

Lesson 3A - The Dark Connection of Shame, Fear and Control

Shame Based Identity

1. In a study done by Christian counselors they found that up to **80% of us live with a shame identity** and **100% of us have had events that caused shame.**

- Rather than walking in the reality of who we are “in Christ,” our life experiences, other people’s words, our failures, and our thoughts lead us to poor self-esteem.
- It has been documented that 80% of a Christian’s thoughts are negative.
- Shame damages our personality and touches us deeply. It is about our worth, not just our performance. We think, “**I really am defective!**”
- We live in a shame based society. Today teenagers use a common insult, “You’re a loser!” to be nasty. We may feel we do not have what it takes to be a fully accepted member of the human race.
- Shame is maintained by the media. It sets artificial standards. Advertising says you are “not good enough” until you buy this product. We may try putting on masks to cover up of our defectiveness.

2. There are two kinds of shame.

- **True Shame** – It is guilt and knowing that you did **something wrong**. “I did something wrong. I made a mistake.” Guilt is action-oriented. You need to repent, change your ways, and not do it again. Conviction comes from God.
- **False Shame** always comes from darkness. It is a **sense of being hopelessly flawed and totally inadequate**. This person feels a need to hide himself from others so no one finds out what he is really like. Shame is self-oriented. “It’s not that I made a mistake but **there is something wrong with me. I am a mistake.**” It is dangerous, painful and common.

3. Living with a **shame identity** seems like the ultimate death trap.

- Our self-worth is linked to our **past failures, dissatisfaction with our personal appearance, or bad habits**, and can lead to another **false belief: I am what I am. I cannot change. I am hopeless.**
- Our self-image becomes a reflection of the past. We are focused on our failures and that affects our personality.
- We may feel stuck in our past. Our opinions are based on our failures which keep us from enjoying new experiences.
- Too often our self-image is based entirely on an evaluation of our past behavior from our memory. Our personalities are then built on the rubble of yesterday’s personal disappointments.

4. This cycle has been going on since Adam and Eve in Genesis 3:10.

- **Shame** came first saying – I am a mistake, flawed, bad, ashamed, and defective – “**I was naked.**”
- Next **Fear** said – What if they find out? They will not like me. They will reject me. “**I was afraid.**”

- Finally, **Control** said – I will control everything so that they won't find out what I am really like, and so I will not get hurt or suffer pain. – **"I hid myself."** (from *Restoring the Foundations*)
- Satan got them to believe a lie and think they were not like God, not good enough, which is shame. That led them and leads us to take things into our own hands.
- Satan encourages us be **"self-focused, we were born to look upward to God.**
- Satan wants you to think others are aware of every mistake you make and others are better than you.

5. The following is a list of roots that may produce shame and a shame identity:

- Some form of physical or emotional abandonment
- If you have been the scapegoat in your family, you may feel that it is your fault and internalize that I am bad. You keep getting blamed and don't know what to do about it.
- Physical abuse or sexual abuse – It has a major lingering affect because you thought others were supposed to protect you. You may think something is wrong with me.
- Shamed from poverty.
- Any kind of loss of status such as a financial loss. Shame results from the humiliation and "put downs" that a person has experienced.
- Growing up in an alcoholic family. You may not be able to have friends over to your house.
- Cross-cultural marriage/ cross-racial marriage (parents and/or children)
- Anytime you feel different – not athletic, parts of your body that are not perfect, overweight, speech problems, too short, too dumb, too smart, wrong sex, live on the wrong side of the tracks, etc.

6. The roots of shame are usually unseen and hidden while the fruits are seen and visible. **Shame-based people look like: (us)**

- When they look in the mirror, they agree with the lies they hear in their mind about how hopeless, useless, defective, and unattractive they are.
- They agree with the lies of low self-esteem, self-hatred, and self-rejection which lead to their being chronically unhappy inside.
- They filter all incoming information negatively. If they do something right, they discount it and focus on the wrong in them. They don't receive compliments, but focus on their flaws.
- They are always comparing themselves to others and impossible standards.
- They can't handle criticism.
- They avoid making decisions. They don't want to make a mistake or look stupid.
- They don't feel they belong anywhere. They feel totally isolated or that no one wants them around.
- They feel different than others and thus avoid social contact. They don't want to expose themselves to further rejection or comparison.
- They are preoccupied with their imperfections and feel everyone can see them. They often replay conversations of the day wondering, "What did they mean by that comment?"
- They are more concerned with appearance than reality. They want to appear in total control but they are dying behind their mask.
- They are prone to performance addiction as they want others to think well of them. They will prove they are worthy of respect.

- If they can't perform, they give up and become hopeless, and passive. They may have a victim mentality. They always feel like a failure.
- They can be addicted to anything from TV or tinkering in the garage. The remote control can be the great escape and symbol of male domination of the planet. If he is pressing buttons, he can change the world.
- They are afraid of close relationships, which may involve risks. If you get too close, you might see behind their mask.
- They live in fortresses to keep people away. They have high walls. It is a 24 hour a day job to maintain the fortress, which really isn't possible.
- They manage pain by shutting off emotions.
- A person will often put down others so that they look good.
- They are apologetic being quick to say they are sorry all the time. They feel they are a nuisance to others.
- They almost always avoid conflict because they do not want to be blamed and are fearful.
- They know more and they need to have the last word to prove they know more than others.
- They are quick to blame others. It is never their fault.
- They can be very critical which often comes from critical parents.

7. The Shame –Fear-Control Stronghold

- It can become a vicious cycle that we can get stuck in. First, it starts with a lie – **shame** that “**this is who I am.**”
- Next we struggle with how to survive among others who might reject us which allows **fear** to intertwine with shame. If anyone finds out what we are really like, we will really be in trouble.
- This leads to **control** with its deceptive promise of protection and cover-up, “no one will ever find out how different or bad we really are.” If we are focused on controlling the situations in our lives, we may find it difficult to be teachable.
- This whole pattern of beliefs and actions can totally cover or mask our true identity in Christ. Instead, we go round and round in shame, fear, and trying to control our lives.

8. We must stop and dismantle this cycle in our lives!

- Begin to recognize and acknowledge the operation of shame/fear/control in your life. This is not meant to be part of a Christian's experience.
- There is no need to hide from God. He cares and wants to help you. The Holy Spirit will also help you walk free. Jesus is not ashamed of you. (Heb. 2:11, 1 Pet. 2:6)
- Expose and repent for living out of lies and false identities.
- Repent and renounce each area where you see the false identity working in you.
- Break any covenant agreement with the enemy.
- Ask the Lord to show you your true identity “in Him!” The best cure for shame is focusing on your relationship with Father God. God does the work when we hang out with Him. (Eph. 2:6-7)
- As you walk through the process of destroying the shame/fear/control identity and mindset, the things that have masked your true identity begin to shrink. You begin to see yourself more and more like God does! Note the diagram below:

The following diagram has two columns – one with **False Identities** and the other with **True Identities**. Look at the lists below and see which false identities you have. Renounce each one and receive your true identity from God. There may be negative words or concepts which you have identified with or said about yourself in the past that are not listed. Make a list of what the Holy Spirit shows you. Renounce each of these and receive the opposite of what you have written, which is your true identity. Stay focused and do not rush through this process. When Satan comes against you with lies about who you really are, you can speak your real identity and change the image you have of yourself.

Contrast False and True Identity Beliefs			
False Identity	True Identity	False Identity	True Identity
Abandoned	God’s Adopted One	Mistake, Illegitimate	Planned and Purposed
Bad	Righteous	Prideful	Meek and Mild
Basket-case	Stable, Sure	Perfectionist	Person of Excellence
Boundary-less	Boundary Setter	Procrastinator	Timely, Responsible
Burden	Blessing	Passive	Assertive
Burned out	Energetic, Anointed	Rebellious	Obedient, Submitted
Compulsive	Content	Rejected	Accepted, Loved by God
Controlling	Spirit Led	Seducer	Pure, Holy, Godly
Defective	Complete, whole	Shameful	Unashamed, Honorable
Deceptive, Liar	Truthful, Honest	Self-sufficient	Dependent on God
Defeated	Victorious	Tormented	Peaceful
Double Minded	Single Minded	Trouble Maker	Peace Maker
Dumb, Stupid	Wise, Christ Minded	Unimportant	Special
Fearful	Full of Faith	Unworthy, Worthless	Worthy, Priceless
Failure, Loser	Success, Overcomer	Uncaring, Cold, Frigid	Caring, Warm, Loving
Guilty	Forgiven	Unlovable, Unloved	Lovable, Loved
Irresponsible	Responsible	Unclean, Impure	Clean, Pure
Inadequate	Well Equipped	Undisciplined	Disciplined Disciple
Man Pleaser	God Pleaser	Unfulfilled	Fulfilled in Christ
Misunderstood	Understood	Victim, trapped	Overcomer, Free
Self-sufficient	Sufficiency in Christ	Independent	Dependent on God
Defensive	Open, Honest	Hopeless	Hopeful in Christ
Expect Punishment	Expect Grace	Poor, Lacking	Rich, abundance in God

Lesson 3B - The Power of Rejection

God Does not Reject Us

“All whom My Father gives (entrusts) to Me will come to Me; and the one who comes to Me I will most certainly not cast out (**I will never, no never, reject one of them who comes to Me.**) (**John 6:37 Amp.**)

- From the beginning, God has not been the one doing the rejecting.
- Man **rejected** “an image or a caricature of God” that Satan created and got them to believe something other than who the true God is. Satan got Adam and Eve and us to think God is good, but He is also cheap, kept the best for Himself and left them without provision. Thus they questioned His words in the garden.
- The seed of rejection and thus the root of rejection have been with mankind for centuries. There are many verses in the Bible that speak of man rejecting God and His commandments. (**1 Sam. 8:7, Hos. 4:6, Mark 7:9**)
- God does not condemn or reject us. He sees us “in Christ” and fully accepts us. (**John 3:18, Col. 1:21-22**) God desires that we be rooted and grounded in His love, knowing our acceptance “in Him” and becoming a tree of righteousness. (**Isa. 61:3**)
- God wants us to get our value, our self-worth, and our significance from Him. But if we do not look to Him, we will try to find significance from other people and things.

The Enemy’s Plan

- He got Adam and Eve to question God’s love, goodness, and His words from the beginning. Is God really good? Does He really accept and love me? If we don’t believe God loves and accepts us, the enemy uses dissatisfaction in situations of life over and over to develop a tree a rejection.
- **Rejection is the act of casting aside or throwing away as having no value, forsaking, and refusal to accept another.**
- Rejection is a form of communication. “It says someone is unsatisfactory to us or he or she doesn’t measure up to the standard we have created or adopted. It communicates disrespect, low value, and lack of appreciation.”
- “Rejection is seen when someone has an outburst of anger, a disgusted look, an impatient answer or a social snub.”
- Rejection usually starts in childhood through physical, verbal and peer rejection, abandonment and other ways.
- The root of rejection has a hold on every person. Satan plants the seed of the past repeating itself which is the “**Here we go again syndrome.**” He never brings up the good, only every hurt, negative situation or negative word spoken. The roots of rejection grow deeper and deeper until the person feels they cannot get out of that place.

Causes of Rejection:

1. Unwanted conception – wrong time so they feel that they are a burden or health issues for mother
2. Wrong sex or adoption
3. Abandoned in relationship- neglect as parents working all the time or military demands
4. Part of an abusive situation
5. Parent is alcoholic, has some form of mental illness, or early death of a parent.
6. Compared to another sibling
7. Peer rejection as a child – compared to other children or kids who say hateful things
8. Strife in the Home
9. Martial rejection – divorce
10. Job loss
11. Chronic illness or a parent in the hospital

- All of these often cause responses of **inferiority, poor self-esteem, guilt, distrust, judgmentalism, hardness of heart, disrespect, rebellion, anger, bitterness, competition,** etc.
- The tendency to be **people pleasers** is increased. We become more concerned about what others think about us. Thus the **fear of man** comes also.
- Rejection can result in **isolation**. You may develop a **pattern of withdrawing or declining most everything** fearing love will be withheld.
- **Perfectionism** may also occur. We feel good about ourselves through our good works.
- We exercise **manipulation and control** to influence, restrain, regulate, or try and prevent someone or something from happening.
- It may result in **depression** which is a deep sense of loss or repressed pent-up anger. Anger that is not dealt with leads to dulled emotions and a dulled sense of purpose.
- Our **perception, how we see things, is based on the past**. We may not see things clearly. One person may experience deep rejection and another has many small rejections, but either way their experiences influence their perceptions.
- Rejection can **cause us to not be willing to receive God's grace**. We feel we do not deserve it. Many times rejection is subtle and we do not realize it is coming in.

Rejection Protection Patterns

- Rejection is painful because it **affects our emotions**. We spend more time protecting our hearts than our physical bodies. We create walls to protect ourselves from emotional rejection.
- We often have something happen such as rejection, trauma, or abuse, which becomes all we can see. Then we think God's plan has changed for us and we cannot be what God called us to be. We've messed up too much.

- We develop wrong beliefs (lies) about ourselves or others that trigger painful emotions. Next we try to medicate ourselves by eating, alcohol, anger, self-pity and other walls.
- **Pretense** – We actually become somebody else because if people knew the real us they would not love us. If there are extremes in your life, you are probably not content with who you are. (such as being a braggart versus not motivated or overbearing versus withdrawn or shy) These behaviors can be traced back to a lie that we have believed.
- We may **pretend we do not care** even when someone's behavior bothers us. Instead we shut off our feelings to that person. Nothing is happening on the outside, but inside resentment may start building up. We may think we are walking in love, but we are pretending.
- We may make **inner vows or promises to ourselves**. (I won't let anyone get close to me or they will hurt me or leave me. My life is out of control but I can control what I eat.)
- We go into **self-defense**. We play games to defend ourselves such as: Get them before they can get you, explode and they will stay away, blame game, change the rules of the game, I am in control etc. We may try verbal defense by trying to convince others we are right. We make excuses for poor behavior.
- We may also **buy protection**. You bless others so others will love you by acts of service, gifts, or calling them all the time.
- We never get to rest or relax if we have to guard our walls all the time. We should have boundaries to guard our heart, not walls. If we have thick walls of protection, our kids will feel the same thing and pick up the rejection too.
- It is time to ask the Lord to show you where the walls are in your heart. We can have walls up to the point that things that should hurt us don't. We may need others to help us see that what happened should have hurt. It is a process to trust God to protect you rather than yourself!

Fear of Man

1. **Fear of man and the fear of rejection** are the same thing. Fear of man is:
 - ✓ Fear of losing other's approval
 - ✓ Fear of being lonely
 - ✓ Fear of being talked about or made fun of
 - ✓ Fear of what people will say or think about us
 - ✓ Fear of not belonging or fitting in and more
2. It causes us to be **man-pleasers rather than God-pleasers**. We want others to like us, accept us and not reject us.
 - ✓ Always remaking yourself to please someone else or fit into a certain group of people.
 - ✓ It sets up an earning mentality – thinking we must earn others love and affection.
 - ✓ We may be shy and easily manipulated or sensitive to criticism and react defensively.
 - ✓ May be **hypersensitive to what other people or strangers think** about us - feeling rejected wherever they go.

- ✓ We may be afraid of our emotions and not allow our self to be sensitive to others or our self. We **approach life as an actor in a play**, fulfilling a role, but no ability to have fellowship and intimacy.
3. We must control others or let them control us to get them to love us. Control can be so normal that you don't see it.
 - ✓ Everything you say or do is based on someone else's opinion or their expected reaction to you.
 - ✓ If you allow others to control you, you can get into an earning mentality. Our society is caught up in this. You can then transfer that into earning God's love, grace, righteousness, etc.
 - ✓ If you let others define who you are, then you can be like a puppy on a leash that can be jerked one way or another. You are more concerned about what others think of you than God.
 - ✓ These people are really very insecure and view lack of control as an unacceptable threat.
 4. When you operate your life through the filter of rejection, you will always think the worst!
 - ✓ Excuses will keep you in bondage – "God knows this is the way I am." But that is not how God made you.
 - ✓ Fear may cause us to run away from a situation or a person, but we take our fear with us and our fears are pushed deeper. We may feel good for a time, but fear is still there.
 - ✓ If Satan can keep us in our past, he can keep us in our fear. The greatest fear is the fear of the past repeating itself.
 - ✓ Satan will launch an attack in the area where we are most vulnerable – those closest to us.

Removing Rejection

1. The pain must get so great that the risk of change is better than where I am!
2. Be willing to **ask the Lord to show you walls or patterns where you have tried to protect yourself from rejection in your life or where roots of rejection have grown.**
 - ✓ Ask forgiveness for believing the lies and renounce and come out of agreement with the devil.
 - ✓ Ask Father God to speak truth to you about how He sees you – images as well as words.
 - ✓ Look in God's Word and find verses that tell of His unconditional love and acceptance of you. Then renew your mind with those verses until you begin to think and act like they are true.
3. Rely on God to help you. Jesus was despised and rejected by men, so He understands how you feel. (**Isa. 53:3**) Ask Him to help you stop living to please others and focus on His acceptance of you just the way you are. (**Eph. 1:3-6**)
4. **Practice the presence of the Lord** and stop practicing the presence of the hurt and let the Lord heal all your wounds. Your past does not define your future.
5. Rest secure in God's love and expect to feel accepted and loved one day at a time! When you know you are fully pleasing to God, you do not have to be devastated when others respond to you in a negative way. Next you can sow seeds of love and acceptance in others so they do not feel rejected by you.