

Get Freedom,  
Give Freedom



The Search for Significance  
and Beyond

# Ch 9: Shame

I am what I am. I cannot  
change. I am hopeless.



# Review: The Satanic Equation

My Self-Worth =

my performance + other's opinions of me

$$SW = MP + OO$$

**Shame:** I am what I am. I cannot change. I am hopeless.

# Question

*Is there anything about your life (past acts, something done to you, anything about your appearance) that you believe makes it impossible for you to ever experience consistent happiness, peace or joy?*



# The Role of Our Past

- Shame says, “Not that I made a mistake but I am the mistake”
- “Our self-image becomes no more than a reflection of our past.”
- Which do you value more: your past failures or God’s unconditional love?
- Do your thoughts and behaviors reflect this?

# Letting go of the Past

- “Day after day, year after year, we tend to build our personalities on the rubble of yesterday’s personal disappointments.”
- To accept God’s way, we must first let go of our old way of viewing ourselves
- How challenging is this for you?







# Shame

- I am what I am. I cannot change. I am hopeless.
- How vulnerable are you to pessimism and a poor self-concept?
- Let's take the Shame quiz (p. 98) and see.



## If your total score is:

- 57-70: God has given you a strong appreciation for his love and unconditional acceptance (or you are deceived or callous to emotions)
- 47-56: Shame controls your decisions rarely
- 37-46: Emotional decisions may relate to shame
- 27-36: Shame is general backdrop of your life
- 0-26: Shame dominates your memory and has probably led to depression



# Where Does the Shame Originate?

- Perhaps you have failed at something (my performance) or maybe you haven't been accepted by others (other's opinion) and your self-image becomes a reflection of your past.
- Where does your shame come from?



# Relinquish the Past or Suffer the Effects of Shame

- Any change in our behavior requires a release from our old self-concept, which is often founded in failure and the expectations of others.
- Proverbs 16:25 – “There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.”



# Inferiority

- By definition, shame is a deep sense of inferiority.
- Feelings of inferiority can destroy our self-worth and adversely affect our emotions and behavior.
- What past failures have left you feeling inferior?



# Habitually Destructive Behavior

- Typically, we behave in a manner consistent with our perception of ourselves.
- Shame often leads to a pessimistic outlook on life and a lifestyle of destructive behavior.
- What destructive behaviors stem from your shame?





# Passivity

- Refusal to invest in relationships and responsibilities
- Use compulsive perfectionism or busyness in peripheral activities to avoid taking risks in relationships or circumstances
- Have you ever used passivity to combat feelings of shame?

# Isolation and Withdrawal



- Similar to passivity, but may involve withdrawal from all meaningful interactions
- Develop masks to hide our hurt
- May be socially active, but never allowing anyone to know true you
- Have you ever felt lonely in a group or withdrawn because of feelings of shame?



# Despising Our Appearance

- We live in a society that values beauty.
- Most of us are ashamed of at least one aspect of our appearance. We need to believe that God, in His sovereignty and love, gave us the features He wants us to have.
- Do you have a hard time accepting some aspect of your appearance?



# Other Effects of Shame

- Self-Pity
- Loss of Creativity
- Codependent Relationships



# Freedom from Shame

- It begins by seeing yourself as God sees you.
- True humility is an accurate appraisal of our worth in Christ.
- God's answer to shame is Regeneration:
  - I am absolutely complete in Christ!
- For a sneak peek of next time, read II Corinthians 5:17

# Small Group Discussion Time



# The Grid

<p><b>PERFORMANCE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All truth and no grace</li><li>• Relationships are fake and performance-based</li></ul>	<p><b>GRACE &amp; TRUTH</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Relationships as God intended</li><li>• Full knowledge &amp; expression of truth in love</li></ul>
<p><b>ISOLATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• No truth or grace</li><li>• No relationships</li></ul>	<p><b>TOTAL EXCESS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• All grace and no truth</li><li>• Behaviors are excessive and relationships are shallow</li></ul>

# Next Steps

- Keep praying for the Spirit's work in your heart and mind
- Read Chapter 10 and work through Step 10
- Next meeting:
  - March 25<sup>th</sup> (we will not be meeting March 11<sup>th</sup>)