


Psalm

Knowing the God of Praise



Lesson 2 *Songs of Confession*

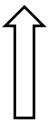
Level 1- Read through the Bible passage prayerfully. As God speaks to you through his word, respond back to him in prayer. What can you praise him and thank him for? What sin do these scriptures prompt you to confess? What do you need to ask God for? How do you need to yield to what God is saying in his word?

Level 2- Read and pray as in level one and do the numbered questions (that follow along with the Bible passage) in the study. Do the Heart questions.

Level 3- Read and pray as in level one. Do the numbered questions and heart questions as in level 2, as well as the Discussion questions and the Digging Deeper for more in depth study.

Day 1

All the Psalms this week are penitential or confessional prayers seeking God's mercy, grace and forgiveness through confession and repentance.



Father, lead me in your truth and teach me, for you are the God of my salvation; for you I wait all the day long. (Ps. 25:5)

Read Psalm 32

1. How does David describe the person whose sins are forgiven in verses 1-2?

Picture and Ponder

"The happiest (most "blessed") people in the world are those who not only know they need to be deeply forgiven but also have experienced it."¹

2. How would you describe David's experience of what it was like to live with unconfessed sin in verse 3-4?

For Discussion

What do you think it means to have God’s hand heavy upon you in verse 4?

3. How does the happiness of the person *in whose spirit there is no deceit* (v. 2), fit with verse 5?

4. Verse 9 shares the wisdom of a negative example. Has God ever had to use a “bit and a bridle” to keep you close? What do you see in this Psalm that shows you how to be in close fellowship with God?



The last verse in this prayer exhorts us to *be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, O righteous, and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!* This is the joy that comes when we turn from our sin and rest in the work of Jesus on the cross. It is only through faith in Jesus that our sins are not counted against us and we are declared righteous. (In Rom. 4:5-8 Paul speaks about righteousness through faith in Jesus and quotes this Psalm.)

- ◆ Write a prayer praising God for delivering you from your sin.

- ◆ What phrase from this Psalm will you ponder in your heart today?

Day 2- Read Psalm 38

1. David, the writer of this Psalm is suffering terribly. What four things are causing his suffering?

v.4-

v.5-8-

vs. 11-

vs. 12-

2. After pouring out his heart what does David do in verse 15?

Picture and Ponder

“Suffering often comes in such overwhelmingly complex compounds that the only solution is to simply call out to God himself to forgive, protect, and heal.”²



Not only does David confess his sin, but he is troubled by his sin. Other translations render verse 18 as I am *in anguish, grieved or full of sorrow for my sin*. It is one thing to regret our sin because of the destructive consequences it brings, but true repentance grieves over offending and dishonoring our Holy God and longs for restoration with him.

◆ When your heart is broken over your sin and you have repented, but continue to struggle with guilt, what is the answer?

◆ How is continually beating yourself up over sin that has been dealt with trying to add to Jesus' work on the cross?

3. What is David longing for, expressed in verses 21-22 ?



Sometimes we suffer painful consequences for the sin we commit. This prayer of David shows us that even though we bring these consequences upon ourselves by our foolish choices, we

can still cry out to God—our Father wants us to cry out to him. He does not leave us alone in our suffering but is with us, no matter the cause of our suffering. Jesus' death to pay for our sins guarantees it—because Jesus was forsaken while bearing away our sin, we will never be.

- ◆ What does it mean to you to know that even when you are suffering the consequences of your own sin God wants you to come to him? What does this tell you about God?

Day 3- Read Psalm 51

1. On what basis does David ask to be forgiven or cleansed from his sin?
2. How does verse 4 show us the right attitude toward sin?

Picture and Ponder

“Every sin is cosmic treason—it is overthrowing the rule of the one to whom you owe everything.”³

For Discussion

What does God delighting in *truth in the inward being* and teaching *wisdom in the secret heart* have to do with confession?

3. What does unconfessed sin keep us from that David is pleading for in verses 8-12?



Tim Keller says, “it is a sin to be less than joyful at what God has done in our lives...*restore to me the joy of your salvation* is a prayer we should pray frequently.” Unconfessed sin keeps us from the joy of God's salvation. If you are not experiencing joy in your relationship with God, spend some time in prayer searching your heart and confessing any unconfessed sin.

- ◆ What else in your life squelches your joy in the grace of salvation?

- ◆ What practices help to nurture joy in God?

For Discussion

What does it mean that the sacrifice God wants is a broken spirit and contrite heart—how is a broken spirit and contrite heart a sacrifice to God?



With your own thoughts and words and making the words of the Psalmist yours, write a prayer in response to the truths in this Psalm.



How does confessing your sin to God bring you freedom and joy in your life?

Day 4- Read Psalm 130

1. What is the Psalmist's emotional state in verses 1 and 2? What words convey his feelings?

2. In verse 3 we see the reason for the pleas for mercy. How is verse 3 a confession?

- a. What is the point of forgiveness according to verse 4?
 - b. How does forgiveness produce fear of the LORD?
3. Verses 5 and 6 talk about waiting for God and hoping in his word. In the context of sin and forgiveness, how does your soul wait for God and what do you hope in?



Verses 7 and 8 confirm that the hope we have in God is not wishful thinking, but a sure thing. God's forgiveness is sure because with him there is *steadfast love and plentiful redemption*. Steadfast love in Hebrew, is *hesed* and means God's covenantal love for his people; it includes God's faithfulness and lovingkindness, his loyal love that will not be turned back for any reason. Its ultimate fulfillment is found in Jesus—the reason our hope is sure.

- ◆ What does the truth that God's redemption is plentiful mean to you?
- ◆ Spend some time praising God for his steadfast love and plentiful redemption.

Day 5- Read Psalm 143

1. David does not seem to be confessing a specific sin here, but rather acknowledging an awareness of his (and everyone's) unrighteousness. Why is this a good practice?
 - a. When there is trouble in your life with people (like David was experiencing) what does the awareness that sin infects everyone lead you to do?



David doesn't specify the exact cause of his suffering in verses 3-4—just the effects of it—making it easy for us to apply to our own situation. Our own sin, or someone's sin

against us can drive us to despair. The Psalms show us that we can cry out to the Lord with our pain. Is the enemy of your soul pursuing you? Do you feel crushed? In darkness? Weary? Is your heart appalled? If this is true for you, write out a prayer, expressing the thoughts of your heart.

2. The Psalms show us how to hang on while we do the hard work of waiting for God. Write down the verbs in verse 5 that focus us on God while we wait.
 - a. How do these actions help us to be God-centered rather than self-centered?
3. How is David feeling in verses 6-7? How does it help to know that these honest words are part of the inspired word of God?

For Discussion

The Psalm begins and ends with the righteousness of God. God's righteousness is his "inflexible steadfastness in doing what is right, acting according to his character, and fulfilling his righteous purposes and promises."⁴ How does God's righteousness bring comfort and assurance when we have sinned or in times of suffering and trials?



There are 13-15 petitions (depending on the translation) in this Psalm— "a true lesson in how to face life and deal with difficulty."⁵ Choose one of the requests and make it your own prayer.

- ◆ What phrase from this Psalm will you ponder in your heart today?

¹ Keller, Timothy Songs of Jesus p. 59

² Ibid. P. 78

³ Ibid. P.108

⁴ Moyter, Alec. Psalms by the Day. P. 406 Christian Focus, 2016

⁵ Ibid. p.408