

WHAT HAPPENS IN VEGAS

Friday, March 9

Reading: Psalm 32

Psalm 32:3 *When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. 4 For day and night your hand was heavy on me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. 5 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.*

In 2003 the city of Las Vegas abandoned their campaign to advertise Las Vegas as a “family friendly” resort and returned to an adult theme in its advertising. The result was the slogan “What happens in Vegas, stays in Vegas.” It was designed to imply that you can come to Vegas and do whatever you want and no one will know about it. When you leave Vegas, you leave all the guilt and consequences of what you did behind.¹

We would all like to think that we could escape the consequences of our sins. David learned the hard way that this is not true. Psalm 32 was probably written after David’s affair with Bathsheba and his orchestrated murder of her husband Uriah (2 Samuel 11). During those long months, David tried to hide his sin. But sin always comes with a price! David was an outdoorsman and a warrior, but his sin took a physical toll on him. His conscience ate away at him until his strength and health had wasted away (32:3-4).

Finally the Lord’s conviction through the prophet Nathan broke through David’s delusions. He wasn’t fooling anyone and he was definitely not fooling God (2 Samuel 12). David confessed his sin (read his confession in Psalm 51) and threw himself on God’s mercy. God forgave David but there were still consequences to pay.

What do we do once we are forgiven? Surely that temptation won’t defeat us again? Oh yes it can! Once our relationship with the Lord is restored we must take action with God’s help to fortify our lives against falling again. David gives us some helpful clues in this area.

1. **PRAY** (31:6) - We need to keep our relationship with God strong through constant communication and submission to His will.
2. **REST** (31:7) - David calls the Lord his “hiding place.” He is safe in His arms. That is why he can sing “songs of deliverance.” He is resting in God’s forgiveness.
3. **SHARE** (31:8) - There is some debate over the speaker in this verse. Some believe it is God speaking to David; others believe it is David speaking to his people. Since the rest of this psalm contains David’s instructions, it seems to me that this is David speaking. He has learned his hard lessons from the Lord and now shares them with others. Our story of forgiveness and restoration should be shared to help others in similar circumstances.

There is no Vegas approach when it comes to sin. We cannot hide it. We must repent, receive God’s forgiveness, and move on relying on His strength to not be snared again. Are you praying, resting, and sharing what God has done in your life?

¹ <https://www.sermoncentral.com/sermons/urban-legend-what-happens-in-vegas-stays-in-vegas-scott-kircher-sermon-on-sin-deceptive-143394?ref=SermonSerps>