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Sermon Notes

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Repentance and Confession: A Good Start to 2006

Psalm 32

Introduction

The emperor Arcadius and his wife had a very bitter feeling towards Chrysostom, bishop of Constantinople. One day, in a fit of anger, the emperor said to one of his courtiers. "I would I were avenged of this bishop!" Several then proposed how this should be done. "Banish him and exile him to the desert," said one. "Put him in prison," said another. "Confiscate his property," said a third. "Let him die," said a fourth. Another courtier, whose vices Chrysostom had reproved, said maliciously, "You all make a great mistake. You will never punish him by such proposals. If banished from the kingdom, he will feel God as near to him in the desert as here. If you put him in prison and load him with chains, he will still pray for the poor and praise God in the prison. If you confiscate his property, you merely take away his goods from the poor, not from him. If you condemn him to death, you open heaven to him. Prince, do you wish to be revenged on him"? Force him to commit sin. I know him: *this man fears nothing in the world but sin.*"

Friends, we have just passed the Christmas season in which we lavish gifts on each other and lavish food and celebration on ourselves. Now we are coming this very day, New Year's Day, to anticipate the upcoming year.

I would like to give you all a gift, one of the rarest value, one of the finest quality, one of the greatest practical usefulness and greatest comforting power

It is the gift of the fear of sin and of the knowledge of the power of confession and repentance for we have sinned

Confession and repentance looks backward at sins we have already committed and has an answer to the question, "What can wash away my sin? How can I go on from here?" Psalm 32 gives us the sweet answer

David's dreadful experience with sin and with the Lord's stern discipline after the sin gives us a second gift this morning: the gift of a genuine fear of sin itself

These two gifts—the backward look of confession and repentance, coupled with the forward look of the fear of sin—will free us up in the presence of our holy God

I can think of no better instructor than King David

I. The Qualifications of Our Instructor David

A. David's Bitterest Lesson

1. The Continental Divide of David's Life

Illus. There is a place called the Continental Divide running along the crest of the Rockies, from British Columbia, through the United States, and continuing southward into Mexico and Central America. It divides the continent's principal drainage into that flowing eastward (to the Hudson Bay in Canada or to the Mississippi River) and that flowing westward (to the Pacific Ocean) Rain or snow that drains on the east side of the Continental Divide flows toward the Atlantic Ocean while precipitation on the west side drains and flows toward the Pacific Ocean.

a. For David, the Continental Divide of his life occurred in 2 Samuel 11

2 Samuel 11:1-4 In the spring, at the time when kings go off to war, David sent Joab out with the king's men and the whole Israelite army. They destroyed the Ammonites and besieged Rabbah. But David remained in Jerusalem. ² One evening David got up from his bed and walked around on the roof of the palace. From the roof he saw a woman bathing. The woman was very beautiful, ³ and David sent someone to find out about her. The man said, "Isn't this Bathsheba, the daughter of Eliam and the wife of Uriah the Hittite?" ⁴ Then David sent messengers to get her.

b. Up to this point there had been a steady stream of blessings in David's life

- i) Yes there had been severe trials
- ii) Yes Saul had been hunting him down like a wild animal
- iii) Yes Saul's army would have killed him on sight
- iv) Yes after the death of Saul, the ten tribes of Israel rejected him as their king and followed Saul's son
- v) Yes David had to fight to win the kingdom
- vi) BUT God's hand of blessing never left him in all that time

2. One Night of Pleasure, A Lifetime of Pain

- a. David gave all of that up for one night of pleasure
- b. From this point on, David's troubles never ceased

c. God showed him how much he must suffer for this one night of pleasure

3. The Sword Never Departed

2 Samuel 12:9-11 Why did you despise the word of the LORD by doing what is evil in his eyes? You struck down Uriah the Hittite with the sword and took his wife to be your own. You killed him with the sword of the Ammonites. ¹⁰ Now, therefore, the sword will never depart from your house, because you despised me and took the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be your own.' ¹¹ "This is what the LORD says: 'Out of your own household I am going to bring calamity upon you.

a. David faced a series of armed challenges to his throne

b. The most painful of all these attacks came from his favored son Absalom

c. This was the Lord's loving discipline to David and a warning to all who follow: SIN IS FAR TOO EXPENSIVE

4. David Never the Same Again

B. David's Humble Broken-Hearted Repentance

1. Many have looked at God's forgiveness of David's terrible sin with Bathsheba as a blank check, carte blanche to sin as much as you want

2. David not so easy to imitate

One pastor preached this: "It is easy to imitate David in his adultery; it is not so easy to imitate him in his repentance."

When Emperor Theodosius slaughtered the Thessalonians, Ambrose, the archbishop of Milan, was so repulsed he refused to give the emperor Holy Communion. The emperor cried, No fair! He argued that David had done worse in the bible, to which Ambrose replied, "You have imitated David in his crime, then imitate him in his repentance!" Off and on for eight months, the most powerful ruler in the entire world mimicked the biblical David, dressing in rags like a beggar in order to plea for forgiveness outside the Ambrose's cathedral.

3. Psalm 32: An insight into the worst year of David's life

a. From the time of his sin with Bathsheba to the time of his confrontation with Nathan the prophet, the child they conceived had been born

b. Thus it is not hard to imagine that David languished with a guilty conscience before the thrice holy God for over a year

c. Psalm 32 is the clearest insight into the agonies of this year

d. Psalm 51: Partner Psalm describing directly David's cry for forgiveness

4. Reading Between the Lines:

Alexander Maclaren: Thus he dragged through a weary year—ashamed of his guilty dalliance, wretched in his self-accusation, afraid of God, and skulking in the recesses of his palace from the sight of the people. David learned, what we all learn (and the holier a man is, the more speedily and sharply the lesson follows on the heels of his sin), that every transgression is a blunder, that we never get the satisfaction which we expect from any sin, or if we do, we get something with it which spoils it all. A nauseous drug is added to the exciting, intoxicating drink which temptation offers, and though its flavor is at first disguised by the pleasanter taste of sin, its bitterness is persistent though slow, and clings to the palate long after that has faded away utterly

- a. Stubborn Resistance to the Lord's Conviction
- b. Physical illness and pain
- c. Probably wrote no Psalms during this year... crumpled up rough drafts
- d. "Nothing tastes"

5. By the Time Nathan Came, David Was Ready!!

a. Matthew Henry's marvelous observation

"One would think it should be followed that the Lord sent enemies to invade him, terrors to take hold on, and the messengers of death to arrest him. No, he sent *a prophet* to him" — "And the Lord sent Nathan unto David" (12:1). We are here to behold the exceeding riches of Divine grace and mercy: *such* "riches" that legal and self-righteous hearts have murmured at, as a making light of sin—so incapable is the natural man of discerning spiritual things: they are "foolishness" unto him. David had wandered far, but he was not lost. O how tenderly God watches over his sheep! How faithfully he goes after and recovers them, when they have strayed! With what amazing goodness does he heal their backslidings and continue to love them freely! "And the Lord sent Nathan unto David" (12:1). It is to be duly noted that it was not David who sent for the prophet, though never did he more sorely need his counsel than now. No, it was *God* who took the initiative: it is ever thus, for we never seek him, until he seeks us.

"Though God may allow his people to fall into sin, he will not allow his people to lie still in it". No, God will exhibit his holiness, his righteousness, and his mercy in connection therewith. His holiness, by displaying his hatred of the same, and by bringing the guilty one to penitently confess it. His righteousness, in the chastening visited upon it; his mercy, in leading the backslider to forsake it, and then bestow his pardon upon him. What a marvelous and blessed exercise of his varied attributes!

b. It may be that God is coming to you this morning in the same way...

- c. Now it is not Nathan coming to David to convict him of his sin; NO... it is now David coming to us to convince us to confess our sins

Psalm 32:8-9 I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you. ⁹ Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you.

C. David's Education in Sin in Grace

1. David's credentials: a thorough education in sin and grace
2. David's desire: to teach us his lessons... he's ready to be our mentor

Psalm 51:12-13 Restore to me the joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. ¹³ Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will turn back to you.

II. The Nature of Forgiveness of Sins

A. Lifting Our Load

Psalm 32:1 Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven

1. Hebrew word: to lift, to bear, to carry
2. Used of a physical load being lifted

Genesis 50:12-13 Thus [Jacob's] sons did for him as he had commanded them, ¹³ for his sons carried him to the land of Canaan and buried him in the cave of the field at Machpelah

Ezekiel 12:6-7 In their sight you shall lift the baggage upon your shoulder and carry it out at dusk. You shall cover your face that you may not see the land, for I have made you a sign for the house of Israel." ⁷ And I did as I was commanded. I brought out my baggage by day, as baggage for exile, and in the evening I dug through the wall with my own hands. I brought out my baggage at dusk, carrying it on my shoulder in their sight.

3. Here it is metaphorical...
 - a. Sin is a violation of God's Law
 - b. That is the sense of the Hebrew word translated "transgression"
 - c. God's Law sets up a moral boundary... when we sin, we cross that boundary into forbidden territory
4. The "Load" is guilt... the death penalty

- a. All sin deserves the death penalty
- b. This was clearly established at the beginning

Genesis 2:17 “of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.”

ESV Ezekiel 18:4 Behold, all souls are mine; the soul of the father as well as the soul of the son is mine: the soul who sins shall die.

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin is death

- 5. The “Load” is also the burden of the sin itself
 - a. Sin is a great burden in our lives
 - b. Sin is a load in our relationship with God and with others
 - c. There is a sense of the weightiness of sin... it weighs us down, like swimming while tangled in a weighted fishing net
- 6. Therefore, forgiveness is a lifting up and carrying of the burden of sin... its burden of guilt under the Law of God
 - a. Sin is lifted off the conscience
 - b. Sin is lifted from the individual
 - c. The burden of sin is felt no more
 - d. THAT is forgiveness

John Bunyan, *Pilgrim’s Progress*, pictured Christian’s conversion in this way: for most of the first part of his journey, Christian had been toiling under a hideous burden on his back; it was so heavy it seemed to crush him. Some commentators guess that it was Bunyan’s experience as a tinker, a repairer of pots and a sharpener of kitchen knives that gave him this idea. A tinker like Bunyan would travel around to every village carrying a massively heavy sharpening stone, a whetstone, on his back. This terrible burden on Christian’s back undoubtedly represents the guilt of sin before the holy eyes of God.

But when Christian came at last to the cross and beheld it, the burden was loosed at last from his back and it rolled down the hill in to the empty grave, and it was never seen again!

Oh what healing power the cross has to free us from the burden of guilt!!

B. Covering Our Defiling Mess

Psalm 32:1 Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

Illus. Watergate cover-up... tendency to conceal, to cover, to hide our sin

From the very beginning, this is what Adam and Eve tried to do as well... they covered themselves with fig leaves, then hid behind a tree when they heard the sound of God walking in the Garden of Eden

Amazingly, in the end, God agrees that that is precisely what must happen to it

God covered them with the skins of animals... and in the end all God will do with our sin is to cover it in the blood of Christ

1. The most significant aspect of forgiveness is that of COVERING
2. Sin must be covered... nothing else can be done with it
 - a. In one very significant way, God CANNOT truly remove sin
 - b. Even if God could have instantly recreated the universe the moment Adam and Eve sinned, such that there was literally no record in the heavens or the earth of that first transgression, it would still remain **in His own memory**
3. Some images imply that sin can be totally removed and disposed of

Psalm 103:11-12 For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him; ¹² as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

Micah 7:19 You will again have compassion on us; you will tread our sins underfoot and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.

- a. This language is true in this sense
- b. As far as God is concerned, the sin is removed from being an obstacle to the relationship
4. However, in the mind of God sin will always exist
 - a. Even removed as far as the east is from the west, the sin still exists... it is merely covered from our sight and God's sight by the infinite distance
 - b. Even in the depths of the sea, the sin still exists...it is merely COVERED by something far more powerful
5. Therefore, the most consistent and powerful image of forgiveness is that of covering... and that is the word God uses again and again
 - a. The day of atonement in the Jewish calendar is "Yom Kippur"

- b. The word “kippur” = covering, like the covering Noah put over the Ark to keep the rain out
- c. God **COVERS SIN**, He hides it from His own sight... in the end, we learn that He blocks it from His mind’s eye by something far more significant... the blood of His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ

Therefore, once the covering of sin has come through the blood of Christ, God cannot see the sin any more... His sight is drawn forever to the infinitely precious covering of the atoning work of Christ

C. Not Reckoning Our Debt to Our Account

Vs. 2 Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him

1. The third image of forgiveness is that of the accountant’s ledger book
2. We should not imagine that God is not a perfect record-keeper... actually the record book of all our words, deeds, thoughts, motives, intentions... all of it is perfectly kept in heaven
3. However, the forgiveness David writes about here is the most astonishing imaginable
4. In the perfect record book of God, the sins of this blessed man are not **IMPUTED** to his account
5. Conversely, God **DOES IMPUTE** righteousness by faith to any who trust in Christ

Genesis 15:6 Abram believed the LORD, and he credited it to him as righteousness.

This is the miracle of the grace of God in the gospel!! God does **NOT** reckon to our account our sins, and **HE DOES** reckon to our account Christ’s perfect righteousness

III. The Misery of Unrepentance

A. Deceitfulness

“an in whose spirit is no deceit”

1. Deceit = lying about sin
2. For one year, David denied his guilty conscience
3. He ate his food, drank his drink, married Bathsheba and lived with her; ruled his kingdom, went about his business

4. BUT the whole time he was lying to himself, covering over his own sin
5. This follows the pattern of what he did when he found out Bathsheba was pregnant... he called her husband Uriah in to cover up the sin he'd committed with Uriah's wife... but Uriah's loyalty and devotion as a soldier of Israel prevented that
6. The essence of the deceit is that WE choose to cover up our own sin, like Adam and Eve did
7. Everyone lies about sin... we are self-deceivers, telling ourselves that our sin isn't as bad as we think it is
8. Confession and repentance begin with conviction of sin... HONESTY BEFORE GOD about what we have truly done

B. Stubbornness

Psalm 32:3-4 When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. ⁴ For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer.

1. David describes what his life was like
2. He was stubbornly fighting the pricks of conscience
3. He was stubbornly resisting what the Lord was saying inside his heart
4. For over a year he was stubborn and refused to yield to God

C. Physical Misery

1. Intense health problems come because of repressed guilt
2. The sinner feels physically wretched
3. "My bones wasted away"... "groaning all day long" "strength sapped as in the heat of summer"
4. People forget that God sometimes brings physical sickness into our lives as a chastisement for sin

1 Corinthians 11:28-30 A man ought to examine himself before he eats of the bread and drinks of the cup. ²⁹ For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord eats and drinks judgment on himself. ³⁰ That is why many among you are weak and sick, and a number of you have fallen asleep.

James 5:14-16 Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ And the prayer

offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. ¹⁶ Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective.

One of the first things I do in dealing privately with someone who has a chronic health problem is ask, “Is there any unconfessed sin in your life?”

David’s wretched physical experience and these other verses show that there IS a link between unconfessed sin and physical sickness and pain

D. Spiritual Misery—Opposition from the Lord

1. David was constantly violating his conscience by refusing to confess the sin
2. He knew that God was against him, that God was not blessing him
3. He felt God’s had heavy upon him: “Day and night your hand was heavy upon me”
4. Perhaps in his deceit, he was denying that it was the Lord who was doing it... perhaps he said “I’m just not feeling well right now”
5. But in his heart of hearts, he knew that God was vigorously displeased with him
6. This is the spiritual misery of unconfessed sin... a foreboding sense of impending disaster... and a sad sense of spiritual loneliness

E. Life Woes

Psalm 32:10 Many are the woes of the wicked

1. David was facing actual adverse providences in his life
2. Because of all this internal strife, physical suffering, and spiritual opposition from the Lord, nothing was going right for him in his life
3. God controls every aspect of life...

Matthew 10:29-30 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground apart from the will of your Father. ³⁰ And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered.

Proverbs 16:33 The lot is cast into the lap, but its every decision is from the LORD.

4. God was orchestrating difficulties in David’s life to get his attention

5. So it is with our lives... in addition to the internal strife of spiritual suffering and physical sickness and pain, there is also life sufferings:
 - a. Financial difficulties
 - b. Failed business ventures
 - c. Failure in academics
 - d. Lack of success in athletics
 - e. Relationships fall apart

Some or all of this may be the experience of the person who is self-deceived, who is resisting the Holy Spirit, who is violating their conscience, who is living in sin, who is determining not to sin

IV. The Nature of True Confession

Psalm 32:5 Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"-- and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

A. Uncovering the Sin

1. A Key insight from Proverbs

Proverbs 28:13 He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

2. Someone is going to cover up sin... either you will cover up your own sin, or by grace God will cover it up
3. Confession is uncovering your sin before the eyes of God, calling it by its proper name

It's not "shading the truth" or "exaggerating"... it's LYING

It's not oogling a girl or making eyes at her... it's LUST

Let's call sin by its proper name: Pride, Anger, Selfishness, Greed, Gluttony, Pleasure-seeking, Cowardice, Idolatry, etc.

4. In confession, we are taking the sin out of the hiding place we stuffed it in, and we are officially showing it to God

B. Voluntarily

1. It is something we are doing because we WANT to do it... we WANT a sense of forgiveness
2. David was EAGER to confess it once Nathan pointed it out to him

2 Samuel 12:13 Then David said to Nathan, "I have sinned against the LORD."

3. David had been coerced by all the adverse circumstances... the guilty conscience, the physical illness and pain, the sleepless nights, the curses on the things he tried to do
4. BUT still freely of his own will he was glad to confess and to agree with God concerning his sin
5. God has power to make a stubborn sinner who's steeped in self-denial willing to be done with it and confess

C. Before the Lord

Psalm 32:5-6 Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"-- and you forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah ⁶ Therefore let everyone who is godly pray to you while you may be found

1. David's confession was very focused on the Lord
2. He confessed it before the Lord, to restore first and foremost his relationship with the Lord
3. This point is made almost shockingly in Psalm 51

Psalm 51:4 Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are proved right when you speak and justified when you judge.

David is not saying his sin affected no one but God. He knew full well that Uriah lay moldering in the grave because of him. He knew full well that the little baby that was conceived in sin now lay dead because of him. He knew that Bathsheba's world had been thrown upside-down and her own character corrupted because of him. He knew that God would in some measure punish the whole nation because of the King's sin. He knew that the sword would not depart from his house for the rest of his life, and therefore that many other people would suffer because of his sin.

But he felt the intense weight of his sin most acutely right where it should have been... in the eyes of Almighty God, the Creator and Sustainer of everything in the universe... before his holy eyes this confession had to be made

4. Confession is an intense time in the presence of Almighty God... it is to the Lord and before the Lord that we confess our sins; it is in agreement with the Lord and submissive to the Lord that we confess our sins; it is in hope that

the Lord will forgive us and cleanse us from all unrighteousness that we confess our sins

D. In Prayer

Psalm 32:5-6 Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"-- and you forgave the guilt of my sin. Selah ⁶ Therefore let everyone who is godly pray to you while you may be found

1. Obviously confession must be done in prayer
2. We speak out to the Lord what He has been saying to us by His convicting Spirit
3. We get down on our knees and speak the truth to Him in prayer
4. Sometimes we have to ask Him to show us more of our sin than we had seen up to that point

Psalm 139:23-24 Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. ²⁴ See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.

E. While He May Be Found

Psalm 32:6 Therefore let everyone who is godly pray to you while you may be found

1. This is such a powerful point
2. God gives us a gracious window of opportunity to repent and bring forth fruit in keeping with repentance
3. That time does not last forever
4. Is God speaking to you

Isaiah 55:6-7 Seek the LORD while he may be found; call on him while he is near. ⁷ Let the wicked forsake his way and the evil man his thoughts. Let him turn to the LORD, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will freely pardon.

V. The Results of True Confession

A. Happiness and Worship

1. The Psalm begins with the word "Blessed"
2. It is a state of happiness to the very core of your soul

- a. Not the temporary mirth of a chuckle at a good joke
 - b. Not the warm full feeling at the end of a holiday meal
 - c. Not the happiness that comes from secular entertainment or the buzz of an alcoholic drink
3. RATHER it is a happiness of soul based on this one truth: God is at peace with me, I have nothing to fear from the future
 4. It changes a sinner like David from a sick, broken, wretched individual to one who can truly sing worship songs from his heart

Psalm 32:7 you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance.

Psalm 32:11 Rejoice in the LORD and be glad, you righteous; sing, all you who are upright in heart!

B. Security

Psalm 32:6-7 surely when the mighty waters rise, they will not reach him. ⁷ You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance. Selah

1. Because of being right with God, the sinner is now at last fully secure in His love
2. Nothing can harm us because the only true and great danger, eternal condemnation by the judgment of God, has been removed
3. So all that is left is the feeling of true safety, of security in the love and forgiveness of God
4. David twice uses the word “surround” here. A sense of being enveloped in the security and love of God

Psalm 32:10 Many are the woes of the wicked, but the LORD's unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in him.

C. Ministry to Other Sinners

1. David is now qualified to teach sinners this simple lesson: CONFESS YOUR SINS TO GOD AS QUICKLY AS YOU CAN

Psalm 32:8-9 I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you. ⁹ Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you.

2. God ordains a ministry for recovered sinners... it is not the sinless who minister in Christ's name
3. We who have been forgiven much can love much
4. We who have eaten again and again at the table of God's mercy can invite other hungry souls to sit with us at a banquet of grace neither of us deserves

VI. Christ Fulfills Psalm 32

1 Corinthians 1:30 Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God-- that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption.

In Psalm 32 we learned that forgiveness involves these three things: the bearing of our load, the covering of our mess, and the cleaning of our ledgerbook

From the rest of the Bible, we learn that Christ is essential to all three

- A. Christ Bore Our Load
- B. Christ's Blood Covered Our Sin
- C. Christ's Ledger Exchanged for Ours

A Christian cannot read of the happiness of a forgiven sinner without thinking of the blood of Jesus shed on the cross of Calvary. There is no forgiveness of sins apart from that blood, but in Christ, every single sin in your life finds forgiveness. Psalm 32 is the treasure map, but Jesus is the treasure... the treasure of the happiness that comes from forgiveness of sin

***Psalm 32:1-2 Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.
² Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him***

VII. Application

A. Who Covers Your Sin... You or God?

1. The same Hebrew word for "cover" or "hide" is used twice

***Psalm 32:1-5 Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.
...⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity.***

2. The same thing we MUST NOT DO to sin is what God alone can do... cover it up
 - a. Adam and Eve tried to hide and cover their sin
 - b. At Jericho, Achan stole the forbidden gold wedge and the forbidden beautiful Babylonian robe

- c. The scribes and Pharisees covered up their greed and pride with external piety, but Jesus called them whitewashed tombs
- d. In the early church days, Ananias and Sapphira tried to hide their selfishness with a lie
- e. And David tried to cover his tracks by having Uriah killed
- f. People are constantly lying to themselves, maintaining a good external appearance...
- g. If we try to cover up our own sins, we will fail

Proverbs 28:13 He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

- h. God calls on us all today to humble ourselves and uncover our sin in his presence
- 3. If we uncover our own sin, God will cover it perfectly with the shed blood of Christ

B. Live a Life of Constant Repentance and Confession

- 1. Psalm 32 is a constant experience for a Christian
- 2. Our lives here on earth are not so much lives of “Every say is better than it was before”
- 3. Rather it is a journey in which we are constantly shown how much we need a Savior, how far we are from God’s perfect standard for us
- 4. Keep short accounts before the Lord... learn to confess sin quickly and freely
- 5. Ask God to search your heart and show you if there is anything offensive in you

C. “While He May Be Found”

- 1. Is God speaking to you today about some sin pattern?
- 2. Is He calling on you to lay that burden on Christ? To renounce that sin and confess it to Him?
- 3. DO IT WITHOUT DELAY