

Series: Isaiah 2024  
Title: God's Forgiveness of Sins  
Text: Is 43: 22-26  
Date: March 24, 2024  
Place: SGBC, NJ

We have seen that Isaiah 43 is written to God's saints. This is written to those God has regenerated and given faith in his Son. This is to those God has made holy in, and by, his Son. The message today is for those God has justified in, and by, his Son. This is written to God's holy, believing saints.

God promises us we have no reason to fear.

**Isaiah 43: 1: But now thus saith the LORD that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called *thee* by thy name; thou *art* mine.**

God promises to be with us.

**Isaiah 43: 2: When thou passest through the waters, I *will be* with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. 3 For I *am* the LORD thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour: I gave Egypt *for* thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. 4 Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honourable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life.**

God promises to use us to call out his people.

**Isaiah 43: 5 Fear not: for I *am* with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; 6: I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; 7: *Even* every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.**

God promises we are his witnesses.

**Isaiah 43: 10: Ye *are* my witnesses, saith the LORD, and my servant whom I have chosen: that ye may know and believe me, and understand that I *am* he: before me there was no God formed, neither shall there be after me. 11 I, *even* I, *am* the LORD; and beside me *there is* no saviour. 12 I have declared, and have saved, and I have shewed, when *there was* no strange god among you: therefore ye *are* my witnesses, saith the LORD, that I *am* God. 13 Yea, before the day *was* I *am* he; and *there is* none that can deliver out of my hand: I will work, and who shall let it?**

God gave his Son for his elect and God revealed Christ in our hearts and God promises Christ is the Way who shall keep us and bring us through this wilderness.

**Isaiah 43: 19: Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall ye not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness, *and* rivers in the desert. 20: The beast of the field shall honour me, the dragons and the owls: because I give waters in the wilderness, *and* rivers in the desert, to give drink to my people, my chosen. 21 This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise.**

These are God's precious promises to you who are God's chosen, redeemed, regenerated, holy saints. Do you believe God's word? Do you own this God and these promises to be to you, personally? Then hear this next word of God to you and me.

**Isaiah 43: 22: But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel.**

God sends painful providence--a brothers fall in sin. We get caught up worrying about other's sins of commission but God says this is our sin of omission, "*But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob; but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel.*" Oh, we often "say" our prayers--"*But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob.*" We would never charge God with doing wrong Yet when we murmur and complain about the providence we are in, God says "*but thou hast been weary of me, O Israel.*"

God has not put us under old covenant law. He has not wearied us by causing us to bring animal sacrifices to him. God has made us free by the blood of Christ. God only requires we come to his house and worship his Son. But when we start looking at worship and service and our gifts, God says,

**Isaiah 43: 23: Thou hast not brought me the small cattle of thy burnt offerings; neither hast thou honoured me with thy sacrifices. I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense. 24: Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices: but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities.**

Children of God, you who are holy children of God, do you declare this word true of you and you alone? If you can declare it to God then this next word of God is especially, particularly for you. What do you think God's next word to you would be? Do you think God will declare that he casts you off? Do you suppose God will speak condemnation to one he has justified? God's ways are not our ways. God's next word to us is this,

**Isaiah 43: 25: I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.**

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God requires but one thing of those he has justified. This one thing we will only do as Christ speaks this word effectually into our hearts by the Holy Spirit. He says,

**Isaiah 43: 26: Put me in remembrance: let us plead together: declare thou, that thou mayest be justified.**

Some think the LORD is saying plead your cause. Some think God is saying declare wherein I have been wrong, that you may justify yourself. No, that is not what God is saying. That is what the Pharisee did in our Lord's parable. But do you remember why the publican went down to his house justified? He hit his face and smote upon his breast saying, "God be merciful to me the sinner!"

**Proposition:** No sinner will hear God declare this free forgiveness of our sins until we confess to God that we are the sinner, that even our best deeds are sinful, and Christ Jesus is our only Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption.

So long as we think we are good, we will never know God's free forgiveness. So long as we presume we are righteous, we will never hear God declare "I will not remember thy sins." This good news is only spoken by God to sinners who confess to God that we are the sinner and beg God to have mercy on us for the sake of his Son. How are God's elect brought to do so? How are we kept doing so?

## **PUT ME IN REMEMBRANCE**

First, we are brought to declare this about ourselves only when Christ speaks into our hearts, commanding, "*Put me in remembrance.*"

Our great Substitute gave the bread to his apostles and said this represents my body broken for you. He said this wine represents the new testament fulfilled by my blood. Then he said, "*This do in remembrance of me.*" From the first hour he calls us, Christ continues to speak this word into the hearts of saints by the Spirit, commanding effectually, "*Put me in remembrance.*"

No sinner will see our sin, even the sins of our best deeds, until the Spirit of God turns us to Christ and makes us *put him in remembrance*. That is so, from the first hour throughout the rest of our days as his saints.

Zechariah 12:10...I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for *his* only *son*, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for *his* firstborn.

Matthew 5:4 [Christ said] Blessed *are* they that mourn: for they shall be comforted.

When our great Prophet, Priest and King first calls his child (and the rest of our days) when we look at ourselves, at our worship, at our sacrifices and think too highly of ourselves then the Spirit of Christ puts us in remembrance of Christ and brings us to mourn our sins and mourn for him to have mercy on us.

God the Father chose his people and trusted us to Christ to make us Righteous and Holy. By God's grace, beholding Christ by faith, we behold the only One who served God in perfection, the only One with whom God the Father is well-pleased! Christ is the sacrifice that pleased God and justified his people.

From the womb throughout every moment of his life, Christ's life was a burnt offering to God, especially his obedience unto the death of cross in place of his people. Only Christ's intercession is the incense that makes his people accepted of God. Christ bought for God the sweet cane with the price of his precious blood. Christ filled God with the sweet-smelling fat of his sacrifice which declared God's righteousness, declaring God just and the Justifier of his people.

It is only when the Spirit makes us put Christ in remembrance that we see we are the sinner and our very best deeds are only sin before God. It is only beholding Christ that we own the truth that in our best worship and service, "[we have] made [God] to serve with our sins, [and] has wearied [God] with [our] iniquities."

### **LET US PLEAD TOGETHER**

Secondly, Christ brings us to confess our sins to God by graciously commanding us in spirit, "*Let us plead together.*"

Isaiah 1: 18: Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. 19: If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land: 20: But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the LORD hath spoken *it*.

Many imagine obedience is running to the law and looking to our works. No, it is believing on Christ alone and confessing our absolute need of Christ to be our Righteousness alone. Christ justified God's elect. For that reason, God will show mercy and not condemn one for whom Christ died. Though we fell in Adam, though we were conceived in sin, though we sin as God's saints, and even our best deeds are sin, our Redeemer shall never cast away one who he justified.

Years ago a religious group were persecuting a young man. I defended him. I bore a fair amount of slander from that religious group. The young man and his father expressed their gratitude. But recently, I heard the young man's father said some pretty harsh things about me. I was surprised. But I should not be. God our Savior alone is the only one who will never cast away those he justified.

God told his prophet Hosea to go down into a land of whoredoms and take a bride. That got the grapevine working overtime among the tribes. So Hosea took Gomer to be his bride. She bore him a few children. She hung around fifteen or twenty years. Then she went back to her whoredoms. Did God cast off his prophet? Did he cast off Gomer? No. God brought Gomer down to the slave block then he said to Hosea,

Hosea 3: 1:...Go yet, love a woman beloved of *her* friend, yet an adulteress, ACCORDING TO THE LOVE OF THE LORD TOWARD THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL, who look to other gods, and love flagons of wine.

That entire trial was given by God to show God's elect their sin and self-righteousness while showing God's unchanging, unchangeable sovereign love for his elect. That is what our trials are for today.

Romans 8: 35: Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? *shall* tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth,

nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

God loves his elect in Christ with everlasting love. Therefore he never cast us off. That is what the love of God does. God's love is commitment to the objects of his love for the sake of his glory, for the sake of Christ. That is the love God puts in the hearts of his people. Rather than casting us off for our sinful self-righteousness, God our Father,

Psalm 103: 10: He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. 11: For as the heaven is high above the earth, *so* great is his mercy toward them that fear him. 12: As far as the east is from the west, *so* far hath he removed our transgressions from us. 13: Like as a father pitieth *his* children, *so* the LORD pitieth them that fear him. 14: For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we *are* dust.

Rather than cast us off, the one Mediator between God and his elect comes in love, and graciously says, Come let us reason together, verse 11, "I, *even I, am* the LORD; and beside me *there is* no saviour." He says,

Isaiah 1: 18: Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool. 19 If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land...

By his grace, by his Spirit, by his Power, by renewing us to behold Christ our Justifier, he makes us willing and obedient. What does Christ make us willing and obedient to do?

## **DECLARE THOU, THAT THOU MAYEST BE JUSTIFIED**

When Christ has moved in our heart, in spirit, at last he brings us to declare to God our absolute ruin in sin. One reason Christ says "come let us plead together" is because Christ is at God's right hand interceding for his people, pleading with God as we plead for mercy.

Our gracious Redeemer makes us willing and obedient, *to declare to God*, what the publican declared to God, what David declared to God,

Psalm 51: 1: Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. 2: Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. 3: For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin *is* ever before me. 4: Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done *this* evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest. 5: Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me. 6: Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden *part* thou shalt make me to know Wisdom. 7: Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. 8: Make me to hear joy and gladness; *that* the bones *which* thou hast broken may rejoice.

Christ commands us to declare our sin to God that we might be justified. When we confess to God that our nature is nothing but sin and our best deeds, along with our vilest sins, are all sin, then, as new as the first day, God our Father through his Son by his Spirit speaks into our hearts and says, verse 25, "*I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.*" Christ said of the publican, "I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (Lu 18: 14).

Be sure to get this. There is no discipline like the mercy and free forgiveness of God for Christ's sake. But mercy and free forgiveness is only for those who bow down to Christ's feet and confess that everything about ourselves, including any good we have done, is only sin. We cannot even boast in our declaration of sin to God, only Christ brings us to do it. But when he makes us holy, THE Holy One, keeps us coming to God through him, declaring, "Have mercy on me the sinner."

Only the grace of God humbles us and makes us true mercy-beggars. But to mercy-beggars, God continually declares, verse 25, "*I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.*" It was done for God's elect from eternity in the Lamb slain from the foundation of the

world. It was finished by Christ on the cross. We experienced God's free forgiveness when he first called us to faith in Christ. But God never ceases to declare in the heart of the mercy-beggar, "*I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake and will not remember they sins.*"

1 John 2: 8: If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9: If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10: If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. 1: My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2 And he is the propitiation for our sins:

**Amen!**