

Faith and Forgiveness

One of Scripture's most endearing passages is Proverbs 3:5-6. To those in pursuit of degrees, careers, marriage partners, or ministry calls, these proverbs of Solomon are often offered as encouragement to trust God for a promising, but uncertain future.

But when have you ever heard these words applied to the proper handling of sin in our lives?

One day while enjoying the Bible, I marveled at how the Holy Spirit coupled for me two seemingly unrelated passages – the above text with Psalm 32. Their union illuminated just how our experience of God's forgiveness vitally rests upon our wholehearted trust in Him.

Trust in the LORD with all your heart... (Prov. 3:5a)

Psalm 32:1-2 speaks of how blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sin the Lord does not count against him. All that's required is an unwavering faith in God and in His promises found everywhere in Scripture. (Psalm 103:8-14; 1 John 1:9)

...and lean not on your own understanding; (Prov. 3:5b)

Psalm 32:3-4 describes the agonizing consequences suffered spiritually and physically by anyone who dares to address or suppress sin on his own.

in all your ways acknowledge Him, (Prov. 3:6a)

Psalm 32:5-7 records the psalmist David's discovery of God's ready forgiveness when he finally acknowledged his sin to God through a brokenhearted confession. His exuberant joy at finding God to be his hiding place and protector as opposed to his judge and executioner compels David to exhort all who are godly to do likewise.

...and He will make your paths straight. (Prov. 3:6b)

Psalm 32:8-11 concludes with a promise of instruction and teaching in the way to go for the righteous one who trusts in God and subsequently becomes a recipient of His forgiveness and unfailing love.

What hope we find in Psalm 32 as the blessed and the godly are not sinless, but rather are sinners who are truly forgiven by grace through faith. In a generation crushed by the weight and guilt of sin, in a day of escalating numbers of stress-related physical and mental illnesses, may you know the freedom of forgiveness through Christ by trusting in the Lord with all your heart!