

The Blessing of Being Righteous

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- [0 : 00] For some people, the Bible is a collection of books about many things.! But in truth, the Bible is a collection of books about many things. But in truth, the Bible is a collection of books that form one book and is about one thing.
- Psalm 32, this psalm that we have come to in our series in the Psalms, gets to the heart of what the Bible is all about.
- What the Bible is all about is the reconciliation of sinners to a holy God. That is what the Bible is about. It is a book of redemption.
- It begins with creation and fall, and it ends with redemption and new creation. In Genesis to Revelation, that is what the Bible is about.
- Psalm 32 gets to the heart of that. So if you have not yet done so, please turn in your Bibles to Psalm 32. And let us consider how in this psalm, David gets to the heart of the one thing that the Bible is about.
- [1 : 27] Please follow along as I read, and I'm reading from the English Standard Version. So if you have another translation, yours will read slightly differently. And if you have questions, as they may arise during the sermon, I will allow some time at the end for questions and answers.
- Let's read.
- Let's read.
- Let's read.
- Let's read.
- [3 : 47] All you upright in heart. Let's pray. Father, thank you for your word this morning. And we pause to ask that you would open our hearts to hear it and receive it.
- Lord, more than that, to apply it to our lives. And so I ask, Lord, for grace to me as I seek to be faithful to proclaim your word to your people.
- And then, Lord, for grace to have its full way and effect in and upon our lives. We pray in Jesus' name, amen.
- Amen. Amen. As is sometimes the case. Amen. Amen. Amen.
- Amen. Amen. Amen. Amen.
- [5 : 37] Amen. Yes.
- Yes. More than being forgiven, what we see in Psalm 32 is this. Life's greatest blessing and highest joy is being counted righteous by God.
- That's what we see in Psalm 32. Life's greatest blessing and highest joy is being counted righteous by God.
- That's the central theme and central truth of Psalm 32. And indeed, it is the central theme and central truth of all of Scripture. This is what Scripture is seeking to get at.

How are sinners made right with the Holy God? Now, before we dive into Psalm 32, I believe it's helpful for us to see how the Psalm is structured.

[7 : 02] And what we'll see is that Psalm 32 has an introduction. It's in verses 1 and 2. And it has a body in verses 3 through 9.

And it has a conclusion in verses 10 and 11. And one of the distinguishing marks of good writing is that whatever is stated in the introduction is restated in some way, shape, or form in the conclusion.

That's a good mark of good writing. A generally good mark you can look for in any good writing. That what is said at the beginning is restated in the end.

Especially when there's a very important point that the author is trying to make. That's what we see in this psalm. So here's what I want us to do this morning.

First, I want to consider what David says in the introduction in verses 1 and 2. And then the conclusion, verses 10 and 11.

[8 : 07] And then I want us to consider what he says in the body of the psalm, verses 3 through 11. In verse 1, David declares that the person whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered, is blessed.

He says that person is blessed. He said blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Throughout the Bible, this word blessed refers to a condition, really, it is a condition of the highest joy and satisfaction that we can have.

And it comes from God. It is a kind of satisfaction that nothing in this world can compare with. Nothing in this world can give. And when that is pronounced upon us, blessed, it is the highest expression of joy.

And this is the word that Jesus uses in the Sermon on the Mount. When he would say to those who would live in accordance with the principles of the kingdom of God, in accordance with the constitution of the kingdom of God, he would say, oh, the blessedness of those who are poor in spirit.

Or those who are meek. What is clear as we consider Psalm 32 is that David is not talking about receiving forgiveness from someone we've sinned against.

[9 : 51] He's not talking about sinning against someone and then going to them and saying, hey, man, I'm sorry. And the person says, hey, I forgive you. Don't worry about it. He's not talking about that.

We've experienced that. And sometimes a lot of that is mere courtesy. Sometimes a lot of that is mere doing what is civil and what is right.

When we know we've wronged someone, we express, I'm sorry. And the person reciprocates and they say, hey, you're forgiven. We've experienced that, but we would admit that it didn't bring to us this condition of blessedness that we see the psalmist talking about two times in two verses.

Instead, what David is describing here doesn't come from human beings. It comes from God.

David is describing what it is to be forgiven by God. So he has God in view and not man. David says, God forgives and covers our sin.

[10 : 53] And what he's saying to us is in the divine account of heaven, the sin no longer exists. Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven.

And he says it another way, whose sin is covered. We all know people who have, and we've done it ourselves, no doubt, say you're forgiven, but the sin ain't covered.

Sin is very much exposed. Sin is very much, ready to be used at a convenient moment. Not so with God. David says, oh, the blessedness of one who has been forgiven by God because his sin is not just forgiven, his sin is covered.

It doesn't exist anymore in the divine records. And I believe that most of us know enough about our Bibles to understand that David was not talking theory.

David was not talking something he heard or something he read about. David is talking about what he experienced. He is talking firsthand about God's amazing forgiveness.

[12 : 12] And that's because although David knew some very high spiritual highs, he also knew some very low spiritual lows in his life.

Like his adultery with Bathsheba and the murder of her husband, Ruiah. We read David's prayer of repentance in Psalm 51. And Charles Spurgeon, in his introduction to this psalm, says that in the history of the psalms, it seems like Psalm 32 was written after Psalm 51.

Now, that's debatable. We don't know that for sure. But it seems very reasonable that whatever David is referring to, it was something that went to the depths of his soul.

Something that was so heart-wrenching and so body-wrecking that it affected him so much that when he came out of it, that he says, oh, the blessedness of one who's been forgiven.

Oh, the blessedness of one against whom God does not hold his sin. But there's another blessedness that David talks about.

[13 : 36] Not just the blessedness that we see in verse 1 about being forgiven and having our sins covered. David talks about another blessedness. That if understood, it's completely amazing.

It is the blessedness of having the Lord not to count or hold sin against him. Look at how he says it in verse 2.

Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity. And in whose spirit there is no deceit.

Again, this goes beyond the blessedness of forgiveness of sins. Because verse 2 is being counted righteous by God, separate and apart from any act that we do or don't do any act of law-keeping.

Not doing this because the law says do it or doing that because the law says do it. The psalmist says the condition of blessedness. A sinner who knows he is a sinner.

[14 : 48] But he also knows he is counted perfectly righteous before God, separate and apart from what he does or he doesn't do. And there's no deceit in his heart about it.

Because he knows he's not performing. He's not pretending before God. He is a sinner before God. But God holds no sin against him.

And so there's no pretense, no performance. The psalmist says the blessedness of the one who is in that condition.

Now one of the beauties of Psalm 32 is that in these first two verses at least, we're not left to ourselves to interpret what they mean.

We actually find in Romans chapter 4, the Apostle Paul, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, interprets for us these two verses. So let's keep your place there if you can.

[15 : 56] But let's turn to Romans chapter 4. You can use that ribbon in your Bible to stay there. For those of you who have a Bible, those of you who don't have a Bible, I'm not sure what you will do.

Romans chapter 4. Now, here the Apostle Paul is continuing to argue that justification is by grace alone through faith in Jesus Christ and separate and apart from any law-keeping anything that we do or we don't do.

That's the argument that Paul has been making. That is the argument that he is continuing to make. And what he does now in chapter 4 is he uses Abraham as an example to illustrate and prove the point that he is making.

So, let's read 4, 1 through 8. Paul writes, What then shall we say was gained by Abraham, our forefather, according to the flesh?

For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say?

[17 : 30] Abraham believed God and it was counted to him as righteousness. Now, to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift, but as his due.

And to the one who does not work, but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness. Notice, just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works.

Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven and whose sins are covered.
Blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.

Paul uses these words to make the point of justification by grace before God.

And so here's where we need to understand what he's saying. This is what he's saying. Interestingly, notice that Paul does something a little different from what we see in Psalm 32.

[18 : 51] In Psalm 32, we see two separate statements about the blessedness of this man and they're separated by a period. They're two full sentences. Here, Paul combines them because it's one thought.

He combines them. And so, what we have is this. We have the whole idea of yes, when we sin, we receive forgiveness from God. God forgives us and if you know what the weight of sin is and you've been forgiven of that, you understand what it is to have that lifted and to know your conscience is clear, to know you're forgiven before God.

But that's not all that he says. In the second verse, he is talking about a person about whom sin is present, the person is sinful.

And understand this as well. Being a sinner in the sight of God has nothing to do with what we don't do or do do. Because in and of ourselves, we are sinful and our very thoughts are sinful.

So if it were possible to come into this world and never commit one single sin, even in that condition, we don't satisfy a holy God.

[20 : 08] Because we know our thoughts are not right and perfect. We know that we will never fully, 100% do our duty as it is towards God even in our hearts.

And so what Paul is talking about and what David is talking about is the person who is in relationship with God and though they sin and they need to ask forgiveness for that sin, they need to repent of that sin and deal with that sin, God does not count that sin against them in terms of their relationship to Him.

He still counts them righteous. See, a lot of times we actually connect our righteousness to what we do or we don't do. And so we believe that, okay, if I commit a sin then I am unrighteous.

No, it doesn't happen that way. What the psalmist is saying is the blessedness of the person against whom the Lord does not count his sin, against whom the Lord does not hold his sin.

And again, it has nothing to do with being sloppy with sin and overlooking sin and saying don't worry about it. No, a holy God will never do that. But at the same time, that sin that we must deal with and we must address and we must confess and repent of and turn away from, God does not hold that against us.

[21 : 40] David said, that man is blessed. And see, this if this doesn't amaze you, you don't understand it.

If it doesn't amaze you, you can be sure you don't understand what David is saying here, you don't understand what Paul is explaining here. If it amazes you, you probably do understand it.

Paul grounds his argument in Psalm 32 verses 1 through 2. Let me point one more thing out before we go back to Psalm 32.

Look at verse 5. Verse 5 says of Romans 4, unto the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly.

the NIV says the wicked. The wicked. God justifies the wicked. God says to the wicked, you're righteous.

[22 : 54] Not because you are righteous in and of yourself, but it is a gift of righteousness. It is a declared righteousness over that person. David says, oh the blessedness of that person.

Oh the blessedness of that person who is wicked, who is a sinner, but to whom God says you are righteous and against whom God does not hold his sin.

Now, I don't have time to go into it this morning, but the thought comes to mind how some would argue and say, well, you know, if that's the case and I could live any way that I want to live, I could do whatever I want to do and it's not going to matter.

And my quick response to that would be, no, not if you belong to God. If you belong to God, the response of that should cause us to fall to our needs.

And thank God for that kind of amazing grace that we don't deserve. What we deserve is for God to hold every single sin against us and hold us accountable and punish us for those sins.

[24 : 08] But he doesn't do that. He justifies the wicked, justifies the ungodly. The people who believe that once you've confessed all your sins, you say, God, forgive me, et cetera, et cetera, then he says, justify.

No, he justifies the wicked. Let's go back to Psalm 32. Psalm 32. Psalm 32. So that's the introduction of Psalm 32.

Let's look at the conclusion that really echoes the introduction. Again in verse 10, although the psalmist is writing under divine inspiration of the Holy Spirit, when he writes, many of the sorrows of the wicked, but the steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the Lord, David, again, is writing from personal experience.

It was in wickedness that he took Uriah's one and only wife and forced her into an adulterous relationship. Even though he had myriads of other women he could have pursued, he had a house full of wives and full of concubines, had a whole kingdom of single women, any one of whom would have been happy to be a wife or a concubine,!

But David went after Uriah's one and only wife. It was in wickedness that he schemed to frame Uriah, to say that he was the father of the child that David fathered.

[25 : 55] And then it was in wickedness that he murdered Uriah. Now I'm not saying that David necessarily is talking about that particular sin. I'm just making the point that David was familiar with these words that he is speaking in these closing verses when he says, many are the sorrows of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the Lord.

David also knew the steadfast love of the Lord. David fully expected that God would have been even more severe with him, that God in the midst of his sin was merciful to him.

And David is able to say the steadfast love of the Lord surrounds the one who trusts in him. And so in verse 11, he calls for the only appropriate response, be glad in the Lord and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart.

He's really, again, restating the blessedness of the one who has been forgiven, the blessedness of the one against whom God holds no iniquity.

now while David is speaking generally in verses 1 and 2, he gets really personal in verses 3 through 9.

[27 : 32] He moves from the general to the personal when he comes to verses 3 through 9. So now what I want us to do is I want us to walk through the body of Psalm 32 beginning with verses 3 and 4.

And what we see in verses 3 and 4 in David's testimony is we see David responding to God initiated conviction.

God initiated conviction. Look at what he says in verses 3 and 4. For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away, through my groaning all day long, for day and night your hand was heavy upon me.

My strength was dried up as by the heat of summer. Now there's a connection between verses 2 and 3.

Notice David says in verse 2, Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity and in whose spirit there is no deceit. But he goes on verse 3 he says for when I kept silent.

[28 : 44] David was in a state and in a season in his life when he was being deceitful where he was not confessing his sin where he was silent concerning his sin.

and he describes for us in verses 3 and 4 the physical and the emotional effect of being under the weight of divine conviction.

Again what the sin was we don't know but what we do know is that David was silent about it to God he was deceitful about it to God which is crazy when you think about it but sin does that to!

sin makes us think like Adam and Eve that you could hide from God we are out of that and we can look at it that's pretty ridiculous but when you're in the sin it makes you silly and we don't think as we ought to think and so David is being silent with the one who knows all things the one who sees all things and though David was silent to God God was not silent to him God convicted David David experienced God initiated conviction evidently it caused David to not have appetite his bones he said were wasting away he knew no rest day and night couldn't sleep God's heavy hand of conviction was upon him his strength was sapped he had no energy to do anything he said it was like the heat of the summer that just saps your strength on Friday night

I was just thinking of going to bed and it was hot and I was going to turn on air conditioning to go to bed and five minutes before I decided to go you know what happened power went out and I was preparing I thought of what David said and immediately it got hotter than it was and you just feel all your energy going out David said God's convicting!

[30 : 57] hand upon him just sapped his strength there's nothing that he wanted was able to do now you would notice that in Psalm 32 like a lot of Psalms sections are broken with this word Selah and the whole idea is that these are intentional pauses that we are to make to consider what we have just read it's a kind of divine marker to cause us to pause and to reflect what David is saying as we think about it is that he was being silent about his sin and verse five makes that very clear when he says I acknowledge my sin to you he was being silent about his sin but here's the truth that we should miss this morning without divine intervention without

God initiated conviction David would have remained silent about his sin without it there would have been no change in his life and the same is true for us this morning if God does not bring conviction to our hearts and our lives nothing will change we will continue to be silent about our sin we will continue to cover our sin we all need divine conviction you realize that again I don't know that the issue that David was grappling with was the sin with Bathsheba but just to use it as an example when you read the account of that in 2 Samuel 11 and 12 what you will see is this a long period of time elapsed a very long period of time elapsed between

David's initial sin and his repentance it's between 9 to 12 months where David lived in this sinful condition knowing all that he did and day after day he went along and he did it and was silent in bringing it to the Lord and repenting of his sin and God initiated sending the prophet Nathan to him to confront him and had God not done that he would have stayed in his sin and what I'm saying this morning is this and I want you to really hear this don't think for a moment that any human being is capable in and of him or herself on his or her own to be convicted by sin away from the work of God none of us can none of us will when we experience conviction!

of sin find God because God is at work in! lives Paul said it well in Romans 7 when he said I know that no good thing dwells within me there's no good thing that dwells within us where we have the power to do what is good and do what is right before the Lord this is more than just turning over a new leaf this is more than beginning a new chapter in one's life as some people say they want to change their lives this is more than pulling ourselves up by our moral bootstraps or tightening our moral belt no we need the convicting work of God in our hearts and lives otherwise we will love our sin and we cling to our sin thank God in David's case he recognized that God loved him enough to bring his heavy hand of conviction on him and to cause him to see his sin and to recognize his need to change so

I ask us this morning I ask you this morning a very personal question are there sins in your life that you're clinging to that you're not repenting from you know it's wrong but you have no real will no desire to change if that's the case ask God God would you grant me God initiated conviction so that I may change so that I may see my sin for what it is that I may hate my sin instead of loving my sin and clinging to my sin and as hard as it may be when we read what happened to David here the pain of God initiated conviction but the fruit of God initiated conviction is marvelous and wonderful and the one who experiences it is one who is truly blessed it brings me to the second part of

[36 : 23] David's testimony which is in verse five and it's God initiated repentance God initiated repentance look at what David says I acknowledged my sin to you and I did not cover my iniquity I said I will confess my transgressions to the Lord and you forgave the iniquity of my sin the NIV approaches this verse a little differently the NIV begins it with the adverb then then I acknowledge my sin to you and it helps us to see the movement and the connection between God's heavy hand of conviction upon David and then his confession of his sin he's saying after you did all that to me after you in kindness gave me no rest and confronted me with my sin then I acknowledged my sin to you and I didn't cover my iniquity I said I will confess my transgressions to the Lord and you forgave the iniquity of my sin there's a saying that confession is good for the soul there's lot truths to that but you know when we confess to

God we're not informing him of anything when we confess to God we are being honest with him about what he knows and about what we know and that is good for our souls because we are owning our sin we are taking responsibility before God for our sin we're not excusing our sin we're not blaming it on somebody else we're taking it and we're owning it and we're coming before a gracious and a merciful God and as David said I will confess my transgressions to the Lord and isn't it wonderful that the very next thing we read and you forgive the iniquity of my sin he freely and abundantly and quickly pardons not holding sin against the repentant sinner but it was

God's convicting hand that brought David to the place of conviction David's repentance was God initiated now closely connected to the God initiated repentance that we see in verse 5 is the third part of David's testimony that we see in verses 6 and 7 which is God initiated prayer God initiated prayer here in verses 6 and 7 David is expressing the joy and the blessing of communion with God in prayer something that was absent when he was keeping silent about his sin prayer this prayer God it started with God initiated conviction it continued with God initiated repentance and now we see God initiated prayer because of his own experience of praying to God and confessing his sins and receiving forgiveness for those sins

David is now able to pray the words we find in verses 6 and 7 therefore let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found surely the rush of great waters they shall not reach him you are a hiding place for me you preserve me from trouble you surround me with shouts of deliverance this prayer of David in verses 6 and 7 should inspire the godly to pray the question for us this morning is am I godly if I am godly I will pray and there are many things that we need to pray about David says pray to God pray to God while he may be found and God is found when he is convicting us God is found when he is near to us and confronting us with our sin it's the best time to call upon him it's the best time to pray to him when we are experiencing this divine initiative to pray when his convicting hand is upon us in Isaiah 55 verses 6 and 7 we read these words seek the lord while he may be found call upon him while he is near let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts let him return to the lord that he may have compassion on him and to our god for he will abundantly pardon you think about it god is omnipresent he is everywhere all the time but the psalmist is getting at this truth that there are times and seasons in our lives when god is in manifest presence closer to us and he says we need to respond to that he says we need to act upon that when god is near when god has come near to us to deal with us in particular convicting us of our sin that we mustn't shrug it off believing that in the morning i can make it right next week i can do it he says no call upon him while he is near to you in manifest presence dealing with your heart calling you to make things right he says pray to god while he is near and notice the promise of verse 7 our god may have compassion on him that he may have compassion on him and to our god for he will abundantly pardon seek the lord while he may be found call upon him while he is near let the wicked forsake his way and the unrighteous man his thoughts let him return to the lord that he may have compassion on him and to our god here's why for he will abundantly pardon it is quite amazing that with promises like these that we still sometimes find ourselves reluctant to go to god reluctant to confess our sins to god reluctant to call upon him and pray and i believe that's because sometimes we don't grasp the power of sin and the depth of our own sinfulness this is a wonderful promise held out to us to pray to god and this is you this morning and god is dealing with your heart in any particular way whatever it may be and let us not think

that it must be some way he great sin maybe it's in areas that we may minimize in speech and in attitude let us not push away the convicting voice of the lord that calls us to repentance that calls us to pray for the fourth and final part of david's testimony that he refers to is in verses eight and nine and it is god initiated obedience brothers and sisters it is not enough for us to be convicted and to repent and to pray we also need to demonstrate genuine repentance by obedience obeying the lord and what he calls us to do and just like genuine conviction and genuine repentance and prayer are all god initiated so is obedience so is the obedience that we are called to in verses eight and nine now in verses eight and nine there are no quotations around these two verses but i believe as you look at them they are best understood as being spoken from the lord in verse eight where the psalmist writes i will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go i will counsel you with my eye upon you i don't think david is saying i will do that for you david cannot do that for us right now there's only one who can do that across all generations for all people and that is the lord himself so first we see in verse eight god's promise to instruct us and to teach us in the way we should go he promises that he will counsel us with his eye upon us this is nothing short of god's promise for us to obey his word and he will direct us and guide us in our ways in verse nine we have this beautiful illustration of what kind of obedience god is calling us to in verse nine it says be not like a horse or a mule without understanding which must be curbed with bit and bridle or it will not stay near you how many of you know about horses you know some things about horses now you think about horses i didn't know anything about horses and i wanted to try to make sure i really understood what was being communicated so i did a little research to try to understand something about horses i didn't know the bit from the bridle and i wanted to understand that and what i found is that the horse's mouth is different from the way our mouths are all of our teeth are together but with a horse the lower part the horse has teeth in the front and teeth in the back and there's this gap between the front teeth and the back teeth and right between there is where a bridle goes that metal rod it can be made out of other kinds of things and what i found is they have all kinds of bits for horses and a ruling horse will get a really rough bit to control them and a

[47 : 50] horse that is not so unruly gets a smooth bit and an easier bit so these bits vary and so this bit sticks out of the sides of the horse's mouth and then it's connected to the reins to the back and this bridle over the horse's head all that's connected into one and so you're able to understand how the rider is able to control the horse and as I was reading I came across a very helpful article an article written by a lady by the name of Courtney Doctor and her article was titled A Bit About Bits and she was actually commenting on this verse she was talking about this particular verse and she did a great job illustrating the two pictures that this verse is actually communicating the understanding horse the one who's obedient the one who submits to the bit and the bridle and the one who is not understanding the one who's unruly and I took the pictures that she had in her post and the first one is the that's could you just hit the lights for a second so they can see it better that's a picture of the understanding horse the horse is being submissive this right here on the edge that's the bridle going into the mouth and that is the reins then the bridle that's the bit in the mouth and the bridle over the head and that horse is being submitted and responsive to the rider that's the picture of the horse that we would want to be submitting to the constraints that God puts on our lives the direction that he puts on our lives which I believe the best picture of it is his word the bridle of his word the bit of his word the direction of his spirit and us being submitted to all of that and then she also showed a picture of a horse that lacks understanding and you can see this horse's mouth is open and the rider is actually now trying to control the horse pulling on the bit and depending on how rough the bit was the horse will feel some kind of pain the psalmist says don't be like a horse or mule without understanding which must be curbed with bit and bridle otherwise it will not stay near you'll run off and do its own thing we don't want to be like that we want to be like the horse who has understanding who understands that this bit and this bridle is the best thing for me because they say that as I was reading they say that the gentlest bit the gentlest bit can be harmful to a horse if the person riding the horse doesn't have the experience or not a hand of the horse and they said that the roughest bit can be fine with the horse if the person on the horse understands what he is doing and how to nudge the horse to move or to stop or to do whatever the horse needs to do brothers and sisters the Lord is calling us to this joyful obedience this obedience of seeing the blessing and seeing the goodness of his word and his commands for our lives and to direct

us Psalm 32 after this illustration in verse 9 rightly concludes with these words many are the sorrows of the wicked but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the Lord many of the sorrows of the wicked but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the Lord I'm sure you've heard people say oh you know the Christian life is so hard to live and there is no doubt that there are seasons and times and places in the world where that is very very true very very true but you know as a whole here's what the Bible says the Bible says the way of the transgressor is hard the Bible says the way of the wicked is what brings great pain and great heartache and heartbreak and so I want to ask us this morning which first of all which of the two horses would you be the one who is submitted to the bit and the bridle of all that God uses to lead us and direct us his word his spirit brothers and sisters the local church all of those means of grace that he gives us to help us are you the one that is lacking understanding and will do your own thing and want to go your own way and life is hard and filled with many sorrows is not trusting in God's wisdom and God's way that he has laid out for you blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven whose sin is covered blessed is the man against whom

God counts no iniquity and whose spirit there is no deceit brothers and sisters let us make no mistake that this is what these two verses and indeed Psalm 32 is all about once again the apostle Paul confirms this for us in Romans chapter 4 he speaks of the blessedness of the one against whom the Lord does not hold sin does not count sin I want us to close by looking back to Romans chapter 3 Romans 3 I want to begin in verse 21 and see how Paul argues for this righteousness that comes by faith and that is separate and apart from the law and understand that separate and apart from the law applies in two ways it applies in the keeping of the law and the breaking of the law the keeping of the law and the breaking of the law and the essence of it is this the keeping of the law will not make us righteous unrighteous before God when God has set his love on you the breaking of the law will not make us unrighteous before God because God has declared us to be righteous it is a permanent righteousness that he gives to those who put faith in Jesus

Christ verse 21 now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from the law although the law and the prophets bear witness to it the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ is for all who believe for there is no distinction for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and are justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus whom God put forward as a propitiation that is an old English word and it means to turn away the wrath of someone God put forth his own son to turn away his own wrath whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood to be received by faith this was to show

God's righteousness because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins it was to show his righteousness at the present time so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus there's a whole lot that Paul says there understand this Old Testament saints and New Testament saints are justified in the exact same way the Old Testament saints looked forward in faith to the sacrifice of Christ New Testament saints looked back in faith to the sacrifice of Jesus Christ the Bible tells us that Jesus was the lamb who was slain before the foundation of the world God knew the basis upon which he would justify sinners so even when

[58 : 00] David would talk about this in Psalm 32 this was looking forward to the manifestation of what God foreordained before the foundation of the world and in the fullness of time God sent his son sent him to the cross to do what he had planned to provide the basis upon which he would forgive every single sinner and this is why Paul concludes in verse 26 and he says all of this was to show God's righteousness at the present time so that God may be just meaning that there would be no wickedness in him see if God simply said to anyone don't worry about it I tear that demerit up don't worry about it it makes him unrighteous because it means that he overlooked sin but the only basis upon which God forgives sin is that his son paid for that sin his son became a substitute for the sinner bearing the sinner's sin paying the price of that sin dying the sinner's death and on that basis

God is able to be just punishing sin and he's able to be the justifier the one who says you're righteous you're righteous not by what you have done you're righteous not by what you haven't done you're righteous because of my son you're righteous because of the declaration that I have made concerning you brothers and sisters the truth of psalm 32 is amazing it is amazing grace but if we don't understand it if we allow ourselves to forget it amazing grace becomes boring grace this is so amazing it should never ever cease to amaze us and when we are trusting in any merit in ourselves when we are trusting in any basis that we believe is right and good before

God that God has accepted me based on this God loves me more based on this it undermines and prevents us from experiencing the fullness of this blessedness where we stand before God with nothing in our hands aware of our demerits not our merits and we have the assurance that we're righteous not in ourselves but because the holy God of the universe because of his son's death is able to say to us you are righteous the psalmist says blessed is the one against whom God holds no iniquity to one to to to to to to to