



The Fairview Church

Guilt, Sin, & Freedom

Romans

Speaker: Pastor Ric

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Pastor's Thought: The book of Romans begins by teaching us about the law. The Law is the revelation of God's righteousness, but offers no hope and only exposes the guilt of mankind. The law doesn't stop evil, and being righteous brings no promise that all will go well. Just as the law teaches us right from wrong, so does our conscience. We each have a conscience within us, that helps us to understand right from wrong, but even with our conscience as our guide we will not live rightly. Our conscience, like the law, only makes us feel guilty. Christ came to abolish our guilt. In the Bible guilt is only mentioned a few times, and it is never used as a motivator for good behavior; but rather, guilt is treated as something that needs to be removed, abolished, and defeated. Guilt in the Bible is a tool of the enemy. When we feel guilty, we become depressed and often this depression leads to sin. Jesus washed our guilt away, and made us clean. When we acknowledge the truth of what Jesus did, and accept ourselves as he sees us, this leads to encouragement which leads to a life of righteousness, patience, and joy. However, often we choose to respond inappropriately to our guilt. Instead of being driven to Christ, we try to deny it or explain it away. We may try to punish ourselves, make a system of do's and don'ts, or just go on sinning. The truth is that anyway we try to appease our guilt and conscience will fail. Only Christ brings forgiveness. The Bible doesn't speak about the "feelings" of guilt; only the reality of dealing with it. God is far more interested in speaking of forgiveness than guilt. He wants us to know that we can stop feeling guilty because guilt leads to depression which leads to sin. As far as scripture is concerned, sin is done with and guilt comes when we don't believe. God is calling us to stop feeling guilty, receive His forgiveness, and walk in His righteousness. Only when we abandon trying to resolve our guilt on our own, and believe in God's forgiveness, will we find what we are looking for. To be free from guilt, depression and sin, we must learn to live in the hope of the forgiveness of the Son. Christ is our only hope.

Q: What happens to us when we dwell on our guilt?

Romans 3:19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, so that every mouth may be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God. **20** Therefore no one will be declared righteous in his sight by observing the law; rather, through the law we become conscious of sin.

Q: What is the point of the Law of God?

Romans 3:21 But now a righteousness from God, apart from law, has been made known, to which the Law and the Prophets testify. **22a** This righteousness from God comes through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe....

Q: How should we see ourselves righteous or sinful, guilty or innocent? Why?

Romans 3:22b There is no difference, **23** for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, **24** and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus. **25** God presented him as a sacrifice of atonement, through faith in his blood. He did this to demonstrate his justice, because in his forbearance he had left the sins committed beforehand unpunished— **26** he did it to demonstrate his justice at the present time, so as to be just and the one who justifies those who have faith in Jesus. **27** Where, then, is boasting? It is excluded. On what principle? On that of observing the law? No, but on that of faith. **28** For we maintain that a man is justified by faith apart from observing the law.

Q: Why, scripturally, is it very inappropriate for us to dwell on our sin and guilt?

Q: How does guilt lead to depression and sin?

Q: What are some ways we have tried to deal with our guilt in our own strength?

Q: How should we view sin and guilt? How can we live above it?