



Psalms of Forgiveness

Cal Heights UMC

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The Impact of Forgiveness

“Happy are those whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.”



Psalm 32 is a song that celebrates the joy and happiness that comes from knowing God's forgiveness. As human beings, we are often harder on ourselves than the God who created us, holding onto shame and guilt long after God has already cleansed us of our sin. Today we explore our need for receiving and living into God's blessed forgiveness and how it will impact our lives. May we finish this day knowing how fully forgiven and dearly loved we actually are in Christ.

Opening Prayer: (Unison)

We come to you, O God, knowing that you welcome all who come seeking forgiveness and grace. Help us to know the happy blessedness of forgiveness in our innermost being and to share your forgiveness with those around us. We know the tragedy and pain of unresolved guilt and shame that we hold onto even though you have forgiven us long ago. Enable us to forgive ourselves and those around us that we may experience the joy of your forgetfulness. Lead us by the Holy Spirit within us to the fulness of healing and wholeness that we may find our hiding place in you. In the name of Jesus, who heals and forgives, we pray. Amen.

Read Psalm 32 below:

Psalm 32

The Joy of Forgiveness

Of David. A Maskil.

- ¹ Happy are those whose **transgression is forgiven**,
whose **sin is covered**.
- ² Happy are those **to whom the Lord imputes no iniquity**,
and in whose **spirit there is no deceit**.
- ³ While I kept silence, my body 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*
- ⁵ Then **I acknowledged my sin to you**,
and **I did not hide my iniquity**;
I said, "**I will confess my transgressions** to the Lord,"
and you **forgave the guilt of my sin**. *Selah*
- ⁶ Therefore let all who are faithful
offer prayer to you;
at a time of distress, the rush of mighty waters
shall not reach them.
- ⁷ You are a hiding place for me;
you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with glad cries of deliverance. *Selah*
- ⁸ **I will instruct you and teach you the way you should go;**
I will counsel you with my eye upon you.

⁹ **Do not be like a horse or a mule, without understanding,
whose temper must be curbed with bit and bridle,
else it will not stay near you.**

¹⁰ Many are the torments of the wicked,
but steadfast love surrounds those who trust in the Lord.

¹¹ Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, O righteous,
and shout for joy, all you upright in heart.

The Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version. (1989). (Ps 32). Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers.

Opening Questions:

- 1) The opening of the Psalm betrays its purpose and subject matter. What does the Psalmist understand is the result of forgiveness?
- 2) Name all of the ways that the Psalmist describes the experience of forgiveness. What are your ways of expressing forgiveness?
- 3) What does the Psalmist say happens to them when they don't ask forgiveness? How have you experienced the physical impacts of unforgiveness, shame, or guilt?
- 4) When you experienced the impact of unforgiveness, what the sin committed against another person or God? How do you think that made a difference, if any?
- 5) When it comes to confession, are you a generalist or do you confess specifically to God? Do you believe it makes a difference and why?
- 6) What are the blessings the Psalmist writes about regarding being faithful? What are some of the blessings you have experienced in your life due to knowing your forgiveness and God's grace?

Closing Prayer: (Unison)

God we thank you for your abundant grace and unconditional forgiveness that brings relief, joy, and peace. Help us each day to lay before you the areas in our lives where we sin out of habit as well as ignorance. Convict our hearts especially when we sin willingly or hurt others that we may come to you and them to find forgiveness. In all things and every day, enable us to live faithfully and with intentional grace that we may find ourselves among your faithful and righteous as we put all our trust in you. Amen