

Think It Over: This section is about turning what God is saying to you into action steps. These talking points, questions, and scriptures are designed to help you take your own next step. If you are leading a group through this guide, don't feel like you have to answer every question. Pick out those questions that will stir up conversation and action among your group.

- Is it easier for you to forgive yourself or other people? How have your thoughts on forgiveness changed over the past three weeks?
- Think about a time when you felt shame. How did that shame affect you? What are some differences between shame and guilt? What are some ways you could start replacing shame with guilt/conviction? How could the change become an opportunity to grow closer to God?
- Why do you think it's so hard to forgive ourselves when we've messed up? What can you do to start forgiving yourself? Why is forgiving yourself more about embracing God's forgiveness and your identity as a Christ follower? What steps could you take this week to let go and accept God's forgiveness?
- Read Matthew 23:25-26. Why is it easier to clean the outside of our lives rather than the inside? How does Proverbs 4:23 tie into true repentance (the caffeinated kind)?
- Read 2 Corinthians 7:9-10 from the outline. Think of an instance where God-led conviction or guilt has actually turned your life around. Thank God that He uses guilt to get our attention so that our lives are redirected for the good. What conviction/guilt has been touching you lately? How could God use it to transform your life?
- A strong cup of caffeinated repentance is not only for the person who needs to come to Christ, but for those of us wanting to grow in our relationship with God. Ask God to speak to your heart regarding the kind of repentance that you are drinking. One will change your life, and the other will only leave you with regret and sorrow. Read Acts 3:19 (Philips) from the outline. Are you finding the refreshment that comes only from repentance that welcomes the presence of God?

Next Steps: Don't carry around the burden of guilt for another week. Pray and ask God to forgive you and remove your guilt. Then embrace the freedom He offers. You don't have to hold on to bitter memories and let painful moments steal your joy and weigh you down. Find out more in *The Grudge Bible Plan* at: www.go2.lc/grudge.

Changing Your Mind: Choose one of the verses listed in the Message Guide and commit it to heart.



If you missed a message, visit www.scc.website or pick up a CD at Guest Services.



Forgiving Yourself

¹³Whoever tries to hide his sins will not succeed, but the one who confesses his sins and leaves them behind will find mercy.
Proverbs 28:13 (Voice)

³I know how bad I've been; my sins are staring me down. ⁴You're the One I've violated, and you've seen it all, seen the full extent of my evil. You have all the facts before you; whatever you decide about me is fair. ⁵I've been out of step with you for a long time, in the wrong since before I was born. ⁶What you're after is truth from the inside out. Enter me, then; conceive a new, true life.
Psalm 51:3-6 (MSG)

Guilt / Conviction (I did bad)

vs

Shame (I am bad)

⁴Fear not; you will no longer live in shame. Don't be afraid; there is no more disgrace for you. You will no longer remember the shame...
Isaiah 54:4 (NLT)

Shame connects your actions

to your identity.

¹Count yourself [blessed], how happy you must be— you get a fresh start, your slate's wiped clean. ²Count yourself [fortunate]— God holds nothing against you and you're holding nothing back from him. ³When I kept it all inside, my bones turned to powder, my words became daylong groans. ⁴The pressure never let up; all the juices of my life dried up. ⁵Then I let it all out; I said, "I'll come clean about my failures to God." Suddenly the pressure was gone— my guilt dissolved, my sin disappeared.
Psalm 32:1-5 (MSG)

- God wants to use your guilt to draw you to His grace.

⁹But if we own up to our sins, when God's light uncovers them, He shows that He is faithful and just by forgiving us of our sins and purifying us from the pollution of all the bad things we have done. 1 John 1:9 (Voice, TPT)

- The devil wants to use your shame to drive you away from God.

⁹Now I'm glad—not that you were upset, but that you were jarred into turning things around. You let the distress bring you to God, not drive you from him. The result was all gain, no loss. 2 Corinthians 7:9 (MSG)

- Guilt can be a gift, while shame can be something we never get past.

The Repentance of Guilt compared to the Repentance of Shame:

The two kinds of repentance both look, smell, and, for many, taste the same. Yet, one (guilt) will transform your life and the other (shame) will only leave you with regret and sorrow.

❖ The Decaffeinated Response

The decaffeinated repentance (*metamelomai*) conveys a change of mind, such as to produce regret or even remorse on account of sin but not necessarily a change of heart.

³Then Judas, who betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, repented himself, and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders. Matthew 27:3 (ASV)

²⁵...You wash clean the outside of your cups and dishes. But inside they are full of what you got by cheating others and pleasing yourselves. ²⁶Pharisees, you are blind! First make the inside of the cup clean and good. Then the outside of the cup will also be clean.

Matthew 23:25-26 (ERV)

❖ The Caffeinated Response

The caffeinated repentance (*metanoia*)

conveys a change of one's mind, purpose, and life

¹⁰Distress that drives us to God does that. It turns us around. It gets us back in the way of salvation. We never regret that kind of pain. But those who let distress drive them away from God are full of regrets, end up on a deathbed of regrets. ¹¹And now, isn't it wonderful all the ways in which this distress has goaded you closer to God? You're more alive, more concerned, more sensitive, more reverent, more human, more passionate, more responsible. Looked at from any angle, you've come out of this with purity of heart.

2 Corinthians 7:10–11 (MSG)

Bottom Line:

You can't change your past,
but God can change your future.

¹⁹You must repent and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out, that time after time your souls may know the refreshment that comes from the presence of God.

Acts 3:19 (Philips)

Resources for this series include messages from Life Church, North Point Community Church, Saddleback Church, and Mecklenburg Church.

To help you turn what God is saying to you into action steps, consider using the Think It Over section on the back.