

Psalm 32 – Bible Study Notes Joy and Blessing of Forgiveness

Primary Focus: Blessedness of God forgiving our sins

Background Info: Unknown; scholars debate the timing of this psalm's writing.

Basic structure:

- I. Recognizing, repenting, and forgiveness of sin (vv. 1-6)
 - A. Those who are forgiven by God are blessed
 1. Forgiven people have their sin covered and removed (v. 1)
 2. Forgiven people are free from God's judgment (v. 2)
 - B. Those who do not repent face turmoil and judgment from God
 1. Sin not confessed emotionally harms and stresses the believer (v. 3)
 2. Those who sin and do not repent face judgment from God (v. 4)
 - C. Those who confess their sin and repent receive God's forgiveness
 1. Confession of sin brings forgiveness from God (v. 5)
 2. Every sinner should confess their sin (v. 6)
- II. Dependence upon God to maintain righteous life (vv. 7-11)
 - A. Depend on God for help and instruction
 1. God is the shelter from sin and shelter in difficult times when temptation may arise (v. 7)
 2. God will guide repentant believers to live righteously (v. 8)
 3. God seeks a cooperative relationship (v. 9)
 - B. God forgives and helps repentant believers
 1. Every sinner is guilty of many sins (v. 10a)
 2. God will forgive and help those who repent (v. 10b)
 3. Praise God for His willingness and blessing of forgiveness (v. 11)

Verses 1-2 – The blessings of receiving God's forgiveness

Verse 1 – God covers our sin with His grace.

God's grace is freely given to those who repent.

God covers our sin with the blood of Jesus.

Verse 2 – Forgiven people are no longer under God's judgment.

The penalty for sin is not paid by those who repent.

When we repent, God saves us from His wrath.

Verses 3-6 – Living in sin destroys; Confessing sin rebuilds

Verse 3 – the psalmist's guilt over his sin caused emotional turmoil and anguish.

His guilt nearly caused physical pain.

This distress is caused by unconfessed and hidden sin in our lives.

This suffering stems from God convicting us of our sin.

Verse 4 – The psalmist is facing God's judgment because of his sin.

God's judgments include:

... eternal death;
... separation from God.

This judgment is avoidable for those who repent.

Verses 5-6 – God forgives and restores those who confess their sin.

When we confess sin, God forgives us of that sin.

When we are forgiven, we are saved from God’s judgment.

Forgiveness and restoration comes through the death and blood of Jesus only.

Verse 6 references:

- Seeking God while he can be found: also in Isaiah 55:6;
- Flood of waters that cannot reach those who repent: likely refers to the flood of Noah.

Life Questions

Describe a time when guilt caused you anguish? Why is God’s forgiveness a blessing?

Verses 7-9 – Depend on God for help and instruction

Verse 7 – People have gathered around the psalmist for two purposes:

- Pray for the psalmist;
- Sing songs of worship to God.

The author depends on God to help him live right and resist temptation.

Verse 8 – God will guide and teach the believer to live a holy life.

God seeks a relationship with the believer – the word “counsel”.

“with My eye upon you” refers to God’s:

- intimate care;
- vigilance.

This verse reinforces the teachings of verses 1-5.

Verse 9 – God seeks a cooperative relationship with his disciples.

The horse or mule are stubborn animals.

Directing a mule or horse requires force and putting pressure on the animal.

God does not want to direct us that way.

God seeks to give us counsel.

You can lead a horse, but cannot counsel it.

God also wants us to be teachable and not stubborn.

He wants us to accept His guidance and counsel.

He desires us to faithfully follow His instructions.

Life Questions

Why is it important to depend on God in order to avoid sin? Describe the difference between God’s ‘counsel’ and God’s orders.

Verses 10-11 – God forgives and helps repentant believers

These verses restate the overall lesson of verses 1-9.

Specifically restates verses 3-5.

It emphasizes the glory and blessing of confessing sin and being forgiven.

Verse 11 restates the idea of verse 7: depend God and praise Him.

“shout for joy” (v. 11) is a call for outspoken, public worship of God.

Life Questions

How will you live a righteous life? How will a repentant life help you tell others about Jesus?