

A Blessing to the Sinner

Wednesday, Lent 1

February 21, 2018

Psalm 32

¹ Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered.

² Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity,
and in whose spirit there is no deceit.

³ For when I kept silent, my bones 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.

⁵ I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity;
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD," and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.

⁶ Therefore let everyone 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.

⁷ You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble;
you surround me with shouts of deliverance.

⁸ I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go;
I will counsel you with my eye upon you.

⁹ 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.
¹⁰ Many are the sorrows of the wicked,

but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the LORD.

¹¹ Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, O righteous,

and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!

IN THE NAME OF JESUS.

If we were to try to figure out who is blessed and who is cursed, we would come up with something that made sense, something lie

Cursed is the man who sins,

Blessed is the man who does not sin.

That would make sense to any reasonable person.

Psalm 32 speaks of blessing and curse, but it does not say, *Blessed is the man who does not sin*. Rather, it says, *blessed is he who transgressions are forgiven*.

We know that the writer of the Psalm is a sinner. That's David. And those given to sing the Psalm are sinners, that's the Israelites and it's you and me and all to whom the Lord calls to his Word.

As you stand before the Lord, what is at question is not whether or not you are a sinner. That's presupposed. But, since you are a sinner, what are you going to do with your sin?

If your sin is forgiven, you are blessed. If your sin is retained, you are cursed.

If your sin is cut off from you so that are released from its guilt, you are blessed. But if your sin is something you hold on to, thinking you can deal with it yourself, you are cursed.

So Psalm 32 liberates us. As it stands us before God, it teaches us that we don't need to deny our sin, our minimize it, or act like we can deal with it, but it teaches us that our sin may be confessed before God fully and freely, without fear.

That's liberation for the sinner.

Hidden sin, minimized sin—this is slavery to our sin. For we never quite get rid of it, and are always trying to keep it under wraps. Psalm 32:3:

³ **For when I kept silent, my bones 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.**

So Psalm 32 speaks of not being stubborn, but confessing your sin. Verse 9:

⁹ **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.**

The Gospel is this you are not cursed because you are a sinner. God would have no sinner cursed. Rather, the one cursed is cursed only because he stubbornly holds onto his sins, refusing the gift of forgiveness. Psalm 32:1:

**Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven,
whose sin is covered.**

² **Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity.**

The question is not whether or not you are a sinner. That question will always get a bad answer.

The question is whether or not your sin is counted against you. Or was it counted against Christ? If Christ took it, it his. That's his gift to you. The sin was imputed to him, he took it to the cross. It is no longer yours. That's the life of faith.

You are righteous by the word of Jesus. His word creates what it says. By his Word, he created fish and bread for the hungry, by his word he creates you as one accounted righteous before his Father.

But it all depends on his Word. His word releases our sin, it imputes to us his righteousness, it liberates us from guilt, it blesses us.

Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven,

whose sin is covered.

² Blessed is the man against whom the LORD counts no iniquity.

IN THE NAME OF JESUS.