

THEME: WHO I AM IN CHRIST

TOPIC: I AM GUILTLESS (I)

TEXT: ROMANS 3:23-24; 5:2; JOHN 10:27-28; 1 JOHN 1:8-9

INTRODUCTION

We continue our series study on “Who we are and what we have in Christ”. Today we are looking at the topic of “**I am Guiltless**”.

Have we been so preoccupied with guilt and sin that we overlooked the astounding fact that Christ has crossed all worlds to be with us and include us in his life? The gospel isn't the good news that we can have Jesus in our lives. The gospel is the good news that Jesus has accepted us into his kingdom.

1. His Strength Is Made Perfect in My Weakness

Our focus must not be on our guilt but on God's forgiveness, but guilt has a legitimate place in our Christian walk. We hurt ourselves and others when we sin.

In our life, we continue to battle with sins of varying kinds; bitterness, impurity, quarrelling, jealousy, outbursts of anger, selfish ambition etc. However we become humble by identifying and admitting our complete reliance upon the Lord for righteousness.

When we are aware of our weaknesses, the Lord can use those very weakness to bless our lives through Him and prevent sins of pride and self-exaltation – **2 Corinthians 12:9-10**

When we acknowledge and admit our weaknesses, we learn to understand the power of God's strength.

Discussion: Give examples of how “His Strength is made perfect in Your Weakness”.

2. Forgiven, But Consequences Remain

Thanks be to God – our sins are forgiven and are as distant from us as the East is from the West. To God, it is as if they never were. But don't be misled; this doesn't mean there are no consequences to sin.

It should be noted that sin is like a gas top stove or burner; if allowed to build up it's harder to clean the debris. God promises if we confess our sins, He will cleanse us from unrighteousness **1 John 1:9**. But it may take years to overcome the grime left on our spirits.

Once we recognize sin, we must confess immediately to God. Don't allow the devil a foothold.

Q: How do we deal with the remains of the consequence of a forgiven sin?

3. Guilt vs Shame

Shame and guilt are not the same. Guilt is that I **have done** something wrong. The shame is I **am** something wrong. Shame says, "You are not acceptable. You are a mistake."

Remember **Satan's Lie "I am not" vs. God's "I Am"** from the first lesson?

Satan will use your guilt to convince you are worthless. Which is definitely a lie! Shame's close cousin is False Guilt. This is when you *feel* guilty when you are not guilty. False guilt comes from deception and is a barrier to living a full life in Christ. *False guilt has nothing to do with what's true and accurate, nor is it related to true repentance. Rather, it is usually the fear of disapproval in disguise.* John 10:28.

Q: What is the difference between Healthy Guilt vs False and Harmful Guilt?

4. The Heart of Man

The Heart of Man is a story inviting the sons and daughters of God to leave behind our broken, moralistic, and religious way of thinking and relating to God and to others. Once we know who God is (and, as a result, who we are), we have something to invite the world into.

Conclusion

Confess sins, identify shame, remember you are forgiven, and stay in the Word. Satan is whispering you are not good enough over and over; saturate yourself in the Truth to combat his lies. Thank God for His love and mercy.

In our darkness, the Holy Spirit dwells. As the Spirit of truth, adoption, grace, and life in Christ, assisting us in becoming who we are in Jesus. Our inner reality is a tangled jumble of guilt, shame, worry, self-centeredness, hiding, and fear, all of which contribute to a profoundly incorrect view. The Holy Spirit does what we could never do for ourselves, opening our eyes to the loving forgiveness of our Father as He tenderly meets us in our grief and bewilderment, gently untangling the mess to allow us to walk in His love.