

**A. Forgiveness is Wonderful**

- There is such a sense of freedom and delight that comes from confessing sin and receiving forgiveness. David was a man who knew forgiveness for his treacherous and wicked involvement with Bathsheba and Uriah. Vv 1-2 teach that blessedness and forgiveness are related. Forgiveness restores our relationship with God and shows us our Lord's love and desire for a right relationship with his people. It results in blessedness because of a transformed relationship with the Living God.
- In Romans 1 and 2, the Bible clearly teaches that nobody is good or honors God; we are sinners who deserve God's wrath. However, our Lord shows tremendous mercy, forbearance and love as he contends with sinners (Ro 2:4). God's patience and forbearance are intended to cause us to reflect on our miserable state and turn to him in repentance and faith. Although there isn't a single one of us who doesn't deserve God's wrath, the marvelous teaching of Psalm 32 is that God forgives those transgressions and sins ("covers" them), and despite our sinful condition, the Lord accepts our sincere requests for forgiveness and forgives us. We don't remain in our sin because God restores us to a right relationship with him (Mic 7:18-19; 1 Jn 1:8-10).
- What a tremendous God we serve, one who forgives us whenever we go before his throne and ask him to do so! This idea in v 1 of covering the sin is deeply-rooted in Old Testament Theology (Ge 3:21; Ps 85:2). Note the interesting contrast: when man covers his sin, he is hiding from God (Job 42:6; Psalm 32:5; Rev 6:16); when God covers sin, he is keeping it from his holy presence by blotting it out. Christ fulfills the depiction in the Old Testament by becoming the perfect once-for-all sacrifice (Heb 9:24-26).
- Are we sufficiently aware of our sin so that we are each day seeking God's forgiveness? Do our daily prayers include confession of sin? Is there a genuine joy and delight in receiving that (undeserved) forgiveness from a God who seeks us out and reconciles himself to us? The promise in verses 1 and 2 is that forgiveness brings blessing. The act of asking forgiveness forces us to reflect upon our unworthiness before God and our great need of the atoning work of Jesus Christ. Are you experiencing blessing because you have received forgiveness from God?

**B. Forgiveness Relieves Our Misery**

- David tells us that we can suffer and be miserable because of our sin. He understood what it was to sin against God (Ps 51:4). The language of verses 3 and 4 of Psalm 32 indicates that the weight of sin on David was so great that it led to physical and emotional distress. He was under great duress as he felt the heavy hand of the Lord upon him. When we don't confess our sins, they can eat away at us and sap us of energy. A person's entire life can be affected by unconfessed sin; God's heavy hand is actually a disciplining mercy that keeps our consciences from being seared (Heb 12).
- The relief that we feel upon confessing our sins is tangible and real. David encourages other believers to offer prayer to God for forgiveness (v 6). The rushing waters are a

picture of judgment; the “hiding place” in v 7 is a picture of God’s preservation and deliverance of his people. Verses 6 and 7 are also a reminder of something very important: the day will come when God’s forbearance comes to an end for the unrepentant and he returns to judge the earth (Ac 17:30-31).

- The forgiven person knows peace and fellowship with God, because when we ask for forgiveness and receive it, a great burden is lifted and we are freed to follow and obey God. Is the Lord’s hand heavy on you right now for a sin where you are keeping silent? Confess that sin to God and experience freedom! That’s what David did in v 5 and he experienced that freedom. We experience that freedom as Christians when we confess such sins.

### **C. Forgiveness Enables Us to Learn God’s Ways**

- The last three verses show that when we confess our sins and are forgiven, our relationship with God is restored and we learn from him about his ways. We don’t want to continue sinning but want to learn from our sins so that we turn from them in the future (Ro 6:1-4). The forgiven Christian changes as he submits to the will of the Sovereign God. David uses an example of what not to be: a horse or mule which must be controlled with bit and bridle. The one who resists the Lord’s teaching will have many sorrows (v 11), always kicking against the goad. He suffers the consequences of his disobedience and stubbornness. On the contrary he who trusts in the Lord experiences his steadfast love.
- When God forgives us, he not only restores the broken relationship, he also teaches us to follow him by strengthening us so that we don’t continue sinning. We learn to obey, to resist temptation and to turn from sin to righteousness. The Holy Spirit guides and directs us in the ways of the Lord. When we are forgiven, we’re free to follow God and we’re slaves of righteousness rather than slaves of sin (Ro 6:16). To be a slave of righteousness means that we seek righteousness and we rejoice in it, we hate sin and we leave it behind. We change because Jesus has forgiven us, not just for the purpose of leaving us as forgiven people (as wonderful as that is), but so that we might learn from Christ and become more like him. We obey our Savior out of gratitude for the salvation that he has earned on our behalf.
- Is there a sin weighing upon you that you haven’t confessed, something that continues to have an impact on you? The strong encouragement of Psalm 32 is to confess that sin (or those sins) to our good, merciful, loving and forgiving God, who doesn’t hold our sins against us, but throws them into the depths of the sea. Let us confess our sins to our God and let’s ask him to strengthen us in our faith and thus receive that wonderful blessing. Let’s pray for those who don’t know God, because the day is coming when there will be no place for those unbelievers to turn. Let us follow God’s ways because they are good and upright. And, as David ends Psalm 32, let us rejoice, be glad and shout for joy for Christ’s transforming forgiveness which bestows upon us such great blessing.