us, we are in a heap of trouble. Think about it. If God forgives your sin and takes them to the south, where will He end up? On our globe, when you get to the south pole, and God's still got your sins, when He gets to the south pole, and keeps going, which direction is He taking those sins? Back north . . . and eventually, those sins will meet you again.

**PP#9:** Picture of globe

If, however, He takes your sins, and heads east from Forest Lake, goes all the way around the world, gets back to Forest Lake, and keeps going toward, say New York, which direction is He headed? That's right, east. Your sins will never meet you again if He separates them to the east. Isn't that great? Folks, let me say it again, before you can appreciate the renewal God gives, you just might want to hear a word . . .

**PP#10:** Selah

Selah.

**PP#11:** Psalm 103:20-22

Finally, verses 20-22 encourages us to REJOICE WITH GOD'S ANGELS . . . AND HIS GREATEST CREATION . . . OTHER BELIEVERS.

**PP#12:** Image of believers worshipping together

Rejoice by just blessing. It's not saying bless someone sitting next to you; not to just bless someone you like, or don't like. David is saying you rejoice by joining the regular angels, connecting with the army angels, and everyone around you to rejoice in and for the One who gave all this to you, God Himself.

You see, you can't rejoice in the wonderful history of the last fifty years, all the buildings which were built here at Forest Hills, all the wonderful ministries accomplished by it's people, or all the people young and old who were brought to Christ until you recognize the Source. You see it isn't the years gone by, or the building we're in right now, or the people whose lives which were changed.

### **PP#13: Image of Jesus**

Don't you see, you have to see it's Him. It's He who was long before Forest Hills was ever conceived or dreamed could exist or anything that's happened here. It's Him. Before you can ever rejoice, you have to see Him as the beginning and reason why. If you're going to rejoice, just stop it, and one more time . . .

### **PP#14: Selah**

Selah!