



## KILLING WHAT'S KILLING YOU, PART 4: GUILT & SHAME

Jesus wants to free us from being pinned down by shame. When healthy conviction comes, we can either cover up or come clean. Covering up leads to unhealthy shame, but Jesus went to the cross to destroy our shame. When we come clean, sin no longer defines us.

**BIG IDEA:** Guilt is feeling bad about what you've done. Shame is feeling bad about who you are.

### DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

*\* Remember the goal is to use the questions to generate discussion, not to complete every one.*

1. Keeping it anonymous, do you know someone that might be described as a bitter person? Why would you describe them as bitter? How does their bitterness affect relationships?
2. Healthy guilt from God's perspective—conviction—should work in our lives as a “check engine” light works in your car. It is an indicator that something could be going wrong. *With the Bible or Bible App, read [2 Corinthians 7:10](#), [Proverbs 28:13](#) & [Psalm 32:1-5](#).*

*<sup>10</sup> For the kind of sorrow God wants us to experience leads us away from sin and results in salvation. There's no regret for that kind of sorrow. But worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance, results in spiritual death. [2 Corinthians 7:10 \(NLT\)](#)*

*<sup>13</sup> People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy. [Proverbs 28:13 \(NLT\)](#)*

*<sup>1</sup> Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! <sup>2</sup> Yes, what joy for those whose record the LORD has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty! <sup>3</sup> When I refused to confess my sin, my body wasted away, and I groaned all day long. <sup>4</sup> Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat. Interlude <sup>5</sup> Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, “I will confess my rebellion to the LORD.” And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone. Interlude [Psalms 32:1-5 \(NLT\)](#)*

3. Some of us tend to ignore the “check engine” light. Hiding sin turns healthy guilt into shame. What does it feel like to ignore or hide sin?
4. What does guilt feel like? What does shame feel like? What are some ways you try to hide sin in your life?
5. Jesus was the master at speaking truth in people's lives in a way that made them feel worthy, dignified, and loved. If you know someone whose “check engine” light is on, how can you deliver the truth of Jesus, with the tone of Jesus, avoiding self-righteousness and condemnation?
6. *With the Bible or Bible App, read [Isaiah 54:4](#) & [2 Corinthians 5:21](#).*

*<sup>4</sup> “Fear not; you will no longer live in shame. Don't be afraid; there is no more disgrace for you. You will no longer remember the shame of your youth and the sorrows of widowhood. [Isaiah 54:4 \(NLT\)](#)*

*<sup>21</sup> For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin, so that we could be made right with God through Christ. [2 Corinthians 5:21 \(NLT\)](#)*

7. Guilt is feeling bad about what you've done. Shame is feeling bad about who you are. How does the cross of Jesus change how we can deal with both guilt and shame?
8. Are there areas of your life where you struggle to see yourself as God sees you? Any areas where you think, "I'll be worthy if...", "If people only knew...", or "I'm not enough"? Share with your group.
9. *With the Bible or Bible App, [read Luke 19:1-10](#).*

*<sup>1</sup> Jesus entered Jericho and made his way through the town. <sup>2</sup> There was a man there named Zacchaeus. He was the chief tax collector in the region, and he had become very rich. <sup>3</sup> He tried to get a look at Jesus, but he was too short to see over the crowd. <sup>4</sup> So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree beside the road, for Jesus was going to pass that way. <sup>5</sup> When Jesus came by, he looked up at Zacchaeus and called him by name. "Zacchaeus!" he said. "Quick, come down! I must be a guest in your home today." <sup>6</sup> Zacchaeus quickly climbed down and took Jesus to his house in great excitement and joy. <sup>7</sup> But the people were displeased. "He has gone to be the guest of a notorious sinner," they grumbled. <sup>8</sup> Meanwhile, Zacchaeus stood before the Lord and said, "I will give half my wealth to the poor, Lord, and if I have cheated people on their taxes, I will give them back four times as much!" <sup>9</sup> Jesus responded, "Salvation has come to this home today, for this man has shown himself to be a true son of Abraham. <sup>10</sup> For the Son of Man came to seek and save those who are lost."*

*[Luke 19:1-10 \(NLT\)](#)*

10. Zacchaeus was a tax collector who had become rich by cheating people. Everyone hated him, but Jesus invited himself over to his house for dinner! The very presence of Jesus brought about a radical change in Zacchaeus's life—he committed to giving back to the poor and making things right.
11. Is God showing you an area of your life that needs change? Is there a character issue that needs to be addressed? Do you have any relationships that need attention? Any attitudes that need adjustment? If you're willing, share with your group.

## MOVING FORWARD

God will never reject authenticity! If you are real with God, He always receives you. Knowing this, is it easier to bring sin out of hiding and come clean with God? Why or why not?

## WHAT WILL YOU DO?

Remember to **BREATHE**: **B**e real about your brokenness, **R**elinquish control, **E**valuate yourself with fearless honesty, make **A**mends with people, **T**Hink in new ways, and **E**ncourage others with your story!

## CHANGING YOUR MIND

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