

Theme: Psalm 32 proclaims the joy of total forgiveness by God that awaits those who confess their sins and turn to Christ in faith.

I. Intro - Augustine's Favorite Psalm

- A. Saint Augustine's favorite Psalm; read frequently
- B. Its words were inscribed on the wall by his deathbed
- C. Why this Psalm? What does it teach us?
- D. End of our cycle on David's sin, rebuke, confession

II. The Blessing of Being Forgiven

- A. How blessed are those forgiven by God (vv1-2)
Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. ² **Blessed** is the man whose sin the Lord does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit. Psalms 32:1–2
 - 1. The theme of the Psalm - blessedness; joy
 - 2. A key concept in Psalms - more than any other book
 - 3. Specific blessedness - sins forgiven
Blessed is he **whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.** ² Blessed is the man **whose sin the Lord does not count against him** and in whose spirit is no deceit. Psalms 32:1–2
 - a. Vv1-2 - Double parallelism (in v1, and vv1&2)
 - b. Key blessing in view - sins forgiven - repeated 3x!

B. The blessing of sins forgiven - the Gospel!

David says the same thing when he speaks of the blessedness of the man to whom God credits righteousness apart from works: ⁷ "Blessed are they whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. ⁸ Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will never count against him." Romans 4:6–8

- 1. Paul is proving Gospel of justification by faith alone
- 2. He has looked at law in OT - and now Gospel
- 3. Gospel to Abraham - and here from Psalm 32!
- 4. The blessedness of righteousness credited apart from works - forgiven, covered, not counted!
- 5. There is no greater blessing and joy in life than knowing our sins are forgiven by God and we are given the righteousness of Christ!

III. The Joy of Confession

A. The agony of deceit

Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. ² Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord does not count against him and **in whose spirit is no deceit.** Psalms 32:1–2

- 1. Deceit - this is regarding confessing our sin - vv3, 5
When **I kept silent**, my bones wasted away... ⁵ **Then I acknowledged my sin** to you and **did not cover up my iniquity.** I said, "**I will confess my transgressions to the Lord**" — and you forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah Psalms 32:3,5
 - a. I kept silent - the opposite of acknowledged, not cover up, confess my transgressions to the LORD

- b. The deceit in view in v2 is the deceit of trying to cover up our sin.
- c. This silence is based in pride and rejection of grace
 “Silence is the performance of stubborn pride or a spirit struck dumb for fear of being found out. It is the way of Adam hiding from the Presence [of God] ... Worst of all, the silence is the rejection of grace.”
 James L. Mays, 147.
- d. This is what John speaks about in 1 John 1

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1:8–9

- 2. The deceit of covering sin leads to agony & misery
 When I kept silent, **my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. ⁴ For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.** Selah Psalms 32:3–4
 - a. Bones wasted away; groaning; heavy hand; strength sapped like hot summer; all day/day and night
 - b. Graphic physical terms for the effects of hiding sin
 - c. Unconfessed sin leads to spiritual stress, which can have devastating emotional and physical effects

B. The joy of coming clean in confession

Then **I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity.** I said, **“I will confess my transgressions to the Lord”** — and you forgave the guilt of my sin.
 Selah Psalms 32:5

- 1. Three statements about confession - opposite of “I kept silent” in v3
- 2. Three terms for sin - sin, iniquity, transgressions

- 3. This was a full confession of sin - Psalm 51
- 4. This is the sign of a wise, contrite heart
 “The beginning of wisdom is to know oneself to be a sinner” – Augustine, quoted in Craigie, 268.
- 5. I confessed - and you forgave my sin!
- 6. “I did not cover my sin” - but the Lord did (v1)!

C. The joy of refuge in God

Therefore let everyone who is godly pray to you while you may be found; surely when the mighty waters rise, they will not reach him. ⁷ You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah Psalms 32:6–7

- 1. David tells us to flee to God rather than from Him!
- 2. If we will flee to God, we will find refuge and protection in the storms of life.
- 3. And when the great flood of judgment comes, there will be no refuge other than Christ - so flee to Him now!

D. The joy of an unfettered relationship with God

I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you. ⁹ Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you. Psalms 32:8–9

- 1. Is this God or David speaking? Probably God
- 2. The point is that God’s wants us to have not only forgiveness but an unfettered fellowship with Him.
- 3. We should be the opposite of a stubborn horse or mule who have to be guided by force of bit & bridle

4. The child of God should have close, daily communion with God, pouring out our hearts to Him, confessing our sins, and receiving His words of assurance and guidance.

E. The joy of God's unfailing love

Many are the woes of the wicked, but the LORD's unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in him.

¹¹Rejoice in the Lord and be glad, you righteous; sing, all you who are upright in heart! Psalms 32:10–11

1. The wicked who don't confess their sin are surrounded by woes (like the miseries of vv3-4)
2. But if we trust in Yahweh and His mercy, His unfailing love (hesed) surround us on every side.
3. This is why Paul said this Psalm was about the Gospel and our response of faith in God's mercy offered in Christ!
4. If we trust in Christ, openly confessing our sin and looking to Him for mercy, we are surrounded by His unfailing love everywhere we turn.
5. This produces joy and worship as God forgives and cleanses us, and forms our heart to be upright, firm and steady.

IV. Applying the Word

A. Am I experiencing the joy of forgiveness in Christ?

1. Have I found forgiveness in Christ? Look to Him!
2. As a believer, does the reality of God's forgiveness permeate my consciousness?
 - a. When I sin, do I run from God or to Him?

- b. Do I believe God defines me by my sin, or by Christ's righteousness?

3. As a believer, is my joy found in being the blood-bought, justified, adopted child of God, or in external circumstances?

- a. If you are in Christ, you are God's adopted child, forgiven, free and surrounded by His unfailing love,
- b. If my daily focus is on my status as God's redeemed, forgiven, eternally loved child, the effect of external circumstances will have a boundary.
- c. Do I find myself focusing more on my unchanging status and place as God's child, or on my shifting circumstances?
- d. How much does my joy fluctuate with changes in my circumstances?

B. Am I building into a community of the joyful forgiven children of God?

1. In both Psalm 51 and Psalm 32, David turns outward as a result of confession and forgiveness
2. Joy only reaches its fruition in community, for we are created for community
3. Can you name the people with whom you share your struggles, receive forgiveness, and experience joy?
4. Are you connecting with others in a small group?

C. The Table of Forgiveness and Joy

1. We have been focusing on confession and repentance the last three weeks
2. Today, the focus is on forgiveness received and joy experienced

The Joy of Confession and Forgiveness

Psalm 32

September 2, 2018

Communion

Jude 1:2

Teaching keywords: confession and repentance; forgiveness; law and gospel; sin; biblical characters

Mercy peace and love be yours in abundance through Jesus Christ Our Lord. Go forth blessed to be a blessing to all you meet! (Jude 1:2 adapted)

Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. ² Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit. ³ When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. ⁴ For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. *Selah* ⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD" — and you forgave the guilt of my sin. *Selah* ⁶ Therefore let everyone who is godly pray to you while you may be found; surely when the mighty waters rise, they will not reach him. ⁷ You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance. *Selah* ⁸ I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you. ⁹ Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you. ¹⁰ Many are the woes of the wicked, but the LORD's unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in him. ¹¹ Rejoice in the LORD and be glad, you righteous; sing, all you who are upright in heart! Psalm 32