

Mercy that Extends to Heaven

Psalm 36:1-12

Halifax: 22 October 2006

Introduction

In our regular sermon series on Matthew, we will be taking up chapter 23 next week.

- In Matthew 23, Jesus roundly denounces the corrupt Jewish leaders of His day.
- For several Lord's Days, we will be looking at the portrait that our Lord paints of these wicked men.
 - But we need to be very careful as we do so.
 - I find that we, as God's people, are very prone in these days to become Pharisees about the Pharisees...
 - We look at them and we say,
 - "Look at those hypocrites—
 - "How could anyone ever be like that?"
 - "I would never do anything like that!"
 - You see, the whole heart and genius of a Pharisee is to find someone he can point the finger at and say,
 - "I'm sure glad I'm not like *those* people!"
 - Now I don't mean that its wrong for you to be truly thankful for the grace of God that keeps you,
 - The problem with the Pharisee is not that he thanks God for God's grace, but that he is lying when he does so...
 - Though He *says* thank you to God, everyone knows that he is lying.
 - And so, as we study this chapter about the blackness of sinful hypocrisy over the next few Sundays,
 - I want to continually remind you that it is not you, but the grace of God in you that delivers you from such wickedness and hypocrisy.
- And to help you keep these thoughts in your praises,
 - I have selected Psalm 36 for us to sing in connection with this series...
 - It is a beautiful Psalm about the grace of God that is greater than all our sin!
 - It is my great pleasure to present this Psalm to you today, and to, as far as God permits, to set forth to you the glories of His grace for sinners.

I. The Psalm begins with a description of fallen man...

A. It is not a pretty picture at all—

1. As we look at it, I want you to understand that it is a portrait of fallen man at his worst...

a. In reformed churches, we sometimes talk about “total depravity”...

- But when we do, we very often clarify that by *total* depravity,
 - We do not mean to say that man is as bad as he can be...
- We explain that total depravity is not total in extent, but in degree...
 - In other words, it is total in that it touches every part of us—everything in us is corrupt...
 - but everything is not as corrupt as it could be.

b. You see, there are different degrees of sin and corruption...

- Our Lord told Pilate that those who delivered Him (to Pilate) had the greater sin...
- Every sin is a transgression of God’s Law and so worthy of eternal condemnation,
 - Before God, you are either a law breaker or a law keeper—
 - if one law is transgressed, then you are guilty of all—you have broken the law.
 - but that does not mean that every sin is as bad as the next sin!
 - That would be absurd and unscriptural—
 - Clearly, the sin of Ahab was greater than the sin of Jeroboam.
 - As 1 Kings 16:30 says:
 - Now Ahab the son of Omri did evil in the sight of the LORD, more than all who *were* before him.

c. So what we have in the opening verses of Psalm 36 is a portrait of man at His worst.

- This is a description of what sin grows into when it comes to full maturity in us...
 - But it rarely does...

1) You see, God graciously restrains our wickedness in many ways...

- We are restrained by societal pressures—
 - We don’t want to look bad in the eyes of others...

- We are restrained by the fear of punishment,
 - We don't want the police or our parents to catch us...
- And we have a conscience that restrains us...

2) But when these restraints are removed,

- Psalm 36 shows what we become...
 - and it is certainly not a pretty picture!

TRANS> But this does not mean that we should distance ourselves from this description...

2. When we look at this description, we ought to be greatly humbled!

- We must see ourselves in it—
 - a. For you see, the sin described here is nothing but the sin found in every person (except Christ) grown up to full maturity!
 - The seeds of this very same wretchedness are found in the very nature of every person.
 - This is what every one of you would become if left entirely to go your own way!

TRANS> Do you want proof of this from the Bible?

- b. Be it known that the Apostle Paul draws from this Psalm in Romans 3:18 when he is describing the universality of sin in the fallen human race...
 - We read this chapter already this morning...
 - He is making the very point that the Jews are no better than the Gentiles...
 - Romans 3:9: "What then? Are we better than they? Not at all. For we have previously charged both Jews and Greeks that they are all under sin. As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one."
 - He points out that as soon as we rightly understand God's law,
 - We discover that we are guilty and condemned...
 - The law speaks to those under the Law that every mouth may be stopped and that all the world may become guilty before God.
 - There are no exceptions.
 - He declares that all have sinned and come short of the glory of God.

- c. So if you read about the description of sin in Psalm 36 and you are proud and say, “Pshew, I sure am glad I’m not like that...”
 - You simply don’t understand...
 - Now you may indeed say that you have not gone to the same depths of depravity that is described here...
 - I would venture to say that most of you have not...
 - There is some fear of God before your eyes...
 - But the point is,
 - The very same sin is still present with you in seed form...
 - It just hasn’t grown to maturity, but the potential is in your very nature.
 - If left unrestrained by God’s restraining grace, it would develop into a monster that would terrify you.

B. Look at this description of sin in Psalm 36 then, and be humbled!

1. At the very core of the transgressor (ever breaker of God’s law) is a practical atheism...
 - a. As it say in verse 1,
 - Ps 36:1: “There is not fear of God before His eyes.”
 - b. In other words, he lives as if there is no God to punish him or to call him to account...
 - He lives as if God does not see or care what he does, and as if God has not spoken against it.
 - c. Now I want you to think about this...
 - When have you ever committed a sin—any sin at all—in *the presence of God*?
 - Now of course the children’s Catechism will teach us the answer—
 - Q. “Where is God?”
 - A. “God is everywhere.”
 - Every sin is committed in the presence of God...
 - But let me ask you the question in another way—
 - When have you every committed a sin—any sin at all—as *one consciously in the presence of God*?

- Not, of course, the God of your imaginations, but God as He is!
- You have not!
 - Whenever you sin, you always pretend that God is not around or that God is not like Himself!
 - There is always this practical atheism!
 - That's why Paul can take this verse and apply it to everyone without exception in Romans 3:18...
 - "There is no fear of God before his eyes!"
 - We all sin:
 - that is the proof that there is no fear of God before our eyes.
- Now I agree that there is *some* fear of God before most people's eyes...
 - We are restrained from sin because of it...
 - But as sin taints even our best deeds, the fear of God is never before our eyes in full measure.
 - We would live entirely as if God is not.

TRANS> The portrait continues with what follows from this...

2. Verse 2 says the wicked man:

- "flatters himself in his own eyes, when he finds out his iniquity and when he hates."
- a. Whenever you do not think much of God before your eyes, you will always think much of yourself before those same eyes...
 - The one who doesn't fear God flatters himself as if he has done no wrong—or at least no real wrong.
 - He finds justification for his malice toward others because of what they have done to him...
 - He makes excuses and blames others instead of facing what he has done... "It was the woman you gave me."
 - Instead of confessing and repenting, he justifies himself and denies the wrong of his actions.
- b. All in all, he considers himself to be quite a fine fellow!
 - Charles Spurgeon's comments on this verse are well worth repeating:
 - "He counts himself a fine fellow, worthy of great respect. He quiets his conscience, and so deceives his own judgment as to reckon himself a pattern

of excellence; if not for morality, yet for having sense enough not to be enslaved by rules which are bonds to others. He is the free thinker, the man of strong mind, the hater of cant, the philosopher; and the servants of God are, in his esteem, mean spirited and narrow minded. Of all flatteries this is the most absurd and dangerous. Even the silliest bird will not set traps for itself; the most pettifogging attorney will not cheat himself. To smooth over one's own conduct to one's conscience (which is the meaning of the Hebrew) is to smooth one's own path to hell. The descent to eternal ruin is easy enough, without making a glissade of it, as self flatters do."

- c. Do you not find the seeds of self-flattery in yourself?
 - How is it that in our quarrels, it is always the other person who has done the wrong?
 - It is because we are all full of self-flattery!
 - But consider how much worse it is that in many of our sins,
 - we are not in a quarrel with another human being about the wrong of what we have done...
 - We are rather in support of each others flattery...
 - A whole society can agree that fornication is perfectly acceptable, even in its vilest forms...
 - Another society can agree that cannibalism is perfectly acceptable.
 - We join with each other in flattery and suppose that by this we can escape the judgement of God!
3. Closely related to this, is the next characteristic of the sinful man in verse 3...
 - a. In short, that he is a twister of truth.
 - It doesn't just say that he speaks wickedly (or falsely), but that "his words **are** wickedness and deceit..."
 - He speaks without reference to God and God's word.
 - He prattles on about this or that, but his words are not rooted in truth.
 - b. Every man is born with an innate sense of God and with a conscience that has some reference to God's moral law...
 - But every person also comes from the womb speaking lies...wickedness and deceit...
 - violating his own conscience...
 - doing what he knows is wrong...
 - Children are not born as a blank slate (as many like to suppose)...
 - they are born with a sense of God and of His moral law,

- and they transgress both of these from their earliest day!
 - They come from the womb speaking lies!
- c. It is for this reason that verse 3 goes on to describe the wicked man as one who has
- “ceased to be wise and to do good.”
 - Even that inborn wisdom, that sense of God and His law that he is born with and that to a certain extent restrains him and produces good things...
 - kindness, honesty, respect for authority—
 - is cast off...
 - He *ceases* to be wise and to do good...
 - Even what good is in him is cast off.
 - He corrupts even his own conscience by violating it and suppressing it until he begins to think that evil is good and good is evil!
4. Verse 4 makes it very clear that he is one who deliberately goes after evil!
- a. One of our worst characteristics is the way we
- “devise wickedness upon our beds!”
- 1) We actually plan to do evil!
 - We fantasise about getting even with the one who wronged us...
 - We fantasise about immorality...
 - We fantasise about our neighbour’s fall and our rise to power...
 - 2) It is no virtue that we don’t always carry out our sinful plans...
 - What we dream about tells what we really are.
 - Just because we don’t have the ability or the courage to follow through with all our dreams doesn’t excuse us!
- b. But then, the verse goes on to say that we often **do** carry out our wicked plans...
- 1) We not only **fall** into sin, but we deliberately **set out** to sin!
 - We prepare ahead of time what sort of cutting remark we will make to our neighbour...
 - We prepare our slanders and our gossip to present to others...
 - We take steps toward our neighbour’s wife...

- or we plan how we may deceive him to take more from him in a business transaction than is just.
 - We plan ahead how we will break the Sabbath and what excuses and justifications we will use for not being in the house of God on the Lord's Day.
- 2) It is bad enough that we fall into sin, brothers and sisters,
- but it is even worse that we deliberately
 - "set ourselves in a way that is not good."
- c. The verse concludes with what is back of all this planning and setting out to do evil.
- The problem is that we do not abhor evil.
- 1) The picture here is of a man whose conscience is now dead...
- He has turned from the good that he knew and suppressed whatever wisdom he once had...
 - and now he has a reprobate mind...
 - he has no reference to distinguish good from evil.
- 2) Now again, you may not have gone this far—in fact, I think none of you have—
- But the question is,
 - Do you really hate evil?—Do you actually abhor it?
 - Just look at yourself!
 - You may claim that you do not fornicate, but then you delight in watching others fornicate on the big screen—
 - and if not that, you at least enjoy hearing about it!
 - There is a certain fascination with evil—
 - This above all shows the wretchedness of our nature.
 - We are attracted to what is vile.
 - We have a friendship with evil because we have much in common with it...
 - Here we are, made in the image of God;
 - yet so corrupted that we do not hate evil...
 - when God, in whose image we were made,

- cannot bear to look upon evil.
- How we need to repent!

TRANS> What a mess we are! What hope is there for the likes of us?

- Surely, there is no hope **in** man when this is our nature...
- But brother and sisters, there is hope **for** man.

II. God's covenant mercy is our hope!

- The Psalm-writer breaks forth in praise to our merciful God!

A. He uses the Hebrew word "*hesed*" to speak of the characteristic of God that sinners need most!

1. He uses it three times in fact—at the beginning of each stanza:
 - a. In verse 5, it is translated by the English word "mercy," and is found at the head of a list of high praises to God for His perfection...
 - b. In verse 7, it is translated by the English word "lovingkindness," and is found at the head of an outburst of praise for *lovingkindness* itself.
 - c. And in verse 10, it is translated by the English word "lovingkindness,"
 - this time, at the head of a prayer that God would continue it to His people.
2. *Hesed* is that wonderful enduring covenant love that God bestows on His own!
 - a. It is His marvellous saving grace that He pours on sinners through His Son, Jesus Christ.
 - It is the love that He promises to sinners and confirms with an oath because it seems too good to be true!
 - b. *Hesed* conveys the idea of a love that is unfailing and unstoppable—
 - That is why some versions translate it as "steadfast love."
 - In the KJV and NKJV, it usually translated by the English word "mercy" or by the word "lovingkindness."
 - It is a Hebrew word worth knowing.

B. See how the Psalmist heads up His exaltation of God with *hesed* in verse 5.

1. He has just finished speaking of man's wickedness...
 - After such a description, he is, perhaps, nearly swallowed up with despair...
 - But suddenly, he turns his gaze upon God and is immediately relieved!

- a. He breaks out in praise when he sees the *hesed* of his God in connection with human depravity!
 - Surely man will be swallowed up in His wickedness...
 - But not so...
 - He sees His LORD first and foremost as a God of *hesed*—
 - a God of unbreakable covenant love and mercy...
 - a God of grace!

- b. He declares,
 - “Your *hesed*, O LORD, is in the heavens and your faithfulness reaches to the skies!”

- 1) Being in the heavens, it wholly transcends this earth...
 - There is nothing man can do to break it.
 - There is nothing that can stop it...
 - God’s Covenant love conquers even the most wretched of sinners when God is pleased to fix it upon them...
 - When he comes to sinners and He says,
 - “I will be your God and you will my people,”
 - it makes no difference how corrupt that sinner may be...
 - God’s *hesed* will overcome...
 - It is grace that is greater than all our sin.
 - It brings pardon and new life to vilest offender, and nothing can stop it!
 - It is in the heavens...

- 2) Now this *hesed* is very often connected with God’s *faithfulness* in the scriptures...
 - Psalm 89 connects it *hesed* and *faithfulness* all the way through.
 - And so we find it connected in verse 5...
 - The idea is that God is faithful to do what He has promised,
 - to love sinners (*hesed* sinners) no matter what the cost.
 - The word translated faithfulness is the word from which we get our word amen...
 - God’s promises are *yea and amen* in Jesus Christ.

- God will surely do what He has said.
2. The Psalmist goes on to praise God for His **righteousness** which is like the great mountains...or the mountains of God...
- a. A great mountain, of course, is something that cannot be moved!
- Very often when the Bible speaks of “**God’s** righteousness,”
 - it speaks of it in terms of God doing what He says He will do...
 - For example, in 1 John 1:9,
 - it says that when we confess our sins,
 - “He is faithful and just (or righteous) to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness...”
 - But how could it be unjust for Him not to do this?
 - Is God somehow obligated to show mercy?
 - Indeed He is, but only for one reason...
 - because He has promised to do so!
 - Because of His covenant promise, it would be unjust of Him to reject any sinner who comes, honestly confessing His sin and looking to Christ...
 - He is righteous in keeping His covenant promise to forgive our sins and remember our iniquities no more.
 - His righteousness is not like the righteousness of men...
 - No one can bribe him or move him away from His righteousness as they can the judges of the earth.
 - His righteousness is like the mountains of God!
- b. Righteousness may also refer to His perfect rectitude as the One who always does justice...
- If this is the case, then in the context of His *hesed*,
 - it speaks of the fact that God has made a way to show *hesed* to sinners without compromising His righteousness...
 - We read about this in Romans 3—
 - that He sent Jesus Christ to be the propitiation for our sins so that in pardoning us, He might be just when He justifies us...
 - You see, it would not be righteous for Him to just pardon such great sin without some just payment being made for that sin...

- It would be a defect in Him for Him to pour out His *hesed* on sinners if the pouring out of that *hesed* did not involve somehow making them righteous.
 - God could not pretend that we were righteous and treat us as righteous when we were not... that would be unjust on His part...
 - So He sent Jesus to bear our sins in His own body on the cross!
 - In this way, He can be just and yet justify the ungodly!
 - His righteousness is like the mountains of God, even when He pours out His *hesed*.
 - His *hesed* carries in itself all that is needed to make us righteous in His sight...
 - When He promised His *hesed*, He envisioned the sending of Jesus to bear the awful curse for our souls.
 - The cross was included in the promise to love us and make us His own people.
3. Verse 6 goes on to exclaim, “Your judgements are a great deep; O Lord, you preserve man and beast!”
- a. Truly, God’s ways are past finding out!
 - His judgements refer to His official actions...
 - They astound us!
 - They elude us and leave us reeling!
 - b. Brothers and sisters, if our minds are freed from corruption,
 - We do not marvel that God sent the great flood upon the world in the day of Noah or that He casts the Devil and all who are in league with him in the Lake of Fire...
 - If we have even a slight understanding of man’s wretched sinful condition and of God’s holiness and purity—of our failed duty and His great glory—
 - the flood and the Lake of eternal fire is no great mystery...
 - But how could it be that our God preserves both man and beast in this fallen world?
 - How could it be that in the great flood, He should spare Noah and his household with the animals,
 - and make a covenant to preserve them with the sign of the rainbow?
 - This is a judgement that defies our understanding—
 - if we can for a moment free ourselves of all our self-flattery!

- It is a great deep to us!
 - It is a great deep that He should give His eternal Son for a Church of rebellious, vile sinners who justly deserve His eternal vengeance!

C. Let us turn with the Psalmist to say,

- “How precious is Your lovingkindness [your *hesed*], O God!”

1. Oh brothers and sisters, God’s *hesed* is something to sing about!

- We say, “How precious!” because we cannot describe it!
 - Take all the gold and all the silver and the Jewels of this world, and they are but so many pebbles compared to the preciousness of God’s love...
 - Take the love of all the sweetest women and the most noble of men, and it is but a puff of smoke besides the *hesed* that sent Jesus down from heaven to redeem us.
 - There is nothing to compare with it...
 - We are left only to say,
 - “How precious is your *hesed*, O God!”

2. Consider how precious it is!

a. It is because of this *hesed* that the children of men put their trust under the shadow of God’s wings...

1) What beautiful marvellous picture!

- Those whose nature is described in verses 1-4 and who are therefore worthy of smoking judgements from God...
 - are, because of God’s all conquering *hesed*...
 - able to come as chicks under His wings for safety—
 - even from His own judgements.
 - He Himself has become our refuge from His own wrath!
 - He Himself has taken all the lightening bolts of His own judgements for us!
 - We are safe and secure under the wings of His love!

2) Oh that more of the children of men might know this!

- It was on this account that the Lord Jesus wept at the end of Matthew 23 for Jerusalem...
 - Matthew 23:37: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your

children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, but you were not willing!”

- Let us be earnest to tell the church and the world of this refuge under His wings of *hesed* that they might come and find safety.
- And above all, let each of us find refuge here!

b. But don't get the wrong idea of this refuge!

1) It is not a bunker—no bomb shelter with canned foods and musty smells!

- This place of refuge is a house of extravagant abundance!
- Our God is a very gracious householder—
 - He pulls out all the stops when He bestows grace on us abundantly!
 - He lavishes upon us all the riches of His house...
 - This is His *hesed*—His covenanted love!

2) Look at what we are told in verses 8-9 of this *hesed*...

a) We are told that we will be “abundantly satisfied with the fullness of His house”...

- God has put eternity in our hearts and we can never be satisfied in this world—not truly so—not inebriated (which is what the word satisfied means) with happiness...
- What will it be like for us to live in full communion in the house of God—with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit!
 - To share in the infinite treasures of Christ's own inheritance as joint heirs with Him?
 - Indeed it is precious!

b) We are told that He will give us to drink from the river of His pleasures or delights...

- The word “pleasures” is the word “Eden” in plural form!
 - It is a picture of that river that supplied life to the Garden of Eden...
 - God will give us to drink deeply of His river of grace (of his *hesed*)

c) As verse 9 shows, it is from Him that we will have the fullness of life pumped into our souls!

- i. As it says, “with Him is the fountain of life...”

- Even from creation, before the fall,
 - the only life we had was the life that He supplies as our Creator
 - There is not a drop of life without Him...
- And now, after the fall,
 - we have nothing but what is described in the first four verses of this Psalm unless we are joined to His *hesed*—His covenant love in Jesus Christ.
- When we are—how precious it is!
 - Then we are brimming with His life, flowing into us and out of us...
 - This is communion with God—He pours in all the things that make us lovely...and we shine as His image.
 - A beautiful image brimming with love and joy and peace and justice and holiness and kindness...
 - This is what His *hesed* supplies.
- ii. It continues: “In His light we see light.”
 - How blind we are until we are connected to Him by grace—by *hesed*...
 - We see only the dull images of this world...
 - We know very little of glory in our fallen estate...
 - We know what it glory is, but we have seen very little of it until His light shines in our hearts...
 - And then it shines brighter and brighter until we reach heaven.
 - As the puritan, Thomas Adams, says,
 - The light of nature is like a spark, the light of the gospel a lamp, the light of grace a star, but the light of glory the sun itself.

TRANS> How precious is the *hesed* of God!

- He just keeps pouring on more and more grace upon sinners!
- And so, having seen the great contrast between our own wretchedness and the grace of God,
 - what is left for you to do my brothers and sisters?
 - What else but...

III. Cry out to God to pour out His *Hesed* on us!

A. Let this Psalm teach us to pray as verse 10

- “Oh continue Your lovingkindness [your *hesed*] to those who know you and Your righteousness to the upright in heart...”
- 1. If you have tasted God’s *hesed* you will surely want it to continue!
 - And you will pray that it will continue and it will continue...
 - God’s promise is that if he has begun a good work in you, He will bring it to completion...
 - In this world you will stumble along, but if there is a true work of grace begun, you will persevere in that grace.
- 2. I tell you brothers and sisters, God’s *hesed* is not something to walk away from!
 - This is your life—
 - this is the life of your children and of your brothers and sisters at church—this is the life of the world!
 - It is something to pursue with eagerness and zeal and perseverance!
 - It something to receive with joy and thanksgiving and hope!
 - Oh my brothers and sisters do not lose sight of what it is!
 - Plead with God to continue it in you and in your children and in your church!
 - If He will pour out His *hesed* on us, we will lack nothing!

B. Pray that nothing will hinder His grace from reaching you...

1. I have already explained that nothing can hinder *hesed* when God decides to pour it out on a sinner...
 - There is no sin to great and no heart to hard for God to break through to with His grace.
 - That is true from His side— *hesed* will always get the victory.
2. But there is no such thing as a *hesed* of God that reaches sinners without producing in them a new heart that seeks after God...
 - a. In other words, when *hesed* comes to you, it produces faith in you that looks to Jesus Christ to reconcile you with God...
 - God’s grace, God’s *hesed*, gives us a new heart and new life that looks to Christ for the life and forgiveness that God promises through Him.

- b. From our side, *the foot of pride* will keep *hesed* from reaching us...
- It is that pride that says I am fine without grace, I do not need God's *hesed* to live...
 - It is that independence and that self-sufficiency that keeps us from looking to Christ.
 - It keeps us from drinking from the wells of salvation, from reaching up to God for His grace...
 - For you see, God calls you to come and receive this grace—His *hesed*—
 - And there is nothing but your own pride that keeps you from eating and drinking.
 - Look at the Pharisees—they were right in God's covenant—to them were the promises and the giving of the law and the adoption...
 - But they did not drink of grace—
 - They wanted to have life without grace...
 - They wanted to have it on their own terms because they were proud.
 - My friend, if you are like that,
 - there is nothing but death for you until you turn from your pride...
 - God resists the proud, but gives grace to the humble.
 - This prayer is for those who are already in the covenant—
 - that God would not let the foot of pride come against us...to ruin us...
 - It ruins many who are in the covenant—
 - so near to grace—yet so far!
- c. And likewise, we pray, “let not the hand of the wicked drive me away...”
- The wicked purpose to make those who receive the grace of God miserable...
 - They want to make it as hard as they can for you...
 - They want to tempt you, and stir up your covetousness and envy for the riches of this world and for its sinful pleasures...
 - They want to drive you away from the fountain of God's *hesed*!
 - Pray that they will not succeed!
 - Pray that you will not be led into temptation...

- Temptation is nothing else than that which tries to draw you away from God's grace—
- from His live-giving *hesed*.
- from your only hope for the trinkets of this world!

TRANS> Pray that it will not be so!

C. For *there* the workers of iniquity have fallen—

1. *There*, outside of God's covenant grace, outside of His love...
 - Verse 12 says,
 - **There** they have fallen... and **there** they have been cast down and are not able to rise.”
 - Away from the grace of God there is no hope...
 - There is nothing but transgression, nothing but death and misery, nothing but wrath and judgement!
2. Who among you wants to go **there**?
 - a. Who among you wants to spurn the grace of God?
 - How could you envy the workers of iniquity when you have God's *hesed*?
 - b. That is the very subject that Psalm 37 takes up.
 - “Be not envious of the workers of iniquity!”
 - Do you see what an affront this is to God?
 - For you—a member of His covenant people—
 - to be envious of those who are away from the grace of God!
 - to be envious of those who are living with nothing but what we saw in verses 1-4 of the transgressors who love evil!
 - What an insult to God to choose **that** over the riches of His *hesed*.

Conclusion...

So what will it be for you?

- Will you come to God to live joyfully in His gracious covenant love?
 - Will you drink deeply from this everlasting fountain of grace?
 - Or will you remain in your sin?

The way of salvation is open...

- Our Lord Jesus says to you who are baptised...

- “Matthew 23:37: “O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the one who kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to her! How often I wanted to gather your children together, as a hen gathers her chicks under *her* wings, but you were not willing!”
- Come to Him, and you will live.
 - Spurn Him, and you will die in your sin.