



MY HIDING PLACE



PREVIEW

For some, it's almost an automatic response to cover up mistakes, bad habits, and shortcomings, because those things show weakness in us. None of us want to admit weaknesses or have anyone identify areas in which we have fallen short. However, when we have weaknesses or shortcomings, it's always best to take them to God and hide ourselves in Him.

PRAISE

Encourage everyone in your group to share a time when they felt safe because God was there for them.

PARABLE

Have you ever played hide-and-seek? Do you remember what it was like when you knew you had found the perfect hiding place? The seeker might have come close to finding you, but never succeeded because your hiding place was such a good one. In fact, the hiding place might have been so good that you eventually had to reveal yourself. Little do we realize that God can be like that hiding place for us. Instead of hiding our wrongs, we can simply take them to Him and hide ourselves in Him.

PRESENT

Many scholars believe King David wrote Psalm 32 after he fell into sin with Bathsheba. David's sin with Bathsheba created a huge mess. David was alarmed when he realized the repercussions of his actions, and quickly tried to come up with ways to cover his sin.

Have you ever been there? You did something wrong, and you knew if anyone found out you'd be in huge trouble. So instead of admitting you were wrong, you tried to cover the sin with a bunch of little lies. But eventually the truth came to surface. That's what happened with David.

The truth of David's sin could no longer stay hidden, as his sin was uncovered. In Psalm 32, David revealed the inner turmoil he was feeling as he tried to cover his sin. It is much like what we experience on the inside when we try to hide the wrong in our life. The New Living Translation tells us he said, "When I refused to confess my sin, my body wasted away, and I groaned all day long. Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat."

When David tried to hide his sin, it disturbed him; he was defenseless against his own thoughts. He could not escape the memory and guilt of what he had done. His memory and guilt were eating him alive. He felt weak, drained, and oppressed.

We know what it's like when we've done wrong and thoughts go racing through our heads. As much as we would like to escape the memory of our wrongdoing, we can't. It becomes like a predator

stalking its prey, and everywhere we turn we can't seem to escape it. We become nervous around certain people and certain conversations. Certain words will trigger a memory of the wrong. We might even have sleepless nights because we know what we've done. There may be times we don't even feel good enough to go to church and reach out for God, because even at church the predator is stalking the prey.

There is a hiding place for anyone to run to when they've sinned. That hiding place is in Jesus. When they confess their wrong to Jesus in prayer, they give themselves over to His mercy. Another time when David sinned he said, "Let me fall into the hands of the LORD, for His mercy is very great." Will running into the hiding place mean there won't be consequences for our actions? No. But it does mean that the person and the wrong have been placed into the care of a loving, caring, and merciful God. God would rather cover a person's sin than have them try to cover it themselves. When people stop trying to cover up their sin and will acknowledge it to God, the weight of guilt is lifted from them. Now they're no longer trying to carry the weight alone; they're no longer trying to battle the consequences of sin on their own. They now have a God who steps in and becomes their place of safety and security.

PRACTICE

The next time you catch yourself doing wrong, tell God about it immediately, then make a decision to turn from it. Tell yourself you are forgiven according to I John 1:9, which says God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

PRAY

Lord, help me not to be comfortable with sin in my life. Help me to hide myself in You, instead of trying to hide my sin.

PLUS

This week make God your hiding place and encourage those in your club to do the same.