

Forgiven: The Miracle of Complete Forgiveness Psalm 32

As we open to Psalm 32, we are listening to David's testimony in song that came to his heart when David received complete forgiveness.

David experienced what the Scriptures often declare—God is a God who offers His children complete forgiveness. Trace with me again those life giving words in your hearts as I read them to you. You may even want to just close your eyes so that nothing distracts you from hearing these ten verses:

- "... as far as the east is from the west, **so far has he removed** our transgressions from us". ([Psalm 103:12](#))
- " Come now, and let us reason together," Says the LORD, " Though your sins are like scarlet, **They shall be as white** as snow; Though they are red like crimson, **They shall be** as wool.." ([Is. 1:18](#))
- "... But You have lovingly delivered my soul from the pit of corruption, For You **have cast all my sins** behind Your back. ([Is. 38:17](#))
- "I have **swept away** your offenses like a cloud, your sins like the morning mist. Return to me, for **I have redeemed** you." ([Isaiah 44:22](#))
- "For I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more." ([Jeremiah 31:34b](#))
- "You will ... **hurl all our iniquities** into the depths of the sea." ([Micah 7:19](#))
- [At the Last Supper, Jesus commanded his own to drink, saying] "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many **for the forgiveness** of sins." ([Matthew 26:28](#))
- "She said, "No one, Lord." And Jesus said to her, "Neither do I **condemn** you; go and sin no more." ([John 8:11](#))
- "There is therefore now **no condemnation** to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit." ([Romans 8:1](#))
- If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and **will forgive** us our sins **and purify us** from all unrighteousness. ([1 John 1:9](#))

David has just experienced the greatest of all miracles that God does on this planet today.

Great Miracle

The Gospels record just 37 specific miracles that Jesus performed during His earthly ministry. These include sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, life to the dead, health to the sick - and many other tremendous miracles supernaturally performed by Christ. Which one was the greatest? If you analyze them they were wonderful but ALL were only temporary.

- The paralyzed, lame, mute, and blind that Jesus gave back eyes, fingers, toes, and skin eventually lost them all again when they got sick and died some years later.
- Peter's mother-in-law was miraculously set free from a fever but years later died of other causes which may also have involved a fever.
- The food miraculously created by Jesus was consumed by the five and four thousands, and used up - and hunger returned the next day.
- The eyes restored to blind Bartimaeus were used, worn out, and dimmed by the time he died.
- The hearing that the deaf received were subject to the natural downward slide of the human body and faded most likely by their death.
- Those dancing feet after Christ's touch that the lame possessed, soon turned to a shuffle and then stopped working altogether as they lay in bed awaiting death many years later.
- Lepers who found fresh new skin and limbs saw them again return to wrinkles, weakness, and finally immobility as circulation, respiration, and digestion all slowly were assaulted by the weight of many years.
- So yes, Jesus performed many miracles - but all of them but one were TEMPORARY.

The Greatest of All Christ's Miracles

The answer is the one that never faded, never aged, never ended. It was the miracle unfaded by time, untouched by health, unaffected by circumstances.

That miracle, the greatest miracle is the one that Jesus Christ is still doing in our midst today. It is the miracle that I have personally experienced. It is the miracle that most of us in this room have also experienced. It is the greatest of all Christ's miracles - **the miracle of complete forgiveness.**

Have you ever wondered secretly in the back of your mind if could be completely forgiven of all your sins? I mean the really bad ones that most or nearly all people don't know about?

What makes complete forgiveness seem even more impossible is if you are someone most people would never even dream of having any kind of struggle with sin. Former drug addicts have a pass, right? They were bad, got saved and are all set. The same for the former alcoholics, the former sexual sinners—but what about 'church going, raised in Christian homes, never really into anything bad' people? What if they fall head long into sin. Other people wonder, are they even saved? Can they be really sure that they are

completely forgiven?

This evening celebrate your forgiveness that is only in Christ, as go deeper into our gift of forgiveness through a look at Psalm 32. Maybe it will encourage you to spend a lot of time in it.

THE DELIGHT OF SINS FORGIVEN

*Psalm 32:1-2 Blessed is he whose **transgression is forgiven**, Whose **sin is covered**. 2 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord **does not impute iniquity**, And in whose spirit there is no deceit. NKJV*

In verses 1-2 David uses three Hebrew words for Forgiveness in Psalm 32:

1. Forgiveness means our SINS PULLED OFF. He says this in verse 1:

*"Blessed is he whose **transgression is forgiven**"*

"Forgiven" [Hebrew *nawsaw*] means literally to have our sin lifted off by our Redeemer. As in Pilgrim's Progress, the burden of sin rolls off and into Christ's tomb. We are being crushed by any sins we keep around. They suffocate, smother and squash the very life of our soul. But there is a Redeemer who can set us free. And to his only hope, David fled.

Just before the Civil War, a man with a heavy load of sin was saved and later moved to serve the Lord the rest of his days in Jerusalem. He lived in a house on the walls of Jerusalem next to the Damascus Gate ministering to Moslem orphans. Here was his confession that most of us have heard. Listen especially to the third stanza.

It is Well with My Soul (Horatio G. Spafford, 1873) #493

- 1 When peace like a river, attendeth my way,
 When sorrows like the sea billows roll;
 Whatever my lot, Thou hast taught me to say,
 'It is well with my soul.'

- 2 Tho' Satan should buffet, tho' trials should come,
 Let this blest assurance control,
 That Christ has regarded my helpless estate,
 And hath shed His own blood for my soul.

- 3 My sin—oh, the bliss of this glorious tho't!—
 My sin, not in part, but the whole,
 Is nailed to the cross and I bear it no more,
 Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!

4 And, Lord, haste the day when my faith shall be sight,
The clouds be rolled back as a scroll,
The trump shall resound and the Lord shall descend,
'Even so,' it is well with my soul.

Chorus It is well with my soul, It is well, it is well with my soul.

And how exactly were our sins pulled off? It was Christ Himself who took the filthy, deadly, burning garments of our sin, tearing them off of us and wrapping Himself in them, in our place.

Like a child on fire that is rolled in a blanket to extinguish the fire, Christ wraps us, removing our sin and taking it upon Himself.

In a few moments, as we come to communion we come to worship the actual person who ran to us trapped in the toxic, deadly garments of sin. Christ stripped those filthy garments off of us, wrapped Himself around us shielding us from the deadly wrath of God streaking towards us, and removed the record of the debt that had led to all that disaster heading our way.

In Psalm 32 David gives us a second reality. Not only does God remove the filthy garments of sin, God also took the just punishment David's sin deserved and graciously removed it, so David no longer faced God's wrath. Because:

2. **Forgiveness means being SHEILDED FROM WRATH:**

"...whose sin is covered."

Look at that little word "covered" [Hebrew *kawsaw*]. This word shouts the strong imagery in the events of the Day of Atonement in the annual worship laid down by God for His people in the Old Testament.

On that day, the High priest took the blood of an animal and sprinkled it onto the mercy seat. Above the mercy seat was the presence of God portrayed by the outstretched arms of the cherubim. Beneath the lid of the ark were the tablets portraying God's divine law.

In essence, the blood stood between a holy God and the sinners who broke His law, averting His wrath. David cried for joy when the wrath of God was turned away from him. So our sins are covered away by the blood of Jesus shed for us!

What exactly is that shield? It is Christ Himself, like a heroic soldier who falls on the grenade in the foxhole dying to save his comrades, or the loving parent who pushes their child out of the way of harm and sacrifices their life—Jesus gave His body in death to save us.

Arise, My Soul, Arise (Charles Wesley, 1742) #199

Arise, my soul, arise, shake off your guilty fears; The bleeding sacrifice, in my behalf appears; Before the throne my Surety stands, Before the throne my Surety stands, My name is written on His hands.

He ever lives above, for me to intercede; His all redeeming love, His precious blood, to plead; His blood atoned for every race, His blood atoned for every race, And sprinkles now the throne of grace.

Five bleeding wounds He bears; received on Calvary; They pour effectual prayers; they strongly plead for me: "Forgive him, O forgive," they cry, "Forgive him, O forgive," they cry, "Nor let that ransomed sinner die!"

The Father hears Him pray, His dear anointed One; He cannot turn away the presence of His Son; The Spirit answers to the blood, The Spirit answers to the blood And tells me I am born of God.

My God is reconciled; His pardoning voice I hear; He owns me for His child; I can no longer fear With confidence I now draw nigh, With confidence I now draw nigh, And "Father, Abba, Father," cry.

So in forgiveness: our sins were pulled off of us by Christ, and He threw Himself over us shielding us from wrath. Then Psalm 32 declares thirdly:

3. **Forgiveness means ALL DEBTS CLEARED OUT:**

"Blessed is the man to whom the LORD does not impute iniquity."

"Not imputed" speaks of a list of debts no longer held against us. David had become utterly bankrupted by his sin. The bills were piling up, mounting like a flood and drowning him. Desire, deceit, cruel deception, cunning craftiness and shameless murder all charged heavy debts to his soul. And now in sheer delight all the mountain of impossible debt is cleared from the ledger. "My sins are gone, and shall not be remembered, God in mercy tenderly forgives."

The importance of forgiveness is a constant theme of Scripture. There are *no less than seventy-five different word pictures about forgiveness* in the world of the Bible. They help us grasp the importance, the nature, and the effects of forgiveness look at these word pictures.

- To forgive is to turn the key, open the cell door, and let the prisoner walk free.
- To forgive is to write in large letters across a debt, "nothing owed"
- To forgive is to pound the gavel in a courtroom and declare, "not guilty!"
- To forgive is to shoot an arrow so high and so far that it can never be found again.
- To forgive is to bundle up all the garbage and trash and dispose of it, leaving the house clean and fresh.

- To forgive is to loose the moorings of a ship and release it to the open sea.
- To forgive is to grant a full pardon to a condemned criminal.
- To forgive is to relax a stranglehold on a wrestling opponent.
- To forgive is to sandblast a wall of graffiti, leaving it looking like new.
- To forgive is to smash a clay pot into a thousand pieces so it can never be pieced together again.

Another great expression of what the Lord does when He removed our sins was written during the Civil War years here in America by Charitie Bancroft. This great hymn has been set to new music and has seen a revival in recent days. The message is so powerful to all of us who like David have had our sins "pulled off" by Christ's work on the cross for us.

BEFORE THE THRONE OF GOD ABOVE (Words: Charitie Bancroft, 1863)

Before the throne of God above I have a strong and perfect plea. A great high Priest whose Name is Love Who ever lives and pleads for me. My name is graven on His hands, My name is written on His heart. I know that while in Heaven He stands No tongue can bid me thence depart.

When Satan tempts me to despair And tells me of the guilt within, Upward I look and see Him there Who made an end of all my sin. Because the sinless Savior died My sinful soul is counted free. For God the just is satisfied To look on Him and pardon me.

Behold Him there the risen Lamb, My perfect spotless righteousness, The great unchangeable I AM, King of glory and of grace, One in Himself I cannot die. My soul is purchased by His blood, My life is hid with Christ on high, With Christ my Savior and my God!

Tonight, as we come to communion, we come to worship the actual person who ran to us trapped in the toxic, deadly garments of sin.

- In salvation, Christ Jesus stripped those filthy garments off of us;
- In salvation, Christ Jesus wrapped Himself around us shielding us from the deadly wrath of God streaking towards us; and
- In salvation, Christ Jesus removed the record of the debt that had led to all that disaster heading our way.

What a Savior, Hallelujah, let us worship Him!