

Inner Peace in Turbulent Times

Psalm 32

We are living in turbulent times. TV ‘talking heads’ and celebs stir the pot of division! Civil discourse is at a premium. Blood pressure rises, tempers flare. Where can we find inner peace? At a turbulent time in life, David found forgiveness of sin and trusted in the Lord.

The story behind the Psalm: A life falling apart

A Declaration of Joy (1-2)

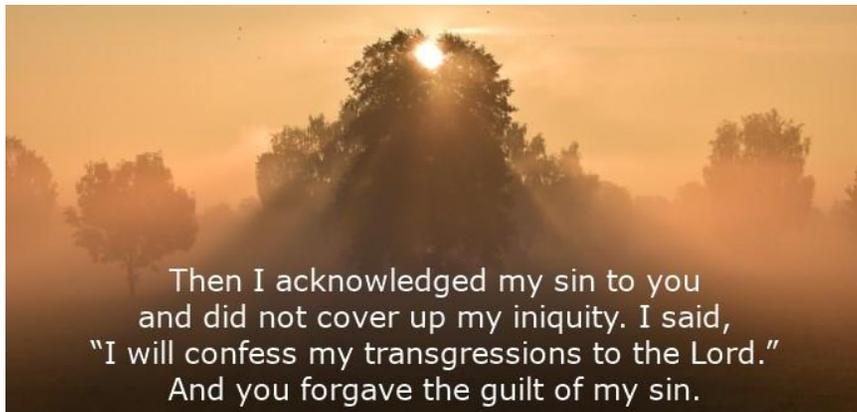
A Tale of Two Sinners (3-5)

The Path to Peace (6-11)

Pray to the Lord while He can be found (6-7)

Don't be like the horse or the mule (8-9)

Trust in the Lord, know His love, shout for joy (10-11)



Digging Deeper

1. Psalm 32.1-2 is an exclamation of deep happiness. The Hebrew word for “blessed” is בָּרְכָה (‘ešer), and can be translated ‘happy’ (*How happy is he...*). What does the psalmist say is the source of this happiness? Each line of these two verses contributes to a complete picture of what results in this joy: Sin is *forgiven*, and it is *covered* (taken away); God does not ‘*count our sin against us*’ (or hold it against us), and there is no *deceit* in us (we are ‘open and honest’ with God). When was the last time you came clean with God, and experienced this happiness?
2. Talk about contrast! In verses 3-4 David describes his feelings when he tried to just go on living while keeping his sin from God. Any child of God will feel this when they fall into sin and avoid dealing with it. When have you felt this? Is there an area of your life you need to stop ‘hiding’ from God, and confess?
3. David’s restoration of fellowship with God is described in v.5. The first three lines characterize David’s actions; what did he do? What does ‘acknowledge’ something to God? What does it mean to ‘confess’ our sins? David’s sins were awful (adultery and murder): Did that mean he needed to do something more to gain forgiveness (like penance)? Notice how matter-of-factly it is stated – *you forgave the guilt of my sin*. Do you hold onto the guilt of your sin *after* you have confessed it? Do you need to?
4. Verses 6-11 are the psalmist’s ‘sermon’ to his audience. What is the message of verse 6 (see Isaiah 55.6)? What does it mean that ‘in a flood of great waters they will not reach him’? What does God want to preserve us from (v.7)?
5. Verse 8 may be God speaking, or David counseling his readers. Either way, the message is that we shouldn’t resist this lesson, or ‘drag our feet’ in applying it to our lives! To do so results in sorrow (v.10a), but this isn’t necessary. How does the psalmist describe the joyful person (10b-11)? Does this description fit you?