



Deliverance from Shame

There are at least three things that are needed in order for shame to exist: secrecy, silence, and judgment. Guilt says, "I did something bad." Shame says, "I AM bad!" Over the years, the self-help, motivational community from John Bradshaw's *Healing the Shame that Binds You*, to Brené Brown's *Women & Shame: Reaching Out, Speaking Truths & Building Connection*, have spoken to and addressed this deep-seated dilemma.

In Scripture, we find verses in both the Old and New Testaments which speak of shame, particularly spun from the heart of David in Psalms:

*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. (Psalms 25:1-3, NIV)¹*

*Guard my life and rescue me; let me not be put to **shame**, for I take refuge in you. (Psalms 25:20, NIV)*

*I sought the Lord, and he answered me: he delivered me from all my fears. Those who look to him are radiant; their faces are never covered in **shame**. (Psalms 34:4-5, NIV)*

*For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the Scripture says, 'Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to **shame**.' (Romans 10:10-11, NIV)*

*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**, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. (Hebrews 12:2, NIV)*

Ever since Jesus scorned shame on that day, it has been scorned for us! One of the words for shame in the Greek is translated into English from the word "entrepo,"¹ which literally means "turning-in upon oneself." Shame is a deep-seated self-loathing and dishonoring of oneself, to be greatly differentiated from healthy embarrassment and repentance when we do something wrong. Shame is the highest form of self-rejection, but notice the remedy for it found in these very Scripture verses: (1) Lift up your soul to God, (2) Trust in God, (3) Hope in God, (4) Seek God, (5) Take refuge in God, and (6) Fix your eyes on Jesus. In other words—our remedy is in Him!

In 2011, my husband and I became Certified Life Coaches, so I am not against psychology or counseling or anything designed to help bring healing to the human soul. On the contrary, I believe that Jesus, as our Good Shepherd, restores our souls (Psalm 23) and heals the broken-hearted (Luke 4)—but I believe those who receive these promises are those who come to Him, abide in Him, and continue in His Word. I don't believe that the removal of toxic shame

¹ Vine, W. E. "Ashamed, Shame, Entrepo." *Vine's Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*. (p. 70) Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1940. Print.



happens through osmosis, but is an intentional aftermath of those who “If ye continue in my word, *then* are ye my disciples indeed” John 8:31 (AKJV). True deliverance is designed for those who continue on in God. Those who get weary and discouraged and give up in their healing journey whether it’s been two months, two years or longer (I don’t know your timetable and you don’t know mine) enable paralyzing shame. It is through God’s grace that the Holy Spirit enables us to come before Him and lift up our souls. Through God’s grace, we can lay before God and pour out our hearts, our weaknesses, and vulnerabilities; and it is through God’s grace, we can experience help in time of trouble for a broken, weary soul. If there is Anyone we can be honest in front of, it is God ... so what are we waiting for?

Much of my Christian coming of age was spent in churches who preached strong sermons on faith and the integrity of God’s Word. While this was obviously invaluable to me—I was rarely exhorted on receiving God’s mercy and grace for my weaknesses and the traumas of my soul, and I didn’t know how to deal with shame other than to be embarrassed that I suffered from it. The reality is that all of fallen humanity deals with shame, and even Christians who do not experience a consistent, loving relationship with their Heavenly Father and their ever approachable Elder Brother, Jesus Christ, fall prey to the constant nagging of the enemy and false self-talk of not being enough: not *good* enough, not *thin* enough, not *rich* enough, not *smart* enough, not *liked* enough, not *attractive* enough, not *popular* enough, not *respected* enough, not *influential* enough, not *successful* enough, not *enough, enough, enough, enough, ENOUGH*. Well, “**Enough of Not Enough!**” Ephesians 1:6 says “to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved” (NKJV). And this is the key—we need to consistently experience Christ’s acceptance of us and how He loves and enjoys us. He told the Apostle Paul who was a memorable giant in the faith who had weaknesses like us all, “My grace is sufficient for you: for my strength is made perfect in weakness” 2 Corinthians 12:9 (AKJV). We are not alone, and we are not rejected by the One who was rejected so that we could be reconciled. Selah.

Practical Steps

Don’t you just hate it when people tell you the right things to do or how you “ought” to behave, but then, they don’t tell you how to get there? I hate that, so I will endeavor to give you some sound steps to hasten the desired outcome of freedom and the 2nd commandment of loving others *as we love ourselves*. Since shame is a form of self-loathing, then the New Testament commandments of loving God and loving others as we love ourselves is imperative. We cannot love ourselves if we do not love God, and we cannot love God if we have not experienced His love for us—so it all goes back to our relationship with God.

So, Number 1: Have a devotional/prayer time with God to cultivate your fellowship with Him. Whether you are a morning person or an evening person or a high noon kind-of-a-guy, it doesn’t matter. Find your niche in Him, and spend time reading your Bible, journaling, and allowing yourself to enjoy the Two of you defining Your alone time together. I do not journal all the time, but when I do and I go back and re-read what I wrote, I see how far I’ve come (or have not come), and I can offer it up as petition or a thanksgiving to God.

Ablazing Grace



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Number 2: Be honest. Self-deception is a scary thing and people can fool themselves, and sometimes, it is that they are blind to their weaknesses and what is truly going on with them. The good news is that because God is in the healing business, He will faithfully reveal what needs to be worked on in our hearts because that's what this is all about, you know—the continued, daily sanctification process that makes us more like Jesus Christ and helps us to grow into maturity unto Him.

Number 3: Get **anointed** help if you need it. I stress the word anointed because everyone is not anointed for you. They may be nice, they might be influential, but if God has a divine appointment for you to meet a person or even people who He will use to help you in the removal of shame—then He will show you who this is. Everyone who has academic initials besides their name is not necessarily anointed for you, and just because it might be free for you to see someone does not mean this person is anointed to help take you to your next level.

Number 4: Realize that coming to God is a lifetime experience. Years ago, I heard a preacher say that the breakthrough is in consistency. Our pastor is currently doing a sermon series on face to face encounters with Jesus and his first sermon asked the question, “*How did the Apostle John write the gospel of John approximately 60 years after the death of Jesus?*” The answer: It is because John *kept* having face to face encounters with Jesus and it wasn't a once and for all thing. Isn't that encouraging? It is not the big, charismatic, once in a lifetime experience that brings lasting change to our lives. It is the consistent, one-on-one, sometimes dyadic, sometimes group, and often corporate, experience in Christ that helps to bring healing to our souls and health to all our flesh. We need to celebrate Jesus and know that He also celebrates us, and we are to love God with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength and love other people *as we love ourselves*. Stay on course in God's growth process to go from glory to glory, remembering the best is yet to come.

ⁱ New International Version (NIV)
American King James Version (AKJV)
New King James Version (NKJV)