

True Guilt / False Guilt:

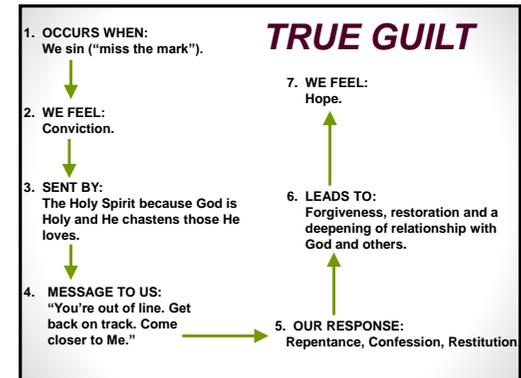
Understanding The Difference

Apostolic Christian Counseling And Family Services
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Overview and Purpose

- Identifying "True Guilt" and its remedy.
- Recognize how the "feeling" of guilt is not the same as "True Guilt".
- When stemming from actual sin and transgressions, feelings of guilt can motivate us to change inappropriate behavior and take steps to reconcile our relationship with God and others.
- When guilt stems from other non-sin sources, guilt can confuse, bind, and harm.



Elements of True Guilt

1. True Guilt occurs when we sin.
2. We feel conviction.
3. Conviction is sent by the Holy Spirit.
4. The Holy Spirit points out the sin and beckons us to come close to God.
5. Our response is repentance and confession.
6. Leads to forgiveness and restoration.
7. We feel hope.

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Acknowledges Sin

Romans 3:23
"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."

James 4:17
"Therefore to him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin."

1 John 5:17a
"All unrighteousness is sin..."

Example of Acknowledging Sin

Psalm 51:1-4

"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest."

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We Feel Conviction

Psalm 32:3-4

"When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer."

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Conviction is Sent by the Holy Spirit

Hebrews 12:5b-7

"...My son, despise not the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou are rebuked of him: For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?"

Chastening is Profitable

Hebrews 12:11

"Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby."

John 16:7-8

"Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient [profitable] for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter [Holy Spirit] will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove [convict] the world of sin, and righteousness, and of judgment."

Appropriate Godly Fear

Hebrews 10:31

"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

Ephesians 5:21

"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."

Proverbs 1:7a

"The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge..."

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The Holy Spirit's Message to Us

Matthew 11:28-30

"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

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Our Response to Conviction

Psalms 32:5

"I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin."

Isaiah 55:6-7

"Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon."

Proverbs 28:13

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

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Repentance Leads to Forgiveness

2 Chronicles 7:14

"If my people, which are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land."

Micah 7:18-19

"Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? He retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy. He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea."

Forgiveness Through Christ

1 John 1:9

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

1 John 2:1-2

"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins of whole world."

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We Feel Hope and Strength

Lamentations 3:21-24

"This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness. The LORD is my portion, saith my soul; therefore will I hope in him."

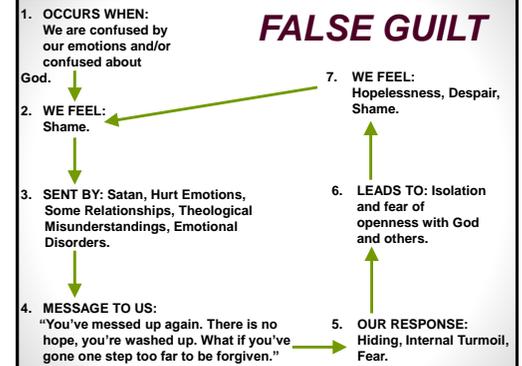
Psalms 42:5

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance."

God is Merciful

1 Peter 1:3

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead."



Elements of False Guilt

1. False Guilt occurs when we are confused by emotion or our understanding about Who God is.
2. We feel shame.
3. Shame is sent by Satan, hurt emotions, misunderstandings, or disorders.
4. Message to us: "You messed up again."
5. Our Response: hide, inner turmoil, fear.
6. Leads to isolation and fear of God.
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False Guilt Comes from Confusion

1 Corinthians 14:33

"For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints."

- Confusion is one of Satan's favorite tools to hinder the believer.
- One hallmark of "false guilt" is when a believer feels condemnation but cannot clearly identify why they feel this way.

According to Man's Perception

Proverbs 14:12

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death."

- Satan loves to torture the most scrupulous believers by convincing them their sin is too great for Christ to redeem and/or their journey to Christ is somehow "wrong".

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Unwarranted Shame

2 Corinthians 5:21

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

- The believer is 100% righteous in God's eyes.

Romans 8:1

"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

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Satan is the Tempter

1 Peter 5:8

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour."

James 1:13-14

"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust [excessive desire] and enticed."

Satan the Accuser

Revelation 12:10b

"...for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night."

Isaiah 14:16

"They that see thee [Satan] shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms;"

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Self-Condemnation Leads to Confusion

Proverbs 24:16

"For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again: but the wicked shall fall into mischief."

- Satan seeks to minimize the work of Christ and convince the believer there is no hope.
- The Lord encourages the believer to get back up and keep pursuing Him knowing full well it is not the believer's faithfulness that saves but the sufficiency of the Savior's work that saves.

Titus 3:5-7

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."

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Hiding in Fear

- Hiding and fear are a common response in both "true guilt" and "false guilt"

True Guilt:

Genesis 3:10 "And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself."

- This passage represents hiding as a result of true guilt

False Guilt:

- False guilt has two fundamental differences from true guilt:

1. The believer gets stuck in hiding and fear.
2. The believer feels guilt and distance from God when neither are accurate.

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Not Seeing Full Picture of God

- When someone only sees or knows of God's judgment, "false guilt" can occur.
- It is true we are not perfect and therefore unworthy of God's love and forgiveness. Yet God has chosen to love His people.
- "False Guilt" can occur when the believer looks at themselves rather than Christ's shed blood for their righteousness.

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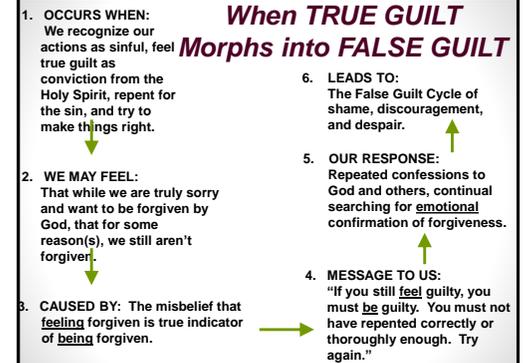
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We Feel Hopelessness

- If we only see God's justice, we will feel hopeless.
- If we believe our feelings are the indicator of how our relationship with God is, we are looking at the wrong markers.

Psalm 130:3-5

"If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope."



When True Guilt Morphs Into False Guilt

1. How does true guilt morph into false guilt?
2. How can we detect when this happens?
3. How can we stop it?

How does True Guilt Morph into False Guilt?

- We have a distorted view of how salvation occurs and is sustained.
- Instead of accepting Scripture as the basis for our forgiveness and hope, we may begin to waver because we don't FEEL forgiven.
- Our understanding of grace and truth is out of balance.

How We Can Detect When This Happens?

- When our feelings don't match what our minds and Scripture tell us to be true.
- We begin to doubt God's faithfulness.
- Our self-judgment is not supported by Scripture.
- We find ourselves leaning toward judgment without grace.
- We begin to feel like we need to earn God's forgiveness.
- We begin to trust our feelings more than God's promises.
- Our respect and reverence towards God begins to turn into unhealthy fear.

How Can We Stop It?

- Remember the faithfulness of God. (**Lam 3:22-23**)
- Remember God's love in that He sent His Son to die for us. (**John 3:16**)
- Perfect love casts out fear. (**1 John 4:18**)
- Trust in the infallibility and accuracy of God's Word.
- Seek counsel from others.
- Commit appropriate Scriptures to memory.

God Is Our Refuge

Psalm 46:10-11

"Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth. The Lord of hosts is with us; the God of Jacob is our refuge."

God is Our Strength

Psalm 42:5

"Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance."

Psalm 62:7

"In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God."

Isaiah 41:10

"Fear thou not; for I am with thee: be not dismayed; for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness."

God is Our Comfort

Psalm 23:3

"He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake."

Revelation 21:4

"And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away."