

THE FORGIVENESS OF SIN

PSALM 130:1-4 • TV103B

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Psalm 130:1-4

“Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD. Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications. If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.”

My text today will be taken from the book of **Psalms; Psalm 130 verses 1-4.**

I’m speaking on the subject: **“THE FORGIVENESS OF SIN.”**

The Old Testament is beautiful in Gospel truth. A man who cannot preach the Gospel from the Old Testament does not understand the Gospel because Paul said, *“that our Lord died for our sins according to the scriptures.”*

Now, what Scriptures was he talking about? He was talking about the Old Testament because when he was preaching in the early days of his ministry the New Testament had not been written.

And so he said: *“When Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;”* he’s talking about according to the Old Testament promises, prophecies, types, pictures, and symbols. The Old Testament is Christ in picture. The New Testament is Christ in person.

THE FORGIVENESS OF SIN

PSALM 130:1-4 • HENRY T. MAHAN

And the apostle Paul said, *“He was buried and rose again according to the scriptures.”* And our Lord when He was preaching during His earthly ministry; referred frequently to the Old Testament Scriptures; He said, *“Moses, wrote of me. Abraham saw my day and was glad.”*

So, don't be misled into making statements like the old Bible and the new Bible. We have only one Bible made up of Old Testament or old covenant and new covenant but it is by one message, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one Mediator between God, the one God, and men.

And I am turning to **Psalm 130** and I am going to read for you **verses 1-4**. Would you like to follow in your Bible while I read **Psalm 130**? *“Out of the depths have I cried unto thee O Lord? Lord, hear my voice; let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplication.”*

“If thou O Lord shouldst mark (or keep account or charge us, is what he is saying, with our sins) if thou O Lord shouldst mark iniquities; O Lord, who would stand, (who could stand)? But there is forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be feared, (worshipped, adored, and believed).”

There's one thing my friend that we all have in common, you and me, and every son of Adam; there's one thing that we have in common. Out there listening to me this morning there are men and women, boys and girls. There are black people and white people.

There are educated people and folks that don't have as much education. There are old folks and there are young folks. And there are religious people and there are agnostics, and atheists, and unbelievers.

But, there's one thing every one of us have in common; do you know what that is? There's one statement; it can be made which is true of every person listening to my voice. I have a message this morning that will meet every man's need that will apply to every person listening to me, every human being, that is, we're sinners.

The Bible says: *“All have sinned and come short of the glory of God.”* The Scripture hath concluded, *“All under sin.”*

There isn't a person listening to me who has no sin. The Bible says in **1 John 1:8**: *“If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves; the truth is not in us. If we say we have not sinned, we make (even God), we make God a liar, and his Word is not in us. All we like sheep, have gone astray. We've turned everyone to his own way.”*

“The Lord God looked down from heaven to see if there was any that did do good. And he found they are altogether become unprofitable. There's none that doeth good, no not one. There's none righteous, no not one.” God said, *“Every imagination of man's heart is evil continually.”*

So, my friend; that's one thing and I don't care who you are. You may resent this and you may get upset by it. But every preacher, deacon, Sunday school teacher, religious person, male or female, every person listening to my voice; I didn't say you use to be a sinner; I said you are a sinner! We are sinners; that's one thing we have in common.

THE FORGIVENESS OF SIN

PSALM 130:1-4 • HENRY T. MAHAN

And the old writers use to talk about awaken sinners, and arouse sinners, and conscious sinners, and unconscious sinners, and great, sinners, and guilty sinners but there's just one kind of sinner and that's a guilty sinner. We are all guilty!

“What the law saith, it saith to everyone that is under the law, (and that's every person), that all the world might be guilty, that every mouth may be stopped.” We are guilty before God!

We are sinners all right. We are sinners by nature. Did you know that sin is not just an act, it's an attitude? Sin is not just a performance of the flesh; it's a principle in the heart. Sin is not just an action; sin is a nature, it is in us, it's born in us.

Listen to what David said: *“I was conceived in sin. I was shapen in iniquity. I was brought forth speaking lies. The wicked are estranged from the womb. They go astray as soon as they are born speaking lies.”*

And this is what many people do not understand about sin. They confine sin to an act or to a deed or to something that is done outwardly, that's seen or heard. But sin is a state; it's a nature. It's a root within us.

That's what John the Baptist talked about when he talked about laying the root, laying the ax to the root of the tree. That's where our problem is; it goes back to our nature. And I've said so many times and I will say it again to you; a man, a man does not become a liar because he lies; he lies because he is already a liar.

He steals because he is already a thief. The deed was planned in his heart before it was ever carried out by his hands or by some outward faculty of his body or some action that's seen. So, we are sinners by nature.

Not only that, but we are sinners in mind and thought. God said: *“Your thoughts are not my thoughts. The natural mind is enmity against God. It is not subject to the law of God and neither, in deed, can be.”*

We don't think on the things we ought to think on. Man thinks but he doesn't think on God. Man loves but he doesn't love God. Man has affection but it's not affection for holiness and righteousness, its greed and covetousness and envy and jealousy. Those are our thoughts, lust, and pride. Oh the thought of pride, the thought of foolishness is sin.

So we are not only sinners by nature but we are sinners by thought and we are sinners in heart. Our Lord Jesus said to the Pharisees: *“Out of the heart proceeds the things that defile a man. It's not what a man puts in his mouth that defiles him. That which goes into the mouth, goes into the belly, and it's digested and cast out into the draught.”*

THE FORGIVENESS OF SIN

PSALM 130:1-4 • HENRY T. MAHAN

It's that which comes out of his heart; that's our problem. Its sin in the heart and it's evil in the heart. And everything that we do outwardly is already purposed and planned inwardly: *"As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he."*

Our Lord was interpreting sin for the religious people of His day and He said: *"Now, you heard it said by them of old time: thou shalt not kill. But, I say unto you to hate is to be guilty already of murder. And you've heard it said by them of old time: thou shalt not commit adultery. Well, I say unto you: to lust in your heart is to be guilty already of adultery."*

I know that the President of the United States gave an interview one time when he was running for office. A lot of people misunderstood that interview in which he stated the very thing that I am saying today.

I don't know how much he knows about it but I know that at that time he was telling the truth that sin comes from the heart and before God. Now, get this; the consequences are not the same openly and actively, but my friend, the guilt is the same.

If the thought is there and the intent is there and the motive is there and the attitude is there and the principle of envy, jealousy, hatred, covetousness, and pride; we may have the happiest smile on our face and we may deceive everybody about us and they may think we are the finest folks on earth, but what's going on in our hearts; that's what God sees.

"God does not look on the outward countenance; he looks on the heart. And those things which are highly esteemed among men are an abomination to God." We are sinners. Let's face it, let's admit it, and let's see if we can't deal with it. Let's see if we can find some hope for sinners. We are sinners by nature; we are born that way.

You don't have to teach a child to lie. Why not? He is born knowing how. You don't have to teach him to be envious, greedy, selfish, and to hate because he is born knowing those. He's born with a seed of those things in his heart.

We have to do everything in our power to bring our children up in some kind of fashion of honesty, love, forgiveness and these things, and you keep pounding these things into them.

Why don't you have to teach; "now son, here's the way to lie?" He knows how to do that. Nobody has to teach him. You don't have to sit down and say: "Now son; this is the way you hate; now you hate this way." No, you have to say: "Son; don't hate, love." He hates by nature; it's a nature; do you see what I'm saying?

And then, sin is a thought, and sin is in the heart, and sin also in the deeds. You know, Paul said; *"That which I would do I do not and that which I would not do, that's what I do."*

Paul here is not an unsaved man. He knew the Lord. He talked about: *"With the inward man I love the law of God but I find within me a law warring against the law of my mind, bringing me into captivity of sin."*

THE FORGIVENESS OF SIN

PSALM 130:1-4 • HENRY T. MAHAN

And you know, these old-timers, these Scriptures, the writers of Scripture; they didn't talk about sin in the past tense like so many religious people do today. Do you ever hear these testimonial meetings, "I use to do this and I use to do that, and I use to do the other?"

"Oh what a great sinner I was. Oh, if you all could have just known me back in days of sin, what a great sinner I was." Let me tell you something friend, it's not what a great sinner you were; it's what a great sinner you are!

And the writers of Scripture didn't talk about their sins in the past tense; listen to them now, listen to the Bible, David said: "*My sin is ever before me.*" He was 60 years old when he wrote that, "*My sin is ever before me.*"

Listen to Isaiah. Here is a man who is looking upon the Lord. Here is a man who knows God to whom God has given a special revelation of His glory, of His holiness. Listen to him: "*Woe is me; I am undone. I am a man of unclean lips and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.*"

That would tear up a testimonial meeting wouldn't it? There wouldn't be much following that would there?

If one of the godliest people in the congregation, one of the most dependable, consecrated, devoted men like Isaiah, stood up and said: "*Woe is me; I'm undone. I am a man of unclean lips. I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips;*" oh, we've got to brag on one another and brag on ourselves and justify ourselves.

Listen to Paul in **Romans chapter 7**: "*O wretched man that I am.*" God Himself said Job was an upright man. Compared with other men he was the most upright man. But listen to Job! When he had seen the Lord, he said: "*Lord; I have heard of you by the hearing of the ear now mine eyes seeth thee, wherefore, I abhor myself, I hate myself. Once have I spoken, yea twice; I have uttered things that are too wonderful for me. I won't speak any more. I'll put my hands on my mouth. I repent in sackcloth and ashes.*"

This is a godly man. But he knows that sin is not just an external act; it's an internal attitude, an attitude toward God, an attitude toward myself, an attitude toward others, an attitude toward providence, an attitude toward God's purpose, an attitude toward second causes, attitude.

He knows that sin is a thought; it's a condition of the heart. It's a state of birth and being and it is also deeds. But these deeds, I'll tell you, are the products of sin. They are the fruit of sin. It's a sin that produces the deed.

We look at the deed and we say, "That fellow got drunk; he ought to not get drunk." Well, that's not the issue between him and God, the fact that he got drunk; the issue between him and God is why he did it. He hates God. He loves himself.

THE FORGIVENESS OF SIN

PSALM 130:1-4 • HENRY T. MAHAN

The issue between you and God is not that you stole a watermelon but why you stole it, what caused you to do it. The issue between you and God is not the fact that you went to the picture show on Sunday afternoon or to the ballgame on Sunday afternoon, it's the fact that you would rather do that than worship Him, and that's in the heart.

Do you see what I'm saying; I hope you see what I am saying because you don't understand sin unless you see that Satan, (Lucifer) sinned before any of these things that we call sin even existed.

When Lucifer fell and sinned against God, sin in heaven, there weren't any picture shows, or dances, whiskey, or any of these things, card tables or dice games. They didn't exist. What was his sin? *"I will be like God."*

What about Adam's sin? What did Adam do? People have tried for generations to find out what that was. I will tell you what it was; it was an attitude. It was the spirit in his heart that rebelled against God and he said: *"I will be like God."*

Throw off the sovereignty of God. Throw off the will of God. Throw off the purpose of God. "I will be my own God. I will be my own boss." Now brother, we are sinners. We've got problems.

Therefore, knowing the reality of sin and we feel it in us; we feel that anger, resentment, envy, covetousness, and oh, pride. That's the granddaddy of all sin. Our Lord in **Proverbs chapter 6**, he said: *"There are six things I hate, yea seven, are an abomination to me (and the first one he names is) a proud look, (pride)."*

We resent authority. We are proud, we are arrogant. *"Pride goeth before destruction and a haughty spirit before a fall. God resisteth the proud. He gives grace to the humble."*

Therefore, knowing the reality of sin and knowing the holiness of God and these are two things that are so far apart, how holy is God, and how unholy is man, how righteous is God and how unrighteous is the flesh: *"In the flesh no man can please God. In the flesh dwelleth no good thing."*

Isaiah said, *"From the soul of your feet to the top of your head; there is no soundness in you. Your whole head is sick, your whole heart is faint, (and your affections are faint)."* That's what made Job exclaim: *"Well how can he be clean that's born of a woman? How can man be just with God?"*

"Behold the moon; it shineth not. The stars are not pure in God's sight. How much more abominable and filthy is man who drinks iniquity like he drinks water? How can he be clean with God?" Boy, I will tell you; that's enough to send you into utter despair.

And I'll tell you this, if you'd sit down sometime, if you will get off this religious merry-go-round, if you will quit listening to these fellows that are singing their praises and your praises

THE FORGIVENESS OF SIN

PSALM 130:1-4 • HENRY T. MAHAN

and start listening to somebody telling you who God is and what you are; brother, you will get down to weeping like the publican in the temple cried: “*O God; can you be merciful (reconciled) to me?*”

And can it be, Charles Wesley wrote:

**“And can it be that I should gain
An interest in the Saviour’s blood?
Died he for me, who caused His pain?
For me, who Him to death pursued?”**

**“Depths of mercy can there be
Mercy still reserved for me?
Can my God his wrath forbear?
And me the chief of sinners spare?”**

Is there any hope? That’s what makes verses like my text cause for rejoicing: “*There is forgiveness with thee.*” Did you read that a while ago, **Psalm 130:4**, what the Psalmist said?

“*O Lord if you should mark iniquity, (or write an account and charge us with every one of our sins, every thought, every, imagination, every dream, and every act; if you should charge it), who’s going to stand?*” Not me and not you!

If a man sins against a man the judge will come between them. But if a man sins against God who’s going to stand for him? That is what the prophet asked. Well thank God, “*there is forgiveness with thee.*”

And we can sing with the hymn writer:

“My sins oh the bliss
Of that glorious thought
My sins not in part
But the whole, (the whole mess of sin)
Is nailed to the cross
And I bear it no more
It is well, praise the Lord
With my soul, (the forgiveness of sin).”

“Preacher, how can you be sure that God will forgive sin; how do you know? You come preaching this Gospel of forgiveness, this Gospel of mercy and you say, ‘full justification, free pardon, pure righteousness and holiness;’ how do you know that?”

Could I give you seven reasons? I’ve got about eight minutes and I’m going to give you seven reasons why I believe God will forgive sin.

THE FORGIVENESS OF SIN

PSALM 130:1-4 • HENRY T. MAHAN

First of all: Because that's His name, that's His name!

Moses said there in **Exodus 33:** *"Lord; show me your glory."* And the Lord said in **Exodus 33:** *"I will show you my glory; I will cause my goodness to pass before you, I will be merciful."*

Then, in **Exodus 34: 5-7;** you ought to mark this and write it down and read it later, **Exodus 34: 5-7;** listen: *"And the Lord descended in a cloud; (this is to Moses), and stood with Moses there and proclaimed the name of the Lord."*

And the Lord passed before him and proclaimed the name of the Lord, the Lord God, His name, now here it is; *"Merciful, gracious, longsuffering, abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin."* That's His name, that's His name.

And when I proclaim the name of the Lord I proclaim the name of Him who is merciful, who is gracious, and who forgives sin.

When you believe on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, you believe on Him whose name is mercy. Sure our God is righteous but He is also mercy. God is truth but God is love. God almighty is holiness but God is grace; that's His name.

And when you call upon the name of the Lord you are calling on Him who is rich in mercy to all who call on him, rich in mercy. *"God delights to show mercy. He's plenteous in mercy."* That's what the Scripture says; that's His name.

A man who preaches a harsh, unforgiving, unrelenting God; he's not preaching the God of the Bible. Our God's name is mercy; you missed it friend, you missed it.

Secondly: This is the message of the Old Testament prophets: *"There's forgiveness with God"*

You know, when we see the movies or television, pictures of a prophet of old; how are they pictured? They've got some old, shaggy-headed, long-bearded guy with piercing eyes and heavy eyebrows who's crying, "damnation and condemnation" on every living creature.

That's not the prophets of old. Sure, they told the truth about man's sin and the truth about God's judgment but they preached the mercy of God. Isaiah said: *"He was wounded for our transgressions. He was bruised for our iniquities."*

David said: *"There's forgiveness with thee."* And over here in **Acts 10:43** it says: *"To him give all the prophets witness that through his name whosoever believeth on him should receive forgiveness of sins. Whosoever believeth on him shall be forgiven."*

That's what the prophets said. They preached a Redeemer. They weren't prophets of doom and prophets of no hope; they were prophets of hope. Isaiah said, *"Look unto me and be ye saved all*

THE FORGIVENESS OF SIN

PSALM 130:1-4 • HENRY T. MAHAN

the ends of the earth for I am God there is none else, the only just God and Saviour.” That’s His name.

Thirdly: Every Old Testament sacrifice preaches forgiveness!

Every Old Testament picture and prophecy and promise pictures forgiveness. Look at Moses lifting up that serpent in the wilderness. God is saying there’s forgiveness. Look at Moses and the people of Israel putting the blood on the door. God is saying there’s forgiveness.

Look at Abel bringing the blood and putting the blood of the lamb on the altar. God is saying there’s forgiveness; God’s saying there’s forgiveness. Do you see that?

Look at the Old Testament priests going under the veil into the awesome Holy of Holies with the blood sacrifice. God is saying there’s forgiveness; there’s forgiveness for all who want it. All of those sacrifices tell us there’s forgiveness.

Fourthly: Our Lord demonstrated His purpose to save during His ministry!

Now you watch His whole ministry, when He went down into Jericho; He forgave, He saved the man. Who was it? It was one of the worst men there, Zacchaeus. When our Lord went into the home of the Pharisee for that big religious dinner He came out of there with one trophy of His grace; it was a harlot.

When our Lord went into the land of the Gadarenes He came back with one trophy of grace; who was it? It was the man who was in the tombs who they had chained that had lost his mind. Our Lord went to Calvary’s cross and died while thousands looked on. He came away from that cross with one trophy of grace. Who was it, a thief?

And you can go all the way through the Word of God and you will find His whole ministry was to sinners: *“The Son of man is come to seek and to save the lost.”* That’s what the Bible says. I know He will forgive sinners. He did; He’s the friend of sinners.

Fifthly: The Lord’s death on Calvary preaches loud and clear that God will forgive sin!

The angel said, “Mary’s going to have a Son,” a fulfillment of the Scripture. **Isaiah 7:14** said, *“A virgin shall conceive and bring forth a son and thou shalt call his name Immanuel (Jesus or God with us).”* The angel said, *“You’ll call his name Jesus; he shall save his people from their sins.”*

What meaneth this suffering of the Son of God? Why these wounds in thy hands and thy feet? Why this blood streaming down from thy back and side? It’s to redeem sinners from their sins.

It is saying, *“God is merciful. If God spared not his own Son but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things?”*

THE FORGIVENESS OF SIN

PSALM 130:1-4 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Then my friend, when the Lord sent His disciples out to preach the Gospel, what did He tell them to preach? He said: *“Thus it is written and thus it behooved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day that repentance and forgiveness of sin should be preached in his name among all nations beginning at Jerusalem.”*

There’s forgiveness with Him. Lord; if you should charge sin I can’t stand and nobody else, who can stand, but there’s forgiveness with thee that thou mayest be believed, worshipped, and feared!