

# Living without Guilt

## A Testimony

I know about guilt. I know about the shadow deep inside, the heaviness, the darkness. I know about being deeply, unforgettably aware of the wrong I've done. I've tried to deal with that guilt in a variety of ways.

I've tried to deny it: "It's just a state of mind...an emotion...it'll pass."

I've tried to rationalize it: "Everybody does wrong once in a while...I'm no worse than most people."

I've tried to blame it on others and escape it: "It's just the way my parents raised me...society's false standards...If I ignore their rules, I'll eventually get past this feeling."

I've tried to make up for it somehow: "I will be nice to people...do good deeds...give money...That will make up for the wrong I've done...My good deeds will outweigh the bad."

But none of that lifts the blackness. None of it makes me clean. None of it changes the person I know I am. My wrongness is not a feeling, or a fiction, or a passing phenomenon. It's a fact.

But thank the Lord, I also know what forgiveness feels like. Years ago I heard about Jesus. At first, hearing about Him only made the guilt worse. I felt painted in a corner. My wrongness, my sin, was bigger than ever. It loomed over me. It stared me in the face.

Finally, in desperation, and in feeble hope, I turned to Jesus. I just opened myself to Him. I admitted how wrong I was. I asked Him to help me. And you know what happened? He didn't scold me. He didn't punish me. He just forgave me. Forgave me! Freely, completely, unconditionally forgave me! I was a brand-new person, bathed in His love inside and out.

I cannot describe the freedom, the cleanness, the joy, the rightness of life. I'm not talking about a feeling. It was a fact. I was a different person.

If you're living with guilt, let me tell you: you don't have to. You don't need to deny it, rationalize it, or make up for it. Jesus forgives sin. Jesus takes away guilt completely. Jesus makes new people. Jesus can make you a new person.