

## **How to Overcome Guilt**

### **Psalm 38**

#### **Introduction:**

1. Guilt can be a crushing weight. Last week we saw from Psalm 38 what guilt did to King David. It nearly destroyed him. David allowed sin into his life, and that sin produced the mammoth weight of a guilty conscience. It had David down for the count. vs. 1-8
2. Because of guilt, we are often overcome by feelings of punishment, rejection, and isolation. Even as a believer, guilt can cause us to doubt God's forgiveness, God's grace, and God's love.
3. One of the deepest needs of human beings is to know how to deal with guilt. Many become confused, frustrated, and eventually give up in trying to deal with guilt. Thankfully, God's Word instructs us in how to handle guilt.
4. But, we must understand that there are two forms of guilt:
  - Genuine guilt – This comes as a result of violating God's Word.
  - False guilt – This is derived from misconceptions or feelings that are not based upon God's Word.
5. This psalm (Psalm 38) is the prayer of a truly guilty man. This prayer came after David had committed the sin of adultery with Bathsheba.
6. In last week's message, we examined this psalm and saw how David's sin had crippled him emotionally, physically, and spiritually (vs. 10, 13-14). It always does. Because of this, sin should be avoided at all cost. God's answer is to flee temptation.
7. But, what if it is too late and we have already sinned? How do we overcome the feelings of guilt and condemnation? Let's learn from Psalm 38.

#### **First, talk to God with confidence. vs. 15**

1. After fourteen rather dark and bleak verses, notice verse 15. Praise God, there is **hope** for the guilty soul! The word "*hope*" does not mean "a wishy-washy desire." It means "a bedrock assurance." We have a firm assurance that God hears us when we pray.
2. Satan will use our guilt to convince us that God no longer hears our prayers. This is where believers must be rooted and grounded in sound doctrine, or they will be tossed around and shaken.
3. In this dispensation, God does not hear our prayers because of what we have done; He hears us because of who we are!
4. If you are saved, you are God's accepted child that has been placed in Christ. You are in Christ, and He is in you. You have been made one with Him. Because of this, you have complete access to your heavenly Father. Ephesians 2:18, 3:12; 1 Timothy 2:5
5. Your access to God has nothing to do with **you**, but it has everything to do with **Jesus**.

- We have been made close to God through the blood of Jesus Christ (Ephesians 2:13), and it is by this same blood that we can have boldness to enter into God's presence. Hebrews 4:14-16, 10:19
6. We have confidence that God hears our prayers even when we cry out in guilt and shame. God hears us not based on our **attainment**, but based on Christ's blood **atonement**.
  7. Don't ever feel like, "I've sinned. I'm guilty and I can't pray. God won't hear me."
  8. As a believer who is in Christ, you have unlimited access to God in prayer.