

But Satan twists this and makes it a bad thing. He leads us to feel guilty over things we shouldn't feel guilty about. This is **bad** guilt and many Christians, like this young man, suffer from it. Good guilt comes from God; draws us closer to God and drives us to become a better person. Bad guilt comes from Satan; drives a wedge between us and God and gives us a sense of failure that leads us to give up trying to become a better person.

One of our **biggest cheerleaders**, urging us to live the Christian life, is the "**angel of light**"-Satan (2 Corinthians 11:14). He whispers to people serious about serving Jesus –"you are not a good husband; or a good wife; or a good parent" and gives you a lot of reasons. He quotes Scripture, but what he says is not true. He says you are not a good Christian if you don't come to church on Sunday and Wednesday nights; if you don't have a daily prayer time; if you don't witness to a lost person every week; if you don't study your Bible daily; etc.

And he is **never satisfied**. He tells us if we truly love Jesus, we will read our Bibles and pray at least five minutes every day. When we do five; he makes it ten; when we do ten; he makes it thirty, etc. On and on it goes and it never stops.

And he does this in **every area** of life – witnessing; giving; working with the poor; etc. He is like the camel on a cold night that stuck his head into his owner's tent. The owner let him do it. Then he put in his right leg; and his left leg and his back legs. In the end, the camel was in the tent and the owner was outside of it.

This **ruins our health**. Most psychiatrists agree that guilt is the *most* destructive of all the harmful emotions. Until David confessed his sins and found forgiveness, his body produced toxic chemicals that made him unhappy and took away his strength. Guilt produces *shame*. Shame produces *low self-regard*. This produces *depression*. Depression produces *anger* that we

dribble out in daily doses by being irritable to those around us. Not liking ourselves and realizing that people think less and less of us, produces *self-destructive behavior* that often leads to *drug addiction* and even *suicide*.

Pastoring a church for thirty years, you get to know a lot of people. There was one lady with six children, who did a wonderful job supporting her husband and being a part of her children's church life and school life. One problem was that her health was bad. She had several serious operations, and was in and out of hospitals all through those thirty years.

She was from another denomination, but came to me for counseling. We had become casual friends at ball games when our children competed with each other. She told me that when she was a young wife and mother, she gave in one day and had improper relations with a utility worker in her home.

She told me her frequent trips to the hospital were mostly for chronic fatigue and depression. And she said she believed it could all be traced back to that one sin. I read from Psalms 32 and 51, where David tells us how he dealt with the guilt, because of his committing adultery with one of his soldier's wives and having him killed in battle, to hide it (2 Samuel 11).

I told her to confess her sin to God and ask for His forgiveness like David did. She said, "Pastor Bob, I have done that a ***thousand times***." My answer was, "**_____** that is ***999 times too many***. God forgave you long ago". Her health problems came from another kind of bad guilt – feeling guilty after we pray for forgiveness. Every day after that, when we pray for forgiveness for that sin, God says, "What sin?".

Psalm 103 pictures God as a "***kind Father***" to his disobedient *children*; and says He separates us from our sins, "***as far as the East is from the west***", when He forgives us.