

How can I shake this regret over past sins?

Lots of Christians are plagued by guilt over sins for which they have already been forgiven. They have committed certain sins that have a lingering effect on the mind and body. The regrets seem to never leave.

Paul had some good advice for us in this regard. Here are some of the things he said in which you can put your faith to help you overcome the shame of your past.

1. **You are no longer what you used to be** – In 1 Cor. 6:9-10, Paul lists some of the sins that the Corinthians had committed. Look over the list; there were some rough characters in that church. However, Paul said, "And such WERE some of you: but ye are WASHED, but ye are SANCTIFIED, but ye are JUSTIFIED in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God," 1 Cor. 6:11.

In other words, no matter what they had done, they were no longer that type of person. A person who is sanctified is cleaned up and set apart to be used by God. A person who is justified has already been tried for his sins and found NOT GUILTY. Some of the people greatly used of God had terrible pasts.

2. **You are a new creature** – In 2 Cor. 5:17, Paul says that once a man is in Christ, "he is a new creature: old things are PASSED AWAY, behold, all things are become new." So, the past is completely gone as far as God is concerned and you are to get on with your new life in Christ. The trouble is that while God sees your new life, you and your old friends still remember the past. But you aren't serving yourself or your old friends; you are serving God.
3. **You must forget the past** – In Phil. 3:13-14, Paul says, "but this one thing I do, FORGETTING those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

See, the devil knows that once you get saved, there is a high calling of God on your life. If you fulfill that calling, or hit "the mark," you get a prize. He doesn't want you to do that. So, he keeps you defeated by wallowing in the regrets of your past. Paul said to forget those things that are behind. He had been responsible for the capture, imprisonment, torture and death of Christians (Acts 8:3,9:2, 9:13, 22:4-5, 26:10-11). And he had to put that behind him.

4. **You must remember where your sins are** – As David said in Ps. 103:12, "As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." They are all behind God's back (Is. 38:17). They are all in the depths of the sea (Mic. 7:19). The Lord Jesus Christ has taken them away (Jn. 1:29). You have been saved from your sins (Matt. 1:21).

The trouble with all of this really stems from thinking about the sins repeatedly and imagining what others would think of you if they knew. Or, you may be plagued with

your own thoughts about yourself now that you know better. Or, imagining what others who do know your past are thinking or saying about you may plague you. Whatever the case, you must remember one more thing. They are not the judges. God is!! Like Paul said, "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ," (Rom 14:10).

Listen, you will give account of yourself to God. You can't change the past. So, the thing to do is live each new day to the glory of God Almighty. You can affect the way today turns out by making right choices today that are pleasing to God. For sure, if you continue to overwhelm yourself with grief, sorrow and regret over the past, you will only make today as bad as yesterday, if not worse!!

