

Lessons David Learned on How God Deals With Transgressors

by James Jennings

This sermon delves into the story of King David's sin with Bathsheba, highlighting the consequences of covering up sin, the need for confession and repentance, and the blessings of God's forgiveness and restoration. It emphasizes the importance of being honest before God, acknowledging sin, and seeking His mercy and grace to experience true joy and righteousness.

Scripture: Psalm 32:1, Psalm 32:5, Hebrews 12:4, Proverbs 28:13, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Confession and Repentance", "God's Forgiveness and Restoration"

Description

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Transcript

We'll turn with me to Psalm 32. As you know, Jeff referred in the first hour to King David, and if you know your Bible, you know that in 2 Samuel 11, King David sadly did not go to war when he should have went to war. He remained laying idle on the roof.

He saw a woman. He saw him. Did not turn back at that point.

Kept pursuing the temptation. Eventually, adultery with Bathsheba. And then David, sadly, tries to cover it up.

So he has Uriah come back from war. Hopes Uriah will lay with his wife and it'll look like the child conceived was through Uriah. But Uriah is such a noble man, he doesn't go home and lay with his wife.

He just sleeps by the door because the men are intense. So David, he has a perfect opportunity now to expose himself and he doesn't do it. Instead, David, of all things, sends Uriah back with the very letter that says they need to put him forward in the most dangerous part near the wall so he could die.

And like a good man will do, he'll obey the orders of those above him and he did it. He went and died. And then David married Bathsheba.

And now she has the child while they're married. So apparently, it was their child since they'd been married. He snuck the marriage in by having her husband killed.

In Psalm 51, in the superscript at the top, it says that David wrote Psalm 51, not 32 where we're at. Keep staying 32. He wrote Psalm 51 after Nathan the prophet had confronted him.

So this has to be at least nine months after he's done all of these things because the child is born. So here Nathan publicly in the setting with those who are there rebukes David and says, you are the man. And in Psalm 51, we see David.

He's praying for the joy of his salvation to be restored. Maybe even turn there to your right. Turn to 51 real fast.

David is praying, Lord, wash me thoroughly from my iniquity. Cleanse me from my sin. Against You, You only have I sinned.

Purge me. Wash me, verse 7. Let me hear joy. He wasn't experiencing joy in those nine months of covering up his sin.

Create in me a clean heart. His conscience was not clean. Renew a right spirit within me, verse 10 he says.

Cast me not away from Your presence. Take not Your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and uphold me with a willing spirit.

And then look at verse 13. David is asking for all of these things. And then look what he says in verse 13.

Lord, restore me, Lord, then I will teach transgressors Your ways. Then I will teach. I will have insight about who's dealing with me.

I will teach transgressors whose ways? Your. God's ways. So David here makes a resolution.

Lord, restore me. And I will take the lessons learned. And I will teach others about these things.

I believe that's what he does in Psalm 32. So turn back to Psalm 32. You can't be dogmatic to say that, but there are so many similarities.

The majority of the commentators I read would agree Psalm 32 seems to come after Psalm 51. And we see this. Let's read Psalm 32.

A Masculine of David. Some versions put an instruction. So David is about to instruct.

Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. And then he looks back on his past.

Because when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night, your hand was heavy upon me. My strength, it was dried up as by the heat of the summer.

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

Therefore, on account of this, what he's just saying, therefore, let everyone... He's instructing us. ...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.

You are a hiding place for me. You preserve me from trouble. You surround me with shouts of deliverance.

Selah. Now, I wrongly missed two selahs. You skip it over.

Look at v. 4. I wrongly skipped that over because the idea is you think about what was just written. Read v. 1-4, think about it. V. 5, think about it.

V. 7, you surround me with shouts of deliverance. Selah. I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go.

There you have it. I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go. I will counsel you with my eye upon you.

And here, pretty clear counsel is, be not like a horse or a mule. Am I like a horse or a mule? We'll find out this morning. Which must be curved with bit and bridle, or that animal won't stay near you.

Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the Lord. Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart. So here, Psalm 32.

David in v. 51 was saying, blot out my transgressions. Here he's talking about the blessed one whose transgressions are forgiven. Psalm 51, he said, wash me thoroughly.

Here, he talks about a man in whom his iniquity is not counted to him. Psalm 51, he said, create in me a clean heart. Renew a right spirit.

Here, he mentions a man in whose spirit there is no deceit. In Psalm 51, he said, let the bones that you have broken rejoice. In Psalm 32, he says, my bones wasted away.

He's looking back. That's what was happening. His bones were wasting away.

And in Psalm 51, he said, I will teach transgressors your ways. And here in v. 8, he says, I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go. Some want to take v. 8 as switching and having God speak.

I don't see how I could read it that way. This is David. I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go.

I will counsel you with my eye upon you. Observing. And then he says, be not like a horse or a mule.

So if you've understood this text to mean God is speaking in v. 8, I don't take it that way. It doesn't seem to fit. It seems this forced thought here.

Is this true of the Lord that His eye is upon us? It is. And there are many things David spoke that are true of the Lord Jesus Christ towards us. So, I want to look at this morning.

Lessons that we can learn from David. If David, after committing adultery and murder, got to a point where he could teach and instruct, I want to know what he had to say. I want to know what he has to say so that I

don't end up like that.

Or if someone here has sin that you're keeping silent about, you would see these lessons and not remain in that spot. And in view of what all happened last Sunday, you can't help but think about passages like this. I can't help but think about you all and have some type of fear.

Is there someone else among us who's keeping silent about something? This is a miserable place to be. I don't want you to be there. And if David is going to instruct us, then we should take heed to this.

So we're going to look at lessons David learned on how God deals with transgressors, with His children. How the Lord deals. So lesson number one is this.

We find it in v. 9. Look at v. 9 again. Here He had just said, I will instruct you and teach you. I will counsel you.

And then He tells us something to not be like. 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. Now, how many people here grew up with horses? Anyone? We've got one hand.

And I didn't entirely know what that was to mean. So I looked it up. The bridle goes on the horse's head.

The reins are attached to that. And the bit is attached to the bridle. And where does the bit go? In the mouth.

And when you pull on the reins, it's applying pain and pressure to the horse to get them to go in a certain direction. And when they obey, the pain is lessened because they're obeying. So, just as the text says, or it will not stay near you.

So David is saying there's such a thing as a horse or a mule that's a person. And this person won't stay near you, the Lord, unless a bit or bridle is put in them and they are forced by that person's hand to come near Him. Forcefully controlling this person.

Proverbs 26, verse 3, a whip for the horse, a bridle for the donkey, and a rod for the back of fools. So the bit is like a rod. James 3, verse 3, if we put bits into the mouths of horses, if we put bits into the mouths of horses so that they obey us.

So how do you get the horse to obey? You put a bit in its mouth. We guide their whole bodies as well. So the bit is a way to lead someone to obey you, to guide them.

It's a form of discipline. It's a form of pain that is put upon the individual. So if you're one of this person's horses, He'll gather you and not let you stray into darkness.

Who do you think the horse or mule is that David's referring to here? Where do you think he got this illustration? Who was this horse? This mule? Say again? It was David. David was the mule. Verse 9, "...be not like a horse or a mule without understanding..." That was David.

"...which must be curbed with bit and bridle." What does it look like to be curbed with bit and bridle? Look at verse 3. Verse 4, "...for day and night your hand was heavy upon Me." God's hand heavy crushing David. They're the bit and the bridle is. The Lord is applying pressure to His child and not leaving him in a place where he's going to run off.

He's going to get that horse into the fold, into the barn. "...For day and night..." Day and night. I mean, all the time.

"...your hand was heavy upon Me. My strength was dried up by the heat of the summer." So, lesson one is this. The Lord, if you Christian, don't come to the Lord acknowledging and confessing your sin.

Instead, you opt to do verse 3, when I kept silent, you try to hide it. The Lord will treat you, He'll treat me like a mule or a horse and put a bit and a bridle and apply pain and His hand in love and crush us until we come and confess our sin and come clean to Him. Is that a loving Master who does that? Yeah.

It is. It's very loving. Now, let's just look at some of these phrases.

When David went through what he was going through and refused to obey the Lord, he's kicking against the Lord. So lesson two is this. We're going to see from some of these phrases here, don't refuse to acknowledge and confess your sin because it simply is not worth it.

It's not worth it. Charles Spurgeon rightly said, God's hand is very helpful when it uplifts, but it is awful when it presses down. Better a world on your shoulders than God's hand on your heart like David.

Someone said, he would not be humbled by the confession of his sin. Therefore, he was humbled by the weight of God's hand. Thus, in his attempt to spare himself, David was guilty of the worst cruelty to himself.

Look at these phrases. Verse 1, verse 3, When I kept silent, when I covered up my sin, when I in pride sought to defend my reputation, when I made justified, I made excuses, when I kept silent, my bones wasted away. What does he mean? My bones wasted away.

In Psalm 35, he says there, all my bones shall say. Do bones speak? No. So I think the idea, if David says all my bones shall say, he's speaking about who he is as a person.

His essence as a person. So when he says in verse 3, when I kept silent, my bones wasted away, he's simply saying my whole person, I was just wasting away. I was rotting there in the darkness.

Decaying with God's hand heavy upon me. Then he says next, this was happening, my bones wasted away through what? Through my groaning all day long. How many of you have groaned for hours? Here he says all day.

And here, this is David out of his silence looking back. He has the greater ability now to express what happened during those at least nine months than he did when he was in them. So he spent at least nine months silent, groaning all day long with God's hand heavy upon him.

The KJV, it renders this word roaring. Roaring. When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my roaring all day long.

I mean, you picture it. Here you're trying to hide this thing. You go lay down to bed.

There the lion is roaring at you, so to speak. You try to go on the walk. It's roaring at you.

And you're groaning. And this thing, you can't escape it. If you're his true child.

The lost person, they can defile their conscience. They can forget about things and they can go on their way. They say they've lost sensitivity.

The next thing. David says here, verse 4, for day and night... So when I kept silent, this happened for... Why? Because day and night, the Lord's hand was heavy upon me. Heavy.

Heavy. I was trying to explain this verse to my kids. And I brought Selah over and I just put my hand on her and pressed her down.

Not too hard. And you just kind of squirm. You feel like I've got to get out from under that.

But here David is. He's trying to go on. He's going this way.

And it's pressing down. He can't escape it. He could.

There's a way out. But he refused to take that way. It was too humbling.

He says in Psalm 38, O Lord, rebuke me not in Your anger, nor discipline me in Your wrath, for Your arrows have sunk into me. Your hand has come down on me. There's no soundness in my flesh because of Your indignation.

There's no health in my bones because of my sin. For my sins have gone over my head like a heavy burden. They are too heavy for me.

Too heavy. Too much. Brethren, these verses speak of the beauty of our Heavenly Father and His discipline for us to believe Her.

Thank God that when our conscience is not clear, there is a hand that can press heavy upon us, right? That is a blessing of all blessings. If that did not happen, that would be a curse. Flip to Hebrews 12.

Let's just read this. Keep your hand in Psalm 32. Hebrews 12, we read of this reality.

Verse 4, In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your own blood. Wow, we're in a struggle. And have you forgotten? So don't forget this.

Do not forget this exhortation. Because when you feel that heaviness upon you, you want to rightly identify it. If it's your Father in Heaven, you want to see it as it is.

Have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord. Do not be weary when you are reproved by Him, because the Lord disciplines the one whom He loves and He chastises every son whom He receives. It is for discipline that you have to endure.

God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? If you're left without discipline in which all have participated, then you are illegitimate children and you're not one of His sons. Do you hear that? If there's no heavy hand, if you can just waltz on in your sin, He's saying here you're not really a child of God.

This hand upon us, this bit and bridle of our father, is one of the many blessings of the Christian. And David looks back on that and he's instructing others, saying don't be like that mule. Don't get to the point where your father has to act in such a way.

Just obey him. Why put yourself through all of this trial, this suffering, this anguish? Having deceit in your spirit. The conscience not being clear.

Why go on like that? For the moment, all discipline is painful. It is. But it's far more painful to continue on without a sensible sense of the Lord.

So, the next thing he says is this, my strength was dried up. My strength was dried up as by the heat of the summer, Sila. My strength was dried up as by the heat of the summer.

Imagine, you're out hiking in the Arizona desert during the summer. Very hot. You have some water.

You're following instructions. You're going in the right direction. And then all of a sudden, you take a wrong turn.

And you find yourself trapped. You find the heat coming upon you. You find your strength dried up.

You guys heard about that on the news? There are people who've died because they got off the trail. What's the big thing the news will emphasize was their big mistake? These people who died. Yeah, they didn't have enough water, but I'm thinking of something different.

They did not communicate to anyone where they were going. David didn't communicate to anyone where he was going. He could have.

But he kept silent. And there he is, all his strength gone, laying there, the heat, zapping his strength just like that. One hiker said this, they were trapped.

They said, I sat and waited for what felt like ages, but nothing happened. I was still all alone. I crawled back to my shade and fitfully slept.

I was out of fire starters. I was out of options. I was spent.

When I awoke on Wednesday, I could not move at all. You see, the Lord, He might have to put a bit and bridle on you. And you keep kicking and going in the wrong direction.

And if you're His child, He puts that hand heavy upon you. He dries up your strength by the heat of the summer. He doesn't let you sleep.

He doesn't let you go on until you stop keeping silent and get in the light. You have to think, what's the greater grief? Exposure and me being humbled or continuing on in darkness? And even if you think, well, maybe I'll get out of this life without ever being exposed. Friends, there's a judgment day coming.

It's all going to be exposed then. And everyone in the universe will know. As Moses said, Numbers 32.

But if you will not do so, behold, you have sinned against the Lord. And be sure, your sin will find you out. The Lord will not let the true Christian not acknowledge their sin.

I really believe the Bible teaches that. Because Hebrews 12 says it. If you don't get disciplined, you're what? An illegitimate child.

He says you're lost. The true Christian gets the heavy hand. They're the one who's not content to go on with the Spirit where there's deceit in it.

So David, what was the final bit in bridal pull? I mean, the hand is heavy. You're going these nine months like that. Your strength is dried up.

And you know what the final pull on the reins was? In that final bit just pulling him who was without understanding? It was Nathan the prophet. When God sent Nathan in there and rebuked him and said, thou art the man, man, you just sit back and you realize I can't hide now. It's all exposed.

And that was a mercy of God. Because here we read verse 11, Be glad, and the Lord rejoice, O righteous, shout for joy. And is that an exclamation mark at the end of verse 11? It is.

All you upright in heart. I mean, here David goes from this darkness to being upright in heart. He goes from having a spirit in whose spirit is deceit to having a clear conscience.

That is a blessing. Okay, here a third lesson as we get from what David is saying. Our God is not a God.

And hear me correctly here. Our God is not a God who covers up sin. Is our God a God who will cover your sin through Christ? Yeah, you better believe it.

Where's the most obvious place we know this in our Bibles that our God is not a God who just covers up sin? The fact that all of this is recorded about David. This is all here in our Bible. David's sin till this day is before us.

R.A. Torrey, he said, this is proof of the divine origin of the Bible. David was the great hero of his times. Unless his Bible biographers had been guided by the Holy Spirit, they certainly would have concealed or at least sought to make less severe this awful fault of David.

But in point of fact, they did nothing of the kind. The Holy Spirit who guided them in their record led them to picture this event in all of its hideousness just as it is. Here is a radical difference between Bible biographers and all other biographers.

Even the heroes of the Bible, when they fall, are not whitewashed. No excuses are offered for their sins. Their sins are not concealed from the public eye.

They are recorded with fullness of detail and the sinner is held up as a warning to others. It talks about elders who sin. Rebuke them in the presence of all.

Our God is a God. He deals with many things very publicly and exposed. John 3, for everyone who does wicked things hates the light.

They don't come to the light. Why? Unless their works are exposed. Men hate exposure.

Men hate transparency. Men hate honesty. That's why the website, I'll Be Honest, will you really be honest? Will you really be transparent? I grew up, too many people were not honest.

They'd come back to you later and say, well, that wasn't really the truth, but I'll be honest with you now. This is really the truth. Well, how do you know if that's really the truth? Lesson 4, we learn here from David that he didn't go on joyfully while covering up his sin.

There's no place where we can find that David had joy while he was covering up his sin. So get this, if you're covering up sin, don't expect in a couple of months you're finally going to have that joy again. It ain't

going to happen.

You need to stop keeping silent. David looked back on this time. This is how he felt.

Verse 3, groaning all day. Verse 4, day and night. I mean, it wasn't just during the night time.

Day and night, your hand was heavy upon me. As one said, David, he strove to smother the sins of his guilt, which was meanwhile like a smoldering fire within him. Afraid to confess his sin to himself.

Afraid to confess it to God. He could not still escape the goading and pricking of his conscience and hence his misery. And that person's right.

Like verse 5, I acknowledge my sin to you. There was a season where David wasn't even acknowledging his sin for what it really was. Kind of like Jeff hit on in the first hour.

You've got people, they won't even say it for what it is. They downplay it. They call it something different other than the sin that it is.

It's innocent, they say. And it's not innocent. What's the fifth lesson we learn from all of this? It's rather obvious.

If you want to avoid verse 3, verse 4, if you want to avoid those verses, if you don't want to be like a mule or a horse who you're without understanding and the Lord has to put a bit and bridle in your mouth and force you in a certain direction, what should you not do? Don't sin. And you say, well, where does the Bible speak like that? Jesus said, go and sin no more. 1 John says, if anyone does sin, don't sin.

And when you do sin, what should you do? Don't keep silent. Clear the conscience. I was thinking of an example of this in Matt Tomlinson's biography on Leonard Ravenhill.

He records on page 282 about George Verwer. George says this, I was at Leonard Ravenhill's house for his birthday party. And Keith Green came over.

We were going to spend an hour in prayer. During that time of prayer, the Lord dealt with me to make something right. What's he going to confess? I had been with Keith the day before.

And when one of his music albums was mentioned, I said in passing, yeah, it's great. Well, I had listened to some of Keith's music, but I had not listened to that album. So in comes Keith to the prayer time.

And I was so convicted that I had not been honest about that little detail that I pulled Keith aside and I said, Keith, I need to repent for what I said to you yesterday. I broke down in tears of repentance because I could not be dishonest even in a subtle little thing when I was with those men. If you let little things like that go by, again, like David, he didn't go to war when he should have been.

There was sin leading up to the greater sin. Someone might say to that example, that guy was being too sensitive. Really? I hope no one would think that.

What about Ananias and Sapphira? Wasn't that a little lie? We sold our land and we got this much money. We don't need to tell them, but we're going to appear like we're giving all the money, but we're going to keep back some for ourselves. I mean, no one's going to know.

They weren't at the closing on the property. What happened to Ananias and Sapphira? God killed them. It says you lied to the Holy Spirit.

These things are not little. We need to take sin serious. We need to always take pain to have a clear conscience before God and man.

I realize you can have too sensitive of a conscience. I realize there are certain things that don't need to be mentioned. I realize that love covers a multitude of sins.

I realize all of those things. But you know what my concern is? Is sometimes people are giving those reasons as excuses why to keep silent about something that should not be kept silent about. They're justifying it when they should not be.

You think about David's sin. One reason not to commit it. 2 Samuel 12, it says, because of this deed, you've given occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.

And the child that's born to you will die. So the enemies have an occasion to blaspheme. Look at those hypocrites.

And the child dies. And even it's told that eventually someone, being his own son Absalom, will lay with all of your wives on the roof. And that happened.

Sin is not worth it. Sin has consequences. It has consequences now.

It has eternal consequences for all of eternity. Verse 10, many are the sorrows of the wicked. There's a lot of sorrow.

Sin is full of sorrow. Yet, like Jeff pointed out in the first hour, thank God we have a man of sorrows who bore our sorrows, the Lord Jesus on the cross. Lesson number six, we learn from David that for those who don't cover their sin, our God is a God who covers and forgives our sin.

Now this is a very good lesson to learn. Because there are some, they're in the midst. They're hiding something.

And Satan is accusing them. There's no forgiveness. You've got an example here of David exposing himself and he found forgiveness with the Lord.

Verse 1 and 2, blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Okay, here the question is, think about this. His sin is covered by the blood of Christ.

Looking forward to that, we find in Romans 3 that God is just and the Justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus Christ. And that He did do justice by slaughtering His Son in the future. In that hour, and people like David, God was just to forgive them in the past for their sins because a substitute was coming.

But look what he says in verse 5. I acknowledge my sin to you. I did not cover my iniquity. Okay, what if David never, ever uncovered his sin, he defiled his conscience, and he went on living in darkness? Would he be forgiven? Well, the real question is, if he did that, would he have really been a true child of God? A God whom disciplines people and puts a bit and bridle on their mouth.

So must you uncover your sin to have it covered? The uncovering of your sin is not some work to get sins covered. But if you don't acknowledge your sin, like David here, I acknowledge my sin. If you don't acknowledge it, how can you even be going to Christ to confess your sins and find Him faithful and just to forgive you of your sin? So someone made a quote.

Calvary will not cover what is not uncovered. Well, is that true? Is it not? No, there are sins that we've committed as believers that we don't even remember and those are covered by the blood of Christ. But if you've got someone bearing the name of Christian, and they're keeping silent, covering all of their sin, refusing to get it in the light, refusing to acknowledge it, it's not that they lost salvation and they're no longer forgiven.

My concern in David's would be to look at them and say, are you really saved? Are you really a Christian? Have your sins really been forgiven? If David never acknowledged his sin, if he continued to cover it and he never confessed it, it says I confessed and you forgave. Look, even this situation recently, the one individual who admitted their loss, they said they never would have come forward. They never would have uncovered it.

An unwillingness to uncover your sin, that gives a very scary reason to say are your sins really covered if you won't acknowledge it? If you continue to cover your sin. Again, those who endure to the end will be saved, Jesus says. We're going to find in the Christian life there's a lot of individuals who end up being illegitimate children of God.

They don't acknowledge their sin. They cover it up. They harden their heart.

They defile their conscience. They continue on in that path. And there's no discipline from a heavenly Father.

There's no bit in a bridle. And God just lets them go. They went out from us because they were not of us.

If they had been of us, they would have continued with us. But they went out to make it obvious that they were not of us. So, Proverbs 28, verse 13, whoever conceals his transgression will not prosper.

But he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy. You see, true repentance is not just confessing sin. He says there, confesses and forsakes.

If I'm sinning and just confessing, confessing, and there's no forsaking, and I just want to love that sin, the true Christian, they can't continue on like that. They're a new person. They're a new creation in Christ.

They've been born again by the power of God. This all should not be strange to us because what does Jesus say in the Sermon on the Mount? He says if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. What? If I don't forgive, then I lose salvation? No.

An unwillingness to forgive gives evidence the heart's not been changed. So same thing here. An unwillingness to uncover.

An unwillingness to acknowledge sin. How is this person really the Lord's? If they're adamant about hiding, concealing, and no bit or bridle is forcing them to come to the light. Now let's look here at what the Lord does because it's marvelous.

Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven. Let's think of these words. Transgression, sin, and iniquity.

Those are three words to describe our sin. And then, our salvation, there's three terms here. Forgiven, covered, and the Lord does not count.

Let's think of these real fast. Transgression. God has law.

You defy His law. You ignore the sign. You trespass.

You transgress what His standard. David did that. Even just the standard of the kings going to war that season, he transgressed that.

And then looking at a woman, Job said, I will not look upon a virgin in lust. He did that. Then adultery.

David transgressed God's standard and committed adultery. David sinned. What is sin? Missing the mark.

The mark of perfection. Our Lord has a rule of law. He has a code.

He has a standard. Our God is perfect, holy, holy, holy. I know I've mentioned this recently and I want to say it again.

Only perfect people do go to heaven. And the only way to be a perfect person legally before God's courtroom is to have a perfect representative who lived perfectly under God's law standing there in your place as your substitute. And the only one who's ever done that is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Because God is holy. You better have perfection and there's only one way through Christ in your place. That's the only hope.

Too many people today, well, no one's perfect. God is perfect and He demands perfection and Christ is the only way that we can have access to that perfection. We can't pay it by our deeds.

As that song said, my debt too great for deeds to pay. So David also, it says here, had done iniquity. It says that in v. 2. The Lord counts no iniquity.

Then you look at v. 5. You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Well, wait, if iniquity just means sin, then David's saying in v. 5, you forgave the sin of my sin. Well, iniquity can be rendered perverse.

Something perverse. David, what he did, was it perverse? Was it perverse sin? You better believe it. As it was already mentioned.

Uriah was one of David's mighty men. And this is one of your mighty men. This isn't some person David didn't know.

To take that man's wife and then to turn around and have that man killed? That hurts. That's perverse that he would do that. Take the wife as one of his mighty men.

So David was a transgressor of God's law who missed the mark of the standard and he missed it in a very perverse and distorted way. And though all of that's true of David, we read in this psalm that he acknowledged his sin and that sin was not too great for Christ to forgive him of all of that sin. I did not cover it.

I confessed it and the Lord forgave the perversity of my sin. Let's think of these responses of God. God forgave, covered, and did not count.

So David was forgiven. He had a massive debt that he could not pay. And this was paid in full by Christ.

Christ said on the cross, it is finished. I mean, if you had a debt of \$10 trillion and someone came and paid that off, you'd be blown away. Our sin, no money could pay it off.

We could have all the worlds in the universe and that wouldn't be enough to pay for our sin. As Jeff mentioned in the first hour, it takes the blood of the perfect Son of God, Him shedding His blood and dying and being resurrected. Christ died for our sins.

And God forgives of the debt. David here, he says his sin was covered. Covered.

Our bill has been paid. Blood has been shed. Life has been given.

And David says here the sin was not counted. It means it was not imputed to our accounts legally. God, instead of counting our sin to our record that we deserve, He takes the perfect record of Christ and He gives that record of Christ to us.

And who gets our bad record? Who got David's murder and adultery and his cover-up on their record? Jesus Christ. Went to that cross. And those were some of the multitude of transgressions that were on His record though He had never committed them.

And the penalty for those things is death. And that's what Christ got. He got death.

We get life. And not just life, we get His perfect record of righteousness so we can stand before the Father. And He looks at us and sees the perfect grade of His Son.

A 100 on the test. And we get that grade and we go to heaven because of that perfection. And if you don't have that grade of 100, if you don't have Christ's righteousness, God will condemn you.

Think about the beauty of justification. Bob Jennings said this, he said, it's the highest judicial official in the universe. They're making the decision.

In human courts, some judges' rulings are overturned by a higher judge. Not here. If you're David and you get forgiven of murder and adultery, you might be kind of living thinking I hope no judge comes along and overturns that ruling.

And someone says, wow, that was a bad mistake by that judge. Let's overturn that. It won't happen.

Even the highest of the highest has made that ruling. Secondly, God is righteous and therefore makes no mistakes. In human courts, there are mistrials.

Not with God. There's no mistrial for David. That's glorious.

Thirdly, this is more than a mere pardon. The guilty is not only forgiven as wrong, but he's declared right in the eyes of the law. That's what a truly blessed person is.

People will say, you know, you're so blessed. You've got nice kids in a house. What's that? What's that? Compared to having your sins forgiven.

There's a lot of people with nice houses, nice cars, nice kids, who are headed to eternal damnation and hell. The great blessing that you want is this blessing here in verse 1. To be able to say, blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven. Blessed am I because my sin is covered.

Blessed am I because the Lord does not count sin to me. And then, blessed I am because in my spirit there is no deceit. My conscience is clear.

I know of nothing against myself in the present, as Paul said in 1 Corinthians 4. So think of this. These blessings here should give you, if you're a mule or a horse this morning, and your Master has put a bit or a bridle in your mouth, if that's happening to you right now experientially, and you feel the Lord yanking on the reins, and you feel the pain, and you feel the hand heavy upon you, if that's you today, guess what? Stop kicking. Just go right in to Him.

He will forgive. He will pardon. This is an incredible reason.

And you could say, well, but people will know about things. Who cares if God declares you righteous? Even if people know about things that cause you shame, on the great day of judgment, you won't be put to shame. You'll stand righteous before God in Christ.

That's all that matters. We need an eternal perspective. When we have an eternal perspective, we have a right perspective of God's forgiveness and of our sin, you get to the point as a Christian where you get in the light.

You can't go on. You can't go on getting crushed by the Lord. And as I mentioned, another lesson in this that's so encouraging, David says, in whose spirit there's no deceit.

A Christian can say... You can say, Christian, in my spirit, there's no deceit. Like I said, Paul said in 1 Corinthians 4, he knew nothing against himself. Hebrews 13, they said, pray for us, for we are sure that our consciences are clear, desiring to act honorably in all things.

Those are not arrogant, proud statements. They could be. They could be made by someone in a very arrogant way.

But it's your idea of Christianity that you could actually say, there's no deceit in my spirit. My conscience is clear. You should be encouraged.

That can be a reality experientially as you walk with Christ. So David here, he doesn't just have sins forgiven. He's got his walk back.

He's got his joy restored. Think of it, brethren. You can go from a dark season like David did in Psalm 32, 3-4, and guess what? That dark season will end.

If you don't keep silent, if you go to the Lord, you'll be like David here talking about how blessed is the person whose sin is forgiven. And you'll be like David in v. 11. Be glad in the Lord.

Rejoice, O righteous. Shout for joy, all you upright in heart. That can happen.

What an encouragement. Here a man is who did the wicked, perverse things he did, and yet here he is saying such things there. That's an encouragement.

Satan wants to tell you there's no hope. Things will always be miserable. It's just not the case.

Another lesson we learn from David is this. We learn from David that we need to act now and not later. Where do I get that? Look at v. 6. Therefore, we just said, I acknowledge my sin.

I did not cover it. Therefore, on account of this, let everyone who is godly, or you could word it, seeking to be godly, wanting to follow the Lord, let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you. Get in the light.

Stop keeping silent. At a time when you may be found. There's a time he can be found.

That implies there's a time where he won't be. Surely, in the rush of great waters, could be referring to judgment. Calamities.

They shall not reach Him. Now, these verses, you read it. What is he saying? They shall not reach Him.

Who is the Him? Obviously, the person who offered prayer to the Lord when He may be found, now the waters don't reach Him. He's safe. You could take it like that.

Or you could say, therefore, let everyone who is godly offer prayer to a time when He may be found. Surely, in the rush of great waters, they, the people who do not get in the light, shall not reach Him. You could take it like that.

Who is the they? Who is the Him? There's all sorts of different views right here. But I'll tell you this, what is clear is verse 6, offer prayer to You at a time when You may be found. You want to go to God now.

Not a year down the road. Not a week down the road. You want to act now.

And confess, acknowledge your sin to the Lord. If you're not a Christian, why go on with the guilt and condemnation? Why not find life in Christ? You can think about it like this. You're sitting on the roof and the great waters are coming up.

And here you are. This is your chance to call for help. Because those waters are going to come up eventually and you're going to drown.

This is the open door to ask for help. Seek the Lord while He may be found. Meaning, there's a time He won't be found.

There's places in the Bible it speaks that way. Men go on with a defiled conscience, with all manner of covered sin in darkness, and their hearts harden all the more. So we should be thankful, brethren, of how God deals with us.

I know as a Christian, I have felt, I've looked at Psalms 32. And boy, verse 3 and 4, it's just like, hey, that describes how I feel. I'm sure some of you have had that same experience.

Maybe all of you. It's just not worth it. Why put our Lord in a place where He needs to use a bit and a bridle? We should not be like a mule without understanding.

We should rather understand that our God is merciful, long-suffering, compassionate, and we should come to Him and find rest in Christ. So ask yourself this morning, are you a blessed one? Can you say these things are true? The Lord doesn't count my sin against me that Christ has borne it? Can you say it's true I'm not keeping silent? I'm transparent? Or could you say, many are the sorrows of my life? Because

v. 10 says many are the sorrows of the wicked. But steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the Lord.

Brethren, if you're saved, don't keep in the darkness. Charles Spurgeon, he said the lesson from the whole of Psalm 32 is this, be honest. Be honest.

Sinner, may God make you honest. That's what God did to him. David.

Spurgeon goes on. Do not deceive yourself. Make a clean breast of it before God.

Get it out before Him. Have an honest religion. Or have none at all.

Have a religion of the heart, or else have none. Put aside the mere vestment and garment of piety and let your soul be right within. Be honest.

And as you're honest with God, you have His honest truth and His Word. If you acknowledge your sin and you don't cover it up and you confess your sin to Him, He will forgive you. So any lie from the enemy, there's no forgiveness.

Don't believe it. And any lie from the enemy, well, Christian life is just chalked up to fears and sorrows and the spiritual realm and no joy, don't believe that either. You should be able to say what David is saying here.

You should be able to be glad and rejoice and shout for joy in the Lord. All you upright in heart. Are you upright in heart? Is your conscience clear? Is it clear? Or is there something accusing you that is accusing you from the Scriptures because it's true? And it's not Satan trying to take advantage of a hypersensitive conscience.

Just like George Verwer. Just being dishonest about not hearing an album to someone is a lie. There's no white lie.

They're all black as the dark sky and put people in hell. So these are some lessons. I'm sure there's more.

Lesson 1, the Lord will treat you like a mule or a horse and put a bitten bridle in your mouth, believer, if you will not take heed to Him. And that is one of the most loving things about our God, that He disciplines us. Praise God for that.

Let's pray. Father, so much could be said on this topic and that passage and so much more. Lord, I pray You'd help those here today.

Lord, those who have Your heavy hand, Lord, that they would take heed to these things. Lord, those who have gotten out of Your heavy hand, that they'd be encouraged that there is joy at the end of the tunnel and things don't stay dark and heavy, but You're so merciful. Father, thank You for sending Your Son.

Lord, I pray that every person here one day when they die, that they would have the perfect righteousness, the perfect keeping of Your standard by Your Son, that they would have that record on their account. Lord, that they would not be ashamed on that day of judgment that they've heard truth and rejected it. But Lord, that they would find a great covering in Your Son who is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.

Lord, please, would You be merciful and save those who don't know You. Lord, open their eyes. And Lord, help us as a church.

Lord, encourage us. Lord, You put us through trials that we have lessons to learn. You put us through furnaces to make us more like Jesus Christ.

And we do thank You for Your goodness towards us. In Jesus' name, Amen.

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