

Got Mercy?

Intro:

During His earthly ministry, there was a time when Jesus sent out 70 disciples on a short-term mission trip if you will. They went to every town before him and preached that the kingdom of God had come near, and they were given power to heal the sick as well as they were given authority to cast out demons.

Upon their return they expressed the fact **that they were elated** that even the demons were subject to them by the power of the name of Jesus. But Jesus redirected their purpose of joy from the fact that the demons had to obey their authority, to something much more significant, valuable, and eternal.

2

Luke 10:20 (ESV) — 20 Nevertheless, do not rejoice in this, that the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice that your names are written in heaven.”

As I was considering all that we have to be so thankful for this last week. This verse came to my mind. **What we should be most thankful and joyful for**, above all else, is the fact that we have received the promise of eternal life by God’s mercy and grace. This is the greatest gift and most substantial truth we can know and hold to.

Jesus asked

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Mark 8:36–37 (NKJV) — 36 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul? **37** Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?

If we received everything in this life, yet could not hold to a promise of eternal life. What good would it do us?

Understand there is one thing that disqualifies every one of us from eternal life, **and that is sin**. Therefore, the absolute greatest blessing that we can be grateful for today, beyond all other blessings. **Is the blessing of God’s mercy towards us sinners.**

And so, this morning I want to look at the subject of God’s mercy through the eyes of King David by looking at **Psalm 32**. But I will also be intertwining **Psalm 51** with **Psalm 32 in the process**. Just know that we will be jumping back and forth between these two psalms.

Before we begin lets ask for the Lord to bless His Word.

Prayer

You may or may not know that **Psalm 51** was written by David's after he committed adultery with Bethsheba and then had her husband Uriah murdered in order to cover up his sin, after finding out that Bethsheba was pregnant from their affair.

After 9 months of attempting to hide his sin, God sent Nathan the prophet to confront David for both his acts of adultery and murder. **Which were both deserving of capital punishment, under the Law of Moses.** At that point David confessed His sin.

Psalm 51 captures that confession as well as David's cry for God's mercy.

Psalm 32 was written at a later time and is likely a fulfilment of Davids promise in Psalm 51, to teach others and to lead them on a path to find God's mercy.

- **Psalm 32** is really just that. **It is an instruction for the sinner in seeking God's mercy.**

It is said that Augustine had these Psalms inscribed on the walls of his bedroom so that he could meditate on them day and night as he lay in his bed dying. Realizing that of every Blessing that he had received from the Lord in his life. None was greater than God's mercy.

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Psalm 32:1–2 (NKJV) — 1 Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, Whose sin is covered. **2** Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity, And in whose spirit there is no deceit.

David states that the person who has been forgiven has every reason to rejoice.

In **Psalm 1**, David promises the same Blessing, but only to the one who walks in the way of the Lord continually. But the reality is that none of us achieve that perfection. But here in **Psalm 32**, David notes that in the reality of our position as sinners, **we can rejoice in the certainty of God's mercy towards us.**

Now remember David's proclamation was a testimony to God's mercy after David committed sins **in which there were no sacrifices or provisions for forgiveness under the Mosaic Law.**

In Ps 32, David uses poetic parallelism in which he places three terms for sin in parallel with three way in which God deals with those sins. **Giving us a full picture of not only the corruption of sin itself, but even more so - the fullness of God's mercy.**

- 1.** One of the first terms for sin that David uses is the word **transgression**.

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Transgression: Literally means a **willful** departure from what is right, or a rebellion against God's law. Transgression is rooted in our rebellion against God's authority in our life. We don't want to follow His rules. In essence we want to be our own god.

Samuel told King Saul that rebellion is just as sinful as witchcraft, after King Saul failed to fully obey God's command to destroy the Amalekites and all their belongings in 1 Sam 15.

Think about that. When we **willfully** disobey the Word of God, it is just as if we were practicing Witchcraft. Any transgression is a serious rebellion against God's authority over us.

2. The second term that David uses is "sin".

6

Sin - Meaning missing or falling short of the mark. Failing to meet the standard of perfection, even if the intent is to hit that mark.

The Apostle Paul noted in **Romans 7** that **even if the will to do good was in him, how to perform that will he did not find**. Pointing out that even when he - in and of himself, desired to hit the bullseye, he found that he often would fall short. As a sinner.

3. The third word that David used is iniquity.

7

Iniquity - Which means **to be** internally corrupt, twisted, or crooked.

It was iniquity in David's heart that caused him to lust after Uriah's wife and then scheme a way to cover up his sin. If you know the story, you know that David tried first to deceive Uriah into going home and spending the night with his wife. Hoping that Uriah and everyone else would think that Bethsheba was pregnant by Uriah. But when that didn't work, the **iniquity in Davids heart** lead him to plot out a plan of murder.

In the process of David's repentance, he admitted that he wasn't just someone who committed sin, but that he was in fact a sinner, through and through.

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<p>Psalm 51:5 (NKJV) — 5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.</p>

David realized that he didn't have to learn to be a sinner. He came out of his mother's womb a sinner.

As we deal with a certain sin in our lives that we struggle most with, we might have a false notion that other than that .. **you fill in the blank**.. addiction, lusts, greed, anger or whatever that sin happens to be, we are for the most part ok. **Maybe even pretty good**.

But what we need to do is come to the same reality that David did. Realizing that his adulterous act and his willingness to murder Uriah **were not just isolated incidents of sin**. The real issue was the fact that deep down inside, David's heart was a corrupted in sin. That was his **fallen**

human condition, and his greatest problem. As is true for every single person. Adultery and murder was just the manifestation of David's sin problem.

Maybe you are here this morning, and you find yourself even wondering why sin is such a big deal, since the fact remains that we are all sinners.

I don't think we are ever willing to state it that way, but we are often willing to downplay the seriousness of sin. Even justifying it with thoughts or words like this;

"hey that is just who I am", when we are confronted about our anger issue, or our lack of patience towards others, or even our tendency to speak ill of others.

We might even excuse our unkind words by stating that **"we are just a person who speaks their mind"**. When the reality is that those sinful deeds are manifestations of the corruption that still resides in our hearts.

Something that we must realize is that every single sin that we commit is a big deal, because it is ultimately against God. Whether that is the sin of anger, of lust, of being impatient towards others, or speaking un-edifying words about others.

King David confessed this much:

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Psalm 51:4 (NKJV) — 4 Against You, You only, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight— That You may be found just when You speak, And blameless when You judge.

David's sin was not only against God. **He certainly sinned against both Bethsheba and Uriah.** David used his position and authority to fulfill his lust and to try to remove the consequence of his sin. But ultimately his sin was against God, Who blessed him with his position of authority.

God hates sin, not only because it is rebellion against him. But also for the reason that it has tainted everything that He created to be perfect and good.

10

Genesis 1:31 (NKJV) — 31 Then God saw everything that He had made, and indeed it was very good. So, the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

It says that everything that God made was very good. The Hebrew means that it was **exceedingly good**.

But sin is so destructive that **it only took one act of disobedience to corrupt what was exceedingly good.** The corruption from sin not only impacted Adam and Eve and their relationship with God. But all of creation was impacted by that sin.

We are told in Romans 8:20 that all of creation **has been subjected to futility**. Ultimately through Adam and Eve's sin.

God could have left us in a tailspin of corruption as a result of sin. But because He is a **God Who is abundant in mercy**, he chose to deal with our sin. Not just leave us to suffer the consequences of it.

Now alongside these terms of sin, David also paralleled three corresponding means by which God deals with our sinful behaviors.

1. **The first term is forgiveness.** In Vs 1 it said “Blessed is he whose **transgression is forgiven**”

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This word translated as **forgiven** - literally means to have our sin “**lifted off or take away**”. Receiving God’s forgiveness is literally God lifting the burden of our sin from us.

12

Psalm 38:4 (NKJV) — 4 For my iniquities have gone over my head; **Like a heavy burden they are too heavy for me.**

Spurgeon noted that to be forgiven means to have that burden lifted off or a barrier removed from the sinner. What a beautiful picture of extending forgiveness to someone else. In doing so, we are lifting the burden from them.

2. **The second word in How God’s deals with our sin is the word “Covered”.** Saying Blessed is the one “**whose sin is covered.**”

13

Meaning to place something **between the object and the viewer in order to conceal it.**

- David would have used this word while **considering the imagery** of the Day of Atonement.

The Day of Atonement took place once a year as the high priest of Israel took blood from an animal that had been sacrificed in the courtyard of the temple and carried it into the Holy of Holies, where it was sprinkled on the **mercy seat of the Ark of the Covenant**.

14 (Picture)

The mercy seat was the lid or “covering” of the ark, and the blood was sprinkled on the lid of the ark as a barrier between the Law written on the 10 commandments and the space between the wings of the cherubim above the ark where the **glory of God** would dwell.

When the sacrificial blood was sprinkled on the mercy seat, **it symbolically covered Israel’s failure to perfectly abide by the Law**. Shielding the sinner from God’s judgment.

This was only a temporary measure that God had set in place under the first covenant. It was a **shadow of the final and perfect cleansing** that would be received through the blood of Jesus Christ.

In Greek term for Mercy Seat is “**Propitiation**,” which means the act of turning God’s wrath aside.

15

Speaking of Jesus, John wrote:

1 John 2:2 (NKJV) — 2 And He Himself **is the propitiation for our sins**, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.

Under the first covenant in which Israel observed the Day of Atonement. The veil that separated man from the Holy of Holies still remained in place.

But that is no longer the case. Understand that by the blood of Jesus Christ and through the sufficiency of His sacrifice, our sin is no longer just covered. **But it is completely removed - Paid in full. There no longer remains any debt to be paid.** Therefore, at Jesus’s last breath - the **veil was torn from top to bottom** as Jesus’s blood **satisfied the that debt of sin** that had all of humanity on a path to hell for all eternity.

3. And this brings me to the **third manner** in how God deals with our sin. Actually, it is a term of **what God does not do**. In verse 2 it says - “Blessed is the man to whom the **LORD does not impute iniquity**”

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He does not count that sin against us. Not that He just sweeps it away as if it didn’t happen. But instead, it is put into another person’s account. Using a bookkeeping term “**impute**”.

Understand, a transaction took place at the Cross of calvary. God imputed or transferred the debt of our sin into Jesus’s ledger, while at the same time transferring the credit of **Jesus’s perfect righteousness** into the believers account.

17

Romans 3:21–22 (NKJV) — 21 But now **the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed**, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, **22** even the **righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ**, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;

God in His mercy has made a way to deal with every aspect of our sin. Our transgressions are lifted away, our sin is covered (hidden) and our iniquity is not counted against us, because it has paid in full by Jesus. And we are accredited the perfect righteousness of Christ.

18

Hebrews 10:14 (NKJV) — 14 For by one offering He has **perfected forever** those who are being sanctified.

Even if David didn't have a full understand of how God would ultimately deal with our sin through the death of Jesus on the Cross. He understood that it was through sacrificial blood that sin was dealt with.

19

In his confession in Ps 51 David wrote:

Psalms 51:7 (NKJV) — 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

How much more for the one who has been cleansed of sin **through the precious blood of Jesus Christ**.

We have all the more reason to rejoice knowing that God has mercifully dealt with our transgressions, our iniquities, and our sin to the point that **we are without blemish before the eyes** of the Father. Perfected forever by the blood of Jesus.

Here we are sinful people whom Jerimah described our very best efforts of righteousness as being like filthy rags. Yet through the mercy of God, we are spotless and without a single blemish in His eyes. Fully deserving of His wrath, yet completely redeemed by His love.

David knew all too well that His sin deserved death and that His only hope was God's mercy. Therefore, his confession and submission to God was **based entirely on God's loving kindness and mercy**.

We too can only approach God on the basis of His mercy alone.

20

Psalms 51:1 (NKJV) — 1 Have mercy upon me, O God, According to Your lovingkindness; According to the multitude of Your tender mercies, Blot out my transgressions.

In **Psalm 32:2**, the promise of the blessing of God's mercy is to the one in **"in whose spirit there is no deceit."** The deceit is the failure of coming to terms with the sin. That was David's circumstance for 9 months before he finally confessed His sin before the Lord and received forgiveness.

While refusing to confess that sin, David felt it's weight.

Psalm 32:3–4 (NKJV) — 3 When I kept silent, my bones grew old Through my groaning all the day long. **4** For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was turned into the drought of summer.

These verses recount the effects of David’s unconfessed sin. David confessed that his very bones seemed to be wasting away and that his strength and zest of life became depleted. **In the same manner that grass withers away in the heat of the summer drought.**

Unconfessed/unrepented sin **not only** affects our spiritual wellbeing, but it impacts every aspect of our life. Including our physical and emotional wellbeing.

The NASB says of verse 3 – **when I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away.**

What a killing thing is sin! It is a pestilent disease! A fire in the bones! **While we smother our sin it rages within, and like a gathering wound swells horribly and torments terribly.**

Spurgeon

Sin unrepented and unconfessed to the Lord, festers within us like a bacterial infection.

- When **we fail to confess our sin to God**. We bear its full burden.

God desires to clean out that infection that resides inside us. But when we refuse to repent. The weight of the sin bears down on our lives, physically, mentally, and Spiritually. Until as David said, we grow old through our groaning and suffering under its weight.

David recognized that the deterioration brought about by His sin was ultimately God’s hand against him.

32:4 “For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me; My vitality was turned into the drought of summer”.

Understand this weight comes from God’s loving and correcting hand against the believer in sin, because He loves us. **It is not God’s wrath.** Not yet anyway. If someone continues to remain in rebellion and refuse God’s mercy then one day they will experience that wrath. But today it is God’s loving discipline.

The purpose of God’s chastening for the believer is not punitive but creative. He chastens “that we may share His holiness.” The phrase “that we may share” has direction in it, and the direction points toward a purified and beautified life.

J.A. Jowett

God loved David too much to allow Him to remain hidden in His sin. As long as David remained silent, the weight of that sin pressed heavily upon Him.

If you are a true believer than you can be assured that God loves you too much to just leave you in the rebellion of your sin.

24

Hebrews 12:5–6 (NKJV) — 5 And you have forgotten the exhortation which speaks to you as to sons: “My son, do not despise the chastening of the LORD, Nor be discouraged when you are rebuked by Him; **6 For whom the LORD loves He chastens, And scourges every son whom He receives.”**

If you are a parent then you understand the necessity of discipline. The most unloving thing a parent can do is leave their child undisciplined. That is a sure path to the child’s destruction.

25

Proverbs 13:24 (NKJV) — 24 He who spares his rod hates his son, But he who loves him disciplines him promptly.

Something even more essential than a parents discipline for a child is the necessity of God’s discipline in our lives, as His children.

A scripture that I often share with others concerning God’s discipline:

26

Hebrews 12:11–13 (NKJV) — 11 Now no chastening seems to be joyful for the present, but painful; nevertheless, afterward **it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness** to those who **have been trained by it.** **12** Therefore strengthen the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees, **13** and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be dislocated, but rather be healed.

This scripture reminds us, **that God in His mercy seeks to conform us into the image of Jesus.**

Often it can be through trails and tribulations that are a direct result of God’s discipline. I am by no means saying that all trials and hardships that we experience are a result of God’s discipline. But I think that we fail to realize that often our progressive sanctification (growing to look like Jesus), is carried out through a process of God’s discipline in our lives.

But understand this! The promise of a **peaceable fruit of righteousness** only applies to those willing to submit under God’s hand of discipline.

Therefore, verses **12 and 13** basically tell us to stop feeling sorry for ourselves when we are enduring discipline, and be encouraged in God's goodness by repenting of our sin and doing what is right.

- **The peaceable fruit of righteousness** is for that who are trained by the discipline. Not those who withdraw in self-pity and bitterness. Or those who willfully remain in the sin.

What David experienced during that 9 months of refusing to surrender and confess his sin was God's hand of discipline. For the purpose of bringing David to repentance.

David could have refused to humble himself and confess his sin and remain under the heavy hand of God's discipline. **But instead, David humbled himself** before the Lord.

27

Psalm 32:5 (NKJV) — 5 I acknowledged my sin to You, And my iniquity I have not hidden. I said, **"I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,"** And You forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah

Once David stopped hiding in the garden as Adam and Eve had done. And surrendered his sin. **The Lord lifted the weight of that sin from David.**

David realized that vitality of life and restoration of joy could only be found through God's forgiveness of his sins.

28

Psalm 51:7–12 (NKJV) — 7 Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. **8** Make me hear joy and gladness, That the bones You have broken may rejoice. **9** Hide Your face from my sins, And blot out all my iniquities. **10** Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me. **11** Do not cast me away from Your presence, And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me. **12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation,** And uphold me by Your generous Spirit.

David not only asked for forgiveness, but he sought to be restored through God's full cleansing. To be re-purified if you will.

29

1 John 1:9 (NKJV) — 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. `

David knew that only the Lord could fully restore him. You and I cannot cleanse ourselves from the defilement of sin. That would be like a filthy pig attempting to give himself a bath in the pig pin. No matter how hard he tries, he will never be clean.

David cried out - **Wash me, then I will be clean.** Cleanse me thoroughly and create in me a clean heart, and place a renew and steadfast spirit of loyalty in me. **Restore me to the joy of Your salvation.**

this restoration can only come through God's mercy.

30

Psalm 32:6–7 (NKJV) — 6 For this cause everyone who is godly shall pray to You In a time when You may be found; Surely in a flood of great waters They shall not come near him. **7** You are my hiding place; You shall preserve me from trouble; You shall surround me with songs of deliverance.

31

Psalm 32:6–7 (NLT) — 6 Therefore, **let all the godly pray to you while there is still time**, that they may not drown in the floodwaters of judgment. **7** For you are my hiding place; you protect me from trouble. You surround me with songs of victory.

This verse in Isaiah sums it up.

32

Isaiah 55:6–7 (NKJV) — 6 Seek the LORD while He may be found, Call upon Him while He is near. **7** Let the wicked forsake his way, And the unrighteous man his thoughts; **Let him return to the LORD**, And He will have mercy on him; And to our God, For He will abundantly pardon.

Closing:

Unconfessed and un-repentant sin robs us of the joy of the greatest gift that we have received. The gift of being washed clean, the blessing of having the guilt of sin lifted off of us by God's mercy. When we refuse to deal with the sin in our lives, we keep ourselves at a distance from God's mercy.

David realized this and cried out to God not only for His mercy, **but for the restoration of that joy.**

33

For 9 months David carried the weight of those unconfessed sins, experiencing its crushing weight in his life.

How long are you going to wait?

Jesus invites you to come to Him this morning with a repentant heart, and have the joy of His salvation restored in your heart.

Alter call