

## YOUR GUILT

Reference: **2 Corinthians 7:8-11**

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Many want to put aside any mention of shame as inappropriate. Paul, though, speaks of godly sorrow and worldly sorrow. What's the distinction and how can sorrow be a good thing?

### A Religion of Smiles – (vs. 8)

1. Today so many presume that God's job is to make them happy.
2. Biblical ideas like carrying your cross, losing your life, or denying yourself would be greeted with (at best) confusion and (at worst) derision.
3. In opposing this I am not saying that God wants us to be miserable all the time. Rather, that there might be something other than our personal happiness that should be the highest goal of our lives.
4. In **v. 8**, Paul notes that he caused the Corinthians sorrow. He says he doesn't regret it, but then acknowledges that he did regret it for a while. That speaks to the fact that sorrow and regret are difficult things to handle even in the best of circumstances. It evokes split decisions and divided minds.

### What About Sorrow? Sorrow is necessarily because we've fallen short. – (v. 9)

1. Sorrow is an important part of each of our lives. I mean sorrow over things that we've done and ways that we've lived.
2. Why is sorrow necessary? Because we've fallen short. We've sinned.
3. We come with endless excuses to justify our questionable actions. But sin is wrong. And having done what is wrong should cause us sorrow.
4. When was the last time you were sorry about something you did? Does it happen regularly?

### Two Approaches:

1. *"Worldly sorrow brings death."* (**v.10b**)
  - a. Worldly sorrow causes you to focus on how terrible of a sinner you are rather than how gracious of a Savior Jesus is.
  - b. The world tries to minimize sorrow. They try to justify it. They try to make themselves feel better. The result is death.
  - c. Others are unable to minimize it. Their sin gnaws at them but they have no remedy available that would take away their sin. And so they either get overwhelmed by their sin or they circle back around to trying to minimize it. The result is death.
2. *"Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret."* (**v. 10a**)
  - a. *"Godly sorrow . . ."* There are times when God wants us to be sorrowful. One of those is when we are facing up to our sins.

- b. *" . . . brings repentance . . ."* This is the first big difference between godly sorrow and worldly sorrow. With worldly sorrow we try to minimize it or numb the pain.
  - The other option is repentance. This is open to us through Jesus.
  - We acknowledge that we've done something wrong. We have sorrow over our sins. We repent to God, acknowledging our guilt and asking for forgiveness.
- c. *" . . . that leads to salvation . . ."*
  - If the repentance here is from a non-Christian coming to Jesus, then the result is directly salvation. They are being saved by their repentance and belief in Jesus.
  - If the repentance here is from a Christian, then they are already saved. In that case, what Paul is pointing us to by mentioning "salvation" is that we continue to be in right relationship with God.
- d. *" . . . and leaves no regret."*
  - Godly sorrow brings freedom and breakthrough. We are left with a clean conscience and no regret.
  - When we try to push our sin away, we end up with it clinging it to us. When we embrace it, though, and admit our guilt, we end up with it being taken away.

### Points of Comparison for the two approaches:

1. Worldly sorrow – (**v. 10**)
2. Godly sorrow – (**v.11**)

### Applying these truths:

1. for the non-Christian – SALVATION.
2. for the Christian - Jesus did **not** come to excuse our sins. He came to forgive them. What's the distinction?
  - a. Excusing sin is saying, "What you did wasn't a big deal. Don't worry about it. You're excused."
  - b. Forgiving sin is saying, "What you did is a big deal. You should be concerned about it. It is separating you from your God. But Jesus came and took the just penalty of your sin upon Himself and that has opened up the door for you to be forgiven. Needing to be forgiven means your sin is a big deal – big enough that it took the death of the only Son of God to pay for them. If you're willing to admit that you need what Jesus did for you on the cross, He will apply it to your life."
  - c. If you believe that Jesus died on the cross, be aware of what that means about you. It means that Jesus thought your sin needed forgiveness. Now, will you pursue godly sorrow and that forgiveness?