

Guilt & Regret: How to Overcome

Part 4: Being Free from Self-Condemnation

(preached 8/11/24)

Please turn to *Isaiah 53, Romans 5:16-19, Romans 8:1*

LAST WEEK:

- The Apostle Paul warns that one of the signs of the last days is a seared conscience: one that no longer works the way God intended.
- Not only does the seared conscience become dull to good and evil, but will actually switch them around.
- You see this happening in our country and around the world: what was formerly called sin is now called good and then made into law and celebrated by all the “high places” here on earth: gov’t, big business, education system, entertainment industry, news media, and even some churches.
- What God calls good these HP’s call evil, or currently: “weird.” The preservation of unborn life is called tyrannical, traditional marriage outdated & privileged, having children is destroying the earth, etc.
- The devil is preparing the people of earth for HIS messiah: the Antichrist.
- How will he people to take his mark? How will he get people to worship him and call him “god”? How will he get people to worship his “image”?
- By searing their consciences to the point where they exchange the truth for a lie, and exchange bitter for sweet, and good for evil.
- A clear conscience acts as our watchman, quoting God’s Word to warn us against committing sins, and “accusing” us after we’ve done so.
- We must avoid the vicious cycle of Romans 7!
- Our flesh will attempt to REBEL against the Law being quoted, and DESIRE that which is “forbidden” that much more.
- When we give in to said cycle what follows is guilt, shame, and what we’re talking about today: *self-condemnation*.
- When we have a conscience cleansed by the Blood of Jesus, we don’t have to beat ourselves up!

This sermon is for me and you guys get to be here and listen in on the conversation God has with me about it.

Are you someone who beats yourself up?

- Self-critical to the point of tormenting yourself?
- Do you call yourself names like stupid, broken, ugly, fat, lazy, and worthless?
- Do you think of yourself primarily as a sinner?

- Do you sometimes feel that you deserve the bad things that happen to you?
- When others speak highly of themselves, do you judge them as being “prideful”?
- Are you easily triggered when someone else criticizes you?
- Do you say things like “stop judging me, I’m harder on myself than you could ever be!”?
- Have you ever physically punished yourself: hit or cut yourself?

Another question: ***suppose you saw someone doing this*** [SHOW POWERPOINT PICTURE] in public.

What you’re seeing is called **SELF-FLAGELLATION** and the AI on my computer defines it this way:

Self-flagellation refers to the act of flogging oneself, often with whips or other instruments, as a form of religious discipline or penance¹².

- PENANCE comes from its root word of repentance, but in this case it means punishing oneself for one’s sins...trying to pay for them.
- You see someone doing this...*would you attempt to stop them?*
- What would you **SAY** to them to get them to stop?
- If you attempted to share the Gospel with them and they responded “*but I’m already a Christian*” how would you counsel them?
- Might you tell them that they **don’t need to beat themselves** because Jesus was beaten for them?
- Maybe you’d remind them they **don’t need to shed their own blood** to remit their sins, because Jesus did that for them already?

[Isa 53:3-5 NKJV] 3 He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, [our] faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. 4 **Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows;** Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. 5 But He [was] **wounded** for our transgressions, [He was] **bruised** for our iniquities; The **chastisement** for our peace [was] upon Him, And by His **stripes** we are healed.

Please repeat after me: ***Wounded, Bruised, Chastised, & Beaten.***

Who? Who endured all these things? JESUS.

For who? For whom did Jesus endure all these things? US.

Why? Why did Jesus endure all these things for us? BECAUSE HE COULD.

- He was God and Man at the same time.
- He was both the Lamb Who takes away the sin of the world and the Divine High Priest who offered Himself up as the perfect blood sacrifice.

Is Jesus the only way to righteousness? Salvation? Becoming God's child? Heaven?

Is there someone else we should look at to save us? Pay for our sins?

WILL GOD OUR FATHER ACCEPT ANY OTHER PAYMENT for our sins other than the blood of His Son Jesus?

What if someone else came along right now and **SAID THERE WAS ANOTHER WAY** to pay for sins? Maybe he presents himself as a messiah, a savior, and says that his blood will do the trick...*would you believe him?*

So why are you, oh self-condemner, trying to replace Jesus?

Yes, that is what you're trying to do. You believe that the shedding of your own blood—whether spiritual or physical—will pay for your sins and relieve your guilt.

You're trying to satisfy your guilty conscience's call for justice. It's screaming at you, telling you the scales are horribly off balance, and you're attempting to make them even.

When you call yourself stupid, a glutton, worthless, and broken you are spiritually cutting yourself.

When you say that you're nothing but a hopeless sinner who will never change, you are spiritually self-flagellating.

When you believe that you deserve the bad things that have or are happening to you, you are nullifying the great work Jesus did on the Cross that was revealed in Isaiah 53.

If you claim to know Jesus as your Savior, then *remember Jesus was Wounded, Bruised, Chastised, and Beaten for our sins,* not only because He loves us but also because **He's the only One qualified to do so.**

- You are I are not qualified because we are not God.
- We have not lived a sinless life.
- We are neither the Lamb of God nor His High Priest of the Heavens.

SELF-CONDEMNATION IS NOT NOBLE, IT'S NOT HUMBLE, IT'S NOT PIOUS, AND DOESN'T MAKE THE PAYMENT.

IT'S ACTUALLY AN ACT OF SELF-EXALTING PRIDE WHERE WE'RE TRYING TO MAKE OURSELVES EQUAL TO JESUS.

It's us saying we don't need what Jesus did on the Cross because we can do it ourselves.

Condemnation according to Jesus is **rejecting Him and everything He offers:** grace, mercy, forgiveness, and acceptance into His divine family.

After the famous John 3:16 where Jesus reveals that He came here to love and give us eternal life, then in verse 17 where He says He's not here to judge, He then says this:

[Jhn 3:18-19 NKJV] 18 "He who believes in Him [Jesus] is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God. 19 And this is the condemnation, that the light has come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil."

Self-condemnation is destructive because **it rejects the grace, mercy, and forgiveness** that Christ gave us. It keeps us in the dark...even to the point where we "love" it as Jesus said in verse 19.

Why would we stay in the dark? Because it's addicting. Beating oneself up is an addiction that stimulates the same part of the brain as other addictions, actually producing a small amount of dopamine. Remember we crave the joyful experience of dopamine when the opposite is happening: stress, anger, frustration, and depression.

We just want to feel better when experiencing these things, ***we want to silence or at least turn down the voice of the accuser in our own heads.***

When we self-flagellate—either emotionally or physically—our guilty conscience is temporarily mollified resulting in a small shot of dopamine to relieve the mental nightmare we've been walking through.

Thus we will stay in the dark and, as Jesus said in the next couple verses I didn't put up here: *refuse to come to the light where our deeds are exposed.*

Self-condemners HATE it when others criticize them because said criticisms echo what their guilty consciences are already accusing them of. SC's immediately go into protect mode and say things like “*clean out your own back yard first before telling me to clean out mine!*” or “*stop judging me! I'm harder on myself than you could ever be!*” They would prefer to remain in the darkness by themselves rather than come to the light where they're exposed.

- There are 7.5 billion people on the planet: how many of them are perfect?
- How many of them are flawed and commit sins?
- Is there anyone who has their own back yard completely cleaned up?
- Anyone without some sort of “mess” in their lives?

Demanding that others clean up their own messes first before confronting us is the ultimate protection mode, because it disqualifies everyone.

SC's wrongly believe that God will be another judgmental voice, like some of the people around them. They fear that if they come to Him, Who is the Light, they He too will condemn them and tell them they deserve to be wounded, bruised, chastised, and beaten.

Yet what does God really say?

[Rom 5:16-19 NKJV] 16 And the gift [is] not like [that which came] through the one (Adam) who sinned. For the judgment [which came] from one [offense resulted] in condemnation, **but the free gift [which came] from many offenses [resulted] in justification.** 17 For if by the one man's (Adam) offense death reigned through the one, **much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness** will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ.) 18 Therefore, as through one man's (Adam) offense [judgment came] to all men, resulting in condemnation, even so through one Man's righteous act **[the free gift came] to all men, resulting in justification of life.** 19 For as by one man's (Adam)

disobedience many were made sinners, so also by one Man's (Jesus) obedience *many will be made righteous*.

Summary: **JESUS DIED FOR OUR SINS. JESUS PAID THE PRICE. JESUS TOOK OUR SIN AND GAVE US HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS.**

YOU AND I HAVE NO RIGHTEOUSNESS OF OUR OWN. We gave that up when we got Saved. We handed our pathetic attempts to be good to Him, and took His perfect attempt to be good.

His righteousness replaced ours.

SC's: **Let's stop trying to take back our old lack of righteousness** and instead cling to the free gift Jesus gave us. Let's hold it tight to our chests, near to our hearts, and be set free. Do you have an ex? Would you go back to them? Trying to take back our old self before Christ is like returning to an abusive and adulterous ex.

[Rom 8:1-2 KJV] 1 [There is] therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.

**PRAY FOR RELEASE—LET IT
GO!**