

## Doctrine of Guilt and Forgiveness

1. Satan is one of three obstacles to Christian growth, the world and the flesh being the other two.
  - *Ephesians 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: 3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*
2. Without a doctrine of demonology, there can be no doctrine of theology.
3. The primary role of Satan is not temptation, but accusation. Temptation comes primarily from a person's own heart, and sin nature. Accusation is when Satan assaults the conscience.
  - *Temptation. James 1:14 But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed.*
  - *Accusation. 1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:*
4. By accusing the believer, the Enemy is able to ensure the heart will be distracted, consumed with shame and guilt, and thus become ineffective in the work of the Lord.
5. Sin brings a natural brokenness of fellowship with the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, because God is holy, and hates evil. Satan quickly moves to exploit that broken fellowship to produce a feeling of enslavement, powerlessness, and self-loathing, that self cannot be better.
6. Psychology has discovered a raw nerve in contemporary humanity that has to do with guilt. The result has been a plethora of self-help books, to guide individuals into having a better self-image.
7. One reason that people are concerned about their self-image, is because there is so much self-love.
  - *2 Timothy 3:2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,*
8. Another reason why individuals are so concerned about self-help, is because we are a guilt ridden people. Sometimes the guilt is legitimate. Sometimes the guilt is not valid.
  - Some people feel guilty because of the prosperity that can be enjoyed in American culture. Liberal politicians exacerbate this guilt by speaking of winning the lottery of life by being born in a developing country.

- Some people feel guilty because of poor parenting skills. Parents can instill a sense of guilt in a child by making them think they “ought” to have done something else. Some parents teach a child that everything they say and do is wrong. Comedy programs have exploited this truth, reflected in the hit series, “Everybody Loves Raymond.”
  - Some people feel guilty because they have violated their conscience. People know what is right, and what is wrong. People know not to lie, cheat, steal, murder, or commit acts of immorality, and when something is done contrary to moral standards, there is a dreadful longing that the action had not been performed.
9. Guilt is a paralyzing emotion. Christians who can be made to feel guilty will find their effectiveness for the Lord neutralized, because they feel so unworthy to pray, to teach, to witness, to correct anyone else, to preach, or even go to church.
10. It should be good news to millions, that at the heart of Biblical revelation, is the message of God’s forgiveness. Certainly it was good news to Joshua the high priest.
11. An example of the use of guilt to neutralize the work of God by Satan is found in the life of the high priest, Joshua. Satan accused Joshua of being unworthy of being a minister for not having on the proper garments designed for beauty and glory. But the Lord intervened, and clothed him.
- *Zechariah 3:1 And he shewed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to resist him. 2 And the Lord said unto Satan, The Lord rebuke thee, O Satan; even the Lord that hath chosen Jerusalem rebuke thee: is not this a brand plucked out of the fire? 3 Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments, and stood before the angel. 4 And he answered and spake unto those that stood before him, saying, Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment. 5 And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments. And the angel of the Lord stood by. 6 And the angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua, saying, 7 Thus saith the Lord of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by.*
12. Every Christian is like Joshua, a brand plucked from the burning. It is while we are in our filth, while we are sinners, God loved us, and Christ died for our sins.
- *Romans 5:8 But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.*
13. Christians do not want to parade the filthiness of the flesh, but two people know about it. God knows, and Satan likes to rattle the secret skeletons in the closet.
14. Notice from Zechariah 3 what God, in matchless grace, will do for those who are the objects of redeeming grace.

- The Lord will take away the filthy garments. *“Take away the filthy garments from him.”*
  - The Lord will remove all of a soul’s iniquity, past, present, and future. *“And unto him he said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee.”*
  - The Lord will replace our filthy rags with clothes of righteousness. *“And I will clothe thee with change of raiment.”*
  - The Lord will set a seal upon the head. *“And I said, Let them set a fair mitre upon his head. So they set a fair mitre upon his head, and clothed him with garments.”*
  - The Lord will give precious promises, and words of exhortation. *“And the angel of the Lord stood by. 6 And the angel of the Lord protested unto Joshua, saying, Thus saith the Lord of hosts; If thou wilt walk in my ways, and if thou wilt keep my charge, then thou shalt also judge my house, and shalt also keep my courts, and I will give thee places to walk among these that stand by.”*
15. When God redeems a person out of the fire, a person still has dirty garments. But God does not stop. The Lord continues the work of redemption by replacing the dirty garments with clean ones.
16. The Lord will place a new turban upon the head of His own, He will ultimately put new clothes upon believers that are free of the filthiness of the flesh.
17. Here is a precious promise that leads to assurance of believers being in a state of redemption. It is not only our privilege to know what our status is before Him, it is our duty.
- *2 Peter 1:10 Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall.*
18. While the believer must not engage in presumptuous sin, neither should any Christian ever despair to the point of believing that human failures negates divine faithfulness.
- *Hebrews 13:5 Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.*
19. People need to know if they are in a state of grace, or not. Joshua heard Satan’s accusation. He also heard the voice of the Lord, and was comforted to know he had peace with God.
- *Romans 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:*

20. The person with a troubled conscience does not have peace with God. They do not have the freedom to be people of power in the world. The person who is of a double mind is crippled in the journey in grace.
21. Sometimes, as a slanderer, Satan will level false accusations at believers. At other times, he accuses the believers where they are really guilty. Here is where there is some confusion, for it is also the work of the Holy Spirit to convict the world of sin.
  - *John 16:8 And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment:*
22. It is a work of divine grace when the Spirit convicts us of sin. It is a sign of salvation so that we may turn from it.
23. The difference from the conviction of the Holy Spirit, and the slander of Satan, is there is something sweet about the work of the Spirit. He comes, not to destroy us, but to redeem us.
24. The debilitating actions of Satan will destroy us, while the convicting actions of the Spirit will restore us.
25. There is objective guilt, and there is subjective guilt. The world will try to convince a person that their feeling of guilt is a subjective response to outdated moral standards, but the person knows objectively, and in truth, that the guilt is bonified.
26. Guilt is defined, legally and theologically, as a transgression of the law. When a person violates the Law of God, that person incurs guilt in the sight of God, whether there is a feeling of guilt, or not.
27. Satan focuses attention on feelings. He wants a person to not feel saved. In contrast, faith is objective. Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God.
  - *Romans 10:17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.*
  - *Romans 8:33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.*