

“Psalms: Week 4”

SUNDAY, JANUARY 26, 2025 -MICHAEL BOWERS



Summary - “Psalms: Praise and Worship”

As we enter into week four of our study of the Psalms, we land in Psalm 32, which should also cause us to pause and truly reflect as we deal with a topic that our post-modern culture often denies, and one that even the church often neglects...SIN. Scripture speaks of sin, iniquity, and transgression in almost every story. After all, sin and the payment for sin were why Jesus Christ endured the cross. Scripture tells us that sin separates us from a Holy God, and the only way we could ever have a relationship with God was if a perfect sacrifice was made as a payment for the sins of mankind, all of us included. We know that Jesus Christ was and is the perfect sacrifice and that we only come to God through Him. As we look at Psalm 32 this week we meet King David in the midst of his own sin and brokenness as it is believed this Psalm primarily is dealing with his sin with Bathsheba and all that followed in that season as he attempted to deal with sin on His own rather than trusting in the Lord. Psalm 32 is when David comes to the end of himself and seeks God on the matter. Psalm 32 is a prayer of repentance and praise of God’s forgiveness. It is a concise, blunt summary of sin, the need for confession, and the forgiveness of God. This lays out a pattern for all of us to follow as we wrestle with our own sins, confession, and ultimately walking in the redemption and forgiveness that is only offered through Christ Jesus.

Scripture - Psalm 32 - “Sin-Filled Silence, Grace-Filled Worship”

Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. 2 Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. 3 For 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 dried up as by the heat of summer.

Selah (pause for reflection)

5 I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,” and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.

Selah (pause for reflection)

6 Therefore let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found; surely in the rush of great waters, they shall not reach him. 7 You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

Selah (pause for reflection)

8 I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my eye upon you. 9 Be not like a horse or a mule, without understanding, which must be curbed with bit and bridle, or it will not stay near you. 10 Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the Lord. 11 Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!

Key Apps, Websites, and Online Tools for Further Study

- <https://www.blueletterbible.org/>
- <https://www.biblegateway.com/>
- <https://biblehub.com/>
- <https://www.youversion.com/>
- <https://www.bibleref.com/>
- <https://bible.org/>
- <https://netbible.org/>
- <https://enduringword.com/bible-commentary/>
- <https://www.desiringgod.org/>
- <https://www.gty.org/>
- <https://www.gotquestions.org/>
- <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/>
- <https://carm.org/>
- <https://dwellapp.io/>

Further Scripture Study

Psalms 19:14; [Psalm 32](#); Proverbs 28:13; Romans 5:6-8; Romans 6:23; Romans 10:9-10; Ephesians 5:15-17; 1 John 1:7-9

As you study the scripture verses provided for this week, study for right context and right questions...

Right Context:

- The verse itself and key word(s) that stand out in the verse (meanings)
- The verses around the verse, the section of scripture, the chapter, the book, old/new testament, and relation to the rest of scripture
- Author and Date (Who wrote the book and when?)
- Audience (Who is the book written to? Main characters in the story and/or text?)
- Main points and overall purpose of the book
- Historical background, cultural significance, setting, people, rulers, etc.
- Scripture references; let scripture interpret scripture as much as possible

Right Questions:

- What does this passage say?
- What does this passage mean to its original audience?
- What is this passage teaching me about God?
- What does this passage tell us about man?
- What does this passage demand of me? (Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a sin to avoid? How is this applicable to me?)
- How does this passage change the way I relate to people? (What actions must I take in response to this passage?)
- What does this passage prompt me to pray? (For God, for others, for my community, for family, etc.)



Key Thoughts

"Sin is a conscious choice to rebel against God's authority in order to go our own way. It is an uprising against heaven, a conspiracy against God." ~ Steven Lawson

"Sin is serious. When unchecked, unguarded, and without confession, sin will take you further than you want. It will keep you longer than you want to stay. It will cost you more than you want to pay. It will require of you more than you want to give. Sin has become an absent word in our modern culture." ~ Daniel L. Akin and J. Josh Smith, Exalting Jesus in the Psalms 1-50

Sin and the payment for sin were why Jesus Christ endured the cross. What Jesus Christ died for can never be taken lightly.

In verses 1-2 David uses three different terms to define what he has done:

- Transgression (1a) - open rebellion and disloyalty, a departure grounded in defiance.
- Sin (1b) - to miss the mark. Sin is willfully and intentionally missing the desires given by God.
- Iniquity (2) - A crooked or wrong act. It carries with it the idea of being corrupt or twisted.

His sin was so great he needed three words to describe it, yet he was also joyful. Why? Because each layer of his description of sin was connected to a varied description of God's forgiveness and grace.

- Transgression is forgiven (vs. 1) - lifted and taken off of his shoulders.
- Sin is covered - as a garment being slung around someone to cover them completely. God wrapped David up in his forgiveness.
- Counts no iniquity - God does not add up the sins and keep a tally of them.

God's grace lifts us out of sin, covers our sins with the blood of Christ, and keeps no records of our wrongs. This allows us to be joyful, not because of our sin, of course not, but of what Christ offers to each of us. Sin is serious and must be confronted, but God's grace, through Christ, is greater.

David was burdened and weary. God's conviction was upon him: night and day. Most likely, he, like us, in the darkness of sin, had convinced himself that confession would lead to further death and pain, but in reality, it was the only path to life. Sin blurs the beauty of truth. Sin says, "Be quiet. Hide it." Truth says, "Be truthful. Bring it to light." (vs. 3-4)

In verse 5 we see a pattern that is found throughout scripture regarding how to deal with sin:

- Acknowledge sin - I brought it to light, and I exchanged the false and incomplete covering of my sin for God's gracious and complete covering
- Confess sin - notice he uses all three words for sin again in one verse.
- And God forgave!
- Pause!

Key Thoughts

In The Gospel, One Psalm at a Time, Paul David Tripp, referring to Psalm 32, describes confession in this way: "When you think of confessing your sin, what images come to mind? I believe that most of us hate confession. We dislike admitting that we are wrong, and sometimes we defend ourselves even when we know we're wrong, and often, we work to create self-atoning arguments that make our sin acceptable to us. The guy at the mall will say that he's not lusting; he's just a man who enjoys beauty. The gossip will say, "I wasn't gossiping; I was just giving a prayer request." And the parent who screams at their child says, "That was not sinful anger. I was just being like one of God's prophets - 'Thus says the Lord.'" We try to do everything we can to not confess."

What we see in verse 5, regarding our relationship with the Lord, is that when confession takes place, God's forgiveness follows. Paul David Tripp adds to his above quote with the following: "And why do I confess? Because I need help because I can run from a situation, I can run from a relationship, but I can't run from me! When I try to run from me, I always show up with me at the end of the run - it doesn't work! And so, I need to be rescued from me. I need rescuing, forgiving, transforming, empowering grace. And I enter into that grace by confession; confession is an admission that I need divine help."

This is not only good news for David; it is also OUR good news to claim and trust in the forgiveness of God through Jesus Christ. (vs. 6-7)

David used three words for sin, he used multiple words to describe forgiveness, and now he highlights who God will be for His children in various ways (vs. 7):

- God is a hiding place
- He preserves (protects)
- He surrounds us with praise! - Songs of deliverance.

Conviction leads to confession, which leads to rejoicing. And that confession changes how we view some of the same moments in life through a different set of lenses. David could not change the impact of sin in his life and the consequences it brought to his relationships, but he could now trust the Lord to do His work in all things. Wisdom-filled walking vs. stubborn disobedience. Conviction, confession, freedom, worship, and wisdom-filled living. (vs. 8-9)

God does not desire to leave us forgiven but to walk in the wisdom his word provides. Not to drag us as a stubborn mule, but to lead us in his direction. David advises his readers, no doubt from his experience, to walk in wisdom. Pursue the instructions from the word. (vs. 9)

Experience joyful worship as a result of God's forgiveness and instruction. Emotional and sin-filled distance does not breed joyful obedience and joyful relationships. David, according to his description, was spiraling downward. But his conviction led to repentance and confession, which brought him back out and into a heart of thanksgiving and praise. (vs. 10-11)

Reflect & Respond

Do you take sin seriously? Do you recognize the gravity of sin? Have you considered the emotional weight of ongoing sinful behaviors, not only for your life, but how it also impacts others?

Are there any sins in your life that you often minimize and/or perhaps even regularly defend? Why might we find it easier in the moment to defend our sin rather than confess it?

Thinking about your earthly relationships (spouse, children, family, friends, co-workers, etc.), which ones are you most likely to either defend or justify your sin in most? Are there any in which you quickly blame shift your sin to the other person in order to justify your behavior?

When you think about the word “confession”, does it bring positive thoughts and feelings for you or negative ones? Why? As you read Psalm 32, and other scriptures that deal with sin, confession, and forgiveness, do you see that “confession” is positive or negative? How can you begin to align your view of confession with the positive and rejoicing truths that scripture speaks of?

Do you grasp the goodness of God’s forgiveness? Have you ever considered that conviction gives us a reason to rejoice?

David repents to God and confesses that there is a switch flipped from darkness to light, from shackles to freedom, from questioning to unparalleled trust in God. What about you? Are you living like David, full of conviction, with no freedom? Will you confess and trust God to forgive you and restore you? Will you allow his forgiveness to lead you to worship and rejoice?

When we look at confession from a biblical worldview, rather than our culture and the sinful world around us, we see that it is a positive thing that leads to forgiveness, redemption, and even freedom. How should the truths in Psalm 32 drive us to be people who confess quickly and often?

We must be careful with confession that it doesn’t become something that we do merely to “dump our sin” on God or another and then feel like we are out from under the weight of it. What do we see from Psalm 32 that we can follow to ensure that our confessing of sin is biblical, from the heart, leads to forgiveness, and ultimately leads to real repentance in our lives and relationships, not just “cheap confession”?

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We know that for some, Psalm 32 and this week’s sermon may be sitting very heavy on your heart. We want to encourage you to take your sins to God, just as we read here in Psalm 32. However, please also know that if you have been walking through a dark and sinful season of sin yourself, and need additional help, support, guidance, encouragement, accountability, and counsel, that our pastors, elders, and staff are here to walk with you, encourage you, and point you to Christ and His word. Romans 3:23 makes it clear that we are ALL sinners in need of a Savior. At the same time, Hebrews 3:13 makes it very clear that when we walk through these seasons together as believers, we not only encourage one another, but also work together to prevent one another from being taken over by the hardness of sin in our hearts. Again, we as pastors, elders, and staff are here for you if you need to talk. Please do not hesitate to reach out.

