



WEEK 3

STUDY GUIDE

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SEPTEMBER 5-9, 2022



Monday, September 5, 2022

Read: Psalm 32:1-5; Philippians 3:8

Scripture Verse: *"Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord does not count against them and in whose spirit is not deceit." Psalms 32:1-2*

Today's Thought:

In this world, there are people who feel blessed because they have a full bank account. There are others who feel blessed because they have a good job, own a sumptuous house, a luxury car, etc. All these things are good to have; it is good to enjoy the fruit of our labors. These happy circumstances, however, are fleeting and they all fade over time. In Psalms 32:1-2, David talked about the greatest experience a man can have. *"Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord does not count against them and in whose spirit is not deceit."*

Along with many other biblical words for sin, David uses the word "transgression" to describe how we betrayed God. Despite the betrayal, God will never reject us if we really recognize our failures and confess with our mouth our violation. "If you declare with your mouth, Jesus is Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess your faith and are saved." Romans 10:9-10. God's grace, his compassion and forgiveness are still available to those who willingly decide to humble themselves and pray and seek his face and turn from their wicked ways. The author of 2 Chronicles 7:14 declared: *"If my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land."*

God is ready to rebuild you, restore, establish you; his eyes will be on you and his ears will be attentive to your prayers when you own up and confess your failures and turn completely from your transgression.

Dave Jenkins said: *"The human conscience is a gift from a good, Holy God to show us our sins and to drive us to the Lord. In the person and the finished work of the Lord Jesus, there is forgiveness because Jesus*

paid for everyone's sin in their place and rose again. Rather than excusing, minimizing, or deflecting our sin, let the people of God give thanks for the gift of conscience and confess our sin to the Lord, who alone forgives when we transgress against him."

Take a moment to think on the way you have sinned against God and confess your transgression and believe that he forgives you through his Son Jesus Christ.

Father God, you say in your word If I declare with my mouth, Jesus is Lord, and believe in my heart that God raised him from the dead, I will be saved. If I humble myself and pray and seek your face and turn from my wicked ways, then you will hear from heaven, and you will forgive my sin and will heal me. Lord, I believe in you, I humble myself before you, I recognize and confess my sins before you. Please, save me, heal me, forgive me, rebuild, restore and establish me for your glory.

- Considering this study, what do you consider a blessing?
- Considering our transgression, do you think that God rejects us?
- Since God doesn't reject us, what should we do when we sin?
- What do you think we will receive in return from God?

Further Reading: Matthew 6: 9-13

Tuesday, August 30, 2022

Read: Tuesday, September 6, 2022

Scripture Verse: *“When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy on me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.” Psalms 32:3-4*

Today's Thought:

As Christians, when we feel guilty, when we transgress God's law, we can't hide and shut up. There is no question of running away from God like Adam and Eve did after their disobedience to God in Genesis 3:6-7. They tried to solve the problem of their sin on their own. Firstly, they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves. According to them their fig leaves could keep God from seeing their state of sin. Secondly, and the worst thing they did, they heard the voice of God and tried to hide from him instead of presenting themselves to him.. *“They heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden.”* Genesis 3:8. No one can hide from God; his eyes are everywhere.

Right away it reminds me of what David says in Psalms 139, that nothing is hidden from God. *“Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.”* God will never reject us because of our sins, and nothing can separate us from his love. *“For I am convinced that neither death nor life, neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* Romans 8:38. No question of hiding and being silent!

God, through his Son Jesus Christ is the remedy and solution for our sins. We need to confess our sins before God for forgiveness. Unconfessed sin can drag us down into a pit where we can't see the sunshine. But when we confess our sin and return to God the shepherd and the overseer of our soul, he takes us from the pit of death and puts us at the pinnacle to admire his glory. We need to take our sins seriously because unforgiven sin affects our body and soul. Therefore, David said: *“When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long.”* Uncon-

fessed sins can ruin our soul, sap our spiritual and physical strength and make us groan day and night. Thankfully, God can bring our happiness back when we confess our sins. Unconfessed sins can make us spiritually weak and weary to pray, to hear and study the word of God. But when we recognize and confess our sins God can renew our strength and increase our power.

David, through his experiences with God, proved to us that the quintessence of all happiness is found in the forgiveness of our sins.

Lord, thank you for your word. Help me not to behave like Adam and Eve who sinned, heard your sound in the garden and hid among the trees. Help me to be like David. Lord, I have sinned against you and done what is evil in your sight, wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.

- What did Adam and Eve do when they sinned?
- Can anyone hide from the presence of God?
- Is there anything that can hide our sins?
- Glance at Psalms 139. How do you understand the Omnipresence of God?
- To whom shall we confess our sins?
- What impact can unconfessed sins have on our body and soul?

Further Reading: Genesis 3:6–8

Wednesday, September 7, 2022

Read: Psalm 32:1-5; Philippians 3:8

Scripture Verse: *"Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord. And you forgave the guilt of my sin."*
Psalms 32:5

Today's Thought:

We have seen that when we sin, we have a tendency to run away from God. We try to avoid God's presence. In this verse we will see that it is important to discover when we are guilty. We should be able to acknowledge our sin and not cover up our iniquity. We must confess our transgressions before God for complete recovery.

To find God's forgiveness we must acknowledge our sins, being able to identify the sin we have committed. It's not about going a thousand ways, trying to get around sin without pointing a finger at it. Sometimes we are not ashamed to commit sin, but we are ashamed to approach God to confess it. We can say this is a serious mistake on our part. By doing so, we leave room for the enemy to create in us the spirit of guilt by telling ourselves we are too dirty, we are not good enough to approach the Holy God. We create all the possible and even unimaginable ways to deviate from God. We neglect everything that can bring us closer to God, such as: our assembly, prayer life, fellowship, breaking of bread, teaching, small group, etc.

All of this is the devil's scheme to lead us away from our God. While what God wants and awaits from us is to recognize that we are guilty and seek his forgiveness. When we do this, we demonstrate that we are children of God, and the devil no longer has power over us.

King David himself gave us a good example of confession in Psalms 51 when he took his officer's wife. When the Lord sent Jonathan to him, he heard him carefully. After hearing him, he didn't burst, he became aware of his sins and said: I have sinned! *"Have mercy on me, o God, according to your unfailing love; according to your great compassions. Wash away all my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me."* Psalms 51:1-2

This is what God expects from us. We must be aware of our sins. We shouldn't do like Adam saying: The woman you put by my side dragged

me to sin; and the woman: The serpent deceived me, and I ate. When we sin, we must have the courage to take responsibility for whatever the consequences.

Since God likes to show mercy, love and compassion, as he did for David, he can do it for us because his great love, his mercy and compassions never fail; they are new every morning. *“Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”* Hebrew 4:16.

Heavenly Father, I know you are a God of mercy, love and compassion. I approach your throne with confidence, bow down before you. I acknowledge my sins, please, forgive me. Help me never to neglect everything that can bring me closer to you such as my assembly, prayer life, fellowship, breaking of bread, teaching, small group, etc.

- What must we do to find God’s forgiveness?
- What can sometimes prevent us from approaching God to confess?
- Can you mention some things that can bring us closer to God, but sometimes we overlook them?
- How do you understand David’s attitude in Psalms 51?
- How does that inspire you?

Further Reading: Lamentations 3:19–24

Thursday, September 8, 2022

Read: Psalm 32:1–5; Philippians 3:8

Scripture Verse: *“What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ.” Philippians 3:8*

Today’s Thought:

Previously, we have seen that we should be able to acknowledge our sin and not cover up our iniquity. We must confess our transgressions before God for complete recovery. Now, before talking about why and what Paul considers garbage for the sake of Christ, let us quickly glance at the apostle's life to better understand Paul's position. Who was Paul before his conversion? What did he consider garbage for Christ's sake?

Educationally, according to the Bible and history, Paul was a man of great education. He did his first studies in Tarsus, his native city, and then he studied in Jerusalem with Gamaliel the most prominent Jewish teacher of his period. Paul declared: *“I am Jew, born in Tarsus of Cilicia, but brought up in this city. I studied under Gamaliel and was thoroughly trained in the law of our ancestors...”* Acts 22:3. At his time, those who met him realized that he was a well-educated person. During his arrest in Caesarea, the Roman governor Festus testified that he was a scholar. *“At this point Festus interrupted Paul's defense. “You are out of your mind, Paul!” He shouted. **Your great learning is driving you insane.**”* Acts 26:24.

Culturally, Paul was very different from the other apostles in the eyes of the Jewish authorities. He spoke four languages: Aramaic, Hebrew, Greek and Latin. Aramaic was his mother tongue and Greek, that of Tarsus and the empire. He knew Hebrew well. As a Roman citizen, he probably spoke the language of the Empire. He had studied philosophy and literature of Greece, he excelled in geography, navigation and sport. He had a vast culture. Paul not only knew how to read and write, but he also knew how to swim. *“...Three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea.”* 2Corinthians 11:25. To know swimming was a sign of a great education among the Greeks. Four centuries before Jesus Christ, a philosopher named Plato wrote: *“The ignorant is a man who can neither read nor swim.”*

On a religious level, he has given a great description of his religious life.

He was a Pharisee and a member of the Sanhedrin, the Jewish supreme court. He was zealous and his faith tolerated no other religion. His zeal for Judaism led him to religious fanaticism. He wrote: *"Circumcised on the eighth day, of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew of Hebrews; in regard to the law, a pharisee; as for zeal, persecuting the church, as for righteousness based on the law, faultless."* Philippians 3:5-6.

Despite his high education, culture, reputation and religious level, his encounter with Jesus in Acts 9:1-22 turned his life from Christians' persecutor to preacher of the gospel. He became an instrument in the hands of God in order to announce his name to the nations. *"This man is my chosen instrument to proclaim my name to the gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel."* Acts 9:15. Considering his journey, his zeal for the gospel and his works, we can truly say this man was a chosen instrument of God.

Father God, thank you for your word. Disregard the time of my ignorance. I repent of my sins; I want to follow you all the rest of my life. In your love, forgive me and make me like the apostle Paul, an instrument between your hands.

- Who was Paul before his conversion?
- What did he consider garbage for Christ's sake?
- If you could write a story about yourself, how would you want it to be?
- How can you help make that story become a perfect reality?

Further Reading: Philippians 3:4-7

Friday, September 9, 2022

Read: Psalm 32:1-5; Philippians 3:8

Scripture Verse: *“What is more, I consider everything a loss because of the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them garbage, that I may gain Christ.” Philippians 3:8*

Today's Thought:

We have just seen in part the life of the apostle Paul, his great knowledge, high culture and reputation, and his religious belief before his conversion. Paul was not a simple man as some might try to believe. His partial story clearly shows us that he left much to follow Jesus. Moreover, what makes us happy is that he had felt no regret for having left garbage of this world to follow Jesus because what Jesus offered him cannot be compared to the perishable things of this world.

In the past, Paul was under the control of devil, an instrument between his hands filled with murderous rage against Christians. The enemy used him in a bad way to persecute Christians. But now, God has chosen him to become another instrument between God's hands to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ. After his conversion and his baptism (Acts 9:18), he immediately went to the synagogues to proclaim that Jesus is the Son of God. *“At once he began to preach in the synagogues that Jesus is the Son of God”* Acts 9:20. Apostle Paul spent the rest of his life proclaiming the risen Christ throughout the Roman Empire.

Through Paul's story, we can discover that God can save anyone. If God saved and transformed a broken sinner like Paul, a religious fanatic who persecuted and killed innocent people, including women and children, we too can find God's grace. He can show us mercy when we don't deserve it and open the gates of heaven to us if we confess with our mouth his Son Jesus Christ.

Apostle Paul realized that preaching Jesus Christ was God's favor on him. *“For when I preach the gospel, I cannot boast, since I am compelled to preach. Woe to me if I do not preach the gospel!”* 1 Corinthians 9:16. If God made Paul a humble and powerful preacher and witness to Jesus Christ, he could also do the same thing to us. Without fear and hesitation, he proclaimed the kingdom of God and taught about Jesus Christ with boldness. He worked so hard to the progress of the gospel. He was not afraid and ashamed of doing his work and telling others what God had done for him. He completely surrendered his life to God and

fully devoted himself to Christ. He declared: *"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me."* Galatians 2:20. Can we say the same?

Finally, we have learned a lot about Paul's life. If Paul who was a licensed sinner, a blasphemer, a persecutor and a violent man was shown mercy to do extraordinary things for the kingdom, then God's love, mercy and compassion are still available for us. Paul had reason to leave everything for the sake of Christ because in Christ there is forgiveness, eternal life, love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness. What a wonderful joy to leave everything for the sake of Christ! Let us live for him now! He is worthy of praise!

Heavenly Father, I left everything in this world to follow you because what you offered cannot be compared to the perishable things of this world. Thank you for saving and transforming me. I surrendered my life to you and devoted myself to your work. Use me as an instrument between your hands to announce the good news of Jesus Christ.

- Who was Paul before his conversion? Who controlled him?
- Who did he become after his conversion? Who controlled him?
- What can you learn from the apostle Paul's life?
- How does his life encourage you to consider everything garbage for Christ's sake?
- *"I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me."* Can you say the same?

Further Reading: Romans 5:8-11

NOTES



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