

## MIDWEEK OF LENT 5: STUDENT

## THE PENITENTIAL PSALMS: PSALM 130

## THEME VERSE

“If You, O LORD, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But with You there is forgiveness, that You may be feared.” (Psalm 130:3–4)

## TEXTS

Psalm 130  
 Small Catechism, Confession: *Which [sins] are these?*

## INTRODUCTION

Everyone has been in the depths sometime. Sin (either our own sin or the sins of others done to us) can drive us to despair, if they are left to themselves. Like a cancer that goes unchecked, sins pile up so that we can hardly see past them. But here, God through the psalmist shows us what it really means to forgive, and where we are to place our trust as His children.

## QUESTIONS

Q1. Pray Psalm 130 responsively together by whole verse, with the leader reading the odd-numbered verses, and the study group reading the even-numbered verses.

Q2. Read Psalm 130:1–2. Our psalmist wastes no time laying out how hard things are right now. What are the depths? What is He asking of God?

What were some of the low points in your life and how did this time effect your relationship with God?

Luther wrote concerning this verse, “We are all in deep and great misery, but we do not all feel our condition” (AE 14:189).

Q3. Read Psalm 130:3, and review “*Which [sins] are these?*” from the Small Catechism. Satan loves to pile one sin upon another. He wants to trot them out in front of us at every opportunity. But it’s not Satan’s opinion of us that matters. It is God’s view of us. Why should I care what God’s view of me is? How does Luther lead us to the benefit of not allowing sins to pile up in our conscience? Are the sins that pile up “big sins,” “little

sins,” both, or something else? Where in Jesus’ Passion is He accused of sin, and of what sins is He accused?

Luther writes in the Small Catechism:

*Which[sins]arethese?*

“Consider your place in life according to the Ten Commandments: Are you a father, mother, son, daughter, husband, wife, or worker? Have you been disobedient, unfaithful, or lazy? Have you been hot-tempered, rude, or quarrelsome? Have you hurt someone by your words or deeds? Have you stolen, been negligent, wasted anything, or done any harm?”

Q4. Read Psalm 130:4. Why does God forgive? What does this tell us about God’s nature and attitude toward us? Why would forgiveness lead to fear of God? What does fear actually mean in this context?

Q5. Read Psalm 130:5. Waiting. It is the bane of everyone’s existence. In our lives we wait for so many things, and our culture today is one of instant gratification. Yet here the psalmist points us to how waiting is integral to faith (cf. Psalm 40:1). Is the waiting that we must do Law or Gospel? What is the connection between waiting and God’s Word? Why is hope in God’s Word a place of certainty for the troubled sinner? What Word of God are we to place our hope in?

Q6. Read Psalm 130:6. My very life is focused upon hearing those words of forgiveness from God. How long should we wait to hear those words? Do we hear them only once, or more often than just once?

*“to say that one waits more than watchmen wait for the morning is to say that there is no break in watchfulness.”*

Q7. Read Psalm 130:7. Why does the psalmist move from his own personal state and on toward Israel? What application might this have for the Church today? And why should the Church look to God? Is there any end to God’s love and redemption?

*Knowing God truly means knowing Him as the God of kindness and love. The Hebrew word translated “steadfast love” is the word that is also translated as “grace.” God’s undeserved kindness and love toward us is His very identity. As long as we see God as the God of judgment and punishment, we have not received the God of the manger and the cross, who completely gives of Himself out of grace toward us.*

Q8. Read Psalm 130:8. What does God promise to do for Israel? What does He promise to do for you?

### CONCLUSION

God is merciful! That is why He sent His Son in the first place. Out of all of God's acts of love, sending His Son is surely the greatest of them, and really is at the heart of God not counting our sins against us (John 3:16). Rejoice that your sins are forgiven, and deliver that forgiveness to all around you. Freely give, for you have been given all things.

#### **Psalm 130**

##### **My Soul Waits for the Lord A Song of Ascents.**

130 Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord!

2 O Lord, hear my voice!

Let your ears be attentive

to the voice of my pleas for mercy!

3 If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities,

O Lord, who could stand?

4 But with you there is forgiveness,

that you may be feared.

5 I wait for the Lord, my soul waits,  
and in his word I hope;

6 my soul waits for the Lord

more than watchmen for the morning,

more than watchmen for the morning.

7 O Israel, hope in the Lord!

For with the Lord there is steadfast  
love,

and with him is plentiful redemption.

8 And he will redeem Israel

from all his iniquities.

#### **Psalm 40:1**

40 I waited patiently for the Lord;

he inclined to me and heard my cry.

#### **John 3:16**

For God So Loved the World

16 "For God so loved the world,[a] that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

## Question 2;

What is depths?

Micah 7:19

He will again have compassion on us; he will tread our iniquities underfoot. You will cast all our sins into the depths of the sea.

Psalm 68:22

The Lord said, "I will bring them back from Bashan, I will bring them back from the depths of the sea,

## Question 3:

John 8:34

Jesus answered them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, everyone who practices sin is a slave to sin.

Luke 22:62-71

Jesus Is Mocked

63 Now the men who were holding Jesus in custody were mocking him as they beat him.

64 They also blindfolded him and kept asking him, "Prophesy! Who is it that struck you?" 65 And they said many other things against him, blaspheming him.

## Jesus Before the Council

66 When day came, the assembly of the elders of the people gathered together, both chief priests and scribes. And they led him away to their council, and they said, 67 "If you are the Christ, tell us." But he said to them, "If I tell you, you will not believe, 68 and if I ask you, you will not answer. 69 But from now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of the power of God." 70 So they all said, "Are you the Son of God, then?" And he said to them, "You say that I am." 71 Then they said, "What further testimony do we need? We have heard it ourselves from his own lips."

## Question 4:

What is fear biblical definition?

Fear of God refers to fear or a specific sense of respect, awe, and submission to a deity.

People subscribing to popular monotheistic religions might fear divine judgment, hell or God's omnipotence.

Webster defines Fear:

Definition of fear (Entry 1 of 2)

1a: an unpleasant often strong emotion caused by anticipation or awareness of danger

b(1): an instance of this emotion

(2): a state marked by this emotion

2: anxious concern : SOLICITUDE

3: profound reverence and awe especially toward God

4: reason for alarm : DANGER

Definition of fear (Entry 2 of 2) transitive verb

1: to be afraid of : expect with alarm fear the worst

2: to have a reverential awe of fear God

3archaic : FRIGHTEN

4archaic : to feel fear in (oneself)

As Paul writes, "If God is for us, who can be against us?" (Romans 8:31).

Here fear means the fear of God's Law as we see in Luther's Explanation of the First Commandment, "We should fear, love, and trust in God above all things"

Question 5:

Psalm 40:1

40 I waited patiently for the Lord;  
he inclined to me and heard my cry.

Romans 15:13

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope

Job 4:6

Is not your fear of God your confidence, and the integrity of your ways your hope?

Acts 24:15

having a hope in God, which these men themselves accept, that there will be a resurrection of both the just and the unjust.

Romans 5:2

Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Titus 1:2

in hope of eternal life, which God, who never lies, promised before the ages began

Yet the psalmist confesses that waiting is intimately connected to hoping in God's Word. In this way, the connection between fear of God (Law) and hope (faith) are laid bare. Luther writes,

Up to this point the psalmist has described the fear, the cross of the old man, and also how this is to be borne. Now he describes the hope, the life of the new man, and how one should walk in it. These two things are taught in all the psalms, indeed, in all Holy Writ. For God deals strangely with His children. He blesses them with contradictory and disharmonious things, for hope and despair are opposites. Yet His children must hope in despair; for fear is nothing else than the beginning of despair, and hope is the beginning of recovery. And these two things, direct opposites by nature, must be in us, because in us two natures are opposed to each other, the old man and the new man. The old man must fear, despair, and perish; the new man must hope, be raised up, and stand. Both of these are in one person and even in one handiwork at the same time. Just as a wood carver, by chiseling and taking away the wood that does not belong to the carving, enhances the

form of his work, so hope, which forms the new man, grows in the midst of fear that cuts down the old Adam. (AE 14:191)

Question 7:

“For whenever our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and He knows everything” (1 John 3:20).

Psalm 73, “My flesh and my heart may fail, but God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever” (v. 26).