

THE BIBLE VIEW

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No More Guilt!

Bill Brinkworth

Before Paul's salvation, he did all he could to serve God his way. In doing so, he unknowingly became an enemy of God and Christians. He was responsible for killing many Christians and did much to slow the spreading of the Gospel. When he was saved, Paul became one of the sincerest servants for Christ.

No matter what he did after salvation, he still had a past. There was no way to undo what he had done. All he could do was go forward by doing the right things after being forgiven, and do all he could for the cause of Christ. He did that with all his heart.

"But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me." I Corinthians 15:1

Many are plagued with a guilty conscience of their past, even after they are saved. Years ago, I remember listening to a Christian radio program where the host answered live scriptural questions. One caller, choked with guilt, called and told the host, "I am saved. I know I am forgiven, and my sins are forgotten, but I just cannot forgive myself, and that is why I am going to take my life." Immediately, the program was changed over to music, while I imagined the radio preacher dealt with the man's guilt and desire to take his own life. Sadly, many will not forgive themselves and still live a defeated life, even after salvation.

We all have pasts. No saved person should have any joy in the wrong he has done. Most of us, if we could do it over, would choose never to have committed the sins we have, but we did. No remorse or guilt is going to change our past. When we trust Christ for salvation, our sins are not only forgiven by God, but they are forgotten (Ps. 103:12). Our sins are under His blood.

Even though God knows all we did, He still offered us a way, by His grace, to His Heaven. Since He has forgiven and forgotten our past, we must also forgive and forget what we have done.

“. . . Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts.”

— Zechariah 4:6b

Effects of Forgiveness

Dr. Guthrie

In the garrison town of Woolwich, many years ago, a soldier was to be brought before the commanding officer for another misdemeanor.

The officer registering the soldier's name said, "Here he is again. What are we to do with him? He has been given all punishments, and still his misbehavior continues."

A sergeant-major interjected, "There is one thing that has never been done with him yet, sir."

"What is that, sergeant-major?"

"Well, sir, he has never yet been forgiven."

"Forgiven?" queried the colonel.

After the colonel had reflected on the suggestion, he ordered the man to be brought before him. When the guilty man stood before the officer, the colonel asked him, "Is there anything you have to say about the charges against you?"

"None, sir!" was the reply, "Only that I am sorry for what I have done."

After making suitable remarks, the colonel said, "Well, we are resolved to forgive you."

The soldier was struck with astonishment. Tears flowed from his eyes.

The colonel, with the adjutant and the others present, felt deeply when they saw the man so humbled. The soldier thanked the colonel for his kindness and left. It was noted that for many years after that act of kindness and understanding that there were no other incidents of misbehavior recorded for that soldier. Mercy triumphed. Kindness conquered. The man was won!

"He that cannot forgive others breaks the bridge over which he must one day himself pass, for every man needs to be forgiven."

The Christian's Ruby Ring

C. H. Spurgeon

A king once gave a ring to his favorite, and said to him, "I know that the council tomorrow will charge you of heresy. When you are brought to them, answer them if you will, but you need not have any fear. If you are accused, simply show them the ring I have given you, and they will let you go."

It is even so with us that are born-again. The Lord has given us the precious blood of Christ to be like that ruby ring. No matter how our conscience torments us, or how far accusations from Satan may plead against us, we have only to remember God's promise that clears us from all our guilt:

“He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.” John 3:18

Where Some Guilt May Come From

Bill Brinkworth

It was very important after Jesus died that He sent the omnipresent Comforter (John 16:7) to do many marvelous things. It is this Holy Spirit, even to this day, that:

- Reproves us of our sin (John 16:8, 9). It is the Comforter that often makes us feel guilty of our sin. This Spirit convicts us so we can get it right. People often blame a pastor, parent, or another person for making them feel miserable in their wrongdoing. However, often it is the Holy Spirit, sent by Jesus, that is doing the convicting.
- Reproves us of true righteousness (John 16:8, 10). The Holy Spirit shows us that in the flesh, we are certainly not righteous in God’s eyes. It is the Comforter that helps us realize that only Jesus is without sin and that we are worthy of Hell unless we accept Christ’s righteousness to cover our iniquities.
- Shows our heart that no one gets away with sinning against God, not even Satan (John 16:8, 11).
- Shows and helps us understand the Word of God (John 16:13). This is why it is so wrong for others to dumb down the Bible and make it “easier to understand” when false translations and versions of God’s Word are produced. It is only the Comforter that helps anyone understand His truths.
- Tells us what the Father wants us to hear (John 16:13).
- Shows us what will happen in the future (John 16:13).
- The Comforter is not to be glorified, but Jesus should be (John 16:14).

This Comforter is still present and working in the hearts of men to this day. What has the Comforter shown you recently? Did you begin doing or stop doing what He convicted you of?

Saved by the Blood

Words to S. J. Henderson’s Hymn

Saved by the blood of the Crucified One!
Now ransomed from sin and a new work begun,
Sing praise to the Father and praise to the Son,
Saved by the blood of the Crucified One!

Chorus:

*Glory, I’m saved! Glory, I’m saved!
My sins are all pardoned, my guilt is all gone!
Glory, I’m saved! Glory, I’m saved!
I’m saved by the blood of the Crucified One!*

“As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us.”

Psalm 103:12

Ugly Forgiveness

H. W. Beecher

There is an ugly kind of forgiveness in this world — a kind of porcupine forgiveness with cruelty and unkindness as its barbs. Men take one who has offended them, sit him down before the hot blowpipe of their indignation and scorch and burn the guilty with the repeated remembrance of his wrongdoing. After the guilty has been well torched by their fury, they then forgive him. They feel better, but the guilty may never recover from the damage done to him.

If those trying to forgive could be more like God to quickly forgive and forget, a sinner may be returned to a useful, guiltless condition more quickly.

“It may be vain for you to expect forgiveness from God when you refuse to forgive others.” — Hoadley