

Psalm 32 (NASB)

How blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven,  
Whose sin is covered!  
How blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity,  
And in whose spirit there is no deceit!

When I kept silent about my sin, my body wasted away  
Through my groaning all day long.  
For day and night Your hand was heavy upon me;  
My vitality was drained away as with the fever heat of summer. (Selah.)  
I acknowledged my sin to You,  
And my iniquity I did not hide;  
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD";  
And You forgave the guilt of my sin. (Selah.)  
Therefore, let everyone who is godly pray to You in a time when You may be found;  
Surely in a flood of great waters they will not reach him.  
You are my hiding place; You preserve me from trouble;  
You surround me with songs of deliverance. (Selah.)

I will instruct you and teach you in the way which you should go;  
I will counsel you with My eye upon you.  
Do not be as the horse or as the mule which have no understanding,  
Whose trappings include bit and bridle to hold them in check,  
Otherwise they will not come near to you.  
Many are the sorrows of the wicked,  
But he who trusts in the LORD, lovingkindness shall surround him.  
Be glad in the LORD and rejoice, you righteous ones;  
And shout for joy, all you who are upright in heart.

We all know the powerful truth of the opening lines of this psalm. We have all sinned and made ourselves unworthy of God's acceptance. But God is willing to remove our guilt and count us among His righteous ones. This is only true, however, if we are like the author of this psalm who acknowledged his sin and prayed to God for deliverance.

Sin is so destructive. When secret sins control us, we feel as if there's something inside of us gnawing away at our bones. We smile back at smiling faces, but we hate ourselves for our deceitfulness and for the burden of guilt that we carry. We know too well that we've failed miserably, and we struggle with choosing the path that is right. Should we confess our sin and risk humiliation, shame, and rejection? The psalmist says, yes. If we confess our sins, God will surround us with His love. He will purify us again and renew within us a heart that can rejoice. So why is it so hard to confess?

We would think that it would be harder to receive forgiveness from a perfect God than from fellow sinners, but that isn't the case. Even though we've all sinned, we sometimes find it hard to hear another person's confession. It is even more difficult, at times, to offer true forgiveness that restores our relationship. And yet, if we are going to model ourselves after God, if we are going to be true to our status as His adopted children, then we have to live by the rules of His house. If God can accept a penitent sinner, then so can we. Sin is a killer, but God is a healer. Which will we be?