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“I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you.” Psalms 32:8

Main Idea: Our Wonderful and gracious Lord will bless those who seek His forgiveness, and He will wipe our sins away. In so doing, He brings us great joy. He does not want us to hide them or rationalize them or seek to manipulate; rather, just let Him know by our sincere confession. This will not be easy, but it is essential for us to grow and flourish in our relationships with God and others. So, confess and tell our Lord all that is in your heart, fears, and transgressions. He is there for us. Allow Him to take away your guilt. Then, worship Him and pray. When sin comes—and it will—confess, pray, and worship more. Alternatively, we can be swept away by our bad choices and the flood of guilt and consequences. God is the place we can go to at all times, in trouble and in joy. He is our hiding place, and will protect us in dire times. He will put songs of joy in our hearts and save us who do not deserve it.

Contexts and Background:

This Psalm of David that shares the same context of Psalms 30 and 31, when David was healed of the illness and his transgressions. This Psalm and 6, 38, 51, 102, 130 and 143 are “Penitential” Psalms, demonstrating repentance and the assurance of God’s forgiveness. Furthermore, this Psalm acts more like a Proverb (with wisdom sayings) than a typical Psalm. (This is also noted for a repentant format.) It warns us of the dangers of wrong thinking and action and the distress that come from it. Paul quotes the first 2 verses in Romans 4:6-8, to describe sin and God’s forgiveness. This was also used by the Israelites after forgiveness or a healing and to know and show what is a repentant and forgiven soul.

Commentary—Word and Phrase Meanings:

Verses 1-2: David's redemption is our example. He was saved by faith, not works, a prelude to God's grace too. David's salvation and restitution to grace was by his repentance and then by God's forgiveness, yet there was the consequence (2 Sam.11-12; Psalm 32; Matt. 9: 9-13).

- *Blessed / happy is the one.* A plural word that means to be exuberant, deeply happy and content because we are enjoying God and His special favor. God desires to bestow upon us a significant favor and grace! There is a direct correlation between following Him and receiving blessedness as well as contentment; or following ourselves and receiving pride and evil to be self-destructive and miserable. The context denotes that being happy is the result of realizing we have been forgiven and being willing to forgive others (Deut. 27:11-28:6; Psalm 1; Matt. 5:3-11).
- *Transgressions... iniquity... sins are forgiven.* Meaning removed or lifted away. There are three different words for sin used in this Psalm. This is to highlight humanities rebellion and disobedience to God and the measures God’s takes to repair our relationship with Him. *Iniquity* refers that is being crooked and intentionally doing wrong and not caring about truth.
- *Sins are covered.* Meaning concealing or carrying away from God’s sight and even away from His memory of them so they do not count against us. The absolute power of God’s power to forgive.
- *Sin the LORD does not count against them.* God inputs His Rightlessness to us, then we are reckoned with God. He considers us righteous when we are in fact not, because of repentance

and forgiveness. This looks to what Christ will do on the cross. However, we are not free to sin just to seek forgiveness (Gen. 15:6; Rom. 4:6-8).

Verses 3-5: Any relationship will produce the ups and downs, when one does something wrong against another, the perpetrator should feel guilt and remorse as we do when we sin against God and or are disobedient. Yet, our stubbornness and pride may blind us to it.

- *Bones wasted away.* Referring to the hot desert environment that wastes one away. This is a metaphor for aching, pain and a lack of physical strength, but it is not just a poetic image, it is a reality. The consequences that sin has and why God hates it because it hurts His children. You may get away with sin for a while, but its costs will catch up with you that you can't pay for and it will hurt you more than you can handle (1 Cor.11:30).
- *Strength was sapped /dried up.* Dealing with the repercussions of sin is exhausting and extremely time consuming. It can take your life or all of your life while you are still alive, as it did for the psalmist. This is also about the aftermath of guilt and shame, realizing what one did and how stupid it was and so easily preventable.
- *Acknowledged my sin.* A willingness to repent and not cover up or rationalize it. Only God can and has the authority to forgive our sins and He does, if we are willing to repent and give them over to Him. And our response must be gratitude and praise.
- *Confess.* Means letting God know of our wrongdoings and then stopping it. It is the event of responding to the God's Truth and the Gospel's message, so we give up sin (Psalm 51; Amos 5:4-6; Romans 5:1-11; James 4: 7-10; 5:16; 1 Peter 2:22-24; 2 Peter 3:9; 1 John 1:9).

Verses 6-7: Real faith is drawing near to God. This involves our recognition of sin and our will being surrendered to God's will, involving all of our being, heart, mind and soul; all sealed by the Holy Spirit. Faith also means not knowing where you are being led. Faith knows the One who is leading! It is not passive, but a response by knowledge and belief through agreement and trust, demonstrated by obedience and commitment that has a response of developing the fruits of character (Isa. 40; Rom. 4:1-25; 10:14; Gal 5).

- *Faithful / godly.* Meaning those who have a relationship with God, as His people in covenant. Also, denotes being loyal to God, our authentic relationship with Him. Having a steadfast love and acting with character, faithfulness will preserve our faith and character. They will trust God, His Way and timing. They will be authentic, dependable and trusting to God and others, and their first response is to Glorify God. Also, in application, the loving-kindness of those in our family, friends and our worship community (1 Kings 19:14; Psalm 12:1; 16:10; 30:4; 31:23; Jer. 3:12; Mic. 7:1-7; John 15; Rom. 5:1; 1 Pet. 1:19; 2 Pet. 3:14-18).
- *Pray to you.* To turn our faces to God and humbly seek and repent.
- *Mighty / great / many waters.* Means a flood or war and refers to being overwhelmed and carried away. This is a theme of judgment. Rough and deep water were a representation of distress, chaos and destruction, what is frightful and terrible; it was also a colloquialism (saying) for a dwelling for monsters and things inexplicable and/or hostile. Like the river of death in "Pilgrim's Progress." Here it is God saving David from death (Job 7:12; 41:1; Psalm 18:4; 32:6; 69:2, 15; 74:13; 89:9-10; Is. 27:1; Jer. 47:2; Rev. 12:13-17; 13:1-4).

- *Hiding place.* Meaning that God hides our sin from His own sight. Also, He protects those who seek Him. This is also considered a Title or Name of God and a picture of grace and the God Who watches over and protects us even in adversity.
- *Protect me from trouble / distress.* Meaning distress, and God's willingness to protect us. Most of our troubles are self-inflicted by bad choices and others' sin that converge to us (Deut. 4:6; Isa. 55:6).
- *Songs of deliverance.* The psalmist, perhaps David wants to share this with others and publicly go before God with humbleness and extreme gratitude for real impacting God exalting worship.

Verses 8-11: Those who fall and repent do not stay down. Not losing our trust and hope that God is in control! When we lose hope, we will lose or miss out on seeing God come through with His promises. **When we are not exercising our faith, we will be consumed with doubt and distrust--the opposite of God's call and plan for us. Those who do not call upon the Lord are no better than wild animals** (Psalm 32; 37:23-24).

- *Instruct.... Teach.* God does communicate to us explicitly! God calls us to have a teachable spirit and be open for instruction and correction. Scripture contains specific promises of God's guidance for us to make into action (Acts 8:26-29; Psalm 32:8).
- *Loving eye.* Meaning God vigilance and intimate care and He will keep us in Him, referring "to guard" (Psalm 12:6; 14:5; 24:6; Prov. 30:11-14).
- *Horse or the mule... bridle.* Horses and mules are bred and designed to obey their caretakers and in so doing by compulsion not out of desire. The faithful and righteous person should obey God, not because we have to; rather, because I want to, out of love and a response of gratitude. We are to turn to God's course not our own (Psalm 26:3; Jer. 8:6).
- *Trusts in him.* Our reliance upon God. Fear of God is respect and reverence, which turns into trust and obedience. Without faith and trust we turn to atheism, which requires more faith and more trust than what is conceivable and rational.
- *Sing all you who are upright in heart!* Being mindful and joyful of our benefits being righteous, now in Christ like forgiveness. "Heart" refers to the inner being of who we are; it is from our spirit or soul that our emotions, thoughts, and motivations come. Joy means our unshakable confidence in God (Psalm 4:7-8; 32:7-9; 34:1-8; Proverbs 4:23; 15:13; John 15:11; 17:13; 2 Cor. 12:9; 1 Peter 4:13- 19; 1 Thess. 5:18; James 1:1-4; Heb. 10:34).

Devotional Thoughts and Applications:

Knowing who we are in Christ leads us to confession and repentance. To continue to lead a life that confesses wrongdoings and is accountable. This means we change our minds and ways, so we are a soul at rest in Him, and so our motives, values, goals, aspirations, and plans are about seeking Christ's Lordship and standing firm in Him, not seeking our own personal agenda.

The distinction between *confession* and *repentance* is that *confession* is taking our repentance and telling someone besides God to hold us accountable. Of course, we go to Him first and foremost! This is a continual process where we conform our lives to God's Way, so our faith applies to God's Truth. This means we come to the grace, forgiveness, and authority of Christ; because of Him, we keep submitting by the application of His precepts to our lives that result in maturity and spiritual growth. This is a "grace" in that we receive the ability from Christ, and a practice that it requires the

commitment on our part to own up to and acknowledge the sins that show our flaws and faults that leads to a content life.

Christian Life Principle: God gives us the freedom and privilege to know and do what is right. But He does not force it upon us; rather, He empowers us with a choice. In so doing, when we do what is right, when we surrender sin, we are more joyful and happy than what the sin promised that lured us into. Thus, do not sacrifice future blessings and God's call for temporary carnal gratifications!

The Essential Inductive Questions (for more Inductive questions, see Inductive Bible Study):

1. What does this passage say?
2. What does this passage mean?
3. What is God telling me?
4. How am I encouraged and strengthened?
5. Is there sin in my life for which confession and repentance is needed?
6. How can I be changed, so I can learn and grow?
7. What is in the way of these precepts affecting me? What is in the way of my listening to God?
8. How does this apply to me? What will I do about it?
9. What can I model and teach?
10. What does God want me to share with someone?

Additional Questions:

1. What brings you great joy?
2. How have you seen people rationalize sin or seek to manipulate others to do sin?
3. What does a sincere confession look like? How have you felt after doing one?
4. How does confession help one grow and flourish in our relationships with God and others?
5. Have you seen Christians swept away by bad choices and the flood of guilt and consequences?
6. How is our Lord, your *hiding place*? What does this phrase mean to you?
7. Has God put *songs of joy* in your heart? How so?
8. Have you experienced the joyfulness from the result of realizing we have been forgiven and being willing to forgive others?
9. There is a direct correlation between following Him and receiving blessedness as well as contentment? Why is that?
10. What will happen if you decide not to repent?
11. What do you need to do to confess and tell our Lord all that is in your heart, fears, and transgressions?
12. Think through the steps you need to take to put *confession* into action in a specific instance. For example, what can you do to improve your *confessional* life and relationship with Christ and others? What are the steps you would take to obtain a good mentor (if you do not have one already) to hold you accountable and also keep you encouraged?