

Finding Freedom from Guilt

2 Corinthians 7:10 HCSB For godly grief produces a repentance not to be regretted and leading to salvation, but worldly grief produces death.

All emotions were designed as motivators – to push us to action. As such they are morally neutral. There is nothing intrinsically wrong with any emotion as long as its source and its application are correct.

For instance:

- Hatred of a person based on their race is sinful.
 - Hatred of sin and of the perpetrators of injustice is right.
- Sexual desire for someone who is not your spouse is sinful.
 - Sexual desire for your spouse is beautiful and holy.
- Lying to stay out of a socially embarrassing situation is sinful.
 - Lying to save a life is morally just.

Guilt can be a very powerful tool. It can:

- Goad you to righteousness
 - Stop you in your tracks and keep you from moving forward
- Lead you to moral freedom
 - Lead you to emotional bondage

God always uses guilt for your good. He uses it to convict, correct, and conform you to the healthy image of His Son. Lucifer, on the other hand, uses guilt to condemn you and to paralyze your attempts at holiness.

What is the difference between godly (healthy) and worldly (unhealthy) guilt?

Healthy

1. God induced (John 16:13)
2. Based on fact.
3. Results in godly sorrow.
4. Brings conviction.
5. Results in repentance.
6. Accepts God's forgiveness.
7. Appropriates Jesus' work.
8. Brings reconciliation from God and others.

Unhealthy

1. Satan induced (Zechariah 3:1-2)
2. Based on feelings.
3. Results in fear of consequences.
4. Brings condemnation.
5. Results in depression.
6. Wallows in self-pity.
7. Depends on personal works.
8. Brings alienation from God and others.

- **John 16:13 HCSB** When the Spirit of truth comes, He will guide you into all the truth. For He will not speak on His own, but He will speak whatever He hears. He will also declare to you what is to come.
- **Zechariah 3:1-2 HCSB** Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the LORD, with Satan standing at his right side to accuse him. (2) The LORD said to Satan: "The LORD rebuke you, Satan! May the LORD who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Isn't this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?"

In Hebrew the word for guilt is *asham* (Strong's #816). *Asham* leads us to acknowledge:

1. the facts of our fault
2. that what we did went against God's revealed will
3. that we deserve punishment
4. that we need a sacrificial offering
5. that until confession, repentance, and restitution take place we cannot be restored.

Derashot:

1. **Identify the true source of your guilt.** (Psalm 51:6)

- **Psalms 51:6 HCSB** Surely You desire integrity in the inner self, and You teach me wisdom deep within.
 - Is your guilt true or false?
 - Are you using the Scriptures as your standard or your feelings?
 - Ask the Holy Spirit for clarifying help.
2. **Ensure that you know and speak the whole truth.** (Psalm 32:1-2)
 - **Psalms 32:1-2 HCSB** Davidic. A Maskil. How happy is the one whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered! (2) How happy is the man the LORD does not charge with sin, and in whose spirit is no deceit!
 - Guilt cannot be treated with half-truths.
 - We have an amazing ability to deceive even ourselves (Jeremiah 17:9), so seek the counsel of the godly.
 - **Jeremiah 17:9 HCSB** The heart is more deceitful than anything else and desperately sick--who can understand it?
 - "The hardest thing you'll ever do in life is get honest." – Blair Bridle
 3. **Take responsibility.** (1 John 1:9)
 - **1 John 1:9 HCSB** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
 - Confess what you've done to those who deserve or need it.
 - Make restitution where and when you can.
 - Take active steps to ensure it never happens again.
 4. **Believe God means what He says.** (Ephesians 1:7)
 - **Ephesians 1:7 HCSB** In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace
 - Thank Him for dying for your sins.
 - Thank Him for convicting you of your sins.
 - Thank Him for forgiving you of your sins.
 - Go forth rejoicing.
 5. **Quit dwelling in the past.** (Isaiah 43:18)
 - **Isaiah 43:18 HCSB** "Do not remember the past events, pay no attention to things of old.
 - Quit the false, faithless self-condemnation.
 - Quit refusing to forgive.
 6. **Renew your mind.** (Ephesians 4:22-23)
 - **Ephesians 4:22-23 HCSB** you took off your former way of life, the old man that is corrupted by deceitful desires; (23) you are being renewed in the spirit of your minds;
 - Memorize Scriptures that emphasize God's forgiveness.
 - Memorize 2 Corinthians 5:17 that tells us we are "new creations".
 - Determine what gifts you've been given and develop a plan to use them for Hashem's glory.
 7. **Rebuke Satan's false accusations.** (Isaiah 54:17)
 - **Isaiah 54:17 HCSB** No weapon formed against you will succeed, and you will refute any accusation raised against you in court. This is the heritage of the LORD's servants, and their righteousness is from Me." *This is* the LORD's declaration.
 - Learn to tell the difference between the Holy Spirit's and Satan's voice.

- Never argue with the devil. You will lose. Always answer the accusations with Scriptures.
- Verbally pray, claiming the forgiveness God already gave you and asking for help against the devil.

8. Daily, actively and practically conform your life to the Messiah's. (Galatians 2:20)

- [Galatians 2:20 HCSB](#) and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the flesh, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.
 - You cannot do this on your own strength. You're going to need to daily – even hourly – ask for the Holy Spirit's help.
 - Call on the Holy Spirit, who knows Jesus far more intimately than you, to conform you to the Son's image.
 - Spend much time in the Gospels, poring over the Messiah's life and words.