

June 23, 2013 by Steve Brandon



# Waiting For the Lord

## Psalm 130

Waiting for the LORD  
Psalm 130

- 1. I Cry to You! (verses 1-2)**
- 2. I Trust in You! (verses 3-4)**
- 3. I Wait for You! (verses 5-6)**
- 4. Hope in Him! (verses 7-8)**

Martin Luther was once asked which were the best Psalms. He replied that the "Pauline Psalms" were the best Psalms. When asked which Psalms he meant, he answered, "Psalms 32, 51, 130, 143." If you are familiar with these Psalms, you then know why Luther answered the question this way. It's not that Paul wrote these Psalms. It's that these Psalms deal with the same subject matter that Paul constantly dealt with in his writings.

These Psalms deal with the issues of sin and the despair it brings. These Psalms also present us with the sheer graciousness of God to forgive the penitent sinner. In this way, they sound like Romans or Ephesians. This morning, we have the privilege of looking at one of these Psalms -- Psalm 130.

As most all of you know by now, this is one of the Songs of Ascents. There are fifteen of them, beginning with Psalm 120 and ending with Psalm 134. Each of these Psalms have the superscription, "A Song of Ascents." Our best guess is that these Psalms were sung by the pilgrim travelers as they made their tri-annual trek to Jerusalem to worship the LORD in Jerusalem. Thus, the title of our series, "Going Up!" My hope in working through these Psalms is that God would increase our heart for worship. After all, each of these Psalms have something to do with preparing our hearts to worship the LORD. Today, we look at the eighth of the fifteen of these Psalms.

This Psalm is very appropriate for us to look at today. This past week we experienced the first day of summer, June 21st. This is the longest day of the year, and it is my favorite day all year long. Several of us celebrated the day by hanging out at Rock Cut State Park until there was no light left. We savored every last bit of light on the longest day of the year.

Well, this morning, Psalm 130 has more gospel light than any of the other Songs of Ascents. It drips with the gospel. May the LORD use it to stir our hearts in fresh affections for Him.

One of the things that is good about all of the Psalms is that they really get to the heart of walking with God. They are written from life's experience. At times, the experience is praise! At other times, the experience is heartache! There are times when the Psalmist is close to God! There are other times when the Psalmist is far from God!

And as we share experiences with the Psalmist, his words will resonate with our hearts. My hope in my message this morning is that you would come to experience life in much the same way as the Psalmist in Psalm 130. In this Psalm we find the Psalmist "Waiting for the LORD." He is facing his sin. He sees it in all of His ugliness. So, he cries to the LORD and looks to Him for deliverance. He meditates upon God and His grace. He knows that there is mercy with God. And so, he waits on the LORD.

My message this morning is simply entitled, "Waiting for the LORD." This Psalm begins with a cry of desperation (verses 1-2). Then, we hear a of God's gracious willingness to forgive (verses 3-4). The Psalmist then describes how he is waiting upon the LORD (verses 5-6). Finally, we hear a call for others to hope in God as well (verses 7-8).

Let us read the Psalm now.

Psalm 130  
Out of the depths I have cried to You, O LORD.  
Lord, hear my voice!  
Let Your ears be attentive  
To the voice of my supplications.  
If You, LORD, should mark iniquities,  
O Lord, who could stand?  
But there is forgiveness with You,  
That You may be feared.  
I wait for the LORD, my soul does wait,  
And in His word do I hope.  
My soul waits for the Lord

More than the watchmen for the morning;  
Indeed, more than the watchmen for the morning.  
O Israel, hope in the LORD;  
For with the LORD there is lovingkindness,  
And with Him is abundant redemption.  
And He will redeem Israel  
From all his iniquities.

In verses 1 and 2 we see, the desperate prayer. Or, as I have put it in my first point, ...

1. I Cry to You! (verses 1-2)

That's what we see in verse 1, ...

Psalm 130:1 Out of the depths I have cried to You, O LORD.

The Psalmist finds himself deep in trouble. And He cries to the LORD for help.

The language is similar to the cry of Jonah. He was in the depths of the sea, close to drowning. And in his trouble, He likewise cried out to the LORD. Jonah 2:2 says, "I called out of my distress to the LORD. ... I cried for help from the depth of Sheol." "Water encompassed me to the point of death. The great deep engulfed me, Weeds were wrapped around my head" (Jonah 2:5).

Similar language is used elsewhere in the Scripture to describe one in desperation. Psalm 71:20 says, "You who have shown me many troubles and distresses will revive me again, and will bring me up again from the depths of the earth." The context of Psalm 71 indicates that it was written by an older, godly man, who had been through many trials before in his life. God was always faithful to bring him "up again from the depths of the earth."

The question of Psalm 130 is this: What sort of depths does the Psalmist find himself in? Is he the deep of the water like Jonah? Perhaps he finds himself in a deep hole? Is he using the depths figuratively to describe various trials of life, like Psalm 71? Perhaps there is another circumstance to which he refers. The fact is, we don't know for sure. But, we have some clues that give us some hints. Look at verses 3 and 4, ...

Psalm 130:3-4  
If You, LORD, should mark iniquities,  
O Lord, who could stand?  
But there is forgiveness with You,  
That You may be feared.

Apparently, the question of God's forgiveness was on the mind of the Psalmist. He ponders the reality of God's forgiveness. It gives us a hint into the nature of the depths he is experiencing. They are moral and spiritual challenges.

Look at verses 7 and 8, ...

Psalm 130:7-8  
O Israel, hope in the LORD;  
For with the LORD there is lovingkindness,  
And with Him is abundant redemption.  
And He will redeem Israel  
From all his iniquities.

Again, we see a similar theme -- redemption. God redeeming Israel from sin. That is, God extending forgiveness to Israel.

With these clues, we can make a good guess at the depths of verse 1. He's probably talking about the depths of sin. The Psalmist finds himself in the trouble of his own sin and guilt. This is how every commentary that I read took these verses.

We aren't told of his specific sin. But, we are told of the effect upon his life. His own sin and his own guilt has brought him low. This isn't surprising at all. This is what sin does. It is like a candy-covered poison pill. It looks nice on the outside and it tastes good coming down. But after swallowed, it brings death. "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).

It can bring a slow death. In Psalm 32, David describes the effects of his sin with these words, ...

Psalm 32:3-4  
When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away  
Through my groaning all day long.  
For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me;  
My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer.  
David describes the depths of the anguish he experienced on account of his sin.

We can only assume that something similar is taking place here in Psalm 130. His sin is having a depressing and devastating effect upon his life. It has brought him low.

And so, he seeks his way out by crying out to the LORD, seeking help from Him. I love the words of Derek Kidner on this point, "Self-help is no answer to the depths of distress, however useful it may be in the shallows of self-pity" [\[1\]](#)

When you are in the depths of your sin, there is no other way out than the LORD. Sadly, many try to climb out of their own troubles. They try to atone for their own sins. But, really, it is only the LORD who can help in such times. And it may well be that such depths of sin are really a blessing. Because, it is only when one has nowhere else to turn, that God is often considered. If our problems are small, we might think that we can manage them on our own. But, when our problems are so big that we can't handle them, we might well be inclined to turn to the LORD.

There is a book entitled, "The Valley of Vision." It is a collection of Puritan prayers. The very first prayer in that collection is where the title of the book comes from. It can come as a great help here to us:

You have brought me to the valley of vision,  
where I live in the depths but see thee in the heights;  
hemmed in by mountains of sin I behold thy glory.  
Let me learn by paradox  
that the way down is the way up,  
that to be low is to be high,  
that the broken heart is the healed heart,  
that the contrite spirit is the rejoicing spirit,  
that the repenting soul is the victorious soul,  
that to have nothing is to possess all,  
that to bear the cross is to wear the crown,  
that to give is to receive,  
that the valley is the place of vision.

And that's what we see here. The Psalmist is desperate over his sin. And in the valley, he turns to the LORD as his only hope for deliverance. To Him he cries, longing for an audience.

Psalm 130:2  
Lord, hear my voice!  
Let Your ears be attentive  
To the voice of my supplications.

To this verse, Keil & Delitzsch say it well, "His life hangs upon the thread of the divine compassion." [\[2\]](#)

To you, I ask, have you ever reached such a point of despair over your sin? Have you ever come to the place where you have seen the ugliness of your sin and have cried to the LORD for help? If you haven't, then you haven't even taken the first step of what it means to be a Christian. The first step in the walk of a Christian is to come to an understanding of our own sin. Oh how hard it is for people to see this. As I deal with people, the majority of them fail to see their own sin. Instead, they think themselves to be pretty good people.

But, if you are pretty good, then you don't need God. The first step in the walk of a Christian is to realize that we do, indeed, need God! We need Him more than we might ever imagine. As you walk with the Lord you will see more and more every day that you need him.

Let's continue on, The desperate prayer -- I Cry to You! (verses 1-2). In verses 3 and 4, the psalmist transitions to some thoughts about the hope of forgiveness. Or, as I have chosen to outline it, ...

2. I Trust in You! (verses 3-4)

In verse 3, the Psalmist puts forth a rhetorical question, which sheds light on the depths of the Psalmist: he is guilty and in desperate need of forgiveness from the LORD. Here is his rhetorical question:

Psalm 130:3  
If You, LORD, should mark iniquities,  
O Lord, who could stand?

In other words, suppose that the LORD had a notebook in His hand. And suppose that He watched our lives carefully, scrutinizing our every action. And suppose that every time we sinned, He carefully recorded in His notebook our sin. And then, suppose that He brought this notebook to the final judgment seat, and proceeded to read all of our sins to us. And suppose that he would demand a payment for each sin committed. What would happen? We would be condemned.

This is the question of verse 3, ...

Psalm 130:3

If You, LORD, should mark iniquities,  
O Lord, who could stand?

The answer is easy -- nobody. None of us would be able to stand before the LORD. Our sins are too many. Our sins are too great!

Listen to the testimony of Scripture. "In Your sight no man living is righteous." (Psalm 143:2). "All of us like sheep have gone astray." (Isaiah 53:6). "There is none righteous, not even one." (Romans 3:10).

William Plumer, the 19th century one commentator writes, "It is utterly vain for unbelievers to delude themselves with the persuasion that they are not sinners against God, and under his wrath and curse.

In vain does any man persuade himself that he can by doing meet the precept, or by suffering satisfy the penalty of the law of God." [\[3\]](#)

If God were to record and keep a tally of all of our sins, even the most righteous on earth could not stand against this kind of scrutiny. Romans 3:20 tells us that, "By the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight." And Galatians 2:16 further says, "A man is not justified by the works of the law." And when we think about standing before God in judgment based upon our own merit, our destruction awaits.

Oh, church family, let us meditate long and hard about these things. Because, as Wayne Grudem has written, "It was not necessary for God to save any people at all." [\[4\]](#)

God could have given us one chance, like He did the angels. When they sinned, they were set aside for future judgment. 2 Peter 2:4 says, "God did not spare angels when they sinned, but cast them into hell and committed them to pits of darkness, reserved for judgment." God could have done this with us. He could have left us in our sins and "committed [us] to pits of darkness reserved for judgment.

Psalm 130:3  
If You, LORD, should mark iniquities,  
O Lord, who could stand?

None of us would be able to stand before the LORD. We would be under the condemnation of His wrath. We would be facing the punishment for our sin.

But, the good news comes in verse 4, ...

Psalm 130:4  
But there is forgiveness with You, ...

This is one of those "blessed 'but's" of Scripture. But, there is forgiveness with you. The entire thought of verses 3 and 4 is similar to Eph. 2:1-5: "You were dead in your trespasses and sins, ... But God ... made us alive together with Christ."

This is similar to Romans 1-3. "The wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who suppress the truth in unrighteousness." (Rom 1:18). "But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, ... even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ." (Rom 3:21-22). This is similar to Titus 3:3-5 -- "We once were foolish ourselves, disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit."

Things look dark. "But God" comes and shines and brings in the good news. We were on death row, but the president pardoned us and invited us to live in the White House! The good news of Psalm 130:4 is that there is forgiveness with God. This is good news for us! Our God is a forgiving God. And when we know and experience this forgiveness, we are blessed. Psalm 32:1, "How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered!"

This is the heart of the gospel. "Abraham believed God, and it was credited to Him as righteousness." When we believe in Jesus Christ and His sacrifice for our sin, God forgives us and credits our account with His righteousness! It simply doesn't get better than that! This is better than a wonderful dream, because it is real. This is better than winning the lottery, because it is eternal. This news ought to stir our hearts with joy!

Do you remember the response of those in Psidian Antioch, who heard this news for the first time? Paul had arrived in the city and went to the synagogue to preach the wonderful news of Jesus (Acts 13:14-41). The Jews were intrigued with what he said and wanted Paul to come back next Sabbath and tell them more about Jesus (Acts 13:42-43). Over the duration of the week, there was a buzz in town about this man who had come into the synagogue and spoken about Jesus, a man who had risen from the dead. So that "the next Sabbath nearly the whole city assembled to hear the word of the Lord" (Acts 13:44). When the Jews saw how many Gentiles had assembled together, they turned against Paul, who said, ...

Acts 13:46-48  
It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles. For so the Lord has commanded us, "I have placed You as a light for the Gentiles, That You may bring salvation to the end of the earth" When the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and

glorifying the word of the Lord; and as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.

People believed in the message. And there was spontaneous rejoicing!

This is how we ought to respond to these things! There is forgiveness with God! There is forgiveness in Jesus Christ! It comes to all who believe! Let us rejoice!

But, there is another response we ought to have. It is given in verse 4, ...

Psalm 130:4  
But there is forgiveness with You,  
That You may be feared.

"That You may be feared"??? This is not what we would expect. This is a surprise! We would expect something like, "But there is forgiveness with You, that you may be praised." It seems natural that the forgiveness of God should cause us to love and adore Him and be close to Him, not to fear him. "You may be feared" seems to go better with something like this: "But there is judgment with You, that you may be feared!"

And yet, the Psalmist here puts the fear of God as a right response to God's forgiveness. I think that the best way to understand this is to realize that the fear of the LORD is a huge concept in the Scripture. It doesn't merely mean to be in terror or dread of the LORD, though it may. It also encompasses the idea of honor and respect and worship. There is also a moral component to the fear of the LORD. Proverbs 8:13 says that "the fear of the LORD is to hate evil." It also brings with it the idea of living always in light of His presence.

Do you remember the Psalm we looked at last week on Father's Day -- Psalm 128? Verse 1 says, "How blessed is everyone who fears the LORD, who walks in His ways." Last week, I made the comment that this is one aspect of fearing the LORD to walk in His ways and to follow Him in obedience.

This may well be the sense here.

Psalm 130:4  
But there is forgiveness with You,  
That You may be feared.

"There is forgiveness with You, ... That we may walk in Your ways." See, some people get forgiveness wrong. They think that if God forgives, it matters not the way that we live. But, over and over and over in the Bible, the reality is quite the opposite. When we come to believe in Jesus, it changes everything about us. When we know the freeness of God's grace in our lives, we will give ourselves to Him who bought us.

Remember Paul in Romans 6? "Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?" (Rom 6:1-2). I think that this is the point here. Yes, God's forgiveness is free and comes to us by His grace alone. But, it doesn't mean that we take advantage of God and the forgiveness that He offers. Oh, instead, it means that we seek to submit to Him all the more.

Titus 2:11-14 says it about as clear as any passage is all of the Bible:

Titus 2:11-14  
For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly, righteously and godly in the present age, looking for the blessed hope and the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Christ Jesus, who gave Himself for us to redeem us from every lawless deed, and to purify for Himself a people for His own possession, zealous for good deeds.

The grace of God is a teacher. It teaches us in the way of righteousness. And when God redeems His people, He redeems them into a people zealous for good deeds. Such is the effect of the grace of God in our lives. It doesn't bring us into complacency, because the cost has all been paid. No, it brings us into submission, because we see the greatness of our God!

Let's turn to my third point, the longing for relief, ...  
3. I Wait for You! (verses 5-6)

Verses 5 and 6, ...

Psalm 130:5-6  
I wait for the LORD, my soul does wait,  
And in His word do I hope.  
My soul waits for the Lord  
More than the watchmen for the morning;  
Indeed, more than the watchmen for the morning.

It's easy to see the thrust of these words. The main thought is repeated four times. The main thought is illustrated to help us grasp his heart.

Look at verse 5. "I wait for the LORD." This thought is repeated again a second time, "my soul does wait." Then, thirdly, it is said again using slightly different words, but with the same meaning: "In His word to I hope." Then, a fourth time, he says the same thing, (at the beginning of verse 6), "My soul waits for the Lord."

Do you get his point? He's waiting for the LORD.

What's he waiting for? Certainly, it has to do with verses 1 and 2. He is in the depths. He is toiling over his sin. In verses 3 and 4, he tells us of his hope of forgiveness. I believe that He is waiting for the forgiveness to come. Perhaps He is waiting for the full experience of forgiveness to come into his heart.

And he longs for the forgiveness. Thus, the illustration of the watchman, in verse 6.

Psalm 130:6  
My soul waits for the Lord  
More than the watchmen for the morning;  
Indeed, more than the watchmen for the morning.

The night watchman would stand at his post on the city wall all night long. The watchman's job was to stay alert as everyone slept. He would watch and watch and watch the stillness of the night, searching for any movement, lest the enemy come upon the city to attack. If there was a disturbance, he was to cry out and let the city know that the enemy was coming!

Now, the night watchman was a difficult job. Not because it was so physically demanding. Not because it was so intellectually demanding. Not because it demanded such great skill. Rather, it was difficult because the hours dragged on and on and on. The temptation to fall asleep would often be great.

And the watchman wanted nothing more than for the sun to arise on the horizon, and for the day to dawn. His work would be finished. He could go to bed and get some sleep. And this longing can be intense -- like pulling an all-nighter. If any of you have ever worked the night shift, you know what I'm talking about.

I remember working at a hospital in the computer department. We had a man who worked the midnight shift every night. He was in charge of backing up all of our servers. He would print out a bunch of reports and distribute them. He would do a bit of data entry. He was also there and available if any problem arose with our computers.

But, when he went on vacation, one of us in the office had to fill in for him. And so, every now and then, I had the opportunity to take the night shift. Now, the work wasn't particularly demanding, but it sure was long. I remember the quiet hours in the hospital hallways. I remember the silence in our office as I did what needed to be done. I remember the conversations with co-workers; they were few and far between.

But, there is one thing that I remember more than anything else. I remember longing for the morning to come, that I might return home and go to sleep. It seemed as if the morning never came soon enough. Every night I worked, there were always hours of waiting for the sun to arise, that my shift would soon be over. I have great sympathy for those who work the midnight shift.

Well, such is the longing here of the Psalmist. He is longing to know and experience the forgiveness of God.

In our culture, I think that we have lost this a bit. Christianity has turned into a formula. "It's as easy as ABC" they say, "A - Admit that you are a sinner. B - Believe that Jesus died on the cross for your sin. C - Confess your sins to Him. That's it. You are saved! Congratulations! Isn't it great to enter the kingdom of God?"

There is an element where this is true. The gospel is simple. We are sinners in need of a Savior. Christ Jesus came and died for our sins. We simply need to repent and believe. That's it. That's all there is to entering the Christian life.

But, it doesn't always come so quick. There can be times and years of struggle to come to experience full forgiveness in the LORD. There is often a long and difficult wrestling match to put off our sin.

There are plenty of examples of this in church history. John Bunyan is one who stands out to me. His autobiography is entitled, "Grace abounding to the chief of sinners." It's a small book that can be read in only a few hours. But, Bunyan goes on and on and on and on with the struggles of his soul.

The book tells of his conversion from his own lips. It tells of the inner struggles that he faced with his sin. It tells of how he sought repentance and couldn't find it. Bunyan would reflect upon Esau and how he found no place for repentance (Hebrews 12:16-17). Bunyan would reflect upon Peter's sin and feel that he too had denied his Master. He would think about Judas and the unpardonable sin, and contemplate whether he had indeed committed that sin, himself.

Let me give you a taste of his struggles, ...

I had no sooner began to recall to my mind my former experience of the goodness of God to my soul, than there came flocking into my mind an innumerable company of my sins and transgressions; among which these were at this time most to my affliction, namely, my deadness, dullness, and coldness in my holy duties; my wanderings of heart, my wearisomeness in all good things, my want of love to God, his ways, and people, with this at the end of all: "Are these the fruits of Christianity? Are these tokens of a blessed man?"

At the apprehension of these things my sickness was doubled upon me, for now was I sick in my inward man, my soul was clogged with guilt;  
now also was my former experience of God's goodness to me quite taken out of my mind, and hid as if it had never been, nor seen.

Now was my soul greatly pinched between these two considerations,  
Live I must not, Die I dare not; now I sunk and fell in my spirit, and was giving up all for lost; but as I was walking up and down in the house, as a man in a most woeful state, that word of God took hold of my heart, Ye are "justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus" (Rom 3:24). "But oh what a turn it made upon me!"

Now was I as one awakened out of some troublesome sleep and dream, and listening to this heavenly sentence, I was as if I had heard it thus expounded to me: Sinner, you think that because of thy sins and infirmities I cannot save thy soul, but behold my Son is by me, and upon him I look, and not on thee, and will deal with thee according as I am pleased with him. At this I was greatly lightened in my mind, and made to understand that God could justify a sinner at any time; it was but 'his' looking upon Christ, and imputing of his benefits to us, and the work was forthwith done. [\[5\]](#)

Such are the struggles of Bunyan. Such are the struggles of many saints through history. Such is the struggle of the Psalmist.

Forgiveness and relief from the depths of sin and despair are free to all who call upon the name of the LORD. But, full relief from sin isn't always so easy. Past sins may come up again and again and again in your mind. Deep into his walk with God, David prayed, "Remember, O LORD, Your compassion and Your lovingkindnesses, For they have been from of old. Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions; According to Your lovingkindness remember me, For Your goodness' sake, O LORD" (Psalm 25:6-7).

So, if you are here this morning, struggling with your walk with God, join the club. Wait for the LORD! Wait a long time if you need to. Remember this: Lamentations 3:25 says, "The Lord is good to those who wait for him."

Let's turn to my final point. Now we see the evangelistic plea, ...

#### 4. Hope in Him! (verses 7-8)

Look at verses 7-8, ...

Psalm 130:7-8  
O Israel, hope in the LORD;  
For with the LORD there is lovingkindness,  
And with Him is abundant redemption.  
And He will redeem Israel  
From all his iniquities.

The Psalmist here turns to address his reader. For six verses, he has described his own struggles and his own fight to wait on the LORD. But, now, he calls all of us into the same experience.

This is similar to Psalm 51:12-13 - "Restore to me the joy of Thy salvation, ... then I will teach transgressors Thy ways, and sinners will be converted to Thee." Is this not true that those most forgiven will delight to tell others? In Acts 3-4, we see Peter and John saying, "we cannot stop speaking." And, in Acts 9:21-22, after Paul's conversion, he immediately began speaking to others about Christ.

Here, the psalmist's hope and trust is in the LORD. He calls us to hope and trust in Him as well. And so, I do the same thing. Oh, Rock Valley Bible Church, "Hope in the LORD!"

You may be here this morning far from Christ. All of this may be new to you. I would call you to "Hope in the LORD!"

As verse 7 continues on, "For with the LORD there is lovingkindness and with Him is abundant redemption." Those who believe in Christ know no condemnation (Romans 8:1). Those who believe in Christ experience forgiveness of all of our sins ("having forgiven us all our transgressions" - Colossians 2:13). When you come to faith in Jesus, He will cleanse you thoroughly!

Perhaps this morning finds you religious, but lost. May Psalm 130 be the catalyst to stir you to faith in Him. God has used it before to awaken religiously lost people. "John Wesley, eighteenth-century Methodist evangelist, was ordained into the ministry in 1728. For a full decade, Wesley labored as an evangelist and missionary, preaching on both sides of the Atlantic while lost. Yet by his own admission, he was not personally converted to Christ until ten years later in 1738.

On May 24, 1738, Wesley attended St. Paul's Cathedral in London and heard Psalm 130 sung as an anthem. "If you, O LORD, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand?" Deep conviction came over his heart. How could he find acceptance with God, who kept perfect records of his many sins? Later that night, Wesley visited a small group of believers where he heard read the introduction to Martin Luther's commentary on Romans. His regenerated soul was 'strangely warmed,' and John Wesley was converted to Christ." [\[6\]](#)

So, hope in the LORD! "O Israel, hope in the Lord" is also repeated in Ps. 131:3. Here the promise: "He will redeem Israel from all his iniquities" (verse 8).

Perhaps you are here this morning and are struggling with recurring, besetting sin. Maybe you are wanting to know and experience full

forgiveness and victory. Sovereign Grace Music has written an album based on the book "The Valley of Vision". They have a song based on the prayer I read earlier. Let's listen to the words of this prayer:

When You lead me to the valley of vision  
I can see You in the heights  
And though my humbling wouldn't be my decision  
It's here Your glory shines so bright  
So let me learn that the cross precedes the crown  
To be low is to be high  
That the valley's where You make me more like Christ

Chorus:

Let me find Your grace in the valley  
Let me find Your life in my death  
Let me find Your joy in my sorrow  
Your wealth in my need  
That You're near with every breath  
In the valley

In the daytime there are stars in the heavens  
But they only shine at night  
And the deeper that I go into darkness  
The more I see their radiant light  
So let me learn that my losses are my gain  
To be broken is to heal  
That the valley's where Your power is revealed

Even the apostle Paul struggled in these things.

Romans 7:21-24

I find then the principle that evil is present in me, the one who wants to do good. For I joyfully concur with the law of God in the inner man, but I see a different law in the members of my body, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin which is in my members. Wretched man that I am! Who will set me free from the body of this death?

It's not like Paul doesn't know of the forgiveness that is his Christ.

Romans 7:25

Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, on the one hand I myself with my mind am serving the law of God, but on the other, with my flesh the law of sin.

The valley is a good place to be. It keeps us looking up. It keeps us hoping in the LORD!

This sermon was delivered to Rock Valley Bible Church on June 23, 2013 by Steve Brandon.  
For more information see [www.rvbc.cc](http://www.rvbc.cc).

---

[1] Kidner, Psalms, p. 446.

[2] Keil & Delitzsch, Psalms, p. 303.

[3] Plumer, p. 1124.

[4] Grudem, Systematic Theology, p. 569

[5] Bunyan, Grace Abounding to the Chief of Sinners, pp. 256-258.

[6] Steve Lawson, p. 297.