

Guilt and Shame



Getting Started

Do you think guilt is good or bad? Of course, guilt never *feels* good. But feelings of guilt can motivate us to do good things. It can motivate us to say we are sorry, and try to do better in the future. But feelings of guilt and shame can also be damaging. If our guilt is overwhelming, we might feel like there is nothing we can do to make up for what we've done wrong. Jesus never wants us to feel crushed by guilt and shame. No matter what we've done, he offers us forgiveness and a second chance.

Improving Your Vocabulary

guilt (n) - awareness of having done wrong, with feelings of shame and regret

shame (n) - a feeling of embarrassment and being unworthy

motivate (v) - to cause or encourage someone to do something

overwhelming (adj) - more than we can stand

adultery (n) - having sex with someone who is not your husband or wife

stone (v) - to kill someone by throwing stones at him

accuse (v) - to say someone has done something wrong

condemn (v) - to say someone is guilty

Reading God's Word

John 8:2-11

2 Early the next morning he went back to the Temple. All the people gathered around him, and he sat down and began to teach them. **3** The teachers of the Law and the Pharisees brought in a woman who had been caught committing adultery, and they made her stand before them all. **4** "Teacher," they said to Jesus, "this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. **5** In our Law Moses commanded that such a woman must be stoned to death. Now, what do you say?" **6** They said this to trap Jesus, so that they could accuse him. But he bent over and wrote on the ground with his finger. **7** As they stood there asking him questions, he straightened up and said to them, "Whichever one of you has committed no sin may throw the first stone at her." **8** Then he bent over again and wrote on the ground. **9** When they heard this, they all left, one by one, the older ones first. Jesus was left alone, with the woman still standing there. **10** He straightened up and said to her, "Where are they? Is there no one left to condemn you?" **11** "No one, sir," she answered. "Well, then," Jesus said, "I do not condemn you either. Go, but do not sin again."

For further study, see Leviticus 20:10; Deuteronomy 22:22;
John 1:17; John 3:17-18; 12:47; I John 1:9.

Taking a Closer Look

1. Why did the teachers of the Law and the Pharisees bring the woman before Jesus? What crime had she committed? (John 8:4)

2. According to the Law of Moses, what was the punishment for the woman? (John 8:5)

3. What was the real motive for bringing this woman before Jesus? (John 8:6)

4. What question did the teachers of the Law ask Jesus? (John 8:5b)

5. What was Jesus' response? (John 8:6b-8)

6. Why do you think everyone left? Why did the older ones leave first?

7. Do you think the woman was ashamed of what she had done?

8. What did Jesus say to her? (John 8:10-11)

9. In your opinion, why didn't Jesus condemn her?

Taking Action

1. Do you feel guilty about something you've done wrong? If you are truly sorry for your sins, tell God and ask for his forgiveness. His answer will be the same answer he gave the woman, "I do not condemn you. Go, but do not sin again."
2. Do you struggle with feelings of guilt and shame even though you have asked God's forgiveness? Read the following verses and trust God's Word (Psalm 32:5; Psalm 103:8-12; Romans 8:1,4; I John 1:9).

Memory Verse: Isaiah 6:7b

Your guilt is gone, and your sins are forgiven.

Review the Vocabulary

Fill in the blanks using the new vocabulary words then discuss your answers with a classmate.

1. What _____ you to do something good?
2. What do you usually do when you feel _____?
3. What are some things that can be _____?
4. Has anyone ever _____ you of doing something wrong? How did it make you feel?
5. Who has the power to _____ us?



This English Bible teaching material is prepared and owned by ORTV, Inc.
It may be reproduced for classroom or personal use but may not be published or sold.