

P.R.A.Y. – PSALM 32 – I WASTED AWAY

It's been said "There's a Psalm for every emotion". The Psalms contain praises, shouts of thanksgiving, confessions of sins, prayers for renewal and bitter weeping over injustice. They show the righteous wondering aloud why God allows injustice while, sometimes in the same psalm, repenting of their own sins. Other psalms ask for God to bring bitter judgment against His and His people's enemies in words so strong modern people shudder at the thought because we have inherited Christian attitudes towards mercy for two thousand years. That raises an important question about how Christians pray all the psalms which will be discussed later. Today we focus on Psalm 32.

Psalm 32 has been considered part of the "Seven Penitential Psalms" since the 6th century. These psalms are 6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, and 143. It helps people understand why to repent, how to repent, and the benefits of repentance before God. People in deep sorrow for their sin identify with the Psalm writer - why do you think that may be?

The word "covered" in v. 1 has an important meaning for understanding the psalm. You can see how that word is used in some related passages here: Genesis 9:23, Exodus 40:34, Nehemiah 4:5, Psalm 32:5, Psalm 85:2, Proverbs 17:9, & Proverbs 28:13. What does it mean in Psalm 32?

Paul quotes this psalm in Romans 4:7-8 in a very important way... what does Paul use Psalm 32 to prove there?

“HOW DO YOU READ THE BIBLE? OH, I PRAY (O.I.P.R.A.Y.)!”

P.R.A.Y. THE BIBLE

PRAY - for God’s help in understanding His Word!

O - Observe what you read (what does it “say”?)

- What Stands Out to you?
- Are there specific instructions/commands given to the reader?
- Does this passage mention any consequences for not following God’s commands?
- How does the author motivate the reader/audience, or make his appeal?
- What Do You Learn About God?
- What do You Learn About People?
- What Do Different Translations Say?

I - Interpret what you find (what does it “mean”?)

- How Would You Explain Them To Someone Else?
- What DID These Words Mean To The First Audience?
- What DO They Mean Today?

- How would you put it in your own words?

P – Praise and Thanksgiving in response to God’s Word

R – Reflect, Repent, Return to Jesus Christ the Lord who forgives and restores

A - Ask, Seek, and Knock in light of God’s kingdom purposes as well as for daily needs (Matt 6:11)

Y – Say YES! to God’s Will by creating a Plan of Action!

PRAY - Turn your answers into active prayer, praise, repentance, and seeking God’s strength to carry out your plans to follow His will!

Remember... Saying “YES!” to God’s Will revealed in Scripture ultimately leads us to **SHARE & BLESS**.

SHARE - What you’ve found with your household, friends, and/or small group this week! Help them answer these same questions and talk about it with them. No “teaching” required!

Who do you know who needs to hear what you’ve discovered?

BLESS – How will you, your household, small group, etc. live out a lifestyle of mercy this week?

WEEKLY CHALLENGE:

- If you're in the habit of P.R.A.Y.ing through your scripture passage at the last minute, try to do it earlier in the week.
- When you do that, schedule time to sit down with your spouse, children, other family members or a friend to read the passage with them and talk about what you find. If they are doing the same assignment share your findings. If not, let them just comment on what they see.
- No "teaching" is required... just talking. So if you don't have all the answers – NO PROBLEM. You're just talking right?
- In other words, don't keep your Bible reading a secret. At least start the process of discussing it with your spouse or a friend.