

Psalm 32

¹Oh, what joy for those
whose rebellion is forgiven,
whose sin is put out of sight!

²Yes, what joy for those
whose record the LORD has cleared of sin,
whose lives are lived in complete honesty!

³When I refused to confess my sin,
I was weak and miserable,
and I groaned all day long.

⁴Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me.
My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat.

Interlude

⁵Finally, I confessed all my sins to you
and stopped trying to hide them.
I said to myself, "I will confess my rebellion to the LORD."
And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone.

Interlude

⁶Therefore, let all the godly confess their rebellion to you while there is time,
that they may not drown in the floodwaters of judgment.

⁷For you are my hiding place;
you protect me from trouble.
You surround me with songs of victory.

Interlude

⁸The LORD says, "I will guide you along the best pathway for your life.
I will advise you and watch over you.

⁹Do not be like a senseless horse or mule
that needs a bit and bridle to keep it under control."

¹⁰Many sorrows come to the wicked,
but unfailing love surrounds those who trust the LORD.

¹¹So rejoice in the LORD and be glad, all you who obey him!
Shout for joy, all you whose hearts are pure!

“Propositional Joy”

Psalm 32

Introduction:

How do you regard your Christian experience? Is it hard work? Is it joyful?

Joy or “rejoice” - used nearly 400x in the Bible. So why do we sometimes get the idea that living for Christ is supposed to be lifeless drudgery or hard work?

1) The Joy of Living in Right Relationship with God v.1-2

¹Oh, what joy for those whose rebellion is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! ²Yes, what joy for those whose record the LORD has cleared of sin, whose lives are lived in complete honesty!

Three different words used here for sin:

Sin as rebellion – “Cosmic Treason”

Sin as faulty actions – we set our own agenda and live as we wish, committing offenses against God

Sin as “crookedness,” ending up in a place or status that is evil – like a cow nibbling its way to lostness

What has God done with each?

Rebellion is forgiven! Faulty actions put out of sight! Record cleared of crookedness! We have a new status!

Martin Luther said, “*God does not save people who are only fictitious sinners. Be a sinner and sin boldly, but believe and rejoice in Christ even more boldly. For he is victorious over sin, death, and the world.*”

2) The uselessness of living in rebellion - V 3-7

³When I refused to confess my sin, I was weak and miserable, and I groaned all day long. ⁴Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat. ⁵Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide them. I said to myself, “I will confess my rebellion to the LORD.” And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone.

⁶Therefore, let all the godly confess their rebellion to you while there is time, that they may not drown in the floodwaters of judgment. ⁷For you are my hiding place; you protect me from trouble. You surround me with songs of victory.

Why would harboring our sin result in our strength be evaporated? Because we were created for something more! We were created for a right relationship with our Creator.

Like defying gravity. You are free to do it, but you will reap the consequences regardless of your belief.

Being estranged from God makes life useless!

Confession is important, but so is REPENTANCE. Train illustration – we may be facing north, but going south. Let the GODLY confess! Confession and repentance is for believers as well as unbelievers.

Remarkable turn of a phrase in v. 7: ****Rather than hiding his sin, he now considers God his hiding place! Rather than wondering if perhaps God would punish him, he now views God as his protector!**

3) The certainty of God’s plan - 8-9

⁸The LORD says, “I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you.

⁹Do not be like a senseless horse or mule that needs a bit and bridle to keep it under control.”

God WILL guide those who are His. That’s a given. The only thing up for grabs is whether or not we will listen. We have the choice to continue to act according to our bad habit of being rebellious, or we may learn to submit our will to His.

The horse WILL go where its master wants it to go. The only question is how much discomfort it will have to endure to get there.

There is great freedom in obedience – Golden Retriever story.

4) Conclusion - The response of the forgiven! - 10-11

¹⁰Many sorrows come to the wicked, but unfailing love surrounds those who trust the LORD. ¹¹So rejoice in the LORD and be glad, all you who obey him! Shout for joy, all you whose hearts are pure!

The Post-moderns don’t have it all wrong – God does want us to *feel* something, not just *believe* something. Perhaps you don’t realize how bad off you are without what Christ has done! If you do, you can’t help but be joyful. And you can’t help but share that joy with others.