



HOUSTON, WE HAVE A PROBLEM...

MON

- ✓ READ Luke 4:18
- ✓ THOUGHT Always remember that each one of us is special to God. Because of this gift of grace, a life of freedom is created within us. Jesus taught us to accept this gift of grace from God and also to go and share it with everyone we know because it is available to them as well.
- ✓ PRAYER Lord, help me accept your gift of grace and mercy as I examine the feelings of guilt that follow me. Amen.

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TUES

- ✓ READ Deuteronomy 31:6
- ✓ THOUGHT Be Brave. Nobody said taking a closer look at our feelings would be easy. You may try to do this alone, but God is always available to point the way. Be intentional and ask for God's help.
- ✓ PRAYER God, I remember your promise, that you will never leave me. As I open my hands and heart to you, I ask for your strength and guidance. Amen.

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WED

- ✓ READ 1 John 1:9
- ✓ THOUGHT Acknowledge when we have made mistakes. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from everything we've done wrong." Be honest with God and share the hidden sins you need to acknowledge.
- ✓ PRAYER Lord, in your mercy, I offer these feelings of guilt that I've been afraid to hold up to your light of love. Amen.

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THURS

✓ READ

James 5:16

✓ THOUGHT

Make amends. "Make this your common practice: confess your sins and pray for each other so that you can live together whole and healed. The prayer of a person living right with God is something powerful to be reckoned with." Maybe you feel it's too difficult to apologize in person. Practice by writing down the specific details about your offense. Later, apologize face-to-face. You will both be blessed.

✓ PRAYER

Oh Lord, help me apologize honestly, with a true sense of humility and concern. Amen.

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FRI

✓ READ

Ephesians 4:32

✓ THOUGHT

Ask for forgiveness. Don't expect to receive forgiveness right away, or ever. Only God can completely forgive. Healing is often a long slow process for everyone involved. The act of asking for forgiveness reveals the sincerity of your heart.

✓ PRAYER

God please forgive me. Thank you for your mercy and love for me. Amen.

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SAT

✓ READ

Romans 8:21

✓ THOUGHT

Life in freedom! "So Christ has truly set us free. Now make sure you stay free, and don't get tied up again in slavery to the law." Freedom in Christ is the point of addressing your guilt. After you have opened the cellar door where you have been pushing down your hidden sins, leave the door open! Let love's healing and mercy show you new ways to know and serve our risen Lord.

✓ PRAYER

Loving God, I bow down to the power of your presence in my life and ask that you continue to guide me as I serve you. Amen.

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GROUP GUIDE

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- ✓ **PRAYER** **God, we acknowledge that you are already here. May our hearts be open to your presence and direction. Amen.**
- ✓ **BIG IDEA** **God takes those spaces within us that are filled with guilt and transforms them as we acknowledge, ask for forgiveness, and then live in the freedom of the love that makes us whole.**
- ✓ **READ** **Romans 8:1-4**
- ✓ **DISCUSS**
 - The book of Romans is the story of the good news of Christ where we are no longer held captive by our wrongdoing. "So now there is no condemnation for those who belong to Christ Jesus." (Rom 8:1) The *now* Paul refers to in this passage is the new life in Christ. What are some adjectives that come to mind when you think of the *new life* that we are meant to experience as Christ followers?
 - However, Paul is clear in the book of Romans that God hates sin, which disrupts our relationships. "And because you belong to him, the power of the life-giving Spirit has freed you from the power of sin that leads to death." (Rom 8:2) Let's talk for a minute about guilt and shame. Shame is a feeling of unworthiness and a sense that we don't belong. Remember, there is nothing you can do to earn or to lose God's love. The emotion of guilt can lead us to examine our actions and the effects on ourselves and upon others. Try to remember a time when your lies or dishonesty caused a rift between you and a friend. How did that affect your relationship with God?
 - Pay attention to this: "God went for the jugular when he sent his own Son. He didn't deal with the problem as something remote and unimportant. In his Son, Jesus, he personally took on the human condition, entered the disordered mess of struggling humanity in order to set it right once and for all." (Rom 8:3) Guilt is the spoon that stirs the disordered mess of our humanity. Be brave and share a struggle that you tend to cover up either now or in your personal time with God. Acknowledgment of a guilty act is the first step toward restoration.
 - Finally, we are called to live as though we are free in Christ, beyond the bounds of human-made rules and expectations. "He did this so that the just requirement of the law would be fully satisfied for us, who no longer follow our sinful nature but instead follow the Spirit." (Rom 8:4) Consider that last phrase, "instead follow the Spirit." Describe what you think that means. How do you notice when God's Spirit is leading you? What are some practical ways you have found to incorporate the nudges of the Holy spirit into your ordinary day?
- ✓ **Pray** **God, thank you for providing the way for us to live in freedom through Christ's life, death, and resurrection. Help us be courageous enough to acknowledge the guilt we feel and take responsibility for the things we need to change. Thank you for your mercy and grace. Amen.**