

Exploring Shame and Guilt

Shame is a powerful and complex emotion. It has been called the “swampland of the soul”. Shame is often the result of trauma and frequently drives anger, anxiety, depression, and compulsive behavior. Uncovering and distinguishing shame and guilt in our own stories is often painful and difficult, but it is necessary for healing. The Bible speaks clearly to both of these emotions. We will explore how shame is resisted and exposed in counselling, and how a gospel remedy can be offered and applied.

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1. Stories of shame
2. What is shame?
3. Creation: No shame
4. Fall: Exposed, aware, cover up
5. Powerful emotion
6. Distortions of shame
7. Differences between men and women

8. Differences between cultures

9. Difference between shame and guilt?

a. Innocence and guilt

b. Honor and shame

10. Healthy and Unhealthy Shame

a. Healthy/appropriate shame

b. Unhealthy/inappropriate shame

c. Exposing idols of the heart – roots of unhealthy shame

d. Shame-prone sense of self -internal or external focus

11. The path to healing

a. From shame to sorrow and grief

b. From guilt to confession and repentance

- c. Shame and redemption – Peter, Prodigal – grace in relationship

- d. God’s delight and rescue

- e. The big picture enables us to endure and despise some shame

Recommended Reading:

Shame and Grace: Healing the Shame We Don’t Deserve. Lewis Smedes. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 1993

The Soul of Shame, Curt Thompson, IVP, 2015