

## Can I Be Forgiven? Psalm 32

**Introduction:** 1) It will take you further than you want to go.

It will keep you longer than you want to stay.

It will cost you more than you want to pay.

It will require of you more than you want to give.

I am talking about sin, an absentee word in our modern culture.

2) The Bible speaks of it, and it does so regularly. It is the major obstacle that separates humans from God. Some form of the word sin occurs more than 470 times in the Bible.

3) Psalm 32 is one of 7 penitential psalms in the Psalter (6; 32; 38; 51; 102; 130; 143). It is a psalm of grief, repentance and sorrow over sin. It is also the first of 13 psalms to have the title “maschil.” Though uncertain, the word may mean a “meditation” or a “contemplation.” It is probably correct to interpret this psalm in connection with Psalm 51, both written in the context of David’s murder of Uriah and his adultery with Bathsheba.

### **I. The Cleansing of Sin is a Blessing.**      **32:1-2**

Like Psalm 1 and the Beatitudes delivered by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount (Matt 5:3-12), Psalm 32 begins with “blessed,” a word of joy and celebration.

#### **1) God will cover our sin.**      **32:1**

David utilizes 3 synonyms for sin and a threefold expression of deliverance from sin in vs. 1-2. Transgressions (*peshah*) speaks of rebellion and disloyalty, a departure of defiance. Sin (*hattah*) means to miss the mark. It is an archery term. David says it is a blessed man whose transgression is forgiven (lit. “carried away”, “lifted off”) and whose sin is covered. The word covered is atonement language. In mercy (v. 11) and by means of confession (v.5) and trust (v. 10), God will cover, remove, forgive our sin.

**2) God will not count our sin. 32:2**

A 3<sup>rd</sup> word for sin is found in v. 2, the word iniquity, meaning a crooked or wrong act.

It is the “blessed” man whom the Lord does not imputed, charge to his account, iniquity. Indeed in his spirit there is no deceit, nothing dishonest or duplicitous.

**II. The Cover-up of Sin will bring Discipline. 32:3-4**

There is a simple basic spiritual law related to sin. “Confess it and you will be blessed. Conceal it and you will be disciplined.”

**1) Sin brings physical suffering. 32:3**

David’s cover-up was eating away at him. Physically he was drained. Emotionally he was at the end of himself. The word translated “groaning” means to roar, usually of a lion, of thunder, a warrior, or of a person in extreme pain.

**2) Sin brings spiritual suffering. 32:4**

Prov. 3:12 teaches that David’s pain and anguish is not accidental. It is providential. Further it was intense and heavy. Intense: “day and night.” Heavy: for it was God’s hand that was bringing the pressure of discipline. Like a naked body exposed for days to the searing Middle Eastern heat, David was dried up, nothing like the blessed man of Psalm 1:3.

**III. The Confession of Sin brings Forgiveness. 32:5**

A great God provides a great forgiveness. It is complete and it is immediate.

**1) Acknowledge your sin.**

Ultimately all sin is against God (Ps 51:4). David now saw his sin as God saw it; he called his actions what God called them: sin (2X), iniquity (2X), transgressions.

**2) Confess your sin.**

Note the parallelism:

- “I acknowledged my sin to You”

- “I will confess my transgression to the Lord”

(Proverbs 28:13; 1 John 1:9)

David kept silent to hide his sin. Our Savior, the Suffering Servant of the Lord, kept silent and bore our sin (Isa. 53:7).

#### **IV. The Cure for Sin is discovered thru Prayer. 32:6-7**

The problem for most all of us is not that the Lord is not available for us to spend time together. The problem is we don't show up. (Jam. 4:2).

##### **1) You must seek the Lord. 32:6**

Part of pursuing God is praying, seeking the Lord when he may be found, a privilege that should not be taken for granted. (Isaiah 55:6-7).

##### **2) You will be secure in the Lord. 32:7**

David makes 3 great declarations about who God is and what God will do. Protection, preservation and praise! Selah! Think about it.

#### **V. The Counsel about Sin is Essential. 32:8-9**

There is a sudden and dramatic shift in vs. 8 as God now speaks directly to David. In vs. 6-7 God has ministered to the heart. Now He moves to minister and enlighten the mind.

##### **1. Listen to the Lord's instruction. 32:8**

God promises 3 things to us in verse 8: I will 1) instruct, 2) teach, and 3) guide you.

The idea is God will counsel and guide us with a watchful eye upon us every step of the way.

## 2. Submit to the Lord's direction. 32:9

Verse 9 introduces us to “God’s animal farm.” Two particular individuals are highlighted for our edification: the horse and the mule. Both can be stubborn. Both can act stupid.

\* Do not force God to bit and bridle you, because He will if you force His hand.

## VI. The Celebration concerning Sin Rejoices the Heart. 32:10-11

Full and total forgiveness is a sweet experience and a precious gift.

### 1) Trust in the Lord. 32:10

- Sorrows, many sorrows, is the life and destiny of the wicked.
- In stark contrast, the one who trust in the Lord, “mercy (*NIV*, “unfailing love) shall surround him.” The word is *hesed*, noting the unfailing covenant love and loyalty Jehovah showers on His children.

### 2) Be glad in the Lord. 32:11

Three commands of praise are set before us: 1) Be glad, 2) rejoice and 3) shout for joy. (cf. “songs of deliverance in v. 7). And who are they who can respond with such praise, worship and adoration? It is the 1) righteous and 2) upright in heart.

**Conclusion:** Psalm 32 was Augustine’s favorite psalm. It is reported that he had it inscribed on the wall next to his bed before he died that he might meditate on it better. Why did he like this psalm so much? Because he said, “the beginning of knowledge is to know oneself to be a sinner.” Yes that is the beginning, but it need not be the end. In Christ you can be a forgiven sinner.