

18. Shame and Guilt

Every person striving to get pure and to stay pure must deal with the shame and guilt of their wrong doings.

The dictionary defines shame as “the painful feeling arising from the consciousness of something dishonorable, improper, ridiculous, etc.” In the booklet ‘the Issue of Shame...’ (Ennis, Ennis and Rinehart), “Shame is an emotional state in which a person feels fundamentally flawed—flawed at the core... Shame says, “I am bad, I am worthless. I deserve to be punished. I do not deserve to be loved. The problem is not what I’ve done. The problem is *who I am*.”

Guilt is “the fact of having committed an offense, crime, violation or wrong...” Guilt is breaking the law; guilt says, “I’ve done something wrong.”

Look at the following verses regarding shame and guilt.

Gen 2:25; 3:6,7,21 The man and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame... When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. At that moment their eyes were opened, and they suddenly felt shame at their nakedness. So they sewed fig leaves together to cover themselves...The Lord God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.

1 Pet 2:9,10 But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light. Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

Rom 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.

Psa 32:3-5 When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the Lord” and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

Eph 5:8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light.

1 John 3:1,1 How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are! ...Dear friends, now we are children of God...

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

MEMORIZE: Psa 32:3-5

Questions:

1. Describe a time when you felt shame, and when you felt guilt. How are they connected?
2. What is the solution for shame?
3. How are we to deal with guilt?
4. How can I apply the truth of these verses to my life today?

FURTHER STUDY: Look up shame in a concordance. Note the connection between shame and nakedness.

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Discussion: Many Christian sociologists feel that our culture has shifted from a guilt-based culture to a shame-based culture? What do you think this means? If this is true, what has culturally changed?