

Psalm 32

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Date: 11 September 2022

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[0 : 00] For those of you who don't know me, my name is Jordan.! I've been here for probably since the start of Shoreline, I think.! So it's good to get a chance to preach.

And like Dave said, we all got a chance to pick what psalm. And I had a different psalm picked out, and I felt like God was just saying, hey, buddy, you need to learn a little something from this one. So a little personal touch from my life. Spoiler alert, I'm not good at this psalm. The things that it's teaching us is things that I need to work on.

And I think we're in good company because it's written by David, a man who also was learning these lessons the hard way. So as we'll be doing Psalm 32, but I got a little intro to get us started. Everybody good? Tracking? All right. I don't know if many of you, this seems super loud. We good? All right. I don't know if many of you have seen, there was a, I don't know, the last couple years, there was a musical, a movie put out for Les Mis.

[1 : 06] It had Russell Crowe. Yeah. Apparently he sings. So they, they, it sounded good to me, but I'm not a singer, so.

But anyway, so they, they put this movie out, and Russell Crowe, who's the main character, Jean, Bill Jean, from the musical Les Mis.

At the beginning of the movie, Jean is a released convict, and he's struggling to find work and lodging because of his, his past, his town.

So in desperation, he goes to Bishop, a local Bishop, and he asks for help. This Bishop shows him extraordinary kindness. He's open. He's generous. He gives. Despite of the Bishop's generosity, Jean takes some valuables from the Bishop's place and runs away.

As he's running, he's intercepted by some police who recognize him, and they question him concerning the valuables that he had taken. So they call in the Bishop for the Bishop to testify against Jean.

[2 : 14] But instead of testifying against Jean, the Bishop says, No, I gave him those as a gift. He extends grace to Jean, and this is impactful to him, right?

And so he takes this as a second chance, and he says, Hey, I'm going to use this second chance, and I'm going to do better, right? And so he determines to do better, but at the same time, he's still not free of his parole, and so he leaves.

He starts a new life under a new alias, and in this life, he does much better. He provides value to society. But then he has this opportunity where there's this lady, where he has a chance to extend grace to her, and he chooses not to.

And that becomes the demise of this lady, right? And he sees his reaction. He sees that he didn't live up to his ideal. He didn't live up to the grace that had been given to him, and it causes the demise of this woman, and he's riddled with the guilt over that, right?

And so the rest of the movie, he's trying to make up for past guilt. So he's trying to redeem himself while also trying to run from his past. And so I guess at the end, it's kind of an unresolved finish, this movie.

[3 : 26] At the end, he makes some sacrificial acts of love towards the end. But when he dies, he dies largely alone. He dies what seems to be conflicted.

Did he ever make up for his guilt? Did he ever pay his debt? He kind of dies in kind of this sad, unresolved way. He dies conflicted, unknown, and mostly alone.

Despite all the good that Jean had done since his second chance, he was not good enough, and the guilt of this knowledge haunted him. In the end, he makes a series of self-sacrificial choices, but these good works are not enough to clear his debt.

In the end, the viewer is left not knowing whether they should be happy for Jean or sad for Jean. He had made the most of his second chance. He had loved sacrificially.

He had extended grace to others, but he had also unsuccessfully hidden from his past. In the end, he suffers because of it. He made great strides, yes, but was it enough?

[4 : 27] The movie ends, and the viewer is left with the sinking sad feeling that Jean never truly finds peace. Though this is a fictional story, it captures the attention of viewers because it paints a realistic picture of life in our broken world.

We all know something of Jean's experience. Maybe you're here today, and your heart is heavy because of moral failure. Maybe you regret a decision you made last night, or how you interacted with your child this morning.

Maybe you are discouraged because you recently compromised your integrity at work. Or maybe there are one or more large failures of the past that still loom over you today.

You live with this constant anxiety that your day of reckoning will come, and that someday your past will eventually catch up to you. No matter what comes to mind to you this morning, you know that dealing with past failures is part of the human experience.

And today's text teaches us what to do in this exact situation. It teaches us what to do with our sin. It provides us both counsel, and it provides us with a testimonial.

[5 : 34] Today's text is Psalm 32. Psalm 32 was written by King David. King David is a complex biblical character. He's a hero of the faith, but he was also deeply flawed.

He was called by God as a man after God's own heart, yet he was involved in a terrific scandal. Today's Psalm is written by David in response to this scandal.

You can read the details of it in 2 Samuel 11, but until then I'll give you a quick summary. As king, David chose not to go in battle with his men. While home, he saw, desired, took, and slept with another man's wife.

Her name was Bathsheba. Her husband's name was Uriah. Uriah was away at war, fighting for David and for his kingdom. Uriah was not just any soldier, though.

He was part of David's mighty men of valor. It was like the special forces, I guess. They were David's most trusted and bravest military unit. This group of warriors had protected David and fought valiantly for him long before he was king.

[6 : 40] In an attempt to cover up his sin and the future pregnancy of Bathsheba, David commands Uriah to return from battle. David's hope is that Uriah spends time with his wife, and nobody is the wiser.

Right? But Uriah refuses to sleep in his house because he says, How can I afford the luxury of being with my wife while my men are still at war?

So Uriah's honor spoils David's cover-up plan, and so David has to get aggressive. So David sends a note with Uriah to go back to the battlefield where he tells Uriah's general to place him on the front line where Uriah is killed.

And briefly after that, shortly after that, David marries Bathsheba and moves on. This is as scandalous as it gets.

Not only does David use his power to take a woman, he also has her honorable husband killed as a cover-up. You can read the whole, and it seems like he gets away with it, right?

[7 : 50] At first it seems like he gets away, and then Prophet Samuel comes in. Nathan? Samuel? Nathan, thank you. It's in 2 Samuel.

The Prophet Nathan comes in and kind of confronts David about this sin, right? And so God intervenes. And you can read about this intervention in 2 Samuel 12.

But Psalm 32 today is David's response to this divine intervention. Okay, any questions on the context? It was a lot. We good? We're dealing with sin, guilt, failure.

King David is our guide. He was not great at any of those. Okay? All right. Before we actually read the text, which we'll do that in a very short moment, this is a little bit of a tricky text.

It's kind of hard to figure out who's talking and to whom they're talking to. So I think the best way, the easiest way for us to understand the structure of this psalm is to view it as if it was a one-man play, a one-man play in four acts.

[8 : 56] So you have Act 1, David is addressing the audience. In Act 2, David prays to the Lord. In Act 3, the Lord responds. And then Act 4 closes with David again, turning and addressing the audience.

So Jason, you can pull it up. We'll read real quickly. So, yeah, no, you're good. Okay, so Act 1, David addresses the audience.

Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven. Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no deceit. For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groanings all day long.

In Act 2, David turns to the Lord. For day and night, your hand was heavy upon me. My strength was dried up as by the heat of the summer. 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.

Therefore, let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found.

[9 : 59] Surely in 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. And in Act 3, the Lord responds, I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go.

I will counsel you with my eye upon you. Be not like a horse or a mule without understanding, which must be curbed with bit and bridle, or will not stay near you. And finally, David speaks again to the audience.

Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the Lord. Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart.

So let's pray. Dearly Father, Lord, as we tackle this passage, it's a weighty one. God, we all know the experience of failure.

we all know the sting of guilt. We all know that confession is hard. We all know that we are undeserving of grace. But God, this text is a guide for us on what to do about our failure, what to do about our sin, and where we can go to find grace.

[11 : 10] And God, I pray that this text would be informative to our hearts today. because, God, there's a lot of pain that we bring into this world through our choices. And Christ has provided a way for that pain and for that sin to be dealt with.

And God, I pray that we could just rejoice together in the gift that we have in forgiveness from the God of the universe. It's ridiculous that the God of the universe even cares about us, but you're so kind that you know us personally.

You know our stories. You know our troubles. You know our failures. And you welcome us to come to you. And so, God, I pray that we would be a church that is marked by a heart of repentance and a desire to come to you often and always because you are good.

Amen. Okay, so as we address or as we go through this psalm, we're going to look at it under three headings. Sin, confession, forgiveness.

forgiveness. Not super complicated. So, for sin, we're going to look at the first three verses. Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

[12 : 28] Blessed is a man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity and whose spirit there is no deceit. For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groanings all the day long.

So, here we see sin is the problem. It's the problem that David is addressing with this psalm. This is clear. David uses four words to describe the problem.

He calls it sin, transgression, iniquity, and deceit. All of these are indicating the same idea. It's our wrongdoing. And while David starts getting personal in verse three, we'll see that in a second, he begins by addressing the entire audience.

David says, blessed is the one whose sin is forgiven and covered. Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity. In this, David is reminding his audience that sin is a human problem.

It was a problem for David. It was a problem for the ancient Israelites. It was a problem for John. He was a made-up character. And it is a problem for us. But before we get too much farther down this path, I'd like to draw your attention to the end of the psalm.

[13 : 31] I don't have it up here. I'll read for you verse seven. Verse seven, or sorry, verse 11.

Verse 11 says, Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart. This is David's final address at the end of this psalm.

And I just bring it up here because it shows us very clearly who David's audience is. It says, he's addressing, Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart.

So David's primary audience is the righteous and those of upright in heart. So I might get a little technical, but hang with me. I don't know if many of you remember when we started this sermon series in Psalms.

We started in Psalm 1. Seems like a logical place because it's the first. But Psalm 1 also does a really good job of kind of putting the entire Psalms in context. Right?

It gives us these two, it characterizes the wicked. It categorically separates the wicked from the righteous. If you remember, it is, it talks about how the righteous will be preserved.

[14 : 40] It likens the righteous to a tree, a well-nourished, strong tree planted by rivers of water. And it likens the wicked to chaff that the wind blows away. Right?

So what does that have to do with Psalm 32, you ask? Psalm 1 says that the wicked will perish and the righteous will be preserved. Psalm 32 helps us interpret all of the Psalms, including the concept of the righteous and wicked in Psalm 1.

Here in Psalm 32, we see that sin is a human problem, a problem that plagues us all. But who does Psalm 32 tell us are the blessed? It says, blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

Blessed is a man against whom the Lord does not count iniquity. So the righteous, according to the Psalms, are not those who are without sin. for we all have sinned.

No, the blessed are those who are forgiven. Those who have sin and know what to do about it. So those who will be preserved, according to Psalm 1, are those who are forgiven.

[15 : 44] And those who will be, who will not be preserved, the wicked, are those who are not forgiven. Psalm 32 continues. Is that a helpful distinction?

Psalm 1 gives us characteristics of the righteous. Psalm 32 helps us define, hey, righteous doesn't mean sinless. Righteous means sinful and forgiven. Right?

And important for us to get that. Okay, so, as Psalm 32 continues, David begins to self-reflect on his sin and its consequences.

So I'll read in verse 3. He says, For when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groanings all day long. David is describing how his sin affected him. In self-deceit, he kept silent about his sin.

And as a result, his vitality was sapped. David likens the emotional pain of physically wasting away. I believe that David is describing the power of a guilty conscience.

[16 : 49] We all know how powerful the sense of guilt can be. God in his kindness has given us all a conscience. He's all given us an understanding of right and wrong.

And our consciences are active, right? That is evidence in the fact that we have remorse for sin, that we feel guilt. So we see here in Psalm 32 that both sin and guilt are common to the human experience.

But what we learn is what we ultimately do about it is what matters, right? All humanity has sin. All humanity has guilt. What we do about it is what matters and that's what we're going to get to next. But before we get there, I wonder this morning, what do you do about the guilt you have concerning your sin? Maybe you, like David, like to simply keep silent about it.

Or maybe you, also like David, try to cover your sin and hide it from others. Maybe you, like Jean and Les Mis, try to run from it while also trying to make up for it, to make amends.

[17 : 55] If I'm honest, my two typical strategies are, one, to make excuses for myself and two, to distract myself so I don't feel it, right?

So I say things like, yeah, I was angry, but I needed to make a firm point because he just wasn't listening, right? So I excuse my anger, I excuse my poor choice and hide behind this excuse.

Or when I feel the sense of pain, the sense of pain, or the, when I feel the sense of pain from guilt rising, I quickly suppress it by moving on to something different, something that's easy, something that's fun, something that doesn't require anything of me, something that doesn't require me to address the real problem, which is my sin.

America is great at this tactic. We have so much easy stimulation at our fingertips. And so we self-medicate on entertainment, ease, and comfort, all the while suppressing our God-given conscience.

Friends, this is all self-deception. Psalm 32 says, blesses a man in whom there is no deceit. For deceit is the tool that we try to use to disarm our guilty consciences.

[19 : 17] But like David and John both find out, and like you know, these ploys will not work because they do nothing to address the true problem, which is our sin.

So on sin, and while your sin may look different than David's sin, it is of the same nature. It is rebellion against God. It is a transgression against his law.

It is a prideful refusal to acknowledge him or to submit to him. It is a neglect of your duty to love him, to worship him, to seek after him, and it all separates you from him and his blessing.

Your sin also wants to displace God and control you. No matter how big or small you consider your sin to be, it all has the same desire. It wants control.

I wonder, is there a sin that is controlling you today? David's desire for Bathsheba gave foothold to sin and then David chooses sin and then sin took over, leading him down this dark and godless path.

[20 : 20] Is there sin that has power over you today? Friend, do not be fooled. No attempt to cover, hide, minimize, or neglect your sin will make it go away.

No amount of distraction will free you from its hold. No self-deception can free you from its guilt. No friend, your conscience will not be fooled. While covering this text, a pastor that I was reading about, or reading how he covered the text, he closed this particular section of the psalm with this really helpful quote, so I'll read it to you.

He says, Brothers and sisters, take note of this, an undischarged conscience can be torture. We see David experiencing that in verse 3. Your conscience will discharge itself fully someday, either in this life where there is a Savior, or in the last day as a witness before God of the truth about you. It is in your best interest for your conscience to discharge itself fully now, today, in this life. No list of sins I haven't done, or list of virtues I have, can calm our conscience once it's been awakened. No humility, no virtues, no fervent prayer, no excitement in singing, no tears can excuse any of our sins. Friends, learn here from David that sin matters.

[21 : 47] Your sin matters. But fortunately, the psalm doesn't end here, right? Next, David will show us what to do about our sin. So, we'll talk about confession.

This brings us to our second point, confession. Can you go to the next slide? So, we'll start by reading verse 4. So, if you remember verse 3, David's kind of talking about how his, was like wasting away because of the guilt, right?

So, as he's like thinking about that, right, his focus turns to prayer, right? And so, we see David transitioning from talking to his audience to praying to the Lord, right? Because it's getting, it's getting deep, it's getting close.

So, he says, for day and night your hand was heavy upon me. My strength was dried up by the heat of summer. I acknowledged my sin to you and I did not cover my iniquity. I said, I will confess my transgression to the Lord and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.

So, in verse 3, David tells his audience how his silence in the face of a guilty conscience tortured him. Now, David turns heavenward and David speaks to the Lord saying, for day and night your hand was heavy upon me.

[23 : 00] My strength was dried up by the heat of the summer. Here, David acknowledges God's hand of discipline. Not only was David tormented by his own conscience, but the Lord was also actively working to convict him and it was painful.

The Lord's hand was heavy upon him and his strength was dried up. Though it was heavy, it was needed and it was the catalyst for David to turn back to God. Without this discipline, David might have remained under the control of his sin.

But the Lord in his love forced David to turn from his self-deception and to deal with his sin. In this way, God's discipline is a gift.

Proverbs teaches us that the Lord's discipline is a sign of his love. Hebrews 12 reminds us that even though it is unpleasant, the Lord disciplines us for our good and he uses it to produce in us the peaceful fruit of righteousness.

So God's intervention in David's life and in ours concerning our sin is a good thing. It is him beckoning us to turn. It is him helping release us from the control of sin.

[24 : 12] Maybe you are experiencing the heavy hand of the Lord's discipline today. Maybe this looks like a lack of joy, peace, or love. Maybe you are filled with uneasiness about how you're living your life.

Maybe you are experiencing weariness, fear, frustration, or sadness. If so, could it be from the Lord? Could he be trying to get your attention?

Is he beckoning you to trust him and to turn to him? David continues his prayer in Psalm 32, reading verse 5. He says, I acknowledge my sin to you and I did not cover my iniquity.

I said, I will confess my transgression to the Lord and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. For David, his sin was known and concealed and the Lord's discipline forced him to deal with it.

And what does David do? It's quite simple, really. He stops covering his sin and he acknowledges it before the Lord. He confesses his sin and the Lord forgives him.

[25 : 14] All have sinned and all have guilty consciences. But only some turn to him in repentance and only some are forgiven. A repentant heart is this distinguishing mark of the righteous.

I wonder, does repentance mark your life? And what does David find when he confesses? You can almost hear his sense of relief in David's prayer.

I will confess my transgressions to the Lord and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. The weight of conviction was painful but it led David to God where he finds complete and utter forgiveness.

Many of you here today believe this truth. You agree that you have sin. You agree that you need forgiveness but functionally you live as if you can take care of that later.

You assume that you have time, that you can confess sin later but friend, that is simply not an option the Bible guarantees us. Later is not a good plan when it comes to dealing with our sin.

[26 : 21] Not according to the Bible. According to the Bible it could be too late. Let's read verse 6. Therefore, let everyone who is godly offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found.

Surely, in the rush of great waters they shall not reach him. This concept is unnerving. What do you mean when God may be found? I thought I could always find God.

Isn't he always present? Can't I find him anywhere? Well, not really. This kind of language in verse 6 is all over the Bible. Isaiah 5, 6 says, Seek the Lord while he may be found.

Call on him while he is near. Friends, we are not guaranteed anything in this life. We are not guaranteed to find God whenever we want to. We should not presume that we ourselves will even care later on.

Is not this the path of the ungodly in Romans 1? They suppress the truth about God. They silence their consciences. They pursued wickedness and eventually God gives them up to their wickedness.

[27 : 28] Gives them up to their debased way of thinking. No, friends, assuming that you will be able to settle up with God at a later time is a bad plan.

You are not guaranteed to find him later, nor are you guaranteed to desire him later. David encourages you to go to God now while he may be found.

Brother, it is a privilege any time we have an inclination to turn to the Lord. Sister, do not delay. Do not put off confession. If the Lord is working conviction in your heart now, then now is a time to go to him.

Do not deceive yourself. Do not minimize your sin. Do not cover it up. Confess it. Why confess? Why do it now? We'll continue in verse 7 and we'll see what David finds on the other side of his confession.

Read with me verse 7. You, he's talking to God, are a hiding place for me. You preserve me from trouble. You surround me with shouts of deliverance.

[28 : 39] Earlier, I stated that the path to dealing with sin is simple. It is through confession. However, saying that it's simple does not mean that it is easy. It is quite the opposite, in fact.

Confession can be quite difficult. Confession forces us to acknowledge our shortcomings. This is painful. It is not natural for us to want to air our dirty laundry.

This is because we fear. We fear that confession will expose us. We fear that acknowledging our sin will separate us. We fear that coming clean will result in greater punishment.

And all of that would likely be the truth, save the character of our great and good God. Our God is slow to anger. and He is abounding in love.

Please take for a second to appreciate the counterintuitive picture we get here of confession in Psalm 32. Track with me. It's cool. Psalm 1 opens with a verse with a statement, blessed is a man whose sin is covered.

[29 : 47] David, however, he chose a different path. He chose to cover his own sin and as a result the Lord exposes his sin and He disciplines him.

This is verses 3 and 4. David turns in verse 5 and says, I acknowledge my sin to you and I did not cover my iniquity. And now in verse 7 we read that you, that God is a hiding place for me. You preserve me in trouble. You surround me with shouts of deliverance. Friend, can you see the counterintuitive nature of Christian confession? When we cover, God exposes. When we confess, God covers. Even though we fear that confession will expose us, God promises to cover us. Though we fear our sin will separate us, God promises to draw near to us. He says, you are a hiding place. That is language of proximity. That is closeness. That is nearness. Though we fear that the uncovering of our sin will be our downfall, God promises to preserve us. [30 : 50] And even though we fear coming clean will result in greater punishment, God promises to surround us with shouts of deliverance. Friend, if you confess your sin to the Lord, you can be confident that sin will not have the last word.

Don't you think it's amazing? We step back. Don't you think it's amazing how confident David is here? Right? The dude committed adultery and murder. Then he confesses it before a nation. But not only does he confess his sin, he also has the audacity to teach others about the nature of confession and forgiveness.

It's pretty wild, right? This guy had this private sin that God exposed and that he made public. We have three psalms where David is kind of reacting to this sin.

Psalms 51, Psalm 32, Psalm 38. Oftentimes I think Psalm 38 is kind of like the initial gut reaction. Psalm 51 is also kind of an early reaction and Psalm 32 is kind of this in hindsight.

right? And so it's crazy, right? How could somebody go from such a low place to have the confidence and the audacity to coach others on what it looks like to repent and find forgiveness?

[32 : 10] I just think of the song we sang today with that Jim had with the chorus about how we we can't fear man.

What was the line right before that? Yeah. And God I trust I shall not be afraid what man can do to me. Right?

And so David took his sin to the Lord. He had the Lord's forgiveness and because he had that forgiveness from the Lord because the Lord was his hiding place, the Lord was preserving him from trouble, the Lord was surrounding him with shouts of deliverance, he could stand there confidently before his nation and heirs dirty laundry and point people through his sin to the God that saves. It's pretty amazing. David could act with this type of blatant confidence because he knew the character of his God and he was experiencing the power of being surrounded by God with shouts of deliverance.

David's sin would not win, it would not have the last word, David would be preserved, he would be covered, and these truths result in a seemingly absurd amount of confidence in the face of his greatest failure.

[33 : 28] And you, my friend, should have just as much or more confidence in the face of your failures as David did because on this side of the cross, we have much greater idea of God's plan than David did.

David looked forward to a savior, we know a savior. You know the details of the work of Jesus Christ. You know what he did in order to save you and secure your forgiveness.

You know that his work is complete. You know that it can't be touched, it can't be taken away, you know that once you're held in his love, nothing can separate you from it. You know that he came and paid the penalty for your sin once for all.

You know his character, you have seen his heart, you witness his gentleness, his meekness, and his care for the weak, the sinful, and the sick. You watched him go towards sinners and not push them away.

You know of his character, you know of his love, and you know of his work. And you also know that he is not like us. He is not easily exasperated.

[34 : 40] He longs for you to come to him often and always. And he is always willing to forgive and always ready to restore. For that is exactly what he came to earth to do.

So friends, do not be stubborn and withhold from Christ the opportunity to forgive you for your sin. Don't sit there and cover it. That's what he came to do. That's what he wants to do.

And we sit here and we put this facade on, like I gotta work myself out of this, or no, it's not that big of a deal, or we make all these other excuses and we don't actually deal with the sin. We don't take it to the one who came to solve our problem.

Right? And when we do, we find him to be gentle, kind, and powerful. able to redeem. And excited to redeem.

He doesn't sit there and be like, come on, Jordan, you idiot. He's like, Jordan, come. Find. Find restoration.

[35 : 57] You know, find me. Find me. Sorry, everybody. All right. I got no idea where I'm at.

So do not be stubborn and withhold from him the opportunity to forgive you by neglecting to confess, by trying to cover or minimize your sin. Friend, the road from the silent suffering of verse 3 to the shouting of deliverance in verse 7 is along the path of heartfelt confession.

Okay, so as we transition to act 3, this is in verses 8 and 9 if you want to go, Jason. And David is no longer praying, but the Lord is speaking.

The Lord says, I will instruct you and teach you in the way that you should go. I will counsel you with my eye upon you. Be not like a horse or a mule without understanding, which must be curbed with bit and bridle or will not stay near you.

In response to David's confession, the Lord confirms that he is with David and that he will remain with him, keeping his eye on him and providing him counsel.

[37 : 06] He says, I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go. I will counsel you with my eye upon you. In light of the Lord's promised counsel, he provides a statement of contrast.

He contrasts his, God's, willingness to lead David with David's willingness to follow. The Lord encourages David to follow willingly. He warns him not to be like a mule that lacks understanding and needs to be controlled with bit and bridle in order to stay near him.

It is kind of God to bridle us and discipline us. However, it is much better if we simply stay near. Oh, how I needed this encouragement. I am so quick to wander towards the things of my own self-interest.

Things that are not inherently evil, but in the midst of my wandering, I lose sight of God and drift away from him. How foolish is that? How foolish we all do this. The God of the universe promises to personally give me counsel and to watch over me.

And I'm like, cool, squirrel? You know? Friends, this world wants your attention and it is working hard to get it. Joy, however, is found along the path of nearness with the Lord.

[38 : 20] Regular, heartfelt confession is a biblical path to intimacy with the creator of the universe. Please do not neglect it because you are wandering around like an unintelligent mule.

In his closing act, David readdresses his audience and he says in verse 10, Many are the sorrows of the wicked, but the steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the Lord. Be glad in the Lord and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart.

Here, David is summing up what we've seen littered throughout Psalms. He is contrasting the path of the wicked with the path of the righteous. The path of the wicked leads to sorrow, but steadfast love surrounds the righteous, and so the righteous is filled with joy.

Friends, as we close today, consider the contrast between Jean Valjean of Les Mis and David. Both knew their debt. Both felt their guilt.

Both experienced the wasting away at the hand of past failure. However, their approach to resolution was entirely different. Jean Valjean spent his time and his life trying to make amends for his past.

[39 : 30] In this process, he missed the sweetest things about life. He was unable to get free, and he only finds, well, he never really finds peace. The movie makes you think he finds peace in death, but there's no real peace in death.

David, on the other hand, acknowledges his sin and took it to the Lord for forgiveness. He realized his inability to make amends and threw himself into the loving kindness of his Lord, who forgave him and freed him from the guilt and the penalty of the sin.

David is restored, filled with joy, and he becomes a testament for the world of the loving kindness of our God. In the end, both die. David dies as a member of the righteous, where he will be preserved by the Lord for all of eternity.

In death, Jean Villajan finally gets a rest from all of his striving, only to experience the true death of eternal separation from God. The difference is how they responded to their sin.

Friends, take your sin to the Lord and seek his forgiveness. Jesus has paid your debt. Go to him and find him to be powerful to save you from the power of sin in your present and the power of a sin into your eternity.

[40 : 48] That's close. Dear Heavenly Father, Lord, we thank you for this text. God, texts like these wouldn't be possible without Christ. All these promises that we hold to so dearly are only ours because he was willing to come to us in love.

He was willing to take on our suffering, our sin, our pain so that we might be forgiven and freed. God, we thank you for David.

We thank you for the testament he is to your grace. God, from a human perspective, I think if that happened today, David would be out of office. He'd be shamed and all kinds of stuff and we'd never hear from him again.

But in your kingdom, you celebrate a broken and contrite heart. Oh God, you will not despise. In Psalm 51, we see David, it's always kind of stood out to me.

David basically says, God, restore me so I can teach sinners your way so that they might praise you. And God, we actually see him living that out here in Psalm 32.

[41 : 52] Psalm 32 was written after Psalm 51 and so we see this heart work that you did in David through confession to give him the confidence and the audacity to speak on your forgiveness in front of the nation and in front of us for all of history.

And so God, even in the midst of our failures, may we know that our failures can be an opportunity for everybody to praise Christ for his work of resolution and his work of salvation on our behalf. In your name I pray. Amen. Amen. Thank you.