

## **“From Despair to Hope”**

### **Psalm 130**

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### **Communion Devotion**

**“Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord,” the Psalmist wrote. “Lord, hear my voice!”**

People cry out to God for a lot of reasons, don't they? Some have lost their way and cry out to God for guidance to help them get back on track.

Others are struggling with an illness that seems to be getting worse, not better, and call out to God for healing.

There are those who have lost someone dear and precious to them and in their grief, they cry out to God for comfort.

In this fragile economy, many have lost their jobs and are worried about taking care of their families, so they plead with God to help them find work.

There are family members whose attempts to help a loved one suffering with an addiction have not been productive, so they cry out to God to intervene.

Many are living under the heavy weight of guilt because of decisions they made which hurt those they love most, so they cry out to God for forgiveness and another chance.

**When did you last cry out to God and why did you do it?** I have a feeling the Psalmist cried out to God because he needed forgiveness. No one pushed him into this pit of despair; he tripped over his own sins.

Many think this Psalm was voiced by David after he had an affair with a married woman and had her husband killed. This kind of behavior and level of guilt could send even the King of Israel into the pit of despair, as it surely did.

**Why did David cry out to God?** He knew God's heart and of God's steadfast love, which meant no sin or setback could separate him from God's grace. He was confident God would not leave him in that pit of despair, but forgive him and help him rebuild his life.

“If you, O Lord, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness, so you may be revered. I wait for the Lord, my soul waits, and in his word I put my hope” Psalm 130:3-5.

This doesn't mean David expected God to sweep his sins under the rug and ignore them. Instead, David believed God would help him to take responsibility for his actions, make amends for his mistakes and repair the relationships he damaged.

"Create in me a clean heart and renew a right spirit within me," David penned in another Psalm on this same topic. David had a lot of work to do to heal the wounds he caused, and it all began inside him. Only with God's help could he do it, and he knew it. This was why he cried out of the depths to God.

**Can you relate to David this morning?** Are you struggling with feelings of despair and hopelessness? Do you feel like you are sinking into a hole from which there is no return? Did you get there because of mistakes you made which hurt those closest to you?

**What do you want to say to God today?** Forgive me. Give me another chance. Help me be honest about what I have done and take responsibility for it. Lead me to people who can help me change my behavior. Show me how to make amends and repair fractured relationships. Restore my self-esteem and desire to live. Create in me a clean heart and renew a right spirit within me.

**What do you think God wants to say to you?** I have heard your plea for help. I still love you and will give you another chance. Take my hand and let me walk with you out of this hole, one step at a time.

**What do you think God wants to say to those of us this morning who may not be in a hole crying out for help?** Listen to my children crying. Respond to them with the same mercy you received from me at an earlier time in your life. Walk with them and listen to their story. Encourage them and share from your abundance. Make hope visible. Give them another chance.

When Jesus died on the cross, he did both. He cried out to God and responded to the plea for mercy from the thief on the other cross with words of comfort and assurance.

I can think of no better time than these next few minutes to do what Jesus did. Talk to God as the communion elements are passed. Unburden your heart. Be honest and specific. Then, listen quietly for His voice and follow where He leads.