

Women in the Word
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PSALM 32 THE JOY OF FORGIVENESS

INTRODUCTION

True happiness is in the removal of guilt

VERSES 1-2 THE GOSPEL

The completeness of our sin

“transgression”—crossing the line; rebelling

“sin”—failing to do what we should

“iniquity”—wickedness, criminal

“deceit”—dishonest about who we are.

Our only chance for happiness is in removal of guilt.

The completeness of our deliverance

“forgiven”

“covered”

“not imputed”/not counted. Like bookkeeping: what’s in your ledger

Only possible because of Jesus Christ.

Imputation: The Glorious Exchange. Our sin for His righteousness

He made Him who knew no sin

to be sin for us,

that we might become

the righteousness of God

in Him. (2 Cor 5:21)

Justification: Legally declared “not guilty”

Paul chose Psalm 32:1-2 to teach the doctrine of justification. Romans 4:5-8 says,

But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness, just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works: “Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven and whose sins are covered; Blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin.”

VERSES 3-5 DAVID'S TESTIMONY

A deceitful spirit v 3

David goes from end of v. 2 (“in whose spirit there is no deceit”) into his testimony. In his spirit, there had been deceit. He had covered it up. He kept silent.

A dried-up life v 4

Vivid imagery for the one hiding sin:

The opposite of “Happy is the man”

Sensation of pain, aging

Ongoing misery

Loss of spiritual vitality

The severe discipline of the Lord

Instead of flourishing (Psalm 1), his life was barren

Acknowledged, uncovered, confessed v 5

He speaks. No more silence. No more hiding. He “says the same” as God does, back to God. He agrees with God.

Fully forgiven, v 5

David repeats: “transgressions...iniquity...sin”

HOW CAN GOD FORGIVE?

Confession is something we “do,” but it’s not a saving work.

The saving work is done by Christ.

1 John 1:7-2:9

Cleansed by the blood of Christ

The Father forgives because He is just—the penalty is paid

Jesus Christ the Righteous is your Advocate.

CONFESSION UNLEASHES JOY

The prodigal son (Luke 14)

Forgiveness is ready (not waiting to be earned)

The Father runs, embraces, says “Quickly!”

VERSES 6-7 ENJOY THE RELATIONSHIP!

--He hears your prayers

--He can be “found”

--Nothing can destroy you

- He protects you
- He's continually with you, surrounding you

VERSES 8-10a PROMISE AND WARNING

Promises guidance, instruction, intimate care (lit. "on you My eye")

Warning: don't act like an unbeliever

VERSES 10b-11 JOY FOR JOY

The King commands you: Be glad, rejoice, shout!

It's another exchange: God rejoices (v 7), and we rejoice back.

Zephaniah 3:17

*The Lord your God is in your midst,
a mighty one who will save;
he will rejoice over you with gladness;
he will quiet you by his love;
he will exult over you with loud singing.*

Sources:

James Boice, *Psalms Volume 1, Psalms 1-41, An Expository Commentary*, 1994

Willem Van Gemeren, *Psalms. The Expositor's Bible Commentary series*, 2008.

Artur Weister, *The Old Testament Library: The Psalms*, 192.

FOR DISCUSSION

1. Compare King David to his offspring, King Jesus (1 Peter 2:22, for starters 😊). In other words, how did Christ succeed where David failed?
2. What is the glorious exchange? How does imputation give joy?
3. What typically keeps us from confessing sin to God?
4. Have you ever heard a friend (or yourself) say, "God must be so tired of me sinning the same way over and over...." What's wrong with that thinking? How can you encourage her?