

# Exposition on Psalm 14

by St. Augustine

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*The sermon highlights the consequences of sin and the importance of seeking after God, through Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness.*

**Topics:** "Gods Existence", "Christian Righteousness"

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## Description

St. Augustine preaches on the significance of recognizing Christ as the end of the law for righteousness, emphasizing the journey of belief leading to the ultimate revelation of Christ. He delves into the folly of denying God's existence, highlighting the corruption that stems from loving the world more than God. Augustine reflects on the state of humanity, depicting a path of destruction and misery for those who do not fear God and do not walk in His ways.

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## Transcript

To the end, a psalm of David himself.

1. What to the end means, must not be too often repeated. For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believes; Romans 10:4 as the Apostle says. We believe in Him, when we begin to enter on the good road: we shall see Him, when we shall get to the end. And therefore is He the end.

2. The fool has said in his heart, There is no God Psalm 13:1. For not even have certain sacrilegious and abominable philosophers, who entertain perverse and false notions of God, dared to say, There is no God. Therefore it is, has said in his heart; for that no one dares to say it, even if he has dared to think it. They are corrupt, and become abominable in their affections: that is, while they love this world and love not God; these are the affections which corrupt the soul, and so blind it, that the fool can even say, in his heart, There is no God. For as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind. Romans 1:28 There is none that does goodness, no not up to one. Up to one, can be understood either with that one, so that no man be understood: or besides one, that the Lord Christ may be excepted. As we say, This field is up to the sea; we do not of course reckon the sea together with the field. And this is the better interpretation, so that none be understood to have done goodness up to Christ; for that no man can do goodness, except He shall have shown it. And that is true; for until a man know the one God, he cannot do goodness.

3. The Lord from heaven looked out upon the sons of men, to see if there be one understanding, or seeking after God Psalm 13:2. It may be interpreted, upon the Jews; as he may have given them the more honourable name of the sons of men, by reason of their worship of the One God, in comparison with the Gentiles; of whom I suppose it was said above, The fool has said in his heart, There is no God, etc. Now the Lord looks out, that He may see, by His holy souls: which is the meaning of, from heaven. For by Himself nothing is hid from Him.

4. All have gone out of the way, they have together become useless: that is, the Jews have become as the Gentiles, who were spoken of above. There is none that does good, no not up to one Psalm 13:3, must be interpreted as above. Their throat is an open sepulchre. Either the voracity of the ever open palate is signified: or allegorically those who slay, and as it were devour those they have slain, into whom they instil the disorder of their own conversation. Like to which with the contrary meaning is that which was said to Peter, Kill and eat; Acts 10:13 that he should convert the Gentiles to his own faith and good conversation. With their tongues they have dealt craftily. Flattery is the companion of the greedy and of all bad men. The poison of asps is under their lips. By poison, he means deceit; and of asps, because they will not hear the precepts of the law, as asps will not hear the voice of the charmer; which is said more clearly in another Psalm. Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: this is, the poison of asps. Their feet are swift to shed blood. He here shows forth the habit of ill doing. Destruction and unhappiness are in their ways. For all the ways of evil men are full of toil and misery. Hence the Lord cries out, Come unto Me, all you that labour and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me, for I am meek and lowly in heart. For My yoke is easy and My burden light. Matthew 11:28-30 And the way of peace have they not known: that way, namely, which the Lord, as I said, mentions, in the easy yoke and light burden. There is no fear of God before their eyes. These do not say, There is no God; but yet they do not fear God.

5. Shall not all, who work iniquity, know? Psalm 13:4. He threatens the judgment. Who devour My people as the food of bread: that is, daily. For the food of bread is daily food. Now they devour the people, who serve their own ends out of them, not referring their ministry to the glory of God, and the salvation of those over whom they are.

6. They have not called upon the Lord. For he does not really call upon Him, who longs for such things as are displeasing to Him. There they trembled for fear, where no fear was Psalm 13:5: that is, for the loss of things temporal. For they said, If we let Him thus alone, all men will believe in Him; and the Romans will come, and take away both our place and nation. John 11:48 They feared to lose an earthly kingdom, where no fear was; and they lost the kingdom of heaven, which they ought to have feared. And this must be understood of all temporal goods, the loss of which when men fear, they come not to things eternal.

7. For God is in the just generation. It refers to what went before, so that the sense is, shall not all they that work iniquity know that the Lord is in the just generation; that is, He is not in them who love the world. For it is unjust to leave the Maker of the worlds, and serve the creature more than the Creator. Romans 1:25 You have shamed the counsel of the poor, for the Lord is his hope Psalm 13:6: that is, you have despised the humble coming of the Son of God, because ye saw not in Him the pomp of the world: that they, whom he was calling, should put their hope in God alone, not in the things that pass away.

8. Who will give salvation to Israel out of Sion? Psalm 13:7. Who but He whose humiliation you have despised? Is understood. For He will come in glory to the judgment of the quick and the dead, and the kingdom of the just: that, forasmuch as in that humble coming blindness has happened in part unto Israel,

that the fullness of the Gentiles might enter in, Romans 11:25 in that other should happen what follows, and so all Israel should be saved. For the Apostle too takes that testimony of Isaiah, where it is said, There shall come out of Sion He who shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: Isaiah 59:20 for the Jews, as it is here, Who shall give salvation to Israel out of Sion? When the Lord shall turn away the captivity of His people, Jacob shall rejoice, and Israel shall be glad. It is a repetition, as is usual: for I suppose, Israel shall be glad, is the same as, Jacob shall rejoice.

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