

Penitential Psalms (Psalms 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 143)

An Exposition of Psalm 32

The Focus: The joyful effect of confession of sin that leads to the Lord's forgiveness and restoration moves out in personal ministry.

The Flow:

Here is an example of undeserved righteousness that leads to unthinkable joy. Here we come to something King David had to have; namely mercy. David had coveted Bathsheba, committed adultery with her and murdered Uriah her husband (cf. 2Sam.11-12). The Old Testament sacrificial system made no provision for such premeditated sin (cf. Ps.51:16). David's case is hopeless...unless the LORD "justifies the ungodly by faith alone; not by works" (cf. Romans 4:1-8). And this is what we find in Psalm 32.

The Proposition v.1-2

Four expressions of evil

Transgression – rebellion against rightful authority

Sin – preferring other things over God and acting upon the preferences

Iniquity – moral crookedness

Deceit – insincerity, cunning

Three expressions of pardon

Forgiven – taking away, a burden lifted off

Covered – Hiding from God's sight

Counts no iniquity – cancelled, a debt not reckoned, an accounting term

Two expressions of overflowing joy

Blessedness (2x) – Happiness, exuberant joy

The Proof v.3-11

Is this true? Can it be that contrite confession of sin to the LORD results in forgiveness and restoration? Is there any hope for me? What flows in v.3-11 are two personal examples of this proposition.

A personal example of a forgiven life v.3-5

A three-fold effect of unrepentant sin v.3-4

Bones wasted away through groaning all day long – Sadness
Day and night God’s hand heavy upon him – Unrest
Strength was dried up – Fatigue

God’s response to contrite confession of sin v.5

Contrite confession – Acknowledgement, uncovering and confession.
God’s response - Forgiveness

A personal example of a restored life v.6-11

Encourages urgently others to take hold of grace

v.6-7

“Offer prayer to [Him]” – open confessions
“at a time when He may be found” – urgent, today, now
“surely” – promise of protection from becoming overcome by trouble
“surround me with shouts of deliverance” – in the environment of confident and joyous singing from others who experience this grace

Counsels compassionately others to walk in the way

v.8-10

“Counsel” – instructing, teaching, warning; one anothering (see Ps.51:13; Isa. 55:86f; Rom.15:14; Col.3:16)
“with my eye upon you” – tenderness, compassion, care
“Be not like a horse or mule, without understanding” – recklessness or stubbornness in dealing with personal sin reflecting v.3-4
“Many are the sorrows...but steadfast love surrounds” – two contrasting experiences made known to motivate the listener.

Calls excitedly others to a life of praise

v.11

“Be glad in the LORD” – to live openly and completely before Him;
experience this Psalm (cf. Ps.16:11; 37:4; 67:3-4; 69:32; 70:4; 97:1)

An application of Psalm 32

1. Until you feel blessed, reflect upon justification by faith alone (v.1-2).
 - a. Reread and reflect on Romans 4-5
 - b. Talk about this doctrine with each other
2. Don't be rash and stubborn in your sin (v.3-4, 9)
 - a. Rash = dealing with personal sin in your own way
 - b. Stubborn = not dealing with personal sin period.
3. In prayer, live openly and completely before the LORD (v.5-6)
 - a. Work on personal confessions daily to the Lord
 - b. Express more of your heart to Him in prayer
4. Help others experience the grace you experience (v.8-11).
 - a. As joy is restored use this energy in get involved in other people's lives. Learn how to “counsel with an eye upon”.
 - b. Learn that faith in Christ is about both personal growth and personal ministry.

