

# Forgiven

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[ 0 : 00 ] As you're there in Psalm 32, would you stand with me as we honor God's word together.

! Whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity, 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, May God add a blessing to the reading of his word.

Would you please be seated? Amen. Human history is riddled with examples of people committing crimes and doing shameful things that they attempted to cover up to keep the truth of their misdeeds from being exposed.

[ 2 : 17 ] But the first cover-up in human history took place in the Garden of Eden. The Bible says that after God made Adam and Eve, He gave them dominion to serve as His stewards over His creation.

God instructed them to eat the fruit and the vegetation the land produced. However, there was one tree from which He commanded them not to eat, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

God warned them that if they ate the fruit of that tree, they would die. Later, Satan entered the garden. He tempted Eve to doubt God's Word, to deny God as the authority of truth, and deceived her into thinking that disobeying God would make her like God.

Eve looked at the tree and its fruit in a new way. It delighted her eyes, and it stirred a desire within her.

Perhaps she was thinking, maybe Satan is telling the truth. Or maybe she was thinking, perhaps I've misunderstood God and His Word.

[ 3 : 43 ] Maybe she was wondering, what is death? What does that even mean in a place that is teeming and full of life? Eve ate the fruit of the forbidden tree, and she gave some to Adam, her husband, and he ate two.

And Genesis 3, 7-8 records what happened next. Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked. And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths. And they heard the sound of the Lord walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden. Our first parents instantly knew that something was wrong after they disobeyed God.

And they attempted to rectify the situation by covering their nakedness with fig leaves. Ironically, in trying to be like God, by eating of the tree he commanded them not to, Adam and Eve found themselves hiding from God.

Hiding from His presence. Covering. Hiding. These are two ways that we respond or react to our sin. A third way is blaming.

[ 5 : 06 ] After God calls out to Adam and Eve and tells them to stop hiding and come to Him, in Genesis 3, 10-13, as God is questioning them, Adam said, I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked and I hid myself.

And God said, Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat? The man said, The woman you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree and I ate.

Then the Lord God said to the woman, What is this that you have done? And the woman said, The serpent deceived me and I ate. Adam blames Eve and indirectly he blames God.

You're the one who made her. You're the one who gave her to me. She's the one who made me eat. So in a way, God, this is really your fault. Eve blames Satan.

She's saying, in effect, Don't blame me. The devil made me do it. Like Adam and Eve, we try to cover the shame of our sin.

[ 6 : 20 ] We think we can hide it from God and blame others for our sin instead of confessing our sin and casting ourselves on God for mercy and for forgiveness.

In Psalm 32, David, inspired by the Holy Spirit, writes about the joy he experienced after he dealt with his sin the right way. Some biblical scholars think that this psalm should be read with Psalm 51, where there David recounts and repents of his sin with Bathsheba.

Many of you are familiar with that story. While David's armies went out to battle, and David should have been with them, instead he decided that he would stay at home in Jerusalem.

And there one day, as he's walking around his palace at the top, with a view of everything inside the city, he sees the wife of one of his soldiers, and he seduces her.

And she becomes pregnant with his child. And David attempts to cover his sinful action in many ways. And when those ways failed, he orchestrated the death of Uriah, Bathsheba's husband, on the battlefield.

[ 7 : 42 ] And after that had been done, David married Bathsheba, and he believed that his sin was hidden from view, and that it was hidden for good.

However, the Bible says that this thing David had done displeased the Lord. God sent Nathan, the prophet.

He confronted David, and he exposed the sins that he hid. There were consequences for David's sin. And those consequences were tragic.

But David, after having committed adultery, and having had tried to cover up that sin with another sin, and murdering Uriah, received God's forgiveness.

David was well acquainted with the crushing weight of guilt, sorrow, and shame that accompanies our sinful actions.

[ 8 : 47 ] He'd experienced the internal torment, the emotional anguish, the mental stress of trying to cover and hide his sins. But he also experienced the forgiveness of God, who, as we've sung this morning, whose mercy is more.

He experienced the blessed release of the weight of his sin when he stopped trying to conceal them, and instead confessed them to God, who, in his grace, covered David's sins with his righteousness.

Psalm 32 communicates the great truth that God forgives and conceals the sins you reveal and confess to him.

God forgives and conceals the sins you reveal and confess to him. Let me ask you a question. What do you do with your sin?

How would you respond to the things that you have done in secret if they were revealed to others? Like our first parents, we think we can cover our sin, we think we can cover our shame by clothing it, by hiding it, by masking it, with doing more good works.

[ 10 : 13 ] We think that we can balance the scales. I've done these bad things. All I need to do is just some more good things. We also think that we can hide our sins from God by pretending that God doesn't exist for some people, or that he doesn't care, or that God will just forget it.

We also think that we can deflect the blame of our sins for others. We live in a world that convinces us that maybe you did bad things, but the bad things you did were the result of bad things that somebody else did to you, and so really they're the one to blame.

God doesn't buy any of those excuses. He's given his word to us to remind us that he doesn't buy any of those excuses.

Hebrews 4, 12-13 says, For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart.

And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.

[ 11 : 33 ] This psalm communicates the truth that God forgives and conceals the sins we reveal and confess to him. It also communicates this truth negatively.

God judges and exposes the sins you conceal and hide from him. Christian, you can't hide from God.

You can't. Whatever you've done, whatever you are doing right now in secret, he knows about it, he sees it, and it displeases him.

You know it's wrong. Otherwise, why would you be trying to hide it? Why would you be doing it in secret? Maybe you hide it because you can't stop, or you don't want to stop, which is a bigger issue. But I'm sure that after committing that sin, whatever it is, you feel spiritually sick in your soul. Do you want relief?

[ 12 : 43 ] God's calling you today through his word to confess your sin to him that you would experience in its place of the shame and the sorrow, the joy of his forgiveness and the peace in your heart that comes with that.

There's also a temptation to walk into this place, this church building, as if we don't struggle with sin, as if we've got sin whipped.

How silly. We all needed Jesus to save us. We all need the Holy Spirit who indwells us to help us live the Christian life.

And we need each other. We need to be able to confide in each other. We need to be able to confess our sins to each other that God will use each of us to help one another.

And I hope that God will encourage you today to do the right thing with your sin. If you're here this morning and you have not trusted in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, maybe you think that you've sinned too much to receive God's forgiveness.

[ 14 : 09 ] Friend, let me tell you, if God would forgive David for what David did, God will forgive you too. But understand, His grace isn't cheap.

While there's nothing you could do to earn His forgiveness, you can only receive His forgiveness through the means God has provided. God is holy, which means He's just.

Adam and Eve's sin brought the curse of sin into this world. It created a spiritual death, a separation between God and people created in His image.

But God didn't leave them. He didn't leave us in a hopeless condition. For Adam and Eve, He clothed them with the skin of an animal who gave its life to cover their shame.

He promised them that one day He would provide the last sacrifice, the seed of the woman who would come and who would crush the head of the serpent.

[ 15 : 13 ] And as the story of God's redemptive plan unfolds in the pages of Scripture, He reveals how that promised seed, Jesus Christ, the Son of God, atoned for our sins as a sacrifice on the cross to clothe us in His righteousness and restore our relationship with God that sin severed by making peace through the blood that He shed on the cross for us.

He's brought you here today to offer the gift of His grace to you and I hope that today is the day that you stop hiding your sin from God and turn to Him in repentance and for rescue and He will save you.

God forgives and conceals the sins you reveal and confess to Him. And in Psalm 32, we see three reactions that we should have to this gracious and glorious truth.

The first reaction, praise God for covering your sins. Praise God for covering your sins. In verses 1 through 2, David declares the blessing of forgiveness.

Again, he says, 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.

[ 16 : 35 ] In these two verses, David uses three words to describe sin. Transgression, sin, and iniquity.

The Hebrew word translated as transgression has to do with rebellion. It's a deliberate break from God's will. It's knowing the right thing to do and willfully disobeying what God commands.

The second word, sin, describes missing the mark. It's an archery term that describes the distance between where the arrow landed and the mark or the bullseye where it was intended to go.

The word, iniquity, describes twistedness, crookedness, or perversion. Looking at these three words is like holding a black diamond to the light revealing the different facets and sides of our sin.

The first word, transgression, describes our relationship with God. God commands our obedience and we choose to rebel against Him. The second word, sin, describes our relationship to God's law.

[ 17 : 50 ] We fall short. We miss the mark. We don't measure up to the standard that He has. The third word, iniquity, describes the effect that sin has on us.

We are morally crooked, perverse, and guilty before a God who is holy. These three words describe the human condition.

A condition that every single one of us is born with. Galatians 5, 17 says, for the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh.

For these are opposed to each other to keep you from doing the things you want to do. Romans 3, 23 says, for all, every one of us, have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Now, I've said this before. you're going to hear me say it again. It's important to understand that we don't just fall short by a little bit of God's perfect, holy, righteous standard.

[ 18 : 52 ] We fall woefully short of that. We're like a golfer at the tee box. The ball is on the tee.

It's not moving. It's not going anywhere. The hole we're aiming at is right in front of us. It's not moving. It's not going anywhere. And we're swinging to try to hit the ball to the hole.

But we missed the mark. Reminds me of one time I was playing golf and I'm not a very good golfer. And I, man, I really felt like I had to get all my strength into this swing to be able to hit the ball hard enough to get it close enough to the hole.

And so I'm thinking about, you know, I've got to put everything I've got into this swing and I pull the club back and, you know, I'm gritting my teeth and I'm ready to just grip it and rip it and let this thing fly.

And I come through and I completely missed the ball. I didn't even tap it. I didn't even nick it. I completely missed the ball.

[ 20 : 03 ] That describes us and how we fall short. Not only do we miss the target, we miss the objective.

We have all sinned. We've all sinned a lot. We've all sinned big. And that's important for us to understand. But the most important thing these verses communicate is not the nature of sin, but that all of these sins can be forgiven.

David matches these three words for sin with three words of pardon. The first word, forgiven, literally means to lift or to carry away. Our sin is compared to a heavy weight that's too great for us to lift, too great for us to get out from underneath, like someone trying to bench press more than they can.

Their arms are shaking, their face is turning red, they are struggling to breathe, then someone comes, a spotter reaches down and lifts the weight up. off of their chest. The second word, covered, has to do with atonement.

Like the animal God sacrificed in the garden to clothe Adam and Eve, and the animal sacrifices God commanded His people in the Old Testament to make, to atone for their sins, shedding its blood and taking its life as a substitute, that it stands in the place and endures the penalty of the sinner.

[ 21 : 28 ] The third word describes what God does not do. He does not count iniquities against us. This is an accounting term. When God forgives someone, He cancels their debt.

Imagine going to the mailbox tomorrow and say all of your bills arrive at the same time. Your mortgage payment, your car payment, all of your utility bills, your student loans, if you have those, your credit card statement, if you have one of those.

Imagine all of those bills are in your mailbox and you open each one of them to find out that every single account has been paid in full and your balance is zero.

You'd be pretty happy about that, wouldn't you? Yes? You would feel blessed, wouldn't you? So it is with the person whose sin has been covered by God.

But there's more to God's forgiveness than just zeroing out our sin debt. After calling Abraham, God told him that he would be the man through whom the promised seed of the woman would come to crush the serpent's head and be the one through whom the nations would be blessed.

[ 22 : 49 ] Genesis 15, 6 records Abraham's response to God's promise. And he, Abraham, believed the Lord and he, the Lord, counted it to him as righteousness.

The verb counted is the same verb David uses in verse 2 of Psalm 32. So this counting God does goes in two ways. In the negative sense, he subtracts our sin debt to zero.

In the positive sense, he adds his righteousness to our account. In Romans chapter 4 verses 1 through 8, the apostle Paul joins these two promises from Genesis 15, 6 and Psalm 32, 2 together. Let's look at what he says. But then, shall we say, was gained by Abraham our father according to the flesh. For if Abraham was justified by works, he has nothing to boast about, but not before God. For what does the Scripture say? Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness. Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift, but as his due.

[ 23 : 57 ] And the one who does not work, but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is counted as righteousness, just as David also speaks of the blessing of the one to whom God counts righteousness apart from works.

And now he's quoting Psalm 32. Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man against whom the Lord will not count his sin.

In Romans 4, Paul makes the point that salvation has always been by faith. It's not passed down through the bloodstream. It's not something anyone can work for.

God does it all. How does God do it? I shared Romans 3.23. Let's look at that verse again, and more importantly, the verses that Paul shares after it.

verse 23, for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God and are justified by his grace as a gift through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood to be received by faith.

[ 25 : 05 ] This was to show God's righteousness because in his divine forbearance he had passed over former sins. It was to show his righteousness at the present time so that he might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Jesus, the Son of God, propitiated, he appeased, he satisfied the wrath of the Father for our sins which violate his holiness.

God is holy, and in being holy, his justice demands that every sin and every sinner be brought to justice. And God would have been justified if he abandoned Adam and Eve after they sinned.

Instead, God in his love sent his only son, Jesus, who lived sinlessly, who measured up, who met that perfect divine standard, and who died sacrificially on the cross, bearing the Father's wrath, atoning for our sins, paying the price with his blood to cover us with his righteousness, to cover our sins.

Abraham trusted in what God would do. We trust in what God has done to absorb our debt through Jesus' death.

[ 26 : 32 ] And by acknowledging what God has done, trusting in who Jesus is, and trusting in what Jesus has done, and as a result of that trust, as a result of our faith in what God has done, God credits his righteousness to our account.

He clothes us in the righteousness of Jesus Christ, his Son. God counts. He attributes Jesus' sinless life to us as if we lived it.

We receive his pardon, his forgiveness, and though we are guilty, in Christ he declares us innocent. It's amazing.

Before moving on to the next reaction to God forgiving and concealing the sins we reveal and confess to them, I think we need to look more closely at the end of verse 2.

The person who truly receives God's forgiveness and who truly praises him for it is a person, David said, in whose spirit there is no deceit.

[ 27 : 44 ] I don't think this deceit refers primarily to someone who deceives others, but to someone who deceives themselves. In 1 John 1.8, the apostle says, if we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.

A person who is self-deceived like this thinks that they have no sin to repent of or that they have no sin to seek God's forgiveness for.

We live in a culture that calls good evil and evil good. We live in a time when many Christians are willing to affirm what the culture calls good though God clearly condemns what they call good in his word.

That's one way we can be deceived. Self-deceived. People can also deceive themselves by thinking God doesn't see their sin, the sin that they're hiding.

People can deceive themselves by comparing themselves to others. It's not really that hard to find someone in a world cursed by sin who has sinned in more harmful ways than we have.

[ 29 : 02 ] People deceive themselves by thinking they are victims instead of sinners. People deceive themselves by thinking that they don't sin at all.

People deceive themselves by thinking that salvation is earned through good works and following religious ceremonies and traditions. Jesus told a parable about that in Luke 18 9-14.

He told this parable to some who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and treated others with contempt. Two men went up into the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector.

The Pharisee standing by himself prayed thus, God I thank you that I am not like other men, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even like this tax collector.

I fast twice a week, I give tithes of all that I get, but the tax collector standing far off would not even lift up his eyes to heaven, but he beat his breast saying, God be merciful to me, a sinner.

[ 30 : 14 ] Jesus says, I tell you, this man, this tax collector, went down to his house justified rather than the other.

For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled and the one who humbles himself will be exalted. As Christians, we need to be careful about falling into self-deceit that we can hide our sin from God. We're thinking that we are better than other people. we need to prevent a culture in our church that excuses, that hides, or that discourages confessing our sins to one another.

We know what God's word says. We know how we should live in obedience to his word. And we know that we all battle with the sin nature.

We are all in constant need of God's grace and mercy and forgiveness. We all needed Jesus. We all need Jesus.

[ 31 : 24 ] We need to be real about our sin and be genuine in our praise of God who covers our sin and who uses his church to purify us and assist us as we pursue holiness.

So that's the first reaction. The second is to pray to God and confess your sins. Pray to God and confess your sins. In verses 3-7, David describes his personal experience when he tried to conceal and hide his sin from God.

In verses 3-4, he writes about his silence towards his sin, his willingness to live as if nothing was wrong, hiding his sin by acting as if he had nothing to hide.

In verse 3, he says, for when I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. The Hebrew word translated as wasted away is used in the Old Testament to describe slow erosion of strength or of substance.

It's used to describe someone who is growing old. The strength they once had, the energy, the reflexes, the vitality, the stamina diminishes with age.

[ 32 : 41 ] This is a fact of life. You don't see young people walking around with objects to help them walk. They don't need those unless they're dressing up as an old person for Halloween.

They don't need those things. They have the strength, they have the stamina, they have the vitality. But as we grow older, we lose those things.

And so David is saying that this is what happens when someone hides their sin from God.

Spiritually and even physically, their strength erodes and they groan and they grieve as they try to hide what God can see.

In verse 4, David explains the source of his groaning. For day and night, your hand was upon me. My strength was dried up as the heat of summer.

David wanted to forget his sin. He wanted to be silent about his sin. But God wouldn't let him do that. God's hand weighed heavily on David's conscience, on his heart, on his mind.

[ 34 : 01 ] David experienced God's severe mercy in this way. God loved David. And because he loved David, he disciplined David for his good.

If God's hand is heavy on your conscience today, friend, know that it's because he loves you. And this may sound strange, but it's true.

he's making you miserable for your good. The time to worry is when you sin and it doesn't bother you.

God wanted to forgive David. He wanted to release David of his guilt and his shame. And finally, that's what David does or talks about in verse 5.

David didn't have to perform penance to receive God's forgiveness to make things right. All he could do was acknowledge his sin to God without making any excuses for himself.

[ 35 : 12 ] In verse 5, he says, I acknowledge my sin to you. I did not cover my iniquity. I said, I will confess my transgressions to the Lord and you forgave me.

In that moment, the weight was lifted. The anguish was gone. You can't conceal your sin, but God can. You can't pay your debt to sin, but God can.

You don't have the authority to forgive yourself of your sin, but God can. And when he does forgive you of your sin, you must forgive yourself too.

Now, put yourself in David's sandals for a minute. His life, many of his sins are recorded in God's word for anyone to read.

How would that make you feel if your life and all of your major sins and struggles were recorded in God's word for people to read whenever they wanted to?

[ 36 : 20 ] Both in Psalm 32 and Psalm 51, he openly confesses his struggles with sin and his turmoil in trying to hide his sin.

Why is he so open about his sin with others? It's because he wants them to know the forgiveness of God.

Verses 6-7. Here David refers to the rush of great waters bringing to mind the opportunity that was there for people to join Noah and his family in the ark before God closed the door and the flood waters came and wiped them all away.

For unbelievers, the call is to pray for God's forgiveness while you still can, while the door is still open to you before it's closed and you face the flood waters of God's judgment.

For believers, and I think David primarily has you in mind here, the encouragement from God is to pray to him and reveal your sin to him before you face the severe mercy of his discipline by his exposing what you thought you could cover up.

[ 37 : 52 ] James 5, 13-20 encourages the church to pray. It calls for the elders of the church to pray for the sick and to anoint them with oil.

We should pray for the sick in our church. Numerous times in our church the elders have prayed for healing over someone in our congregation. Our prayer lists are full of names of people who are ill and who are in need of God's help in that way.

And it's good that we pray for each other and those who are sick and ill in our church. But James also says this, in James 5, 16.

As a part of all this passage of the church praying, therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another that you may be healed.

And I think we're missing this. We're missing this. We don't do this like we should.

[ 39 : 03 ] God's sin. Why don't we confess our sins to one another as God commands us to in his word? Well, I think part of it has to do with pride. We don't want to admit that we're sinners to each other.

How crazy is that? Think about that. I don't want you to know that I'm a sinner. Well, I know that you're a sinner and you should know that I'm a sinner because we read God's word and it says that's who we are over and over again.

We both confess that we need Jesus Christ to save us. I know you're a sinner. You know that I'm a sinner. Sometimes we don't do this because we fear, and I think this is a big thing, we fear how others will see us in the church.

I don't know. Everybody else seems to have their life all together. Everybody else seems to be getting an A plus in the Christian life and I'm just here trying to get a D. and if they knew, I mean I can pretend it, but if they knew what I was really struggling with, they probably wouldn't want anything to do with me.

They'd probably gossip about me. They probably wouldn't ask me to do anything with them outside of church. We hide our sins not just from God but from each other when God commands us to confess our sins to one another.

[ 40 : 25 ] God in our men's groups we're going through a book called The Pursuit of Holiness written by Jerry Bridges in this past week. One of the encouragements that he gave was to pray for holiness to pray to God for your holiness and I'll be praying that for myself but I want you to know that I'm also going to be praying that for us for you as a church.

I think that a part of confessing our sin to one another is the way we pursue holiness so that we can pray for one another so that we can hold one another accountable and so that we can spurn one another on to love and to good works and reminding each other of God's grace his mercy and his forgiveness which leads now to the third reaction that we should have provide counsel to those who conceal their sin provide counsel to those who conceal their sin David has experienced that though his sins were many God's grace mercy and forgiveness are more and he wants others to feel the same release he wants others to have the same peace and joy that he's received from God by confessing his sins in verses 8 and 9 again he says I will instruct you and here he's talking to his readers

I will instruct you and teach you in the way that 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 this is an example to us of how we can keep others accountable when they struggle with sin in our church David says in effect I've got my eye on you I'm not going to leave you alone I'm going to tell you when you are acting like a stubborn mule there's a desire here that he has to help others and to counsel others in their struggle with sin Galatians 6 1-2 says brothers if anyone is caught in any transgression you who are spiritual should restore him in a spirit of gentleness keep watch on yourself lest you too be tempted bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ this is what we should do what we're commanded to do in the church now in verse 11 this is a loud verse

David sinned he thought he could hide it he experienced the severe mercy of God's heavy hand upon him he confessed his sin God forgave him and now he responds with shouts of joy 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 oh righteous and shout for joy all you upright in heart friend if you know what God has done for you you should make some noise about it you should make some noise about it if you know what Jesus did for you you should shout for joy about it if God's forgiven you if you've received his grace his provision to save you from your sins through Jesus Christ that should stir your emotions do you really know and if it doesn't if it hasn't do you really know that you've been forgiven you've heard me share the gospel this morning in this message about what

God has done to save sinners who could not save themselves Jesus Christ the eternal word of God son of God entered into human history he was born of the virgin Mary he lived a sinless life that none of us could live and he died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins he was the fulfillment of all of those Old Testament examples of animals shedding their blood giving their lives in place of sinners and here God does it God has done it Jesus gave his life he shed his blood in our place for our sins he died and he rose again on the third day and it's those who believe in him who believe in who he is who believe in what he's done who believe that in their mind in their heart and who confess that with their mouth the Bible says it is those who have been truly forgiven it is those who are saved and the call for you today from God through his word to you is to stop covering and stop hiding all of the sins that he will one day expose to do it now to do it now

[ 45 : 29 ] God I'm a sinner I've sinned against you forgive me save me do that today no matter how much you've sinned my favorite parable that Jesus told is the parable of the prodigal son because I was the prodigal son the prodigal son he asked his father for his inheritance early on in other words what he's saying I can't wait till you die to get what's coming to me I just want it now and the father gives him that inheritance and he goes off to a faraway land and he squanders it living sinlessly and he has nothing and he's trying to feed himself and he's working in a pig farm which for a Jew is like the lowest you can get and he desires to eat the food of the pigs and he thinks to himself you know what my dad will never receive me back as his son but maybe he'll receive me back as a laborer to work his fields and the son goes back to his father and the father who's been looking for his son sees him in the distance he makes a fool of himself in a way by girding up his loins and he's running to this son who has sinned against him in big ways and he wraps his arms around him and he celebrates his son who has returned completely forgiving him completely restoring him that's who

God is that's what God does and if you're that prodigal he's calling you today he's reminding you of who he is he's reminding you of the forgiveness that he wants to give to you uncover your sin and he will cover it up for the rest of us how do we adjust for those of us who have been saved how do we adjust to this well three ways confess your sins counsel sinners celebrate God's forgiveness confess your sins to God and then I encourage you to confess your sins to others we've made a transition in our church from deacons flock to elder flocks your elders should be reaching out to will be reaching out to every one of our church members they're going to be asking you for prayer requests tell them what you really need prayer for and I promise you that you will receive not just prayers but wise counsel from these men counsel those who struggle with sin when somebody confesses something to you don't just say I'll pray for you pray for them like really actually do that and then with that perform spiritual check ins every once in a while say hey how are you doing with this how are you doing with that and listen to them counsel those use

God's word help each other in this church and then finally celebrate God's forgiveness share your testimony with those whom you can worship the Lord who has been gracious to forgive you be joyful that your sins will not be counted against you and that you have eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord let's pray God we're thankful for the word that we've read this morning in Psalm 32 as your servant David recounts the the torment he experienced in trying to hide his sins from you

and thinking that that he could do that that he could conceal his own iniquity the God we see and we know through scripture that you're a God who loves us and in loving us you discipline us your hand is heavy on us whenever we refuse to confess our sins or ignore our sins and you do that because you love us because you want to set us free of the shame of the guilt that we're harboring in our hearts

God you know each person in this room you know every person listening to this message Lord you see everything you know everything you know the sins that we're hiding and harboring you know what we're desperate to keep hidden from others God we pray that through your word you would convince us to do the right thing with those sins that we are eager to hide from you that we would reveal them to you knowing that God in your grace you will conceal them from view and Lord we thank you that you are a God who loves us so much that you would do what you've done to save us from our sins and God I pray for our church I pray for the church Lord so often when we come together we act as if our lives are perfect we act as if we don't have any kind of struggle with sin and Lord you know why we act that way because of our own pride or because of our fear of how others will view us a number of different things but Lord you command us in your word to do that because the church is a way it's a blessing it's a gift you've given to us to help us seek you and to be purified of our sins so Father I pray that that in our church that we would be obedient to that command that we would confess our sins to one another and that in doing that Lord that we would counsel one another and pray for one another and encourage one another and disciple one another in ways that help us all be more like

Christ in ways that will help us Lord to better be the city on the hill that you've called us to be and that you would be pleased with what you see here that you'd be pleased with what you see in our lives and that you'd be glorified by all of it and we ask these things in Jesus name amen