

## God's Fresh Start: His Forgiveness

### Psalm 32

**Psalm 51:1-2** Have mercy on me, O God, because of Your unfailing love. Because of your great compassion, blot out the stain of my sins. Wash me clean from my guilt. Purify me from my sin. **Psalm 51:8-10** Oh, give me back my joy again; you have broken me—now let me rejoice. Don't keep looking at my sins. Remove the stain of my guilt. Create in me a clean heart, O God. Renew a right spirit within me. **Psalm 51:12** Restore to me again the joy of Your salvation, and make me willing to obey You.

In the first 2 verses of Psalm 51, what are the three character traits David ascribed to God? What sometimes keeps us from seeing God as merciful and very compassionate, with a love that never quits?

In the Psalm 51 passage above, underline what David is asking God to do for him since he has confessed and repented of his sin. What do you think it means to be broken? What do you see as the place of guilt and shame in the life of a follower of Christ? Should the life of every follower of Christ be characterized by joy? (**Philippians 4:4-7**)

**Psalm 32:1-2** Oh, what joy for those whose rebellion is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! Yes, what joy for those whose record the LORD has cleared of sin, whose lives are lived in complete honesty!

What word is used to mean sin in verse 1? **Rebellion**. When we sin, we are rebelling against **God** and **God's Word**. The sinful life is also characterized by **dishonesty** and a lack of eternal purpose. Repentance is real **honesty** before the Lord, being willing to assume personal responsibility for our sin.

In **Matthew 22:37-40** Jesus summarized what should be our goal in life: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets." Anything else is sin.

**Psalm 32:3-5** When I refused to confess my sin, I was weak and miserable, and I groaned all day long. Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat. Finally, I confessed all my sins to You and stopped trying to hide them. I said to myself, I will confess my rebellion to the LORD. **And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone.**

What happens to us when we try to rationalize known sin, justify it, or hide it like David did?

What is the only action that will bring forgiveness and freedom from guilt and shame?

**How we confess and forsake sin:**

- 1. Admit the sin to the Lord, and accept responsibility for it. Be totally truthful.**
- 2. Change the behavior (repent). God will empower you if you choose to change.**
- 3. Accept and receive the gift of the Lord's forgiveness. Believe you are forgiven.**

**Following these steps may be painful, but the joy and freedom that follows will more than make up for the pain!!**

- **Our relationship with God provides protection: Psalm 32: 6-7** 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. You are my hiding place; you shall preserve me from trouble; You shall surround me with songs of deliverance.
- **Our relationship with God gives us guidance: Psalm 32: 8-9** I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will guide you with My eye. Do not be like the horse or like the mule, which have no understanding, which must be harnessed with bit and bridle, else they will not come near you.
- **Worship is the result of our relationship with Jesus: Psalm 32: 10-11** Many sorrows shall be to the wicked; but he who trusts in the Lord, mercy shall surround him. Be glad and rejoice, you righteous; and shout for joy, all you upright in heart!

**A FRESH START happens when we in the Body of Christ no longer tolerate or repress sin and all of its sickness in our lives.**