

**Grace Bible Church**  
**2018 Biblical Counseling Conference**  
**Track One**



## Session #5

### Change Process: Sin/Guilt, Repentance/Faith

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In the believer's pursuit of knowing, loving and serving our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, he must possess a deep theological understanding of sin & guilt, repentance & faith, and forgiveness, in order to help people change biblically. Because these concepts are so central to the doctrine of sanctification, Satan, the world and man's sinful flesh work overtime to distort them. We are also aware that not struggles are sin-oriented but there are also suffering issues (e.g. Job)

#### 1. Sin & Guilt

##### a. Sin <sup>1</sup>

- In answer to the question, "What is sin?" the Shorter Catechism explains, "Sin is any want of conformity unto, or transgression of, the law of God." We could point to 1 John 3:4 "...sin is lawlessness."
- "Sin is anything (whether in thoughts, actions, or attitudes) that does not express or conform to the holy character of God in his moral law" <sup>2</sup>
- "...there is no more conspicuous misuse of language than when we speak of anything which has in it the virus of rebellion against God, and the breach of His law, as being a small sin. It may be a small act; it is a great sin. Little rattlesnakes are snakes; they have rattles and poison fangs as really as the most monstrous of the brood that coils and hisses in some cave."<sup>3</sup>

##### b. Guilt and the contemporary war against it

- i. The biblical understanding of guilt (Ps 25:11; Isa 6:7; Hos 5:15; Luke 14:12; 23:22)
- ii. Definition: A legal liability or culpability to punishment
  - (a) The fact of guilt vs. the feeling of guilt
  - The term "guilt" properly denotes the fact of liability and not the feeling that often accompanies it. Negative feelings are a result of guilt. So we can be truly guilty but not feel guilty (e.g. the man who slows down to 35 mph in a 15 mph zone).

##### iii. Dealing with guilt

1. We must never minimize the fact of guilt
2. Guilt is universal because sin is universal (Rom.3:19, 23).
3. Guilt is serious because God is a holy Judge (Rom.1:18, 2:5-6).

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<sup>1</sup> **Only clear sins are to be dealt with** (violation of or omission of God's commands), don't confront on matters of conscience (Rm. 14), preference issues (Phil.2), motives of the heart (1 Cor.4), physical maturity issues (child to adult – 1 Cor 13), wisdom issues (Proverbs), "halo" data issues (Eli and Hannah – 1 Sam), personhood (personality) issues (eg. irritations, rubs, insensitive, personal differences – Col 3:) – but do bring them up if they greatly affect one's ministry or witness.

<sup>2</sup> ESV Study Bible, 2530

<sup>3</sup> Alexander Maclaren, Commentary on Matthew, 40.

4. Guilt will remain even if it is explained away or if its effects are somehow lessened, and where guilt remains punishment is inevitable.

iv. We must never minimize the feeling of guilt

There is always an underlying reason for guilty feelings, and taking them seriously provides great hope for change.

v. We must never underestimate the effects of guilt.

Psalm 32:1-5 and Psalm 38:1-8 graphically reveal the devastating emotional and physical effects guilt can have on a person.

c. Conscience: The "warning light" that reveals guilt

God has given us the faculty of conscience (a gracious gift) to help us identify the presence of guilt. The word literally means "a knowing with" (*suneidesis*) and has been defined as "the soul reflecting on itself." Our inner man uses the information it possesses to evaluate our thinking and actions, much like a diagnostic program running perpetually on a computer.

Definition: "The conscience is your consciousness of what you believe is right and wrong. (Consciousness means awareness or sense)<sup>4</sup>

1. Conscience produces different results for people based on different moral standards
2. Conscience can change
3. Conscience functions as a guide, monitor, witness, and judge<sup>5</sup>

NOTE: Conscience involves what we know or believe rather than what we feel. We may believe something is right but feel hesitant or even hostile toward it, and we can feel good about what we know is wrong. Feelings are often a result of the operations of conscience but are not identical with them.

(1) The importance of a good, clear conscience (Acts 23:1; 24:16; 1 Tim 1:5, 19; 3:9; 2 Tim 1:3; Heb 13:18; 1 Pt 3:16)

(2) Variations of conscience referred to in Scripture (clean and good (verses above); weak-1 Cor 8:7,12; seared – 1 Tim 4:2; defiled- Titus 1:15; being purified – Heb 9:14;

(3) The solution to guilt

The only true answer to guilt is forgiveness through repentance. God must remove the guilt of our sin through His appointed means of repentance. This is true before salvation (Luke 24:47) and after (Matt.6:12).

## 2. Confession/Repentance & Faith

### The Doctrine of \_\_\_\_\_ Sorrow

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<sup>4</sup> *Conscience*, Andrew Naselli & J.D. Crowley, Crossway, 2016, p.42

<sup>5</sup> p. 42-43

- A. Defined
  1. The word: *lupeo* (to cause pain, to make sorry)
  2. According to the world (Unbelievers & Christians acting fleshly)
  
- B. Demonstrated
  1. Esau (Gen. 27; cf. Heb. 12:16ff)
  2. Pharaoh (Ex. 9:27; 10:16-17)
  3. King Saul (1 Sam. 15:24-30)
  4. The Nation of Israel (Joel 2, Malachi, etc.)
  5. Judas (Mt. 27:3-5)
  
- C. Described
  1. Various expressions of worldly sorrow (responses to sin that stand in the way of true repentance)
    - a. The person who \_\_\_\_\_ it down
    - b. The person who \_\_\_\_\_ in it
    - c. The person who \_\_\_\_\_ to get rid of it (PENANCE)  
**Penance** = "A religious attitude prompting men to attempt to pay for their sins through good works and suffering." (C. John Miller, *Repentance and the 20<sup>th</sup> Century Man*, 19-20)
  2. Various elements accompanying worldly sorrow (flipside of 2 Cor. 7:10-11)
    - a. Regret giving sin up (v. 10)
    - b. Laziness, carelessness, lack of concern (v. 11)
    - c. Excuses, rationalizations, defending accusations (v. 11)
    - d. Angry at the mess, angry at others, angry at self (not sin) (v. 11)
    - e. Fears consequences and others the most (v. 11)
    - f. No longing for true restoration (v. 11)
    - g. No real effort to correct the real heart problem, hoop-jumping (v. 11)
    - h. Various false refuges to counter the guilt
  3. The sure results
    - a. Temporarily: Habitual "kiss and make up" syndrome, deceive oneself, no sanctifying change
    - b. Ultimately: Only One Sure Result: Death (Romans 7:13)

### The Doctrine of \_\_\_\_\_ Sorrow

- A. Defined
  1. The word: *lupeo* (to cause pain; to make sorry)
  2. According to God ("a grief as God intended")
  
- B. Demonstrated
  1. King David (2 Sam. 12; Ps. 32; 51)
  2. The Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32)
  3. The Apostle Peter (Luke 22:54-62)
  4. The Thief on the Cross (Luke 23:39)
  
- C. Described
  1. Various expressions of godly sorrow

- a. Self-examination (one's focus is not on self but on \_\_\_\_\_)
  - b. Full admittance to sin/failure
  - c. The realization and \_\_\_\_\_ of forgiveness/grace of God
2. Various elements accompanying godly sorrow
- a. Glad to have sin uncovered and dealt with rather than be resentful (v. 10)
  - b. True repentance/change follows (v.10)

#### Old Testament

- *nacham* — to regret; be sorry (the emotional side of repentance); mostly used of God and His relationships with people when He relents or changes His purposes with man according to His sovereign purpose – 1 Sam. 15; Ps. 110
- *shub* — The term is basically a verb of motion meaning “to turn.” However, when used for the concept of repent, “The imagery is one of a person doing a turnabout.”<sup>6</sup> The term implies a conscious, moral separation and a personal decision to forsake sin and enter into fellowship with God. The critical aspect, though, is the direction toward which one turns. “The moves in this turning process are delineated clearly in Jer. 3:22-4:2, a veritable liturgy of repentance: acknowledging God's lordship (3:22); admitting wrongdoing (3:23), including the verbal confession, ‘We [I] have sinned’ (3:25); addressing the shame (3:25); and affirming and adhering to a new conduct (4:1-2).<sup>7</sup>

#### New Testament

- *epistrepho* – A complete transformation. Used thirty-six times in the N.T. and the main word used in the Greek Septuagint for the Hebrew word ‘*shub*.’
- *metamelomai* — “to change one's care;” shows change of mind so as to produce regret or remorse on account of sin
- *metanoia* — This term usually expresses repentance in the full sense of a sense of a complete change of one's way of life...the spiritual change implied in a sinner's return to God.”<sup>8</sup> Matthew 3:8 teaches that repentance manifests itself by producing good fruits that are appropriate to new spiritual life.

#### Stated

**Repentance** = “Repentance unto life is a saving grace whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ does, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of and endeavor after, new obedience” (Westminster Shorter Catechism, Q87)

**Repentance** = “Repentance unto life is an evangelical grace, whereby a sinner, out of the sight and sense not only of the danger, but also of the filthiness and odiousness of his sins, as contrary to the holy nature and righteous law of God, and upon the apprehension of his mercy in Christ to such as are penitent, so grieves for and hates his sins as to turn from them all unto God, purposing and endeavoring to walk with him in all the ways of his commandments.” William Plumer, *Vital godliness*, 214

- c. Earnestness, eagerness, diligence to deal with the issues (v. 11)
- d. Vindication, seeking pardon (v. 11)
- e. Indignation, anger that God is offended, anger that sin was in their midst (v. 11)
- f. Fear of God and His displeasure (v. 11)

<sup>6</sup> J. A. Thompson and Elmer A. Martens, in NIDOTTE, edited by Willem A. VanGemeren (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1997), 4:57.

<sup>7</sup> Byron H. Dement, “Repent,” in ISBE, edited by Geoffrey W. Bromiley (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1979), 4:135.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

- g. Longing, yearning to settle the issue, work out any other problems, and see relationships restored (v. 11)
- h. Avenging the wrong – concern for justice (v. 11)

3. The Sure Result = Salvation/life (2 Cor. 7:10; cf. 1 Tim. 4:16)

✓ Remember: It's all of \_\_\_\_\_ (Acts 11:18; 2 Tim. 2:2)

<b><u>Worldly Sorrow – Unbelief</u></b>	<b><u>Godly Sorrow – Belief (faith)</u></b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ Superficial</li> <li>✦ Produces regret</li> <li>✦ Shallow</li> <li>✦ Can lead to penance</li> <li>✦ May produce some possible horizontal change – ultimately death</li> <li>✦ Unaccompanied by godly action</li> <li>✦ Produces false attempts to remove guilt or cover its effects</li> <li>✦ Concerned with self and what others think</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✦ Genuine</li> <li>✦ Suffers loss in nothing</li> <li>✦ Far-reaching</li> <li>✦ Leads to biblical repentance</li> <li>✦ Results in salvation and sanctification</li> <li>✦ Accompanied by godly action</li> <li>✦ Produces clear conscience</li> <li>✦ Concerned with God and His view of sin</li> </ul>

### III. Repentance leads to strengthening one's Faith

“As repentance is the negative aspect of conversion, turning from one's sin, so faith is the positive aspect laying hold upon the promises and the work of Christ... (pisteuo) to believe what someone says, to accept a statement (particularly of a religious nature) as true...personal trust as distinct from mere credence or belief”<sup>9</sup>

“...faith is the one attitude of heart that is the exact opposite of depending on ourselves.”<sup>10</sup>

One must keep his eyes upon Jesus, regularly finding one's heart satisfied with “the Fountain of Living Waters,” seeking to know Him and experience His power in obedient holy living (according to God's revealed Word) and eagerly awaiting His return (Heb 12:1-2; Jer 2:13; Jn 4:13; Phil 3:10; Titus 2:11-15). This is often spoke of “putting on” what is right (Rom 13:14; Col 3:13ff).

<sup>9</sup> Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 938-939.

<sup>10</sup> Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, 730



## We must remember as Counselors:



1. The goal is to help in \_\_\_\_\_ a believer (Gal. 6:1-3); present every man complete in Christ (Col. 1:28-29); and glorify God (1 Cor. 10:31)
  - At the same time being careful to watch our own walk in the process (Gal. 6:1)
  - Be sure to explore their testimony thoroughly (dialogue through the gospel with them)
2. The means of correction takes place in their lives by \_\_\_\_\_ working dependently upon the Holy Spirit by the means of the Scriptures within the context of a body of believers motivated by the truths of the Gospel of Jesus Christ – both in turning from sin and likewise turning to Christ in faith (Phil. 2:12-13; Eph. 4; Col. 3; Ps. 19; 2 Ti. 2:15-17)
3. To understand sin both \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ (Rom. 1-3; Jas. 1:13-15; 1 Cor. 10:13)
  - To emphasize that it is a heart/mind matter (Prv 4:23). A choice of the will needs to be made in conjunction with the work of the Holy Spirit. It is a dependent work (Phil 2:12-13).
  - To beware of stated rationalizations, blame-shifting, and ungodly remorse (Jer 17:9)
  - To identify clear sin(s) by using observation and asking questions to confirm the facts by God's Word (Prov. 18:13; Rom. 7:7)
  - To confront sin gently and lovingly even during a rebuke (Eph. 4:15; 2 Ti. 2:24-25)
  - To be sure we know how to deal with sin and are doing it on a daily basis (1 Jn. 1:7-9)
  - To define and illustrate true repentance (2 Cor. 7:10; Ps. 32; 51; Joel 2:13; 1 Thess 1:9, etc.)
  - To look for signs of a contrite heart, humility, meekness, brokenness, godly sorrow, and a turning from sin. Listen for their recognition of God in their speech (Ps 51)
  - To evaluate the nature of repentance by observing their attitude and actions on a habitual level (There may be sinful snapshots from time to time, but what's the growing practice?)
  - To encourage a specific plan? (Putting off and putting on — Col. 3:1-17; Rom. 13:11-14)
  - To use radical amputation wherever necessary (Mt. 5:29; Mk. 9:42-48)
4. To be sure to make this matter of repentance a constant \_\_\_\_\_ request (both from us and from them) Eph 6:18
  - To emphasize the importance of prayer and confession to God so that they may walk in close communion with God again (1 Jn. 1:7-9; Eph. 4- 6)
5. To \_\_\_\_\_ them wherever you can (1 Thess 5:11)

RESOURCES

Title	Author/Speaker	Medium	Source
How To Help People Change (ch. 17)	Adams, Jay	Book	Zondervan
Theology of Christian Counseling (on Repentance: pp. 201ff, 215ff, 291ff)	Adams, Jay	Book	Zondervan
The Grace of Repentance	Ferguson, Sinclair	Book	Crossway
Repent or Perish	Gerstner, John	Book	Sola De Gloria
Repentance: The First Step Toward Life Transformation	MacDonald, James	Audio	NANC 0103
Repentance and Twentieth Century Man	Miller, C. John	Book	Xn Lit Crusade
Redemption: Accomplished and Applied	Murray, John	Book	Eerdmans
Repentance	Roberts, Richard	Book	Crossway
Repentance	Thomas Boston Thomas Goodwin	Book	Tyndale
Repentance and Counseling	Scipione, George	Audio	Sound Word
Killing Sin Habits with Christ Conquering Faith	Scott, Stuart	Book	Sound Word
The Two Sorrows and True Repentance	“ ”	Audio	
Various Commentaries on 2 Cor. 7:8-11	Various	Book	

**Sorting Through the Past**  
(Place the events and responses in a Bucket)

	<b>No Fault in Circumstance 1st</b>	<b>Personal Fault In Circumstance</b>
<p><b>Good Response</b></p> <p>No Sin Good for Evil Trust Humility God and Others focused Peacemaker</p> <p>Confession &amp; Repentance</p>	 <p><b>Innocent Past</b></p> <p><u>DO:</u></p> <p>Face It: Honestly Biblically With Renewed thinking and perspective Hopefully Thankfully Missionally</p> <p><b>Authentic</b></p>	 <p><b>Confessed &amp; Forgiven Past</b></p> <p><u>DO:</u></p> <p>Remember God's Grace, Forgiveness Remember His Death for that Sin Thank Him *Forsake Sin by Proper Worship No Provision &amp; Putt-off &amp; putt-on thoughts &amp; acts</p> <p><b>Needs Joyful Remembrance</b></p>

<p><b>Poor Response</b></p> <p> <i>Anger</i>  <i>Bitterness</i>  <i>Evil for Evil</i>  <i>Malice</i>  <i>Lack of Forgiveness</i>  <i>Pride/Lust for Approval</i>  <i>Self-focus</i>  <i>No God</i>  <i>No Trust</i>  <i>No Confession</i> </p>	 <p>Innocent Past (initially)</p> <p><b>Needs Humble Analysis</b></p> <p><u>DO:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Admit sin</li> <li>Confess</li> <li>Repentance Steps*</li> <li>Willingness to forgive</li> </ul>	 <p>Guilty Past</p> <p><b>Needs Honest Self-Confrontation</b></p> <p><u>DO:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>See it as God sees</li> <li>True Confession</li> <li>Repentance Steps*</li> </ul>
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