

Surrey Chapel Fellowship Group Notes May 9th/10th Psalm 32 Joy of Forgiveness

This study is the first in a new series looking at five penitential Psalms. These Psalms, four of which were written by David, express regret and repentance for sin. It should be noted that whilst this is a Psalm of repentance it is also a hymn of praise to the God who freely forgives. This Psalm was probably used in temple worship when the restored sinner offered his song of thanks in front of his fellow worshippers. It may have accompanied the presentation of a sin offering. (Leviticus 4:27-5:19)

The Psalm can be split into two parts. The first tells us how blessed forgiven sinners are. The second part is more practical and encourages us to freely confess our sins.

Blessed are the Forgiven

It is only the forgiven that can be truly happy, truly blessed. Is there any more blessed condition than the described in verse 1 & 2?

Do we rejoice enough for our forgiveness/ salvation?

Verse 3 describes an unrepentant sinner. What is God doing in verse 4? Is he oppressing the sinner or calling him to repentance?

Confessing our sin

Verse 5 is a full confession of sin. Nothing is held back. There is no self-deception.

Perhaps this is particularly important where habitual sin is concerned?

“You forgave the guilt of my sin”. This verse reminds us that God doesn’t just save us from the punishment of sin but also the guilt of sin. That is far better than just being let off by the judge. See Romans 8:1-2, Psalm 103:12

V.6 What does the “rising of the mighty waters” refer to?

Verse 7 is a famous verse of comfort and encouragement but it also hints at spiritual warfare. - The ESV translates this more strongly as “shouts of deliverance”. Is there a parallel with Philippians 4:8?

Verses 8 & 9 could be the the words of the Psalmist in his role as a teacher of his people. Or is it more likely that they are a divine oracle that the Psalmist received when he asked for forgiveness?

v.8 How does God teach us and counsel us?

v.10 How does this verse play out in the world today?

In conclusion, reflect on how sin and the need for forgiveness is portrayed in modern society. How much of this has rubbed off onto our own thoughts and attitudes? How does this affect how we evangelise and the importance of repentance in coming to faith?

You could also read Romans 5:1-11 which covers similar themes.

Prayer Pointers

Rejoice in being forgiven!

Persecuted Christians around the world

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