

“I Cannot be Forgiven”

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- Why is forgiveness such a difficult matter for people to understand, practice, and receive?
- Christians know that our salvation depends on our forgiving others.
 - Matt. 6:14-15 - “For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. 15 But if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.”

“I Cannot be Forgiven”

- It is difficult to forgive when we are hurting or suffering loss from a sin someone has committed against us
 - Luke 6:28 - “Bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you.”

“I Cannot be Forgiven”

- It is difficult to forgive when people intentionally do malicious things
- It is very difficult to forgive others when they harm people we love.
- Often the more we love and trust someone, the more challenging it is to forgive them when they hurt us

“I Cannot be Forgiven”

- Who is the hardest person to forgive?
- When all is said, the most difficult person to forgive is one's self. Prolonged, unresolved guilt is the failure to forgive one's self.

Guilt Is Something Everyone Must Address

- John 4:7-19, 39-42 and the Samaritan woman Jesus met at the well of Jacob in Sychar
- She knew what she had done.
 - John 4:39 - “And many of the Samaritans of that city believed in Him because of the word of the woman who testified, He told me all that I ever did.”

Guilt Is Something Everyone Must Address

- Shame is the result of unresolved guilt that has been internalized.
- It is no longer associated with the transgression, but with the identity of the transgressor; it goes from “I have committed evil” to “I am evil”
- Shame is how we feel about ourselves when we have transgressed.

Guilt Is Something Everyone Must Address

- Carrying unresolved guilt over un-repentred sin in our lives has consequences.
- Guilt destroys our confidence
 - Prov. 28:1 - “The wicked flee when no one pursues, But the righteous are bold as a lion.”
- Guilt adversely affects relationships; fear of being found out and confronted smothers openness.
- We all have to deal with guilt or it will overwhelm us.

Guilt Is Something Everyone Must Address

- God's grace is greater than all of our sin and guilt - Psalm 103:1-18

Why Do We Find It Hard To Forgive Ourselves?

- We struggle to accept personal failures.
- Perhaps because we think we are stronger and more moral than others
 - 1Cor. 10:12 - “Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.”

Why Do We Find It Hard To Forgive Ourselves?

- Perhaps because we know what was in our hearts at the time.
- Perhaps we don't view ourselves as too evil to be forgiven.
- Perhaps because we believe that we must pay for it in this world.

Why Do We Find It Hard To Forgive Ourselves?

- Christians must learn to stop resisting the grace of God. To resist His grace is a form of resisting His sovereignty.
 - John 6:38-40 - “For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me. 39 This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. 40 And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day.”

Why Do We Find It Hard To Forgive Ourselves?

- Matt. 18:14 - “Even so it is not the will of your Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.”
- 2Peter 3:9 - “The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.”
- Rom. 8:1 - “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.”

Why Do We Find It Hard To Forgive Ourselves?

- “Un-forgiveness that is self-directed will do more damage than any other form of un-forgiveness.”
(Paul Myers, “Forgiveness”)
- Insecurity over past failures interferes with present successes and future accomplishments.
- Guilt is a barrier to spiritual maturity if not scripturally addressed.

Guilt Can Be A Good Thing

- Guilt in a healthy measure can protect us. It alerts us when we're straying from the path we know to be right.
- Secret sin can't be hidden in a peaceful heart
 - Psalm 38:1-11

Guilt Can Be A Good Thing

- Guilt moves us to restore our relationship with God
 - 1John 1:8-9 - “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Guilt Can Be A Good Thing

- Guilt left unresolved is very unhealthy. The longer we live with guilt the more harm it does to our heart, mind and soul, and the less we feel it. It is like leprosy; eventually we don't feel it at all
 - 1Tim. 4:2 - "...having their own conscience seared with a hot iron..."
 - Eph. 4:19 - "...who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to..."

How Do I Resolve My Guilt?

- Learn to distinguish between godly sorrow and unresolved guilt
 - 2Cor. 7:10 - “For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.”

How Do I Resolve My Guilt?

- Understand the source of our ongoing feelings of guilt
 - Zech. 3:1-4 - “Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the LORD, and Satan standing at his right hand to oppose him. 2 And the LORD said to Satan, The LORD rebuke you, Satan! The LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire? 3 Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and was standing before the Angel. 4 Then He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And to him He said, See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes.”
 - That accusing voice in our head comes from Satan (Adversary) or the Devil (Accuser)

How Do I Resolve My Guilt?

- Jesus role is not to accuse us, but to be our Advocate
 - 1John 2:1-2 - “My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. 2 And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.”

How Do I Resolve My Guilt?

- Come to view guilt as any other form of pain.
 - Don't ignore it, or pretend it will go away on its own, or treat its symptoms
 - Find the cause and address it. Seek out the cure and apply it.

How Do I Resolve My Guilt?

- When you have met the conditions of forgiveness and God has forgiven you, forgive yourself
 - 1John 3:19-21 - “And by this we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before Him. 20 For if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knows all things. 21 Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence toward God.”

How Do I Resolve My Guilt?

- Eph. 2:4-10 - “But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, 5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.”