

# Is That So?

*“Say to them, ‘As I live!’ declares the Lord God,  
‘I take no pleasure at all in the death of the wicked,  
but rather that the wicked turn from his way and live.  
Turn back, turn back from your evil ways!  
Why then should you die, house of Israel?’”  
Ezekiel 33:11 (NASB)*

*“‘Come now, and let us debate your case,’ Says the Lord,  
‘Though your sins are as scarlet,  
They shall become as white as snow;  
Though they are red like crimson, They shall be like wool.’”  
Isaiah 1:18 (NASB)*

**F**rom time to time I have counselled a person who has sinned greatly and over a long period of time. These individuals have come to the place where they want to be rid of their sin laden past. They long for forgiveness from those they have sinned against and especially against the Lord. They understand that the Lord forgives those who repent and forsake their sinful ways, yet they wonder if they have perhaps sinned so grievously that their sins block them from the Lord's grace.

I have said many times in my sermons and written ministry that the Lord's grace always exceeds our sins. We cannot out sin the richness of God's grace. If we only believed the Friend of sinners when He said He came to call sinners to repentance.

He wore with honour the title

His enemies gave Him that He was the “Friend of sinners”. He willingly, publicly owned repentant sinners as His people (eg. Luke 7:36-39).

The repentant thief lived a life worthy of death according to his own confession (Luke 23:40-41) yet he cried to Jesus for mercy and was heard! He received grace that dealt with his guilt in its entirety and received mercy that dealt with his suffering that was terminated that same day. God is more willing to forgive than we are to repent. Read saintly Charles Wesley's hymn and be encouraged to approach in confidence the throne of grace.

Depth of mercy! Can there be Mercy still reserved for me?  
Can my God His wrath forbear,  
Me, the chief of sinners, spare?

I have long withstood His grace,  
Long provoked Him to His face,

Would not hearken to His calls,  
Grieved Him by a thousand falls.

I my Master have denied,  
I afresh have crucified,  
Oft profaned  
His hallowed name,  
Put Him to an open shame.

There for me the Savior stands,  
Shows His wounds  
and spreads His hands.  
God is love! I know, I feel;  
Jesus weeps and loves me still.

Now incline me to repent,  
Let me now my sins lament,  
Now my foul revolt deplore  
Weep, believe, and sin no more.

- Charles Wesley

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