

Shame: Why Am I This Way? (Week 1: The Reality of Shame)

Do You Feel or Think This way?

How you relate to yourself:

1. You suffer from chronic low self-esteem/self-worth
2. You are highly performance-conscious
3. You don't know yourself very well
4. You are frequently unaware of your own feelings
5. You have a tendency to be idolatrous
6. You have a high level of anxiety
7. You are wounded
8. You are tired

How you relate to others:

1. You are unaware of personal boundaries
2. You have incredible "radar"
3. You feel as though you don't belong
4. You can't tell what 'normal' is
5. You have a difficult time trusting people
6. You are afraid of being deserted

Do You Act This Way?

1. You use a lot of negative 'self-talk'
2. You don't allow yourself to make mistakes (or admit them)
3. You are over-responsible
4. You martyr your own needs (to meet own needs = selfish = bad)
5. You set up inappropriate boundaries
6. You act like a victim
7. You tend to 'code' when you communicate (beat around the bush)
8. You suffer a lot of stress-related illness
9. You can't have guilt-free fun
10. You sometimes act in ways that seem contradictory
11. You can't deal with gifts very well
12. You sabotage your own success
13. You procrastinate
14. You are possessive in relationships
15. You have a high need for control
16. You cannot self-differentiate

We all struggle with shame...but some struggle more than others. And if left unattended to, it becomes an unhealthy stronghold in the person's life.

What is Shame? Getting it defined.

- A painful feeling of humiliation or distress caused by the consciousness of wrong or foolish behavior.
- A painful emotion caused by consciousness of guilt, shortcoming, or impropriety.
- A feeling of being exposed in a way that humiliates, embarrasses, or defines.
- A loss of respect or esteem.

“To feel shame is to feel *seen* in a painfully diminished sense. The self feels exposed both to itself and to anyone present.”

Shame as Emotion.

Shame is a primary emotion. Like anxiety or love, it drives other emotions.

Shame can be evident in our emotional responses

- Run and hide when possible
- Overly angry when trapped
- Undermines intimacy

Shame can be evident in body language

- Poor eye contact
- Avoidance
- Hang heads
- Slump shoulders
- Lack of spontaneity
- Lack of physical care

Guilt vs. Shame

Guilt is about WHAT we do; shame is about WHO we are.

Guilt is about defective behavior; shame is about defective personhood.

Guilt evaluates actions; shame evaluates self.

EXAMPLES TO CLARIFY.

Not only different in meaning, but different in ways we deal with them.

What guilt seeks is forgiveness...

GUILT: When I do something wrong, we generally know how to correct it.

1. Confess/admit.
2. Repent.
3. Seek Forgiveness.
4. Make Restitution (restoring something lost or stolen).
 - a. Recompense (make equivalent amends for loss or harm suffered; compensate).
5. Feel a sense of absolution (formal release from guilt, obligation, or punishment).

Overcoming guilt results in righteousness (right behavior)

What shame seeks is acceptance...and there are no simple steps for this.

SHAME: When I feel the emotion: humiliated, distressed, exposed

- It's a loss and must be grieved, experienced.
- It's a humiliation I can't wish away.
- It's an emotion that has to be understood and processed over time.

BUT Shame can be healed, overcome, released. This is what this seven week intensive is all about!

Overcoming shame results in a clearer sense of identity.

Origins of Guilt and Shame (Circle where you see evidence of shame)

Genesis 3:6-11

⁶ When the woman saw that the fruit of the tree was good for food and pleasing to the eye, and also desirable for gaining wisdom, she took some and ate it. She also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. ⁷ Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they realized they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

⁸ Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the Lord God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the Lord God among the trees of the garden. ⁹ But the Lord God called to the man, "Where are you?"

¹⁰ He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."

¹¹ And he said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree that I commanded you not to eat from?"

Good Shame

Good shame (discretionary shame) can drive healthy behaviors

- When it moves us toward acknowledging our sin
- When it creates modesty

Good shame is like a thermostat. It helps people maintain the appropriate level of closeness and distance from others.

- Culturally
- Biblically

Good shame helps us maintain a healthy sense of self.

Good shame can serve as a protection against destructive shame.

Destructive Shame

The belief that I am defective.

- Debilitating
- Consumes capacity
- Paralyzes
- Negative lens
- Poor communication

- Too self-focused
- Inability to receive criticism
- Feeling of not belonging
- Sense of powerlessness
- Hard to accept praise
- Hard to accept discipline

Destroys a person's ability to see the image of God in themselves. Thus a negative self-image, self-esteem, self-worth.

Debilitates emotionally. Difficult to relate in a healthy way to self, others, and God.

Often forces the person to become 'stuck' spiritually. We blame him. And typical "cross" theology doesn't help.

God's Intent: (Circle where you see the word 'good')

Genesis 1

⁴ God saw that the light was good

¹⁰ God called the dry ground "land," and the gathered waters he called "seas." And God saw that it was good.

¹² The land produced vegetation: plants bearing seed according to their kinds and trees bearing fruit with seed in it according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

¹⁷ God set them in the vault of the sky to give light on the earth, ¹⁸ to govern the day and the night, and to separate light from darkness. And God saw that it was good.

²¹ So God created the great creatures of the sea and every living thing with which the water teems and that moves about in it, according to their kinds, and every winged bird according to its kind. And God saw that it was good.

²⁵ God made the wild animals according to their kinds, the livestock according to their kinds, and all the creatures that move along the ground according to their kinds. And God saw that it was good.

³¹ God saw all that he had made, and it was very good.

Hebrew transliteration of 'good': towb (tobe) = Beautiful. Just as it should be.

The deceiver wants us to believe we are the opposite. Ugly.

God finds us beautiful. Worth dying for. Broken, yes. Sinful, yes. But these are positional statements. We are far from him. But his beautiful image is still in us. Even when we sin.

The Reality of God's Grace

- God accepts us with our sin and brokenness
- God overlooks our sin to draw us into relationship
- God loves without conditions

Defining Grace

- The free and unmerited (unearned) favor of God.
- Purpose:
 - It makes God approachable
 - It allows for our salvation
 - It works towards our sanctification
 - It gives us an identity beyond our sinful state

By God's Grace, Help is Available

Grace, not forgiveness, is the key to healing and freedom from shame

Our Response to God's Grace

- Accepting God's Grace
- Coming Out of Hiding

Free at Last

Breaking the bondages of guilt and shame

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Do You Feel, Think, or Act This way? Keep track of how many apply to you.

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Shame as Emotion.

Shame is a _____ emotion. Like anxiety or love, it _____ other emotions.

Shame can be evident in our emotional _____.

Shame can be evident in _____.

Guilt vs. Shame

Guilt is about _____ we do; shame is about _____ we are.

Guilt is about defective _____; shame is about defective _____.

Guilt evaluates _____; shame evaluates _____.

What guilt seeks is _____.

What shame seeks is _____.

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Good shame helps us maintain a healthy sense of _____.

Good shame can serve as a protection against _____ shame.

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THE GOOD NEWS!!!

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Coming out of _____.