

Surrey Chapel Fellowship Group Notes 24th/25th June

Psalm 32 Joy of Forgiveness

How often do we thank God for being forgiven?

When asked to state things that we are thankful for, how often do we mention being forgiven?

This Psalm reminds us that forgiveness is not just about our eternal salvation but is something that affects the here and now. It restores our relationship with our heavenly Father and results in being truly blessed.

Historical Background

This Psalm of David can be classified as a penitential Psalm but is more often classified as a thanksgiving hymn. This Psalm was probably used in temple worship when the restored sinner offered his songs of thanksgiving in the presence of his fellow-worshippers. It may have been accompanied by the presentation of a sin offering. In the prayer book it is often appointed for use on Ash Wednesday.

V.1-2 The joyful relief of being reconciled to God.

The Psalmist opens with two statements of praise about being reconciled to God. Something that is at the very heart of the Christian faith and life.

V.3-5 The effects of unconfessed sin.

These verses may speak of physical suffering as a result of sin. They certainly speak of the gnawing pain of a guilty conscience, the destructive effects of sin and the way in which unconfessed sin can eat away at us.

Is verse 4 a reference to God disciplining those he loves?

V.5 There are 3 steps:

- Acknowledgement of sin
- Confessing sin
- Being forgiven

V.6-7 Advice and comfort

V.6 Is the reaction to the preceding verses. It reminds us that time is short. That God will not harbour anger forever. That salvation is at hand.

V.7 May be familiar from the chorus: You are my hiding-place. -793 Mission Praise.

V.8-9 Instruction

These verses are probably a divine oracle that David received when he asked for forgiveness.

What is the purpose of this teaching and instruction?

The Holy Spirit is often referred to us a counsellor.

V.9 We are like senseless creatures when we refuse to use our minds to grasp God's will for us and to follow it obediently.

V.10-11 Concluding comments

V.10 Reminds us that the wicked will suffer many woes. While it doesn't promise that those who trust in the LORD will be spared this suffering it does promise that we will be surrounded by his love. If you had to choose, which would you rather have; to be spared suffering or to be surrounded by God's love?

The Psalmist concludes in worship.

Prayer Points

Thank God for blessing of being forgiven.

That others known to your fellowship group may know this blessing.

ADB