

(How to Understand the KJV Bible) 17 Psalm 32

by Keith Simons

The sermon explores the importance of right relationship with God, the nature of sin and forgiveness, and the process of repentance and forgiveness, highlighting the benefits of trusting in God's mercy and forgiveness.

Duration: 23:07

Scripture: Psalm 32:1

Topics: "KJV Bible", "Forgiveness", "Repentance"

Description

Keith Simons teaches on Psalm 32, emphasizing that a true relationship with God is not about mere belief or actions, but about repentance and seeking forgiveness for our sins. He reflects on David's experience after his sin with Bathsheba, illustrating how true happiness comes from being forgiven by God. Simons explains that the blessed person is not one who has never sinned, but one who acknowledges their wrongdoings and turns to God for mercy. He encourages listeners to confess their sins openly to God, assuring them of His forgiveness and guidance. The sermon concludes with a call to rejoice in the mercy and kindness of God, who protects and delivers those who trust in Him.

Transcript

Welcome, my name is Keith Symons. I'm a Bible teacher from England and you're listening to our talks on how to understand the King James Version of the Bible. Today we'll be looking at Psalm 32 and as usual we'll be looking through it verse by verse and word by word, not preaching too many sermons, but understanding the words and their meaning and by that means learning a little more about the Bible and about the King James Version.

I think if you were to ask most people how you join a religion, they would say to you, well, you first need to know what the religion believes and agree to that and then you've got to find out what the religion does and follow that. But as we're about to find out from today's Psalm, the religion of the Bible, a right relationship with God, isn't really about discovering what you're supposed to believe and it isn't really about doing the things that the religion commands you to do. Yes, we do obey God and yes, we learn the things that he teaches us we should believe, but how do we become a true Bible Christian? The answer is by turning to God, by repenting of our sins and by having the wrong things that we've done forgiven by God.

So Psalm 32 and the heading of the psalm is A Psalm of David, Mass skill. So this psalm is written by David, the facts in it match very closely to the time when he sinned with Bathsheba. He had an affair with a

woman who was not his wife and she became pregnant as a result of it and then David tried to cover up for what he'd done.

He brought her husband home from the war in the hope that the husband would sleep with her and believe the child to be his, the husband's child and then when that plan failed he arranged for the husband to be killed in the war and David tried to cover up for his wrongdoing. He tried to cover up for a time of about a year and then he turned back to God and this psalm seems very much like the story of what happened to him then. There's one more word in the heading which is a Hebrew word, it says mass skill and a mass skill means a teaching poem.

So as we go through this psalm we're expecting to learn lessons from it. So verse one begins with the word blessed. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

The word blessed is the same Hebrew word that begins the book of Psalms in Psalm 1 verse 1 and it describes a person who is truly happy, the person who genuinely has right relationship with God and it's rather curious that it appears here because the person announced blessed is not the person who's never done anything wrong, it's not the person who lives a perfect life, no the person who is announced blessed, truly happy, with the right relationship with God is a person who is guilty of sins, a person who's done wrong things and how does this person with wrong things get a right relationship with God? Well they've got to be forgiven. It's not in their own power to sort out their lives like the religions we spoke about earlier or like they claim, no, a right relationship with the real God, with the true and living God, with the only God comes about when our transgressions, our wrongdoings, our sins are forgiven. That word blessed appears at the beginning of verse 2 so let me read to you verse 1 and the beginning of verse 2 together and we'll consider them together.

Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity. So in this section we've got three words with a very similar meaning, transgression, sin and iniquity.

They all mean the wrong things that we do against God and against his law. They all mean our evil acts but when I first looked at this psalm I thought I'm going to have to explain the difference between transgression and sin and iniquity but you see there isn't much of a difference between them except that these are different ways to do wrong things. These are different ways to do the things that offend God.

Yes there are many different ways to offend God and only one way to live as pleases God. That is the right way but there are many wrong ways that people follow and so there are different words for these wrong ways but they all mean about the same thing. Yes we might sin by means of a deliberate act or we might sin by means of our own weakness that we just fall for something that maybe we get tempted to do or maybe we don't do anything wrong.

What's wrong is what we failed to do. We failed to do the good and proper thing that God has told us that we should do and all these things whatever we call them whether we call them transgression or sin or iniquity they're wrong against God but we need God to forgive us and to cover that sin and not to impute that iniquity to us. Again three words for forgiveness.

Well you could find slight differences in the meaning but they all amount to the same thing because the person who is forgiven has their sin covered and the Lord doesn't impute iniquity to them. Impute means counting them. He's not taking a reckoning of that crime of which they're guilty because they are forgiven.

They get a right relationship with God and we see with all these things it's God who does them. We can't achieve it by our own effort but there is something that the Psalm says we must do. The end of verse two, and in whose spirit there is no guile, no deceit.

This person is not hiding away his sins from God. He's not trying to cover up for the wrong things that he's done. He's turning to God.

He's being open about these wrong things. He's confessing them to God. Well we see on that list one of the descriptions of how God forgives sin is that he covers sin.

But what do we do when we do wrong things? Well often we try to keep them secret. That's what David did in his affair with Bathsheba. And David now writes in this Psalm, verse three, when I kept silence my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.

He kept silence and he roared those are opposites. How can you keep silence and roar, cry out aloud at the same time? But David says that's what was happening in his life. He wouldn't confess his sins to God so he kept silent.

But deep within him, like his bones were crying out, his conscience was saying to him that he was guilty, that he'd sinned, that he must turn back to God. And for as long as he kept silent he was resisting it. It seemed to him that it was tearing him apart, that he was waxing old, becoming old, becoming old before the proper time.

Well he wouldn't confess his sin to God. Verse four, for day and night thy hand was heavy upon me, my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah.

So day and night he never got any rest because of these guilty feelings that there were. And it was not just his own feelings, God was acting. Thy hand was heavy upon me.

He knew that God's judgment was against the guilty things which he'd done and he felt as if there was a burning fire or there was a heat of the hottest sun in summer drying him up, taking his life from him. The word selah at the end of the verse just means pause and think about it. So verse five, what did David do? I acknowledged my sin unto thee and my iniquity have I not hid.

I said I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. David didn't confess his sin to a priest or to another person or to his servants and his workers and his officials. No, he acknowledged his sin to God.

He went straight to God. It was against God that he defended by all these evil deeds and he stopped covering over his own sin. He wanted God to cover it for him.

So he didn't hide his iniquity, his wrong acts. He confessed them to God and God forgave him. God is the God who in kindness reaches out to us and forgives us.

And we know now what David didn't know and couldn't express at this time how God forgives us when we confess our guilty acts to him. Because the New Testament teaches us how Jesus died on the cross to take the punishment for our sins. So that instead of our sin being imputed to us in the words of verse two, instead of our sin being counted as ours, we get Christ's righteousness, the righteousness of the perfect Son of God to replace the sin, the wrong things that we've done and which God is not now imputing

against us.

David pauses with another psalm. Verse six. For this shall everyone that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found.

You want to be godly? You want to be a right person, to be a person with the right relationship with God? Then pray to him and don't put it off like David did. Don't delay it. Now is the time when God has given you life.

Now is the time when God is giving you the opportunity to repent, in other words, to turn back to him. So confess your sins to him, pray to him and God will reach out to you and just as he's done for me, David says, God will do it for you. Because in the floods, surely in the floods of great waters, they shall not come nigh unto him.

When there's great troubles, like a flood, then they're not going to overwhelm the person who has turned to God. God will protect that person because they have a right relationship with him. Verse seven.

Thou art my hiding place. How does God protect his people from troubles? The answer is, they hide in him. They find their place of safety with him.

He is protecting them. He is looking after them. Thou shalt preserve me from trouble, David adds.

Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah. Songs of deliverance.

Is this my songs of the deliverance that God has given to me? Yes, we should rejoice. We should rejoice gladly and as with song, that God has forgiven us, that he's freed us from sin. But are the songs, God's songs, that God is rejoicing and surrounding us with songs of joy because we have turned back to him and he has set us free from our sins, our wrongdoings.

It's a thing of great joy to turn back to God. Jesus spoke of the joy of a shepherd who finds his sheep that's been lost. That is the joy God feels over us when we turn back to him.

And that's also the joy that we feel when we turn truly to God. We may not feel joy immediately. We might feel unsure of ourselves.

We might feel worried about it. But be assured that joy will come because the person whose transgression is forgiven, verse one, is blessed, is truly happy. And so although the emotion may not come in, and it may not come in for a long time, the true joy will be that person's.

Verse eight has a bit of a mystery for us because verses eight and nine were something that Bible commentaries disagree about. Let me read you the verses. I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go.

I will guide thee with mine eye. Be ye not as a horse or as a mule which have no understanding, whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee. Okay, who's speaking now? Well, this is something which has been disagreed about since the days of the great reformers Calvin and Luther.

Many people with, I think, Luther held that this is God's promise. Yes, that when we turn to God, when we repent of our sins, when God forgives us, God looks after us. He instructs us and he teaches us and he guides us as with his eye.

He looks in a direction to show us which way we should go. So we shouldn't be like a horse or like a mule and a strong animal that's like a horse which don't understand. And you've got to hold them.

You've got to put a bit in their mouth and a bridle over their head so that you guide them and direct them in the way that they should go. And so you shouldn't be like the animals. You should willingly choose to obey God who wants to instruct you and teach you.

That was Luther's view of this passage. But Calvin took another view and it may be equally valid that these are the words of David. David is saying, look, this is a teaching psalm.

I've taught you that you're to confess your sins to God. And so I'm instructing you and teaching you that this is the right thing to do. I'm guiding you.

Don't neglect it. Don't refuse to obey these instructions like an animal which just doesn't understand and which has to be controlled. No, be willing to confess your sins to God.

Be willing to turn back to God. So are these the words of David or are these the words of God? Well, I think both might be true. David speaks as God's prophet.

He's advising the people, you should turn from your sins. You should turn back to God just as I've done. And as he speaks, he's speaking also the word of God who is saying to the people, listen, just as David is advising you, so I, God, am advising you.

I'll look after you. I will direct you if you turn back to me. Verse 10.

Many sorrows shall be to the wicked, but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about. Mercy, God's great kindness is for the person who trusts in God. And yes, they must suffer the same troubles in life, maybe, as evil people do.

The person who trusts in God is not defended from all the dangers and troubles of this life. God does sometimes protect them, but sometimes not. Sometimes they go through their troubles, yet they never, the thing that separates the wicked from God's people is that God's people always receive God's mercy.

God's great kindness is always for his people. The person who's turned from their sins benefits from that mercy, that great kindness. But the person who continues in their wicked deeds, the person who refuses to repent and turn back to God, is bringing sorrows and troubles into both this life and after this life when God's judgment is against them.

Verse 11. David began this psalm by announcing how blessed, how truly happy the person was who has a right relationship with God. And now he speaks to that person, a righteous person, a person with a right relationship with God, and he tells them, God's forgiven you, so be glad in the Lord and rejoice, ye righteous, and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart.

Shout for joy, be glad. What God has done for you is a wonderful thing. Don't keep silence about your sins, but don't keep silent about the fact that God has forgiven you.

Be grateful and be joyful in him. So if you'd like to write to me, my email address is 333kiv at gmail.com. I won't be adding you to a mailing list, but it would be fascinating to hear what part of the world you're from and I'd really appreciate if you'd let me know that you've listened to this talk on Psalm 32. That email address again is 333kiv at gmail.com. Now here's the whole psalm.

A psalm of David, Maskil. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile.

When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me. My moisture is turned into the drought of summer.

Selah. I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord, and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin.

Selah. For this shall everyone that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found. Surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him.

Thou art my hiding place. Thou shalt preserve me from trouble. Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance.

Selah. I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go. I will guide thee with mine eye.

Be ye not as a horse, or as a mule which have no understanding, whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee. Many sorrows shall be to the wicked, but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about. Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice ye righteous, and shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart.

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