Talk 4. Guilt and Repentance Outline for Participants

1. Introduction: guilt and guilt feelings
   a. In this talk we will consider the second form of feeling bad about ourselves – guilt feelings or self-condemnation.
   b. We are guilty when we have done something objectively wrong. Often we feel guilty even when we have not done something wrong.
   c. In our culture, there is a tendency to downplay objective right and wrong, especially in personal relationships.
   d. The result of such approaches is moral insensitivity and tendencies to automatically excuse oneself or, paradoxically, introspection and preoccupation with our intentions, with resulting guilt feelings.

2. How we should approach wrongdoing (sin)
   a. We should live righteously, avoiding wrongdoing, as well as improving bad ways of relating that are not helpful (1 Tim. 6:11).
   b. We should repair wrongdoing (cf. Foundations Course 1): (1) admit our wrongdoing, (2) decide to change, (3) ask for forgiveness when we have wronged someone, (4) make restitution when we can (see 2 Sam. 12:1-15 – the story of the repentance of David).
   c. We should take responsibility for what we have done, not focus on blaming or excusing ourselves.
   d. We should be sorry for our wrongdoing, not feel guilty. – Sorrow for sin and regret (feeling bad about ourselves for it) are different (2 Cor. 7:8-11). Sorrow is focused on God and others and is change-oriented.
   e. We should repent for real wrongdoing, not for imperfections, mistakes, wrong feelings, temptations. We should avoid scrupulosity.

3. Dealing with guilt feelings
   b. Repair wrongdoing when you do not live righteously.
   c. Do not let feelings rule, but take a stand on the truth. 1) We are not guilty just because we feel guilty (2 Cor. 1:12). 2) Others can make us feel guilty (sometimes deliberately). 3) God forgives. We should accept his forgiveness (1 John 1:5-10).
   d. Go to your pastoral leader, or someone you can trust to judge well, for judgment when it is needed.
   e. Clear your conscience: do a moral inventory, repent of wrongdoing, make a general confession, ask forgiveness, and make restitution.
   f. Do the normal things for any emotional problem: reject it, have faith you can overcome it, etc.

4. We need to treat one another well in this area
   a. We should be straightforward when we think someone has done something wrong: admonish
them or talk it through. – We should normally put up with other things we do not like or talk them through.
b. We should not make others feel guilty. We should avoid indirect communication about things we do not approve of or like.
c. We should forgive freely.

Www.Hrcekc.com/guiltflow.html

5. Freedom from sin and its consequences is a Christian blessing. – Heb. 10:19-25.