

## PRAYER STUDY # 64 "SHAME"

*In you, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed. Deliver me in your righteousness. Bow down your ear to me; deliver me speedily. Be thou my strong rock, for a house of defense to save me.*

Psalm 31:1-2

"There is an importance difference between guilt and shame. Guilt is part of recognizing that I have done something wrong. Guilt is a painful emotion. It can, however, be a helpful emotion because it alerts us to a violation of our values and ideals. Guilt can be the first step in a process that leads to growth and change, to repentance and recovery.

Shame, on the other hand, is not part of such a healthy process. Shame does not open a person to the possibility of change. Instead, shame is experienced as a flaw so fundamental that no hope for recovery seems possible. Shame causes people to see themselves as unlovable, unworthy, and irreparable. Perhaps the most difficult tenet of the Christian Gospel to believe is that no matter how badly damaged you may seem to yourself, God sees you as valuable. No matter how unlovable you may seem to yourself, God loves you. No matter how pessimistic you may be about the possibility of recovering from shame, God is eager to bring healing."

Dale and Juanita Ryan

### Some Scriptural Characteristics of Shame

1. **Confusion:** *We lie down in shame, and our confusion covers us; for we have sinned against the Lord, our God, we and our fathers, from our youth unto this day, and have not obeyed the voice of the Lord, our God.* Jeremiah 3:25
2. **Lack of the Lord's Glory:** *As they were increased, so they sinned against me; therefore, will I change their glory into shame.* Hosea 4:7
3. **Sense of forsakenness, of no longer connecting to the Lord:** *Fear not, for you shall not be ashamed, neither be you confounded; for you shall forget the shame of your youth and shall not remember the reproach of your widowhood any more.* Isaiah 54:4
4. **Unproductive for the Lord:** *He that gathereth in summer is a wise son, but he that sleepeth in harvest is a son that causeth shame.* Proverbs 10:5
5. **Rebellion, refusal to submit to authority:** *Poverty and shame shall be to him that refuseth instruction, but he that regardeth reproof shall be honored.* Proverbs 13:18
6. **A Proudful Spirit:** *When pride comes, then comes shame, but with the lowly is wisdom.* Proverbs 11:2
7. **Lack of righteousness:** *I counsel you to buy of Me gold tried in the fire, that you may be rich, and white raiment that you may be clothed, and that the shame of your nakedness do not appear, and anoint your eyes with salve that you may see.* Revelation 3:18
8. **Pain:** *Turn unto me, and have mercy upon me; for I am desolate and afflicted. The troubles of my heart are enlarged. Oh bring thou me out of my distresses. Look upon mine affliction and my pain and forgive all my sins. Consider mine enemies; and they hate me with cruel hatred. Oh, keep my soul, and deliver me; let me not be ashamed...Psalm 25:16-20*

9. **Feeling of not belonging (in certain groups especially):** Woman with the Alabaster Jar *And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat eating, there came a woman, having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard, very precious; and she broke the box, and poured the ointment on his head. And there were some that had indignation within themselves, and said, Why was this waste of the ointment made? For it might have been sold for more than three hundred denarii and have been give to the poor. And they murmured against her. Mark 14:3-5*
10. **Feeling of unworthiness:** The Prodigal Son *I will arise and go to my father and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you and am no more worthy to be called your son; make me as one of your hired servants. Luke 15:18-19*
11. **Longing to die:** *But it displeased Jonah exceedingly, and he was very angry. And he prayed unto the Lord and said, I pray thee, O Lord, was not this my saying, when I was yet in my country? Therefore, I fled before unto Tarshish; for I knew that thou art a gracious God and merciful, slow to anger and of great kindness and repentest thee of the evil. Therefore now, O Lord, take, I beseech thee my life from me, for it is better for me to die than to live. Jonah 4:1-3*
12. **Rejection and isolation:** Woman at the Well *Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that you, being a Jew, ask drink of me, who am a woman of Samaria? For the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. John 4:9*

### How to Overcome Shame

1. **Pray:** *Is any among you afflicted? Let him pray...James 5:13*
2. **Confess your faults one to another:** *Confess your faults one to another...James 5:16*
3. **Repent of any wrongdoing:** *Repent, therefore, of this your wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven you, for I perceive that you are in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. Acts 8:22-23*
4. **Let go of the past:** *Remember not the former things, neither consider the things of old. Behold, I will do a new thing; now it shall spring forth; shall you not know it? I will even make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. Isaiah 43:18-19*
5. **Speak life over yourself:** *You art snared by the words of your mouth...Proverbs 6:2 Death and life are in the power of the tongue... Proverbs 18:21*
6. **Forgive yourself:** *And when you stand praying, forgive, if you have anything against any, that your Father also, who is in heaven, may forgive you your trespasses. But if you do not forgive, neither will your Father, who is in heaven, forgive your trespasses. Mark 11:25-26*
7. **Praise Him:** *Violence shall no more be heard in your land, wasting nor destruction with your borders, but you shall call your walls Salvation and your gates Praise. Isaiah 60:18*