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Groups Sermon Study Questions

**GUILT to GRACE**

*November 19, 2017*

**Message Summary**

We have all acquired real guilt, from failing to love God with all our hearts, and our neighbors as ourselves to disobedience, self-centeredness and downright meanness, “we all fall short of God’s glorious standard” (NLT). Yet because of love, God took our guilt upon himself through his Son’s death on the cross. And now by God’s grace through faith we have complete forgiveness—Jesus took our guilt and gave us his white robe of righteousness! But sometimes we still feel guilty. Why? Because we haven’t confessed our sin, or when we do we don’t believe we are forgiven. Sometimes we are burdened with false guilt. And then there are those consequences of sin that sometimes can’t be undone in this life. Then we can cast those burdens upon Jesus, trust him to take care of the details and find rest for our souls.

**Consider This: Real Guilt and Real Grace**

1. Can you share ways you have found rest in your life since coming to Jesus?
  
2. What are some things you have learned from Jesus about guilt and grace?

*The Psalmist said, Indeed, I was born guilty. I was a sinner when my mother conceived me (Psalm 51:5).*

3. How do feelings of real guilt help us avoid relational destruction with God, others and ourselves?

4. Read Romans 3:10–20. Can anyone, on his or her own be innocent before God? Can anyone, on his or her own, find cleansing from guilt?

5. Read Romans 3:21–28. Where can people find cleansing and freedom from guilt? How? And on what basis—why?

6. According to 1 John 1:8–10 as believers, what must we do to obtain forgiveness from guilt? How much of our guilt will God forgive and purify us from? Do you believe these verses? Can you claim forgiveness? Will you?

7. Read Isaiah 53:4–6. For believers, what happens to their guilt and the punishment it deserves? How does that make you feel about Jesus' love for you and grace to you?

*False guilt is still a lie—it is slander against ourselves and it signifies a deficient understanding of God's grace and the encompassing work of the cross. Often, false guilt results from a need to please others rather than God, and a constant drive for perfection rather than trusting God's enabling power.*

8. Some people shirk or minimize their responsibility for harming another, others accept responsibility for things they did NOT do. What does God expect from us according to Psalm 51:6?

9. Read Matthew 26:3–4. Jesus was perfect, and yet what did the leaders of the people, the movers and shakers of his day

think of him? Should believers expect the important people of our day to always be pleased with them? Why or why not?

10. Consider Psalms 19:7, Proverbs 19:20 and James 1:5. How can you discern the difference between false and true guilt according to these passages?

11. The apostle said, "It is God who produces in you the desires and actions that please him" (Philip 2:13). Read John 15:5. Apart from the enabling power of Christ, how much can any of us actually do?

12. Trusting God versus trying to please him. False guilt comes when a person does not really believe he or she is accepted—good enough. Read Ephesians 1:1–14 and list the truths about your position in Christ. Do you believe it? What does Hebrews 11:6 say about the importance of faith, and how does it relate to false guilt and perfectionism?

## **Moving Forward**

*This week read Focus on the Family's "Living Without Constant Guilt" series:*

*<http://www.focusonthefamily.com/lifechallenges/emotional-health/living-without-constant-guilt>*

1. Living without constant guilt
2. Healthy guilt versus False and Harmful Guilt
3. The Origins of False Guilt
4. Cure for feeling real Guilt