

DOES YOUR PAST HAUNT YOU?

1 John 3:14-24

INTRODUCTION: One bad choice can lead to a lifetime of regret. However, guilt is a terrible motivator. When we have feelings of guilt our natural reaction is to withdraw from others. Once we identify our guilt we must make the effort to cast it out of our minds through honest confession to our God: 2 Corinthians 7:10.

I. OUR FEELINGS ARE FICKLE!

Our feelings are fickle. Sometimes there is no reason to feel badly, but our hearts may still condemn us. Sometimes our hearts will falsely condemn us but our God is greater than our hearts: 1 John 3:19-21. Guilt is something our God has built into our emotional makeup for His purpose. Guilt, much like pain has a God given purpose but it should not remain with us long-term. Godly conviction and guilt are two different things. Conviction is the process of the Holy Spirit revealing something in our lives is displeasing to Him. Proverbs 4:18-19; John 15:5. When we are convicted we must turn to the Lord for His deliverance because our corrupt human nature does not have it within itself to correct these problems: Philippians 4:13.

II. CONVICTION EVIDENCES WHAT GOD IS ABOUT TO DO!

When our God reveals a failure in our lives it is so He can do the miraculous: Lamentations 3:21-26; Joshua 23:15. We cannot bask in the Lord's blessings if we are not abiding in His presence. Judgement is actually a call of repentance so we might experience the blessings of our Lord. Yes, we will suffer for our sin, but our God is filled with mercy and grace and as we seek the Lord in our heart we may continue to suffer for our sins for a while but God's grace and mercy are on their way: 2 Chronicles 7:14. To those who trust in God's mercies, consequences are never eternal. Hebrews 12:11: Yes our Lord does discipline those He loves but the Lord's mercies are always new.

III. GETTING GOD'S ETERNAL PERSPECTIVE!

Even our most shameful sins can become trophies of God's grace. We must not chain ourselves or allow others to chain us to our failures. God can and will make us new in Christ: 2 Corinthians 5:17; 1 John 1:9. We must learn how to encourage ourselves in the Lord: 2 Timothy 1:7. Our God say He has removed our sins as far as the East is from the West: Psalm 103:11-12. Remember, if you have honestly confessed and repented of your sin and guilt arises from it yet again it is not from God: 1 John 1:9. "Our sin has been paid for in full!" Our God can and will use even our failures for His glory and our good if we love Him and keep His calling on our lives in view: Romans 8:28-29. As we trust in the Lord He fills us with His hope! Romans 15:13. Whether it be a small deed or a big one, consequences, good and bad do follow our pattern of behavior: Galatians 6:7-9. As we honestly confess our sins and turn from them our Lord will renew our lives and fill them with His joy and grace.