

Theme: The blessing of total forgiveness by God awaits those who confess their sins and turn to Christ in faith.

I. Intro – Augustine’s Favorite Psalm

- A. Augustine’s favorite Psalm, read frequently
- B. Had its words inscribed on wall by death bed
- C. What is it about this Psalm that he so loved
- D. Why an OT passage – why not NT passage?

II. Blessing of Forgiveness – General (1-2)

- A. How blessed are those forgiven by God! (vv1-2)
 - 1. Vv1-2 general principle that will be developed
 - 2. Double parallelism vv1-2 – first 3 lines
 - 3. Ultimate blessing (Ps 103:2-3; Rom 4:7-8)
- B. Paradox – blessedness through confession
 - 1. Note the 4th line – no deceit – confess sin
 - 2. Goes against the grain of self-esteem culture!
 - 3. Augustine quote – beginning of wisdom
 - 4. This leads to the next section on confession

III. Testimony of Confession & Forgiveness

- A. The Psalmist had been deceived – no confession
 - 1. He had been silent (v3) – no confession

- 2. This silence is not golden – must confess
 - 3. James L. Mays quote
 - 4. Confession must be made – not assumed
- B. Disastrous results of no confession (vv3-4)
 - 1. Graphic physical terms (vv3-4)
 - 2. God’s disciplining hand on wayward child (v4)
 - 3. Total opposite of vv1-2
- C. The big change – confession of sin
 - 1. Contrast “I kept silent” (v3) and “I said” (v5)
 - 2. 3 fold verbal confession (v5) – acknowledge/not cover/confess
 - 3. Note same terms for sin in v1, 5
 - 4. Covered (by Lord – v1); not covered (by me v5)
- D. The result – forgiveness (v5)
 - 1. God immediately forgives the sin (v5)
 - 2. God fully forgives the sin (same terms 1,5)
 - 3. Like lancing a boil – health and healing come

IV. Summons for The Godly to Confession & Faith

- A. Psalmists advice – go to God (v6)
 - 1. Call to pray to God – when I sin (v6)
 - 2. Mighty waters – God’s discipline (v6)
- B. Psalmists confession – God is our Refuge (v7)
 - 1. God is hiding place, protection, deliverer (v7)
 - 2. No more heavy hand (like in v4)
 - 3. He is the only one Who can protect sinners!
- C. God’s call for willing confession (vv8-9)
 - 1. God will teach us & watch over us (v8)
 - 2. Don’t be stubborn mule – come! (v9)
 - 3. Plural – addressed to all readers!
- D. God’s great deliverance (v10)
 - 1. Surrounded by God’s hesed if we trust
 - 2. Same terms in 6-7, 10 (see slide)
- E. Concluding praise to God (v11)!

V. Applying the Word

- A. Do we see the great forgiveness God gives to repentant?

- 1. Do we recognize our sin as sin?
 - 2. Do we hide from God – or run to Him?
 - 3. Do we openly confess our sin to Him?
- B. Do we see that God justifies us in Christ?
 - 1. God does not impute/count our guilt - justification
 - 2. Same word used in Gen 15:6 – God does count righteous
 - 3. This is Paul’s point in Romans 4
 - 4. What God desires is repentance and faith
 - C. Are we like mules – or trusting children? (Communion)
 - 1. Come to the Table – His grace is here
 - 2. Confess your sin – and receive forgiveness
 - 3. In Christ, our Judge has become our Refuge

Confession Is Good for the Soul

Psalm 32
June 22, 2008
Communion
Hebrews 13:20-21

² Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits-- ³ who forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases,
Psalm 103:2-3

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 4:7-8

“The beginning of wisdom is to know oneself to be a sinner” – Augustine,
quoted in Craigie, 268.

“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.

1 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!