

Guilt Leads to Frustration

Do you feel frustrated and troubled? If you do, then you are neither the first nor the only one. Frustration is so common. The pressures experienced in just facing everyday living are for some more than they can bear. But one common cause for being deeply troubled is the feeling of unresolved guilt. Some have allowed themselves to be tight in knots through a deep seated guilt complex.

Guilt is a crippling disease. It affects body and mind. When we speak about a guilt complex, we generally think of unhealthy guilt. You are reminded of a morbid sense of guilt that comes through an overworked sense of imagination. But this type is uncommon.

More common is the guilt of un-confessed sin, the real and heavy load by which the consciences of men and women are burdened and weighted. They just cannot come to confession of sin. They find that to make restitution of past wrongs, to confess their sin and to ask for forgiveness is most difficult. Their pride stands between them and their relief from oppression... And, of course, Satan, the arch-deceiver, does everything he can to keep them blinded to the relief that can be obtained. He likes to see people on a guilt trip. He glees with devilish delight in the misery of the frustrated. He does not like to see the children of his enemy happy and free.

I have also met Christians who had a guilt complex that affected them to the core of their being. They read Scripture and are reminded of the high standards the Lord expects of His followers. They mirror themselves in the life of the Lord. The instructions of the apostles are so clearly before them. And they feel guilty. Their shortcomings and failures in their Christian lives bother them to no end. The wrong things done weigh with heavy pressures on such remorseful souls.

You also meet Christian believers who feel they have sinned so deeply that there is no forgiveness available. I have met such people. I recall an elderly lady who professed faith in the Lord, but at her advanced age was still plagued by the sins of her youth. She could not believe that forgiveness was really for her. She didn't dare to face her God as she felt that what she had done was beyond redemption.

What is the remedy for this burden of guilt? The greatest therapy such people can have is the all encompassing forgiveness available to them through Jesus Christ the Lord, who died for the sins of all who believe in Him.

Once Jesus said to a paralytic: "Son, thy sins be forgiven thee." Then He said "But that ye may know that the Son of Man has power to forgive sins, I say unto Thee, arise, take up thy bed and walk." These were liberating words for the paralytic. Through the Lord, he became healed in body and soul.

You can stop your guilt trip by turning to Jesus Christ in repentance. He will forgive all who earnestly seek to be cleansed from their sin and guilt.

But what happens when you continue to feel un-forgiven even after you have acknowledged and confessed your guilt? If you still feel un-forgiven after you have confessed your guilt, it's an indication that you think in rather small terms of God.

Then you are saying that your sinful weaknesses, failures and your guilt are greater and more powerful than God's forgiving power. When you have received forgiveness, you should go on your way rejoicing.

John Bunyan, in his *Pilgrim's Progress*, gives us this beautiful description of Christian's experience of forgiveness. "Just as Christian came up with the cross, his burden loosed from off his shoulders, and fell from of his back, and began to tumble, and so continued till it came to the mouth of the sepulcher, where it fell in, and I saw it no more.

"Then was Christian glad and lightsome, and said with a merry heart, 'He bath given me rest by his sorrow, and life by his death'. Then he stood still awhile to look in wonder; for it was very surprising to him, that the sight of the cross should thus ease him of his burden. Then Christian gave three leaps for joy, and went on singing".

When we have experienced God's forgiveness, then we can go through life with a song in our hearts.

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