

trips us, we lose our joy, but when we confess the sin and God forgives, we can again be glad.

- 3) We are also to rejoice. This is a slightly different from “be glad”. AHLB says that it describes dancing around in a circle while rejoicing. Wilson’s OTWS says it is to be very glad or to rejoice with a joy that expresses itself in the gestures of the body.
- 4) We see a close parallel here to Paul’s challenge in (Philippians 4:4) **"Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice."** God wants us to be rejoicing people.
- 5) We note that David addresses this to the **righteous**. This word describes one who walks God’s straight path. **We cannot rejoice if we have not confessed our sin and returned to God’s straight path.**

#### b. Shout for joy

- 1) He commands that we shout for joy over having an upright heart (one following a straight path). The only way to have an upright heart is to keep it right with God through confession of sin. (1 John 1:9) **"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."**
- 2) Verse 11 applies to ALL who are walking on God’s straight path. This rejoicing is not reserved only for those who have sinned and gotten right with God.
- 3) Truly, we ought to be glad, leap for joy and shout for joy if we are on God's straight path, avoiding sins that bring great distress, shame and guilt.

**Conclusion:** In this Psalm, David describes how we can use a sinful failure as a stepping-stone and a cause for rejoicing. **If you are following God’s straight path and avoiding sin, rejoice! If God has forgiven your sins, rejoice! If you have a sin that needs God’s forgiveness, confess it so that you too can rejoice!**

When we are walking in righteousness and in harmony with God, the Holy Spirit will produce the fruit of joy in our lives.

**Chorus:** Rejoice in the Lord Always

# A Cause for Rejoicing

*5 February 2023 PM – Psalm 32:1-11 – Stepping Stones – Scott Childs*

**Introduction:** God wants us to be rejoicing people. We find the words joy and rejoice more than 380 times in the Bible. In Luke 15, Jesus spoke of rejoicing over a lost coin found, over a lost sheep rescued, and over a lost son who returned home. In each case, neighbours and friends were invited to rejoice, and Jesus told us that angels in heaven rejoice when a lost soul comes to Christ. Joy is the theme of the book of Philippians. At least 18 times in that brief book, Paul mentions joy.

One of the bumps in life that causes many Christians to stumble is sinful failure. All too often, we sin with our mouth, with our thoughts, with our attitudes and with our actions. When we do, each sin is like a stone in our path. It may become a stumbling block on which we trip and fall; or it may become a stepping-stone on which we climb and grow spiritually. How we respond makes a huge difference.

**Transition:** In Psalm 32, David describes how we can use a sinful failure as a stepping-stone and a cause for rejoicing. As we read the Psalm, notice that David began positive and ended positive. **Read it together.**

## 1. The Blessedness of Being Forgiven (v.1-2)

### a. These verses speak of our failures.

- 1) A **transgression** is a failure. This word speaks of revolt. It was a revolt against God’s standard of right. Genesis 50:17 speaks of the **transgression** of Joseph’s brothers against him. In Numbers 14:18, we read, **"The LORD is longsuffering, and of great mercy, forgiving iniquity and transgression, and by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation."** In David’s confession to God for his sin with Bathsheba, he prayed, (Psalms 51:3) **"For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me."** When we transgress, we revolt.
- 2) Another failure is our **sin**. This word describes any sin or a moral offence. It emphasises the distance from what is right.
- 3) The devil wants our transgressions and sins to cause us to

trip and fall, but that is not God's desires.

**b. These verses also give us hope.**

- 1) God offers forgiveness (v.1). He desires to remove our iniquity (v.2). This gives every sinner hope.
- 2) David begins the Psalm with "**Blessed**". This word literally means to walk straight on. It is a blessed walk because it leads to a right end. Once God forgives and removes our sin, we can then walk on the straight path. Amen!

**2. The Burden of Hiding Unconfessed Sin (v.3-4)**

**a. Hiding sin hurts (v.3).**

- 1) Unconfessed sin makes us feel old and weary.
- 2) It haunts us day and night.

**b. Conviction is heavy (v.4).**

- 1) God's conviction is a heavy weight.
- 2) Our spiritual life shrivels and dries up.

**3. The Relief of Confessing Sin (v.5-7)**

**a. All confession begins with admission**

- 1) Though we must confess to the humans we hurt, we need to begin by confessing to our God, whom we have hurt.
- 2) Praise God, when we confess, He forgives (v.5). **God is a great forgiver** (Psa 86:5). We must forgive those who have hurt us as well. (Ephesians 4:32) "**And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.**" **Bitterness from not forgiving is like a cancer that will slowly kill you.**

**b. Confession brings God's comfort**

- 1) He protects from guilt that overflows like the floods of great waters (v.6).
- 2) He is our hiding place from the devil's accusations (v.7).
- 3) He gives us songs of deliverance (v.7). God's cleansing is a joyful relief!

**4. The Benefit of a Submissive Spirit (v.8-10)**

**a. God interjects instruction (v.8)**

- 1) It is possible that David is saying this to instruct other struggling sinners, but most commentators conclude that it is God speaking. It is difficult to determine.
- 2) The way of confession of sin is the right way to go.

- 3) Repeatedly, Scripture points us in that direction.

- a) (Proverbs 28:13) "**He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.**"
- b) (Psalms 51:10) "**Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.**"
- c) We have the example of the Prodigal son. (Luke 15:18-19) "**I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, And am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants.**"

**b. God warns against stubbornness (v.9-10)**

- 1) **Stubborn pride will keep us from confession and forgiveness.** When it comes to dealing with our sin, we must NOT be like a stubborn horse or rebellious mule. Neither of them will come when they are called. They must be persuaded by force. God wants us to confess our sin willingly and readily.
- 2) Growing up on a cattle farm, I found that cows are very stubborn as well. When they make up their minds not to go where you want them to go, it is a difficult challenge to change their minds.
- 3) If there is a sin in your life that you stubbornly refuse to confess and get right, God will continue to use his persuasive conviction, but He will not force you.
- 4) Thus, we read that **many sorrows shall be to the wicked** (i.e., those who refuse to confess and forgive) (v.10).
- 5) However, when we trust the Lord and confess our sins, God will surround us with his mercy (v.10). What a blessing!

**5. The Joy of Returning to the Right Path (v.11)**

David concludes the Psalm with two commands for joy.

**a. Be glad in the Lord and rejoice**

- 1) The word "**glad**" is frequently translated "rejoice". It is a command.
- 2) We are to be glad **in the LORD** (i.e., Jehovah). When sin