

Guest Preacher Rev. George Macaskill

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Preacher: Rev. George Macaskill

[0 : 00] Well, now we're going to have a look at Psalm 130, and we're going to refer to much that's in the whole psalm, I'm sure.

So we'll just read a few verses again. We'll read verse 1. Well, the verses I want to concentrate on are verse 5.

Sorry, verse 4 and 5. But with you there, verses 3 and 4, I'm very sorry, verses 3 and 4. If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?

But with you there is forgiveness that you may be feared. If you, Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand?

But with you there is forgiveness that you may be feared. You remember how this psalm began? Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord.

[1 : 21] O Lord, hear my voice. That's verse 1. The last verse, the psalm closes. O Lord, O Israel, hope in the Lord, for with the Lord there's steadfast love, and with him is plentiful redemption.

He will redeem Israel from all his iniquities. Now tell me, how does one go so quickly from the depths of despair in verse 1 to the heights of confidence, certainty in verse 8?

How does one go from grieving sorrowfully to singing heartily, from a state and condition of utter desperation to complete assurance?

What comes, in other words, between verse 1 and verse 8? What is there in between these verses that make all the difference to this poor man who cries out of the depths that God would hear him? And between how he ends, O Israel, trust in the Lord, their steadfast love with him.

[2 : 48] What has made the difference? Two things I suggest. A prayer to God.

A prayer to God. And a word from God. And it's exactly the same today. For you and for me. Situations can change. With a prayer to God.

It's a prayer to God. It's a prayer to God. It was not a prayer to God. It's not a prayer to God. A prayer to God. A prayer to God. A prayer to God. It was not a case that a psalmist said, Well, I have nothing in my diary today.

I'll do a bit of psalm writing. No, no, no. That's not how it happened. Neither was it a case that a psalmist said, I've got a gift of poetry.

[4 : 13] I'm going to devote every Tuesday to composing psalms no no no no that's not how it happened that's not how psalmists wrote their psalms where do we learn how they did it well we learn it from the psalms themselves that's why we sang Psalm 45 verse 1 tells us what made him pick up his pen to write we sang it a noble theme inspires my heart with verses for the king my tongue's a skillful writer's pen composing lines to sing in the original word the original word has the idea of his heart bubbling up bubbling over he's discovered something and oh it's tremendous it's changed his life and he said

I can't stop picking up my pen and putting this down in writing for future generations this is a tremendous discovery I've made I want you to know it others have to learn about it of course we do know that God was stirring up his heart and he couldn't stop himself picking up his pen to write it so what is the noble theme of Psalm 130 that moved the psalmist to put it down in writing well that's our text verses 3 and 4 if you oh lord should mark iniquities oh lord who could stand but oh I love these but in the bible but with you there is forgiveness forgiveness that you may be feared the themes the seriousness of sin and secondly the fact that despite the seriousness of sin there is forgiveness with God that's the noble theme inspiring our psalmist to write these words so as God would help us let's just look at these two things first the seriousness of sin and secondly the reality the truth there is forgiveness with God however serious your sin is there is forgiveness with God the problem is sin you often hear people saying ah he's got guilt feelings that's his problem no it's not

guilt feelings are not our problem our problem is guilt not guilt feelings guilt so what does guilt mean guilt simply means or I suppose

I should say because we're in an age now when things change we change definitions we don't like what sin is so oh we just change it's meaning oh it was a mistake a mistake not all guilt in the Bible means liability to punishment for your sin because we have sinned we're guilty and guilt means we're liable to punishment because of our sins it's very simple it's not at all pleasant but it's very simple we've done things that are wrong in God's sight therefore we're liable to punishment so we have to ask what is sin who decides what sin is the government eh really and governments change so the definition of sin changes come on who decides who defines sin

God the maker of everything the one who called everything into existence he defines sin and he's got the right he's got the right because he made everything he made you he made me he's got the right to define what's right and what's wrong what is sin anything against God my personal definition would be disagreeing with God because you see sin goes right into the depths of our hearts I can be doing everything just right I can be keeping all these commandments and then God gives me cancer and I'm not a happy bunny I'm disagreeing with God that's sin

I must repent I must confess it to God I'm not happy with what you've done I think it's a mistake I think it's terribly wrong you've spoiled my plans disagreeing with God is sin someone has said say no to God God murder actually we're all born with it and if we're truthful we want to keep God out of our lives am I right we want to keep God we acknowledge he exists but keep him at a distance keep him at a distance we've got our agenda we want to do our thing wrong God is the boss and he has every right to be God because he's made everything and he made everything for his glory but we said no to God that's sin and he's liable to punishment as our text says who can stand if God should mark iniquity that word mark in the original has two ideas we need to mention first of all it means an intense scrutiny it's not just a casual glance intense scrutiny and the second thing in the word mark is the indelible recording of it every wrong thing we have done is written in

[12:33] God's book irreversibly irreversibly thankfully it can be blotted out it can be blotted out can't be removed but it can be blotted out with the blood of Jesus Christ covering it that's the good news of sin God demands requirement there's a verse in the bible Galatians 3:10 that says cursed is everyone everyone who does not continue continue in all things all things which are written in the book of the law to do them it's an ongoing thing the standard must reach heaven heaven sets the standard the depth our inward hearts you know there's a verse in

James chapter 2 verse 10 whoever keeps the whole law of God and yet stumble in one point he's guilty of all that verse is saying the system of getting to heaven by being good enough falls down fails breaks down if you once and break one point one aspect of one law the system has failed do you know why because God is an absolute being we don't believe in that nowadays so that doesn't matter doesn't matter what you believe what matters is what is God is an absolute being and God is perfect and God requires perfection he has to otherwise he'd no longer be a holy God he'd be changeable he wouldn't be God and that has to continue forever we're not going to make it we're not going to achieve it we cannot reach the standard it's too late we have all already broken it the system of getting to heaven by being good enough by being absolutely perfect has fallen it's failed we need another system to get to heaven and that of course is the good news of the gospel we're all liable to punishment to all the miseries of this life and in that which is to come through our sin and we deserve it and that's what's happening to us in our default position as we come out of the womb

I am so glad that's not the gospel complete it is the starting point it is the starting point you know some people say to me you start off with God as love really come on you're going to get yourself in awful trouble if you start off explaining the gospel with God loves you aren't you going to get the reply God loves me well why did I get cancer God loves me why did I lose my wife come on you're walking straight into trouble listen there's nothing truer nothing more basic to the gospel but God is love but listen that's not the starting point you don't understand God is love until you understand first God is holy and can't let anything off but you must understand secondly we're going to change the subject we're now going to go on to

I just love these verses in the Bible that have but in it it is true who could stand if God marks iniquity but that's not the end of the story the gospel has just begun but although that is true there is forgiveness with God hallelujah that's the gospel there is forgiveness with God you know we sinful people we're people of extremes the real difficult thing to do in explaining the gospel is to try to

convict people of their sins to tell them they've disobeyed God and God is angry with the wicked every day it's very difficult to convince people of that

[18 : 23] I remember a Christian friend who was very good and he had authority to go into prisons and preached the gospel and he said I love going to prison you don't need to spend long telling them they've got a problem doing wrong he says they know it what they want to know how can I stop it how can I get rid of this impetus in me to do what I want instead of doing what God wants and you know as I said people brought up in a Christian environment like most of us have been in the real thing is convicting them of sin and their absolute urgency of getting right with God quickly once you do convict them once they do become convicted of sin you know what happens they swing to the other extreme and they say oh there's no hope for me

I'm so bad I'm so ruined there's no hope for me isn't that so like mad extreme oh no I've done nothing wrong I'm a good person I'm far better than Joe Blogg's I would never do this I'd never do that I don't need to be saved and then when you get conviction oh you see the devil works doesn't like you be convicted of sin and he will convict of sin but it's to make you despair it's to make you to be without hope when the Holy Spirit convicts it's to make you interested in the gospel yes you're a sinner yes you're liable to punishment yes you're on the road to hell but but there is forgiveness with God you can be forgiven in an instant you can be on the road to heaven in an instant we're a people of extremes I'm not a sinner don't you do a number of times

I've been said don't you dare call me a sinner and then when they're convicted they say ah there's no hope for me yes there is hope for the vilest sinner out of hell but they must believe they must believe note carefully verse four it's the order of things if you're here today or if you're listening to me I think this has been recorded I'm not sure but with you there is forgiveness that you may be feared if you're here today you're listening to me and you're not a Christian am I right in saying that when you begin to think about the things of God if you ever do am I right that you say well for God to forgive me I've got to sort myself out first am I right if God's going to bless me with heaven I've got to turn over a new leaf I've got to be a different guy am I right is that what verse four says but with you there is forgiveness that or as it could be translated in order that you may be feared properly you see we can't fear God a right until you're first forgiven the first step in Christianity is forgiveness it's not something you get at the end for trying hard enough no no you're not you haven't begun the path the Christian life until you're first forgiven and it's here in verse four there is forgiveness first of all so that you may then begin to fear God a right isn't that what our text is saying note verse seven hope in the

Lord in his word do I hope upon what he makes a prayer in verse two oh Lord hear my voice he's asking for mercy but it has to be based upon something you know people say oh I believe in God now tell me are you here and you say oh I believe in God you maybe wouldn't say you're a Christian I believe in God now tell me what precisely do you believe about God I want more than oh I believe God exists come on what precisely do you believe about God you see our psalmist here saying his hope is in his word his hope is in his word in his word do I hope verse 5 you see you don't just believe you have to believe something about

[24 : 11] God you don't just believe he exists I remember when I left the printing trade and began to apply for the ministry I remember a customer coming in and saying oh George I heard about you you're leaving the trade and you're going in for the ministry oh he says I've got my faith I've got my faith oh I says Bob what in I said oh he said I've got my faith George don't you worry I've got my faith I said Bob what is your faith in George he says I have faith I've got a lot of faith I said Bob what in he didn't know come on the Buddhist has great faith the Buddhist burns himself to death because he trusts in Buddha but wait a minute Buddha doesn't believe in the eternal world he doesn't believe in heaven or hell he doesn't believe in God and he says in fact if there is a God nothing to do with us what's the point in believing in Buddha you see it's not faith that saves it's faith in

Christ that saves it's Christ that does the saving forgive me if I've given this illustration before I'm going to deliver something in a foreign country and I have to cross a river and there's two bridges and I'm told one of these bridges will hold my 17 stone but the other bridge won't but they tell me they can't remember which is the one that will hold my weight choose so I say to myself right I'm going to put all my faith on that bridge on the left I'm going to put all my really going to believe it's going to take me over so I go off start across it and then drop into the water that's not my faith that let me down it's a bridge that let me down and my faith in the wrong bridge just like the buddhist what is you believe in and on the word of god he says in verse five in you in his word

I hope what has God promised to the unbeliever what has God promised to every person who comes in contact with his word you see there are a lot of promises in the Bible but they're restricted to Christians so if you're unconverted if you're not a Christian and you want to become a Christian you've got to believe you've got to put your trust in something he says to non-believers so that they'll become believers in his word here's a verse whoever confesses and forsakes his sin will have mercy Proverbs 28:13 whoever whoever whoever do you know what that word whoever means it could literally be translated without exception without exception anyone who confesses and forsakes his sin love mercy can you get in there can you get in there in another verse again to anyone to whosoever

Romans 10:11 for the scripture says whoever believes on him will not be put to shame whoever without exception that's a specific promise from God to non-believers if you believe you will not be put to shame can you say that have you done that do you believe that is that your hope I'll give you a third text Romans 10:13 it's actually only two verses further on whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved that's

God promising putting in writing a promise to any man woman boy girl who calls seriously genuinely on the name of the Lord will be saved do you believe it do you believe it that's the gospel it's all there is it's not difficult to understand is it do you believe it though that's the key do you believe it is that your hope if you were to die tonight and you were to arrive at the gates of heaven and you asked why why do you expect to get in here what would you say oh please don't tell me you'd say I've done my best please don't tell me that would you be able to say

[30:20] God put in writing that if I called on his name for salvation he would save me and then the gates will swing open God's word in his word do I hope I'm sure you sing Psalm 34 here a lot I just love the last verse it's another promise it's another promise Psalm 34 verse 22 none perish who him trust doesn't matter who you are doesn't matter how often you sin doesn't matter what condition you're in call on the name of the Lord trust in him and you'll never perish faith is faith in the promises of God well that's how one becomes a

Christian that's how one receives forgiveness but then of course there's the Christian life afterwards and I thank God every day and I hope you do too that my guarantee of getting into heaven does not depend on how well I do on the Christian life it depends on did Christ really die to pay for the sins of rebellious people like me and my Bible says he does he did our entry into heaven is purely Christ paid for our sins therefore he's worth following therefore he's worth professing he's worth witnessing for encouragement in verse seven with the

Lord there is steadfast love and plentiful redemption he will be with you all the way all the way to the very end steadfast love having begun John 13:1 is a loving verse John 13:1 having begun to love them he loved them to the end isn't that amazing 13 John 13:1 now before the feast of the Passover when Jesus knew that his hour was come to depart out of this world to the father having loved his own who are in the world he loved them to the end even though they let him down so often he continued loving them to the end just as we close just a few words about verse 5 very important to understand this

I explained earlier what does what does marking iniquity mean what is what's the definition of sin etc what is the definition of wait here in verse 5 he says I wait for the Lord my soul waits it's vital to understand that the psalmist here is not saying I'm waiting for God to see if you'll forgive me that's not what he's saying if you'll forgive me that's not faith he will forgive me because he said it and he put it in writing waiting for God in the Bible means depending on God it's what the psalmist in verse 5 the psalmist has discovered he has realized that sin can be forgiven it's really an act of faith it's a declaration of faith in his word

I hope he's written whoever believes whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved I'm believing it that's my hope the certainty of God's mercy if we call on his name if we believe in his name if we trust in his name a plea what comes between verse 1 the first verse and the last verse a plea for mercy based upon a word of truth do you believe God do you believe what he's written do you believe when Christ died he died for the sins of a number that no man can number for multitude who believe and depend on Christ's salvation for forgiveness and eternal life may God the

[35:46] Holy Spirit make his word effectual to every one of us let's bow our heads in prayer oh Lord we pray for your Holy Spirit to take the things of Christ and make them ours here this day in your house give us this faith that changes our lives saves our soul guarantees heaven for us help us put our trust alone in Jesus now hear now forgive now bless for Jesus sake Amen well we're

going to sing these verses we're going to sing this Psalm in Psalm 130 it's on page 421 page 421
Psalm 130 Lord from the depths to thee I cried my voice Lord do thou hear and to my supplications
voice give an attentive ear down to the last verse and plenteous redemption is ever found with him
and from all his iniquities he Israel shall redeem Psalm 130 to God's praise Lord from the dead to
thee I cried my voice or to the ear unto my sorrow hē they viene I
O Lord, should smile iniquity, but yet with Thee forgiveness is that dear love may as me.
I wait for God, my soul doth wait.
My hope is in this word more than lay at our morning wash, my soul is for the Lord.
[39 : 17] I stay for that lay that to wash, the morning I to see.
Let this smile open the Lord for when mercy see see and plenty as we ever have shown this ever
found within hora and Pete through and to his outrageous In equity, Jesus has some redeemed.
The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with
us all, now and forevermore. Amen.