

The Joy of Forgiveness and the Misery of Sin– Ps 32

Turn to Ps 32 – 1 of 8 penitential psalms; Psalms of regret, repentance of sin

This one, as are some of the others, is written by King David

Clues us in, in stark contrast, to the difference between the joy of forgiveness and the misery of sin (read – keep track of the audience changes)

There are two kinds of people in this room this morning – those experiencing the joy of forgiveness, and those experiencing the misery of sin

Those experiencing the joy of forgiveness make it a practice to confess your sin when you fail – and therefore you receive God’s forgiveness and the joy that comes with it

Those of you experiencing the misery of sin either don’t want to face the consequences of confessing your sin, thinking that your misery is better than facing the music

Or you’re in denial about your misery altogether, and haven’t reached the bottom of your barrel

Either way, you’re miserable – I don’t care how good you are at rationalizing it

The longer you go without confessing your sin, the more miserable you’ll get

If you don’t have any hidden or unconfessed sin in your life, then consider this preventative maintenance . . .

And tuck it away for the future, because you’ll run into people who do

If however, you’re sitting here and you feel like I’m breaking the seal of a secret page of sin in your life – now is the time to do something about it

I want so much for every single one of you to experience the joy of forgiveness and be done with the misery of un-confessed sin

When I was playing b-ball in college, I developed a boil under my skin on my left forearm

Tried to ignore it; Tried to bandage it; Tried to play through the pain

Until one practice somebody hit it dead on and I went through the roof

There was no more hiding the pain or the boil

Un-confessed sin is like that – like a festering boil just beneath the surface, sooner or later it leads to sorrow

Don’t kid yourself – sin leads to sorrow (v10)

It *will* catch up with you

You can ignore it and hide it for a time, but eventually, the pain will be so unbearable, and the sorrow so noticeable, you’ll have to deal with it

10 – *Many are the sorrows of the wicked*

Many are the sorrows [*plural*] of those who sin, and rationalize it

Those who sin and minimize it; Those who sin and ignore it

If you don’t think so, you’re kidding yourself; And ignoring the truth of God’s Word

You can mask the sin for a time, but eventually sorrow will rule the day

Like the sorrow of . . .

Distress – what have I done?

Grief – with tears upon tears

Regret – I wish I hadn’t done that; If I could only have that moment back

Remorse – I feel so badly for what I’ve done

Shame – I’m so embarrassed about what I did; so ashamed

• Remember the story of King David?

When he committed adultery with Bathsheba and was found out?

It’s no surprise that he wrote this Psalm because he experienced every single one of these sorrows, and then some

Like the sorrow of losing a friend and warrior; losing respect; losing his child

Not to mention the sorrow of family upheaval/dysfunction that followed

The sneaking around, the compounded lies, and the close calls are like an ever tightening noose around your neck

And instead of the sin/stolen pleasure serving you, you end up serving the sin

And becoming a slave to it

Oh, it doesn’t seem that way at first, does it?

At first, the thrill of sin feels very freeing

Ever hear that children’s song – “I was sinking deep in sin (weeeee!)”

The weeeee thing isn’t really part of the song

But the truth is – sometimes sinking deep in sin is fun and pleasurable at first . . . until you hit rock *bottom*

Then with a broken soul and festering boils, you pay the price of sorrow

Don’t kid yourself – sin leads to sorrow, and lots of it

And silence leads to misery (v3-4)

Silence makes it worse – read v3-4

If you want to live in misery, all you have to do is keep silent about your sin

Live a double life of deceit – contrary to the blessed man in whose spirit there is no deceit (2b)

Keep it a secret (3a) – don’t talk about it; stuff it in the depths of your soul

Ignore God’s heavy hand of conviction (4)

And the weakness of your strength

Don’t admit it and cover it up – contrary to David in v5(a)

Don’t ask God for help – again, contrary to David in v6

Get stubborn about your sin – like a mule that needs a bit (9)

God’s like – don’t do that

I’ll put the clamps down on you so fast, I’ll give new meaning to the word misery

He’s not beyond doing that to get your attention and break your will

If you want to live in misery, keep silent about your sin

That’s exactly what David did – he kept his sin to himself

For a year, he kept silent about his adultery

For a year he hid it and led a double life

For a year he kept it a secret and ignored God’s conviction

For a year he covered it up and got stubborn with God

And it was *miserable*

• He suffered . . .

Depression and *despair* (read v3)

Ever been there? Few things are more miserable than sin-induced depression

Not all depression is sin-induced, but much of it is

When it is, it’s utter despair – doom and gloom with seemingly no way out

It’s a downward spiral that will never end, unless you end the sin *and* the silence

Overwhelming Conviction (4)

There's no more miserable place in all of life than to live under the overwhelming conviction of God; none
It's one thing to feel guilty as an unbeliever
But it's quite another to be convicted as a *believer*
No wonder – because if you make the HS who lives within you miserable with the silence of your sin, he'll make you miserable with the weight of his conviction
Don't mess with God – because the weight of his conviction is crushing

Silence also leads to the misery of . . .

Physical Weakness (read 4b)

There's nothing like concealed sin to prove a connection between your body and your soul – it saps your strength, your resolve, your discipline, your will-power
Secret sin saps everything

The misery of silence is unavoidable

The longer you wait to break it, the worse it will be when you do . . .

And the more miserable your life in the meantime

You're like – I've already waited 20 years, how much worse can it get? A lot

Don't kid yourself – just like you can't avoid the sorrow/consequences of sin, neither can you avoid the misery of silence . . . even if you've long since quit the sin

Sin leads to sorrow and silence leads to misery (that's the bad news) . . .

But confession leads to forgiveness (v5) – read v5

I've dealt with the broken life of more than one man or woman who committed adultery or some other secret sin early in their life . . .

And lived with an underlying guilt/misery for *decades* before they confessed it

And it adversely affected every single aspect of their life – until they confessed

Until they broke the silence

I'm pretty sure some of you are living a lie right now, and intend to do so until you die

You're miserable on the inside, fake on the outside, and sick and tired on all sides

When are you going to give it up?

When are you going to confess it, to both God *and* man?

To God *and* to those you wronged?

The Bible says to *bear fruits in keeping with repentance* (Lk 3:8)

One of those fruits is to get right with those you've *hurt*

To confess your sins to one another (James 5:16)

When are you going to do that?

I'm not talking about taking an ad out in the newspaper

I am talking about talking to the one(s) you *sinned* against, including God

I'm saying that the worst thing you can do is keep silent, because you forego God's forgiveness *and* theirs

Forgiveness – where your sin is taken away, debt is covered, the wrong no longer counted against you; that's the sense of forgiveness in v1-2

Forgiveness that's immediate from God, and in most cases eventually given by the one you wronged

But it starts with confession

• But there's more to confession than just the words

It starts with a heart of integrity – *in whose spirit there is no deceit* (2b)

There's nothing disingenuous about genuine confession

It's brokenness through and through, were you say it like it is and admit full responsibility

It starts with a heart of openness – where every door of your heart is unlocked and flung wide open for the inspection of the one you hurt

It starts with a heart of urgency (read v6)

David's not contradicting other very clear Scriptures like – *if you seek me, you will find me*

Rather, he's saying – if you're harboring sin in your heart, deal with it now while there's ample opp

Because it's possible your foxhole prayer may not be heard – either because it's not genuine, or it's self-serving

King David hid his sin of adultery and murder for a whole year, but when he finally confessed, he did so with an open heart of integrity and urgency

Open, honest, straightforward confession with both God and man – leads to forgiveness

Silence doesn't; So don't wait any longer if you're harboring sin in your heart

Confess it now, and start basking in the forgiveness that leads to joy

Sin leads to sorrow and silence leads to misery; but confession leads to forgiveness . . .

And forgiveness leads to joy (v1-2,11)

V1-2 say that the person forgiven is *blessed* (happy, fortunate, joyful) – read v1-2

Then look at v11 (read it)

If you've been relieved of sorrow, depression, despair, guilt, weakness, and the conviction of God, and misery in general – who *wouldn't* be joyful?

Forgiveness leads to joy . . .

The joy of protection from trouble – read v7a-b

Forgiveness leads to joy because of the protection you receive from God

Protection from trouble; from more sin

Forgiveness leads to the joy of victory over sin – read v7c

When you confess your sin to God, he not only forgives you, but gives you victory over your sin . . .

Often times in the form of a strong distaste for that sin, so that you never want to go back to it

Forgiveness leads to the joy of God's guidance – read v8

Everybody wants God's guidance; Everybody wants to know God's will for their lives

Having forgiven you, God gives it – through his Word, his Spirit, and his people

The best part is that he continues to watch over you

He doesn't just shove you out of the nest and wave good-bye

He keeps watch over you and continues to give you counsel

Forgiveness leads to the joy of love, love for a lifetime – read v10

The steadfast love of the Lord is the opposite of the sorrow of sin

The sorrow of sin is loneliness – the love of God is a relationship

The sorrow of sin is despair – the love of God is hope

The sorrow of sin is guilt – the love of God is relief

No wonder forgiveness leads to joy

- With all of that in mind, David says (speaking to God) . . .

Let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found (6)

David's like – I've experienced the forgiveness, blessing, and joy of confessing my sins,
why don't you do the same?

Why don't you confess *your* sin to God?

That's a good question – why *don't* you?

Aren't you tired of hiding your sin?

Haven't you experienced enough misery?

Don't kid yourself any longer – Sin leads to sorrow and silence leads to misery; but
confession leads to forgiveness and forgiveness leads to joy

If you've been hiding something – for a month, a year, 20 years, whatever – why don't
you confess it?

I'm going to give you a minute to do that right now with God

And then, later this week, I want you to follow through with the one(s) you sinned
against – will you commit to that right now?

Don't get stubborn on me; Don't get stubborn on God

Now is as good a time as any – confess your sin to him, and commit to do the same with
the one you hurt

Forgiveness and joy await

Pray – allow time to confess, reflect, and commit