

Honest Confession is Good for the Soul

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 28 February 2021

Preacher: Rev Kenneth I Macleod

[0 : 00] I want to extend a very good evening to everybody as we gather together for worship. On behalf of Stornoway Free Church, I extend a very warm welcome to you all.

We're going to begin our service this evening singing from Psalm 103 in the Scottish Psalter. We're going to sing verses 8 to 13. Psalm 103 verses 8 to 13.

The Lord our God is merciful and he is gracious, long-suffering and slow to wrath and mercy plenteous. He will not chide continually, nor keep his anger still. With us he dealt not as we sinned, nor did we quite a rill.

For as the heaven and its height the earth surmounteth far, so great to those that do in fear his tender mercies are. As far as east is distant from the west, so far hath he from us removed in his lap all our iniquity.

Such pity as our father hath unto his children dear, like pity shows the Lord to such as worship him in fear. Psalm 103 from verse 8, the Lord our God is merciful.

[1 : 11] Psalm 103 from verse 8, the Lord our God is merciful and he is gracious, long-suffering and slow to wrath and mercy plenteous.

Psalm 103 from verse 8, the Lord our God is merciful and mercy plenteous. He will not chide continually, nor keep his anger still.

Where God is merciful and mercy plumbly, nor keep his silence is dotted for us. kapi ■■■■■la approached God is merciful and Engagement rocketous. We understand the Lord our God is merciful and ω pigments a matter who does alone. www.gums302 with us he dwells, not as we sit, nor live, Local if we quite are ill.

For us the heavenly site, the earth's our mountain fire.

So great to those that do help me, this tender man sees high.

[2 : 47] As far as he stays distant from the west so far hath he.

From us we were bred in his love, all our living mercy.

Such pity as the Father hath unto his children here.

Like pity shows the Lord to such as worship him in fear.

Let us now bow in prayer. O Lord our God, we give thanks for these great words that the Lord our God is merciful. It is a truth that your word proclaims.

[4 : 07] And it is a truth that we ourselves have come to discover. And we give thanks today as we gather before you. That that remains so.

That the Lord our God is merciful. We give thanks that your word reminds us that you delight in mercy. That mercy is something which is at the very heart of God.

And that it is his great pleasure in bestowing mercy upon us. And we pray that all of us this evening that we might call upon the living and through God.

Seeking for that mercy. Like the Republican that we read about. The Republicans that we read about in the temple. That he just smote upon his breast, it tells us.

And he cried out, Lord, be merciful to me, the sinner. And we pray that that prayer might be our prayer as well. That within our own hearts there might always be that longing and that desire to know the mercy of God.

[5 : 13] We pray that you will bless us as we come under your word. And we pray that it might indeed bring help and strength. And that we might know direction and leading in it.

We give thanks, O Lord, that you are gracious and that you are long-suffering. And that you are patient with us. That is another of the great truths that your word reveals to us.

Because were it not for the fact of your patience and long-suffering. Long ago you would have dismissed us and cast us off. Because that's what we deserve.

Lord, we've let you down over and over and over again. Every day, every week, every month, every year. There's so much failure written all over our lives. And yet we give thanks that you are patient in your long-suffering.

And that you are tender in your mercy. And so we pray that you will be gracious to us, even in our worship this evening. Deliver us, Lord, from the sins that we're so prone to.

[6 : 19] Deliver us from the sins that we're not even aware of. Deliver us, Lord, from the pride that can be so subtle that we don't even recognise. Deliver us, Lord, from where we try to deceive you and where we try to deceive one another.

Deliver us, Lord, for when we're not who we ought to be. But we give thanks for the transforming power of grace. That you are working in us.

And we are certainly not the finished product. But we give thanks that one day we will be. And that there'll come a day when we will be made perfect in holiness. When we pass into glory.

And where we'll fully resemble our Saviour, our Redeemer. And we give thanks, Lord, for the great hope that the Christian has. The world doesn't have this hope. The world has no real hope.

There is only hoping that things might work out. But at the end, there comes an end. But for the Christian, the end of this world is but the beginning of an even greater.

[7 : 26] And we pray that it might be that what focuses. And we find out so much of our thinking based upon. As we reflect upon the hope that is within us.

The hope of glory. We give thanks, O Lord, that you have set out before us wonderful things.

Things that we could never have worked out. And that's the beauty of the Holy Scriptures.

That they reveal to us so much about you. So much about ourselves. And so much about your purposes for us. And so much of the inheritance that has been prepared for us.

We give thanks for our Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ. Who has done everything for us. All we are commanded to do is to believe and to repent.

And we give thanks, Lord, that the doing has been done. And that it is fully acceptable in your sight.

We pray then that you will watch over us from the youngest to the oldest.

[8 : 23] Bless every home and every family. We pray for health and strength to be given. We ask, Lord, that you will be with all those who are struggling. We know these are difficult times brought about through the COVID pandemic.

But the fallout has been immense. And so many people are struggling with so many different issues. Whether these issues are issues of mind, issues of body, issues of relationships, issues of finance, issues of spirit.

And the list is almost endless. Because the pandemic and all that it has caused has brought so much in its wake.

And we ask, Lord, that through all this that we might turn to you. And that we might hear what God

the Lord will speak. We pray that not just for ourselves individually in our homes and families.

And not just for our congregation and congregations. But we pray that for our whole land. From our leaders at the top all the way down. That we might all turn to the living and through God.

[9 : 33] And we pray, Lord, that you will bless us. That you will prosper us. Not according to our deserving, but according to your tender mercy. We pray that you will provide work. That you will open doors.

That our economy may grow again. And that people will get work. It's a very, very hard thing for people to lose their job. We're made to work. And we ask, Lord, that provision will be made.

And even when we hear of little glimpses like with regard to Arnish, we rejoice. Every person on our payroll is a meal provided for a family at home.

And we pray, Lord, that you will open more and more doors. And provide more and more work. And that following on from this pandemic. Although we maybe will have to live with it at one level.

We pray that through the vaccine and through various other things. That we will be able to live to a large degree a life of normality.

[10 : 37] But we pray that you will be at the centre of our lives. And so we pray for those who tend to those who are ill. We remember all our nursing staff.

We remember all our doctors and consultants. And all our NHS workers. We commit them to you and give thanks for them. And likewise, all our cares in homes and in the community. Lord, we give thanks for them.

The wonderful provision that is made. And we pray for our elderly and those who have for a long time been missing loved ones. And those in homes, Lord, who haven't seen family. Or haven't seen family apart from maybe through the window. Oh, Lord, our God, we pray that all these barriers will soon be removed.

And that once again families will be restored one with another. Father, we ask, Lord, that you will bless all our leaders and rulers and those in authority over us.

[11 : 34] Bless, Lord, all our emergency services. And we commit them to your care and keeping. Remember those, Lord, in the sea and in the air and in the faraway places.

We commit them to your care and keeping. And now as we come under your word tonight, we pray that you will bless it. Open our hearts to hear it, to receive it. And we pray that our lives will be molded by it.

And we ask, Lord, that you will bless those who mourn. Death is never far away. Always there is bereavement. Always there is sorrow. And we pray for every broken heart, Lord.

May you bring healing and help and restoration. Bless the sick. We pray again for healing. Wash away your sin. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen. Just a wee word to the young folk, any young folk listening in tonight.

The last couple of weeks, the weather hasn't been so good. But do you remember, maybe three or four weeks ago, the weather was really, really good. It was very frosty, very slippery.

[12 : 41] There was a bit of snow, a bit of ice. But every day was sunny. And it was crisp weather. It was nice. But although you're not driving yet, it was actually quite difficult driving.

Because in the winter, the sun lies quite low. And sometimes you'd be coming in by brie. And the sun seemed to be just like it was sitting at the top of the brie.

And you could hardly see. And then the roads, which had been so frosty, then they would begin to get, as the ice would melt, they were getting very shiny.

And I was speaking to a lorry driver one day. And he said to me, you know, he said, I had such a headache by the end of the day. Because all day when I was driving, the sun was reflecting and beating, reflecting so brightly off the road.

It was like a shine, like the road had a shine all the time. And it was bright into my eyes the whole time. And by the end of the day, he said, I had a thumping headache from the glare of the sun onto the road.

[13 : 48] And then reflecting into his eyes. The sun is very powerful. And we know that when the sun reflects, it beams its light anywhere.

Probably you're a man. I remember in school we used to sometimes, some people used to, I wouldn't do that. We used to, if it was a nice bright day, and if the sun sometimes would come at a certain angle in, and it would be beating in the window, you would put your watch so that the sun would reflect off your watch.

And then you would try and get the reflection into the teacher's eyes. And sometimes the teacher would have the head down and you'd be waiting.

Now you couldn't get it quite, and then all of a sudden, that's it. You could see the beam from the sun to your watch to the teacher. And then sometimes the teacher would look up and there would be this just, for a moment, there was this, you would get this.

You say, I got it. Bingo. That was just that one moment. There was that little flash there. And then the teacher would say, what are you doing? And it's just fun thing.

[15 : 02] But it's not telling you, I shouldn't be saying this. That's, maybe you do that anyway, but it's not, maybe not a good thing to do. But anyway, it's just showing that the sun can reflect off things.

And you know, it can actually cause a fire. If you leave a glass or even a mirror in a room and the sun is beating down, the sun can actually start a fire when it catches and reflects with the power of it.

And if, for instance, somebody was saying, right, the usual person, he says, right, I'm going to reflect the sun onto you, right?

That's what I'm going to do. I'm going to reflect the sun onto you. Now, there are two things that we have to do. Suppose I'm going to use a mirror. I've got to put the mirror here. The first thing is, I have to face the sun with a mirror.

So, there's the sun, here's the mirror. The second thing is, nothing must get in the way of the sun coming to the mirror and the reflection of the mirror to you.

[16:11] Nothing must get in the way or it won't work. And this is all true spiritually. And it tells us in the Bible about a man who came into this world.

And he had a particular purpose, a particular role, a particular job, as it were, given to him by God. And that was John the Baptist. And his job was to witness about Jesus.

And this is what it says. A man sent from God whose name was John. He himself was not that light. He came only as a witness to the light.

That was John's job. He was a witness to the light. And who was the light? The light, of course, was Jesus. Because Jesus, as we know, called himself the light of the world.

And you know, the wonderful thing is that the light of Jesus shines into our hearts. When we ask the Lord Jesus to come into our life, that's what he does.

[17:14] And if we want to reflect the light of Jesus into other people's lives, then two things are very important.

The two things that we said, if we're working with a mirror of the sun, first and foremost, you must face the mirror to the sun. And likewise, we must face ourselves to Jesus.

In other words, all the time, every day, we must be saying, Lord, will you be at the centre of my life? Will you be the one who is there to lead me and to show me the way to go?

Will you be my Lord and my King? And the second thing is, we mustn't allow anything to come between ourselves and the light of who Jesus is.

And if we allow sin and wrong things to get in the way, then the light of Jesus is not going to reflect out into other people's lives.

[18:19] But the more that we are careful in our lives and the more that we fight against sin and ask God to take the sin away, the more the more the light of Jesus will shine into our lives and will reflect out and other people will see that light.

Let your light so shine, it tells us before others, that they may see your good works and so glorify your Father which is in heaven. So you ask the Lord Jesus every day, Lord Jesus, shine your light into my life.

And may my life be a shining light for you in this world. Let's say the Lord's Prayer. Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, I will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen. We're going to read God's word now from the book of Psalms, Psalm number 32.

[19:33] The book of Psalms, Psalm number 32. Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

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 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.

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.

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.

[20:33] You are a hiding place for me. You preserve me from trouble. You surround me with shouts of deliverance. I will instruct you and teach you in the way 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 it will not stay near you.

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.

Amen. And may God bless to us this reading of his own holy word. I want us this evening just to consider the first few verses of this psalm.

It says at the beginning, Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered.

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

[21 : 43] 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. Then the psalmist goes on to say, 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. Someone once said that honest confession is good for the soul.

And there is something very true in that. In fact, you could say that that is a biblical principle, that honest confession. You can make a confession that isn't honest, but honest through confession is good for the soul.

And it is the only way forward, really, in the Christian life, is that we are open and honest with God, and that we confess our sin to him.

[22 : 44] Now, it can be a very difficult thing for confessing our sin before God, because by nature we don't want to do that.

We don't want to confess sin. Our sin, again, we have to ask, what is sin? Well, I think we remember that, as the Catechism says, that sin is any want of conformity or transgression against the law of God, which means two things.

It means that we're not doing what God commands, or we're doing what God forbids.

That's what sin is, that we're not doing what God commands us to do, or we're doing what God forbids us to do. And that brings the area of our life under the spotlight of God, because God is assessing our lives, looking at our lives all the time.

And as a holy God, he cannot remain impartial to sin. Sin is an offence to the nature of God. And that is something that we really have to lay hold upon, and it's something people don't want to hear.

[24 : 02] Some people really take umbrage to the fact that they're told that they're sinners. But other people say, I don't want to hear that. And I suppose most people, in fact, all people who acknowledge are not perfect, but they don't like this idea that they don't come up to the mark with regard to God, if they believe in God at all.

But other people don't like it. But God in his mercy has revealed this to us. He's shown us how it really is. This is how life is and how God sees it.

And if we have come to that place where we recognise something of the holiness of God, and recognise that sin is something that has to be dealt with, it causes issues and problems for our lives.

But we thank God that provision has been made. But so often with regard to sin, we don't want to deal with it. We try to either justify it, or ignore it, or run away from it, or pretend it hasn't happened, or try and conceal it, or cover it.

These are the sort of normal things that we do with sin. But there are times where we have to face up to it, and we have to deal with it. And that's what this psalm is very much about.

[25 : 20] Because you see, sin won't go away. Sin cannot go away of its own. Sin has to be dealt with. There are only two ways in which sin can be dealt with.

Either on the individual person, or the sins of that person placed upon the Lord Jesus Christ. Now, confession of sin is not an easy thing.

Because it means that we have to delve down into who we are, and we have to be open and honest with God. And as we come under the spotlight of God's Spirit, in keeping with His Word, we are brought to see something of what we really like.

And we see all the rebellion, and the lust, and all the twistedness, and the deceit, and all the perverseness, and all that we don't want to discover.

And we say, oh, I don't like what I'm seeing. And you know, sometimes it's extremely painful. And we say, I don't want to do this. But you know, it's like a surgeon having to cut to go in and delve and find out, cut out that cancerous root there that is causing so much problem within our lives.

[26 : 34] Because owning up to sin acknowledges within us that we have failed on so many fronts. But it also forces us to deal with the sin.

Because it's not simply enough to confess our sin and to say, well, Lord, I'm sorry, I have sinned. Repentance involves not only owning up and confessing our sin before God, it also means on our part of turning away from sin.

So that there is an owning up before God of being sorry for our sin, but endeavouring with a new obedience to turn your back upon that sin, our sin, and to follow the Lord more fully.

See, it's very easy at one level to say sorry. You know, sometimes you do it with children, and two children have started squabbling, they're falling out, and one has really done wrong. And you know that this is the one who's done the wrong thing to the other.

And you say, right, say sorry. Go on, say sorry. And sometimes they'll just go, sorry. And you know full well that they don't mean what they're saying.

[27 : 53] You've asked them to say sorry. Well, I'll say it. But I don't really mean it. And you know, sometimes we can be like that with our confession of sin before God. We're saying, oh, Lord, I'm sorry for my sin.

Are we? But sometimes, yes, we're genuinely sorry. But sometimes we're just like the little child. We're saying it because we know we should say it. And sometimes we say it because we are sorry, but we're not really, really as sorry as we should be.

There isn't that sorrow in our heart of how we have grieved God. And this psalm brings before us, this psalm, it's as well, brings out this honest dealing with the sin of our life before God.

And it shows us two things, really. It shows us what happens when we don't deal with our sin and what happens when we do deal with our sin. Now, many people believe that this psalm came from the time of David's great sin, that we find that the psalm about it is Psalm 51, after David's great sin with Bathsheba.

And David is here dealing with these two things, just the importance of confessing our sin and the liberty and freedom that is discovered when we do, but also how awful it is when we don't deal with sin at all.

[29 : 26] And that's what really you're seeing it there in verse 3, what has happened there, because if we don't deal with the sin and sin is just lying in there and we've tried to conceal it and cover it and not own up to it and ignore it, see what's happening.

When I kept silent, my bones wasted, see the language, wasting bones, groaning all day, God's hand heavy upon him, strength was dried up.

Poor, that's an awful picture. But David is talking from experience and that's how it was for the great man. And when we think back to the incident and the episode in David's life, that kind of black period there, for a close year, close in a year you could say, David had kind of lost his way spiritually.

You remember well the whole incident with Bathsheba, but it occurred at a time when Israel was at war.

Israel was fighting. And Israel were fighting the Lord's battles. And David was the king. Now David, as we know, was a tremendous fighter. And David had always been leading and had acquitted himself so well in battle.

[30 : 57] But the king's place was to lead his people. The king's place was there to be leading the troops. And that's what David always used to do. But on this occasion we find that he's not, that he's lazing about at home.

It's a strange time for David. Because this is not how we normally find David. Now of course, everybody needs a time of rest and a time of renewal and a time of refreshment. We all do. And David needed that as well. But not at the time when the intensity of battle was taking place. His place was there, not at home. And I believe that there was a twofold laziness in David at that particular time.

It didn't last. Because there's one thing, David wasn't, he wasn't a lazy person. But at this particular point, it would appear that there was a laziness in body, a laziness in spirit, and a laziness before God.

Because he just wasn't himself. And that's the most dangerous time. It's a vulnerable time and David was caught hopping. And it was a great time for Satan and a poor time for David and the kingdom of God.

[32 : 10] And we know the story very simply of how one day David went out onto the roof. We know there were flat roofs there and he just went out. And as he looked there and he saw this woman washing herself.

And this woman was a very, very beautiful woman. And David was captivated. And he wasn't just captivated by her beauty. He was captivated by lust.

And there's a difference between beauty and lust. But David, that's what the Bible says. The eye is never satisfied with seeing. Because you can look on beauty and look at the beauty of just this

world is filled with beauty.

But lust comes in. It's not just what you might talk there of a person, a man's lust towards a woman. Lust can come in 101 different ways.

It can come in the ways of coveting what people have lusting after money. The list is endless. But here on this occasion, David moved very quickly from going from being captivated by beauty to being captivated by lust.

[33 : 23] The eye isn't satisfied with seeing. And for David, what he saw, it wasn't sufficient that he just saw. He had to act upon what he saw.

And he said, I have to have that woman. And he made inquiry as to who she was and remember the warning came straight away. David, she's out of bounds for you. That's Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah the Hittite.

She belongs to Uriah, David. She is out of bounds for you. You cannot have it. David knew. He knew God's law. He knew everything perfectly well.

But at that moment, the lazy, spiritually lazy David was in a grip of another power and he lost himself. And we know what happened. He went into this adulterous relationship with Bathsheba.

Then we know what happened after that. Then the news came. Bathsheba sent word through to David that she was pregnant. The alarm bells went off on David because David knew full well that back in the Mosaic law that God took the marriage relationship so seriously and that straying out of it in this way, it was punishable by death.

[34 : 44] Now David knew that he had done completely wrong. He knew that. And it's here where we see how David is really in the grip of Satan, of how he has completely lost his way spiritually.

Because you know what happens when we go down the road of sin and we're out of control and we've left God out of the picture is that we add sin upon sin upon sin.

Sin, however bad it is, then becomes layered. And David decides, I have to conceal this. And Uriah was one of his great men.

He was one of the elite guys. David says, if Uriah finds this, whatever happens, Uriah must not find out what's happened.

I mean, I'm not going into the story. We know the whole story of where he took Uriah home and tried to get him to go and see his wife. He was so nice to him and all the rest and Uriah wouldn't go. He came home and he just sat at the gate and he said, how can I go into my wife when the Lord's battles are being fought out there?

[35 : 56] I need to get back to the battlefield. And David says, there's only one thing for it. And he's saying in his heart, I'm sorry about this, Uriah, but you're a dead man. And he sends a letter with Uriah to make sure that Uriah gets killed in battle.

Isn't that awful? That's David. Here's this man after God's own heart. And you see the sheer deceit and hypocrisy and just, it's a very, you're saying, David, this is like hell exploding in your life.

Everything you're doing is so vicious and evil and corrupt. You're putting Uriah's death warrant into his hand and sending him off to try and conceal your sin.

Layer after layer after layer after layer. And we know what happened. Uriah was killed in battle and after a period when, when the morning was over, David took Bathsheba to be his wife.

And, you know, all throughout this period, David, he was a good man. I don't believe for one moment that David never had any form of worshiper or was in touch with God.

[37 : 21] But, it would have, he was spiritually bound. He would have gone through the motions. And you know, we can do that. We can spiritually go through the motions. We can be going to church. We can be reading the Bible.

We can be praying and yet be miles away from God. It's all just token stuff. It doesn't go in deep. It's not real. Well, that's how it must have been for David because he had no point was he owning up to what he had done.

He had, he had plowed through the commandments. He had coveted. He had stolen. He had murdered. He had committed that. He had done a lot.

He had blasphemed the name of God. He had given a cause for the enemies of God to rejoice.

And, he just, he just smashed the commandments, obliterated them, willfully, in order to try just to satisfy first his own lust and then to conceal what he had done.

That's sin. And, it just mounts up and mounts up. And, in all that period of time, in all these months, when David would have been going through token gestures of, of, being still a good man, this is

how he really was.

[38 : 38] He tells us in verse 3. And, when he means, what he means, when I kept silent, was, I never mentioned this to God. Why, yes, he might have said, Lord, I'm kind of sorry the way this went, but, this is just, this is how it is.

But, when I kept silent, my bones wasted within. You know, it was like a physical, it was physical. All day, he was, talk of being in a downer. David was in a mass downer.

The David who could sing these wonderful sounds of praise was incapable of doing it at that time. Everything was, oh man, it's heavy. Day and night, your hand was heavy upon me.

My strength was dried up. David was a passionate, vigorous man. In that period, he was just so different, mentally, physically, spiritually.

This is not the David that we know. And he brought it all upon himself. And he was making it worse by refusing to deal with what he had to deal with.

[39 : 43] And, you know, I believe that that is part of what's at the problem of society today. Because guilt is a fearful thing. And if we don't deal with guilt, you know, it consumes us.

And I believe that this incredible restlessness of society where people cannot bear silence, they cannot bear, you know, people need to have, they need to have some background noise, they need to have something going on all the time.

People don't want just to sit in silence and to reflect and to think. Because they can't bear, I've spoken to people and they say, I can't bear the silence. I can't bear the, I need to have something going on all the time.

See, this is a kind of a form of escapism. And I believe that deep down there's this powerful lack of contentment throughout society because people are riddled with guilt.

They don't know it. But you see, when we offend a holy God, we have been given a God-given conscience and it's in the heart. Yes, our consciences can get broken and twisted and all sorts of things.

[40 : 51] But until we come to make peace with God, there will be an ongoing restlessness within every soul. It doesn't matter how placid they appear outside.

It doesn't matter how well life seems to be going. That's the bottom line. You cannot have the deep-rooted peace that belongs to the people of God when they're in a right relationship with God. The fruit of the Spirit is love and joy and peace and gentleness and goodness and all these things. And that's what we get when we're made right with God.

So you make sure if you're today, if you haven't got yourself right with God, if you haven't come into a right relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ, you make sure that you are there today, that you ask the Lord to come into your soul, into your heart and that he will deal with that, you will be open and honest.

Same with me, to be open and honest before God and to confess all our sins. And so, this is how David is as we see in his awful state.

[41 : 57] And do you remember how God said, right, enough's enough. And he sent Nathan the prophet to David and Nathan the prophet told David a wee story about the man. Remember the man, there was a man who had lots of sheep and they were next door to him, there was a man who had just this little pet lamb.

And a visitor came to the man with lots of sheep and he thought, oh, I better get something to eat for this visitor, a very important visitor. So what does he do? He jumps over the fence, takes a one little lamb belonging to this poor man and he kills the lamb and they have that, they eat the lamb. They have that mutton for dinner. And he tells that story to David and David is so incensed. Oh, he said, that man will die.

I've never heard anything so awful. He's got loads of sheep and then he goes and takes the one little lamb that belongs to that man, a pet lamb and he, oh, I've never heard that like Nathan, said, you're that man.

You are that man. And at that moment, the spirit of God pushed David's heart and he saw, that is me.

[43 : 13] That's exactly what I did. I had everything. God had given me everything. And there's Uriah with Bathsheba and I've taken Uriah and I've killed Bathsheba.

I've taken Bathsheba and I've killed Uriah. And he saw himself for what he really was. And David becomes a broken man and Psalm 51, of course, is the great confession of sin.

and so, this is what he does. He's confessing sin. And you know, the great thing about the confession of sin, the word confession, the Greek word actually means agreeing or saying that it means to say the same thing.

And isn't that lovely? That's what we do when we confess sin. We're saying, Lord, I'm saying the same thing as you. I agree with your assessment of it. That's what we're doing. And so, it's vital and important that we come to that place and that point where we confess our sin.

Because, as I said, we can't ignore it. We can't forget it. We can't run away from it. We can't conceal it. It's there. And as I said, God has to deal with it in one of two ways.

[44 : 28] Either our sin on his son or our sin on ourselves forever. And then David talks of three things and with this we finish about our sin.

Because he says at the beginning, blessed, there's blessing comes in the one whose transgression is forgiven. This word forgiven means to lift up and to carry away.

And that's what God does with our sin. He lifts it up and carries it away and it is gone. The Israelites in the wilderness were given a picture of that in the day of atonement with a scapegoat that was let loose where the high priest put his hand on the scapegoat as it were transferring the sins of the people onto that goat and then that goat was taken away into the wilderness and led away never to be seen again.

Transferred and lifted up and carried away. And that was a picture of what Jesus was going to do with our sins and what Jesus did with our sins. He took them upon himself.

He lifted them up and carried them away. Then the next word we find is whose sin is covered. That simply means concealed. And that's what God does with our sin.

[45 : 45] Because when we confess our sin and our sin is dealt within Jesus Christ our sins are concealed. They're done away with. As far as east is from the west.

That's what we're told. So far hath he removed our iniquities from us. Isn't that wonderful? And then we're told blessed is the person and the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity or reckons no iniquity.

In the AV we have the word impute which is a kind of a financial it means simply to put to one's account. and that's what it is that God is not reckoning to our account not putting it to our account. Our sins have been transferred to Christ's account and Christ's perfect righteousness has been transferred to our account. What a transfer that is.

That's what God has done in Jesus Christ and that is why confession of sin is so important. it will change your life and my life if we're open and honest and confessing before God.

[46 : 59] And then we ask the Lord to forgive us all our iniquity to cleanse us and to renew a right spirit within us. And if we are honest like that before God God will do just that for us and it will be liberty in our lives.

Let us pray. Lord our God we ask thee to forgive us our sin. We stand before you tonight and we confess our sin individually and collectively nationally and indeed internationally.

Watch over us and bless us in Jesus name we pray. Amen. We're going to conclude singing from Psalm 32 this psalm from Sing Psalm Psalm 32 the psalm we're just singing we're going to sing verses 1 to 5 Psalm 32 you have blessed the one who has received forgiveness for his sin whose sins are covered from God's face whose debt is cancelled in God's grace there's no deceit in him. So on to verse 5 then I laid bare my sin to you the guilt that lay within I said O Lord I have transgressed and you forgave when I confessed you pardoned all my sin.

Sing these verses of Psalm 32 how blessed the one who has received forgiveness for all his sins whose sins are covered from God's face whose death is cancelled in God's grace there's no deceit in him when I kept silent all my bones with going whereward

[49 : 21] I beneath your heart I felt a trap O day and night my strength was as in a summer ground then I laid bare my sin to you the guilt that lay within I said O Lord I have transgressed and you'll forgive when I confess you pardon all my sin now may the grace mercy and peace of God the Father

Son and Holy Spirit rest and abide upon each one of you now and forevermore Amen thank you thank you very much for joining with us this evening and we pray that God will bless you and that you will all be kept safe throughout this week for you