

Realizing What We Have

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[0 : 00] You know, as we come together this morning, God's good, isn't it? And I didn't share during praise time, but I just praise God for willing hearts.

! Because you know, that's what God desires, isn't it? God wants willing hearts, hearts that are willing to accept His Son, Jesus Christ, and His death on the cross, His resurrection, the life that that can bring.

God wants willing hearts to do that, doesn't He? And then God wants willing hearts to follow His ways, the ways that the Bible teaches, the ways that Christ taught. He wants willing hearts to follow. And then He wants willing hearts to serve after that, doesn't He? And I just praise God that we have so many willing hearts here. I know it's already been shared in part, but, you know, this last week was quite a week.

But, you know, I look through the week and just look at all the blessings of it. The willing hearts in setting up tables and taking down chairs, willing hearts in fixing meals and bringing food, the willing hearts in, you know, of all weeks.

[1 : 13] You sometimes wonder, God, what's your timing doing? You ever wonder that? You know, I was battling with some laryngitis this week, right? The week of Easter and the week of just busyness.

And it's like, you know, come on, Lord, give me a break. I don't need this right now. But then I look at how God just uses all that. And, you know, I had to ask someone to do Bible study Wednesday night and Thursday morning to try to give my voice a break.

And both times I asked people, they were like, sure. Scott, this morning when he read that, I said, do you want to share it this morning? A little hesitation, but he said, okay. Amy, when she was asked to sing that song, and I know Donna had shared that that that just was something that went over and through her mind over and over and over again, didn't it?

Jesus, take the wheel. And she said, would you ask Amy if she'd sing that when I'm able to come back? And I asked Amy and said, I don't know, that's going to be a tough one, but okay. Okay, willing hearts.

And those are just a few examples of just all the times in the church where I ask and people just say, okay. I praise God for that. And I just want to encourage you to continue with that.

[2 : 21] You know, God wants willing hearts, and I just pray our hearts are always willing. It has nothing to do with the sermon, but turn to Psalms. Psalms chapter 32.

That might be another sermon sometime, willing hearts. But I praise God for the willing hearts that are in our church, and keep your hearts willing. And sometimes that willingness does mean, and here's the challenge that comes of it.

You know, Scott was very open and shared that it dragged him just a little bit out of his comfort zone. We all have a comfort zone, don't we? Would you agree with that?

Do you like being sometimes drugged or pulled or pushed or asked to be out of your comfort zone? Do you enjoy that? I love it. You love it? I love it.

All right. That's not the case for most of us, though. Why don't we like getting out of our comfort zone? Because if we're not in our comfort zone, that means we are uncomfortable, doesn't it?

[3 : 19] That's just the natural reaction to being out of that comfort zone. But here's the thing. God doesn't want just a bunch of comfortable Christians. That is not what God wants. Sometimes we think it is, don't we?

God wants us comfortable. No, He doesn't. How many times do you think the disciples were uncomfortable in their lives? How many times do you think the prophets of the Old Testament were comfortable in their lives?

Paul was shipwrecked. He was thrown in prison. And he gives a whole list of things he endured. Do any of those things sound comfortable? God doesn't want comfortable Christians.

He wants Christians that are willing to step out, serve Him, and be uncomfortable at times. And again, you're right. That's another sermon. All right. Psalms 32 is where we're at this morning.

And we're going to share a few verses, and we're going to look at a couple things this morning. But if you're in Psalms 32, I'm going to ask if you're able, if you would stand as we read God's Word together this morning.

[4 : 18] Psalms 32, beginning in the first verse. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

Blessed is a man to whom the Lord imputes not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long.

For day and night your hand was heavy upon me. My moisture has turned into the drought of summer. I acknowledge my sin to you, and my iniquity have I not hidden. I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord, and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.

For this shall everyone that is godly pray to you in a time when you may be found. Surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come near to him.

Let's pray together this morning. Lord God, thank you again for this time that you've given us. I thank you that we can be in your house. I thank you that we can hear your Word. And Lord God, this morning, I just pray that we would, and sometimes it's a challenge, Lord, you know it, but we'd set aside all the busyness, all the thoughts on our mind, all the activity of the week, and just help us to do one thing, and that is focus on you, to focus on your desire for us, to have willing hearts, Lord, that we want to hear your message, that we want to apply it to our lives, and we want to live it out.

[5 : 37] So Lord, just help us to have willing hearts and minds right now. And we ask and pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen. Amen. All right. You may be seated. So we just read in Psalms, but I want to read to you something else, and then keep your finger in Psalms because we're going to get back there.

But I want to read to you also from Luke, and just listen. That's all I'm going to ask you to do. It's not going to be up here. You don't even need to turn there. I just want you to listen. And the reason I want you to do that is because I want you to engage your minds a little bit this morning, and I want you to try to insert yourself into the story.

Can you do that? And this, what I'm going to read is an account that probably most of us have heard before. It is two men on the road to Emmaus.

Okay? I want you to try to put yourself in their shoes. So don't follow along. Just try in your mind to put yourself into your shoes and think what this situation would have been like.

This is the day after the resurrection. This is... We'll just go from there. Okay? And behold, two of them went that same day to a village called Emmaus, which was from Jerusalem, about three score furlongs, about seven and a half miles.

[7 : 01] And they talked together of all the things which had happened. You're walking along. You're journeying along the road. It's kind of like for us in a car trip.

You're with somebody else. What are you doing during that time? Now you're walking, not in a car, so you're not sleeping. You're walking. What are you doing to pass the time as you walk? Okay.

So you're walking along. You're talking. What are you talking about? You're close to Jerusalem.

Been a lot of activity happening in Jerusalem the last few days. So what do you think you're talking about? All the events of the day.

This crucifixion that you heard. This resurrection that you've heard tell of. That's what they're talking about. And it came to pass that while they communed together and reasoned, Jesus Himself drew near and went with them.

So again, insert yourself into the story. You're walking along with a friend. You're talking about all the activities of the day. And all of a sudden, there's somebody walking along with you. It names Him.

[8 : 03] It is Jesus. But you don't know it at this point in time. All right? Got it? Because it says their eyes were held that they should not know Him. So they didn't know who this person was, just a person that joined them in their walk.

And He said to them, What manner of communication are these that you have one to another as you walk and are sad? And the one of them, whose name was Cleopas, answered and said unto

him, Are you only a stranger in Jerusalem?

And have you not known the things which will come to pass there in these days? So this man that's walking along beside you asks, Why are you sad? What are you talking about? And your response is, Haven't you heard?

Don't you know what's been going on? And Jesus said to them, What things? And they said to Him concerning Jesus of Nazareth, Which was a prophet, mighty in deed and word before God and all the people, And how the chief priests and our rulers delivered Him to be condemned to death, And have crucified Him.

But we trusted that it had been He which should have redeemed Israel. And besides all this, today is the third day since these things were done. Yea, and certain women, also of our company, Made us astonished which were early at the sepulcher, When they found not His body, They came in saying that they also had seen a vision of angels, Which said that He was alive.

[9 : 27] And certain of them which were with us went to the sepulcher, And found it even as the women had said, But Him they saw not. Then He said to them, O fools and slow of heart to believe all that the prophets have spoken.

Ought not Christ to have suffered these things and to enter into His glory? And beginning at Moses and all the prophets, He expounded to them and all the scriptures the things concerning Himself. And they drew near to the village where they went, And He made as though He would have gone further.

But they constrained Him, saying, Abide with us, for it is towards evening, the day is far spent. And He went in to tarry with them. And it came to pass, as He said it, Meet with them. He took bread and blessed it and broke it and gave it to them.

And their eyes were opened, And they knew Him, And He vanished out of their sight. And they said to one another, Did not our hearts burn within us while He talked with us by the way, And while He opened to us the scriptures?

So, again, this is you in that story. You're walking along with a friend, Talking about these events. All of a sudden, another individual is walking along with you. You don't know who it is.

[10 : 35] They're asking, Well, what are you talking about? And he's like, Haven't you heard? Haven't you heard all these events that have happened? That this Jesus was crucified? We thought He was the one that was going to redeem Israel. We thought He was the one.

But they killed Him. They crucified Him. And they put Him in the grave. And now we've heard tell that He's risen. But we don't really know what to think about all this.

And they're talking. And who are you talking to in this story? Jesus. But you don't know it. And you talk with Him more.

And He talks about all kinds of things with you. And finally, it says your eyes are opened. And you understand who it is you've been talking to. Who have you been talking to? Jesus.

But at that minute that your eyes are opened and you understand who you're talking to, what happens? It says He vanished out of their sight. I want you to imagine at that point in time, what is going through your mind.

[11 : 38] You finally realize this is Jesus that you walked with, that you talked with, that has been conversing with you. You finally realize it. But as soon as you realize it, He's gone.

What is going through your mind? He's alive. Certainly that's going to be going through your mind. What else? Okay, now what? Absolutely that's going to be going through your mind.

Anything else? There's something else as I thought about this account this week that really would have been going through my mind, but I maybe think a little different than everybody else. What's the reason He showed up?

Why us? Anything else? Where did He go? We have lots of questions, don't we? Where did He go? He vanished out of our sight. Now where is He at? Anything else? Did this really just happen? Is it our imagination? Did this really just happen? Anything else?

[12 : 35] You still haven't hit on, again, I told you, I think different people. Forrest? Why did we not recognize Him? Why didn't we know Him? All of a sudden at the end, our eyes were open and we knew it, but why didn't we know that before?

That's getting close to what goes through my mind. Why me? Why me?

The other thing that I can't help but think is, what would have gone through my mind was, I wish I would have known who I was talking to. Wouldn't you think that?

If I would have known who I was talking to, I would have had some different questions. If I would have only realized who I was in the presence of, boy, I would have appreciated that whole experience more.

If I had known that I was walking with Jesus, if I had realized who that was, boy, I'd have had a whole other list of questions for Him. What is going on? How does this all transpire?

[13 : 35] But I didn't realize it. Do you think there was maybe even a little regret that they didn't realize it later? That in the middle of the experience, they didn't have that understanding?

They didn't recognize what they truly had and what they truly were doing? They didn't recognize that we are walking with a risen Savior. They didn't realize it until afterwards. How do you think they would have acted had they known that in the middle of it?

They would have realized what a special experience that was. And I guess the thing that I'm getting at, the thing that has been on my mind a lot this week, and even as I read there in Psalms, we don't always realize the blessing that we're in the midst of, do we?

At that moment in time, as they were walking with Jesus, they didn't realize the blessing that they were experiencing right then. Their eyes weren't open to it. How many times in our lives do we miss the blessing of an experience because we just don't realize what we've got until after the fact?

You know, I even think about little situations in my life that maybe help me understand this a little more, that looking back on something you think I wish I would have known. Even little things.

[14 : 46] There's a little thing once in my mind that I think about. We were shooting the basketball around a little bit in the driveway yesterday, just messing around a little bit. But basketball is something I always enjoyed.

I was never all that great at it, but I really enjoyed it. And even after playing in high school, you know, I'd still go places sometimes. There'd be pickup games or stuff going on. You'd get together with friends, play some five-on-five in a gym somewhere.

I enjoyed that. You know what? I don't know if I can do that anymore. And you know what? I don't know when I last did that. But I think back and I thought, I don't know when the last time was that I did that.

I wish I would have realized when I was on the court the last time that this would be my last time I did it. That this would be the last time I laced on those basketball shoes and ran up and down the court and enjoyed that. I didn't enjoy that moment because I didn't realize really what it was. How many instances in our lives do we have like that when we're in the middle of something wonderful that we should appreciate and yet we fail to realize what we've got? Keeping that thought in mind, I want you to look back in Psalms where we started.

[15 : 54] Back in Psalms 32. Because I believe so often in our lives we do not realize the blessing that we have as believers and as Christians that we're in the midst of experiencing a tremendous blessing and yet sometimes we take it for granted because we fail to appreciate what we've got.

Look again in Psalms 32, just the first verse. Blessed is he whose transgressions or transgression is forgiven and whose sin is covered.

So for someone who has their sins forgiven, someone who has put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ and his blood has covered their sins, it says their sins are washed white as snow, they're separated as far as the east is from the west, they're blotted out, they're gone.

What is that person? First word of this verse. Blessed. They are blessed. If you have accepted Jesus Christ, that is you and that is me.

Do we understand what a blessing that is? Are our eyes really open to how wonderful a thing that is to know that your sins are forgiven? You know, I truly believe, at least for me, and I won't speak for you, but I truly believe there's sometimes that amazing thing that sometimes I take it for granted.

[17 : 20] Sometimes I forget how blessed I am just for that simple fact to know that my sins are forgiven. Because folks, do we understand what a difference that makes? Do we understand that that makes all the difference?

You know, Ron already shared, we had three funerals this week. You know what? I praise God, all three of those people were believers in Jesus Christ. Do you know what difference that makes? All the difference. All the difference.

Everything else in our lives, the ups, the downs, the struggles, the trials, the sicknesses, the illness, the financial challenge, all the other things, even the good things that we experience, all that is what?

Temporary. All of it. And it's going to come down to one thing where your sins forgiven through Jesus Christ. That makes all the difference, doesn't it?

And if you have accepted Jesus Christ, you are blessed. You're saved and you are blessed. Do you realize how blessed you are? Or are we like the two on Emmaus that they're in the midst of a great blessing and they fail to recognize it?

[18 : 27] Do we recognize that blessing in our lives? Do we wake up in the morning and think how blessed we are just to have our sins forgiven? You know, we talk about so many other blessings and there are lots of them, aren't there?

They're shared every Sunday morning. We share them all the time and we should. The blessings of family, the blessings of health, the blessings of experiences that we have, the blessings of the country we live in, the blessings of the church that we have, the blessing of love around us, the list goes on and on.

But you know what? There is no greater blessing than this blessing that's listed in the first verse of Psalms 32. The blessing of knowing that your sins are forgiven.

What's the alternative? If your sins are not forgiven, what condition are you in? You're lost. What do you appear like before God? Because when God looks at you, if your sins aren't forgiven, what does He see?

He sees sin, doesn't He? If your sins aren't forgiven, when God looks on you, what does He see? He sees that sin. And you know what sin looks like? Folks, it's ugly.

[19 : 37] Do we understand that? I mean, the Bible says very clearly that Satan does a great job of making sin look good, doesn't he? Through the world, Satan glorifies it.

He makes sin look good. He makes it look like fun. He makes it look like that's what you really want in life. But what is it really at its core in reality? It is ugly.

And it leads to death. And it leads to sorrow. And it leads to hurt. And it leads to heartache. That is what sin is. And when God looks at a person, if they don't have that sin forgiven, that is what God sees.

He sees that ugliness. But when He looks at a believer, when He looks at someone who has put their faith and trust in Jesus Christ, what does He see?

Isn't it a trick question? What does He see? A diamond in the rough. A diamond in the rough? What else does He see? The righteousness of Jesus. He doesn't see sin when He looks at you if your life is in Jesus Christ.

[20 : 40] He sees someone who has been washed white as snow. He sees what the Bible says, not me, but what the Bible says. He sees a saint. Isn't that what the Bible says?

If you're a believer, you're a saint. That's what God sees. He doesn't see sin because it is, we already said, blotted out. It is separated from us. It is washed white as snow. What a blessing to know that's what God sees.

I hope and I pray that our eyes are opened to that blessing. Blessed is a man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered, and that's all because of Easter, what we just celebrated, isn't it? Because of what Jesus Christ did on the cross and His overcoming of death. And it goes on in verse 2, blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputes not iniquity. That's a fancy way of saying what?

Imputes not iniquity. What does that mean? What does it mean? Who has the Bible? It says, it words it differently. Doesn't count our sin against us.

[21 : 46] Isn't it good not to have your sin counted against you? What would happen if your sin was counted against you? You die, you get to those pearly gates.

I know that's the impression we always have in our minds. You get to that judgment. What if God holds your sin against you? What if He starts checking off those sins in your life?

Push that button, you're going down. You push the button, you're going down. Well, you know, we get all kinds of visions in our mind, but that's the reality of it. It says, blessed is a man to whom God doesn't charge sins to them.

He doesn't say, you're guilty of this, this, this, this, and this. There's none of that if your life is in Christ. That's a blessing, isn't it? Are our eyes truly open to what a blessing that is?

Because guess what? You don't deserve it. You do not deserve it. That's harsh, isn't it? You ever been given something great and somebody says, here it is, but you don't deserve it?

[22 : 49] It sounds harsh, doesn't it? And I know sometimes I have you say things to your neighbor next to you and the reason I do that, I think sometimes when we say it, it registers different in our brains. Tell someone next to you, you don't deserve it.

With love. Do it with love. Sue, you're sitting by yourself. You don't deserve it. I know. Now, everybody look up here.

Tell me I don't deserve it. All at once. Go ahead. Tell me. Good, because I don't. I need reminded of that because it reminds me what a blessing it is.

It's something I didn't earn. It's something I don't deserve. It's something I can't earn. It's something there's no way in the world I can ever earn it. And yet God gives it to me anyway. Blessed is a man to whom the Lord imputes not iniquity and in whose spirit there is no guile.

You know, there's an alternative that David talks about in this verse. When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. He's talking about when he held this sin in, when he didn't confess that sin.

[23 : 53] What did it do? It did what sin does. It eats us up. It did what sin does. It tears us down. The Bible says that Christ came to give us life.

What does Satan want to give us? Death. It says he comes to rob, steal, and destroy. He wants to rob the joy from us. He wants to steal life from us. He wants to bring us death.

That's what sin does. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me. My moisture has turned into the drought of summer. Drought's no fun, is it? What is real drought?

It's just when things are dry. Can things grow with no moisture? What happens to them? They die. That's what sin does.

That's where sin leads us. But verse 5 changes everything. I acknowledge my sin to you.

[25 : 00] And my sin or my iniquity have I not hidden? When I brought it before God. When I opened my heart up to Him. When I say, God, here's my sin. I said I will confess my transgressions to the Lord.

When we give it up to God. That's what David is talking about. When we give it up to God. What happens? He takes it away. When I said I will confess my transgressions to the Lord.

And you forgave the iniquity of my sin. When we do that, God forgives. And we're blessed.

For this shall everyone that is godly pray to you in a time when you may be found. What is the time that God may be found? It's right now.

It's right now. It's today. It's each day of life that God gives us. He may be found. It's just up to us to turn to Him. You know, folks, David is talking about sin.

[26 : 11] And He's talking about what it's like to be in that sin versus what it's like to be have that sin removed from Him. He's showing the difference between the two.

And He's saying, if you have had your sin removed from you, you are blessed. I believe God wants us to understand how blessed we are.

That's why it says, blessed is the man. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven. Folks, if you have invited Jesus Christ into your heart, if He has forgiven your sins, you are blessed beyond measure.

I don't care if everything in your life seems to not be going in the direction you want it to go, guess what? You're still blessed. It doesn't change that fact. Nothing changes that fact. And the thing today that is laid on my heart more than anything else, I pray that our eyes are open to how blessed we are.

That we don't take it for granted. That we don't only realize later on how blessed we are, but we realize today how blessed we are. That we're not like the two on the road to Emmaus who didn't know, who didn't understand, who I'm sure later on thought, I wish I would have known how blessed we were.

[27 : 22] Right now, I pray we understand how blessed we are when we have Jesus Christ. I also pray that if there's anyone in here that doesn't have Jesus Christ, that you would decide, because it says, while the Lord may be found, that's right now, that you bring your life to Him and ask Him to forgive your sins like David did.

Because once you do that, you are blessed beyond measure. You have an eternal home in heaven waiting for you that no one can take away. That is a blessing, isn't it? Isn't it?

Isn't it? Yes. Do we understand that? And I'm not talking just talk about it at church. Do we understand that in our hearts? Do we live like people that are blessed?

Do we think like people that are blessed? Or do we think doom and gloom and oh, I wish this were different and I wish that were different? If we do that, we're kind of forgetting we are blessed people. If the only thing that we see as a blessing is that our sins are forgiven, then we are blessed beyond measure. I pray this morning that each one of us has eyes that are open to how blessed we are when we have Jesus Christ in our hearts and in our lives.

[28 : 31] Did Jesus Christ have to walk on that road with those two men? No. Did He? Yep. Did Jesus have to go to the cross for you? Nope. Did He?

Yep. Why? Because He loves you. And that means you are blessed. I pray that you wake up every morning just thinking, I am blessed.

I am blessed because my sins have been separated from me. I pray that we have eyes that are open to that each and every day of our lives. Let's pray.

Lord God, thank You again for Your Word. And Lord, I just pray as we think about those on the road to Emmaus and how they didn't realize in the midst of it how truly blessed they were. They didn't see it until later on.

But I pray, Lord, that right now in each and every day of our lives that we would see the blessing we have, that we would understand it for what it is, that we would not take for granted the fact that Jesus died on the cross and because of that our sins are separated from us.

[29 : 30] That ugliness, the hurt and heartache that sin leads to is separated from us. And God looks on us and He sees perfection.

He sees saints. He sees people that have been washed white as snow. And Lord, thank You for the blessing of knowing that that is how our Father in Heaven sees us when our life is in Christ.

Lord, if there is anyone in here that hasn't accepted Jesus, I pray that this morning would be the morning that they do that. If there is anyone in here that doesn't appreciate and understand how blessed they are, I pray, Lord, that their eyes are open to that this very moment and that they would see and understand how blessed we are to have the forgiveness of Jesus Christ in our hearts and in our lives.

Open our eyes, Lord. And it's in the name of Jesus we pray and all God's family said, Amen.