

# Joy in believing God's promises

*New Year Day*

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**Bible Text:** Psalm 32:7  
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Dear congregation, we may begin this service with expressing a blessed new year to all of you. That's our heartfelt wish, a blessed new year; to the younger ones, to older ones, to the elderly, all of us, blessed. But we have heard what that means, right, blessed? I hope you may be really blessed and not only receive many gifts and many blessings from the Lord but that you may receive the Lord himself. That's the real blessedness, to have fellowship with God, to be restored with him again, to not be on your own but to belong to that faithful Savior Jesus Christ. Blessedness is not only objective blessedness but also an experiential blessedness, a true happiness. May the Lord give you that sorrow for sin to acknowledge your iniquities whole-heartedly, to pour out your heart before the Lord, younger ones and older ones, to tell the Lord everything, to admit your sins, to also grieve about your sins, but then there is also forgiveness with the Lord and that you may experience that forgiveness. That means so much, I can't tell you. That is so sweet, so exciting when you see first dark clouds and damnation and sin and guilt and hell in front of you, and the Lord takes it all away and God shows his mercy in the Lord Jesus Christ. That is so thrilling, so beautiful. I would say go for that. Seek it, that blessedness, because, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man unto whom the LORD imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile." You heard about that. Yesterday evening, we focused on the first part of Psalm 32, looking back, and the second part of Psalm 32 is looking forward.

So the text starts halfway verse 6 with, "surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him," all the way to verse 11. But let me focus especially on verse 7. The text for this morning's hour is the main text in Psalm 32:7,

7 Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance. Selah.

So far. "Joy in believing God's promises." Three thoughts. The believing of the righteous, that believing is expressed in verse 7, right? I hear someone in faith say, "Thou art my hiding place; thou shalt preserve me from trouble; thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance." That's faith, right? That's the believing of the righteous. The righteous, where do we get that from? I get it from the last verse, "Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous." So the first thought is the believing of the righteous, focused

on verse 7. Secondly, the promise is for the future. Then you see it in verse 8, the tone is changing and David is not talking anymore in faith but the Lord speaks in verse 8, the Lord speaks, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." There are three things in that text: instruct and teach and guide. And in the third place, rejoicing in the Lord. That's mainly in verse 11. That's a command for the new year. "Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart." So joy in believing God's promises, believing of the righteous in verse 7 and expressing his faith, the promises for the future especially in verse 8, and rejoicing in the Lord, especially verses 9 through 11.

As I said, congregation, this Psalm can be divided in two parts, Part I and Part II, and Part I deals with sin in the past and forgiveness, and the second part deals with the future. And as I said, halfway verse 6 is the dividing line. Verse 6 still says, "For this shall every one that is godly pray unto thee in a time when thou mayest be found," and then a new part starts. I would say "surely" should have been the first word of a new verse but the dividing in verses is from the thousands or so, 1000, so that's not inspired. So we deal with this Psalm starting with, "surely in the floods of great waters they shall not come nigh unto him."

Look at that, the floods of great waters. We don't always going to be flooding this year. It could be. We're going to be surprised. We're close to the rivers and the mountains and the snow, there's a bunch of snowfall. In Israel, the floods represented disaster. They thought the flood of Noah, for example. So when you read in the Bible of a flood and of billows and waves go over you, it's disaster, it's disaster striking and problems ahead of us. But "surely in the floods of great waters, they shall not come nigh unto him." And to him namely the godly, namely them in whose spirit is no guile, namely to those righteous we have heard about. The Lord promises and says, "It won't happen. The floods come, the waves roll but they will not come nigh unto him."

What a blessing. That's a promise in verse 6 and the promise is answered by David in faith, stating, "O Lord, if that's true, if those great waters won't even come nigh unto me, then thou art my hiding place, then thou shalt preserve me from trouble, thou shalt compass me about with songs of the deliverance." A hiding place. Congregation, younger ones, older ones, when you need a hiding place, you know, when the valley will flood, we will bring the cows on high ground, we will flee into the mountains and the hills and maybe some people living in the hills will invite us to stay with them for a while until the floods have been receded, but we need a hiding place also in a spiritual sense. The hiding place and the hiding place is God himself. "Thou art my rock. Thou art my fortress. Thou art my hiding place." And a hiding place is a place where you take refuge unto, you're hiding for a while or maybe forever.

"Thou art my hiding place." Now look at that word hiding place. Do you see something of the Lord Jesus there? Is he not the hiding place? He is. Isaiah 32:2, "And a man," a man, the Lord Jesus Christ, "And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." So that's the hiding place and now the church, I hear the church of God

confessing this morning, "Thou art my hiding place." The new year 2020 has begun and I hear someone say, "I have courage because whenever the floods came, they will not come nigh unto me, and the Lord Jesus is my hiding place." What a blessing if you can say that, "Thou art my hiding place," not, "I hope to be there or maybe there is one." No, "Thou art my hiding place." You know, that's the blessing meant in this Psalm, the forgiveness of sins, God in Christ being your hiding place against all the waves and all the billows and all the sins and all the disasters, and everything you can think of.

"Thou art my hiding place." You know, maybe after church this afternoon you will see friends and family members and you'll say, "Blessed New Year." What a blessing if you could say on good grounds, "Children, I can say the Lord is my hiding place. Thou shalt preserve me from trouble." Preserve me from trouble. So the Lord has promised that his children don't have any trouble in this life? Absolutely not. Sometimes more than average, but the Lord will preserve them. He will save them. He will protect them. He will preserve them from trouble. The Lord is able to avert all trouble into something that's beneficial. He can yet make it well. So often we don't know even what the blessing is anymore and we say, "That's not the blessing." But it can turn out to become a blessing. And something you say, "That's a curse," but it does not have to be a curse because the Lord says, "I take care of my church," and here responds the church, confessing, "Thou art my hiding place. Thou shalt preserve me from trouble. The Lord will do that. I believe that," it says.

But let me insert again who is talking. Just anyone? Just flippantly? No, the righteous, the church of God, them whose sins have been forgiven, those that acknowledge their sins unto the Lord and have not hid their iniquities anymore, them that it became real, and whose heart was broken and have taken refuge in the Lord Jesus Christ, in that hiding place. They have nothing to fear but in contrast to verse 10, but "Many sorrows shall be to the wicked." Even as things look to go so smoothly, many sorrows shall be to the wicked but the Lord will preserve me from trouble.

"Thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance." Compass me about, surround me with songs of deliverance. What does that mean to "compass"? You see the same word in verse 10B, "but he that trusteth in the LORD, mercy shall compass him about." It's being surrounded on all sides by an army with someone protecting you. So in front of you and besides you and behind you, surrounding you, I see an army of soldiers singing even and being so courageous they sing around their King and around the one they need to protect, and they compass me about with songs of deliverance. For example, think of David, King David coming back from the battlefield with the Philistines and they conquered the Philistines and he came back and I see so many women, so many women singing, "Saul has slain his thousands and David his ten thousands." They are surrounding him with songs of deliverance.

And that's the confession I hear, a child of God experiencing the only comfort in life and death stating, "I know," and he does not confess this to you but he confesses this to the Lord and he's saying, "Lord, thou art my hiding place. Lord, I know thou shalt preserve me from trouble. And Lord, thou shalt compass me about with songs of deliverance." I

hear someone you can be jealous of, someone safe, someone confident, someone relying on the Lord and confessing his faith in dependence upon the Lord, that he is the hiding place. Whatever is going to happen, he says, "Whatever is going to happen, the Lord will be there for me. The Lord will be my hiding place. He will preserve me whatever trouble befalls me, and he shall surround me and compass me about with songs of deliverance." Then he says, "Selah." Forte. Emphasis. This is true. I believe this. I mean it from the heart.

Now this is quite a height, God's child exalting the Lord and expressing such a confidence. Many of God's children don't dare to say this. Faith can be so weak. They can look upon their circumstances, there can be so much doubt, but if they look more upon him, upon him who is willing to forgive, upon him from whom all those blessings flow, it will make a difference. So seek that and ask the Lord for this confidence, "Thou art my hiding place." It brings us to the second thought: promise for the future. Do you see the difference in tone in verse 8? In verse 7 it is, "Thou art my hiding place," David talking to the Lord, "Lord, thou art my," but then in verse 8, "I will instruct thee." Who's talking? A few state that David is talking now and that David is talking to other people, and that David says, "I have something to tell. I would like to teach you, friends." But David says, "I will instruct you, I will instruct thee and teach in the way that thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." I don't believe a word of that. I cannot accept that in this text David is talking to friends. Why not? Well, that last part, "I will guide you with mine eye." I don't think David can say that. I don't think David can say to other people, "I will guide you with mine eye," and if someone would say that to me, "I will guide you with mine eye," I would say, "Whatever. You? I need someone else to do that." So I firmly believe that in this verse and that's often in the poem, often in this Psalm, the Lord is talking certainly. Certainly the Lord is speaking in response to his confession. So he is confessing, "Thou art my hiding place, thou shalt compass me about, thou shalt preserve me, Lord." I know that the Lord is responding to David and saying, "David, I will instruct thee. David, and I will teach you in the way which thou shalt go, and I will guide you with mine eye." Precious.

You know, maybe you have the feeling this morning, "I don't know what to do. I really don't know where to go. Nobody can help me. I need the guidance from the Lord." But look at this text, "I will instruct thee. I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go. I will show you. You don't need to know today but I will show you the way that thou shalt go." And again he, the Lord, is talking with thee, to his church, to the righteous, to the godly ones, to them in whom there is hardly no guile, to them whose sins have been forgiven. "I will instruct thee."

You know, you may have questions today. Young people often have questions. What's my calling in this life? What am I going to do with my life? How am I going to spend my money? What will I buy and not buy? Where do I move? Do I have to move? Do I have to buy a different farm or job, or house, or look for a different job? And legions of questions young people have about the future and they say, "Mom, dad, what should I do? I don't know what to do." Well, in the first place, seek a new heart. In the first place, seek to acknowledge your sins. In the first place, seek that knowledge, seek that

forgiveness, "and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin." In the first place, seek to become a child of God. That's so crucial in all questions. But then the Lord can only instruct you and he promises to the church, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way that thou shalt go."

We've got major decisions, right, we're going to marry? Who are we going to be friends with? What job do you apply for? What education? Don't make those decisions on your own. Don't figure it out yourself. Ask wise people for their input, especially your parents. They know you. But not only that, have the courage to say, "Lord, I'm dumb." Have the courage to say to the Lord, "Lord, I should not make up my own mind. Lord, I'm so biased. I'm such a wimp. Lord, I don't have the courage to make decisions. But Lord, if I have to make hard decisions, may I be able to make those hard decisions. Oh, give me instruction. Instruct me, O Lord." And the Lord says, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way that thou shalt go." And don't go by your feelings. Don't go by your heart. Some people say, "Let your heart speak." No, sir. That's not how it works. Your heart is always deceiving you. Don't listen to your heart. That's a modern way of saying things, just follow your heart. That's the dumbest thing you can do. Ask the Lord for instruction, say, "Lord, teach me the way that I shall go. Also the new future, the new year."

"I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." As I said, I cannot believe that David is saying this himself. The Lord is speaking and the Lord is saying, "David, I keep a close eye on you." That's what it says. "I will guide you with mine eye. I will look at you from heaven. I will see what's happening to you. I will always be there for you. I will always look at you and never lose sight. I am constantly following you wherever you go. You can't hide from me. My eye is upon you. I will guide you with mine eye."

So that's the blessing. The expression means "to set my eye upon you." It means "to care for you. I care for you." So this Psalm is a Psalm of David. He confessed his sins. He acknowledged it to the Lord. He did not hide it anymore. He became real. And in that time that the Lord may be found, he found that grace, "and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin," and he received that true happiness in his heart, and he confessed to the Lord and to people that the Lord will preserve him, that he is his hiding place, and now the Lord is saying, "David, I will instruct thee and teach you and I will guide you with mine eye. I will comfort you. I will always be there for you."

Is that what you would like? You know, we don't know what the new year will bring us. We have no idea regarding our health, our relationships, and jobs, and even the weather, and income. It's all uncertain. But if you may only have the Lord as our God, that's enough, that's everything, the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all other things will be added unto you.

This fits with Philippians 4:6, "Be careful for nothing," be anxious about nothing, "but in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." Just tell the Lord. "And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." Oh, that hiding

place in times of trouble, then whatever happens, you're calm; whatever happens, you may follow the Lord because he has promised that he will keep an eye on you, and that he will comfort you for body and soul, for time and eternity. You know, God's children are safe. God's children have everything. God's children do not need to worry about anything. They have a God and that God keeps an eye on them and teaches them, and whatever happens to them, it cannot harm them. It might be painful, it might hurt, but even that pain is a blessing for them because it leads them to the right place. All things must work together for good for them that are called.

So what was the theme? Joy in believing God's promises, right? And we talked about that believing in verse 7, "Thou art my hiding place." We talked about the promises of the future in verse 8, "I will instruct thee." And now the third point: rejoicing in the Lord.

First we sing.

Congregation, before we go to the last thought, let me first group five things, five things out of this text, out of this Psalm, just group them and show you. I kind of did already but I would like to do it again. I read in verse 2, "and in whose spirit is no guile," right? In whose spirit is no guile. When the Lord gives a new heart, he takes that deceitfulness out. He makes someone real and true within and there's no guile in that spirit anymore because you tell everything to the Lord. You're not a hypocrite anymore. You're a real child of God and that connects with what you see in verse 6, "For this shall every one that is godly." Godly. It's a difficult word to translate, the godly, may different possibilities. It's about God's people, he saves the faithful, the pious ones, the real ones, the godly ones, yes. So this Psalm is about them in whose spirit is no guile and who belong to God's people, the godly ones. And look at verse 10, "Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the LORD." Do you see? So the people in whose spirit is no guile and they are the godly ones, they really trust, they trust in the Lord and they trust in the Lord Jesus Christ. They have faith in him. And connect that with verse 11, "Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous." The righteous ones, righteous not in themselves but righteous in Christ. Righteous with the imputed righteousness of God in Christ. And then again at the last line of verse 11, "all ye that are upright in heart."

So I don't say that to discourage you, saying, you know, Psalm 32 is about God's people but it is a fact, and I hope you feel if you're unconverted, that you feel kind of they have something that I miss. But if you say that, I may still say it is available for you as well. There is salvation in him. You have to become real and acknowledge your sins. Having said this, the last verses 9 through 11 have lots of commands in them. "Be ye not as the horse, be ye not as the mule,; and then, "Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, and shout."

First of all, verse 9. What a difference between a horse and a mule on one side and a sheep or a lamb on the other side. Have you ever heard of a bit and a bridle in a sheep's mouth? No. Sheep don't need that. They're mellow and they follow the shepherd and the shepherd just calls them, "Come. Come." And they just follow him. They hear his voice and they recognize his voice but a horse or a mule, that's something else. They need a bit and bridle because they are stubborn with their own opinion, and so, we people, are also

by nature so stubborn and we need a bit and a bridle. So the Lord says, "Don't be as a horse. Don't be like a mule which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee, lest they will harm you."

We talked about verse 10 already and then verse 11. For the new year, for them in whose heart is no guile, the godly ones, the trusting ones, "Be glad. Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice this morning." You have reasons to. You should not be too sad. You have a God, you have a Savior, you have everything. He keeps an eye on you. You're the apple of his eye. Be glad then. Be glad in the Lord, not in the world, not in things, not in food and drink and marriage and children and so many blessings, but be glad in the Lord. Not only glad because the Lord gives so many things but be glad with him. Be glad that you may have him, that he is your God. Be glad in the Lord and rejoice.

You know, that will be such an honor to God if his church on the first day of the year in spite of all the trouble in their life would say, "I'm glad in the LORD." Therefore be glad in the Lord. I cannot make that, I cannot give that to you but I must pass this on to you. I must pass on to you, "Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice." So that's double. Be glad, not just try it but quite an emphasis on that, "Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy." Put the emphasis, "Be glad. Rejoice. And shout." Don't whisper. Don't hesitate. Be open about it. Open your mouth wide, "and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart."

So why would someone be so glad, then? Because the Lord reigneth. And what else? Because the Lord forgives. And what else? Because the Lord keeps a close eye on you and he will instruct you, and he will teach you, and he will compass you about with songs of deliverance. You have nothing to complain about. In spite of the sadness you may bring before the Lord, "Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous: and shout for joy, all ye that are upright in heart." In heart, there is an uprightness in the heart, right?

So this is the same as Psalm 40, "Let all those that seek thee rejoice and be glad in thee: let such as love thy salvation say continually, The LORD be magnified." Or Philippians 4, "Rejoice in the Lord alway: and again I say, Rejoice." What a blessing that would be if children, young people, would see that in you, if they would see the tender fear of God in us and say, "That's so special. I saw in my dad, I saw in my wife, I saw in my child a happiness in spite of all the sorrow." That it would be such an honor to God. Matthew 5, "Rejoice, and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." So in spite of persecution and making your life difficult, rejoice and be exceeding glad for great is your reward. It's coming yet. The suffering is not there forever. And you remember the Apostle Paul, right, with Silas in Philippi in the prison in jail? There was not a jail like it in Canada. It was a dungeon and their feet were hurting and at midnight Paul and Silas prayed and sang praises unto God and the prisoners heard them. So may the prisoners that we meet hear it, that you in spite of all that are glad and may sing praises.

You know, that's quite a theme in the Bible, that real, humble, godly joy. Actually the Apostle John is referring to all that theme and mentions it at least three times, but his

purpose of preaching is that the joy of the congregation might be full. I will quote you three texts from John and 1 John. "These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you and that your joy might be full." That's kind of also the purpose of this morning hour's sermon, that the joy of God's people might be full. Or 1 John 1:4, "And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full." And 2 John 1:12, "Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full." Do you see that? "Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, ye righteous," for the blessedness.

You know, looking over this Psalm, think about the following things. The real blessedness, this Psalm is not a prayer, it's a song of gratitude with Beatitudes, "Blessed. Blessed." Oh, I wish I could make you jealous of that blessedness. But you know, in order to receive that blessedness, you have to sincerely acknowledge your sins and to be without guile, and not only to admit sin but to abhor sin. All this Psalm speaks about trusting in God's protection but also in taking direction. "I will teach you." Not only protection now also direction, having that hiding place, Christ as the refuge. Being glad in the Lord, being glad with the Lord's help, but especially being glad in closeness to the Lord, in following that shepherd. So keep it in mind that the sorrows of the wicked are many but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about. Amen.