

The Recipe for Ruin or Rescue

Proverbs

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Bible Text: Proverbs 28:13-14

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Thank you Adam Foster. It is wonderful to see young people want to use their abilities for the Lord, isn't it? We are blessed by it.

I am going to ask you, please, to turn to the book of Proverbs chapter 28 verse 13 and verse 14.

Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper,
but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.
Blessed is the one who fears the LORD always,
but whoever hardens his heart will fall into calamity.¹

Let's read that again.

Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper,
but he who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.
Blessed is the one who fears the LORD always,
but whoever hardens his heart will fall into calamity.²

Let's pray together.

Lord, now we lift this time of preaching to you and ask your blessing. Lord, all that is contained in that request we ask you for. Bless, Lord. In a powerful way direct our attention to you. Change our lives we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

It is especially true in the Psalms, but it is true throughout Hebrew poetry that often times you will have a statement made in God's Word immediately followed by another statement that either further explains the first statement or restates it in a different way, the same principle in a different way. It is meant to illuminate it. It is meant to explain it. It is meant to drive a point home. You see that often, especially in the Psalms. But even from time to time to you see it in the book of Proverbs. I believe that is what you have in Proverbs 28 verses 13 and 14. God tells us something in very clear terms in verse 13 and

¹ Proverbs 28:13-14.

² Ibid.

then he puts it to us in a different way in verse 14, a way that helps us really understand what he is saying to us in verse 13 so that when you take these two verse together what you have here is really a recipe for either ruin or redemption, ruin or rescue, because we all have that choice set before us. Every day throughout our lives, do we want to be ruined by sin or do we want redemption from sin? Do we want to be rescued from our sins?

These two verses describe a contrast that exists in two areas, a contrast in terms of responses to sin. There is one way to respond to sin that leads to blessing. There is another way to respond to sin that leads to ruin. But also there are two contrasts in terms of what God promises in return. In other words, here is one way that people respond to sin and this is what God promises in return. And here is another way that people respond to sin and this is what God promises in return.

Which kind of person will you be?

And so this morning I want us to look at these two verses under two main headings. We are going to say a lot of things this morning, but under two main headings. And the first one is this. The first thing we see, the first part of verse 13, but we also see it in verse 14 is there is a certain and compassionate warning. There is a certain and compassionate warning. I mean, all warnings are compassionate, aren't they, from God? He doesn't have to warn us. And why does God warn us except that he wants to deliver us from what would ruin us?

You see the warning in verse 13.

“Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper.”³

You also see this in verse 14 at the end of verse 14.

“Whoever hardens his heart will fall into calamity.”⁴

Do you notice the certainty in both of those statements?

“Whoever conceals his transgressions...”⁵ What is the next word? “...will not prosper.”⁶ I mean it is certain they will not prosper.

“Whoever hardens his heart will fall into calamity.”⁷

There is no wondering about it. It is not that this may happen. No, this is certain. So that God is giving us a warning that carries with it a certainty. It is compassionate in that he

³ Proverbs 28:13.

⁴ Proverbs 28:14.

⁵ Proverbs 28:13.

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Proverbs 28:14.

doesn't want us to be ruined in these ways. He is warning us that we might be delivered from it.

Now there are several things I want you to see with me about this certain and compassionate warning. First of all, we recognize this is a simple thing, but I still think it needs to be driven to home. The first thing we recognize is the reality of sin. There is such a thing as sin. And it is not defined by men. To make it more personal, it is not defined by you. It is not defined by me. It doesn't matter how you feel about a certain thing. It doesn't matter how you think about a certain thing. It doesn't matter where your emotions are on a certain day. Do you recognize there is something that is concrete, something that is standardized by God? It is called sin. It is a reality. It is not something nebulous. It is not something that we just have to sort of grope after and say, "Is there such a thing as sin?"

No, there is such a thing as sin.

Verse 13.

"Whoever conceals his [next word] transgressions..."⁸

That word carries with it the idea of rebellion. All right, to transgress, to step across, to violate the law of God. To rebel against God.

The Scripture tells us, "For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin."⁹ Sin is when we don't believe God. Sin is when God tells us something and we don't listen to him. We disregard him. We don't believe him. We feel comfortable thinking in ways that don't agree with his Word or we feel comfortable feeling in ways that don't agree with his Word or we feel comfortable in choosing in ways that don't agree with his Word.

What does the Bible call that? What is the answer, beloved? It is sin. There is such a thing as sin. Sin is transgressions. It is rebellion. Sin is real. Whether you acknowledge your sins or not does not determine whether you have sinned, right? You can sin and not acknowledge it. You can sin and deny it. But your acknowledgement of sin doesn't make sin real. It is real whether you acknowledge it or not. It exists as an objective reality.

Now he tells us not only of the reality of sin in these two verses, he also tells us of a ruinous response to sin. There is a way to respond to sin that will ruin you.

He says in verse 13, "Whoever conceals his transgressions..."¹⁰

Or, as he puts it in verse 14, "Whoever hardens his heart..."¹¹

⁸ Proverbs 28:13.

⁹ Romans 14:23.

¹⁰ Proverbs 28:13.

¹¹ Proverbs 28:14.

Verse 14 says the one who “hardens his heart will fall into calamity.”¹²

The word means injury, evil, misery, distress. You continue in sin and you end up in misery. You continue in sin and you end up injured or, as God puts it in verses 13, “you will not prosper. You respond to your sins in this way, you conceal them, you bank on this. You will not prosper.

Now there are several things we can say about this ruinous response. First of all what God says here applies to anybody, everyone, right?

Verse 13. The ESV has it “Whoever conceals his transgressions...”¹³

In verse 14, “But whoever hardens his heart...”¹⁴

Some versions have “he.” That is there is a kind of person, the kind of person who conceals his transgressions or the kind of person who hardens his heart. No exceptions, no special cases. If you think that you are going to be an exception to this, if you think that you can cover your sin, continue in your sin, harden your heart toward the Word of God and somehow you will prosper, you will... others don’t, but you will. Others may fall into calamity. Others may be ruined by sin, but you won’t. If you think that you are the exception to these two verses, you are a fool. You are blind. You are deceived, because the Word of God says, “Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper... whoever hardens his heart will fall into calamity.”¹⁵ This is true of anyone. This is true of everyone.

Second what God says here applies specifically to the one who covers his transgressions. The idea is one of, as the ESV has it, to conceal or to hide, to cover over. What exactly does that mean? If you cover your sins today, if you conceal them, what exactly would that look like?

Well, we do well to recognize that there is more than one way that people cover their sins. The first way that occurs to us usually is the most obvious way that is people cover their transgressions through deceit. I mean, we just... we lie about it. We hide it. We don’t live our lives in a way that is open and true and honest and has integrity. It is amazing what happens to people who are set on pursuing what they know is sinful and wrong. Right? Someone sets a course. They know it is wrong. They know that others know that it is wrong. So what do they do? It is amazing how private their live suddenly becomes. It is amazing how personal everything becomes.

Well, this is just a personal matter. This is just a private matter. They become very guarded. It is amazing how many lies can be told, how many justifications can be offered

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Proverbs 28:13.

¹⁴ Proverbs 28:14.

¹⁵ Proverbs 28:13, 14.

for the lies. Perhaps even you have done this with your children. Well, we are just... we are going to say this. And if someone asks you, this is the answer you give them.

Oh, the joy of living a life that doesn't require lies, right? The joy of living a life that doesn't require justifications.

So transgressions are concealed through deceit, but that is not the only way that people cover their sins. Again, if you see verse 14 as amplifying verse 13 and I do, then realize what you have. The person who conceals his sin, in fact, you don't even have to look to verse 14 at first. Just look at the second half of verse 13. What is the opposite of concealing your sin? What is the opposite of that? Confessing your sin, forsaking your sin. So to cover your sin is not to confess it. To cover your sin is not to forsake it. But if you look at verse 14 you also recognize this. The one who confesses his sin is the one who fears the Lord always. And the one who covers his sin is the one who hardens his heart.

I mean, he is exposed to the fact that this is sin. He is aware of the fact that this is sin. He knows that this doesn't please the Lord. He just doesn't listen, you see? He hardens his heart.

So you can cover your sin not just through deceit. You can also cover your sin through denial. People not only lie to others about their sins, people lie to themselves. We play deceitful games in our own mind. We refer to our sins by different names. In fact, we may not even call it sin anymore. It is a mistake. It is a weakness, bad judgment. Is it sin? Is it really sin? Is sin a reality? And if sin is a reality what you are engaged in right now, how you are thinking, how you are feeling, what you are choosing, is it sin? Or they may call it sin. Someone may call it sin, but they diminish it. They diminish their sin and in that way they deny it.

Yeah, I know this is wrong. Yeah, I know this doesn't please the Lord, but there are a lot of things that don't please the Lord. I mean, is it really that wrong? Is it really that serious? Aren't there a multitude of sins in the world so that even if we call this thing sin, is it any worse than anything else?

When you begin to reason that way, when you begin to think that way... In fact, do you know what some people do? We have all done this, perhaps, at some point in our life. We even presume on the forgiveness of God.

Oh, I know this is wrong, but do you know what? I know on the other side of this there will be forgiveness and I want to pursue it.

What are you doing? You are covering your sin.

There is another way that people cover their sins through deflection. What do we mean by that? We mean that instead of confessing their sins they conceal their sins by

deflecting responsibility for their choices. It is not really your fault. It is someone else's fault. It may even be the fault of the person you are sinning against.

Well, if they weren't that way I wouldn't be acting this way. If they hadn't done that, I wouldn't have done this.

So you are really not guilty.

And, by the way, people will deflect responsibility for their sins even while they will claim they are taking responsibility for their sins.

Look, I know what I have done is wrong. I am not trying to excuse myself, justify myself. I will be the first one to say that what I have done is wrong, but you just have to understand the reason why I have done this is because... right? Because of this, that person, this situation.

What are you doing? Are you confessing your sin at that point? No. So what are you doing? You are concealing it. You are covering it.

Through deceit, through denial, through deflection. To sort of sum it all up we could say through a determined pursuit of your sin. You cover your sin when you will not forsake it. You cover your sin when you will not forsake it, when you will not turn it loose, when you will not separate yourself from it, when you will not remove yourself from it, when you determine to pursue this thing regardless of what the Word of God says.

And, by the way, folks, listen. I want to be very clear this morning. This can be something in the realm of your thoughts and attitudes. Anybody ever had this happen? You know, I know what I am feeling right now is not right. But I am just mad. And you are just going to have to understand, I am just mad. Oh, it is not right, but I am just made. You make me mad.

So what are we saying? I know this is sin. I know this isn't right, but I am determined that at this moment, at least, that I am going to continue in this. I know that we are commanded by God's Word to forgive, but you don't know what they have done to me. I know I am to forgive, but right now I don't feel like forgiving. I know I am not to hold on to bitterness, but right now I feel bitter.

So that we treat our emotions as if they are sovereign. We treat our emotions as if we had no responsibility for them. We treat our emotions as if we are not to obey God with respect to how we feel. We make choices in our minds and hearts that would affect how we feel.

So this is true for anyone. This is true for everyone, specifically the one who will not prosper, the one who is on a ruinous course is the one who will not confess and forsake their sins. They cover their sins.

A third thing I want you to notice about this what God says here applies to any situation, any individual sinful situation, but it seems to especially be speaking to a lifestyle, to a lifestyle. Why do I say that? Because, you notice, he uses these plural words.

“Whoever conceals his...”¹⁶ What is the next word? Are we awake this morning? If you are listening say amen. All right. What is the next word? Transgressions, right? Not a single transgression, but transgressions. He who covers his transgressions.

And the end of verse 13 says, “who confesses and forsakes them will obtain mercy.”¹⁷ Plural, them, his transgressions.

What is said here is true. If a man were to cover a single transgression. But it is true to say that the person who will cover a single transgression is usually the same person who covers transgressions as a pattern. And the person who confesses his transgressions usually is the person who as a pattern confesses all his sins. The person who would confess the single sin is the person who would confess any and all sin. In other words, there is a covering kind of person and there is a confessing kind of person. And the covering kind of person, if it is, indeed, their life, is someone who doesn't know the Lord. And the confessing kind of person is the person who does know the Lord.

In fact, there is a great New Testament parallel to this. Go to the book of 1 John real quickly if you would, 1 John chapter one and look at verse five.

This is the message we have heard from him and proclaim to you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all. If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin.¹⁸

Ok? And this language here looks at lives in terms of their totality, a pattern. Who is the person who has fellowship with God? Who is the person who has their sins forgiven? The blood of Jesus Christ cleanses them from all their sins. Who is this person? Not the person who walks in darkness as a pattern, but the person who walks in light. This is the saved person. And then he gives us some particular specific instances of this.

Verse eight.

“If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.”¹⁹

If any one says that he lives a sinless life, that person doesn't have fellowship with the Lord. Listen, the Holy Spirit who lives in us, he makes us aware of our sinfulness,

¹⁶ Proverbs 28:13.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ 1 John 1:5-7.

¹⁹ 1 John 1:8.

doesn't he, every day. So anyone who could say they are sinless is someone who doesn't have the truth in them. They don't understand the truth.

Notice the opposite of this, though, verse nine.

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”²⁰

Now here is how we have often read that verse. If I confess this sin, God will forgive it, right? What is the problem with that reading of the verse. What happens if you don't confess that sin? What happens if you die with some unconfessed sin in your life? That would mean it is not forgiven and if it is not forgiven where do you spend eternity? This is not teaching if I confess, then I will be forgiven one cent at a time. This is teaching if I confess my sins—again, he is talking about patterns in this section—if I am a confessing person I am a forgiven person. And if I am someone as a pattern who doesn't deal with his sin, who doesn't say about his sin what God says about him, who doesn't get out of sin when I meet with it, if I am not a confessing person, then I am someone who doesn't have fellowship with God at all.

You say you know this God who is light and you walk in darkness, you lie. What kind of person walks with God? A person who walks in the light. Does that mean he is sinless? No. It means that he confesses his sin when he meets with it.

Verse 10.

“If we say we have not sinned,”²¹ that is, someone says I have never sinned, “we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.”²²

Look back, please in Proverbs 28. So while what we read here is true of any individual transgression, when you see these words in the plural it seems he is talking about lifestyle.

[?]

I want you to notice a fourth thing about this. What God says here is certain, because, ok? Why is this certain? Why is the verse able to say, “Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper”?²³ “Whoever hardens his heart will fall into calamity.”²⁴

Is that a certainty? Does this just happen sometimes or is this always true? It is always true. It is always true. Why is it a certainty? Because the living God stands behind it.

²⁰ 1 John 1:9.

²¹ 1 John 1:10.

²² Ibid.

²³ Proverbs 28:13.

²⁴ Proverbs 28:14.

Do people prosper apart from God? Who prospers people? God does. And God in his holy nature will not prosper people in a way that is contrary to his nature, in a way that would affirm sin, in a way that would deny justice and truth. He refuses. He will not do it.

So if you are a person who doesn't confess sin, who doesn't deal with sin, who walks in darkness, you will not prosper. You will fall into calamity. It is a certainty.

Now, right away we recognize something, don't we? We have got to define prosperity, because there are sinners all over this planet who are materially prosperous despite their sinful lifestyles who prosper in their given field of work despite their sinful lifestyles, who may be even surrounded by many people who love them. So you can look at them relationally and say, you know, in terms of relationships they seem to be doing ok to me.

No, we are talking about, these verses are talking about spiritual prosperity. Verse 14 says, "Blessed is the one..."²⁵

What does that word mean, "blessed"? Spiritually prosperous, spiritually joyful. The happiness that God gives, this belongs to the one who fears the Lord always. So you may prosper in some realm as you live in sin, but you won't prosper with God. It is possible for God to allow you to have a physical bounty while your soul is lean. There are people in this world who have all that they could ever hope for materially who are spiritually a vacuum. In their heart they are empty.

The writer of Ecclesiastes had everything a man could ever imagine or want from a material point of view and yet what is the resounding theme of that book? Vanity, vanity, all is what? Vanity. It is all empty. It is empty. This thing you are chasing after in your sin. Oh, if I could just have it.

Well, let me ask you. What are you going to have when you get it? What are you going to have when you get it if you have it without the Lord? You will be empty. You will not prosper. You will fall into ruin. You will be injured.

The question is do you believe God. It is certain because God stands behind it. Listen. God makes you a promise this morning. He makes you a compassionate, warning promise. He promises you you will not prosper if you don't confess your sins. He promises you you will fall into calamity. God stands behind these words, which leads to our second major heading this morning and it is this.

We see not only a certain and compassionate warning. We also see a certain and compassionate hope, because just like sin is a reality, we find in these verses the reality of mercy. Forgiveness is real. Transgressions can really be forgiven. Sins can really be forgiven, forgiven, washed away, answered for in a way that makes God both just and

²⁵ Ibid.

justifier. And that is where blessing is. That is where prosperity is. It is in forgiveness. It is in the mercy of God.

David wrote in Psalm 32:1, “Blessed is the one whose transgression is forgiven [listen], whose sin is covered.”²⁶

Interesting language when you put it side by side with Proverbs 28:13 and 14 because, you see, there is a covering of sin that does not lead to prosperity. There is another kind of covering of sin that means blessing. When you cover your sin there is no blessing. But when you confess your sin and God covers your sin with forgiveness there is blessing. There is prosperity. There is a covering for sin that is consistent with justice. It is not an excusing of sin. It is a payment for sin. It sets people free. The only payment that is sufficient to pay for all your sins is the payment that is found in the death of Jesus the Son of God on a cross 2000 years ago where the Son of God, the perfect, sinless, Son of God gave himself as the sinless sacrifice for sinners on a tree. He became a curse for us that we would be delivered from the curse of the law. And if you look to the Son of God for life for a right standing with God, if you come to Christ on his terms looking to him as your Lord and Savior, sins are atoned for, forgiven, not just as if you had never sinned in terms of your temporal experience, though forgiveness makes a difference in our temporal experience, but truly just as if you had never sinned from the standpoint of righteousness before God because the righteousness that you were given as a gift on the basis of faith is not a righteousness of your own, but the perfect righteousness of Jesus himself. All your sins forgiven in Christ’s righteousness put to your account. This is how God views the one who doesn’t cover his sins, but confesses his sins and seeks for the mercy of God.

So that just as we see a ruinous response to sin, we also in these two verses see a redemptive response to sin, a way that leads to rescue.

Notice several things about this redemptive response to sin. First of all it applies to anyone who meets the conditions.

“Whoever conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he...”²⁷ It is the same guy. The statement is just as broad, ok. He, that is, whoever “...confesses and forsakes them...”²⁸ Whoever will confess his sins, whoever will forsake his sins “...will obtain mercy.”²⁹ It applies to anyone and everyone. It doesn’t matter where you have been. It doesn’t matter what your sins are. It doesn’t matter how deep into sin you have plunged.

It doesn’t matter how far you have fallen. It doesn’t even matter, listen. It doesn’t even matter whether society will ever acknowledge your forgiveness or not, whether the world will ever believe that God could change someone like you. It doesn’t matter. Whoever will come to God on these terms, whoever...

²⁶ Psalm 32:1.

²⁷ Proverbs 28:13.

²⁸ Ibid.

²⁹ Ibid.

But notice, specifically, it applies to the one who confesses and forsakes. Whoever, not whoever asks for mercy, because there is a way to ask for mercy here, isn't there? What do you do with your sins? You acknowledge them. You confess them. You forsake them.

What does it mean to confess sin? It means, first of all, you have to see your sin the way God sees it. You see, before you get to the confession of something, you have to get to your view of it. So to confess your sin means you see it for what it really is. And every true confessor in this place, you know that experience. You know what it is for God to show you your sin. It humbles us. It crushes us. It grieves us when we really see our sin rightly. It means you see your sin the way God sees it. It means, then, that after you see it the way God sees it, you say about it what God says about it.

This is what I have done. This is what this is. It means you no longer cover it. That means no more deceit about it. You are through lying about it both to others and to yourself. No more denial. No more denying the seriousness of it. No more denying the substance of it, calling it by some other name, excusing it in a thousand different ways. No more deflection. You will know you are ready to confess a sin when you stop blaming others and you take 100 percent responsibility for what you have done, for what you thought or how you felt or what you have said, no more deflection, no more blame shifting. No more, oh, I know what I did was wrong, but... or this was wrong, but I did it because... And don't underestimate that word "forsakes" that means no more determined pursuit of it. You stop running after what you have been running after. You stop.

To confess means that we forsake our sins. The word means to leave or to loose. We are willing to walk away from our sin. We are willing to let loose of it.

Can I ask you this morning? What are you still staying? What sin is it in your life where you are still staying in the vicinity of what you should abandon? We are talking about mental deceit, you know, mind games with yourself. You say you are confessing a sin, but you still just stay close enough to it that whenever you want to retake it, you can.

Folks, did Jesus teach that we are to deal with sin radically? If your eye offends you, what do you do with it? Pluck it out. If your hand offends you, what do you do with it? Cut it off. I mean, if you mean to abandon a sin, you take whatever action is necessary to be rid of it, to forsake it. What are you still holding on to that you know is forbidden by God? You haven't let loose of it.

So this applies to anyone who meets the conditions, anyone, no matter what your sins are. But it applies to the one who confesses and forsakes it. Isn't it interesting? You know, people want to... when they want to excuse their sin, many times they will talk about don't judge lest you be judged, don't be the one to cast the first stone. When Jesus met the woman caught in adultery, he didn't condemn her. And they sort of go down that road.

But isn't it interesting that when Jesus had these conversations with people like the woman at the well, what does he many, many times end the conversation by saying? What does he say? Go and sin no more. Forsake this.

A third observation about this redemptive response to sin. It applies to any situation, but it especially seems to apply to a lifestyle.

“Who confesses and forsakes them...”³⁰ his transgressions, plural. This is how this person lives. And that is why verse 14 to me seems to amplify it.

“Blessed is the one who fears the LORD...”³¹ What is the next word? Always. This is his lifestyle. He is a God or she is a God fearer. And so when you walk before the Lord fearing him always, then what do you do when you come face to face with your sins? You confess them. You forsake them. It is true of any individual situation. You need to confess it and forsake it, but really what he is painting a picture of here is two kinds of people. A person who belongs to God who is one of God's and the person who is going to perish unless they turn. One is a confessing person, the other is a concealing person.

Finally what God says here is certain because God stands behind it. The person who confesses and forsakes his sins, his transgressions will obtain mercy.

Here is a great test of whether we see ourselves rightly or not. Do you need mercy? Who here this morning needs mercy?

What is mercy? It is God having pity on you. It is not something you deserve. Mercy is not deserved. It is not something you can earn. You don't earn mercy. It is not something you can presume upon. But someone says, “Well, I know I will be forgiven for that later,” right away oh, there is something diseased in their thinking because what they are saying is, “I can presume on the mercy of God.”

Doesn't God tell us that one of the things that makes him God is he has mercy on whomever he wills and whomever he wills he what? What does he do? He hardens. And what is the opposite of a confessing person?

Verse 14.

“Whoever hardens his heart...”³²

Are you sure God will grant you a heart of repentance? Can you say with certainty that you can pursue this course of sin and then when you are ready you will have a broken heart over it? What if God doesn't grant you that mercy? Does he owe it to you? Do you deserve it? Can you earn it? Can you presume on it, upon it? What if what you envision

³⁰ Proverbs 28:13.

³¹ Proverbs 28:14.

³² Ibid.

is not what you expect and you run after your sin and once you have what you want, your heart is hard?

Mercy is not something without a cost, because God gives mercy to sinners and station in a person that is Jesus. Jesus had to pay for God's mercy to be extended to us. He died to set us free from our sins.

To forsake sin is to run to Jesus. To confess sin is to receive the goodness and the mercy and the kindness and the grace of the Savior. It is to love Jesus more than you love sin.

Finally, third thought this morning and we are done, a conclusion and an application.

To be a confessing person is to be a God fearing person, verse 14. To be a sin covering person is to be a hard hearted person, verse 14. So right now whatever sin it is you are struggling with, whatever transgression that God has brought to your mind this morning, whatever there is in your life that perhaps you have not confessed, I want to ask you this day this morning this moment. Will you fear the Lord or will you harden your heart? Will you believe God's testimony in these Scriptures or will you turn a deaf ear? Do you believe you will be the exception or do you believe God when he tells you are the rule so that you would believe God when he tells you that if you don't confess, if you don't turn, what you are going to fall into is calamity, a calamity that is—listen—that is both immediate and everlasting. Right now if you think you are prospering in your sin, you are living in a dream. If you could just see yourself accurately right now you are already being affected by the sins you are holding on to. It is like radiation exposure. People get exposed to radiation and perhaps in some cases there is no immediate effects that you can see. But it has already had an effect. And years later the effects show up. Sin is like spiritual anesthesia. It puts you to sleep to what is really going on in your life. It makes you insensitive to what injuries you are already inflicting upon yourself.

So are you a concealing person or a confessing person? Are you a fearing and forsaking person or are you a hard hearted person? The most important question of all: Will you seek the mercy of God this morning? Will you confess and forsake your transgressions by turning to Jesus?

If you already know Jesus would you turn to him afresh and anew in that situation? And if you don't know Jesus there is God's mercy. He is offered to anyone who will confess and forsake their transgressions and run to him.

Let's pray together.

Our Father in heaven, we thank you that your Word is true and that in your Word you have spoken. And I pray that we would hear you even now in this moment, in this hour and wherever, Lord, we are aware of sins in our life, however they may argue those sins to remain in our life saying to us that they are just small things, I pray that we would listen to you this morning and believe you and wherever there is sin we would confess it and forsake it and be among those who know your mercy in your Son. I pray for anyone

this morning, Lord, who is not yet your child. May they recognize even in the way they respond to sin their true lost condition and today come to your Son for life, for forgiveness, for the mercy that you offer in him. And we ask you for this today in Jesus' name. Amen.