

OVERCOMING SHAME

When Jesus became sin for us He accepted into Himself all the shame of mankind. All our unacceptability, unworthiness, disgrace came into the glorious Son of God at the Cross, where the public ridicule, public nakedness, mockery and torture was painfully endured. He had contempt for the shame, he looked down on it, disdaining it, and despising the humiliation of it, but endured it for the joy set before Him. He fixed his gaze on the future joy of angels rejoicing when sinners accept the royal pardon, when sufferers are healed and delivered in His name. He was not sidetracked by the sheer hard work and ugliness of the stark Cross. He could have asked for 72,000 angels to release him from the shame, but tasted the eternal separation, that was for us, as a perfect Redeemer. Shame entered the world at the fall of Adam and Eve when the talking serpent removed their glory clothing and they saw that they were naked. When Lucifer fell from the heavens, was excommunicated from the inexpressible glory of heaven, he felt an immense shame, guilt and rebellion, which he injected into the paradise garden couple when they disobeyed the clear prohibition of God. In simple terms, Satan cursed their identity as beings made in the image of God, producing the self disgust, low self-worth and insecurity with fear. Shame, the ancient game of Satan, can be defeated in the anointing of the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and the virtue of the cleansing blood of the Lamb.

What are the causes of shame?

1. Sin

The hidden sins of the believer will always cloak the image of Christ to the unbeliever. Paul tells the Corinthians he renounced (or spoke off himself) the hidden things of shame. The power of sin clings to us unless we confess and repent. The new creation cannot be manifest unless we make a claim on the precious blood of Jesus Christ for cleansing. The shame of unconfessed sin makes us walk round in a fog, prevents us from being real, and causes us to hide behind “fig-leaves”. Adam and Eve knew they were naked, the knowledge gave them shame, and so they sewed together the fig leaves of low self-worth, withdrawal, fear, self-pity, anxiety and so on in order to cover up. We attempt to flee from sin in a hundred and one ways. In marriage today, men flee from sorrow, renege on responsibility, fantasize about another woman. Women flee from being ruled and often end up in feminism. The shame of divorce centers round the struggle for control – the woman wants to be in charge and the man does not want to be accountable. Marriage can never be perfect until Christ Jesus returns, but until then it is a laboratory of love, an opportunity for total openness with the one, who means more to you than your previous family.

Jeremiah 3 : 24 – 25 links shame and sin among Israel’s farmers. The diminishing of the herds brought disgrace through sexual sin: “...*we lie down in our shame.*” Sin has the consequence of lowering status and wealth.

2. Abuse and violation

Read 2 Samuel 13 and feel the shame of Tamar, whose kingly robe could no longer be worn, whose virginity was robbed by the lusty Amnon, and whose honour of being a wife and possible future queen was no more. All sexual sin brings deep shame. Verse 19 speaks of deep loss of fruitfulness. Victims of sexual abuse know the pleasure of one’s body has

become the basis of a hatred of one's soul. Tamar for the rest of her life endured confusion and the dissociation of thoughts and feelings. Self-contempt, said Dr. Dan Allender, is Satan's counterfeit for the conviction of sin.

Jesus died naked at Calvary in order to restore glory to your spirit. He became my shame, so I can rise up in the convincing splendour of the character of His name.

3. Poor self-image

Read 2 Samuel 9 on Mephibosheth, whose name means "bearing shame". He lived in Lo Debar which means "no communication". People with shame are usually passive, reactive folk who empower the circumstances rather than take a determined approach to life. Shame is the result of ridicule, rejection, and unjust punishment and is rooted in a deep-seated fear of abandonment. Mephibosheth had the wrong perception of WHO HE WAS – A DEAD DOG. David's plan was to restore inheritance to Jonathan's son, who sensed he was a mistake. Remember guilt is the God-given emotion that I've made a mistake. Shame never appreciates true identity of being a new creation but breeds the cursing of worthlessness, uncleanness and a sense of illegitimacy.

One way out of shame is the renewed mind in relation to who we are in Christ Jesus our Lord. Give yourself to the 'in Him' Scriptures in Ephesians, Colossians and Philippians. Declare them aloud. Give the Holy Spirit opportunity to assure your heart you are DNA distinctive, uniquely made person; re-made in the image of the Son of God!

4. Carnality

The flesh-lifestyle of the Corinthians was a ground for shame. Intense focus on self will produce shame in the believer. How must Peter have felt when the Lord rebuked him for superimposing his own will on the true pathway of the Cross? The disrespect and undermining of the critical wife is like rottenness in the bones, says Proverbs 12 : 4.

Paul warned the Philippians concerning gluttony, (3 : 19), as a carnality directly opposed to the laid down life of true service.

Ezekiel 16 is a key O.T. chapter on carnality (or giving in to the flesh). Verse 27 says :

“Behold, therefore, I stretched out My hand against you, diminished your allotment and gave you up to the will of those who hate you, the daughters of the Philistines, who were ASHAMED of your lewd behaviour.”

Carnality in the church shocks the world. God must judge! (See 1 Corinthians 5: 5). We either REPENT or will be JUDGED. You can enter a house of God and sense whether there is a clean atmosphere of anointed love and fear of the Lord, or whether there is confusion, self-ambition, instability and a sweeping of sin under the carpet. The great antidote to shame, FEAR of the LORD, must be actively chosen daily by leadership and flock. The elder's main job is to keep the church flowing together in the confidence of Christ, so we may not be ashamed at His coming. (1 John 2 : 28).

5. Humiliation

The Prodigal Son parable in Luke 15 has millions of modern applications. Generations since 1950 have come under the curse of fatherlessness either by open rebellion or by the lack of godly parenting. Fathers should be a source of life and training in righteousness with correction and love, but some children refuse to submit or have no adequate role model. Most children feel tolerated rather than chosen, valuable, unique. The headlong dive into the shame of alienation has been emphasized by every decade.

1950's	-	teddy boys, beat generation (USA) ;
1960's	-	mods & rockers, hippy, flower-power. (beginnings of drugs, rock n'roll, promiscuity) ;
1970's	-	punk (which means rebellion) ;
1980's	-	dance and drugs epidemic ;
1990's	-	rise of homosexuality, lesbianism.

All this points to a deep-seated shame that has been covered over by wrong core beliefs and thought patterns, an atheistic evolutionary system that has no concept of sin. The prodigal son returned by coming to an awareness of his futile predicament. The restoration of identity was threefold :

- a) **ROBES** - **righteousness to cover the body ;**
- b) **RING** - **eternal life in his spirit ;**
- c) **SHOES** - **shoes of inner peace. Healing and deliverance to his soul.**

The father killed the fatted calf, and the outpoured blood of the Lamb seals the covenant for us as believers. The breach of covenant with the family was the responsibility of the prodigal and the orphan spirit, the sense of exile and loneliness will always follow. The shame of rejection excludes us from the anointing. The name of acceptance includes us when the shed blood is experienced by the contrite heart.

Humiliation can be our bitter experience via character deficiencies. Check out Peter in Luke 22 : 62. We must be careful what we confess positively. Will the enemy of souls be able to mock us? The slanderer succeeds with souls who are proud.

Humiliation also comes to those who live in the disappointment of unmet needs. **Isaiah 54 : 6** says :

*“For the Lord has called you
like a woman forsaken
and grieved in spirit
like a youthful wife when you were
refused, says your God.”*

If you go on reading to verse 10 you discover the wonderful promises of God. We rescue ourselves on the promises of peace from the Prince of peace who wants us to enter His programme of peace. The waters of Noah swept away all shame and demonized humanity.

The blood of Jesus is just as powerful today because it contains His glorious, overcoming, heavenly life, and comes freshly slain from heaven.

THE PATH TO FREEDOM

1. Repentance Acts 3 : 19; Lamentations 5 : 21; 2 Corinthians 12 : 20,21;

I will arise and go to my father!

2. Forgiveness Mark 11 : 25; Matthew 6 : 14,15;

If we cannot forgive we will not live in His life and also imprison those who have hurt us.

3. Know your identity in Christ Jesus 2 Corinthians 5 : 17; 1 Peter 4 : 16;

Romans 10 : 11;

We are not designed to carry shame, either through our own sin or through suffering from someone else's action.

Bless your new creation identity by proclaiming the "in Him" truths.

Remember in the ordering of the armour of God it's :

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|-------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| 1. TRUTH | - | for the sexual area ; |
| 2. RIGHTEOUSNESS | - | for heart ; |
| 3. PEACE | - | for the walk ; |

This order is also seen in **Psalm 85 : 10-12; Isaiah 32 : 17,18**. The truth declared, believed and obeyed will establish righteousness as a reality, beyond the positional truth. Those who believe (or be and live in Jesus by the power of the Spirit) will not be ashamed.

4. Deliverance ministry Psalm 74 : 21

The word "oppressed" means a demonic weight falling upon. Jesus came to set free those oppressed by the devil. Discerning of spirits in the wisdom of the Father is vital for this stage. A healing to the damage in the human spirit will be necessary for those who feel defiled, especially by sexual sin.

(2 Corinthians 7 : 1). Although Psalm 69 : 19, 20 applies to our Lord at Calvary, we can apply these verses to many who are alienated, lost, lonely, and living under the curse of illegitimacy or identity cursing. Our pain avoidance society (and church!) must open up to true deliverance ministry. The church is a hospital BEFORE being a barracks, a lover of humanity BEFORE being a militant army.

Many think everything is achieved at the new birth in our wonderful privilege of being in Him. Pentecostals, charismatics and even Calvinists stress our standing in Christ Jesus. What about the state of your heart? What is going on in the REAL YOU? Positional truth emphasis can become a very convenient fig-leaf. Those who oppose deliverance and inner healing are guilty of a partial gospel yet pretend to be those preaching a full gospel.

The balance between our legal status and our vital state is needed as never before in today's pulpit.

5. Renewal Titus 3 : 3-7; Romans 12 : 2; 2 Corinthians 10 : 4 – 6

Distorted images of God, wrong core beliefs learnt previously to the new birth, and false religious teaching must be corrected by the word of God, and the experience of comfort and rest to your soul. The path to freedom is never instant fix exorcism, but all these five steps coming together over a period of time. The renewing of the Holy Spirit is shed upon us to

cleanse and invigorate from the shame list of Titus 3 : 3. We must also pull down strongholds, which I deal with in the chapter, Kingdom lifestyle.

WHY DO WE NEED INNER HEALING?

Mephibosheth was lame in both feet and could not walk into the future, although he ate at the King's table.

Three Christians in four are like that according to the parable of the sower and the seed. So why do we need inner healing?

a) Our make-up is tripartite 1 Thessalonians 5 : 23; Hebrews 4 : 12; John 3 : 6
We are born again in our spirits. Our souls take many years to be an adequate vehicle for the expression of the new life. Any casual reading of Watchman Nee's 'The Spiritual Man' (one of the top ten classics of all time), should convince us of the need to sanctify our souls and bodies. Those are the arenas where we work OUT what God by regeneration HAS WORKED IN to our spirits. Discipline and counsel are the brackets around inner healing and deliverance. These four areas produce mature sons and daughters. To neglect any of the four cannot bring true discipleship.

b) A hurting and hating environment Ephesians 2 : 2; 1 John 18,19; Matthew 2 : 11
As believers we swim against the stream. The world hated Jesus and it will hate those loyal to Him. The whole world is in the lap of the wicked one. Take the incident of the wise men bringing their gifts, which were God's provision for the next two years of exile. Gold represented prosperity and poverty is linked very strongly to shame. Frankincense represents worship and no one is emotionally free unless they can worship in spirit and in truth. Myrrh represents death to self. Inner healing is never permanent unless we die to our own plans, self-reliance and self-ambition. God provides where he guides in times of persecution.

Think of this scenario. If I trap my finger in the door, the body says 'ouch'. If I have been caned at school, the body hurts and the emotions will feel disgrace. If I am continually victimized my body and soul will feel it, but also my spirit will be overwhelmed and damaged. Inner healing removes the blockages so we can experience Jesus spirit, soul and body. Without inner healing, the knowledge of Jesus will be severely restricted to mind, emotions or will-power. This produces a breed of believer who cannot fellowship deeply with their Lord.

a. Jesus healed inner damage Luke 5 : 20; Luke 8 : 43 – 48; Luke 24 : 18 – 32; Luke 4 : 36

Being made well is wholeness, which is beyond just physical healing. The healing ministry of Jesus touched the whole person in it's sanctifying power. He brought sanity and sanctity. The inner torments that plagued mind and body were healed by His creative words :

*“ ‘What is this in His mouth?’ the Pharisees asked,
‘For with authority He uses the power to command evil spirits, and they
come out.’ “*

With laser discernment Jesus knew what was IN man, because he was the micro-surgeon of the soul. He knows our spirit, soul, body inter-relationship and how we react to an evil world. Whatever we go through he is able to save, heal, deliver to the uttermost. Those who don't

spend time knowing the true heart condition of their flocks are irresponsible shepherds who omit 40% of Jesus' earthly ministry. Praying for revival is no substitute for the hard work of service in counselling and inner healing. If you study revivals, God came down on a prepared people, who were enabled to breakthrough beyond the second veil to the most Holy Place. Inner healing is never the goal, only the pathway to His glorious presence.

b. To experience the Father's intimate love Romans 5 : 5; John 17; 2 Cor 1 : 3 – 6
Our experiences are not primarily for ourselves. We go through adversity and trials in order to receive God's comfort so we possess His love to give to others, who go through similar affliction. To grasp this truth means we begin to shatter focussing upon ourselves, our desires and the gratification of the flesh. Inner healing and deliverance should have the wonderful fruit of ENLARGING OUR CAPACITY to move forward into a higher dimension of KNOWING GOD.

Our greatest JOY
Our deepest PURPOSE
Our biggest SATISFACTION

is **KNOWING** the **FATHER** and **SON** intimately. Our greatest loss is the failure to press on and know the Lord.

Take an hour with John 17 and see the fellowship between Father and Son. Enter the secrets of the most Holy Place. Enjoy the sanctuary stillness where revelation awaits you. God is moved by hearts that have fallen in love with His Son. Such are led by the Spirit into all truth. The glory, rest, perfection (union with His will) and inheritance are within the veil. The majority of believers never get there because they refuse to

- discipline the flesh on a regular basis;
- take inner healing and deliverance seriously;
- will not open up to their secret sins of the deceitful heart;
- change their distorted images of a severe, legalistic, taskmaster God;
- come out of performance orientation

God is looking for a new breed upon whom His fulness of power can come.