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Experiencing Joy Through Confession

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Experiencing Joy Through Confession

Abstract

"The step of trust (confession) is what led to joy for David in Psalm 32, and it can lead to joy for each of us."

Posting about repentance from *In All Things* - an online hub committed to the claim that the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ has implications for the entire world.

<http://inallthings.org/experiencing-joy-through-confession/>

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Comments

In All Things is a publication of the [Andreas Center for Reformed Scholarship and Service](#) at Dordt College.

Experiencing Joy Through Confession

 [inallthings.org/experiencing-joy-through-confession/](https://allthings.org/experiencing-joy-through-confession/)

Eric Forseth

Daily Scripture Texts

[Psalm 32](#)

[Matthew 4:1-11](#)

[Romans 5:12-19](#)

It's exciting to think about a warm summer night while we are in the dead of winter. But the Scripture, in Psalm 32:5, takes an unexpected direction with the image, cautioning us to think about our strength being "sapped" just like the summer heat if we don't recognize the consequences of our vices. As in King David's situation, we today are still called in this Psalm to "not cover up our evils" and to confess our sins. In so doing, God will forgive the guilt of our injustices.

I, who grew up with seven siblings, am reminded in this Psalm of what it means to contemplate living in community by confessing our sins to one another. The experience of seven siblings was filled with many examples of community: among them, rivalries. Learning to get along. Leading. Following. Influencing.

The dynamics of the large family also involved *being* influenced—depending on the circumstances—into making good decisions and bad decisions. Those summer evenings might have involved going to bed with a clear conscience, or sometimes with the guilt of sin on our minds. But the best remedy in falling asleep was not letting the summer sun go down before we confessed our shortcomings to God and our siblings (and to mom or dad).

If you were caught breaking the family rules, you had two choices. Confession was the first option. If you chose to confess your sin, you allowed mom to bite your finger, or if the transgression was a serious one, you allowed mom to bite your ear and then you screamed bloody murder. Or you waited for dad's return to the house. What kid would ever choose this bad experience voluntarily? Yet, the choice of confession was a simple one, because it meant either having the punishment of mom's discipline, or facing the consequence of a whipping from dad when he came home from work. Confessing transgression was an important step to having God relieve our guilt, and receiving accompanying forgiveness of our sins.

The second summer option was to go into cover-up mode after the family guidelines had been violated. Yes, we tried to cover up our "iniquities" at certain times, but our mother usually did not let a suspicious silence last for long in the summer heat. Just as in Psalm 32:9, we see an illustration that in our own human strength, we attempt to strongly resist confessing our sins and are provided this caution: "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."¹ In this image, we are all called to resist the temptation of relying on our own guidance (and strength) and to seek the Lord's unfailing love.

The step of trust (confession) is what led to joy for David in Psalm 32, and it can lead to joy for each of us. To faithfully live in concert with our families, one key step of community includes confessing our vices instead of covering up our shortcomings.

Prayer: Lord, help us to take a step today and confess to a brother, sister, mom, or dad. We want to access your promises to give us courage to live well with our family members. We trust your promises the same way King David did, and we are grateful your joy will come in the morning, because your promises are new every day.

Footnotes

1. Patterson D. & R. Kelley, *Old Testament Commentary* (B and H Publishing, 2011), p. 911. [↩](#)