



## God's Encouraging Word ... *when I am burdened with guilt*

What she had done in the past weighed heavily on her conscience. She was living under the soul-crushing conviction that the death of her nine-year-old daughter was God paying her back for her sins.

He was resigned to live the rest of his life in despair. His wife had begged him to get help for his alcoholism through their entire marriage. Now suddenly, she was gone and so was any opportunity to make up for being a lousy husband and father. It was too late.

His head hung low as he dissolved into tears. When he looked up, he asked, "What kind of person would steal from his own family?" He knew the answer. That was why he was sobbing.

How does your guilt feel? Does it hit you like a wrecking ball when you are confronted with the horrifying truth of how evil you really are or how much damage and pain you've caused? Does it leave you hopeless or even horrified at the truth you have to face sooner or later? The truth that you're never going to be the person you know you should be. The truth that makes you a failure to a holy God and undeserving of anything good from him.

You should know something about all those people mentioned above. They all found relief from guilt. They found it in the only place it can be found—in the God who pledges, **"I, even I, am he who blots out your transgressions, for my own sake, and remembers your sins no more."**

You might think your sins and weaknesses define you. They don't. Not in God's eyes. You know how you highlight a phrase and then hit "delete" when you are editing a document? God does that with your sins. He not only doesn't see them anymore, he doesn't even remember them. He doesn't recall the worst things you've done or your habitual failings. So your sins not only don't define you to God, they don't condemn you to his punishment either.

How is that possible? God loved you with a love so amazing that he charged his Son, Jesus, with your sins and punished him in your place. All of the ways you have sinned or ever will sin, have been paid for. They are not on your record or clinging to your identity anymore.

Believe it, and in Jesus live unburdened from your guilt and in the joyful freedom of forgiveness.