SHAME



Mike Connell

Unashamed

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Smashwords Edition

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 Audio Transcripts of regular Sunday Sermons

Unashamed

Sin disconnects us from God, and puts shame around our life; but God wants us to be connected, so I can be myself, I don't have to wear a mask. I can actually just be true and authentic and genuine, but I have to learn the skills of building good relationships as well. Shame is an Identity Thief. It steals away who we are.

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Great. Well we're in for a great, great day today and it started well, enjoying the presence of God. I want to just share with you something. We started off this year talking about how God wants you to grow. How many people in their heart really understand God wants you to grow? No growth without a bit of pain. It means something will change, and it won't change until you identify what is going to change. So we looked the week before last at a message on breaking through your limitations. We identified a number of areas that your life could be restricted or limited. How many believe you've got limitations in your life? Distinct areas, it can be in the area of finance, a financial limitation, it can be an emotional one, there's issues in the emotions haven't been sorted out. It could be a relational one, a spiritual one, there's a whole range of ways. It could be just a skill limitation you know, and I find like in working Word documents, I've only got so much skill on it, and then when I start to try and get these things to line up they all re-number, re-label and reline and it drives me crazy. I want to hit the computer - so that's a skill limitation.

There's no use staying there. You just make a decision to actually take the actions that'll change that; get someone to show you, practice it and come up in another level of skill. So if we want to grow in the capacity that we have to serve God, we have to make a decision to change. We may need to get others to help us in that changing. Let's go back to that scripture in Isaiah 54. I want pick it up and just look at a specific area I want to help you change. I want to actually help us all change. I want to break through in this area to a new level too and in Verse 2 it says: enlarge the place of your tent. You enlarge, enlarge - and let them stretch out the curtains of your dwellings; do not spare, don't hold back or place limitations. Lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes - and here's why we have to prepare, because you will expand to the right and the left. So expansion requires we demonstrate faith that God will do it, by making stretches in our personal life, so if we go down here it says: for you shall expand to the right and

left, your descendants will inherit the nations, and make the desolate cities inhabited.

Now this is the part we're going to focus on here, because these are some of the limitations that people have, all of us have it. All of us have it. If someone says they don't, tell them come on, you're dreaming and you're in denial. We will establish clearly these things are an issue, so do not fear. Do not fear. How many people at times have felt afraid? How many have felt that sort of gut-pulling fear, when you're knotted up inside, and you're almost paralysed in your mind? I've had that a few times too - we've all had that, see? So fear, fear is a spirit from hell, and it says: fear not, neither be ashamed, neither be ashamed. How many people have felt at sometime, something about you wasn't good, you didn't like it? If you could change it, you'd change it. Okay then, sometimes you have a look at the movie stars, we think they've got it all together, but I'm curious as to why if they've got it all together, they have to do so much surgery to change what it looks like. It means they're ashamed of what they are like, ashamed of what they are.

So fear and shame are extremely powerful spirits that work to limit us and restrict us. I felt the Lord put it on my heart over two or three weeks to begin to help us face this area so that we can become enlarged, so if I said that this is a problem for the majority of the church, most people would think it's the guy next to me, but I want to over two or three Sundays just help us see how it is actually an issue for all of us individually, and it is one corporately as well. I want to show why it is, and then how you can get out of it. As I was thinking about this series and what to do and how to just speak about it, I felt the Lord tell me well, don't focus on shame, focus on the theme unashamed, shame free, unashamed. So rather than finish up with that bit, I'm going to start with that bit. I want us to today get a little bit of a picture about how God designed us to operate, and then what actually changed all of that, then what it'll look like when we've shifted again. Then in the subsequent weeks we're going to look at the issue of how shame and fear come in, and then how you can recognise them, because if you don't recognise it, no doubt you'll never change.

There are many of us have lived in what I'd call a toxic shame-filled family environment where - probably if I use this word - put downs are regular. See, now if you've been in an environment where put downs are regular, the chances are you've already accepted the message of shame, you're living with it in your

life, and you can hardly recognise it when the put downs come. So we want to shift all of that, so that the church individually, and therefore corporately, becomes a people committed to build others up, because we ourselves are built up on the inside, we ourselves are unashamed. A person with shame in their life will shame others. They will use it as their way of dealing with issues in relationships, so we want to help you address this. I will share at some times some things from my own life, the struggle with this areas of both shame and fear, and how I've been helped by the Lord in a major way, yet still now feeling like it's another layer come up, another level, and so I purpose well, I'm going to work with these areas to just come up to a new level, unashamed see? Can you say that, God wants you to be unashamed? Tell the person next to you, God wants you to be unashamed, shame free! Glory to God.

Okay and notice what He says in this verse. This is His promise to us: You will forget the shame. That means it won't be in your mind, shame thoughts any more, and you won't remember the reproach, so whatever's happened in your life in your past, whatever ways you've thought about yourself, you will not remember that stuff. You've changed how you think. It's an internal change. I want to show you the process of change as well, because it's a process. Now of course I know you'll all love to come up and get hands laid on you and get it all fixed up - if only! [Laughter] Shame was built a block at a time, and you'll have to tear it down a block at a time as well, and I want to give you the keys and the tools how you can do it, so then you'll stand up, unashamed. Now I'll get to it shortly what unashamed will look like, but you have to understand this, it will start this off. When you stand up unashamed, you will stimulate and stir and provoke a reaction against you, from those who are full of shame, who will say: who do you think you are, and try to shame you to going back into your cave again.

Church, it's time to come out of the caves we've hidden in aye, become shame free, unashamed, unashamed, unashamed as God intended us. Shame is a demonic, devilish thing, from the one who has been shamed more than anyone. God has got no shame to put on you. Unfortunately the church, the church corporately or speaking of the bigger picture, often is a toxic shame centre, and so we have to recognise - this is one area, if you can over the next two or three Sundays, begin to get a handle on this area and the process of change, and make a decision in the course of this year, I will break through all issues of shame God

shows me, and I'll begin to tackle the fears around my life, I guarantee your life will change in almost every area, absolutely in every area. Something will be different about you, and you will start to stand up and emerge, and I'll tell you this too: all existing relationships you have will begin to change, because people who were used to the shame-filled person living in a cave now don't know how to relate to this one who can't be shamed back into the cave. Good stuff aye? Good stuff. Come on, want to stand up.

Let's go back and have a look now, that God's heart for us is to be totally unashamed. It's the heart of God for you to be totally shame-free, and so we're not going to go too much into shame today. I want to stick on unashamed, I want to look on God's original design, so let's have a look at Genesis, Chapter 1. God's original design for us, unashamed. Now if you want to know how life ought to be lived, don't look how others around you are living it. Find out how God designed it to be lived, go to the source. You've got to go to the word of God. You've got to see what God says about you, and about life, as He designed it. He designed us to function in a certain way, and so we're going to look at the original design. We're going to see just a little bit about how it shifted, and what caused it to shift. Particularly I want you to see in the initial stage the primary shift that took place, how it took place, and then later on we're going to look in another session how to get back into that place of being absolutely shame free.

Alrighty then, let's have a look in Genesis, Chapter 1, Verse 26: Then God said: let us make man as a little bug. [Laughter] He didn't say that did He? An insect - no, a worm. He didn't say any of that. What did He say? Let us make man in our image, according to our likeness, and let them have dominion. God made man in His own image, a reflection of what He is like: loving, expressive, passionate, full of dreams, creative. That's what He made us to be like! You say I'm not like that. Change! You're living below what you're designed to do. Come on, you've got to continually go back to the standard God set, first when He did it first, and secondly, when we look at Jesus Christ who is the only standard. Most people look at someone else and say I'm doing better than them, I must be alright. Don't use that.

Notice this, it says: He made us in His image and likeness. God made you with emotions. He put emotions in you, so you've got some men are pretty staunch! Too bad, you're real broken up you know. You can't live life like you're supposed to. There's something wrong in you, you're damaged. Staunch is a fig leaf to

cover what's wrong. God is a passionate God. Jesus loved, Jesus wept, Jesus was angry, Jesus had all the range of emotions. If you hunt through the Bible, you'll find God's got things He loves, things He hates, things get Him riled up, things that touch His heart. He has compassion, He has anger, He has all range of emotions, and He's real happy to express them. He designed you, not only as a spirit being capable of working and living and moving in the dimension of the spirit; He designed us to represent what He's like, so if your emotions are messed up, you cannot represent properly what God is like. How can you?

You will reinforce the image most people have, that God is cold and unemotional, instead of loving and passionate. So we have to not be driven or out of control in our emotions, but understand they have a part of expressing who we are as people, as God has designed us. God has caused you to be creative - you say well I'm not the creative type. The moment I use the word creative, you will automatically think of someone who does art or makes craft - oh, they're creative. You have put a mindset that limited creativity. Is it true that God is creative? You're made in His image? By design you are creative. Now whether you are creative in your expression, has a lot to do with whether we're functioning right, see? Now if I'm not functioning right, I won't express creativity.

Listen, I'll show you how - we'll get onto it a bit another time, but let me just give you the tip on this one. Whatever God gifted you to do, He will enable you to be creative in that area, see? In other words, to come up with ideas that others haven't thought of, but of course if you're full of shame, you'll want to copy what everyone else wants, and you won't want to be different. That's why we've got to deal with the lies of shame, so we can actually dare to be different, dare to be ourself, dare to be creative. Creative people say: oh, I've got a great new way of doing that! Shameful people say: we've never done it that way before. They shut down the creative gift. We've got to stop that. We've got to actually make room for the expression of the gifts and creativity that people have in their life, and that's why you've got to deal with shame, because shame will shut it down as we'll see in a moment. I'll tell you what it does, I'll tell you two major things it does to us, and then we've got to work on how to get out of that, and be what God called us to be, Amen.

So God has emotions given expression, we're designed to represent Him. We're designed to represent that God is a good God, so when people see you, do they

see in your life God is really good? God is good, He is good. Here's the second thing that the Bible tells us very clearly there: notice in Chapter 1, Verse 31, when God saw everything He'd made, indeed it was very good. So when God looks at you, what does He see? Very good, ooh very good! Whoa! Like those lions are pretty good, but look at this man I've made! Whoa! Very good! See? Those fish - well the fish are pretty good, but oh look at the man I've made, very, very, very good! God's basic looking at you, is that you reflect what He's like. You're very, very good. The core of your identity is I am very, very good. Why am I good? Not because I'm doing good things - because I'm made in the image of someone who's really good. But you see already I can feel it rising up: what about sin? What about, you know, all have sinned?

That's true, but let me just give you this thought here. Suppose your little child - here's your beautiful little child, and the child has had an accident, fallen off something, and now your child comes running to you and as you look, now that beautiful child that went out to play now is looking quite different. The child now has got a bone sticking out of the arm here, the skin is broken, there's blood and there's this terrible sight there and the first sort of reaction is oh! You don't want to even look at it - but then you go basically it's still your child, just your child's damaged. Now you're not going to reject your child. You're not going to abuse your child - you just can't do anything now can you! You're really bad! You don't treat a child that way because their arm is broken.

They're your child, but they're damaged, and they need your help to be repaired to their original condition. That's how God sees us. Now if you can get that concept in your mind, it'll change how you relate to God. God is not there ready to beat on you because you have a broken arm in some part of your life and there's a bone sticking out. He's not there to beat on you. Jesus said: I've got no condemnation to give. What He came to do was to restore us, so we could function like God intended us to function. You've got to understand that when Jesus came, He came to actually address the root problem and then to restore us, so we can live life like we're supposed to live life. The trouble is many Christians only get a bit of the way. We give our lives to Jesus and never embrace changing to become what He called us to become, and to fulfil the destiny of representing Him in the community, hence the church is withdrawn from society, and has meetings instead of being stirred in God to change the world we live in, bringing creativity into it, in a way they've never seen before.

See some people, they have issues over a number of things of course. One they have issues over is getting buildings painted and done up nice and oh there's money, money, money. Now that's a wrong thinking. How will people know that the God we serve is excellent, if we don't present ourselves individually and corporately in an excellent way? It confirms the wrong impression they have - don't get near God, you lose all you have. You'll become mean and miserable and bitter and twisted and you'll be a hypocrite like all these other people we've seen. Do you understand? It's a concept that people have got a hold of, they want to believe it of course, because they want to come near God, but actually what they're looking for is to see, have you got something for real that I need? Has your marriage got something different? Have you got something different? That's why we need to become unashamed, and you'll see just in a moment.

So God - very good, so when God looks at you He's still saying: very good, very good, very good. You say what about this is wrong and this is like this? Yeah, I know - but you're still very good, you're made in my image. Your value comes not from whether you did well. Your value comes from who you are. Who you are is? Made in the image of God! That's why evolution and all that goes with that devalues you as being made in the image of God. You cannot ever, ever base a person's value on what they're doing. It has to be based on what God says - good! God is good, and what He's made is good. God doesn't make any junk. He didn't make junk when He made you. You've believed a lie, and we've got to change that lie this year, okay? Whatever God makes is good.

Here's a third thing now. God clothed man in His own glory. I'm going to explain what that means in a moment - just keep your finger there in Genesis, Chapter 2 and look quickly in Psalm 8. Now we're looking at the original design, because if you want to see how something should function, go look in the manual and how it was made, then see what needs to be done to repair it. Okay then, in Psalm 8, Verse 4, the Bible says: what is man that You are mindful of him, or the son of man that You visit him. You have made him a little lower than the angels. You have crowned him with glory and honour. How about that? You've made to have dominion over the works of Your hands. Look at that Verse 5: You have crowned him with glory and honour, crowned him with glory - now what does that mean?

The word glory means - you see the Bible uses words and we say oh, crowned with glory and honour and ooh, that's nice, that's really good. What does it mean? See, so when God designed man, man was made slightly lower than the

realm of God. What is man, that You continually think about him, or the son of man, that You come to visit him and meet with him to relate with him. You have made him a little lower than elohim, God Himself. God has created us a little lower than Himself, but we're of the same stock. We're children of the living God by faith in Christ. He says you've crowned him with glory - to be crowned means literally to be positioned for a role of ruling - and what did God do to man to position him for this realm of ruling or having dominion, whatever all that might mean? He crowned him with glory. Well what on earth is that? What would that look like?

Well the word glory has a number of meanings, but it referred to the tangible presence of God, the tangible presence of God. I think in Psalm 104 it says: God is clothed with light, so when in the Old Testament God made Himself visible, many times what they saw was, they saw what they call a shekinah glory, so if you went into the holiest place of the tabernacle, the house where God physically manifested Himself, it was a totally dark room, no natural light - but the brilliance of God's presence lit it up. It just lit the place up! You just about needed sunglasses to go in there, and the presence of God was so powerful, if you didn't do it right, you would fall down dead. So He was clothed, God was clothed in light. The Bible says He is clothed in light and immortality, so when Adam and Eve first were born, they didn't look just like us. They actually had a clothing of God upon them. There was a manifestation of light, of glory - in Exodus, Chapter 33, Moses says: show me Your glory, and God says: I'll let all my goodness come before you. So they were clothed with the manifestation of what God is like. Their bodies glistened with light. They were glorious bodies, bodies that would not die, would not get sick, would heal themselves, and the goodness of God radiated out of their life, so that anyone seeing Adam and Eve were seeing the image of God, exactly as God made them to be in the earth. Come on, think about this. You've clothed them with glory, so they were covered with a life of God. Even now, when you get in the presence of God, and the presence of God begins to fill you, there is a joy and a life and a brightness and a light on your countenance.

You get to have a look in India and some of these places where people have a dark skin and demons have got a hold of them; they look dark and they look black and when they get saved and the light, the glorious light of the gospel of Jesus Christ comes into their heart, their faces shine. You look different when

God is in your life. Your countenance looks different when He's coming forth. There is a difference, there's something inside flowing out, come on, so they were crowned with glory and honour. That word honour means literally, they were given - they looked majestic. They looked amazing. They looked extraordinary, so if you came into the world in the days when Adam and Eve were here, the highlight of everything that you saw, no matter how beautiful it was - [inhales sharply] Ooh, what is that! Ooh, it's my son and daughter, carrying my glory and majesty, and reflecting me into the world I've made. You see, that's why when the Bible says: all have sinned, most of us hear that bit.

What we miss is the next bit - have fallen short of the glory of God. That word falling short means we've become inferior, or we've come and slipped well below what God created us to be like, and to function like. Amazing isn't it aye? That's how God designed us. Now, now you'll understand why it says: the man and his wife were naked, and they were not ashamed. So how did God design us? Unashamed. What was the key to being unashamed? To have no self-consciousness whatsoever, to be conscious and filled with the presence, glory and wonder of what God is like. Now that is how He started. Do you think He's going to finish with something different than that, see? You see what happens is, mentally what you'll be doing is this. Mentally we look at what is, and that's our measuring stick, and you've always got to shift that measuring stick and say: what did God intend? That's my possibilities. That's my future, if I can believe for it.

So when we get to this issue of shame, you're going to begin to see that shame was never part - see they were not ashamed, UNASHAMED! Ha! God's my father. He's put me in charge of it all - look at the glory, oh! Unashamed, expressive, creative. Adam was extremely creative. Listen, if we brought every animal in the world to you, and you didn't know any of their names, and we said give them all a name, you'd be struggling. Why? Because we've fallen short of that creative realm that God originally put into us, but even though we've fallen short of it, it's still there because that's who we are. You can't change the child who's your child that broke it's arm, all it means is he can't function properly, but he's still your child, and he's still valuable. If you can get the arm fixed up he'll begin to function again just like he was designed to do, and so we've got to see that God's plan for us is to become connected to Him again, and then to learn how to function like He intended us to function, in our marriages, our families,

our finances, our business, our life, wherever God's called you to be, being creative and unashamed!

Now of course you're going to find the moment you get like that, there's going to be the big put down, who do you think you are? So you've got to deal with shame in your own life, and then learn how to handle shame around you. There's no way we're going to get away from actually exposure to shaming of various kinds, so unashamed. Notice in Proverbs 3, Verse 35, it says: the wise inherit glory, but shame is the legacy of fools. That's an interesting statement. I looked up words where glory and shame were together, and I found there's a whole heap of them. I'm only going to give you that one - it says the wise, yeah, the wise, haha! The WISE! The wise man says yes to God, see? He is full of glory. He shall inherit glory. In other words, if we connect with God, the one thing He wants to put in our lives is His glory, His goodness, His creativity, His passion, His desires, His life, and He wants you to truly come alive and live life, see? It's religion's the problem, see? It says: the fool inherits shame, so got to understand this: shame is for God's enemies, not for His family.

Shame has little or no place in the family of God. God has not called us to shame, He's called us to glory, but His enemies - all through the Bible it talks about His enemies being covered with shame. Who's His key enemy? Lucifer, the angel once moving in heavenly realms, who by rebellion against God, sinned and fell short of his former glory and became a demon. So if an angel can become a demon, what could we become if we let go of God? There's no limits to how bad we can become, but we are still at the core of our being, made in the image of God. It's just damaged by sin and our yielding to sin, so if we can address this kind of stuff we can get out. Man, we've got some possibilities here haven't we, some good possibilities here, see? Good possibilities here, possibilities. See sometimes whole cultures can live in shame, whole nations can live in shame. Families can live in shame, marriages can be filled with shame, individual lives can be filled with shame. Shame is a demonic entity that comes to stop, it comes to steal some things. Let me just show you how the shame came in.

I'm not going to deal with it much, I want just to tell you this: shame is a thief. Jesus said: the thief came to steal, kill and destroy; I've come to give you life. Let's look in Genesis 3. I don't want to go into all the dynamics of it. I'll pick it up in a little more depth. I just want to show you a couple of things that happen.

See, now notice here it says in Genesis, Chapter 3, the serpent was very cunning, more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. He said to the woman: has God indeed said you'll not eat every tree of the garden? And so he had entered into a debate with her you see? And eventually, you know the story - it says Verse 6, she gave to her husband with her and he ate, and the eyes of them both were opened and they knew they were naked. They sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God, among the trees of the garden.

Then the Lord said to Adam: where are you? And Adam said: I heard Your voice in the garden, I was afraid because I was naked - remember he was naked and unashamed, now he's naked and shamed? And he said: and I hid myself. He said: who told you you were naked? Where did you get that information from? Who have you been talking to? Who were you listening to? Oh, you weren't listening to that old shame-filled devil were you by any chance? He will fill you with shame. That's all he's got to give. I will fill you with goodness, that's all I've got to give. So we'll just have a look in here, I want to just pick up a couple of things about this. The first thing you'll see is that the moment that they sinned they became self-conscious, they became conscious of their condition because something left them: the glory. Now before there was no awareness at all.

Have you ever seen little kids growing up, they're young, you can bath them together, there's no awareness at all of anything different between a boy and a girl? Then there's comes an age and suddenly they know! Now you've got to separate them, can't bath them together. See - and you think what happened? There's an awareness or a knowing of something they didn't even know about. Now before they didn't even think about it, it was a nothing issue. Now it becomes an issue, they become aware of something. So when Adam and Eve fell they experienced guilt: I have done something wrong, and with that fear - what if I'm found out? What will happen to me? And with it shame - something is wrong with me. Now Adam and Eve really had a big dose of shame, because they lost all of that glory. Now I don't know whether Eve - I was wondering how this may have happened. Since it doesn't tell it clearly we can't speculate, but you imagine Eve takes the apple and eats it, or whatever the fruit was that she ate - probably wasn't an apple, a something. Anyway whatever it was she ate, imagine just

eating of that fruit, and then gradually the glory vanishing off her - and the shock to Adam perhaps.

It doesn't actually tell whether the glory left them at the same time or not, but suppose it left off her. He's in a dilemma, do I walk with her or do I step away and lose her? It says he deliberately did it. She was deceived. He deliberately made a decision to do the same as his wife and ate. He rebelled, and therefore was held responsible for everything. He was silent when he should have spoken up, and he ended up losing everything for all of us - an incredible thing. It said immediately they got fig leaves and they covered - now notice this, what they covered. They covered what made them different and unique. That's what shame will do. It will cause you to conceal what makes you different from the person next to you, and unique in God's eyes. For you to be unashamed, you must be able to live with being different, and be able to embrace how unique you are. Now you start to see the depth of the problem? Can you see the problem now, because mostly in our culture we don't want to be different? If you're a teenager it's almost paranoiac to be different - I've got to go with the crowd, got to flow with them.

I love it when I see teenagers standing up and they are different. Remember out in the door there, and two girls who were talking to this guy there and the hair - I'd never seen hair like it in my life. Man, he had the - I don't know how they even do what they did with it. It was colours, it was all kinds of stuff, and the girls obviously had an attitude about it, and they said to me: what do you think of this hair? I said: awesome! [Laughter] And they obviously didn't expect a Pastor to pass that kind of opinion about it. I said: do you want me to tell you why it's awesome? They said: yeah, why? I said: it's because he's got security and confidence enough to be himself, and to present himself as he'd like, without fearing what you think. [Applause] Oh! See? It's one of the ways if people are different, they're different. It's not wrong, it's not bad, it's just different. Who says our way's right? Come on, it's just different. You go to another country, eat different food, good on you. Just eat the food, don't complain about it, don't compare it or anything like that.

They became ashamed and conscious of themselves, and you see the shame, the terribly painful feeling something's wrong with me. So the message of shame is like this: there's something wrong with me, and I'm different - and that's bad. Actually there's something different about you, and God loves it, because it's

why He made you, and you're good. You getting the idea? So that's why you've got to be unashamed - so you see the problem that happened of course, when they hid from themselves, they hid from God, and there was tremendous pain. Now there were two things that came about; one - and you've got to see this - shame will steal your identity. Shame, when it gets on your life, will cause you to be afraid to front up for who you are. The first thing that Adam did was, in standing in front of a person, his wife who he loved, he felt ashamed, and concealed his maleness. She likewise concealed her womanhood from him.

So shame will cause you to conceal who you are. If you have shame on you, the first thing that will happen is, you can't be who you are, you will put on a mask. You will present what's acceptable, so unfortunately church, which should have the answer to shame, often people - this is the one place they put on more masks than any: I got to look good! Ooh, it costs a lot to look good, a lot of money, a lot of time, a lot of emotion. God doesn't want you to look good, He wants you to be right before Him. If you are right before Him which He calls righteous, then you can be who you are, and you don't have to be ashamed at all. I can be me! I can be ME! I don't have to be someone else! I've resigned from being someone else! Now you see this is what happens is when shame gets into an environment, a relationship, a family or into your life, into a culture, then no one can be themselves. They've now got to put on a mask and be something - I don't know, what are we supposed to be? I don't know, I'll ask him? No, he's not too sure either - I'll ask her? No, oh I'm blowed if I know what I'm supposed to be, but the people that speak loudest to me, I'll be like them. [Laughter]

We can never be ourselves when there's toxic shame, so the first thing it steals is your identity. The first thing to be restored is your identity. Who are you? Who are you? I don't know. I don't know, I was told you shouldn't think that, you shouldn't feel like that, you shouldn't do that, you're a naughty boy, and I was so filled - I don't know who I am any more. I got lost years ago. I've got to discover in Christ who I am, what He made me to do, and fulfil that course, see?

The second thing you lose is - so shame will steal intimacy. It will stop you have intimate relationships. A person filled with shame can never enter into intimate relationship. You know why? It's so obvious of course, because I so hate what I'm like, I can't show you it. If I can't show you who I am, if I can't show you my feelings, I can't connect with you. If I can't show you my ideas, my thoughts, my dreams, my passions - these are all part of who I am by the way. If I can't show

you those things for fear you'll reject me, I cannot be intimate, and you can never know me.

Sitting in the church today are multitudes of people who've never got shame off their life to become unashamed, so they can't become intimate anywhere, intimate with God, intimate with one another, intimate and open in a family environment - and that has got to change. It's not God's design. God wants us to be free of that toxic kind of shame that stops us being who we are, and connecting like we ought to connect, in ways which are open and transparent. Hello! See, so if I'm going to enter into a relationship, my feelings are part of who I am, I've got to be able to talk about them. If I can't talk about them, share them, be open about them because they're mine, because it might make you unhappy, then now this fear of what you may do is shutting me down from connecting authentically. I must, in order to present Christ, I must be authentic in my personal life, so I've got to break free of shame and all the fear it brings.

Right, so unashamed - let me just give you three things that unashamed would look like. I just didn't go looking in a book. I thought man, I just need to get the handle on this: God, show me what it would look like, and I've come up with some things. Number one, you are a connected person. I'll explain these terms in a moment. Number two, you are a confident person; number three, you are a creative person. Now there's probably lots of other things. I kind of nailed those three down, because I think that's what God wants to shift for us, connected first of all, connected instead of being disconnected. I'll explain that in a moment - confident in what I am, and what I can do, and creative. Now let me just explain each one, I'll give you a couple of examples as I go with it.

Number one, connected: that means I can remove all the masks, and live out my true identity as a child and representative of God. See, connected means I can actually connect with myself, connect with God and connect with you. I can be true to who I am. If you don't like it, that's not my problem. See, I'm not going to be shamed or afraid of what you think, or what you're like. I can be me! Don't like it, it's no problem, I don't want you to like me. See, God likes me, loves me, and I'm content to draw from that. The other's inconvenient and hurtful at times, but we can get over that, see? That gets you to be a connected kind of person, see so shame causes us to cover and conceal ourself. We can't connect properly, can't connect for one another. Often church is a very lonely place because of shame, people can't connect.

Okay then, so that's the first one. Now let me give you an example. Unashamed means I am free to live out my true identity. I can be ME! A great example of it is found in 2 Samuel 16:6. It's King David, and David is absolutely uninhibited, unashamed, expressive. He can just be himself in front of the whole, whole nation. He goes out there, and they've never done it before. They've got trumpets, they've got musicians, they've got everyone out there, and he just girds himself up, and he's leaping and dancing and not worried about anyone, don't care what anyone thinks - but that's David. Jesus was called Son of David, so Jesus must have been quite expressive too. In fact with the religious people, when they saw everyone yelling when Jesus came into town, they said stop - stop, stop, stop, stop! See, religions don't want you to be expressive. It thinks that's irreverent. Oh give me a break! It's not being irreverent. It's actually expressing - Jesus said this. He said listen, He said you shut the kids up, even the stones will yell out. I wish they'd shut the kids up, have the stones all yelling, banging together, man!

So David was totally uninhibited. He could be free and expressive. He didn't worry what anyone thought. He was free inside to express his joy, his life, his feelings. Jesus of course was free as well. He could weep at the tomb of a friend. He could laugh with His friends and His disciples. He could have fun with them, He could be straight up and angry. He could express His emotions freely, so one of the things is, when you're unashamed, you're free to be who you are. When I asked that question years ago of myself, I was shocked. I couldn't answer it. I thought I'd got so lost - when did I get lost? When did I just get lost, and I didn't know who I was, or what I really wanted, see? So the first thing is, if you're unashamed, you're actually free to be who you are, and don't worry what people are thinking of you. If you're not controlled by what they think of you, you can just actually express, you become very expressive.

Now a lot of people are unexpressive because actually it's demonic bondage. It's demonic bondage. They've been shamed, and what for them is normal and they think that's me, actually I'm sorry, I have to inform you - gladly inform you today - that that uptight, staunch, locked up, emotionless person that you project out as who you are, is a broken, damaged, fallen short of the glory of God person, that God loves and values, and wants to lift up and heal that broken part of your life. So what? So you can be free. Now you'll express the life different to me, but you'll still express it. There are many ways we can express joy, but it

should show on the face.

Okay, second one is you'll be confident: I can confidently fulfil God's assignment, and be free from the fear of people or their opinions. How many believe God has a purpose or an assignment for your life? Well you should be confident doing it then, see? Because everyone else has got a plan for your life, but you need to be confident in what God called you to do, able to do it without any - shame causes us to compare ourselves, and then we try to be like everyone else, and do what they want. See David - notice in this - when David was doing all his celebrating, and this is the bit I love, immediately his wife looked out the window, and she tried to toxic-shame him: who do you think you are? You just want to be the King of Israel, that's what you're doing, blah blah blah. He says ha! You thought that was something? You watch in the next round-up, I'm going to be even worse.

Now he refused to be shamed. He was able to stand up at what he's called to be, and the next day he got up, you know what he did? He said this is what we'll do now, we will now have 24 hours of this. He said up courses of musicians, never been done in history before. He sets up 24 courses of musicians, or 12 courses of musicians around 24 hours. He's setting up all of these courses of musicians to praise, worship, do stuff before God - no one had ever seen it before - oh, we've never done it that way before! Well I got this creative idea from God, I got this - what are you on about? No, don't put me down, I'm moving forward with these great things that God's given me to do, see? In the area he was called to serve, he became incredibly creative. That brings you to the last one.

See, creative means, in the area that you serve, you come up with ideas no one has ever thought of before. You don't follow the crowd, you become the crowd leader. You're free to express the creative wisdom of God through your gifts and abilities, so you've got to value those. Shame will cause you to not value them. What did Gideon do? Gideon changed a nation, but you know how he started? God said: oh Gideon, you mighty man of valour - and Gideon manifested shame. I'm the youngest in the family, haven't got much education. I can't fight, and we don't have much money, we're a small family. God said: when you're finished! [Laughter] YOU are a mighty warrior. I will use you to save a nation. Oh really? He needed a little bit of persuading to get out of his shame, but once he got the word of God about who he was, he got God's perspective on who he was, and agreed with God's perspective, and he did what God called him to do. It's

brilliant to see it.

All kinds of guys in the Bible did the same kind of thing. Now you're not called necessarily to go out and conquer an enemy army out there, but wherever you're positioned in this city or region, God wants you to be unashamed, confident in who you are, and what you're called to do, and creatively do something no one else really else thought about doing it that way before. When Solomon got on the throne, he did it too, and he became so famous that people came from all round the world, what to see? The creative wisdom of God. They were smarter, sharper, better, had it working better, and people came and said: [inhales sharply] that's something else! That's what the church is called to do. Now by the church, the manifold wisdom of God will be revealed to the principalities and powers who sought to shame us, hold us down, stop us standing up, and living in a place of fear, and short of the glory of God, now by the church, by you and me, God wants to reveal His wisdom - and you can't do that if you're full of shame. You've got to come into agreement with what God says about who you are, what you're called to do, and what you've got inside you to help you to do it. That's the agreement.

I will share with you over the next couple of weeks just what shame is, how you can actually recognise it, because many of you here will be just taking in the concept in the initial stage, but you won't realise how deeply it's in your life and relationships, and you won't even realise how much the people around you are shaming you, and reinforcing that. But once we uncover what it looks like, feels like, and how it manifests itself, you will start to recognise it, and then we're going to begin to talk about how you get yourself out of it. There's a process to get out of it. It's not just a prayer, there's some steps you take that change your life, and I want to show you what they are, so all of us can step up and move out. How many people, when we did the series on offences, then began to recognise them just like that? I'm believing God will be the same on this one of shame. God wants us to arise, be bold, and be who He called us to be - full of His glory, so Paul says: Christ in you, God put His spirit in you, and it's the hope that you will manifest the goodness, the life, the light, the glory of God. Come on, let's stand up and give the Lord a clap!

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1. Introduction:

· Isaiah 54:1-5 - “Enlarge the place of your tent…do not fear for you shall not be ashamed”.

· Whenever Go speaks to us, He also empowers us if we respond and take faith-action.

· God desires to help us grow through the limitations placed by fear and shame.
· To overcome personal limitations we must face them and plan how to work with God on it.
· God's heart for us is that we live without shame and fear – be unashamed.

2. God's Original Design – "Unashamed":
1) We are made in the Image of God:
· Genesis 1:27-28 - "let us make man in our image, according to our likeness".
· God made us in His own image – beautiful, loving, creative, spirit beings.
· He made us with emotions, dreams, passions, creativity, ideas.
· God has many emotions and he created us to give expression to them.
· We are designed to represent God in the world – God is Good!

2) Whatever God makes is Good:
· Genesis 1:31 - "God saw everything He had made and indeed it was very good".
· God is Good – whatever He makes or does is good.
· God's view of the man He created – "Very Good".
· God does not make trash – 'I am not trash' – 'I am unique' = "very good".

3) God clothed man with His Glory:
· Psalm 8:4-6 - "You have crowned him with glory and honour".
· Glory = 3519 = Kabod – tangible manifest presence of God –
Psalm 104:1-2 = "Light".
· Exodus 33:18-19 = "Show me your glory…I will make all my 'goodness' pass before...".
· Adam's whole body radiated the presence of God's glory.
· Honour = 1926 = hadar = magnificence, majesty, splendor, highest value.
· Man stood out above all God's creation because of glory and honour of God.

4) Man was Unashamed:
· Genesis 2:25 - "They were both naked, the man and his wife were not ashamed".
· Adam drew his identity and life from his relationship with God.
· He walked with no fear, no shame – totally unashamed.
· The presence and Glory of God empowered him to live "unashamed".
· Proverbs 3:55 - "The wise inherit glory – shame is the legacy of fools".
· God has prepared man to share His glory – shame is for His enemies!

3. Shame is a Thief:
John 10:10 - "The thief does not come except to steal, kill and destroy…".
Genesis 3:1-10 - "Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord".
When Adam and Eve sinned they lost their glory and changed.
They became focused on self – ashamed – conscious of something wrong.
Shame can only arise from consciousness of sinful or wrongful conduct.
Adam and Eve became tormented with guilt, shame, fear of God.
Verse 10 - "naked" = made bore, lost their clothing or covering.
Verse 11 - "Who told you" = Satan had ridiculed them and pointed out their condition.
Satan accused them both and belittled their condition.
Shame = painful feeling when conscious something wrong, dishonorable, lack, inadequate – something is wrong with me!
Shame was never part of God's design – God wants us unashamed.
Shame is a thief:
1) steals identity

2) steals intimacy

4. Unashamed! What does it look like?
· Note: People who are unashamed will experience shame attacks from those in shame bondage – “Who do you think you are?”

1) Connected - I can remove all masks and live out my true identity as a child and representative of God:
· Shame causes us to cover and conceal who we are, live behind a mask.
· Shame causes us to be disconnected from self and from God and others.
· 2 Samuel 6:14-15 - King David, emotionally expressive. Totally able to be himself, total freedom emotionally/physically.
· David was connected with God – himself – his men.

2) Confident – I can confidently fulfill God’s assignment to me, free from fear of people or their opinions”.
· Shame causes us to live comparing ourselves to others and fearful of being different.
· Unashamed = I am free of what people think or say”.
· 2 Samuel 16:22 - King David refused to be put down by Michal.
· David was able to withstand her shaving words.
· David expressed his freedom boldly.

· Acts 4:13 - Peter refused to be intimidated by religious criticism.
· Peter stood and acted boldly –verbally bold and assertive.
· He stood up in his calling and assignment of God.

3) Creative – I am free to express the creative wisdom of God through my unique gifts, abilities and creativity:
· Shame causes us to place low value on what we are and have to give.
· Shame keeps us mediocre – following the crowd, copying.
· Unashamed = I am free to discover and develop my unique capacity boldly, confidently and creatively.
· Gideon – changed a nation – Judges 6:12
· Paul – proclaimed gospel – Romans 1:16 – “Not ashamed of the Gospel”
· David – music, songs – e.g. Jesus

It is Time to Break the Power of Shame – be Unashamed!

Unmasking Shame (2 of 6)

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Okay, let's have a look in the Bible at Isaiah 54. We started last week a message called Unashamed. How many people have started to get stirred and challenged by that? Come on, that's right, come on into freedom, challenged into freedom, and right now the Holy Spirit is moving in the church as a result of us in fasting and prayer for a season, just lifting the lid off a whole number of things in people's lives. So if you're finding you've got all kinds of feelings and struggles, or things happening around in your life, don't be ashamed of it, other people are going through the same thing. It's part of growing; first you feel uncomfortable, then you begin to address the things you need to change.

We're reading in this Verse in Isaiah 54, and God is speaking in Verse 2: Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch out the curtain of your habitations. Don't hold back, don't spare. Lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes, for you shall expand. So God's speaking about expanding, growing, increasing, and increase happens externally. Increase firstly must happen internally, and so then He goes on, He says: Do not fear, for you will not be ashamed; neither will you be disgraced. You will not be put to shame; you'll forget the shame of your youth, and not remember the reproach of your widowhood anymore. So notice He uses these words: fear and shame. You won't be put to shame. God has got no shame to put on you. Not only that, He's got no fear that He wants to put on you. Fear and shame are limiters in our lives, and we looked last week at some aspects of how God made us.

We found we are made in the image of God, and what God made is good. We may be a bit damaged, but we're still good. We're made in the image of God. There is something good about every person. They're of a unique value, because we're made in the image of God, and we saw that when the original man and woman were made, they were clothed with the glory, with the goodness of God. There was a supernatural presence of God upon their lives, and so they were able

to be naked, physically unclothed, but absolutely no shame, no awareness of shame. They never knew what shame was, and that was their condition. We saw that when people are unashamed, there's a number of things happen. We saw that when people are unashamed, they can become connected in relationship; when we're ashamed we disconnect in our relationships. We saw also that when people are unashamed, we can be confident, absolutely outspoken and confident, because we're unashamed, not ashamed of who we are, not ashamed of our thoughts, our ideas, what we have, who we are, where we stand.

Many Christians are ashamed, and shame will stop us being effective, got to push against this thing. We saw that when people are unashamed, then we can become creative in expressing how God has wired us and gifted us. We saw last week that God's desire and heart is to be unashamed, absolutely unashamed, so we're going to follow that through in recognising the fact that many people, many of us have and do struggle with shame. I want to over this today and the next couple of weeks begin to address - firstly we want to look at well, how would I recognise shame? If I'm going to beat something, I've got to recognise it. So you say well I'm doing okay, I'm not ashamed. Well we'll see, we'll see. If you don't know what it looks like, you'd never recognise if it's in your life, and the first phase of any changes in our life is to actually recognise where we're at, then how we got there, and detach from how we got there, then begin to build different things into our life so our future's different.

So to get free of shame, it's not a matter of simply come up the front, we pray and break something off you - if only. Now you can be prayed for, and lots of shifts can take place, but essentially, if you don't understand this whole issue and how it affects your life, you won't take the steps needed to move yourself out of it, and so I want to today just look at this whole area of shame. We want to look at the area of unmasking shame, get the lid off it, okay? So let's go have a look in Genesis. We'll have a look in Genesis, Chapter 3. Let's see where shame first came in, then we're going to try and have a look at what its message is. When shame is talking to you, it's saying something, so we're going to talk about what shame is saying, identify what it is, and how it impacts us. Then we're going to have a look then at just some examples of its fruit in your life, so I want you by the end of today, if shame is operating in your life, and affecting the way you run your life and relationships, I want you at least to be able to say: I'm recognising it. I've got a handle on it man! Man, oh! I thought I was doing alright but oh,

there's something there I need to shift.

So let's have a look first of all at the entrance of shame, Genesis, Chapter 2, Verse 25. They were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed. Okay, now Chapter 3; Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman: has God indeed said you shall not eat every fruit of the tree? And the woman said to the serpent: we may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God has said you shall not eat it, nor touch it, lest you die. [Laughs] The serpent said to the woman: you won't die. God knows in the day you eat, your eyes will be opened - partial truth - you'll be like God - not true - knowing good and evil - true. When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and was desirable for the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. And she gave to her husband with her - I've often wondered why Adam never spoke up when all of this was going on, the silent husband.

And he ate, went along with it, went along with his wife's plan. Then the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew they were naked, and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. Then they heard the sound of the Lord God, walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God, among the trees of the garden. Then the Lord God called to Adam and said: where are you? - not meaning He didn't know where he was. He's trying to get him to come out into the open and enter relationship, but he's so cloaked with shame he said: I heard Your voice in the garden. I was afraid because I was naked, and I hid myself. And the Lord said: who said you were naked? Who told you? Have you eaten the fruit of the tree?

So we see here the entrance of shame. Sin introduced two or three new emotions; here's the first. Sin introduced a deep sense of guilt, followed by a sense of shame, followed by fear. Sin brought it in. That's the entrance of shame, and of course sin continues to keep it there. Some families get so full of shame, that it literally travels from one generation to another. Cultures can be full of shame, organisations can be full of shame, relationships can be full of shame - but shame entered firstly here as a result of sin. So when they sinned, they broke the boundaries God had set them, and immediately something left them. You see when they sinned they became separated from God who was the source of

identity. Now think about this: if God was the source of our identity and we become separated, we've got to find it somewhere else. The answer truly is in not finding it somewhere else. The answer is in finding our relationship with God again, so sin caused a breach. The Bible says: all have sinned, and when Adam and Eve sinned, not just was their relationship broken and their intimacy broken, but something departed from them which they previously had. It was called glory. It was goodness. It was a manifestation of the life of God upon them, that allowed them to live free of shame.

Now as soon as that left them, suddenly they became conscious of themselves. That's the first thing that shame does; it causes us to become focussed inward on ourself. We become aware of ourselves, and of course the problem with sin is that all have sinned - notice what the Bible says - all have sinned, and fallen short of the glory of God. Let me put it another way. All of us enter this world with a broken relationship with God, and we don't carry the glory of God on our life. We're aware we're somehow lacking, and so we're vulnerable to being shamed. It's the condition of every person, so notice it says: the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew. That word 'knew' means to be intimately acquainted, or to experience something, so as soon as they both sinned, immediately they had an experience inside. They became conscious of something they never were conscious of before. It was a feeling they had. It was a bad, bad feeling, and notice what it says in Verse 10. He says: I was afraid. He was filled with fear - we're going to look at this in a moment.

He was filled with fear, because of my condition. I was ashamed of the condition I was in, fear overwhelmed me, and so I did the only thing I thought I could do, which was to hide myself. So shame always will have with it, fear and hiding or covering over, so shame is firstly an intimacy thief. It stops me coming near to God. Secondly, it's an identity thief, it caused me to hide who I am, and cover what I'm like, so I wear a mask and you don't really know me. That in turn, because I'm wearing a mask and you don't know me, I can't be intimate with you either, and here's the dilemma. We have in church many, many people who are lonely. It's not because God isn't here. It's not because there aren't people around you, who don't love you. There are. God has come in many ways, in healing and touching and His presence in all kinds of ways, people connect in groups and whatever. Yet still in the middle of it people feel alone, and that loneliness that's in there is the consequence of shame and its work in your life.

Unless you recognise it you can never break out, because shame caused them to be afraid, and then to cover up, and unless we address that in our personal life, and learn how to change the way we see ourselves, and the way we work with people, then we're going to live in this bondage of being - or held inside this area of being alone. I know exactly what this feels like. I've worked on this considerably in myself, and I feel now God's saying come to another level, come to another level, see? Come to another level. Now there's a difference between guilt and shame. You need to be very clear about them. Guilt has a completely different message to shame. When there is guilt, the message of guilt is simply this: I did something wrong, so I sneaked up and stole those lollies. I did something wrong. I went around there and spray painted the back of the building. I did something wrong, I've broken some acceptable standard or law - guilt. Guilt means I did something wrong. It has to do with my actions or my behaviour, but shame is a different message.

Shame says to you: there's something wrong with me. There's something wrong with me. Shame has to do with your identity, who you are: somehow I am lacking, somehow I'm inferior and inadequate to the people around me. Shame is a message: something is wrong with me, I'm weird, I must be a loser or some kind of thing like that, or I don't fit. That's all shame talking, shame. Now shame is a very powerful, powerful spiritual enemy. If you don't confront it, it will affect the way you live your whole life, what you do, how you run your relationships. So shame then is a painful emotion, it's a painful experience, It's a feeling you have. It's a feeling you have, it's also a belief, and it's associated with something being wrong with me: I'm not acceptable, something's wrong. So the shame message is - and I'll put it in a way that's really easy too, I'll put it in three words that are really easy to remember. Then when you remember these things, then you'll be able to identify that's shame. Here's the message of shame. The message of shame is: damage; difference; and danger - damage, difference, danger.

Okay, the first part of shame is I'm damaged, something's wrong with me. The second part of shame is I'm different, I'm not the same as you. You notice the first thing that Adam and Eve did was they covered up - presumably they covered up their private parts, the parts that were different. So when shame is talking to you, its message is damage - you're damaged goods. You're different. You're different, you look different and difference is bad, see? Actually God

made us all different, and difference is good, but shame will tell you difference is bad, you need to cover up the difference, so you can be alike. Now you can understand that if we don't get a touch and get connected back into relationship with God, we'll end up being religious, because religion will cause you to fear being - it'll never address the shame of your condition. It'll cause you to leave the place where you feel ashamed of, who you are, and be ashamed of being different; whereas God says: I MADE EVERYONE DIFFERENT! HA! When I made you I broke the mould! There's no one like you!

And you see shame will tell you you're different, you need to be the same. God says no, I made you different. I want you to be different, because every person will differently express what I'm like into the world. I want you to be different! I want you to be unique in who you are, your giftings - but there's some areas I want you to be alike, and that is like my Son and His character. I want you to be able to represent Me, and My character and desires in life, but to express it differently. So a religious culture always will be a toxic shaming culture, because it'll point out something's wrong with you, you're different and difference is bad, you need to co-operate and conform. So typically when religion abounds, or the spirit of religion abounds, and a new person walks into the church, immediately what's noticed is their difference, which is what is unique about them.

So someone comes in, and they've got this punk hairstyle, and their ears are full of iron and their nose is full of iron - of course they're different. Difference is neither good nor bad. You say aah what, that's bad. No, it's different, it's just different. Why not celebrate they're different? They may change their ideas and thoughts about the whole area of all the iron and metal and stuff and the hairstyle, but it's not up to you to change that. But religion will conform, or push a conformity, to behaving the same as everyone else, so if you behave differently, or are different, or are not the same as everyone else, you're different - and difference is bad! Of course that fills you with fear, what's going to happen to me if I'm different? You getting the idea?

So the first part of shame is that I'm damaged, something's really wrong with me, and I'm different to everyone else, and now danger; I'm afraid they're going to do something to me. I've got to get out of here, or I've got to conform. Can you see the whole package of shame, and you can see how it robs you of intimacy, it robs you of your identity, and it robs you of dominion? It robs you of all of those things. Just think it through now; firstly is I am damaged, therefore there's

something not right about me, I better cover it up. I better put on a mask - that robs me of my identity. I can't be me. I can't even tell you that I'm damaged. What the heck will you do if you know I'm really damaged? What would you do if I told you just how damaged I am? Can you see? So the thing of being damaged on the inside, which we're all damaged by sin, and by the sin of others and sin of our own, we're all damaged to some extent. If I put a mask on, I cannot be authentic, so my identity is concealed, I sit in a group having a mask on. It's the mask of Bible Knowledge - I know all the Bible, but you will never know me, see?

There's many masks. We're going to look at a few of them in a moment, but the mask that covers you stops you being who you are - see, damage, damage. I'm different, I'm different. If I'm different that means there's something wrong with me, it's bad to be different. So now you see first my identity was sold, now I can't be intimate with you, because I'm different so I'll hold back. Then finally because there's danger to me, now I've got to put up some mechanism to defend myself. I'm going to find a way of stopping you hurting me. There it all is in a package - shame. It all goes together: I'm damaged, I'm different, and I'm in danger because you could hurt me, and I'm going to make sure I don't let that happen. And what are the consequences of all that? Well I don't know really quite who I am, because I can never be that, and I'm a bit frightened to actually come out in the open and get connected to anyone, in case they do some bad stuff to me, because it's happened before you know, so I'm in the church and I'm lonely.

The key thing is not to change your environment. The key thing is change what's inside you, and that we want to look out over the next couple of weeks about how to change what's inside you. If you don't change what's inside you, and gain God's remedy, then what happens is this thing just keeps cycling, and we're forced to wear a mask and can't be authentic. The thing we long for, intimacy, connectedness with God, connectedness with people, being able to be ourselves, discovering the giftings we have, being encouraged - it all eludes us, because shame has cloaked us. The Bible talks about shame being like a garment. It's not for us, shame is for our enemies. Shame is for God's enemies, see? We were never designed for shame. We're designed to be... [Unashamed] ...and when you're unashamed you're functioning right; when you're full of shame you're malfunctioning, something's wrong, it needs to be addressed - not by putting on

a different set of clothes, not by conforming in behaviour, but by actually changing what's on the inside, and that's what Jesus came to do.

So the shame message is: damage, different and danger, and so we were not designed for this kind of thing. So the core message of shame we've said is damage, different and danger, but the next thing is, is there an emotion that comes with it, a motivation? When people - notice what Adam said. He said: I was afraid. Now what was he afraid of? He was absolutely filled with terror, and I know what that fear is like. This is what it is; it's the fear of being exposed. It's the fear that the lid will be taken off and there you are! Probably some of you have had dreams, and in your dreams you're naked in the middle of a crowd, and trying to find some way to escape. It's actually a shame thing talking to you. That's what it is, and the fear, the wanting to run away, can't get away, see? So we see there that fear, the fear of exposure, and then once you're exposed, then you'll be rejected or punished in some kind of way, so it's a driving fear inside people: if you could really see what I'm like, I'm terrified of what you'd do to me.

And see people just get covered in, and so the core strategy, how do people decide they'll fix it? Well you can see it with Adam and Eve.

They fixed it three ways: number one, they covered themselves so made fig leaves and covered themselves, literally got some coverings, put it over, now you can't see me. That was smart. Okay, fig leaves. Fig leaves meant a covering of self. The second thing they did was, they went into hiding. They actually hid themselves from genuine, authentic intimacy. This is ridiculous. I mean God comes there, and He's walking and talking with them, and then they take a hike, they hide away in the trees. Then when God was saying: where are you, He's not asking where are you like I don't know. He's actually saying: I know that my relationship with you has been breached, I'm coming looking to you. Will you talk to me about your condition? I wonder what would have happened if Adam had come out and said: Lord, I've just blown it, will You forgive me? It would have been totally different.

Here's the third part of shame then, we tend to blame everyone else, the final seal on it. Lord, that woman You gave me! In other words implicit in that is: listen, don't blame me! It's not my mess. Who thought up the idea of the woman aye? Come on. Come on. Who made the woman aye? [Laughter] Who brought her to

me? And who's messed it all up for me? So don't talk - just talk to the hand, you know, it's You and the woman can sort this out. It's nothing to do with me, see? Of course you see, now he's not in the position now to actually take any responsibility. That's how he lost his dominion, he would not take responsibility for the things he could manage, so shame is an identity thief, it stops you being who you are; it is an intimacy thief, it stops you connecting in relationships, and it's a dominion thief, because it stops you taking responsibility to manage your world. It stops you being accountable, the blame game - be heaps of people here in the blame game.

I hear it. Every time I hear it, shame is talking, because the moment you blame someone else, you have made a decision not to be responsible for your life, to play the victim card, and this is not how we have dominion in life. To have dominion in life, we must be responsible, so becoming responsible for my thoughts, my emotions, my choices, my actions, is a part of having dominion, and shame will cause me to actually withdraw, and try and find someone somewhere to blame. Well it was Prime Minister, well it was the white people, well it was the Government, well it was the police, well it was my father, it was my mother, it was my background, it was the bottle. Whatever it was, listen: that stops you becoming responsible to build a different future. So there can be no place for shame in my personal life, nor can I tolerate it in my environment, and so in dealing with the issue of shame, we want to first recognise it.

Then we want to learn how we can overcome it personally, then of course since we live in an environment which is full of people shaming us, you've got to learn how to handle being shamed, and to also handle what you do with people. I even heard that expression this week: oh, shame on you! I thought where did that come from? My goodness me, that's straight out of hell. God has got no shame to put on people. He wants actually to restore us so we know how to walk, and if you fall over to get up quick without carrying shame. The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, though he fall, though he fall, though he fall, though he fall, though he fall, though he fall, he'll not stay down, cast down by shame, the Lord will lift him up - so God is committed to lift us up. Why? Because we're the apple of His eye! Why? Because He loves us. Why? Because He's not ashamed of us! He wants to lift us up, wants to get us up again!

Which is worse, falling over, or refusing to believe God wants to get you up again? Come on, think about that one. Most people think the worst part is I fell

over, I did this, I did this, I did this. Listen, the worst thing is, you don't believe that God will help you get up again. That's a more important thing - not you fell over. Here's the message of the cross: Jesus died for all the sins that brought shame onto people, so that every person could be free of their shame, and not stay down, so if you get knocked down get up, push your shame aside, walk with God again! If you fall over again, get up again! WALK WITH GOD! I will not receive shame! [Applause] Jesus has got no name. He carried it for you, and He actually learned how to handle it when people tried to shame Him. You've got to understand this: the devil will seek to shame you. His first and primary attack on you, is on your identity. If he can shame you - well who do you think you are? That's the message see? If he can shame you, or if he can say something like: well if you're something, why don't you prove it and do something? If he can just get you working to establish that you're good enough then he's nailed you.

The beginning of Jesus' ministry, the devil attacked His identity by shaming Him. At the end of His ministry when He's hanging on the cross, the devil attacked His identity again and tried to shame Him. He learned, He knew the keys how to deal with shame, and we'll deal with that a little later. When you get shame, when things come against you, you need to know what to do, because around you you will find people - this is their way of relating. They're so full of shame themselves, that what they do when you try and raise an issue, or there's something happens, they'll try and shame you and put you down. You've got to recognise it, and learn how to stand up and defeat the thing, so for example you see it even in the biggest scene in the nation; someone stands up and expresses an opinion, and immediately now, what they've shared is not spoken about, but the person is attacked and shamed and put down.

The message of shame is a put down, put down, put down. Everyone hates to be put down. Everyone is called by God to stand up. Amen. Okay then, so we've got that impact of shame, and so the core strategy is hiding. We hide away, hiding, so they covered themselves, they hid themselves, and then tried to blame someone else. Okay, let's come down, I want to have a look in Luke Chapter 6, and I want to see if we can unmask shame in your life, want to just see if we can just pick up some things. In Luke Chapter 6 it says this. in Verses 43 and 44: If you want to know a tree, have a look at it's fruit. If you want to know a tree, have a look at its fruit - Luke, Chapter 6 - for a good tree doesn't bear bad fruit, and neither does a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree is known by its own fruit. You

want to know a tree - fruit, look for the fruit. If the fruit's there, the root's there. You see an apple on a tree, either someone's conning you and they pinned it there, or that's an apple tree. Is that right?

If you see an orange, and you say well either someone's conning me, or that's actually an orange tree. Now we already learned, we know that from the trees - but what about if you looked at your own life in a mirror, and started to look and see, and you started to find the fruit of shame. What would you conclude is happening in the root system of your beliefs and inner life? That shame has got a grip, shame is working, and you're just not even aware of it, because that's the nature of the kingdom of darkness, is to work unaware. So if we want to have a look at shame operating in our life, then we need to see how it affects us and impacts us. I've jotted down some things which are all fruit of shame, when inside I am damaged, I don't like what I'm like, I'm different. I'm different to everyone else - man, difference is bad and whoa! I'm in danger, something will happen to me, I'm afraid.

Then we're going to do some things to try and deal with it, and it's the things you do to deal with it which are the fruit, so if I look and see the fruit in your life, I absolutely know that shame is there. I'm NOT ashamed! Now listen, come on, if the fruit's there - if it's orange there it's an orange tree, is that right? Okay, here's some of the fruit of it. Okay, let's go for a few things, alright then. I've got a heap of them so I'll just throw them out, and just every time these things come up, I look and think oh my goodness, there it is, there it is again. Okay, shame - anger, especially when there's injustice. Now if you've ever experienced injustice in your life, you will have felt ashamed. You'll feel shame, you were badly treated, and sometimes the shame is shame at being powerless: I couldn't do anything about it. You know what will happen the next time you see someone treated unjustly? There'll be an anger rise up in you that's beyond anything that's relevant to the situation. It's an anger that's coming up out of the fact that you were shamed and treated wrongly, and so anger is a fruit.

Performance is a fruit. Now God wants us all to be motivated, wants us all to work hard, and I'm not talking about working hard or being diligent which biblical. We're talking about being driven, so your life can't even be balanced anymore, you're like a workaholic. Workaholics have shame operating on the inside of them. They don't like who they are. Someone shamed them - maybe they just told them: you'll never amount to anything. I'll prove it! And so the

shame of that condition that they have, they rise up, and then they're driven by the shame, and when a person's driven to perform by shame, they actually lose all perspective and balance in their life. They get out of balance everywhere, and it's basically because inside they don't like who they are. They need to actually get shifted in a different way.

Another thing that comes as a result of shame is control. Now by control I'm talking about ungodly control. See when a person's got shame they're afraid, so what they try and do then is they try and control all the relationships around them, so you can't possibly hurt me or shame me or show me up. And so a person who's got deep shame in their life, will then begin to try and control everyone around, so you can't make me look bad, okay? And so parents who have shame in their life will try and control their children, so their children don't make them look bad. Now you've got to understand this about human design: God made us to be unashamed and free, and here's the thing. When someone tries to control another person, that person may apparently submit, but they become incredibly devious and creative in finding ways to rebel and find their way. There's no way you're going to tell me what to do. Even if you try to, and even if it looks like I'm doing it, I might be sitting down on the outside, but inside I'm standing up!

It's extraordinary when control comes, how people can find a way around it in various ways - so control, lost identity and living identity through others, some women who are ashamed, live their identity out through their children. Some can live it out through being in a position - I remember we used to catch a bus from Napier to Hastings. There was a guy there, insignificant man really in many ways but he had a uniform on. Well you can't believe what that uniform did. He became a Nazi - immediately a little bit of power! The uniform has changed him, and now he's got a world of young people to control on the bus! No way is it going to work of course, however it was an attitude he had, a little bit of power, you know? So some people with no identity, or shame, will struggle in that kind of area. Shame will also cause people to put down others, and I recognise in my own life a couple of aspects of shame; one was being very negative. You know, you'd see eight positives and two negatives - man, I'd get obsessed with the negative, couldn't get over the negative.

Another area was the area of putting down, of comments or remarks that were hurtful to others. It was actually shame-based. It came out of an originated

shame on my own life. Another area is no sense of belonging, that's another one I really struggle with. I can be in the middle of a crowd and feel like I didn't belong. That's because shame has isolated you, and you have no connectedness. When a person has a strong sense of identity, they're known for who they really are. They have good intimacy; it's a sense of belonging and being connected, but when you have shame around your life you don't feel you belong, and you don't feel you're connected. Now that's why a lot of people in church don't feel they belong. It's nothing to do with what's outside you, it's internal. It's a shame message talking to you. You need help to get out of it, need to actually face the thing, and do what's needed to break out of the thing.

Another area that shame does, it causes people to be withdrawn. They'll be a shadow, and they're present but they're not present. They project nothing of their spirit into the immediate surrounding. They're there, but it's like they're not there, and you can actually learn how to do that; shut down so you're almost like you're not there, and funnily enough you can be in the group, and no one even noticed you were there, because your presence was not manifest. You never opened your heart and spirit to connect with people. One of the keys of releasing the power and presence of God into an environment, you have to be free of shame, so your spirit can open up and release your inner life, and what God has put in there, into the area around you. We'll share that with you when it comes to ministering - when it comes to ministering to people for example, when you minister to people, God expects you to give what you have, in other words not stand back remotely, and say: oh God bless that person, they need help, but rather what I have I release to you. Something you have, you give. Shame will stop you giving what you have, cause you to withhold it and be shy, withdrawn, and then come to agree that's what I'm like, and I'm different - and that's bad.

See, we've got to break these things off us. Hopelessness, self-pity - man, I used to wallow in self-pity, pity parties, no one else was invited to and it would go on for days. Terrible thing self-pity, but self-pity is an evidence of shame, embarrassed and shamed about what we're like; suicidal thoughts, hypersensitive to criticism. If someone says a little thing and next thing oh, what did they mean by that? What did they mean by that? Blah blah blah blah - and you obsess with what people are thinking about you. That's shame talking. That is shame talking to you and paralysing you with fear. Distrust, people who have got shame can never trust anyone, can't build healthy relationships. They become self-focussed,

in other words, I think they're talking about me, I KNOW they're talking about me! I know this is ALL about me! That's the message of shame, it's all about me. Well get out of that place.

See, fear of relational intimacy. Some people are emotionless. They're ashamed of their emotions, so they shut down their emotions, and now they have no emotions, and somehow they're more male because they have no emotions - not so. They've now become very difficult to relate to as a woman, because they're ashamed of the emotions and they've shut them down, they can't talk about them. Addiction is another one; alcoholism, sex addictions, work addictions, all of these kinds of things. All of them are a desire to somehow make me feel better, because I just think I'm damaged, and I don't like what's going on inside me. Now if you don't understand that shame is driving it, you can't get out of it. Shame - we need to look at it in another session, how shame comes into our life, and how we actually receive it without even realising it's there, and then it's manifesting, and what we can do to start to break out of that cycle. We need to be able to break out of this thing, we don't want it around me.

I can remember as a young boy, and we'll see it next week when we look at some of these how it enters in, but often it enters in when you're quite young. Sometimes it enters in through family, but I can remember for me as a young child growing up, at about the age of five. I'd just started primary school. We didn't have any pre-school stuff in those days, so I'd just started primary school, it was actually Marewa School over in Napier there. I started over there and I was probably about six months into it, and I got something wrong in my hair. Of course it's easy to treat now, but in those days they couldn't treat it. It was called ringworm, which is basically I must have handled some cat that had this thing and scratching my hair, I'd got this thing in my hair. Now in those days they couldn't deal with it, so the only way they had to deal with it was, they shaved off all your hair, and what they couldn't shave off they used a piece of tape and pulled the rest all out until you were left absolutely bald.

If that wasn't bad enough, now you've got to go to school bald, so my mother thought she'd protect me. Lovely mum, she wanted to do the best so she made some kind of thing to put over me. Well that made it even worse. Nowadays of course - this was before Cojac. It was alright see if Cojac had been he could have saved me you know. I could have just said oh, Kojak! But he hadn't been around so bald is weird and different. Then of course I became the jeering of people

there, and then I was assaulted more than once, with people wanting to actually expose this condition. You can't imagine at five years old what you believe about yourself, and how you feel about yourself, and so I struggled with two other areas which are natural areas. One was lack of co-ordination physically when it came to ball games. You can't believe what that does to you, when you can't do what everyone else can do - something is different, something is wrong with me.

Then I was short sighted as well. I wear glasses now. I never took glasses on until I was in Sixth Form. Because I was so filled with shame about my weakness I never admitted it. See, shame causes you to conceal and cover yourself. I was ashamed about my weakness, I was ashamed about my vulnerability, I was ashamed about who I was. I withdrew. I could not handle school relationships very well, and so I was extremely lonely because of shame, and the fear that goes with it, the paralysing fear someone will find out. Now you understand that? That shaped my whole growing through high school years, and those are the years when you're impressionable, when your life is being formed, when the way you see yourself is being shaped, so I understand the message I'm talking about. So I tried to compensate in a number of ways, so if you'd seen the fruit, you could easily tell what it was; number one, I over performed. I struggled and just buried myself in work, and separated from people. You could tell.

Second, I went away into a place where I didn't have to connect with people. You see the identity's lost, intimacy's lost, dominion lost. It's a terrible place to be, in the place where shame dominates your life. I never knew about the devil and what he could do. I never knew about Jesus and what He did. It was years later when the Lord helped me to face and address this issue of shame. Let me just finish with you a couple of scriptures. One is found in Romans I think, Chapter 9:23, and it says: Those who put their trust in the Lord will never be ashamed. Now does that mean, well we'll put our trust in the Lord? What does that mean, that we'll never be ashamed? Well those who trust Him in their walk, God will never, never allow them to be disappointed and ashamed in the long term, but do we still suffer with shame? Yeah. We need Jesus to help us.

Let me finish with this story. We don't need to read it, it's found in Mark 1. I love this story, and the Lord drew my attention to it this morning and I saw it a little differently. There was a man who was different, and was damaged. He was a leper. In other words, he had a totally disfiguring disease that was visible to

everyone, and he was separated from everyone, because lepers had to be separated, so there was no intimacy. His identity was not you are a valuable child of God; you are a leper, stay away. So here's this man. What is he going to do? A man absolutely helpless, covered with the shame of leprosy, with the feeling of being different, the feeling of being damaged, the feeling of no power and he heard about Jesus Christ. It says he came to Him, and he fell down on his knees imploring that Jesus would help him. I just saw this morning something I hadn't seen before, the significance of the touch of Jesus. This man had been isolated. This man had no touch. This man was struggling with who he was, and Jesus didn't - before He even healed him, before He addressed what was the outward problem, He came near to the man, and He touched him, and looked into his eyes. He accepted him just as he was, and then He healed him.

Most people think that you've got to get your life right before Jesus will accept you. It's definitely not true. He just wants those who know they're a leper, to come to Him. He's not ashamed to reach out and touch your leprosy. Perhaps your leprosy's pornography, maybe some bad sexual relationship, maybe an addiction, alcoholism or gambling. Maybe there's all kinds of things in your life you're so ashamed of, you don't know what to do - then you're a leper, covered with shame. But instead of holding up a sign 'unclean' and avoiding, why don't you come to Jesus Christ, and let Him reach out, and let you know you're of value to Him? You're of value to Him. Everyone around you may be communicating messages: you're damaged, you're different, you're of no value, but we are of great value to God. That's why Jesus came. It was God in the flesh, coming to communicate the message, that in spite of the shame of our condition, we're still of great value.

You are of great value. Maybe you've been put to shame by what others have said and done to you, an abusive father, critical people, teachers, life's failures, but you don't have to stay there. Whoever will come to the Lord will never be put to shame. He'll never reject you, He'll never abandon you. His commitment is a covenant-al commitment to stay with you no matter what you're facing, to keep reaching out to you, no matter how many times you fall, and to keep telling you you're of value to Me. The message most of us have carried in our life is we're not much value, and we've got to prove ourselves. We've got to work hard, get money, get this, get that, get whatever. The message Jesus brings is: I value you without any of that stuff; can you come to Me?

Summary Notes: Formatted » Back to Top »

1. Introduction:
· Isaiah 54:4 - “Do not fear, for you will not be ashamed, neither be disgraced, for you will not be put to shame, for you will forget the shame of your youth…..”
· Last week:
1) Man is made in the image of God.
2) Whatever God makes is good.
3) Man was clothed in the Glory of God.
4) Man was designed to be unashamed.

2. The Entrance of Shame:
a) Key Passage: Genesis 3:1-11

b) Sin introduced with it, new emotions = “Shame and Fear”
· Genesis 2:25 - “..they were both naked….the man and his wife and they were not ashamed..”
· Adam and Eve were clothed with the glory / goodness of God and had no sense of shame.
· When Adam and Eve sinned – they broke the boundaries God had set them, they changed.
· Sin separated them from the source of their identity and changed them.
· Genesis 3:7 - “Then the eyes of both of them were opened and they knew they were naked.
· Knew = 3045 = yada = to be intimately acquainted, experience, deeply conscious.
· They were ashamed of their personal condition.
· Genesis 3:10 - “I was afraid because I was naked and I hid myself”.
· Their shame was accompanied by great feelings of fear.

c) The Massage of Shame:
· There is a difference between guilt and shame.
· Guilt: “I have done something wrong” - my behaviour.
· Shame: “There is something wrong with me” - my identity.
· Definition: Shame = emotional pain associated with having done
something wrong and lost the respect of others.
· The Shame Massage:
1) “I am damaged – something is wrong with me!” - no value.
2) “I am different – I am not as good as others!” - different is bad.
3) “I am in danger – I am afraid of being rejected!”

d) The impact of Shame:
· We were not designed for shame and fear – we were designed to be unashamed.
· Adam and Eve were deeply impacted by experiencing shame the consequence of sin.
i) Core Massage: Shame = Damage + Difference + Danger
verse 10 – “I was naked”
- Adam and Eve became ‘self focused’, self centered.
ii) Core Motivation: Fear….verse 10 - “I was afraid”.
- Adam struggled with feeling damaged and different, he was filled with fear.
- Fear of being exposed – fear of being judged – fear of being rejected.
iii) Core Strategy: Hiding…verse 10 - “I hid myself”.

Notice Adam’s response – his strategy for concealing the shame he felt.
a) Cover Up – verse 7 - They made themselves cover up.
- there was a loss of identity => putting on a mask.
- Identity = characteristic by which a person is known.

- Shame is identity thief – “I can’t be myself”
b) Hiding – verse 10 - “…they hid themselves from the presence of God…”
- There was a loss of intimacy – hide = to conceal, withdraw self.
- Intimacy = feeling of being close and belonging together.
c) Blame – verse 12 - “The woman you gave be with me, she gave me…”
- there was a loss of sense of responsibility .
- Responsibility = accountable for something within ones own power.

Shame is a Dominion Thief - “It is someone else’s fault, I am like them”.

· Who told you that you were naked? - Genesis 3:11
· The devil loves to take advantage of our damaged condition to accuse and condemn us. He is the accuser – Revelation 12:10
· The devil loves to shame people because he himself has been stripped of all his rank and privileges as an angel and clothed with shame – Ezekiel 28.

3. Unmasking Shame in your life:
Luke 6:43-44 - “Every tree is known by its own fruit”.
The presence of shame in your life can be recognised by the fruit it produces.
Trying hard to perform better is not the solution – the root of shame must be removed.
Examples:
* Anger, esp. injustice
* Shame/Put Down other
* Hopelessness
* Self focused
* Performance
* Constant comparisons
* Self Pity
* Fear of relationship
* Control
* Consistently focused on negative
* Suicide
* Emotionless
* Lost identity - live through others/positions
* No sense of belonging – always on outer.
* Hypersensitive to Criticism
* Addictions
* Arrogance superiority
* Withdrawn
* Distrust
* Blaming

People clothed in Shame can never fulfill their destiny and purpose.
Shame:
= Wear a mask, create a false self (identity).
= Maintain distance – unable to be intimate.
= Transfer the shame onto others.
Where there is fruit – the root is present.
Romans 9:33 - “Whoever believes on Him (Christ) shall not be ashamed.
Mark 1:40-42 - Leprosy – shame of identity, loss intimacy, powerless. Jesus touched him and renewed his

strength.

Sources of Shame (3 of 6)

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Well I want you to open your Bible, look in Genesis, Chapter 2. We're just doing a series on shame, I want to pick it up now, want to begin to look at the sources of shame, and we want to just have a look then at the steps that we can take to break out, because there's steps out. I don't want to do it all at once, want to just do one step today, then we're going to look and progress over a couple of Sundays, how you break this thing off your life. Let's just have a look in Genesis 2, and just revise where we were for those who are perhaps here for the first time - Genesis 2, Verse 25; They were both naked, the man and his wife, and they were not ashamed. So God's original design was we should be unashamed. Unashamed means you can be who you are, there's nothing at all that you feel embarrassed about, about your life, about your ears, your nose, your height, your hair, your anything. You're just happy to be who you are.

We saw that when people are unashamed as God designed us, then people can be connected in relationship. We become confident, and also we're able to apply what we've got to life. We can be quite creative in our various areas of life, but when shame comes around our life everything changes - so let's have a look in Genesis 3, what happened when shame came in - Verse 7. Then - that's after Adam and Eve had sinned - then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew were naked. They became conscious and aware of something they didn't realise before - and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves coverings for their loins. And they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God in the trees of the garden. Then the Lord God called to Adam and said to him: where are you? And he said: I heard your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself. The Lord said: who told you you were naked? Who told you? Who have you been talking to?

You see what happens now as Adam and Eve sinned, as they broke their

relationship with God, something that God had imparted to them was lost. The Bible tells us very clearly that man was made to be clothed in glory, so we see that the original Adam and Eve were covered with the life of God. Their life radiated the presence of God. We saw that they were very good, part of God's creation, but the moment sin entered in, something changed. They actually became different. They became separated from God, and different on the inside. The glory, the life that they had, the beauty that they had, now had disappeared, and they became very self-conscious. Before they had not been self-conscious or self-focussed at all; now the presence of something wrong - we saw that shame, the message of shame is: something is wrong with me, I'm damaged. The message of shame is: I am different, and now I'm in danger that I will be exposed, rejected and hurt, I have to do something.

You notice when God came to Adam, what he said to Him was this: Adam spoke to God and he said: I was afraid. I felt deep fear come into my life, and he said: because I was naked, because something was wrong and damaged, and so I hid myself. We saw the two things Adam and Eve did as a result of fear; one, they concealed themselves one from another, and we saw that shame, when shame is around your life, you will cover over who you are. You'll try to put on a mask and be something you're not, and we saw also that they hid from God, they hid from an intimate relationship with God. We saw that shame is an intimacy thief, it stops you connecting intimately in any relationship, because you can't really reveal who you are. If you showed who you are, well you might be exposed and shown up, and rejected or judged, and that's extremely painful. The Bible says they said: we were afraid. They'd never felt shame, never felt fear, never run away and hid before, and now the moment they've sin, something has changed in their life.

So we saw that these were some of the impacts of shame. We want to pick this up and take it on a little bit further now, and what I want you to pick up first of all in Genesis 3, Verse 21, it says for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them. So we see Adam and Eve had covered themselves. When shame is around your life, you just are terrified someone will get to know you. That's why people who are covered with shame will always avoid the prophetic. They don't want to be around anyone who's prophetic, because they feel immediately, that prophetic person is looking right into their life, and can see what they're really like, so they avoid them. The other kind of

people that people with shame hate is people who move in deliverance, for exactly the same reason. They fear that you can look into their life and will see what they're really like, and so they avoid you.

One of the experiences I've had over many years of ministry is, ministries avoid me, because once they hear I work in deliverance immediately they don't want to know me. And some, because I work in prophecy, the same reason - they will immediately avoid me. They'll just take a step back, and I know as a result of that that there is shame in their life. There are things covered and hidden they don't want me to see, and the only way to get out of that is to withdraw from that person. Now you notice also this, that when Adam heard the voice of the Lord, so even though he had sinned, he could still hear the voice of the Lord. When he heard the voice of the Lord, he ran away and hid. Now one of the things that I've found that happens is when people have got things in our lives that we're ashamed of, we want to hide from God, so we stop coming to fellowship. One of the first signs there's shame on a person's life, if they've been a Christian walking with God, and something's gone wrong, they will immediately withdraw, because the presence of God brings to mind this painful condition.

So when you come into church for example, if things are going wrong in your life, how many people would say this: you feel like everyone can see right into you, and see what's going on in your mess? Is that true? Yeah and you don't want to be there, so you try and find a place to hide in the middle or hide in the back, or just don't come or go get busy doing something. That's true, it's what people do. It hasn't changed a bit. When people feel ashamed, we hide. We just find ways, clever ways, sophisticated ways of hiding and covering what we're really like. Some become over-cocky, some get over-confident and arrogant, some people tell lots of jokes, some people withdraw and hide. Some people get very busy and work, some people show off the stuff they've got, but all of it's fig leaves and hiding, all of it. It all stops them connecting authentically, and God wants us to be helped.

So you notice here in this scripture here that God helped them. The first thing that God did, after confronting the condition and laying out the consequences of it, the next thing He did was this: He actually made provision for Adam and Eve to have a covering, and it was actually a temporary covering until the day of Jesus Christ, when we could receive what He really wanted us to have back. So we see that it says: He made skins, He made clothes for them out of skins, so

some innocent animal had to die, shed its blood in order that Adam and Eve could be covered, so right there in Genesis, you see a picture for us of the path out of shame. We have to actually come out of our place of hiding. We need to let go the coverings we've covered ourself, and receive God's provision, God's covering.

I'll say it again, it's very simple. We need to come out of the place of hiding, out of the trees, so maybe you've been hiding in business, hiding in family, hiding in your hobbies, hiding in this, hiding in that. God calls us to come out of the place of hiding, to a loving God who cares about us. He calls us to come to a place where we can then remove what has covered us, and receive from Him what He's provided for us, and when you have God's covering around your life, security comes. You're not worried if anyone finds you anymore. You're not worried if anyone finds out what's going on anymore - there's nothing to be found out. There's something has changed on the inside. We're clothed with something that God has provided, so we're going to move that way and end up there today. I want to just have a look and start to just open up some areas of how shame comes into our life.

I want to just talk about three sources of shame. I'm going to focus on one of them particularly. Here's the three sources of shame - the source is where it comes from, so the first thing it comes from is: our own sin, our own sin. When we sin, we feel ashamed of what we've done. The person who sins messes up their life, does something foolish, we feel ashamed, so there's a certain measure of shame comes because we blew it. In Proverbs 14, Verse 34, it says: righteousness exalts a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people. Sin brings shame. Now you can try and pretend there's no shame in it, but there is. When people blow their lives and get caught up in alcohol, drugs and they find themselves in a mess, there's a shame about it. You can tell there's a shame. People try and hide it all the time. Whenever we sin, there's a sense of shame, something is wrong with us, something has broken us, and so the Bible tells us everyone has sinned, so the first thing is fairly self-evident.

Our own actions can bring shame on our life, so one of the pathways out of shame, is to begin to live in God's wisdom, so you don't goof-up and do stupid things. You begin to live a life that's very productive. The second source of shame are demonic spirits. Notice what the Lord says in Genesis 3:11. Who told you you were naked? Who told you you were naked? It implies in this scripture,

although it doesn't directly state it, that someone had told them they were naked. Someone had mocked them, ridiculed them, and laughed at them. It doesn't record that part, but God does ask: who said to you that you were naked? How did you actually know you were naked? Who's been talking to you? Who have you been listening to? So one of the things we see about the devil, and the Bible describes it in Revelations 12 and Verse 10; he is an accuser. The devil himself was once an angel clothed in light. He was cast down, and his angelic coverings and beauty was taken away, and he is clothed with shame and dishonour.

So what he seeks to do, is to point out everything wrong in your life, so you'll find one of the major strategies the devil has, spirits of shame, spirits of fear, all kinds of tormenting, accusing spirits; they attack us, and try and point out where we lack and where we fail. You have to be aware, there is a spirit world around you, and demons will come, and if possible attach to your life, then begin to whisper into your ear. If you begin to listen and take on-board their lies and come into agreement with them, after a while you are in agreement with the spirit of shame. The problem is when you are in agreement with it, it's empowered to operate in your life, and you don't even know that there's a demon there. Imagine walking around, and you've got a demon walking, he's with you all the time, and it's just talking into you all the time.

Any time anything happens, immediately he shames you, and these terrible, painful feelings rise. You feel guilty. You feel ashamed of yourself, feel vulnerable, you feel afraid. You want to run away, want to hide, you begin to bluff and bluster and try and put out a front that you're something different to what you are, in reaction to this demonic assault. So this happens to people, it happens to everyone. No one is exempt from those attacks of shame. No one is exempt from the attacks of the accuser - even Jesus, when He began His ministry. In Luke, Chapter 4, it tells us that the devil said to Him, immediately, he said: if You be the Son of God prove it. In other words I don't really think You're the Son of God, I don't think You are who You say You are. You better do something to establish Yourself. When Jesus was on the cross: if You're the Son of God, come on down, prove You're something, prove You can do it. Do you understand that this is an attack of the devil against people's identity?

Let me show you another example of it. It's found in Nehemiah, Chapter 2. Nehemiah - his name means the comfort of God. He's very much a picture of the Holy Spirit, but he was a builder. He had a mission in life to build, rebuild the

walls of Jerusalem that had been broken down and demolished, and as with every work of God, immediately you begin the work, the devil comes to do certain things. Notice what he does here. We'll pick it up at Verse 18. I told them of the hand of my God, which had been good upon me, and also of the king's words he'd spoken to me. They said: let us rise up and build. And they set their hands to the good work - so they've got a vision together of building something great for the Lord.

Then it says: but when Sanballat the Horonite, and Tobiah the Ammonite the official, and Geshem the Arab heard of it, they laughed at us and despised us, and said what's this thing you're doing? Will you rebel against the king? Let's just stop there. The moment they tried to build something for God, the Bible tells us the enemies, the enemies of God, the enemies of His work - in your version if it's King James it will say this: They laughed us to scorn. They mocked and ridiculed. They belittled us. In other words they were shaming them. They were saying words to cause them to feel inadequate for the task that was ahead of them; who do you think you are? We think you're going to rebel. Who do you think you are? What do you think you're doing?

They were hurling abuse, and actually mocking and laughing at them, and that is the way that these demonic spirits of shame and fear and so on work together. They mock and ridicule and belittle, they belittle YOU. They try and make you feel small. They try and make you feel inadequate. They try and make the task seem too big, and your efforts absolutely insignificant. They actually use shame to disgrace you to giving up what you've started out to do. That's why it's a powerful weapon, and we have to learn how to defeat this enemy of shame, how to break it off our life, and be unashamed. Now look what Nehemiah did. And Nehemiah remember is a picture of the Holy Spirit. He said then I answered them and I said: the God of heaven Himself will prosper us. We are His servants. You notice how strong he is, in who we are. We serve a great God, and He will prosper us, and we are His servants! You, you've got no place here. Get out of here. [Applause]

Notice the strong, unashamed response to demonic attack, a strength coming out of relationship with God, a strength coming out of knowing who he was, and an absolutely intolerance for any shaming by anyone else. So as we take this journey out of shame to become unashamed, one of the things you have to develop in your life is a great confidence in this God we serve. He is a great

God. He is an awesome God! He is a good God! He is a faithful God! He is a mighty God! Oh, and I'm one of His servants! See, you need to know who you are, need to know your value to God, and so we'll see that the journey out of shame involves changing how we see God, changing how we see ourselves, and changing how we relate to others, because most of the shaming that comes, comes through people. So there's partly the shame we have to deal with, the shame of our own sin, our own failure and the demons that come with all of that, but also there is a shaming that comes through people, and that's the other area I want to talk about.

I want you to be able to recognise it. Maybe you'll recognise one or two things here, and then we're going to look at the path out, and I want to break it down into some steps out of shame, just how you actually break the hold of this thing around your life, until you change the way you live your life. It will affect your relationships, because there's some things you're not going to stand for any more. There are some things you won't put up with any more, and it may be that some people that you've hung out with, who keep shaming you, you won't hang out with them any more. You've just got to make a decision - I'm going to be who God called me to be, I'm going to walk with the Lord, and I ain't taking shame from no one. You've got to get that sort of thing inside you, see? So let's have a look then.

I want to just list for you some ways that others shame us. When people shame us, when people deliberately by words, or their actions against us, cause us to feel damaged, or different, or something's wrong with us, initially you feel tremendous pain. I'm going to give you some examples of it, and you may identify with some of them, but what happens is we begin particularly when children are very young - children who are very young are very self-referenced. What they do is whatever's going on around them, they tend to think that I'm somehow the cause of it, so if mum's angry, somehow I'm the cause of it. They tend to blame themselves. Later on as they grow up others tend to shame them in different ways. I want to list for you now a few ways that people can be shamed.

The first one is when a child is born out of wedlock, often the mother feels tremendous shame. She feels embarrassed about her condition, and she carries with her a sense of shame that can be imparted, so that the child even from birth, feels shame around their life, something's wrong with me. I wasn't wanted, wasn't expected, there's something not right about me. So a person can grow up

not even being aware, that this thing has been in them right from the core of their being, right from when they first began. The truth is, God always wanted you, and your birth was not a surprise to Him. The lie is: you were never wanted, and with that powerless to change that thing, the feelings of shame, something's wrong with me.

The second area of course is that of physical abuse. When people hit, or beat, or slap around a child or an adult, the person feels very vulnerable and they feel ashamed of themselves, feel ashamed of being weak and vulnerable. Physical abuse inevitably leads to shame and fear. It always does, so it's a major doorway into people's lives. Hitting, beating, especially if there's anger, strong anger, so many parents will discipline their child in anger, and the message the child gets, is not what you're trying to get them to get. The message the child gets, is there's something wrong with me, they're angry at me, and they don't even connect the behaviour very much to what you're saying or doing; they've picked up the anger and the way they're being disciplined, and they take on a message of shame. They feel humiliated and walk away, and they start to begin to get feelings and beliefs of shame around their life.

Another one is verbal abuse. Verbal abuse is a major one. Verbal abuse is where people begin to shame someone by calling them names: you're stupid, you're this or you're that, or where they call them a name - Big Ears. You're just Big Ears, so the child gets a name, and that name associated with something they're powerless to change, causes them to feel tremendous shame about a part of their body, so all of us at some stage would have experienced shaming, where it came from whatever source, over words spoken to us, name-calling, where you were called a name. Sometimes a nickname is given - it's rarely ever to your credit. It's usually a nickname that's derogatory and shaming, and when you take that on-board and allow yourself to be called by that, you've allowed that shaming to come upon your life - very hard to live differently then. You have a name, use your name. Don't let people put a nickname on you that's shaming to you, or highlights some lack in your life - so verbal abuse, name-calling, scolding, labelling, and constant criticism, constant belittling: you're so this, you never do this, or you're this.

See those kinds of statements speak in and cause the person to become ashamed of themselves, and shame gets around them, then they begin to internalise it, then they begin to feel that way right through life. No longer is the person

abusing them, but they still feel like they're getting it everywhere they go, and they react angrily. Sexual abuse also causes people to feel tremendous shame. There's almost nothing like sexual abuse to cause a person to feel ashamed. Sexual abuse means they were exposed to seeing something they never wanted to see, hearing something they never wanted to hear, being touched in a way, or forced to do things that they never wanted to do. That causes the person to feel a deep sense of shame around their life. Tamar in the Bible, in 2 Samuel, was assaulted and sexually abused by her stepbrother or half brother, and she said: where shall I cause my shame to go from me? The Bible says: she was desolate. The shame came around her life, and she couldn't hold her head up, she just covered herself and hid, and could not function properly in life as a person, because of the way she had been shamed.

This is the horrendous thing about sexual abuse, is the shaming it brings around people, and the child or as an adult then becomes covered over. They can never enter into intimacy, because there's this deep shame that grips them, if you see what I'm really like, and what was really done, and what I was a part of, then you'll reject me. Sometimes, because of the way the child responds when they're being abused, they then feel even more ashamed about how they've responded in the abuse, and feel more guilty. Most times an abuser will put the blame on the innocent person, so they feel as though somehow it was all my fault. Now when you get some cultures where sexual abuse is extremely rife, and no one's saying or doing anything about it, then the whole culture becomes riddled with shame, the whole family becomes shame-based, because of the way it operates.

I've been around some families, and the name-calling, the name-calling that goes on, I've just literally cringed at the words that I've heard people called, by someone who's supposed to be their brother or sister. It goes on all over. I've noticed among Maori people quite often when I've been with them, I've heard the most horrendous shaming of one another, see, when we should be building one another up, instead of putting one another down - and words shame people. Words have death and life, words have power to shame. It's not just in that culture, it also exists in our culture in various forms, different forms, that same putting down, those words.

Another way that people are shamed is in the area of emotions. How many have heard this statement, boys don't cry? So what happens you get exposed to that, after a while you begin to believe inside, you're embarrassed about you're

emotions, so you begin to shut the emotions down. You have many men today, and they cannot express healthy emotions in marriage or relationships, because they were shamed about their emotions; it's something wrong with me if I have emotions. Many young boys exposed to that whole Kiwi thing of rugby, racing, and beer, and they're perhaps more gentle or creative and sensitive, they become shamed about what they're like, and become very vulnerable to homosexual relationships. Shame is a very powerful thing. I remember being at school, if you didn't play rugby, what's wrong with you? What's the message you get - there's something wrong with me that I don't play rugby. What if I just don't like it, and don't want to? That's got nothing to do with it, there's something weird about you. Do you understand that? There's a shame message goes with it, it's in the culture. It's in our culture, very strongly in our culture. If we don't recognise it, and then begin to learn how to deal with it, both in stopping it coming around our own life, and standing up and not shaming others, we're going to find it'll happen continually to us.

See, unfavourable comparisons - why can't you be like your brother? That shames you. You'll never be like your brother, you'll never be like your sister, you'll never be like someone else. You're unique, but the belief that comes with it is: you should be like them. Well actually, no you shouldn't, because you're unique, you're different. See the lie of shame is: I'm different and that's bad, but the truth is: I'm different and it's good! Can you understand that you get that lie builds in, so you'll see that in dealing with shame you have to start to deal with the lies that people build up, we build up in our heart as a result of it. Manipulation and control - if you love me, you'll do this. You know what happens is people begin to perform to get the approval, and then they feel ashamed that they gave up what they really thought.

What happens in so many relationships, and I've seen this, I've actually had to deal with it in my own life quite in a major way, of so much wanting to approved, that you actually don't say what you really think when you should be speaking. You're silent, because you feel ashamed that your view, your thoughts, your ideas are different to someone else's. Now of course as a believer, our thoughts and our lifestyle and lots of things we do are different, so we've got to be unashamed of that difference, because that difference is unique. It's good, and actually the difference that we can bring to the world is what will make it healthy, amen. Okay, come on, I'll give you a couple more. You're getting very

quiet about this.

Constant blaming and criticism - blaming, people who have got shame in their life will blame everyone else. Remember when Adam, first thing he did, hey God, You, You're the trouble, and that woman You gave me. See, blaming is an evidence or a reaction of shame, so you get some families where people are always being blamed. When you get a culture of blame, people feel ashamed, they always feel something's wrong with them, I can never do it good enough.

Rescuing, where a parent takes up the role of the child well beyond what they should do, and they begin to take their responsibilities on. The child feels I'm not good enough, I can't do anything right, so rescuing, where a parent over-rescues a child creates a huge issue in them.

Here's another one, financial poverty. Poverty in a family or poverty in your background can bring great shame, because often when you go to school you see these kids with all this stuff and then they begin to point out or make fun of, or ridicule you and what you have or don't have. Tremendous shame can take place. A lot of people have been driven to success in finances, well beyond what they should have, because they were shamed as a child at school - recognise that one? It's a major one that one.

Here's another one, a teacher's ridicule in front of peers. Many times in schools teachers instead of actually being able to encourage, lift and build, they ridicule or they say words that make the child belittled in front of their peers. I can remember being belittled in front of my peers. I can remember it as clearly as if it was yesterday, that's how vivid it was. A teacher standing over me at the age of 17, shouting at me, because I couldn't understand something. You don't forget it, it shames you. Because they're yelling, the whole classes attention is on who? On you and your lack of ability in some kind of way. It's appalling, absolutely appalling. People are shamed and belittled, and then they struggle to overcompensate and try and cope with what they've taken on-board see, so ridicule in front of peers.

Another place it takes place is peer ridicule at school, one of the worst places. That's why if you can build a strong young people's culture, and you've got two or three of you standing together, you can be quite supportive in school. But often in school kids are merciless. They will pick on a physical defect, and

they'll ridicule the person. Maybe there's some kind of mental handicap or disability. They pick on it, and they're merciless. Maybe it's because of your colour. Kids are shocking the way they'll do this. They'll speak, and then the child becomes ashamed of who they are, and then don't want to go to school, hate it.

Some people are shamed because of their gender. I know and have prayed for many women who are ashamed to be a woman. If only they were a man, they would be treated different in life. If only they were a man, their dad would have really connected with them, and done something with them, and invested into their life, so people can be totally ashamed of being a woman. A woman's ashamed of being a woman, she will then conceal her femininity, her true identity is covered over, as she tries to compensate. You probably know people like that.

Divorce can cause great shaming. In the era when my father grew up, if a divorce took place, it was put in the newspapers, and advertised as a shaming public ridicule, see? It's got a lot less now, it's become more acceptable, but there's still a tremendous shame that children feel when their parents break up, and they're caught in the middle of the conflict and fight between one and the other. They live with shame, something's not right about me, I probably am to blame for this. Getting some of the ideas? There's a whole heap of them. Male chauvinism's another one. Male chauvinism's a major one in our culture. Male chauvinism is an arrogant pride by insecure males. They try to make out they're better than women and women feel it; sexist comments, sexist treatment. All of this, actually what it does is, it devalues and dehumanises the woman. It makes them feel like they're a sex object, rather than a person. That means they're being shamed, and women feel that deeply.

I've prayed for many women who wept and wept and wept, feeling shamed, because they were treated just like a sex object. Many men who do not value their wives, or learn how to cultivate love, cultivate intimacy in marriage, then just have a sexual relationship with their wife - she feels cheapened and used by that, and feels shamed by it. This is what goes on in our society, this is what goes all around, and we need to recognise this invasion of our lives by shame, where it comes, how it comes, and then begin to work to deal with it. When I was in Taiwan, the Lord spoke to me how there was something they did in the culture there, which shamed people. I began to just speak prophetically about it. Before I

knew it, I had about 80 people up there weeping and waling, because they had been shamed by being scolded.

In an Asian culture, they scold them often, to correct them, and when the scolding is very angry, and very strong put down, and the person becomes ashamed, so shame is used to control the person in the family. It happens in churches, and I've picked it up in some churches. I said you can't talk that way, that's not how you talk to the children of God. They're children of God, just like you and I are. You can't do that to them, it's an evil, and so what we did then was I ministered to them. Well you can't believe the demons that came out of everyone, because they'd been scolded: spirits of death, spirits of hate, self-hate, spirits of shame, all kinds of demons came out of people. They screamed and - I haven't seen such a spectacular display in a long time, but it was over the issue of being scolded, by someone trying to control their behaviour.

Many times in families, people try and control the behaviour of others by shaming them. Another kind of shaming is ethnic shaming. The Bible tells us God has made us out of every tribe, kindred nation, every ethnic group has made one people, yet what happens is, we think that we're somehow better than others. Usually, to put it bluntly, the ones who are in the majority, think they're better than the ones who are in the minority. The ones in the minority feel shamed, because they're not accepted, valued or received like everyone else. It's true, and the church is somehow going to have to get a grip with this one, because the church is growing now - in this coming decade, it's going to become multicultural, and it's going to have to face the issue of how to cross not only the gender gap, but particularly the cultural gap between different cultures.

So cultural shaming means we think that we're better than someone else, our way is better, see? So there's a shaming comes on the minority group, until the minority become the majority, and it turns out they think just like us, that our way is better. Now we're in the minority, and now we're shamed. That's what goes on. That's what happens. Rarely does a group of people coming into a nation to settle there, think their way of doing things is less than the way of the people in the nation. They think it's more important, or its better, and when they've got enough numbers, then they become the predominant culture, and they shame the other culture. But Jesus has called us to be of one culture. He calls out every tribe, every nation, to become one culture. Kingdom of God culture, it'll have tremendous variety of expressions, depending on the culture

people have come from, but it's still a kingdom of God culture, and it's not a western individualistic culture.

We have a western mindset, which we think is normal. It's completely anti-biblical. The Bible's concerned about family, about community. We're all about looking after me, number one, and getting ahead, and that breaches the whole concept of what God has built into His own culture, which some cultures in the earth really welcome that. Hey, you're getting all quiet. [Laughs] Don't get too serious on me. Interesting isn't it aye? Here's another area where people get shamed, and that is through the media. The media shame us. Now how do the media do it? Have you ever sat in front of a TV and watched some of the adverts? You'll notice they do the same thing, that in order to be happy, you need such-and-such a product! [Laughter] They're extremely clever - you can't be happy? How can you possibly say your life is right, unless you have da-da? And so we need all kinds - your kids get in front of the television, you know, to be happy they've got to have that latest toy. Get them away from the tele, you won't have half the expenses. [Laughs]

Okay then, so then of course the other place that shaming takes place is in the area of the church. Church is one of the worst at shaming people. Jesus has entrusted us the keys of releasing people from shame, and yet often what happens is through a judgemental attitude, we cause people to feel ashamed about being different. You see that judgemental attitude, Jesus confronted continually. The Pharisees of His day failed to recognise that the call of God encompassed all nations of the earth. They had gender prejudice, they had religious prejudice, they had racial prejudice, or ethnic prejudice, and when Jesus confronted it, they just wanted to kill Him.

You read Jesus' first ministry, first message that's reported Jesus preached, and you find what happens. Found in Luke, Chapter 4, He preached, they said: what a lovely preacher, what a nice man and then he began to tell them how God had blessed the Gentiles. That was it, they were up, they wanted to kill Him. Do you understand that Jesus confronted these things, continually confronted anything in the society that brought shame to people, and eventually they crucified Him for doing that - so then we get some idea now on shaming. How many people have come in, and you felt like you didn't fit; there's something wrong with me, and you felt shame because there was a judgemental attitude? People are sensitive to that. It resonates with what they've already got struggling inside.

Okay, how are we going to get out of it? So let me just define it, and then show you the steps out of it, then we'll get started on them. Looks like I won't get started too far today, but let me give you the keys. I want you to see where we can go on this. So we begin to recognise these doors, so shame is an accusing spirit that torments people. It's an emotional wounding, and pain that people have, and shame is also a deep belief: how I see myself, and how I see the world and God. So it's a belief, it's an emotion, it's a spirit, and if we're going to get free of shame, I've got to recognise what's needed to get rid of what, and there's different things needed to get rid of different things. If you had a learning disability, chances are you have tremendous shame, and you've tried to cover your inability to read all these years, ashamed it'll be found out. I couldn't believe it, it's the first time I'd actually ever met people who couldn't read, was when I went to Dannevirke.

It never occurred to me people couldn't read, just never occurred. It was quite a surprise for me, and then I found it was actually quite common. Then I found that God helped people who couldn't read - found one man there, amazing man, he never could read, and he asked God to help him, and he could read the Bible. Couldn't read anything else, he could read the Bible. I heard him read it, many times fluently - couldn't read anything else, so God gave him grace to do it, but he used to hide the fact that he couldn't actually read anything else, and he had to get his wife to do everything. He become ashamed of it. Okay, how do we get out of shame? So let me give you the four parts of getting out of shame, or four things I've identified are crucial, and we'll see if we can get one started.

Number one, how am I going to get out of shame? How am I going to get this thing, that's wrapped around me, so I don't like who I am, and I want to hide from you, how can I get that off my life? Here we are, number one. Number one, I must come to Christ, the shame-bearer. I need to come to Christ, and I'll open these parts up for you, each one of them up and develop them. But the first thing I need, Christ carried my shame at the cross. He is able to take shame off my life. He is able to totally set me free, not only set me free from shame, but restore what originally got us shame, which is being separated from God. He is able to put His spirit in me, so the glory that was originally there in man, now has come back inside man, and we carry the glory of God within us.

So the first step to getting free of shame is nothing cosmetic on the outside; it's a deep, transforming change, coming to Jesus Christ, who took our shame on the

cross. He took the shame as He hung naked upon a cross, and then by faith in Him, I can receive His spirit into my life, and the Bible says then: I become a new creation. I become a different person. I'm one of God's kids now. I have a new identity. Now the dilemma of course is to shift your thinking to embrace the new identity - that's where we'll get to in just a moment.

The second thing I need to do, is I need to break my attachments to shame. I need to break free from any attachments to shame. I need to break free of them. I'll show you how to do that, and we'll share that next week. I need to break free of any place shame has got attached on my life. Maybe it was some parent shamed me, maybe it was the family background, maybe it was where I was in school, maybe it was failure, whatever it was that was done or happened that caused shame to get a hold of me, I need to break that thing and cancel it's power. I need to let go, what's held me there. I need to forgive the people involved, bring the grief and pain of it to the cross. I have to deal with that.

Then the third thing I need to do, is begin to change the way I think. That's the bit that takes the effort and the time. I need to change by inner beliefs, how I see God, and how I see myself. If you don't shift how you believe, the Bible says: as a man believes, that's how he lives his life - so if you don't shift what you believe about yourself, you will live out of the old shame-based belief system. So it's not a matter of just getting delivered. It's not a matter of just becoming a Christian. I need to shift totally the way I see myself, to agree with how God sees me now, and that's where many of us have not shifted. We still think of ourselves as we were before we came to Christ, and you can tell because of the shame that still lingers.

Finally, the last thing I've got to do, is I have to learn or change, I have to change the way I relate to people, have to change the way I relate to people. Number one, come to Christ, the one who took our shame; number two, break my attachments to shame; number three, shift how I see myself and how I see God, and four, change the way I relate. In other words, I need to learn how to refuse being shamed by people. I've got to learn how to do that, and we'll share some things, show you how to do it. I've got to stop shaming other people. I've got to stop shaming them. I've got to change totally how I am on the inside, and I've got to stop comparing myself with anyone else, start to celebrate who I am. So comparing with others leads to shame, because always, you'll compare the best in another man, with the worst in yourself.

So we've got to stop that kind of behaviour. I've got to change how I connect with people, so if they shame me, I've got to learn how to confront it, push it away and separate from that kind of people. If I've been one who's shamed other people, I've got to stop shaming people, otherwise it'll just come back, I'll reap what I've sown. So you getting the idea now? So to shift out of this thing of shame, the first place is to become attached to Jesus Christ, the one who carried our shame. I'll develop these things over the next couple of weeks.

Summary Notes: Formatted » Back to Top »

1. Introduction:
· Genesis 2:25 - “They were both naked, the man and his wife and they were not ashamed”.
· God’s original design for man – to be unashamed – connected, confident and creative.
· Shame is an enemy that attaches to people and steals their identity and intimacy.

· Genesis 3:7-10 - “I was afraid because I was naked and I hid myself”.
- When sin entered Adam lost his covering of Glory – he was damaged by sin.
- Adam became conscious of being different – he was ashamed.
- Adam and Eve covered themselves - with fig leaves – verse 7
- Concealed themselves – amongst the trees of the garden – verse 8

· Genesis 3:21 - “Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made garments of skin and clothed them”.
· Adam and Eve had to remove their covering to receive what God provided.
· God provided a suitable covering for them.
· God’s covering required the death / shedding of blood of an innocent animal.
· This is a prophetic picture of God’s willingness to remove our shame by the Cross.

2. Sources of Shame:
1) Our own sin:
· Proverbs 14:34 - “Righteousness exalts a nation but sin is a reproach to any people”.
· Reproach = to put to shame, humiliate.
· Our own actions can be a cause of embarrassment and shame.
· Romans 3:23 - ‘All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God”.

2) Demonic Spirits:
· Genesis 3:11 - “Who told you, you were naked?”
· Adam and Eve were vulnerable because of their sin and changed condition.
· Most likely the devil came and exposed them to ridicule, pointing out their nakedness.
· Satan made them aware of their nakedness and impending judgment.
· Revelation 12:10 - “The accuser of the brethren …who accused them day and night”.
Satan = one who hurls accusations against us to shame and belittle us.
· E.g. Nehemiah 2:19-20 - “The enemies of God’s people shame and ridicule them. Nehemiah arises and Unashamedly throws of the shaming”.

3) Shaming Actions of Others:
· When others shame us the pain and grief is usually internalized.
· We begin to agree with the shame message: ‘Something is wrong with me’.
· Examples:

1. Unborn child – takes on the shame of his mother.
2. Sexual abuse – something forced on them which they never wanted.
3. Physical abuse – hitting, beating, hair-pulling, slapping face, angry hitting (child takes on the shame as if it is his/her fault).
4. Verbal abuse - name calling, scolding, labeling, constant criticism.
5. Shaming emotions - 'boy's don't cry', 'you shouldn't think like that'.
6. Unfavorable comparison - 'why can't you be like your brother'.
7. Manipulation / control - 'If you love me you will'.
8. Constant blaming / criticism
9. Rescuing - taking too much responsibility for others (e.g. parents rescuing children, overprotect)
10. Financial neglect or poverty - personal value based on $
11. Teachers ridicule - in front of peers.
12. Born wrong sex - girls never properly valued, compared unfavourable to boys.
13. Divorce - children can feel shame of broken family.
14. Male Chauvinism - dishonoring and put down woman, treat as sex object.
15. Ethnic shaming - treated as inferior or with prejudice.
16. Media shame - constant communication of inferiority – appearance, possessions, positions, e.g. Barbie Dolls.
17. Church shaming - judgmental attitudes, pride and superiority.

· Shaming = making people feel they are damaged, lacking, inferior.

3. Breaking Free of Shame:
· Shame is:
a. An accusing spirit that torments.
b. An emotional pain and bondage.
c. A way of thinking, viewing God and self.

· Keys for breaking free:
1. Come to Christ - the One who bore our shame.
2. Break the Attachments to Shame.
3. Change the Inner Beliefs;
- How you see God
- How you see Yourself.
4. Change the Way you Relate to people;
- refuse to be shamed
- refuse to shame others
- refuse to compare with others

Key 1 - Come to Christ:
· Jesus bore our shame, He understands our suffering.
· Isaiah 50:6-7 - Jesus chose to pay the full price for shame.
· Hebrews 12:2 - Jesus despised His pain.
· Matthew 27:27-31 - Jesus was cruelly shamed by soldiers.
- Jesus was stripped – abused – shamed – ridiculed.
- The Crucifixion was a means of death and of public shame.
- Jesus' shame was labialized in 3 languages – for all to see.
- Jesus bore our shame on the Cross. John 1:12; 2 Corinthians 5:7

Breaking Free of Shame (4 of 6)

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Today I want you to be open for the spirit of God to change your life, and over the last few weeks we've been talking with you about shame and recognising shame, how shame enters, what it is, what it speaks to you. We're going to today, I want to just start the keys on how to get out of it. We're going to just summarise what we shared last week, and then begin to go and open up some keys for you. Keys are not just something you know about. Keys are something, unless you stick it in a door and turn it, it doesn't happen, and the dilemma in the Christian church on the whole is people continually think if I know it, that means I know it, but biblically the only way you know something is if it's operating in your life, when you've actually experienced what you know about. You understand the difference between - suppose we talk about flying a plane.

There may be this man over here, and he's read all the books on flying, he knows how to fly a plane. Then there's someone else who's gone through a training school, and has actually flown a plane. Now we wonder which one you would commit yourself to? [Laughter] Which one would you commit yourself to? Well you see in the western culture, we commit ourself to the one who's read the book, and we become book readers and not flyers, but if you really want to fly, you've actually got to get the handles of the thing and do it. So if you wanted to learn how to fly, you really want someone who's had experience with it, and you actually have to gain experience yourself. Most of what we did yesterday was giving people a chance to have experience with God, because once you've got that experience, it's never taken away.

Let's go back into the Bible, Isaiah 54, and we were there on that scripture, we started the year off with growth, growing, enlarging. I want to pick up Verse 4: Do not fear, you will not be ashamed, neither be disgraced, you will not be put to shame, for you will forget the shame of your youth. You'll not remember the reproach of your widowhood anymore. And so God's telling us not to be afraid,

not to have a heart that's gripped with fear, and about five times in different ways, He talks about this issue of shame. He says: you'll not be put to shame, in fact you will forget the shame of your youth. When He's talking about the shame of your youth, He's talking about things when we look back into our life, we're incredibly embarrassed about, one, what we did, and two, what happened to us. Remember some things in your past you're very ashamed of, the shame of your youth, goofy stuff you wish you'd never done it, and it was incredibly embarrassing.

Of course there's shame associated with many experiences we have in our younger days, and He says this. What the Lord says, He said: you won't remember the shame of your youth. It will actually go out of your mind, you won't be aware of it, it won't come back to you. You'll actually be free of it. This is a promise to be free of shame. He makes a promise to us, to be totally free of shame, and then the fear of being exposed that goes with it. If you have a fear constantly gripping your life, that somehow you'll be exposed, uncovered, people will find out what you're really like, you have got a great deal of shame in your life. Shame and fear go hand in hand. With shame comes the fear I will be exposed, someone will find out, and if you're trying to control your world, trying to prevent yourself being discovered, then you have some major issues with shame.

We saw that shame is an identity thief. It steals away who we are. What it does is, it causes us to put a mask on, and hide who we are. Adam and Eve hid themselves; they covered themselves with fig leaves, they pretend, they put on a mask, so you never see the real person. The real person can never come out, and if the real you can never come forth into life, your identity, who you are, has been stolen from you. You are acting a part, but not authentic, and that's going to affect every relationship, so that brings us to the second thing we saw with shame. Shame is an intimacy thief, because if you've got a mask on, so no one can see you, and you're afraid of exposure, you can't get near anyone either. You can't actually get near anyone. You can be around a table with them, you can talk with them, you can share with them, you can go on holiday with them - but they never know you. They never can know you, and you can never be known while you've got that mask on, and while you can't be genuine.

We saw a whole number of ways that shame entered, and one of the areas that we talked about was how some people are ashamed of the feelings they have.

Many people are ashamed of their feelings. Men are often ashamed of their feelings, so to feel sad, to feel hurt, to feel uncertain, to feel anxious. Men don't want to let anyone know what they really feel, because men usually are raised in a shame culture, where for any man to admit weakness, they will be immediately mocked and belittled, so men have a fear of being exposed, the fear of being vulnerable. For a man to cry, mostly in growing up, as you're a young man growing up, if you cry, it's perceived as a sign of weakness, and you are mocked and ridiculed as a cry baby. So what message do people learn? Don't let your feelings get out, then they become ashamed of their feelings.

Right now in the season in the church, many of you are beginning to experience feelings surfacing - don't be ashamed to have feelings. God's not ashamed of your feelings, He gave them to you. He doesn't mind you having feelings. He doesn't mind you crying, laughing, weeping. He doesn't mind you being angry, upset. He's quite happy about all of your feelings, and what He wants to do is to actually engage you in what you're feeling, and to help you walk through it; but if we bury our feelings, hide our feelings, cover our feelings, then we can't actually - we've got a shame thing around our life. Many men have struggled. I've struggled in that area for years, so I took some time to break through that, to be absolutely unashamed, to weep and to laugh, and to be open about feelings, because I grew up being ashamed of what was going on in my life, and tried to conceal myself.

So shame is a terrible thing. It steals away your life, and Jesus promised we can be free, so let's go back into the steps out of it. I guess you can find many books about it. I shared with you four steps that I think actually bring us out of shame: number one, we need to come to Christ. Two of them I'm going to develop today - number one, we actually need to come into connection with Christ. You must attach to someone who carried the shame, and I'll explain that in a moment.

Number two, we need to resolve or to break the attachments we have in our life to shameful experiences or people who have shamed us. I'll explain that in a moment too; we need to break the attachments. If you are attached in your life, and I'll show you how that happens in a moment - if you are attached to shame from your past, or people have shamed you, you're still attached to it, those attachments have to be broken.

The third thing, and this is now - so we're going to deal with two today. We're

going to deal today with how I actually break out of shame, then we're going to look next time round at the changes I need to make, and how firstly change my inner beliefs, what I see God like, how do I see God, and how do I see myself. You have to change how you see yourself. If you don't change what you see yourself being like, and agree with God, you can't come forth and be the new creation man He called you to be.

Finally, we need to change how we relate. By that I mean how we relate to ourself with our weaknesses, struggles, pains and feelings and so on; how we relate to others, when they try to shame us, and how we relate to others in not shaming them. So you need to learn how to recognise and to deal with those things, and that's the journey out of shame. Attach to the Lord, the shame bearer; break with the past, with the shame; begin to renew how I believe and think and see myself, and begin to change how I live my life. Getting the idea? Yeah, great stuff, okay then.

Well let's go on and have a look at the first one then. I want you to look with me in Isaiah, Chapter 50. So the first step out of shame is to embrace Christ, the shame bearer. We need to embrace Jesus Christ as our shame bearer, and I'll show you what that means in a moment. Look what it says in Isaiah, Chapter 50. It says - Verse 6: I gave My back to those who struck Me, My cheeks to those who plucked out my beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting, for the Lord will help Me; therefore I will not be disgraced. I have set My face like a flint, and I know I will not be ashamed. We have to see here that Jesus personally experienced shame. He said: I did not hide from shame. He could have actually vanished. There were many instances where Jesus just moved right away from people, He fled to the wilderness, He walked through the crowd. He did not have to endure this being shamed, but the Bible tells us very clearly, He did not hide His face from it. He didn't hide His face from the shame and spitting.

It's talking here about His walk to the cross, and as He walked to the cross, people yelled at Him and abused Him, spat on Him, and then they pulled out His beard. Now I don't know if you've ever had a beard - women wouldn't know what I'm talking about here, but the men would know. If you had some whiskers, and someone's pulled them and tugged them out, that hurts. See, ask Clive see. [Laughs] It hurts! But the thing is, they spat on Him, they treated Him with contempt, and He said: He didn't try and hide or conceal Himself from any of it.

He set His face like a flint; I am doing this, because I know people in the 21st Century in Hastings, New Zealand, who need to be free of shame, and I will take the shame so they can be free, see? So He didn't hide from the shame. He determined not to hide Himself. He did not draw back from the shame of dying on the cross like a criminal. You understand this, we'll look at the cross in a moment. The cross was a criminal's death. It was like a public hanging. It was a criminal's death. It was actually not about just execution. If they wanted to kill them, they could kill them quite easily, they could just stick a sword through them. But they didn't want to kill people that way.

What they wanted to do was to have them die slowly and painfully, and be exposed to public ridicule. You probably would have seen some things in the French Revolution, and they used to have the guillotine, and they'd bring people out, and then the whole crowd would watch, and they would revel in someone losing their life and being publicly humiliated, who was aristocracy. In this situation with Jesus dying on the cross, the crowd gathered around to publicly ridicule, and mock, and shame Him. They treated Him shamefully. He took our shame. He carried our shame, and He refused to allow Himself to be shamed, but He took our shame on Himself, amazing thing that scripture is. He took the shame on Himself.

In Hebrews 6, Verse 6, it tells us Christ was put to an open shame, He was exposed to public humiliation. I don't know if you ever thought about it, because all the pictures you see of Jesus on the cross, they have His private parts covered, but that's not actually what happened when they were hung on the cross. That's to preserve modesty for us, who are very sensitive. Actually He hung naked on the cross. He hung naked, and totally exposed to be ridiculed. When you are in a place where you feel powerless, even more you feel the ridicule and the taunts. When you're in a place where you are exposed, even more you feel the ridicule and the taunts, and He was exposed to die like a criminal on the cross, a slow, painful death, drawn out over hours.

I want you to read with me in Matthew Chapter 27, the death of Jesus on the cross. Just look what it says about Him. It says the soldiers of the governor took Jesus to the Praetorium, and gathered the whole garrison around Him. These are hard, rugged, hardened soldiers - and they stripped Him naked and put a scarlet robe on Him. When they twisted a crown of thorns they put it on His head, and a reed in His right hand. They bowed the knee before Him and mocked Him, or

they taunted Him, and said: Hail, the King of the Jews! Then they spat on Him, and took the reed and struck Him on the head. When they'd mocked Him, then they took His robe off Him again, and put His own clothes on Him, and led Him away to be crucified.

Verse 33: And when they came to the place called Golgotha, which is to say the Place of a Skull, they gave Him sour wine mingled with gall to drink, but when He had tasted it, He would not drink. Then they crucified Him, dividing His garments and casting lots, that it may be fulfilled what was spoken by the prophet. They divided My clothing among them, My clothing they cast lots. Sitting down, they kept watch over him and they put up on His head an accusation written against Him: This Is Jesus, The King Of The Jews. Even the robbers were crucified with Him, one on the left and one on the right, they taunted Him. Those who passed by, wagged their heads - ah you just destroy the temple and build it up, save Yourself if You're the Son of God! If He's the king of Israel, come down. Can you see the mocking and belittling of Jesus? A number of things happened with Him on the cross. He was stripped naked and exposed to public ridicule, three times the soldiers stripped Him naked, put a garment on Him, then they stripped Him naked, put His own clothes, and they took Him to the cross, stripped Him naked.

He was hung in front of men, women and children to die a shameful death on the cross, gasping to breathe, in terrible, terrible torment, carrying our shame. No matter what shame you've experienced, Jesus carried that shame. Have you been abused? He was violently abused, physically abused. He was verbally abused, He was mocked and ridiculed, and He took our shame on Himself. He experienced shame, so you could be set free of shame. He took sin on Himself, so we could be free of sin. He took our sicknesses on Himself, so we could be healed. He took the penalty of the curse on Himself, so the curse could be broken; all that we could come into blessing. God's plan is that He designed us to be unashamed. When sin entered and man became ashamed, and covered with shame, Jesus made a way that the shame could be taken away. You should not live with it. You must not live with it. You can never fulfil your destiny living with shame. Jesus has made provision, we can throw off that shame! Someone put it on us, we accepted it, and began to wear that beggarly garment. We can put it off - but to put it off, I must come and bring the shame to someone who understands, someone who stood on my behalf, someone who conquered the

shame! I need to bring it to Him, and throw it off onto Him who carried it by an act of faith!

How do I get rid of my sin? I confess it to Him, and let it go to Him, and believe He carried it, and supernaturally the grace of God enters, and I am clean and know it! It's the same with your shame. It's like an old beggar's garment that you put on, and it cloaks you and covers you, but you've got to let it go! Throw it off and release it to the Lord! Do NOT let it come on again! When we look at next week, or the next time round and we teach on this, we'll be looking at how you change what you believe, so you begin to believe differently. Every time that shame comes again and tries to cloak you, PUSH against and put it off! You don't take the shame. You're not to take shame. Shame will cause you to not even know who you are. You'll have a mask on - so the first step in breaking free of shame, there is someone who God sent into this earth, to help me be free. I need to come to Him. He's not ashamed to call you His brother and sister. Isn't that amazing? He's not ashamed of us. Sometimes we're ashamed to come to Him.

Do you know what happens when we know something's wrong in our life? We do just what Adam and Eve did, we cover up and hide from God, run away, instead of just coming to Him, no matter what it's like, no matter how bad it is, no matter what you're ashamed of. No matter what you've done or has been done to you, He is not ashamed of you. He loves you. He came to get rid of the shame. You've just got to come to Him - make a decision: I'll come to the one who bore my shame. Jesus said: come to me all you who are heavy, who are burdened and heavy laden. Shame is a heavy burden on people's lives. We become secretive, covered, alone, a terrible burden. He said: come to Me, come to Me. My yoke's easy, my burden's light. See, very, very good.

Okay, let's have a look. The second thing we need to do, is to break the attachments to shame. In other words, even though I've come to the Lord, there are some things I need to recognise that cause shame. There are mechanisms cause shame to cling onto me, and many would have just come to Jesus, and told Him they loved Him and given their life to Him, but still the shame seems to cling. There can be some reasons for this. In Amos 3, Verse 3, the Bible says: can two walk together, except they be agreed? If I want to walk with God, I must be agreed with Him, I must come into agreement with what He says about me, see? I must agree, if I want to walk God. I can't walk with someone, and I think totally different to them. I mean if you don't have people - normally the people

we are friends with, or walk with, actually have similar interests and similar ways of thinking. God says: you can't walk with Me, unless you come into agreement with how I see things. He says: you see it from My point of view, we're in agreement, you're now able to represent Me in the earth, but if you've got your own ideas and your own ways of thinking, and you've got your own things about me, He said: you can't walk with Me.

So to walk with God, I must actually come into agreement, and that word agree is the word Yadda. It means to be intimate with someone, with a view of reproducing life, so if I want to walk with God, I must come into being intimate agreement with Him, with a view that His life will start to flow in me, and flow out from me. It's intimacy. I must come into agreement in my heart with Him. I must actually yield to Him. So intimacy in a marriage, then there's a yielding to one another. There's an engaging one another. You can't be intimate in marriage if you've had a great row, it's just impossible. You actually have to come to yield to one another, and so He uses this process of walking together as us yielding to the Lord, yielding to what He says - so for example, let's just give you an idea.

I have found many times if I've looked into a person's eyes, and I've talked to them about how valuable they are, and what great qualities they have in their life, often they begin to react. What they're reacting to is, they can't agree with me over what I've said about them. Now God has many things to say about you, but if you won't agree with Him, you will react to what He says, instead you'll attach to what you've been used to thinking about yourself. That's why our belief systems must shift. So there are reasons why we may be like that, let me just give some of them, so I'll show you how to actually break the agreements. Number one, I need to remove the mask, I need to remove the mask and become honest. The first step out of shame is you've got to remove the mask. You've got to remove the mask, and there are lots of masks that people wear. Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:7, the moment they become aware of their shame they covered themselves, they put some fig leaves on. I wonder what fig leaves you've got on?

Then when God came they just ran away and hid see, so the hiding. Now there's many ways we've got of hiding, but let me just ask you a few questions, just for you to think about. What experiences of shame have you had in your life? What did you feel when you had those experiences? What did you feel? What message did it say to you? The message of shame is that I'm damaged, something's wrong, I'm different and I'm in danger, I'm going to hurt, someone's going to

expose me, see? More important, what did you cover yourself with, to try and cope with it? I started to think of a few things as I was thinking about this this morning. Some people have a mask on. I didn't have one at home, or I'd have worn it, and you wouldn't have been able to relate to me with a mask on. You'd hear my voice - that sounds familiar, but you wouldn't connect with me if I was wearing a mask, because what you're seeing, and what you know, are completely different.

You can go down into these shops, you get a mask - have you ever got a mask on? How scared kids get when you wear a mask, even adults. Get a big ugly mask and put it on, you come near someone, they freak out. They know it's you, but they still freak out, because they see the face, so the face that you present, is actually the way people identify you, see? So what face are you presenting? Well of course people have got all kinds of ways to cope with shame. I've just listed a few, and you might recognise one or two. It won't be you of course, but there's someone probably sitting in this church. [Laughter] There's the witch face, and when they put on the witch mask, then very sharp, very critical. Probably you know a few old witches, you know, very sharp, very critical. Then there's the Arnold Schwarzenegger mask, [laughter] tough and independent, and nobody messes with me. Some people wear that, everywhere you go, but there's a frightened little person inside there.

Some people wear the clown mask, the Joker, so the moment you try to relate to them, they're joking. You can't get past the jokes. Me thinks he jokes too much! I can't get to know who he is. I've been there. Okay, then there's other kinds of masks: the Lone Ranger mask. The Lone Ranger, if anyone's seen the Lone Ranger, Lone Ranger comes and rescues people, and some people are the Lone Ranger. No one really ever knows them, they're a Lone Ranger, but they have a mission. I will rescue people! Someone's in need, count on me, I'll help them out. They're in there to rescue, and they've got all these people they've rescued, and they're so grateful to the Lone Ranger, who's feeling much better about themselves, because I am the Lone Ranger, and I rescue people! [Laughter] It's who I am! Of course the Lone Ranger often has a nervous breakdown, [laughter] so unfortunate that, but because you can't know who they are, you never do see them when they're having their nervous breakdown. It's usually when they're alone, and they took the mask off, see? There's all kinds of things.

Then there's another one I was thinking of is the princess mask. Oh, some wear

the princess mask. That's a lovely one. Everything has to be just right for me, everything has to be perfect, just perfect for me - so they control all their environment, try to make it all just sweet, just perfect, just nice. It's very, very nice. Then there's another one I thought of called the genie mask, you know the genie in the bottle, the genie comes out: Master, what can I do for you? So the genie mask - the person who's the genie, now their mission in life is I just serve everyone. I have no life of my own, I just serve. A lot of mothers put on the genie mask. They have no life of their own, lost who they were years ago: Master, what can I do? So they're serving, and they look so wonderful. They are wonderful people to have around. Do you know why they're wonderful to have around? Because they just help you, but in the midst of their helping, they're trying to find their identity.

Do you know what happens? They become very hurt, very resentful people. Do you know why? Because in all their serving, there was an agenda: I want to feel better about myself, I need you to say some nice words to me, and you never said them. Well we know about those ones? Whoa, a few of them - of course it's further down the road. Then I was thinking about some others, I was just trying to think of different kinds of masks - the fairy godmother. [Laughter] Comes to Cinderella, fairy godmothers have no needs of their own, they just know what to do, and they tell everyone else what to do, take over control of their life and make it happen for them. [Laughs] I'm sure you can think of many other masks. I was thinking of the Kiwi, and what a timid, shy bird that is, and some people wear a Kiwi mask. They just run away and hide, you can't see who they really are. You never really see them, you never really know them. Come on, think about some of these ones.

Some people are like a beaver, they're just buried in their work - work, work, work, work, work, work, work. Work, work, work, work, work. Who is that person? I don't know. Work, work, work, work, work. [Laughter] They have breakdowns too. In fact most of these people have breakdowns. You know why they have breakdowns? Because there's a big gap between who I am on the outside, and who I am on the inside, and there comes a point in your life when you begin to ask: I wonder who I am? Then you hate that there's such a gap, and it's very stressful, so take off the mask, be who you are. I don't know who I am! I just don't even know. See, that's the problem. When you try and take off the mask, at least you can identify the mask and take it off. The bigger issue is

discovering who you are, and we'll deal with that again, when we look at changing how you believe, and what you believe about yourself.

You've got to stop wearing a mask, and stop trying to be someone. You're a Christian, you ought to be this! Oh, the Christian mask! [Laughter] Come on, burdened and having a breakdown inside. Really we're hurting, but they've got to be this lovely Christian. That's not real. The world wants you to put on your Christian masks, that's what they expect, but when you actually become authentic, they don't know how to handle it. [Laughs] But you're supposed to be a Christian. You're not supposed to have problems! Welcome to my world! [Laughter] Same as yours! [Applause] You know, come on, that's how it is, got to get that mask off. So how many could think of someone else, today as I gave out a list of a few masks? I'm sure you could come back next week, and bring up a few masks of your own. You probably have a whole - start to think about them and you'll start to recognise them: little beaver masks, and the genie masks, the Lone Ranger masks, and all kinds of masks.

You know what happens with quite a few of them? They end up helping people. They're lovely helping people, doctors, nurses, teachers, Pastors. [Laughter] Pastor mask! [Laughter] This is what life is like. I've been around, I've seen them everywhere. One of the problems when you move in the prophetic and deliverance, you tend to peel off the masks. [Laughs] Then you'll see that same person that had that - I remember being at one church there, and I started to pray for two people; one was a man, one was a woman, and they went down on the floor, rolled around, growled like dogs, and the woman Pastor was very shocked. She said are those demons? I said yes. [Laughter] She said: but they can't be, that's my Chief Deacon, [laughter] and that's my Head Intercessor. They're going wah-wah like this. They'd worn the masks to long, the demons got in and filled it all up in behind. [Laughter]

So anyway nothing like the prophetic and deliverance - so the Bible's very clear in Proverbs 28, Verse 13. It says: if you cover what's going on in your life, you can't go forward or prosper. You just actually have to confess and forsake. You've got to get rid of the masks. You know in Isaiah, I think 30, it says: woe to those who cover up with a covering that's not of Me. God has got a provision for you, but to get it, you've got to take off the one you've put on. When Adam and Eve put the covering on themselves to get God's provision, they had to take off their one, so first step is take off your covering, take off the mask. Whoo whoa!

Oh, that Lone Ranger mask is a very good mask. Okay anyway, so the second thing is, we need to break our agreements with evil spirits.

We need to break our agreements with evil spirits. Oh dear, what do you mean agreements with evil spirits? Well some people have sat down and written out a deal with a demon, actually with more than one demon. I don't recall doing that. Well it looks like you have, the way you live your life, you must have. How did I do that? Well the Bible fortunately, actually explains how we do it. Look in Isaiah 28, Verse 15 - look at this. We have made a covenant with death - that's a pretty strong agreement. We're married to the spirit of death, and with hell we're in agreement, that tormenting demon, yes, we've come into agreement - latter part - four - this tells how we did it - we made lies our refuge, and under falsehood we have hidden ourselves. My goodness me, that's how you get into agreements with demons. You cover yourself with lying, you cover yourself with a mask, cover yourself with pretences. When we do that, we're virtually giving agreement to a demon, to come into our life, and to trouble us.

The devil's very keen to do that, so it may well be that when a spirit comes to you, and whispers in your ear: you're no good, you're nothing, no one wants you; and you agree with that, you've given it power over your life. So part of getting out of shame, I have to break agreements with any accusing spirits, any spirits that shame me. Any spirits that put words or voices or thoughts into my mind, concerning shame, I have to break the agreement with them. I have to refuse to accept their lies any more, have to refuse to accept them. Sometimes we need to make a stand against them, and repent them. Jesus has given us total acceptance, so any demon that says: well nobody loves you - actually usually the way they say it is like this. The demon stands alongside you, or he's actually probably in you by that stage, and he just says something like this: nobody loves me - and you pick it up. Oh, nobody loves me. Nobody cares about me - oh, nobody cares about me, I'm all alone. Yeah, I'm all alone - and you begin to listen.

Some people are having this dialogue with demons, listening to thoughts that come out of hell. You've got to break those agreements. You've got to not agree with any of those thoughts. You've got to agree with what GOD says! I LOVE YOU! I care for you! You are Mine! You are special to Me! Cast your cares on Me, because I care about you! Oh there's heaps of scriptures. You've got to get the scriptures into your heart, and shift what you do - so break the agreements with demons, and the last part here, let go the grief, and the reactions to being

shamed. Let go the grief. We've got to abandon the reactions, and the grief, of being shamed. When we get shamed we're hurt. I shared with you some experienced I've had that were incredibly shaming, and as a result of that there was tremendous pain inside, great pain. Now what are you going to do with it, just pretend it isn't there? I know what I'll do, stuff, stuff, and put on the Christian mask! [Laughter] Praise the Lord! Now this doesn't buy it, because you've still got it inside you. You've actually got to be honest with your feelings. Sometimes that can take a little while. How do you really feel about that matter, how did it really affect you?

One of the ways you can deal with this area, is you can begin to write out, and remember what you did. Another way is as you worship the Lord, you begin to allow your mind to go back and remember what happened, remember what it felt like, remember what it felt like inside, and as you do it, the Holy Spirit just brings this stuff up, then you feel a lot of pain. Now most people when they feel the pain, just want to get out of the pain, and so they push it down again. If you're male, you may have quite a strong problem with this area; the moment you start to think about anything that caused you pain, immediately you block it off, and minimise it, say it's nothing, don't worry about that, you know? So what happens is, we don't engage what's really in our heart. So as we worship with the Lord, David was absolutely abandoned. He shared his distresses and troubles with the Lord, and the Lord set him free. He can set you free too.

So the first part is, I need to allow the feelings to surface, and just release them to Jesus, the grief carrier. It says in Psalm 84: blessed is the man whose strength is found in the Lord. He turns to the Lord with an open heart, and he said: he makes the valley of tears into a well, that others can be blessed in. So there is a part of your pain and your shame, that if you can bring it to the Lord and weep over it, you let the feelings go. I remember praying over people that have been abused, and they just wept and wept and wept, with the grief of being so shamed and embarrassed. Some cultures, the shame is so deep, that when it starts to surface they just weep and weep and weep.

The second thing we need to do is forgive. We've just got to let go, from the heart. Forgiveness is more than just a prayer, just 'I forgive'. No, it's actually - there's the heart feelings as well as the will, and so in forgiving someone, I need to actually remember how it's affected me, and allow myself to feel the reactions, then make the choice to forgive. Some people forgive, it's just from the head.

Jesus said in Matthew 18:34-35, forgive from the heart. I've got to let it go, let it go, let it go. Unforgiveness locks you to the past, grief locks you to the past. These things keep you there. To move out of shame, I've got to let them go. I've got to just be willing to let it go, grieve over it and move on, and we don't like doing that because it's a bit messy. You feel a mess, you feel you're falling apart, but it doesn't last. You just grieve, you release forgiveness, start to bless the people, thank God He can use it to make something great in your life, and then you come free of it. It's a process as well as a decision, can take a little time to do it - or it can just take place in a very quick time.

Have you let go the people who've shamed you? Have you really let them go? Have you really let them go? Have you let them go? You don't need to stay back there, you need to move on. This is the time to move on, time to let go. People shamed us - let it go, let it go, let it go, let it go, let it go, let it go because it stops you fulfilling what Jesus called you to fulfil.

And finally, we need to deal with the hidden reactions in the heart, where I've reacted about being shamed. By reaction, reaction's the way you respond when someone's really hurt you deeply, and there's many ways we can respond. Some people respond by making an inner vow - I'll never, I'll never let anyone get near me. I'll never let any woman, I'll never let any man - and so inner vows are vows you speak into yourself, that harden your heart, so you can't be shamed any more. They put a wall up, they keep you distant, and so there you are, you look tough, you've got it all together, and inside there's just a broken little person, fighting to try and hold the wall up. That's what people do. People do it everywhere. They're at your workplace, they're all around you, but church is a place we can find healing and restoration. We don't have to stay in those places. So we may have made inner vows, and may have made judgements, and may have just wanted to die; Elijah wanted to die, he felt ashamed of the whole thing. He'd run his course and there it was, he still hadn't made a change in the nation, and so he just wanted to die.

There's many reactions. Whatever reaction you've made, just repent of it and bring it to the cross. We need to do that so we can move on, so here's where we get out of shame, four steps out of it. We've given you two today: the first, I need to personally come to Christ, who carried my shame. He understands my shame. He's carried it. I can come and talk about it to Him, and bring it to Him. Secondly, I need to separate or break the attachments to people or things that

caused me shame. I just need to get the mask off and be honest with Him, face the emotions that are there, and grieve over them, release them to the Lord. I need to get rid of the reactions that are inside me, and make a decision, I'm going to stand up now, and begin to change the way I view myself, the way I view God, and the way I live my life. It's an important decision for us to make.

I think there are many people here sitting on stuff - why don't we just close our eyes, and bow our heads right now. This is a time for you to make a step. Some powerful things can happen in an altar call. Altar call is where you make a decision that you've come into agreement with God, you've heard His word, and you are agreeing with God. Change is a must. You're saying to yourself: I'm not going to hold onto this stuff. Maybe you're ashamed of failure, maybe a family broke down, maybe a parent died, maybe someone abused you verbally, someone abused you sexually. Maybe you were humiliated in school, humiliated by teachers. Remember I was chosen here, a local high school, grew up here, and I was chosen to speak and represent the school at a speech contest. So I had the speech all ready and all prepared, all memorised, and I remember going into the - it was over in Napier, and they had all the inter-schools, everyone was there, parents were there, everyone was there. I got a good number, I was up number three. I thought that's quite good, not number one, number three - so I got up there all prepared to really do my best.

When I stood up there, I got started into this speech, and I was starting to get going on it, and then suddenly it began to rain, and it didn't just rain, it really pounded down on an iron roof. There was just this loud noise, and it distracted my attention, and I froze, and forgot everything. I can remember to this day the pain and the shame, of standing in front of everyone, representing our own school, and I got a mind blank. I got prompted, and I got through it, but the feeling of that time didn't leave me. Years later when I become a Pastor, I would have to have everything written out. I was still living in the shame of such a defeat publicly, and for a long time I had everything written out, could never take a meeting or enter any meeting, if I didn't have everything written out. I was gripped by the fear this would happen to me again. It was just a teenage experience of shame, that brought fear, and then attempts to control and protect myself.

I had to make a decision at one point to face that, to let it go, and to begin to trust God. So the Lord put me with children, so I could get experience and success,

without that fear around me, and then I was able to come and stand at a platform and preach. I can do it now without any notes, without any reference to notes. I have only the barest of notes most of the time. I don't need them, because I've tapped into the One who loves me, and said: I'll be with you, I'll give you things to say.

Summary Notes: Formatted » Back to Top »

1. Introduction:
· Isaiah 54:4 - “Do not fear, you will not be ashamed, neither be disgraced, for you will not be put to shame, for you will forget the shame of your youth…”
· God’s design for man was to be totally unashamed – sin caused shame to enter.
· Shame Message: ‘I am damaged’ – ‘I am different’ – ‘I am in danger of exposure/rejection’.
· Shame is an identity thief – shame is an intimacy thief.
· God promised us that we can be free pod shame and reject being shamed.
· Forget = 7911 = to cease to care, cause to wither, put out of mind, pay no attention to.
· Keys for breaking free of shame:
1. Come to Christ.
2. Break attachments to shame.
3. Change inner beliefs.
4. Change how you relate to people.

2. Christ bore our Shame:
· Isaiah 50:6-7 - “I did not hide my face from shame and spitting”.
· Jesus Christ personally experienced shame – He understands our suffering.
· He determined not to hide from shame – chose to pay the full price for shame.
· He did not draw back from shame of dying a criminal’s death on the Cross.
· Christ was put to an open shame – Hebrews 6:6 - exposed to public shame and humiliation.
· Matthew 27:27-31,35
· Jesus was stripped naked and exposed to public humiliation three times.
· Jesus was physically abused, verbally abused and mocked.
· Jesus’ crucifixion was more than means of death, but means of public shame.
· Jesus shame was public and universal – labeled in 3 languages for all to see.
· Without complaint Jesus bore his shame and our shame on the Cross.
· No matter what shame you have experienced Jesus understands and made provision for it.
· God promises to make remove our shame and even the memory of it.
· Matthew 11:28 – “Come to me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest” – acceptance and love.

3. Breaking the Attachments to Shame:
· Amos 3:3 - “How can two walk together except they be agreed?”
· In order to walk with God I must come into agreement with Him.
· Agreed = 3259 = yada = to be intimate with in order to reproduce.
· I must break all my attachments, agreements and intimacy with shame.

Remove the Mask and become Honest with Myself:
· Adam and Eve covered themselves to hide their shame – Genesis 3:7
· Adam and Eve had to remove their covering to receive God – Genesis 3:21
· What experienced of shame have you had?

· How did you feel?
· What message did it give you about yourself?
· How did you cover yourself? – What mask did you put on?
· Mask:
*Witch – sharp, critical
*Lone Ranger – rescuer
*Princess – want the best, perfectionism
*Genie – please and save everyone
*Arnold Schwarzenegger – strong independent
*Clown – joker
*Fairy Godmother – no needs, know what to do
*Kiwi – timid, shy, intimidated
*Beaver – buried in work, business
· Proverbs 28:13 - "he that covers his sins shall not prosper – confess and forsake => mercy.
· What have you done that you are ashamed of? Repent and Confess.
· What have you experienced that brought shame to you? – admit it.

Break you agreements with Evil Spirits:
· Proverbs 28:15 - "We have made a covenant with 'death' and with 'hell' we are in agreement …for we have made lies our refuge and under falsehood we have hidden ourselves".
· While we remain covered and hidden we are open to demonic spirits.
· Accusing spirits – accusation, shame, abandonment, rejection and fear.
· Romans 8:1 - "There is no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus who walk not according to the flesh but according to the spirit".
· Jesus offers us total acceptance, no condemnation based on our agreement with what He has done for us upon the Cross.
· Make a stand against accusing spirits of shame – familiar and tormenting.
· James 4:7 - "Resist the devil and he will flee".

Let go the grief and Reactions to being Shamed:
a) Grief:
- remember what happened and how you felt.
- Allow the feelings to surface and express – God is interested in your feelings.
- Jesus carried our grief and sorrows – Isaiah 53:3-4
b) Forgive:
- Let go from the heart the resentment and anger at people.
- Forgiveness involves the emotions and the will.
- Unforgiveness keeps you attached to showing experiences.
- Matthew 18:34-35 - "Forgive from the heart! Let go the demands!"
c) Reactions:
- Repent and break the agreement with ungodly inner reactions to being shamed.
- Adam and Eve reacted to their shame and fear – covered, hid.
- How did you respond to experiences that shamed you?
- Inner vow?
- Bitter judgment? We are responsible for our reactions
- Death wish? Repent, change by bringing it to the Cross.

· God promise to "roll away the shame of Egypt" – Joshua 5:9
· Our part is to come to Christ in faith – expose our shame and let go the attachments to it by faith.

Changing what you Believe (5 of 6)

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Had a break over a couple of weeks and I'd like to really draw in this message on Unashamed into a close and we shared a whole number of things about it. We'll just pick it up and just get your mind back focussed again on what we were sharing. I want to share with you something that will be a major help for you, be a help for you if you do it. If you do it it's just another meeting, but if you actually start to put it into practice in your life it can change your life completely and so we were looking in this series Unashamed, how God created us to be unashamed, to be connected relationally - that's part of being unashamed.

So sin disconnects us from God and puts shame around our life, but God wants us to be connected so part of being unashamed is I can connect with people. I can be myself, I don't have to wear a mask. I can actually just be true and authentic and genuine, but I have to learn the skills of building good relationships as well, so we're dealing at the moment with the issue of shame and we found that when sin entered in that shame came on people and Adam and Eve covered themselves. They put on a mask, they clothed themselves up, they covered themselves and they hid and we saw over that series that shame is an identity thief. It stops you being able to be who you are because you're not too sure who you are and so we refer to what's outside us to define who we are; I am a businessman, I am this or I am that. But we don't actually define who we are according to what God says and today we want to talk about redefining ourself, want to talk about shifting our belief system, shifting our belief system.

Okay then, so we talked then about how Adam and Eve when they drew back and they covered themselves and shame covered their life, they became disconnected, they lost their confidence and we saw that their lives were dramatically changed. I want to pick this up and pick up this truth that God has made provision for our shame. I want to talk with you, the provision He's made and how we begin to take that provision around our life, so we'll have a look

back into Genesis, Chapter 3 and just pick up the verses there in Genesis, Chapter 3. We're going to have a look at the entrance of sin. I want to pick it up in Verse 1. Now the serpent was more cunning than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said to the woman, has God indeed said you shall not eat every tree of the garden? And the woman said to the serpent we can eat the fruit of the trees of the garden; but the fruit of the tree which is in the middle of the garden, God said you shall not eat it, nor shall you touch it, lest you die.

Then the serpent said to the woman, you will not surely die. In other words he denies that there are consequences for sin - and then he said, now here's the one I want to pick it up at - for God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be - notice - you will be, you will become something. This is identity - you'll be like God. Actually he already was like God. He was created in the image of God. Now you notice how sin entered in, notice the entrance of shame into the world came through believing a lie and if you continue to believe lies shame will continue to cling. It doesn't matter how many meetings you go to, it doesn't matter how many songs you sing, how many passages of the Bible you have learned or memorised or whatever. If you continue in your heart to believe this lie, then what'll happen is shame will continue to come around you. Notice what the lie was. Have a look at it here. It says God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God.

Now notice what he said. He sowed the seed of doubt, God is not good. You can't really trust Him because He holds out on you, that's what he's saying, God is not good. And that's actually the core issue that we struggle with is whether we really believe God is good, whether we really believe God can be trusted. Now if God is good and I can trust Him then I can lean my life on Him in every area and be secure in Him and not having to worry what people are saying and doing around me. Now notice this: he implied that God is holding out on you. If you actually were to just set out and run your life your own way, then you would actually have revelation and understanding and you would be something. You would become something. You would become like Gods, so notice how the devil has tempted him. He sowed a lie into him, God is not good, God can't be trusted, God is holding out on you. If you'll do what God says you'll miss out on something. [You're tired, 00.04.58] well you'll miss out, God will take your

money, see? If you withhold having sex before marriage well you're going to miss out. That lie pervades civilisation today, always there, just there. God is not good, God can't be trusted, God is holding out on you. Now if you just break out you can really make something of your life, you can become something.

So rather than resting in his identity as a child of God he took onboard those lies and those lies formed the foundation for him running a life independent of God. If we are going to come out of the path of shame and out of shame around our life and become who God says we are, we have to come back to a foundational faith in our heart, God is good, God can be trusted. God loves me. He's got my very best interests at heart, so no matter what He says, even if it doesn't look right, God still is good. If someone dies unexpectedly God is still good. If something goes wrong in my life God is good. God can be trusted. Something happens I didn't expect, God is good, God can be trusted. Now you understand this, the foundation of our Christian walk depends on us believing in our heart God is good all of the time. He can be trusted all of the time. His word is reliable. He is reliable and if I trust my life into His hands I won't miss out, I'll actually become everything He wants me to become. You see that's the core of how this thing of shame entered in. They believed lies.

So if we don't deal with lies in our life, if we don't shift our heart beliefs, then what'll happen is we have a form of Christianity but we have no living connectedness to God and His power. Listen, if you have doubts about someone's goodness how could you trust them? How can you lean on that person if you are not really sure they can be trusted? This is the problem that so many believers have, is we really do doubt that God is good and can be trusted and so we give a measured trusting, so long as I keep within what I can control. But God calls us to abandon ourselves to Him because He's trustworthy and you see here what Adam and Eve have done, the moment sin came in immediately the glory of God left them. They became damaged and their first response was to hide. God came and He came walking in the - the Bible says they heard the voice of the Lord walking in the garden.

Now notice God's first question to Adam: Adam, where are you? Now what kind of question is that? Is that an information question? Adam, I can't figure out where you've got to, you're not in the normal meeting place. Where did you go? How come you didn't turn up on time? It's not an information question. It's a relationship question. God's primary concern with us is relationship. He wants

you to have a relationship because out of relationship you then begin to arise and you have dominion or you represent Him out of your relationship with Him. So His first priority is relationship. Even though Adam had failed in sin God still loved him passionately and we can see that God had not changed because Adam sinned. Look at this in Genesis 3 and Verse 21. Now Adam had become ashamed, he'd lost his identity as a child of God. He had lost his intimacy with God because shame is an intimacy thief and identity thief. Now I want you see what the Lord did and I'm going to look at God's provision that He made, the provision that He made for shame, in Genesis 3, Verse 21.

Also for Adam and his wife, the Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them. The Lord God made tunics of skin, and clothed them. Now you notice the thing that God does. He demonstrated first of all - Adam, where are you? He demonstrates He's a relational God, He's looking for where we are. He's looking for where we're hiding. He's looking to engage you at a heart level, where are you really? Where do you live? What is going on in your life? What is really happening in your life? I made you to be my friend, what's happened to our friendship? Where are you living your life? Is it in friendship with me, or has something happened? So the passionate desire of God always has been a love relationship, intimacy, connected with us. Sin and the shame it brings disconnects us, so notice now what God does. God shows He's good: Adam, I see in your own efforts you've covered yourself, but I tell you I'm still good and I've got a better covering than the one you've made.

So a result of shame is we conceal who we are. We put on a mask so no one really knows us because we're not happy about what we're like and what they'll do if they see what we're like. We put on a mask and then we hide ourselves, so we get busy. Some people get busy in their work and they pour themselves into the work, never stopping to realise that maybe all the rest of their life is totally out of balance and not as God intended. The work has now become a covering for the insecurities and other things in their life - or we pour ourself into our children. It's right to work, it's right to invest in your children, but some people, some women, their life and identity is in the children. Life is not to be found there, life is to be found - my identity is I'm a representative of God. If your life is found in the children how can you train them? How can you correct them? How can you endure them being disapproving of you? How can you stand up to them as teenagers and correct them and they go angry and it doesn't affect you

too much? You have to be secure in your identity, in who you are in Christ, see?

So what God did is God came to him - notice this - first thing is God demonstrated He's still a good God: I still love you. I see there you've got fig leaves on - well I don't know, I made caterpillars and caterpillars eat fig leaves so that's not a good thing to have on. [Laughter] I've got something better for you, you know? So this is what He said, notice what it is: He made tunics or He made clothing. God made clothing for him. How did He do it, did He go [unclear 00.11.22] there they are, some designer Armani! [Laughter] He didn't do it that way did He? How did He do it? Some innocent animals had to lose their life to provide the clothing, so right now God is foreseeing - centuries ahead of time He's foreseeing the tragedy that would be in the earth as a result of this sin and He's picturing and prophetically foretelling that He is going to make a provision that will break the power of sin and shame and enable people to live free again.

So an innocent animal is going to lose its life. It's a prophetic picture here of Christ. The second thing you notice, that He made tunics. God created something from that innocent animal's death. He created something of value that could be used to clothe them. The third thing was they had to remove the clothing they had - it's not comfortable to wear fig leaves underneath sheepskins. Fig leaves don't make good underwear. [Laughter] See, they had to remove what they'd provided for themselves and they had to receive and apply God's provision. Now in that you begin to start to see that in spite of all the impact of sin God's heart is still good, God still loves Adam and Eve, He now has provided for them and this is the prophetic picture of something that Christ would do for us at Calvary, something He would provide for us. So we want to have a look now what happened at Calvary.

I'm going to have a look at a brief part of it. I want to show you something dramatic that happened at Calvary and then we're going to look at just some key truths you need to put on in your life if you want to walk free of shame, okay? So let's go and have a look in Matthew, Chapter 27, Verse 50. We're looking at the death of Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God. We'll read it from about Verse 45 through to about Verse 54, okay. Now it was the sixth hour until the ninth hour there was a darkness all over the land. And about the ninth hour Jesus cried with a loud voice - notice that, a loud voice. I'm going to come back to that in a moment - saying Eli, Eli, My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me? And some of those who stood there, when they heard that said this Man is calling for

Elijah! Immediately one of them ran and took a sponge, filled it with sour wine and put it on a reed, and offered it to Him to drink. The rest said let Him alone; let us see if Elijah will come and save Him.

And then Jesus cried out again - notice here a second time, a loud voice - and then He yielded or He gave up His spirit. Then - now I want you to see something here. Jesus has been taken, He's been unjustly accused, He's been mocked, He's been shamed, He's been ridiculed. They stripped Him of His clothing. They beat Him, they cut Him with the whips, they put the crown of thorns on Him and all of this, He endured the shame and humiliation of this so He can provide a powerful remedy for sin and shame in our lives. Now notice this, it says Jesus cried with a loud voice and then something happened the moment He yielded up or He gave up His spirit. Now Jesus had power to do something we didn't have power to do; He had power to yield up His life at the time He was ready and the Bible says He yielded up or He surrendered His life at that point.

Then I want you to see something that God did, some things that the Lord did. I want to just draw your attention to three things that were dramatic. The first one here was it says behold or look, this amazing thing. The veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom; number one. The earth quaked and the rocks were split, and Verse 52, the graves were opened and many of the bodies of the saints who had fallen asleep were raised; and coming out of the graves after His resurrection, they went into the holy city and appeared to many. And the centurion and those with him, who were guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and the things that had happened, they feared greatly saying truly this was the Son of God!

Now God has done something at Calvary for us. Remember when Adam and Eve sinned and fell and they covered themselves and God prophetically showed them that He had a provision for them which one day would come into the earth; it would require Jesus Christ laying down His life. It would require the innocent dying for the guilty. Now I want you to see something, when Jesus surrendered His life He didn't do it with a whimper. Now most people when they die, their voice starts to fade away. Their voice becomes very weak, but twice right at the very end it said Jesus - now you've got to remember He's been tortured, He's been whipped, He's been crucified, hanging in pain for three hours. Now He says with a LOUD voice, He cries out with a LOUD voice. He is actually proclaiming

His total victory over what sin has done, His total victory over the power that the devil had held people in bondage, in sickness and shame and death for all of those years. He cries out with a LOUD voice, it is a shout of triumph! It is a shout of victory that He has won and immediately it is answered from heaven.

Now listen, a lot of people shout but there's not many shout and there's an answer from heaven! You have to understand that when Jesus let out a loud shout it was a shout against His enemies. It was a shout of victory, of total victory over sin and shame and sickness, cursing, poverty, everything that could come into [the earth, 00.17.34] everything the devil used to hold man in bondage. He cried out a shout of victory and heaven answered and it answered in three ways. It answered by dramatic bursts of power from heaven into the earth. Jesus' death was not normal. Listen, you've got to imagine - right now at that very time when Jesus died, the High Priest was offering the Passover Lamb, the natural lamb just like the lamb that was slain to give a natural provision for Adam and Eve. Right then he was about just in the process of offering that sacrificial lamb, there was a huge thick curtain that held people back from being able to access the presence of God and suddenly two hands come from heaven, tear it from top to bottom and God has now made that place open! You and I have access freely to God.

Shame stops us being intimate with God. Shame stops us being intimate with people. God removed the veil and said it's now possible wherever you are, you can have access to Me through faith in this thing that Jesus just did on Calvary. You have right to come right in where you could never come before, into the very presence of Almighty God. That is a privilege given to us by that death on the cross. The second thing that happened was it says the earth shook and the rocks were split. That word earth refers to the whole countryside, the very ground on which everyone stood. There was literally a shaking of everything. Remember when Adam fell the earth was also brought into bondage and God shook it. It was shaken so hard by the power of God they couldn't stand up. People fell over on the ground. Whoever was around there that was standing proudly, laughing and mocking at Jesus' death, listen, they would have fallen over because an earthquake that shakes the land and can split open rocks, you can't stand in that.

If you had been here in the earthquake in '31 when the ground shook and things began to split open you couldn't stand. No one could stand. The earth literally

shook with the power released. In other words - then the third thing that happened is the graves opened and people rose from the dead when Jesus also rose. By this we have an incredibly clear witness what Jesus did was accepted by God as totally sufficient. Now if you try to make yourself right with God by working hard, reforming, trying to become something by striving, by doing all kinds of things, listen, you will end up just striving and striving and striving. You end up in bondage. Jesus wants us to understand through this that the work He did has provided acceptance for us. Religion means you want to become accepted by God. Religion is man's way of working and doing stuff so I'll be good enough for heaven, so I'll be good enough to be accepted by God, so God will be pleased with me and not be mad with me. That is the core of religion.

Christianity is completely different. In Christianity God did the work through Jesus Christ. God said this is good enough for Me, this makes people totally acceptable to Me. There is something Jesus did for us that provides a clothing, a covering for us. In the Bible the Bible uses the word 'righteousness' which refers to this: it means to be declared or to be announced judicially clean, clear, not guilty. It's a pronouncement in the legal system of heaven, not guilty, innocent, there are no charges that stick. Shame will cause the charges, accusations to stick. Righteousness is God's clothing and answer for this issue of shame. I need to know I am a righteous person. Now of course because we don't use the word righteous very much except in church people in the world haven't got a clue what it means really. Righteousness, well a righteous person I suppose is sort of some churchy person I guess. We don't have much concept of it, but the original word meant to be declared or decreed and announced to be innocent and free of all charges. Now if you are innocent and free of all charges you have nothing to be ashamed of. There is no reason for any shame.

Not only are you announced as being free of all charges, you now have privileged access to come in as a child of God into the presence of God. Who am I? Am I sinner? No, I'm a child of God. I'm a child of God. Religion will keep calling you a sinner. Religion will keep focussing on your faults, your failings, it'll make you conceal them, cover them and work trying to get over them, but Christianity, the word of God declares now you can become the righteousness of God in Jesus Christ! Now you can be clothed with all His goodness and free from being ashamed about anything lacking in your life - so God does two things; one, He pronounces those who come to Christ clean, clear, innocent.

Now you've got to not just have that as a head knowledge. That has to get into the heart because the problem is most Christians have been around a while or two, they actually believe that scripture. They know [unclear 00.23.19] I'll put it this way - they know that scripture, see? But the problem is believing it.

To believe it I've got to believe it in my heart. It has to get into my heart. It has to get in my heart I am righteous, but I've got these weaknesses and lacks - I am righteous. I am righteous. I actually have to bring my heart into agree with what God says about me in spite of the flaws, the lacks that may still be apparent externally or in my life in some areas. I need to agree with what God says about me - righteousness. Look at this in Romans, Chapter 3. I'll get it down and I'll bring it to where it becomes incredibly practical in just a few minutes. Romans, Chapter 3, we'll pick it up in Verse 21. Now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. There is no difference; for everyone has sinned and fallen short of the glory of God, but they are made just freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ, whom God set forth as a mercy seat by His blood through faith.

Notice it's continually through faith; demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God passed over the sins that were previously committed, to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness. Now these words are hard to pick up. They're hard to get a handle on, but let me just give it to you in a kind of a really simple way. God has made possible for us to be absolutely declared innocent of all failings, of all mistakes, of everything that we have done. He's made that possible. There are two ways that you can try and get this. One is you work for it, you strive for it, you try hard to be a good person, try hard to run a good life. You try and the works of the Lord - you try to do things to satisfy this thing of righteousness - but there's another way and this is the way that the Bible says we can be made righteous, by faith. I have to put my heart trust, no matter what my mind and feelings are telling me, that what God has said is completely reliable and legally I can come into His presence.

I'll show you how you apply this into your life because unless it gets us a working thing in the heart it's just kind of words in the Bible. It has to move from words in the Bible to actually I know who I am and where I stand before God. You notice that the key path in there is the word faith, to him who believes, him who believes, I must believe. In Romans 10, Verse 10, by faith, we are made

righteous before God by faith. I have to believe. Well what do I have to believe? I have to believe that all that Jesus Christ did is totally accepted, it's made me accepted to God. I'm going to just share with you a couple of things and then we're going to look at three or four practical truths related to this. First of all look in John, Chapter 8.

So we understand that in the Old Testament God made a provision for their shame, provided a covering. In the New Testament Jesus died on the cross and His life becomes our covering. If I will come to Him I can be accepted by God and this makes Christianity unique. Romans 10:10, with the heart man believes unto righteousness. Now look what it says in John 8, Verse 31. Jesus said to the Jews who believed in Him, if you abide in My word, you are My disciples indeed. And you shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. Notice this - He says truth has the power to liberate you and change your life. Truth has the power to free you from things that held you in bondage, so if my life has been in bondage to guilt and shame or particularly shame and I feel there's something wrong with me, I'm not good enough, not acceptable, the truth of God's word has the power to set me free.

But for it to set me free I must know that truth and that word know is the word in the Bible meaning to be intimate with someone with a view to reproducing something. When Adam knew his wife Eve there was sexual intimacy, or there was a oneness with his wife with a view to bringing forth children - so Jesus said you shall know the truth. So for the truth to set me free it's not just a matter I've heard the verse and someone told me; I actually have to become intimate with it. It has to get into my heart. It's not enough just to actually say yeah, yeah, I know that verse, yeah, I agree with it, it's right. See, the truth that sets you free is not just the truth in the Bible, it's the truth in the Bible that you now know by experience in your heart. Now what happens in the west is we tend to try to get lots of knowledge, but biblical knowledge always involves experience and outworking in your life, see?

Notice then the righteousness comes by faith. The word faith means to believe - alright then, but believe to us means yeah, yeah, I believe that. Yeah, I believe there's a God. Listen, believing there's a God does not save you, it doesn't change you a bit. The devils believe and they tremble - but it doesn't save them. Do you understand, biblical belief is not just mentally agreeing with something? That's where many of the churches in the west particularly have come undone. We're so

filled with Greek way of thinking that we think if we know about it that's when we know it, but actually in the Bible the biblical belief, biblical faith, I have to have it working in my life or I don't know it at all. So in other words biblical knowledge was always experiential. The Greek invasion of the church in 300AD and the Greek thinking invading the church caused us now to become we just think if I know about it then I know it.

Well see you can know about tithing but it actually does you no good unless you position yourself and you begin to start to tithe regularly. You begin to see God break through for you. You begin to know the truth has actually done something in your finances. You've all got quiet now, yeah. This is true, this is how it works see, so if I know Bible verses but am not working them I don't really know them at all, I know about them. The only truth that changes my life is the truth I become intimate with, embrace and I allow it to change how I live my life. That's the truth we know, so we may have heard heaps of messages, heaps of sermons, but the only truth you really know biblically is the one that's actually working out in your life. If I see it working in your life then it is - you've got the truth and you'll stand up and testify, that's what Jesus did. It's experiential. Are you getting the idea?

The trouble is then we have so much that we know about in the head, I've got to get it from the head to the heart. It's the getting it from the head to the heart, see? So let's give you an example. We'll read a verse and then we'll just give you a couple of questions, see what [you do. 00.30.50] Romans, Chapter 10 and Verse 10; with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the Scripture says whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame. So you notice now there's a confessing with your mouth, believing in your heart. Now what part of you must believe? What part of me believes? It didn't say if you believe with your head. It says if you believe with your heart; that means an experiential knowledge. See in Paul in writing to the Corinthians said I don't want you to be ignorant of how to flow in the gifts of the spirit. In other words he's saying I don't want you to be without experiential knowledge how to do this - so here's the challenge. How can I get it from my head knowing about the scripture into my heart?

So I'll ask a couple of questions. How many believe that scripture? Let's start off with that scripture there, that with the heart man believes unto righteousness, how many believe that's true? Okay, believe the word's true. How many then

have said man, I believe [what Jesus Christ has saved me. 00.31.56] I believe and now I'm righteous before God. How many believe that? Okay, that's a fair few. The others think it's a trick question and you're not righteous before God at all, you're in real trouble. [Laughter] Okay, now here's the question I want to really ask see - how many feel righteous? See, that's where the dilemma comes because what you feel is what you're experiencing in your heart and your life and so what happens is you have many and there'll be many of us here today and this is what the struggle will be: I know that scripture, if I will believe in my heart that Jesus Christ died on the cross for my sins and was raised from the dead I'll be right before God. I believe that scripture but I don't feel righteous. I feel something missing and lacking. I feel incomplete. I feel as though something is not right, so when I come to stand before God, when I come to worship then I don't feel quite right and I don't know what to do. Perhaps I'll sing louder, perhaps I'll clap louder, perhaps that'll do it.

But the real struggle is the internal one, see? When shame cloaks us we're disconnected. When shame is removed and we are righteous before God we can connect and so when we come in to worship we come the Bible way which tells us enter His gates with thanksgiving, into His courts with praise, and then it says know, know this, that the Lord is your God and you are His people and reminds us who we are, our identity and then it says and now if you'll hear His voice don't harden your heart and talks about worshipping Him. So there's a progression of how to access the presence of God. Now the problem is everyone can clap and sing songs, that's the easy bit. We can all sing the songs. We can all shout and clap our hands and do that part, but the real key part is the connecting intimately with God. If there is something in your heart that causes you to doubt, if there are accusations, if there's shame, if there's anything in your heart that's resident there and has a hold there, when it comes to access the presence of God you won't do it. You'll feel I'm not right, I just had a bad week this week. I had this, I had this, this - all kinds of stuff comes up instead of being able to enjoy the presence of God.

So services become shortened because the majority of people don't know how to stand and stay in the presence of God. Moses, the people said they saw the cloud. They said Moses, you go there, talk with God, you just come and tell us something. This is not what we're called to do. We're called to be intimate with God and out of intimacy with God, then we overflow in our life, we have an

incredible life. But this issue of intimacy with God, now if you have shame you are clothed with something's wrong with me, you can't be intimate so when you stand before God do you feel there's something wrong with you? Do you constantly remember things that are wrong? What things are going through your conscious awareness? What are you feeling? Well, I need to know that I'm righteous. If I know that I'm righteous I can stand there and I can feel absolutely accepted and in His presence and I can enjoy Him, so to get it from the head to the heart there's a key. The Bible's very clear on how to shift things from the head to the heart. I have to meditate in the truth.

I must meditate in the truth until my heart embraces that it's true, see? I must meditate in the truth until my heart welcomes, receives and produces the fruit of it, so if you come before the Lord and you're consciously aware something's not right with me and you feel a bit ashamed about your life, then the truth of your righteousness is not operating. If it's operating I can actually come boldly into His presence like the Bible says. That's why the Bible says come boldly, come boldly into His presence. Let us come boldly to the throne of grace where we'll obtain mercy and grace to help in time of need! God says come boldly into His presence - but you see if you've got shame and guilt you won't come boldly and then you may put a religious thing over it and say well actually we're not into this clapping, shouting thing. We'd rather be reverent before God - but that's actually a lie. It covers completely the truth, that in fact that person is not right before God. They don't feel right before God and they're trying to put on a religious cloak to make it appear as though they are.

Constantly the Bible tells us how to come near to the Lord. It is always with strong expressions, praise, gratitude, thanksgiving, declarations, all of those things and then bow down and be intimate with Him. We can come with the bold expressions because our heart is right. We can come with bold expressions, there's nothing hanging on me anymore. People can't pin one on me anymore, I'm free, I'm right before God! So how can I get the truth to shift? It shifts through meditation. It shifts as I will meditate. Now how am I going to do that? Well meditation, you can say well [unclear 00.37.08] but it's nothing like that. Meditation is quite different. Meditation, biblical meditation means taking the word of God and imagining it, picturing it, using your imagination.

Your imagination is like a screen on the inner man and that's where the impressions from God, the revelations from God come. It's also where

impressions from the outside world come and so our imagination we have to renew. We need to actually use the imagination God's given us. How do we do that? We take the word of God and we begin to picture it and then imagine what that truth looks like. God says I'm righteous, what does it look like to be righteous? What would it look like in standing before God? What would it feel like? So you imagine what it looks like, you imagine what it feels like. You are imagining, picturing inside yourself the truth. It's not trying to make up something, not trying to make up some weird thing or make up things in your imagination. It's taking biblical truth and repeatedly picturing it and embracing that picture, welcoming that picture until that picture begins to settle in the heart and you become conscious I'm right before God.

So when you come to pray for someone whatever your conscious of will immediately arise, so if I bring you up to pray for someone, get someone with a need, bring you to pray for them, this is what'll happen: the moment you come near to pray for them the first thing you'll be aware of is whether you're close to God or not. If you're not aware you're close to God and God is full of love and He's a good God and He will supply, immediately you'll start to fear because you have to perform. Now I've got to do something, see? The reason you have to do something is because you're not conscious that you're standing near to God, that God is the One who does something. You are just the postman who delivers, receive, deliver, receive, deliver. You don't have to be smart to be a postman - oh here's the letter, okay, just deliver it.

So ministry to people is receive, deliver, receive the letter, post the letter, well it's your number, there it is. Now that actually is what ministry really at the core of it involves, but the key part is being conscious of the presence of God, being aware of His presence. So to become aware of His presence I must take time to meditate, to continually reflect on the truth. I'll give you three or four truths you can reflect on in just a moment, but I need to not only imagine it and see it, imagine how it feels, I allow the feeling of that to rise - it's good. See, for example if you look back over your shoulder and you see all the rest of your life behind you then what do you see? If you're a forgiven person and you know you're forgiven you look back, there's nothing to see, it's wiped away, see? If you know that you are a forgiven person it's a revelation for you, you're not going to feel bad about any of that stuff in the back. But you see if you're not sure about that you'll start to remember all the things you did, you're going to feel bad about

them and that stops you accessing the presence of God.

So we have to know we're righteous, know we're righteous, right before God. How do I know that? I begin to meditate, meditate, meditate, meditate, presence of God with me, presence of God with me, see? And I have to meditate on what the Bible says is true and as I do that it becomes established in the heart. Now the biggest thing is people don't want to take the time to do it, but if you'll take the time to do it your life changes and you're free of shame, see? If you take the time to do it your life changes. Your life changes. You begin to experience God, you begin to encounter God, you begin to experience Him as someone who loves you passionately. You begin to enjoy the experience of being in His presence. You begin to feel His love flowing into your heart. You begin to have that encounter and that experience, it becomes a part of your life, but there's a process to it and that process is called meditation, embracing the truth, holding the truth, imagining the truth, declaring the truth until I feel it sink into my heart. When it does you change. You actually then are unashamed, you can come before God [unclear 00.41.31] unashamed. That's why David did it - absolutely unashamed and danced before the Lord. Absolutely unashamed to be himself, not worried what anyone thinks. I don't care what anyone thinks, it's about me and God and oh! You can imagine the joy he had in his life after all the years, now God has fulfilling the promises. He's excited about the Lord, unashamed about loving the Lord.

See, a lot of people are hung up, can't lift their hands, can't dance, can't [unclear 00.42.00] can't do anything. It's like they're held back. Now that's - see shame - God's wanting to get us free out of all that stuff, not so you can have a personality like mine but so you can have your own personality and be expressive totally about how you love the Lord, passionately expressive and loving of God. So meditation plants the truth in your heart. It plants the truth I am right before God, I'm accepted before God, I am loved by Him. There are several truths you need to have put into your heart. The first truth is that God loves you. God absolutely and totally loves you. That's a good truth to put into your heart. Well you say well I know that one. Really? Really? You see you know the words - God loves you, see? But has it become a revelation, see, that I am loved? If I am loved I don't have to go hunting everywhere else for it. I am absolutely loved by God.

Here's another truth: God has made us to be righteous, or He's made us accepted.

Well here's the truth: I am accepted totally before God. I can come before Him blamelessly. That's a good truth to know isn't it, see? God is good and I can trust Him. See, that's a good truth to have in your heart. God has made me unique, to be a representative of Him. I'm an ambassador, I can represent God uniquely. [I have to 00.43.34] compare with anyone. I can be myself. I'm called to represent Him by being ME! But you've just got to live in the heart, it lives in the heart. I can give you scriptures for all of these things but it's got to live as a truth in the heart. It's got to become truth in the inner man and when it becomes truth, that's when you begin to find your life changes.

Now of course the dilemma is it requires some time working on your belief system. Now listen, your belief system is your belief system. Most of our belief systems were formed out of the environment, circumstances around us and we've got many things we believe to be true in our heart which are not true at all. You see as the Holy Spirit helps you identify those truths which are not truths at all, they're wrong beliefs, and you begin to work on them and change what you believe, your life changes because as a man thinks in his heart so he is. So for example if I have struggled growing up in a financially impoverished background and I believe life's real hard and you've got to really work hard for everything you get and man, there's not much to go round.

If I believe there's not enough to go round for me, so suppose I was the last in a big family, wasn't much to go around for me and here I am and I'm thinking there's not much for me; now when it comes to God, you know what? I'll be thinking there's not much for me. Everyone else gets blessed but there's not much for me - and it reflects how you run your life, so I need to actually have that God has an abundant generosity to me. I've got to change the belief and we can't change beliefs just by getting delivered of a demon. You change beliefs by uncovering what you really believe to be true. You'll talk it. At some point you'll say it. It'll be seen in the way you run your life. People can say I trust God with my finances, then I'll look how they run their finances - it's not true, you don't trust God at all. You actually trust yourself and you're impoverished and you're in fear of failure in this area. That's why the thing's covered and secretive, you're ashamed of it. Whatever you're ashamed of you cover.

In covering it you're hiding it and it's got no power, but if I can actually bring it to the light - a lot of husbands and wives struggle in their marriage in this area of finances. They have wrong beliefs about finances and then it's covered over the

finances, then there's division between them on finances. To get this thing right you've got to deal to the heart belief system, not just change the outward behaviours. There should be openness and transparency see, because that's the fruit of being unashamed now, it's out in the open. You've all gone real quiet now. [Laughs] Okay, let me just finish. We'll just share with you - I'll just give you the scriptures for some of those things and then I'll just finish up. I just want to pray for one person and so here it is.

So God loves me, 1 John 4, Verses 7 to 10, I am loved by God. I am loved by God. He has made me accepted. I'm accepted. Ephesians 1, 3 to 6, God is good. Romans 8, 15 to 17 and Exodus 33:6, I'm a unique ambassador, 2 Corinthians 5:17 and 20.

Okay then, so I need to get this into my heart: I'm unique. I'm unique. I'm made to represent God with my gifts, with my life and I can walk with God. I don't have to copy, don't have to copy. I can be original! See? Otherwise you're comparing all the time. You compare what you earn, you compare what someone else has got, compare this and that. When we connect, God made me different, different is good! Now I've got something to give because I'm different, see? Otherwise religion will make you a clone, you'll all turn up the same, you'll all look the same, carry on the same. God doesn't make clones, He makes unique people so we can be different, so we can express our giftings and be unique in what we have - it's wonderful! But do you realise, do you believe that? If you don't believe it you know what'll happen? You'll be totally vulnerable to the pressures of everyone around you to conform to what they want for your life. Is that right?

Let me just pray for Ron here. Ron, just come here, just stand up. Okay, just give me your hand, that's right, just stand there, that's right. Just stand facing me, that's right. Okay, just lift your other hand up to the Lord. Now this is what I want you to do Ron. I want you just to with your eyes closed now, I want you just to be conscious [of 00.47.58] what you're feeling and what you're sensing and I've linked my hand to your hand, I'm holding onto your hand right now, so whatever I begin to start to reach out and touch with God you'll begin to experience it because we're connecting. So you don't have to do anything at all, just have your eyes closed and your heart really open to receive. I want you just to receive and to feel what I begin to experience now. This is what I'm going to do now, what I'm going to do is this: I will just close my eyes and I'll just begin

to meditate on the truth, that I'm accepted and I am loved. So what does that look like?

I begin to imagine Jesus right before me. His eyes are full of acceptance and love. He's got so much joy on His countenance of seeing me. I just open my heart to Him. Thank You Lord. As I meditate upon Him I'm just totally conscious, I fix my mind upon Him being there. I begin to feel His love flowing. Thank You Lord - ooh. And so as I meditated I began to access what I could see in my mind, see? Meditation puts the truth in your heart so it becomes living and then you can access God through the truth you have, see? So what I did then was I began to just imagine the truth of being loved and accepted. I saw Jesus standing there and very glad to see me. I see His eyes are ablaze with life and ablaze with love. I just began to embrace what I could see with my imagination and allow it just to flow into me. As I let it flow into me I began to access His presence.

What did you feel Ron? Just stand up, I'll just pop this microphone here so we can hear you. Stand up, just put it...

[Ron] Felt a real warmth and it looked like Jesus was standing there and reaching out His hand. I could just sort of - as Mike was just saying what he saw I just feel it coming right across into me.

[Pastor Mike] Yeah, so as I was describing what I was imagining, then it become real not just for me but also for Ron. There was a flow from heaven just came in. That's why I did it, demonstrated it this way, because if I just talk meditating I know you just - you'll nod and say yes and won't do it. I had to spend a lot of time to do that, to actually encounter the Lord personally through meditating. Now whenever I do that I just feel His presence, just is there, it's always there. He's always there, He's always good, He's always there, He always loves me, He's always willing to welcome me. He'll always pick me up, He's always there - but it took time to get the truth in. If you'll get the truth in it will change your life. Tania, won't you come and I'll just do the same thing.

Just come, just hold my hand, just stand here, just face towards me, that's right. Just hold my hand so we make a physical connection. You don't have to do anything, want you to close your eyes and I want you to allow yourself just to receive. You're just going to receive. Now I consciously have to stop thinking

about her there, so all meditating is is focusing your thoughts. It's making a decision to eliminate other thoughts, so I just eliminate all thoughts she's there with me and that you're looking at me and I'll totally fix my mind that Jesus is my friend and with me. He loves me. Thank You Lord. You can take a moment or two, just begin to connect and suddenly I begin to feel His love just flowing in. She'll be starting to feel it at the same time, love of God just flowing like a river - ooh! Do you feel the presence of God? What did you feel?

[Tania] Shaky and jelly, yeah.

[Pastor Mike] Shaky and jelly, right. So meditation is how the truth gets into our heart. If we're too busy we have no time to meditate and busyness is in our heart. We have to make it a priority to get hold of what God's provided so we can stand unashamed in His presence and enjoy Him. From then you begin to change how you relate to people, the way you work with people, what you do with people. You begin to refuse to let people devalue you. There's a whole number of things you can do now to walk shame free, but it starts with my experience of the Lord, not just knowing that verse but experiencing the verse, accepted, loved, close. God is good. You can feel His presence, you'll all pretty well feel His presence now.

Okay, I want you just to finish this way then. I want you to stand right just for a moment, stand and just lift your hands to the Lord. Just lift your hands to Him. We're not going to draw this out very long, only take a few moments, be about one minute to one and a half minutes, then it's over. As you're standing there I want you just to begin to activate your imagination and we're going to imagine the truth. Most of the time our imagination's full of all kinds of other stuff, but right now for a few minutes we're going to imagine the truth. The truth is God is near to me through Jesus Christ. The truth is He loves me. The truth is I'm accepted. I want you just to picture Jesus standing right in front of you - about six foot I guess, bright piercing eyes full of love and acceptance. They're ablaze, they look right into you. Focus on His eyes. There's not a hint of any judgement - you are loved. He's full of joy, countenance shines. His arms are reached out like a friend to you because you are His friend. You've believed in Him. As you reach out to Him begin to imagine now, imagine what it feels like to be loved by Him. Feel the love just flowing into you, just receive it. If you feel like falling over there's a seat behind you will catch you. [Exhales once gently 00.55.03] receive in Jesus' name. Receive right now in Jesus' name.

Lord, we thank You for Your presence. Thank You for Your wonderful love. We can stand unashamed. You're not concerned about our failures. You're not concerned about things that went wrong in our life, but You love and value us. You've always loved us. You've never stopped loving. You passionately desire that You would have room in our life and heart. Thank You Lord. Thank You Jesus.

You feel His presence - some people it may be just a little hard to focus your thoughts. You get distracted. You can start to do that at home, take time to just meditate, welcoming the truth like it's your friend. Then you know the truth and the truth sets you free. I'm loved. I'm acceptable. God is my friend. He is good to me. He is always good. I don't need to be concerned about what other people think or say or do, or what is happening around me. I am complete in Him. Amen. Amen.

Feel His presence here? [Meditating.] Meditating on the Lord opens the door to His presence, meditating on His goodness. Many areas and many ways we can meditate, but unless that truth rests in the heart and today whatever touch you got came because you just began to position yourself to do that. If you'll do it day by day until the truth is in your heart and as you become aware of Him you may become aware also of things wrong, but His great love overwhelms you. You repent of those things, you put them right quickly and you just have no sense that He's going to reject you because of things that are wrong. What a great thing. I wonder if there's anyone here today doesn't know Jesus? If you're here today it'd be a great day, you felt His presence, you've heard the word of God, be a great day for you to just do one thing. The Bible says very clearly to everyone who received Jesus, who believed on His name, He gave power to be a child of God. It requires you do something to receive Jesus and put your trust in Him.

Summary Notes: Formatted » Back to Top »

1. Introduction:
· The entrance of shame into the world = Adam believe a lie.
· Genesis 3:5 - “God knows that in the day you eat of it – eyes opened – be like God”.
· Adam believed lies: God is not good; God can’t be trusted to meet my needs; I must act on my own behalf to establish my own identity!
· When Adam sinned – guilt, shame, fear, ‘hiding’ all entered.
· Adam experienced: 1) Loss of identity (mask) 2) Loss of intimacy

2. God’s Provision for Shame:
a) In the Garden – Skins.
· Genesis 3:21 - “Also for Adam and his wife the Lord God made tunics of skin and clothed them”.

· God demonstrated His kindness and goodness to Adam.
(1) Innocent animal slain by God.
(2) Skins to cover were provided by God.
(3) Adam had to remove his own covering.
(4) Adam had to receive and put on God's covering.
· This was a prophetic picture of what God would do at Calvary.

b) At Calvary – Righteousness.
· Matthew 27:50-54 - "God accepted Jesus as the offering for sin".
(1) Veil of the temple rent – All may have access to God.
(2) Earth shook, rocks split - The devil's power over creation broken.
· Earth = the entire earth, all of the land, entire creation shook in violent response to the shedding of the Saviour's Blood.
· Shook = to agitate, tremble, come in cosmic disturbance, throw into tremor.
· Rocks split = to divide, rend, tear, split apart.
· A power confrontation in the spirit realm – Colossians 2:14-15 - cause of the devil to loose his hold on creation.
(3) Bodies arose from the dead - Jesus offering accepted, consequence of sin overcome.
· Romans 3:21-26
· O.T. Righteousness = to be right morally, to be declared to be right
= legal term involving process of justice.
· Man who is just is cleared of all charges and accusations.
· N.T. Righteousness = to approved acceptable to God and declared innocent.
· God's provision for Shame to clothe us with righteousness and put His Spirit (His Glory) back within us.

3. Freedom comes by embracing the Truth:
· John 8:31-32 - "you shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free".
· Know = mental understanding or agreement to truth.
= experiential knowledge of the truth.
= to be intimate with so as to reproduce.
· When truth is in your heart and spirit your life is changing.
· Faith = not just meaning 'to believe' – give mental agreement to.
= to put you trust in and to lean on from within the heart.
= trusting from the heart in such a way that your life changes.
· Romans 10:10 - "With the heart – man believes unto righteousness".

How can Truth get from the Head to the Heart?
Meditation – creative to repetitive use of imagination.
Meditation = repetitively picture and embrace the truth by imagining it.
Your imagination is a gateway to your heart and spirit.
Gateway of imagination must be cleaned and used properly.
Imagine the truth - picture how it looks.
- How it feels
Imagining and embracing the truth allows it to conceive in heart.
As you do this, the lies that are held in the heart may arise in reaction:
- identify them
- speak and break their power
- dwell on the truth – embrace and confess it
NB - I am who God says I am!

Key Truths that Free From Shame:
i) God loves me - “I am loved!”
· 1 John 4:7-10
· The major remedy for shame is to know the love of the Father.
· God loves you passionately and desires connection with you.

ii) God has made me righteous in Christ - “I am accepted!”
· Ephesians 1:3-6
· Because of what Christ did I am totally accepted.
· Acceptance becomes reality as I trust and lean on truth.

iii) God is good and can be trusted - “I am a child of God!”
· Exodus 33:6
· Romans 8:15-17

iv) God has made me a unique ambassador - “I am an ambassador of Christ!”
· 2 Corinthians 5:17,20
· Shame causes us to focus on self.
· Now – new focus = God – representing Him, serving people.

Changing Your Behaviour (6 of 6)

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1. Introduction:
· The result of shame is distance and hiding from relationships.
· Shame based behaviour can be changed by the personal choice to change.
· John 21:21-27 - "Lord, what about this man? ….What is that to you, you follow me!
- Peter's focus was on the other person.
- Jesus directed him to change his focus – become responsible for his own life, decision.
- Often in relationships our focus is upon other people and their faults, failures, irritations.
- We must choose to shift our focus: "You follow me".

2. The Power of One:
a) Key facts about our design:
· You are made for relationship – no choice whether to participate or not, only how to participate.
· You are made with the capacity to choose – what will you choose? Help or hinder?
· You are made to take responsibility for yourself – thoughts, feelings, beliefs, actions.
You decide how you think and react in relationship.

b) You are responsible for your choices:
· Romans 14:10-13 - "Each of us shall give account of himself before God".
· Each of us is held responsible for ourselves – how we think, act, and behave.
· You can change your life by becoming responsible for your life's choices.
· You can behave like an Adult – person capable of accepting responsibility, fully accepts personal responsibility.
· You can behave like a Child – person capable of accepting responsibility, but refuses to do so.
· 1 Corinthians 13:11 - "…when I became a man I put away childish things…"
· You can choose:
(1) Not to hide, be covered – choose to be honest.
(2) Become respectful of others and commit to connect.
· One person can change the cycle of shame and shaming.
· Are you that person?

3. The Shame Intimacy Cycle:
· Genesis 3:7-13 - "The Lord God called to Adam and said…"Where are you?"
(a) "Adam heard the voice of the Lord"….Adam and his wife hid themselves.
· The presence of God triggered feelings and thoughts – pressure.
· Adam made choices:
i) Avoid the relationship – hide.
ii) Refuse responsibility for his choices.
iii) Blamed Eve and God.
· Blame cycle: Pressure -> opt out -> blame, shame, defeat -> separation -> back to start.

· Intimacy cycle: Pressure -> opt in -> stay open, honest respectful -> address issues -> become bonded -> intimacy continues and relationship build.

(b) “Adam, where are you?’
· This is a relationship question to bring issues to the open.
· God was hurt by Adam’s action
· God made choices.
i) Value the relationship – connect
ii) Value the person – give opportunity to explain.
iii) Assigned responsibility - verse 14-19
iv) Continue to love – verse 21
· Ephesians 5:1,2 - “Be imitators of God…and walk in love as Christ also has loved us”.
· Under pressure you can choose how you respond.

A: Opt into Relationship
-Identify Personal feelings
-Identify Beliefs, Expectations, Assumptions
-Gain Gods Perspective
-Connect and communicate value

B: Opt out of Relationships:
-Controlled by feelings and beliefs
-Blame other person
-React by shaming or punishing them
-Disconnect: anger, silence, evidence trying to appease without dealing with the issue

· There is a moment of decision – a point where you choose the road to take.

4. Practical Keys to Changing patterns:
i) Take responsibility for own feelings, thoughts, expectations, assumptions, judging.
· Galatians 6:5 - “Each one shall bear his own load”, (responsibilities)

ii) Surrender to the Lord all expectations that people or things can bring you lasting fulfillment.
· Matthew 20:28 - “The Son of man came not to be saved but to serve and give His life”.

iii) Believe everything that happens can be changed with something true.
· Romans 8:28 - “All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose”.

iv) Define what you are responsible for.
· What are you fully responsible for?
· What do you have no responsibility for?

v) Forgiveness.
· Forgive other person (Matthew 6:12) - Pardon them and care for them.
· Seek forgiveness (Matthew 5:23) - Take responsibility and ask their forgiveness.

vi) Choose to serve – demonstrate the love and character of God.
· Romans 8:29 - “…He predestined us to be conformed to the image of His Son…”

5. The Example of Jesus:
· John 13:1-17
· Key issues: heart attitude and turning
· Jesus personal identity secure
· Chose to demonstrate the Love of God – serve
· Positioned Himself as a servant – not controlled by His own feelings and concerns
· Went in love to help them ‘face the dirt’ on their feet
· Most want to expose the dirt and shame of others
· Servant loves and washes the feet

· Peter’s response:
i) Tried to stop – verse 8
ii) Overreacted

· Jesus response:
i) Necessity of receiving washing to maintain relationship
ii) Personal example for us