

Psalms 32:1 (William (Bill) Prost) 218321

Toledo Conference: 1986, Happy Is He Who Is Forgiven (32:1)

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And tonight, I'm going to turn to the 32nd Psalm. And we'll find there, I believe, that which would speak to each one of our hearts. Psalm 32. Psalm 32 and verse one. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven. Whose sin is covered? We won't read the whole song. We'll go through it, perhaps verse by verse. Here we find the first verse says blessed or happy is the man or is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered? And you know, friends, tonight, this brings us face to face with the first great fact of the gospel that we must present to you tonight, and that is that you and I and every other. In this room tonight is a Sinner before God. Have you ever thought of that? That you have a responsibility toward God? And God in looking down tells us by divine revelation here that we are sinners. We could turn to other scriptures which would support that. We could turn to Romans 3 and 22 which says, for there is no difference, all have sinned and come short of the glory of God. We could turn to other scriptures which tell us that there is none righteous, no, not one. And yet here we have this blessed verse which says. Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven. Whose sin is covered? I would like to ask you tonight, in the presence of God, just going around this room and speaking to each one, can you put yourself in this verse? Can you say yes, thank God, my sins are under the shelter of the precious blood of Christ? If you can't, then I have to tell you on the authority of God's Word, that you're lost. Lost. Oh, you say. I'm not lost. I know exactly where I am. I know exactly where I'm going. People speak today of having control of their life. May I say that's nonsense. You don't have control of your life unless you know Christ. You're being born along by forces which you know very little about. And we'll see a little about them later on in the chapter here. But oh how blessed to know that one's transgressions are forgiven and ones sins are covered. Now you know the word of God doesn't repeat itself, and it speaks here of transgression and sin. Transgression is the breaking of a known command, a known law. And I doubt if there's anyone here in this room tonight who would be prepared to stand up and say I have never done that which I knew to be wrong. Even the smallest child here, you can understand that. You can understand when mom or dad says no, and yet perhaps you did it anyway. Transgression breaking the known command. But you know, the eye of God goes further than that because the eye of God goes deeper and shows us what is in our hearts. And it uses a word called iniquity or lawlessness, which simply means the act of an independent will. An old beloved friend, tonight you may sit in your seat and say, I have never done any harm to anyone. I'm a good citizen of the community. I pay my debts. I keep the law. I try to do the best I can in this life. I provide for my family, I try to help out wherever I can in the community, and we wouldn't belittle that in the least as far as it goes. But Oh my friend, deep down inside, God can look down in your heart as He did once into mind, and see an independent will, a will that was set up against God, that wanted its own way. That was at enmity with God, as the word of God says. And I ask you tonight, if you're not saved, is that not true of you? Is that not true? People speak today of doing their own thing. Man speaks today of looking after #1 but Oh my friend, whether you're doing that or whether you're doing something else, if you're not saved, you're exercising your own will before God, and God's Word calls that sin.

But oh, how blessed to think that there is a way that that sin can be covered. And I venture to say that if you're not saved, there have been occasions in your life when you have realised that things are not what they should be. We read about a man like that in the Word of God. We read about Nicodemus in the third chapter of John, who was just such a man as I have been describing a few moments ago. A man who was upward, who was outwardly upright. A man who was an exemplary man, no doubt, as far as his fellow man was concerned. A man who did everything that he was supposed to do. But he knew deep down inside that something was wrong. Well over 10 years ago when I was buying some furniture for my office, I had occasion to speak to the man who was selling it and in the course of our conversation I told him that I was a Christian and that I knew the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior. To my great surprise, he started to cry. Grown man there in his office started to cry, just the two of us. Oh, he said. I've done some awful things in my life. And he confessed to me some things that he'd done which had ruined his marriage caused a great deal of difficulty in his home. He says, you know, I'm going to have to get all this sorted out pretty soon, and I think I'm going to go into the ministry. Go into the ministry. Oh, I said, Sir, that might sound all very good on the surface, but will it save your soul? Why not come to Christ and bring the whole thing to him? Why not come to Christ? I said, There's no use glossing over the outside when the inside is bad. And that's what we try to do today, isn't it? Isn't that what we try to do today? Oh beloved friend, tonight, if you're trying to fix up the outside, you have to realize that the inside is bad. Those transgressions need to be forgiven. Those sins need to be covered through the precious blood of Christ. Notice the second verse. Blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile. Oh, this is a very searching verse. It doesn't say Blessed is the man to whom his fellow man imputeth not iniquity. I know things about myself. But probably no one else knows. But there is one whose eye can look down into my heart. As he does into yours. And we read a verse like this in Hebrews. All things are naked and open unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Let me repeat that all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do. Some of us go over to the city of Toronto to the detention home week by week. And we meet there with some young people, very sad cases who, having been charged with very serious crimes, are being held there in custody until their case comes up in court. It's easy to talk to them, you know, because we don't have to tell them that they're sinners. They know it. And sometimes we put it to them this way. You're going to go before a judge next week, Yes. And what's going to happen? Well, he's going to listen to our side of the story, and then he's going to listen to the other side, and then he'll decide whether I'm guilty or not, and he'll come to a judgment. So we've put it to them like this. Suppose that you knew that the judge had seen you do whatever you did with his own eyes. What then? All they say then there's no point in trying to present a case because we've had it. They use pretty straight language. There's no point in saying anything because you're going to get it anyway to use their language. Oh, my friend, tonight we have to do with one.

Who looks deep down into your heart and mine? Knows every act that I have ever done, everything that these lips have ever said, and more than this, every thought that I have ever had. Blessed is he, blessed is the man unto whom the Lord imputeth not iniquity. Oh my friend, it's a wonderful thing to have your sins washed away and be clear before a holy God. It's not good enough to be clean before your fellow man. How blessed to know that what the eye of God reveals in your heart and mind, the blood of Christ can cover. Oh, you say, how can you talk so

freely about the blood of Christ? Why can God put such value on the precious blood of Christ? Oh, beloved friend, because. There is a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who came down into this world in love to you and to me. A Savior who came down and went to Calvary Cross and there stretched out his hands and was nailed to a cross and there suffered for his own sins. No, for mine. For my sins died there because he was guilty. No died for you, beloved friends, in order that you might be saved. Will you accept that blessed Saviour tonight? Will you come to that blessed one and accept him as your Savior? That's why we have this meeting, you know. That's why we take the trouble to have a gospel meeting like this, because we want you to know the joy in your soul that comes from knowing the Lord Jesus Christ is your Savior. Notice the last half of verse two, and in whose spirit there is no guile. You know, that word has particular effect on me today because we see all around us today guile being practiced. What is guile? Oh, I think in simple terms, it's trying to give an impression of being what we are not. Isn't that right? Trying to give an impression of being something that we're not, and how many there are today who are trying to do that? I had occasion to speak to a poor elderly woman in my office a few weeks ago. I'll tell this story for the sake of the children, because you'll understand it, and so will we older ones. And this woman, she's not very well. Not well at all. In fact, if it weren't for a very devoted husband, she'd have to be in a nursing home. And I feel sorry for that woman. She has a lot of things wrong with her and in the natural course of events, she's not going to be here very long. And one time I ventured to speak to her about the importance of being saved and how wonderful it was to know our sins washed away through the blood of Christ. And to my great surprise, she said to me, I don't think I've ever committed a sin in my whole life. Oh, I said can it be possible? I said, can it be possible that you never in your life ever remember telling a lie? Oh, the poor soul, she gave herself away. She said, oh, she said we didn't tell lies at home because whenever we did, we got our mouth washed out with soap. Oh, I said to her, you've you've condemned yourself. I said, why was it even necessary for your mother to do that if you never told a lie? Oh, my friend Guile, and you know, we have to be honest in the sight of God. There is a God who knows all about you and yet, beloved friend, he comes in love to you tonight. You know, there are some people that we get to know and the more we know them. Maybe I'm one of them, but the more we know them. Perhaps the more things we find out about them and the less we like them, we may get a good impression at the start, but then we find some things out that make us a little less enthusiastic about their friendship. But you know there is a God in heaven who looks down and knows all about you, as we already quoted naked and opened to the eyes of him with whom we have to do. God's Word uses that word naked and open strong word, as we heard last night.

But a word that the Word of God uses, an old beloved friend. There is one who knows everything about you, and yet his heart reaches out in love to you tonight. To me, that's the most wonderful thing of the gospel, that God could look down in love on a poor guilty Sinner like me and send his Son to die for me because he loved me even though he knew everything about me. It's no use to pretend with God. No use to use guile, Oh beloved friend, tonight, if you're exercised about being saved, if you want to come to Christ, may I urge you to come and just come as you are. Don't try and hide anything. Don't try and spruce things up the way that man was who was going to go to a seminary and study to be a minister. As if somehow by doing that he would make himself a little more presentable before God. Oh no, beloved friends, tonight. What we need is the precious blood of Christ. Notice verse three when I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. Keeping silence. That means trying to hide something, to keep it inside, to try and hide from God. You know, that's an old story. It's been done for centuries, right from Adam on down in the Garden of Eden, who would hide amongst the trees of the garden in order that he might not have to face God. And ever since that time, man has been keeping silence. But all, beloved friend, what does it produce? Oh, it says here my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. That simply means that if the Spirit of God is exercising your soul as to your need of a Savior. Oh, don't. Don't try and resist it. Recognize that there is a God who knows all about you and who wants to save your precious soul. Come to Him and admit that you're a Sinner. Are you willing to do that? Are you willing to do that? Have you gotten to the point that you're willing to come to Christ? If God is working with you, don't resist it. Verse Four. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me. My moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah. That last word simply means I believe. Pause and think about that for a moment. It reminds me of a story of a man who was lying in a hospital bed after having been in a serious automobile accident. And while he was lying there, a Christian friend of his who knew him well. Came to visit him. The man had been very badly hurt, Car had flipped over and he was very, very seriously injured, not to the point of death, but to the point of needing to be in hospital for several months. And in the course of that conversation, he said something like this. This is the, I think, he said, the 7th automobile accident that I have had in the last five years. Serious accidents, he said, I think the Lord is speaking to me and he was saved through that. He recognized that the hand of God was heavy upon him and all. Beloved friend, sometimes the hand of God, in order to make you realize your need of a Savior, may have to bring circumstances into your life. Which may be most unpleasant? Are you finding that your moisture is turned into the drought of summer? Are you finding the hand of God heavy upon you all recognise that perhaps He's doing it in order to draw you to Himself. Oh, what a blessed thing it is when God works in a soul, even to the point of bringing difficulties and problems into their lives. In order to draw them to himself. Finally, verse 5, Here we find what we wish you would do tonight and I might mention at this point. Don't think for one moment that I'm standing here talking down to you or anyone else in this room. I stand here as a trophy of the grace of God. I'm more than happy to admit that I'm nothing more than a Sinner saved by grace. And it's only the grace of God that saved my poor sinful heart. And I know too much about my own heart.

Ever to talk down to someone else. No beloved friend. But we have come to know the blessedness of him whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. And how do we get saved just by doing what we have? In this fifth verse do you say, I don't know how to be saved? Oh, here it is in plain language. Verse 5 I acknowledged my sin unto thee. And mine iniquity have I not hid, I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord. Isn't that blessing? You know, to me, I think the greatest hindrance of souls being saved. Is just what we have here. Because we are too proud to admit that we're absolutely helpless before God. And in these favoured lands. Where the gospel has been preached for so many years, we've become hardened to it. I've had the privilege of visiting some foreign lands. And I've talked with others who have visited other lands. You'll pardon me if I say I have gone to villages in India. And others here will bear me out. Where I literally had to hold a handful of Sunday school papers over my head to prevent children from tearing them out of my hands. They were so anxious to have them. Handed out gospel tracts where there just weren't enough to go round. And yet, beloved friends, here we are in the United States of America. Where I suppose there has been a greater gospel testimony almost than any other nation on earth, and yet we find souls that turn their back on the wondrous grace of God, and refuse to acknowledge their sin unto him. Reminds me of our brother Eric Smith, who told us a few years ago how that he was handing out tracts in a large American city. And how he offered a tract to some college students. No, they said, we don't want that. Take that junk away. Well, in his quiet way, he said. Boys, I'm surprised. I'm surprised to see you turn your back on the very thing that has made America great. No doubt they detected a slightly different accent. And they said, are you an American? And he quite truthfully answered, no, I am a Bolivian. Oh, let's see that tract. And they took it. Whether there was blessing from it, we leave it with the Lord. But Oh my friend, tonight I dwell a little on this verse, because I tell you again, it is the reason why so many souls are not saved. We do not come to

Christ and admit, as it says here, my sin and mine iniquity. Bring your stubborn will, if I may say that to the feet of the Lord Jesus tonight. Bring all your sin that you have committed. And accept the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior tonight. Notice the end of the verse. Thou forgives the iniquity of my sin. Is there such a thing as the Lord Jesus Christ ever refusing one? No, him that cometh to me. It says in John 6 and 37. I will in no wise cast out. In no wise cast out. Tonight, beloved friend, as the Word of God says, we pray you in Christ dead be reconciled to God. Verse 6. For this shall everyone that is godly. Pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found. That expression, everyone that is godly, I believe, simply means that we justify God when He tells us what we are in His sight. You know, it tells us in Acts chapter 17 that God now commandeth all men everywhere to repent. And repentance simply means that you believe what this precious book says about your true condition in the sight of God.

And that you recognize that when he says that you and I. We're lost, guilty sinners in the sight of God that this witness is true. And old beloved friend, tonight maybe there's a boy or a girl here under the sound of my voice that isn't saved. Maybe there's an older 10. How wonderful to know the grace of God and to accept the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior. Will you come tonight? Will you come and accept that blessed 1 as your Savior? It reminds me of another story that I've told before, but I think it would be worth telling again. This was about a man who was not what we would call a young man. He was middle-aged. And he had a wife who was a dear Christian. And he owned a large ranch in New Zealand, and a preacher of the gospel came to that home to try and point him to Christ. And he wouldn't have them. He said, get him out of here. I don't want to hear anything about that. Don't want that preacher coming here at all. He drove a carriage, you know, in those days, this was years ago with gospel verses on the side. And he ridiculed and he said, what nonsense to put gospel verses on the side of a carriage like that. And he wouldn't have him around the place. Time went on. The gospel preacher came back again. It's time. The man had softened little, he said. Well, all right, give him a room to sleep in. We'll feed him, but keep him out of my way, whatever you do. But you know. That man didn't wreck it on the prayers of a beloved wife and children who were saved, and they prayed earnestly that their father might come to know the Lord Jesus Christ. As Savior. And you know. One day. They were sitting in the living room, the family was, and they ventured to invite the preacher to come in and sit for the evening and chat. And of course, the father of the home could hardly refuse. That kind of hospitality. And. While sitting there, the family was a musical 1. The preacher noticed a violin sitting over in the corner. Oh, he said. Do you play the violin? He said to the father. And a conversation ensued, a little bit about music. Finally, the father said to him, Do you play anything? No, the preacher said. But if your daughter will kindly accompany me on the piano, I'll sing a hymn for you. And the family held their breath. The father said. All right, all right. And so that preacher stood up. And he chose that hymn. The glory shines before me, I cannot linger here. And so on. And you know, as they sat singing that hymn. Started to rundown the face of that father. As he realized that there was number, glory shining before him, no glory shining before him, they came to the last verse. The glory shines before me, I know that all is well, and so on. And that Father, right then and there, he bowed himself at the feet of the Lord Jesus and accepted him as Savior. Oh, my friend, tonight will you come to the Lord Jesus Christ, as it says here, in a day when he may be found? I can't promise you that this hour will even be completed. I can't promise you another chance. I can't promise you that there will be another gospel meeting here tomorrow. It's scheduled on our schedule here, but it may not take place. Surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto thee. Oh my friend, our time is drawing to a close, but I have to speak to you in faithfulness to God and in faithfulness to your soul, that there is judgment ahead.

Surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh thee and the word of God. Water always speaks when it's used in this way of judgment. Floods of great waters speaks of judgment. Some hear know more about floods than I do. I've never been involved in one, but I have spoken to those who have been involved in floods. The frightening consequences of a river rising to the point where it causes. To homes, but how wonderful it is to be in those circumstances on higher ground. And beloved friend, tonight, there is judgment coming on this world, perhaps very soon. It tells us in Proverbs 27 And one, boast not thyself of tomorrow, for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth, But oh, there is a shelter from the coming storm. Oh, if you're under the shelter of the blood of Christ, you have nothing to fear from coming judgment. But all beloved friend tonight. What if you should be taken from this world suddenly? What a few should be taken? He'll pardon a personal reference. But earlier this week I had the responsibility of a funeral. A dear woman whom I know knew Christ as her Savior for many years. But as I stood there and looked at the one in that casket. And as we saw those sitting in the room there who attended that funeral, I couldn't help but remind them of the shortness of time. Because a few short days before that funeral, I don't think that anyone expected that that dear sister would be an eternity. But she was gone from this world. Gone where? Oh, as the word of God says to be with Christ. Which is far better? Could we say that if you were to leave this world suddenly, or would it rather be to leave this world and to go into judgment? God's word tells us in Hebrews 9 and 27, it is appointed unto men once to die, and we all would agree with that, But after this the judgment. Oh beloved friend, what a solemn thing to think about that, if your transgressions and sins are not. Shelter of the blood of Christ. That you must bear the judgment for your own sins. And you will permit me to speak very solemnly in that awful place called hell. The Word of God uses that word. Man uses it too. But you know, I believe it's right to say that in every case but twice in the Word of God where that word is used. That translated properly, it falls from the lips of the same blessed Savior that we're pointing you to tonight. Oh, why did He speak so much about it, Oh beloved friends, because He and He alone knew what it would be like to go into a lost eternity. A lost eternity. How solemn, how solemn. Reminds me of a story that is told a true story of a man who was an atheist. And he got into conversation with another man who was a Christian, who had never met him before. And the one who was a believer said to him, I know the Lord Jesus Christ as my savior. Do you all? The other man said, I've been an atheist all my life. He said my father was an atheist, my grandfather was an atheist, and that's what I grew up with. But you know, I'm having second thoughts. All the Christians said what happened. And he told this awful story, which I would not tell if it were not true. He told the story of how just a few weeks before, his father had died. And he said I had the awful experience of standing there at his deathbed. And as we stood beside that bed, he gradually lost consciousness so that we just were waiting for him to breathe his last and we expected it at any moment. We spoke to him but couldn't get any response and never expected him to say any more.

But he said, you know. I felt it very keenly because. All of a sudden, my father sat up. We didn't think he had the strength to do it, but he sat up. And he said these awful words in a clear voice. There is a God. There is a hell. And I'm going to it. And he fell back dead. O beloved friend, I don't tell you that story. Just to dramatize the gospel meeting. These things are real. These things are not fiction. What we are telling you tonight is not that which we merely put on and then walk out that door and forget about. Old beloved friend, these things are real, and someday, as the Word of God says, every one of us must give a count of himself to God. And one day you are going to stand before the very God who made you, the very one who sent his Son down into this world. You're going to stand before that Blessed One who hung on Calvary's cross. And if you have not accepted Him as your savior, then He in that day will be your judge. How will you have that blessed one? Will you have them tonight as your Savior or will you have them? As your judge in a coming day. Notice verse 7. Thou art my hiding place. Thou shalt preserve me from trouble. Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah. I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go. I will guide thee with mine eye. I refer to these verses simply to show you, my friend, that God isn't going to save your soul.

And then leave you to drift in this world as best you can, and then see him in heaven at the end. No, I don't know of a happier thing than to walk through this world as a Christian, and I defy you tonight ever to find a Christian who regretted accepting Christ as his Savior. I had an elderly man in my office. He comes in from time to time, and he pointed to a gospel verse on the wall. But I have often enjoyed believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved, He said. That's a good verse. I said yes, that's what I'm resting on for eternity. He said so am I, so am I. Recently, that man buried his daughter who died of cancer. But, you know, they told me I wasn't at the funeral, but they told me that it was a triumphant funeral because they were able to say she was absent from the body and present with the Lord. And so the Lord is able to give you strength and help to walk the pathway down here. You know, sometimes people say if I accept Christ as my Savior, I could never live as a Christian. I could never walk as a Christian. I could never do. That, oh beloved friends, God has never asked you or me either to do it in our own strength. And I wouldn't be standing here before you tonight if I didn't continually ask God for help and strength to walk the Christian pathway. And so every Christian here tonight would tell you the same thing, that it was the grace of God that saved them, It was the blood of Christ that put away their sins, and it's only the grace of God that keeps them going on through this world. Notice verse. Verse 9 Be not as the horse or as the mule, which have no understanding, whose mouth must be held in with bitten bridal, lest they come near unto thee. Oh, how many dear souls I see going through this world with a bit and a bridle. People victims of circumstances over which they have no control, and don't know how to change them. Oh, beloved friend, how blessed it is to go through this world. Knowing, as we said at the beginning of the chapter, that your transgressions are forgiven. That your sin is covered, but more than that, that there is one who is going to see you all the way home. Verse 10. Many sorrows shall be to the wicked. But he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about. Now it doesn't say that the Christian will never have any trouble. It doesn't say that the Christian won't have any sorrows, but it says mercy shall compass him about. Oh, beloved friend, tonight we preach under you a Savior who not only saves, but who keeps.

Verse 11 Be glad in the Lord, and rejoice, ye righteous, and shout for joy all ye that are upright in heart. Oh my friend, I trust, and I say it humbly, I trust on the faces of those of us who are the Lords, you see something of the joy and the peace of knowing the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior. How many times? Does the Christian burst into song as it says here? I sometimes have a bad habit of doing it. I do it perhaps when I shouldn't and people look around and wonder what I'm doing. But all beloved friend, it's real. It's real. Reminds me of the little boy who was just saved and he couldn't help but sing. His father told him to be quiet two or three times, but he kept starting up again. Father finally said. I told you that I didn't want you making all that row and singing. Well, the little boy didn't mean to be disobedient, but he said, Daddy, I don't want to be disobedient. I stopped. But then it just keeps coming out. And you know that Father realized that down inside he had no song. He had no joy in his heart because he didn't know the Lord Jesus Christ as his Savior. And you know, sometimes a child can be used to bring an older one to Christ. And if you're going to come to Christ tonight, it must be with the simplicity. Of a little child that comes simply believing what God has said and accepting the Lord Jesus Christ as your Savior. Well, our time is up. I trust that the gospel has been plain tonight. Again, I'd like to say what was said last night. If you don't understand, if you say I still don't get it straight, I still don't know what you mean. Oh, there are plenty here who would only to gladly sit down with you and open this precious book and show you, if we can, more clearly the way of salvation. But whatever you do. Don't walk out that door and allow the devil and there is a devil, there is a Satan. Don't allow the devil so to occupy your mind for things of this life. That the Word goes right out and you forget all about it. He'd love to do that, you know. And how many times souls come to a gospel meeting like this and perhaps hear the Spirit of God working with working in their hearts. Perhaps hear the voice of God speaking to them. Perhaps realize that they need a Savior and that they should be saved. And yet. And yet. Later, later, later, until there comes a point. When it's too late, O beloved friend, we're going to sing just one verse of a hymn now, and it's addressed to you.

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