

“Your True Worth Through God’s Eyes”
Session 5: The Shame Trap
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I. The Shame Trap

False Beliefs: A feeling of inadequacy, imperfection or disgrace. Believes they cannot change. Hopeless.

FEAR OF INFERIORITY

- Often thinks about past failures and experiences of rejection
- Certain memories from the past bring up strong, painful emotions
- Same mistakes made over and over
- Wants to change certain aspects of their character, but don’t believe they are able to.
- There are certain aspects of their appearance that they cannot accept.
- Is often disgusted with self
- Perceives self as an immoral person
- Mourns lost opportunities to experience a complete and meaningful life

Beliefs about God:

- Feels unworthy of God’s love – perhaps feels they deserve to be rejected.
- God seems distant
- Blames God for their situation. If only he really cared or helped.

II. Roots of Shame

“They felt no shame” – Genesis 2:25 aspects of nakedness, openness, transparency, communication and fellowship.

It is linked where we put our trust: The tree of knowledge of good and evil or God?

Satan accused God of withholding knowledge from humans. This is partly true, but Satan never told humans the cost.

Guilt: I have done wrong

Shame: I am wrong/something is wrong with me.

Inner conviction: related to guilt

Inner condemnation: linked with shame, the sensitive areas of our lives

III. Where does shame arise?

- Feeling of inadequacy or imperfection
- Shame is the exposure of what we see as our inner ugliness or deficiency
- Shame based messages make us feel a sense of disgrace.

IV. Signposts of Shame:

A. Absorption with self

Ps 44:13-16

You have made us a reproach to our neighbors, the scorn and derision of those around us. You have made us a byword among the nations; the peoples shake their heads at us. My disgrace is before me all day long, and my face is covered with shame at the taunts of those who reproach and revile me, because of the enemy, who is bent on revenge.

Isaiah 29:22

Therefore this is what the LORD, who redeemed Abraham, says to the house of Jacob: "No longer will Jacob be ashamed; no longer will their faces grow pale."

Shame is like the blood rushing out of your body. Like you died...

To be covered in shame is to feel the self engulfed in something disgusting or hideous.

B. Hiding: flight from exposure...

Escape only intensifies the terror. It only increases the shame.

C. Habitually Destructive Behavior

It lashes out to destroy the self and blind the observer.

D. Codependent Relationships

Trying to gaining personal significance by rescuing and taking care of others, but still feeling hopeless and inept.

Biblical Definitions of Shame

- Shame arises because I trust in idols, and feel foolish when my idol topples.
- Shame is the experience of being exposed as a fool.
- Shame arises when we ascribe glory and honor to something other than God.

Psalm 4:2

How long, O men, will you turn my glory into shame? How long will you love delusions and seek false gods?

Shame is an internal wake up call. We are worshipping a god who is not God. We are relying on the flesh.

Isaiah 44:9-11

All who make idols are nothing, and the things they treasure are worthless. Those who would speak up for them are blind; they are ignorant, to their own shame. Who shapes a god and casts an idol, which can profit him nothing? He and his kind will be put to shame; craftsmen are nothing but men.

Shame has the potential to arrest passion, close down desire, and turn the heart away from sorrow. It shuts us down.

V. The redemptive power of shame: God's multifaceted solution

Facing shame is an invitation to look into the eyes of the one who does not condemn – but instead offers grace, forgiveness and freedom. This is the promise of regeneration.

A. The humiliation of God

- In the incarnation – the manner of Jesus birth
- In his suffering

Hebrews 12:2-3

Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame

Isaiah 50:6-8

I offered my back to those who beat me, my cheeks to those who pulled out my beard; I did not hide my face from mocking and spitting. Because the Sovereign LORD helps me, I will not be disgraced. Therefore have I set my face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame.

If shame is the exposure of idolatry, then it is possible to trust in the true God and experience profound attack, assault, failure, and humiliation without succumbing to the inner hopelessness of shame.

When shame exposes us, we can counter our penchant to hide in self protection by hoping in our Advocate who protects us and comes to our defense. We transfer it to God

B. We break shame by experiencing sorrow, confidence in God, and gratitude.

Psalm 25:1-7

To you, O LORD, I lift up my soul; in you I trust, O my God. Do not let me be put to shame, nor let my enemies triumph over me. No one whose hope is in you will ever be put to shame, but they will be put to shame who are treacherous without excuse. Show me your ways, O LORD, teach me your paths; guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my Savior, and my hope is in you all day long. Remember, O LORD, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old. Remember not the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you are good, O LORD.

C. We break shame by receiving our God given identity

Joel 2:25-27 (New Living Translation)

The LORD says, "I will give you back what you lost to the swarming locusts, the hopping locusts, the stripping locusts, and the cutting locusts. It was I who sent this great destroying army against you. Once again you will have all the food you want, and you will praise the LORD your God, who does these miracles for you. Never again will my people be disgraced. Then you will know that I am among my people Israel, that I am the LORD your God, and there is no other. Never again will my people be disgraced."

Isaiah 61:7

Instead of shame and dishonor, you will enjoy a double share of honor.

D. We break shame by being appropriately clothed by God

Genesis 3:21

And the LORD God made clothing from animal skins for Adam and his wife.

Isaiah 61:10

I am overwhelmed with joy in the LORD my God! For he has dressed me with the clothing of salvation and draped me in a robe of righteousness. I am like a bridegroom in his wedding suit or a bride with her jewels.

For Personal Reflection:

Take some time to pray about and think through the areas of your life where you have felt shame.

- A. Which aspects of your shame are based on relying on a human value system of some sort (false gods)?

- B. Do you have a shame that was caused by the sin of another? What about it made you feel alienated and wanting to hide?

C. Where have you seen the redemptive power of shame (part V) at work in your life?

Coming up....

October 21th - The Road to Truth

The audio and notes for this and previous sessions of this series are available at www.sequimcommunitychurch.org in the Sunday Seminar section