**Benefits of Honesty with God**

***1*** *Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven,
    whose sin is covered.****2****Blessed is the man against whom the Lord counts no iniquity,
    and in whose spirit there is no deceit.*

***3****For 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 dried up as by the heat of summer. Selah*

***5****I acknowledged my sin to you,
    and I did not cover my iniquity;
I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,”
    and you forgave the iniquity of my sin. Selah*

***6****Therefore let everyone who is godly
    offer prayer to you at a time when you may be found;
surely in the rush of great waters,
    they shall not reach him.****7****You are a hiding place for me;
    you preserve me from trouble;
    you surround me with shouts of deliverance. Selah*

***8****I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go;
    I will counsel you with my eye upon you.****9****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.*

***10****Many are the sorrows of the wicked,
    but steadfast love surrounds the one who trusts in the Lord.****11****Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, O righteous,
    and shout for joy, all you upright in heart! (Psalm 32:1-11, ESV)*

 Dealing honestly with God brings His blessings into our lives. Greetings to you dear brothers and sisters as we talk in this Lenten season about confession and being honest with God. Having a relationship with God is a dialogue – and today, our passage is an example of that honest relationship. King David shows us in this psalm that our will, our spirit, our whole being needs to be open to God’s Will and Word. In saying that, let’s talk today about honesty as it shows up in our lives in confession as we live out our faith. He who is honest with God is the one who will be blessed in all his paths. Let us see, therefore, how this truth plays out in our day-to-day life.

 Blessed is the man whose sins the Lord forgives, and within whom there is no guile. This is the call and message of today’s psalm to each of us. Let us remember that the psalms were written not only as private prayers, but also as corporate songs to be sung in the Temple at Jerusalem. This particular psalm is very clear and simple in its spiritual message to us: When David stayed quiet, he became ill. He felt as if his bones were wasting away under that heavy burden of sin. He felt that God’s hand, His power, was pressing down on him like a heavy object, to get him to confess and train himself to be a confessor before the Lord as a lifestyle. We see the spiritual key of the passage, however, in verse 5 – that David made his sin known to God, that he confessed it to Him, and that he did not conceal the matter anymore before the Lord. The event itself was so simple; he says that he confessed, and then the Lord forgave his iniquity, his sin. Then the Scripture says, “Selah”, or “Think!”, or “Meditate on this!” It says through the word “Selah,” “Stop everything for a moment.”

Therefore, let the believer pray as long as God can be found, in other words as long as he or she is alive. Thus, they will see that the flood waters will not come near them, threatening to drown.

Furthermore, when David calls God his refuge, he is showing the hearer of this prayer his level of trust. Conveniently and exactly in that moment, God himself responds to David: God says, “*I will teach you. I will show you your path. I will advise you. My eye will be upon you. So, don’t be hard-hearted or obstinate in your mind, as animals are. If you do that, you will have much pain. Rather, listen to me and you will have reason to rejoice.”*

Even in the medical field, we know that confession, both to God and to each other has an extraordinary effect in healing relationships. When someone has sinned against God, how much better do they feel when they finally lower that burden from their shoulders and confess! Or, when someone has sinned against another human being, how good it is when the topic of offense is brought up in an atmosphere of love and not revenge or rebuke…

It is not necessary to ask you “What does this have to do with us?” All of us can confess more often to God, and especially to each other when we sin against one another. The book of James in 5:16 says to confess your sins to one another and pray for each other that you may be healed.

Honesty is one of our greatest weapons against the enemy, who is satan. An honest expression in love builds up the church and strengthens the inner connections between the members of the Family of God. This honesty or openness also draws, pulls, and convicts the unbeliever or the backslidden toward God’s love which grows among us when we cultivate an atmosphere of confession and honesty.

Therefore, let us work on creating an atmosphere of confession and honesty in our lives - first, between each of us and God, and then between each other. Finally, may the Lord give us a forgiving spirit, that we may enjoy His blessings and reflect His forgiving personality through our lives.

Blessed is the man whose sins the Lord forgives, and within whom there is no guile. Dealing honestly with God brings His blessings into our lives. The Lord bless you all. Amen.