

Something to Pray About

By Cindy Sears – August 2011

“On Dangerous Ground”

“Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit.” — Psalm 32:2 NIV

First, open your Bibles to Psalm 32, and brace yourselves. I have wrestled with this message for several months, but the Lord would not let it rest. This is not a “nice” column. The truth is good, but it is not always “nice.”

In Psalm 32, King David speaks about sin and forgiveness. Although he knows that forgiveness from the Lord is available, he does not receive that forgiveness automatically. Until David comes to the Lord in *repentance*, he suffers greatly:

“When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me...”

In the next verses, David tells us how he was reconciled to the Lord:

“Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity.”

David stopped lying to himself that what he had done and what he was doing was okay or not really sinful. He admitted that he had done *wrong*, and what was the Lord’s response?

“I said, ‘I will confess my transgressions to the Lord’—and you forgave the guilt of my sin.”

David’s guilt is removed once he acknowledges his sin as sin (though the consequences of his sin remained—read the rest of the story in 2 Samuel 11 & 12). Now, David is ready to be reconciled to God through prayer (vs. 6), to be protected by God from trouble (vs. 7), and to receive instruction on how he should be living (vs. 8). Yet, the Lord admonishes him to be obedient and not obstinate like a horse or mule, who has to be controlled by a bit or bridle (vs. 9), and warns that the woes (troubles) of the wicked (sinful) are many, but the Lord’s unfailing love surrounds the man who trust in him (obeys) (vs. 10).

Now we can go back to verses 1 & 2, and understand that the covering of our sins, the forgiveness, is given to those who **confess and turn from their sin**—not to those who continue to indulge in it. Notice the words in verse 2b: “...and in whose spirit is no deceit.” If you are continuing in sin after “confessing,” you are deceitful, you are lying to yourself and to God—and your sin (guilt) remains upon you.

Now, turn to 1 Corinthians 6:9-10 and read a list of those people who will not inherit the kingdom of God:

“Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: neither the sexually immoral (in all its forms) nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God.” See also Galatians 5:19-21 where the Apostle Paul gives another warning “...I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this will not inherit the kingdom of God. Paul then goes on to list the fruit of the Spirit (vs. 22-23). He tells us that “those who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified the sinful nature with its passions and desires.”

Jesus said the same thing. In Matthew 7:17-20, he tells us that “a good tree cannot bear bad fruit...thus by their fruit you will recognize them.” He is speaking specifically of false prophets here, but also all “pretenders.” Read on into verses 21-23 where he proclaims that “not everyone who says to me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, **but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven.**” Remember what Jesus says in John 15:10, which Eric read to us and expounded from on

Sunday, the 24th:

“**If you obey my commands**, you will remain in my love, just as I have obeyed my Father’s commands and remain in his love.”

Our joy in the Lord cannot be complete unless we obey Him—and when we fail to obey, then grace steps in **if** we confess and repent (turn from) our sin.

Grace is not a license to sin. In Romans 6:1-4, Paul tells us why. The saved have been baptized into death with Jesus and raised into a new life. Then in vs. 15-16, we read that we are slaves to the one we obey, and we need to understand and decide “whether you are slaves to sin, which leads to death, or to **obedience**, which leads to **righteousness**.” Paul reminds us that “now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit you reap leads to **holiness**, and the result is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (vs. 22-23).

Open your eyes to the truth. Do not be deceived by yourself or the culture. True children of God (and only believers in the Lord Jesus Christ are God’s children) are new creatures who live in joyful obedience to the Lord and become holier every day (sanctification). No matter what the culture says is okay, a Christian will not live in open rebellion against God’s revealed law. So, where do you stand? Are you His child or are you a pretender that will someday hear the following words from the Lord, “. . . I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers” (Matthew 7:23b)? He, who has ears to hear, let him hear—Dear Lord Jesus. Amen.

