

INTRO

Brian started his sermon by sharing the story of Hiroo Onoda, a man who hid in a jungle for 29 years and missed out on so much of his life when he could have been free.

In what ways does shame cause you to hide and isolate yourself?

Where are the places you find yourself hiding and isolating?

How has shame caused you to miss out life and robbed you of freedom?

Where do you long to be set free from shame?

IDEA 1

“Only Christ has the power to disarm shame and bring us freedom. Christ’s submission and sacrifice on the cross leads us to freedom and victory. There is nothing we can do on our own to bring about this victory.”

- **What is your response to the truth that there is nothing we can do on our own to bring about victory of shame in our lives?**
- **What are the ways we can try to overcome shame on our own?**
- **What does it look like for us to embrace the victory and freedom from shame that Christ has won for us?**

IDEA 2

Read Colossians 2:13-15

Brian pointed out that this passage describes 2 major things that shame us:

- **Barrier #1 - The Record of the Charges Against Us (things we do)**
- **Barrier # 2 - Spiritual Rulers and Authorities (things spoken over us)**

How do these barriers show up in your life?

When are the moments you notice yourself saying, “I should know better?”

Where have you experienced Imposter syndrome?

What do the voices of shame sound like in your life e.g. “you’re not good enough, smart enough, attractive enough,” etc?

PRACTICE FOR THIS WEEK

Memorize Hebrews 12:1-3 and meditate on the truth that Christ us disarmed our shame and brought us freedom

EXPERIENCING GOD TOGETHER

As part of the Experiencing God Together section for this series, we will engage with a spiritual practice, sometimes known as the Prayer of Examen. You are invited to pay attention to the places in your life where shame shows up because until we pay attention to where shame shows up, we will continue to be controlled by it. The goal of this is not to analyze or judge yourself for feeling shame, but to simply become aware of when you experience it throughout your week. As you do, this is an invitation to bring those moments before your loving Father. Our shame is transformed not only as we recognize it, but also in knowing we are seen and loved by God in the very moments when we feel like we are not enough.

We encourage Life Groups to take 5-10 minutes during group time for members to engage with the prompts below. (You can print off the pages below for your group or provide them with the Shame study guide which also includes this spiritual practice)

Spiritual Practice

Use the prompts below to help guide you through this spiritual practice. Go at your own pace. This could be done in as quick as 10 minutes or could take you 30 minutes or longer if you have time for it:

Become Aware of God's Presence

Get into a comfortable position and let your body relax. Slow down your breathing and do your best to quiet your mind. Ask God to make His presence known to you in this moment.

What Am I Grateful For?

Spend a few moments in gratitude, thanking God for one or two of the blessings, big or small, that you've received this week.

Review Your Week

Like a movie reel in your mind, take some time to replay moments from your week. Ask the Holy Spirit to guide and direct your thoughts. As you do, ask yourself the following questions:

- How has shame shown up in my life this week?

- What situations have occurred that have made me feel like "I am not enough"?

- Where was shame spoken over me? What did it sound like in my mind? Where did I feel it in my body?

Respond to God

In light of your review, take time to respond to God. You may find it helpful to ask Him some of the following questions:

- What is(are) the lie(s) I have come to believe about myself or about who You are because of shame?
- God, where have You been present in these moments of shame?
- What is the truth You desire to reveal to me now?

Before moving on to the final section of this spiritual practice, take a moment to ask King Jesus, "how do you empathize with me in my weakness and shame?"

As you listen for His response (a word, verse, picture, feeling, etc.), we invite you to gaze at the artwork on the following page. Allow the Holy Spirit to use this piece to reveal more of God's heart toward you.



"Jesus and Our Shame" by Akbar Nemati

"So then, since we have a great High Priest who has entered heaven, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold firmly to what we believe. This High Priest of ours understands our weaknesses..."

Hebrews 4:14-15

Looking Ahead

As you anticipate the events of this coming week, how is God inviting you to respond to the moments where shame might show up? To walk in the truth and love He's revealed to you during this time? To partner with Him in creating a world of goodness and beauty?
