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# Sermon Notes

November 19, 2023

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

## The Forgiveness of Sins Psalm 103:8-19, 1 John 1:0

### Ultimate Thanksgiving

- ❖ There is absolutely nothing more worthy of thanksgiving than the forgiveness of sin God grants you in Christ
  - a springboard into thanksgiving that will occupy your mind and heart throughout all eternity
  - Psalm 103 reveals much about the nature and character of our forgiving God
- ❖ “I believe in the forgiveness of sins”
  - all of the other statements in the Apostles’ Creed hang on the truth on this single truth
  - the forgiveness of sins is the centerpiece of the way God chooses to put His glory on display in the universe
  - the forgiveness of sins is the centerpiece to which every facet of redemptive history points

### Ultimate Gift

- ❖ God forgives all your iniquity, heals all your diseases, redeems your life from the pit (vv. 3-4)
  - having your sin forgiven is the greatest benefit you can ever receive from God

- as you give thanks, remember the price God paid in order to make this gift available to you
- ❖ David describes God’s disposition toward you in vv. 8-10
  - *merciful and gracious, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love*
  - *will not always chide* (accuse)
  - does not *keep his anger forever*
  - *does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities*
- ❖ God’s steadfast love *is from everlasting to everlasting on those who fear him, and his righteousness to children’s children* (v. 17)

### Ultimate Guilt

- ❖ The message of forgiveness David celebrates in Psalm 103 presupposes real guilt
  - the idea of forgiveness would be meaningless if there were nothing that needed forgiving
  - to properly understand forgiveness, we must first understand the nature of our guilt before God
- ❖ Guilt vs. “feeling guilty”
  - feeling guilty is a subjective experience (comes from inside of ourselves)
  - genuine guilt is based on something objective (comes from something outside of ourselves)
    - guilt involves our legal standing and our violations of God’s law
    - when our behavior falls short of anything prescribed or proscribed by God, we are guilty

- David's expression of guilt in Psalm 51:4, *Against you, you only have I sinned and done what is evil your sight.*
- an inescapable relationship exists between people and their Creator
  - your relationship with God may be negative or positive (you either love Him or you hate Him)
  - your relationship with God is never neutral
- when we violate any of God's standards, we rack up guilt before God
  - there is **ABSOLUTELY NOTHING** we can do to rescue or repair that relationship on our own
  - **YOU** cannot forgive **YOURSELF!**
- ❖ The convicting power of the Holy Spirit
  - conviction of sin is a painful thing
  - conviction of sin is a good and necessary thing
    - the Holy Spirit softens our conscience, causes us to experience and express godly sorrow, leads us to repentance and confession of our sin to God
  - the ministry of the Holy Spirit vs. the accusations of Satan
    - Satan keeps pointing you inward as he dredges up and keeps dredging up your past guilt
    - the Holy Spirit works to get your eyes off yourself and onto God and the free, unmerited gift of grace He longs to pour out on you (Psalm 103:11-12)
      - Satan works to paralyze you with fear
      - the Holy Spirit works to liberate you from fear

## Ultimate Freedom

- ❖ No other world religion features a God who freely forgives, and who goes so far as to offer Himself as a sin offering for His people
  - only the Christian gospel offers the message of hope that God has done it all and offers all we need as a free gift
  - on the afternoon of His resurrection, Jesus summarizes the gospel and says *repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations* (Luke 24:47)
- ❖ Have you received God's forgiveness of your sins?
  - God's gift: John 3:16-17
  - God's promise: 1 John 1:9
  - real forgiveness from God rests not on whether or not you **FEEL** forgiven, but on the declaration God has made that you **ARE** forgiven!
- ❖ Confess your sin, repent and turn away from sin
  - the penalty for your sin has already been paid
  - the judgment for sin you deserve has fallen on Christ

## Personal Application

1. How convinced are you that your sins are forgiven? If you have lingering doubts about God's ability and desire to forgive you, speak with a trusted Christian friend or church leader and ask them for their counsel and prayer.