

# 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