

GUILT

I. Some Biblical words for guilt.

- A. Hebrew word *asham* - "offense, guilt"
Prov. 30:10 - "slave...curse you and become guilty"
Jere. 51:5 - "Israel and Judah...their land is full of guilt"
Hosea 5:15 - "...until they acknowledge their guilt and seek My face"
- B. Hebrew word *avon* - "iniquity, guilt"
Job 33:9 - "I am innocent and there is no guilt in me"
Ps. 32:5 - "Thou did forgive the guilt of my sin"
- C. Greek word *enochos* - "liable, culpable, guilty"
Matt. 5:22 - "guilty before the court"
Mk. 3:29 - "guilty of an eternal sin"
I Cor. 11:27 - "guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord"
James 2:10 - "keep whole law, stumble in one point...guilty of all"
- D. Greek word *aitios* - "responsibility, guilt"
Lk. 23:4,14,22; Jn. 18:38; 19:4,6 - "I find no guilt in Him"

II. Kinds of guilt.

- A. Objective guilt, legal guilt - caught in trespass of law.
 - 1. Theological guilt - trespass of God's law or character
Rom. 3:23 - "all have sinned and fall short of glory of God"
James 2:10 - "stumble in one point, guilty of all"
 - 2. Sociological guilt - trespass of law of land, or civil law
I Peter 2:13 - "submit yourselves for the Lord's sake to every human institution"
- B. Subjective guilt, psychological guilt - trespass of established attitudes.
 - 1. Bible does not directly address issue of psychological guilt.
 - 2. Allusion to guilty conscience -
Rom. 2:15 - "Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness, and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them"
 - 3. Legitimacy of guilt feelings
 - a. Genuine guilt feelings - established attitude consistent with God's attitude.
 - b. False guilt feelings - established attitude not consistent with God's attitude.
 - (1) Sigmund Freud - "To feel guilty is not to be guilty."
 - (2) Attitudes of "weak" brothers - Rom. 14; I Cor. 10
 - c. Whatever is not of faith is sin - Rom. 14:23

III. Consequences of guilt.

- A. Theological guilt
 - 1. Penalty -
Rom. 5:12 - "sin entered the world, and death through sin"
Rom. 5:15 - "by the transgression of the one the many died"
Rom. 6:23 - "wages of sin is death"
 - 2. Condemnation
Rom. 5:16 - judgment arose from transgression resulting in condemnation.

Rom. 5:18 - "through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men"

- B. Sociological guilt
 - 1. Penalty
 - 2. Condemnation
- C. Subjective guilt - both genuine and false
 - 1. Nervous
 - 2. Depressed
 - 3. Defensive
 - 4. Suspicious
 - 5. Sleeplessness, insomnia
 - 6. Fear, panic attacks
 - 7. Escapism, flight
 - 8. Insecurity
 - 9. Judgmentalism
 - 10. Lack of concentration
 - 11. Shallow friendships
 - 12. Blame others
 - 13. Self-contempt, self-denigration, self-condemnation
 - 14. Addictions, self-destructive behavior
 - 15. Works and performance

IV. Solution to guilt

- A. Theological guilt
 - 1. Payment of penalty by Jesus Christ
 - a. Bought with a price - I Cor. 6:20; 7:23
 - 2. Christ took our condemnation
 - a. No condemnation - Rom. 8:1
 - 3. Christians are acquitted and declared "right with God"; justification by faith
 - 4. Provision of God's grace for righteousness
- B. Sociological guilt
 - 1. Must face consequences of our choices
 - 2. Pay the penalty imposed
 - 3. Stand condemned
 - 4. Provision of God's grace for righteousness
- C. Subjective guilt
 - 1. Inadequate solutions
 - a. Minimize - "It's nothing." "Only an illusion"
 - b. Rationalize - "Everybody's doing it"
 - c. Compromise - "lower your standards"
 - d. Criticize - "blame others"
 - e. Chastize - "whip yourself" - masochism
 - f. Apologize - confessionalism - "I'm so sorry"
 - 2. Christian solutions
 - a. Confess your sin - I John 1:9
 - b. Accept God's forgiveness
 - c. Live by faith - our receptivity of His activity - Col. 2:6
 - d. Develop God's attitude by renewing of the mind - Rom. 12:2