

# Dealing with Sin and Guilt

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## Watch before you begin

Scan to watch the Lesson 6 teaching video — a [X]-minute companion to this lesson.

### BIG IDEA

Guilt is forgiven at the cross. Shame is healed in the light, among people who know the whole truth about you.

### CORE SCRIPTURES

*"If we walk in the light as he himself is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin."*

— **1 John 1:7 (CSB)**

*"Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, so that you may be healed."*

— **James 5:16 (CSB)**

### KEY CONCEPTS

Fill in the blanks as you read or as your group works through the lesson.

1. Lesson 2 dealt with the verdict that doesn't move. This lesson deals with the \_\_\_\_\_ that's still there even after the verdict is settled.
2. Forgiveness is what the cross does. \_\_\_\_\_ is what the body of Christ does.
3. Walking in the light, first of all, is vertical — honest with God. Walking in the light with one another is \_\_\_\_\_ — honest with someone you trust.

4. Shame's whole strategy is \_\_\_\_\_ :  
"if they knew, they wouldn't love you."
5. The shape of a maturing Christian's life isn't sinlessness. It's a shorter \_\_\_\_\_ .

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

*Work through these questions as a group. There are no wrong answers here — only honest ones.*

### ► **OPENING** — LOW STAKES

1. Before tonight, when you thought about sin and guilt, was it usually the act you focused on or how you felt about yourself afterward? Where do you think you learned that?
2. Has there been a time when you knew, intellectually, that you were forgiven — but couldn't shake the feeling that something was still wrong? You don't have to give specifics — just name whether you've been there.

### ► **CORE** — HEART OF THE LESSON

3. The lesson distinguishes guilt ("I did wrong") from shame ("I am wrong"). Without naming specifics, which one tends to take up more room in your head after you sin? What does that one sound like?
4. The lesson says walking in the light is, first of all, vertical — honest with God. What's your honest first move when you become aware of having sinned: do you go toward God with it, or away from him before you do anything else?
5. James 5:16 says, "Confess your sins to one another, that you may be healed." Why do you think James used "healed" there instead of "forgiven"? What does that distinction open up that we might miss otherwise?

### ► **DEEPER** — FOR COURAGEOUS GROUPS

6. The lesson says shame's strategy is isolation: "if they knew, they wouldn't love you." Where has that voice talked to you the loudest? You don't have to share the content — just name where it shows up in your life.
7. Is there one person in your life right now to whom you could say something hard about yourself, knowing they wouldn't flinch? If yes, what's it like having them? If no, what's been in the way of building toward one?

## JOURNALING

*Set aside 15-20 minutes with these prompts. Write honestly — no one grades these.*

**1** Think about a recent sin you confessed to God and believed he forgave you for — but that you still flinch when you remember. What is it about that memory that lingers? Why do you think it's still there?

**2** The lesson distinguishes godly grief (the kind that puts you in motion toward repentance) from worldly grief (the kind that just spirals into "I'm hopeless"). Which one have you been more familiar with lately? Write what the spiral sounds like in your head — and then write what you think God would say to that voice.

**3** Make a list of the people in your life who might be a "trustworthy hearer" — someone you could say a hard thing to about yourself, knowing they wouldn't flinch. For each one, write a sentence about what makes them safe. If the list is short or empty, write instead about what it would look like to start building toward one.

### THIS WEEK

Practice the return trip. When you become aware of a sin this week — and you will — try this rhythm: name it plainly to God in one sentence, receive what's already been done at the cross, and keep walking. Don't wait until you feel sorry enough. The goal isn't fewer falls — it's a shorter trip back. At the end of the week, note one thing: did any return get faster than the one before?

## ANSWERS

Fill in the blanks as you read or as your group works through the lesson.

1. **wound**
2. **healing**
3. **horizontal**
4. **isolation**
5. **return trip**

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### Want to go deeper?

Scan to watch the Lesson 6 teaching video — a [X]-minute companion to this lesson.