

PSALM 32 – PART 5

Psalm 32:10-12 ... “Many sorrows shall be to the wicked; but he who trusts in the Lord, mercy shall surround him. Be glad in the Lord and rejoice you righteous; and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!”

In this study we conclude our series in Psalm 32. We have read the words of King David, his public confession of sin, and his testimony of the Lord’s faithfulness in forgiving and restoring him. David also shared a direct message to us from God in which God reminds us that he is ready and willing to guide us away from evil if we will trust him. In this last segment, David closes by telling us that sin does not pay and that God’s mercy will be enjoyed when we trust in God.

Verse 10 tells us that “many sorrows shall be to the wicked.” That may be obvious, but it is worth a reminder to us that when we choose to disobey God, we will suffer. Man is a stubborn creature and many of us choose sin over Godliness all through our lives. Sorrows – or trials and challenges – come to us when we choose to be wicked, but God’s mercy will surround us when we trust in the Lord. Mercy is God telling us that he understands the struggles we face with temptation, and he extends his compassion when we fight the good fight to avoid sin. Mercy is our reward for doing our best to be obedient.

Verse 11 instructs us to “be glad in the Lord.” If you have lived for periods of your life in which you were obedient and listening carefully to God’s instruction through His Word and the Holy Spirit, you know that gladness comes automatically. You do not have to be instructed to be glad. But if you are going through a difficult time today and facing a challenge or disappointment that seems overwhelming, you may have forgotten the gladness you once felt. David tells us that we can fight through the distress of our troubles, choose to be glad, and once again enjoy his mercy. The instruction to “rejoice you righteous,” is also an automatic response from us when we understand that, although we sin and sometimes yield to temptation, Christ has declared us righteous through our acceptance of his salvation. We did not deserve that and cannot earn it. Nothing we do in this life, no good deeds, no regular attendance at church, and no amount of witnessing to the lost, will earn us righteousness. It is only available to us through the death of Christ as payment for our sins. And, that is certainly something we can all rejoice about.

David closes Psalm 32 by suggesting that we “shout for joy, all you upright in heart.” The theme of Psalm 32 was recovery from sin. In David’s case, the sin of adultery and murder. It does not get much more serious than that. But in just eleven verses, David shares with us the redemption he received – and we can receive – when we confess our sins, repent of them, seek God’s forgiveness, and receive that forgiveness. In this Psalm David addresses our death sentence for unforgiven sin, our future hope on the basis of forgiveness, our weaknesses, and the humility required to face God in our shame with honesty. He closes by telling us that we can experience true joy when our hearts are healed and true to God’s plan for our lives.

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