
12 Myths

12 Myths that Christians Believe That Aren't in the Bible!

A myth is a widely held but false belief or idea, a misrepresentation of the truth. Not everything believed as biblical truth is truly biblical. This series will seek to unravel 12 commonly accepted beliefs that cause bondage rather than liberty.

MUSIC: YouTube = Zach Williams – Chain Breaker https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cd_xxmXdQz4

Video Clips: YouTube = Rat Park ---- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ao8L-OnSYzg>

From the Book Chasing the Scream by Johann Hari

Resources: 12 Christian Beliefs That Can Drive You Crazy – y Dr. Henry Cloud & Dr. John Townsend.

Myth #9: Guilt & Shame are good for me! (Part 2)

John 8:36 - So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

Problem #1: When you believe that that guilt and shame are good for you and helpful to your spiritual growth. Problem #2: Guilt and shame assist us by revealing our past sin to us—and they also prevent us from sinning again.

How do we learn to defy our conscience and live in the freedom Christ offers?

1. You may hear someone preach that _____ is a sign that you *are* guilty. Someone may say, "Guilt feelings are an emotional red light telling you that you have sinned. God speaks through guilt and shame. So, listen to them."
2. Teaching like this can cause many Christians to feel enslaved to a _____. But we don't have to - let's look at a biblical view of the conscience.
3. Human beings didn't always have a conscience - because they didn't need one - they had a _____ connection with God.
4. In addition, Adam and Eve were never intended to deal with issues of morality - questions of good and evil weren't meant for humans, but only for God – He knew that if we had knowledge of good and evil, we would turn our focus from _____, from love to legalism - being good would become more important than being connected.
5. The conscience began – it developed out of our _____ with God, as we began responding to the internal law of sin and death (Romans 8:2). It was an adaptation to learning how to sort out good and evil. The conscience became an "evaluator," _____ the goodness and badness of our thoughts, actions, and feelings.
6. Our conscience _____. It's part of living in a fallen world, and in a judged state - this internal referee combines the law written on our hearts by God (Romans 2:15) with our early _____ processes. But it isn't perfect.
7. As a product of the image of God as well as part of the Fall, our consciences _____ with us. As we help the conscience _____, we can trust it more. But it is certainly fallible and equating the conscience with God can be detrimental and destructive to our souls.

Confusing Guilt Feeling with Godly Sorrow

1. Guilt feelings focus on our **badness** - they focus on our feeling of worthlessness and our deserved punishment - they are essentially _____, not other-centered. Guilt moves us away from relationship and into **hiding**.
2. Godly _____ is a better response to our sinfulness.
3. In 2 Corinthians 7:9-11 Paul teaches the difference between godly sorrow (remorse) and worldly sorrow (guilt). God sorrow is _____, centering on the hurt we cause to someone we love - we feel bad because we feel the pain of the person we've injured.
4. Godly remorse seeks to **heal**, to make restitution to those we've hurt - _____ are its goals - to the contrary, guilt seeks self-justification (**defensiveness**) - it attempts to get rid of the bad feelings.

What Can You Do?

1. The next time you miss the mark, search your _____. If it centers on how bad you are, your emotions are “worldly sorrow” - or guilt. But if your response centers on loving your neighbor as yourself, it is likely to be “Godly sorrow” - or **repentance**.
2. If you’re motivated by guilt or shame, you cannot also be _____ – a strict, rigid, guilt-inducing conscience is not from God - ask Him for help in finding people who can move you from guilt and shame to love.

It can be helpful to remember these things:

- a) Own the guilt. It may have been built into you by too-strict relationships, but it’s now _____, and you can do something about it.
- b) Get into a Life-support system that is more concerned with _____ a group that understands that “God’s kindness leads you toward repentance” (Romans 2:14).
- c) Investigate where you _____ the guilt messages.
- d) Become aware of your _____.
- e) Forgive whoever _____ you.
- f) _____ new information to reeducate your conscience, from the Scriptures and from teaching that combines grace and truth.
- g) _____ new voices from your Life-support group - guilt isn’t resolved by simply retraining your mind - you **must** replace critical voices with accepting ones.
- h) Don’t resist _____ - let others comfort and love you through the process.

John 8:36 – So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. NIV

Romans 8:2 New International Version (NIV)

² because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you^[a] free from the law of sin and death.

Romans 2:14-15 New International Version (NIV)

¹⁴ (Indeed, when Gentiles, who do not have the law, do by nature things required by the law, they are a law for themselves, even though they do not have the law. ¹⁵ They show that the requirements of the law are written on their hearts, their consciences also bearing witness, and their thoughts sometimes accusing them and at other times even defending them.)

2 Corinthians 7:9-11 New International Version (NIV)⁹ yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. ¹⁰ Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death. ¹¹ See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter.

1 Corinthians 7:22 - For he who was a slave when he was called by the Lord is the Lord's freedman. Conversely, he who was a free man when he was called is Christ's slave.

Galatians 5:1 - It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not be encumbered once more by a yoke of slavery. NIV

ACTION: Journal This!

1. How has guilt and shame played out in your journey?
2. Did you grow up in a guilt/shame based environment?
3. How has your acceptance of this theology impacted you and your relationships?

Roane Hunter, Sr., LPC, CSAT, CCSAS
601.790.0583 | 940 Ebenezer Blvd. | Madison, MS 39110
rhunter@lifeworksms.com | www.lifeworksms.com

12

MYTHS

12 Myths that Christians Believe That Aren't in the Bible!

A myth is a widely held but false belief or idea, a misrepresentation of the truth. Not everything believed as biblical truth is truly biblical. This series will seek to unravel 12 commonly accepted beliefs that cause bondage rather than liberty. Men need to be aware of how nuggets of truth become cornerstones for error when wrongly understood. We need help to build solid scriptural foundations that produce emotional freedom. Christian men have taken so much scripture out of context and made a whole religion out of it. This has caused so many problems for men who need help and instead of being thrown a lifeline; they are left to drown hanging on to a Bible verse thrown from the shoreline. This series looks at the adjustments that need to be made to help men who need solid direction in how to grow to full maturity.

Myth #9: Guilt & Shame are good for me! (Part 2)

John 8:36 - So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed

Problem #1: When you believe that that guilt and shame are good for you and helpful to your spiritual growth.

Problem #2: Guilt and shame assist us by revealing our past sin to us—and they also prevent us from sinning again.

How do we learn to defy our conscience and live in the freedom Christ offers?

1. You may hear someone preach that **feeling guilty** is a sign that you are guilty. Someone may say, “Guilt feelings are an emotional red light telling you that you have sinned. God speaks through guilt and shame. So, listen to them.”
2. Teaching like this can cause many Christians to feel enslaved to a **shameful conscience**. But we don’t have to. Let’s look at a biblical view of the conscience.
3. Human beings didn’t always have a conscience - because they didn’t need one - they had a direct, **uninterrupted connection** with God.
4. In addition, Adam and Eve were never intended to deal with issues of morality - questions of good and evil weren’t meant for humans, but only for God – He knew that if we had knowledge of good and evil, we would turn our focus from **relationship to rules**, from love to legalism - being good would become more important than being connected.

5. The conscience began as it developed out of our **loss of relationship** with God, as we began responding to the internal law of sin and death (Romans 8:2). It was an adaptation to learning how to sort out good and evil. The conscience became an “evaluator,” **refereeing** the goodness and badness of our thoughts, actions, and feelings.
6. Our conscience **isn't God**. It's part of living in a fallen world, and in a judged state. This internal referee combines the law written on our hearts by God (Romans 2:15) with our early **socialization** processes. But it isn't perfect.
7. As a product of the image of God as well as part of the Fall, our consciences **change and grow with us**. As we help the conscience **mature**, we can trust it more. But it is certainly fallible and equating the conscience with God can be detrimental and destructive to our souls.

Confusing Guilt Feelings with Godly Sorrow

1. Guilt feelings focus on our **badness** - they focus on our feeling of worthlessness and our deserved punishment - they are essentially self-absorbed, not other-centered. Guilt moves us away from relationship and into **hiding**.
2. Godly sorrow is a better response to our sinfulness.
3. In 2 Corinthians 7:9-11 Paul teaches the difference between godly sorrow (remorse) and worldly sorrow (guilt). God sorrow is empathic, centering on the hurt we cause to someone we love - we feel bad because we feel the pain of the person we've injured.
4. Godly remorse seeks to **heal**, to make restitution to those we've hurt - reconciliation and relationship are its goals - to the contrary, guilt seeks self-justification_ **(defensiveness)** - it attempts to get rid of the bad feelings.

Did Bible characters struggle with general feelings of guilt?

"Since the introspective, guilt-oriented outlook of industrialized societies did not exist [in NT times], it is unlikely that forgiveness meant psychological healing. Instead, forgiveness by God meant being divinely restored to one's position and therefore freed from fear of loss at the hands of God.

Thus all known **agrarian societies have been honor-shame societies** and it is only individualistic societies in which guilt comes to the fore. The issue is therefore not the modern versus the ancient, but the collectivist versus the individualistic. Since industrialized societies allow for economic, political, and especially psychological individualism, it is ***industrialized societies that are guilt cultures***. It is because the ancient Mediterranean world was a highly collectivistic, agrarian society that guilt was virtually unknown. Reading it into **ANY** biblical text is a serious mistake.

No, these texts do not indicate that ancient people could be overcome by guilt. They indicate that people could be overcome by shame. Understanding the difference between guilt and shame is crucial here. Guilt is an internal reaction to a violation of one's own conscience. It depends on the existence of an individual conscience - something Middle Easterners do not have.

Shame is an internalization of the moral judgment that comes from outside, ***from the group***. In shame cultures it is the ***group that has the conscience, not the individual***. Thus when a group accuses one of violating its standards, deep shame is the result."

From Skip Moen – At God's Table

What Can You Do?

1. The next time you miss the mark, search your **emotional response**. If it centers on how bad you are, your emotions are “worldly sorrow” - or guilt. But if your response centers on loving your neighbor as yourself, it is likely to be “Godly sorrow” - or **repentance**.
2. If you’re motivated by guilt or shame, you cannot also be **motivated by love** – a strict, rigid, guilt-inducing conscience is not from God. Ask him for help in finding people who can move you from guilt and shame to love.

It can be helpful to remember these things:

- a) Own the guilt. It may have been built into you by too-strict relationships, but it’s now **your problem**, and you can do something about it.
- b) Get into a Life-support system that is more concerned with **relationships than “sin-busting,”** a group that understands that “God’s kindness leads you toward repentance” (Romans 2:14).

What Can You Do?

- c) Investigate where you **learned** the guilt messages.
- d) Become aware of your **anger**.
- e) Forgive whoever **controlled** you.
- f) **Learn** new information to reeducate your conscience, from the Scriptures and from teaching that combines grace and truth.
- g) **Internalize** new voices from your Life-support group - guilt isn't resolved by simply retraining your mind - you *must* replace critical voices with accepting ones.
- h) Don't resist **grief** - let others comfort and love you through the process.

ACTION: Journal This!

1. How has guilt and shame played out in your journey?
2. Did you grow up in a guilt/shame based environment?
3. How has your acceptance of this false theology impacted you and your relationships?