

In **2 Timothy 3**, the apostle Paul warns young Timothy that the end times will be especially dangerous because of the moral degeneration of mankind

“For men will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good,”

(2 Timothy 3:2–3, NKJV)

- And of course, this is the world in which we are now living

In the world, we now live it can be easy to feel defeated and overwhelmed yet the Bible shows us that through Jesus we are More than Conquerors

“Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us.”

Romans 8:37 NKJV

In this series, we will see how we can be over-comers and live in victory in every area of life!

The Apostle John says we have the capacity to overcome the world and everything that is the enemy of Christ

“For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world—our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?” **(1 John 5:4–5, NKJV)**

Overcoming Shame

“And they were both naked, the man and his wife, and were not ashamed.” (Genesis 2:25, NKJV)

- God creates us to be shameless
- He never has and never will use shame in your life
- God cannot function in an atmosphere of shame
- He cannot do what He wants to do in our lives when shame is present
- Everything God creates and everything God controls is shameless
- The paradise God created in the Garden of Eden was designed for shameless living

Where did shame come from?

“So when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desirable to make one wise, she took of its fruit and ate. She also gave to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings.”

(Genesis 3:6–7a, NKJV)

- Satan comes into the garden and does what he does
- He advertises
- He tries to make Adam and Eve believe that sin is the answer
- The instant they sin he administers shame

Every time there is a sin, a failure, a trauma, or a problem in your life, you can count on the devil to be there to administer shame

- The devil doesn't announce himself
- He uses stealth – after all, he is a serpent
- This is why God asks Adam, *“Who told you?”*...

Sin opened the door for Satan to whisper a lie to Adam and Eve's souls that would change the human race forever

“Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves coverings. And they heard the sound of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God among the trees of the garden. Then the LORD God called to Adam and said to him, “Where are you?” So he said, “I heard Your voice in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; and I hid myself.” And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you that you should not eat?” (Genesis 3:7–11, NKJV)

- God never asks a question to get the answer
- He asks the question so that we will get the answer
- Adam and Eve are completely unaware that the minute they sinned they opened a door to the devil

He immediately began whispering, *“You are defective. There is something wrong with you.”*

God created Adam and Eve to be naked

- There was nothing wrong with their nakedness; it was glorious and pure
- It was not nudity like we would think of it today
- They were covered with the glory of God
- God created them perfectly, with no need to hide from each other
- But when shame entered the picture everything changed
- Shame causes us to hide from each other and God

Shame always comes from the devil because he cannot operate in an atmosphere of shamelessness

How Shame Changes Us

Shame changes the way we see and think about ourselves

- When shame entered Adam and Eve it lowered their self-esteem and made them ashamed of who they were

Shame changes the way we interact with others and destroys our potential for healthy relationships

- Before shame, Adam and Eve were each other's helpmates
- They had intimacy with each other as well as God
- After shame, they hid from one another and God
- They hid from one another and accused each other

Shame changes the way we think about God and relate to Him

- Before shame, Adam and Eve walked with God intimately in the cool of the day
- After shame, they were afraid of Him and hid
- Shame changes everything about the human condition

A definition of shame

“a feeling of being inwardly flawed—of not measuring up.”
Shame says, There is just something wrong with me. Shame says God expects certain things of me to be acceptable. Maybe people expect things of me to be acceptable too, and I am stuck here and cannot get any higher.”

– Alan Wright, Free Yourself, Be Yourself

Here are some ways to recognize shame

- Having a fear of exposure and intimacy
- Never feeling like you do well enough; being driven by performance and perfectionism
- Being devastated by criticism
- Being overly critical of ourselves or others; having extremes of bitterness, rage, compliance, and needing to please people
- Being primarily motivated by what other people think
- Being primarily motivated by fear (fear of failure or fear of rejection) – Underperforming to avoid any risk
- Feeling self-hate and self-depreciation
- Measuring your value and others’ value by how well you or they perform

Jesus Wants to Take our Shame

The Day of Atonement

“Aaron shall offer the bull as a sin offering, which is for himself, and make atonement for himself and for his house. He shall take the two goats and present them before the LORD at the door of the tabernacle of meeting. Then Aaron shall cast lots for the two goats: one lot for the LORD and the other lot for the scapegoat. And Aaron shall bring the goat on which the LORD’s lot fell, and offer it as a sin offering. But the goat on which the lot fell to be the scapegoat shall be presented alive before the LORD, to make atonement upon it, and to let it go as the scapegoat into the wilderness.”

“And when he has made an end of atoning for the Holy Place, the tabernacle of meeting, and the altar, he shall bring the live goat. Aaron shall lay both his hands on the head of the live goat, confess over it all the iniquities of the children of Israel, and all their transgressions, concerning all their sins, putting them on the head of the goat, and shall send it away into the wilderness by the hand of a suitable man. The goat shall bear on itself all their iniquities to an uninhabited land; and he shall release the goat in the wilderness.” (Leviticus 16:6-10; 20–22, NKJV)

- This would happen every year under Mosaic Law
- God provided cleansing for sin with two goats because there are two elements to our sin
- Sin causes a separation between God and us
 - Sin creates shame on the inside of us that damages our self-image and our social and spiritual abilities

The Scapegoat Solves the Shame Problem

God did not want shame in Israel's camp just like He did not want shame in the Garden of Eden

- God cannot work and we cannot live in an environment of shame

The second goat was designated to be a visual symbol of the shame being taken out of the camp

- God has not only taken care of our sins but our shame as well
- It's one thing to know you are forgiven but another to know that we have no shame before God

Jesus is our scapegoat!

He not only takes away our sin He takes away our shame as well!

- He is the total solution for our sin
- Under the Old Covenant, this ceremony was needed every year
- It was only a covering for sin
- Jesus is our once-for-all-time scapegoat
- On the cross, He permanently removed our sin and shame
- God pronounced all our sins on Jesus and then sent Him "*outside the camp*" to bear our shame

"Therefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered outside the gate."

(Hebrews 13:12, NKJV)

“He is despised and rejected by men, A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. And we hid, as it were, our faces from Him; He was despised, and we did not esteem Him. Surely He has borne our griefs And carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.”

(Isaiah 53:3–6, NKJV)

- The scapegoat was the most despised animal on the face of the earth
- It had all of the sins of Israel pronounced or laid on it
- When Christ died on the cross every one of our sins was pronounced on Him
- He not only healed our sin but our shame as well

In the Garden of Eden, there was no shame but there was a tree with fruit that could not be eaten

- The punishment for eating the fruit was death and removal from the Garden

On a different Tree – the Cross Jesus bore our sin and shame outside the city of Jerusalem

- The fruit of this tree is available for all to eat
- The reward is eternal life and an entrance into the Father’s Kingdom

Five Steps to Overcoming Shame

Be Naked and Without Shame

“This is the message which we have heard from Him and declare to you, that God is light and in Him is no darkness at all. If we say that we have fellowship with Him, and walk in darkness, we lie and do not practice the truth. But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.” (1 John 1:5–10, NKJV)

- On the Cross Jesus was naked baring our shame
- We do not have to hide any longer
- We can be “*naked*” – we can be who we really are
- Jesus never had a problem with sinners
- He had a problem with religious people
- He never had a problem with someone honest about their sin
- He did have a problem with people who tried to hide who they were

Because Jesus removes all of our sins and shame we can live in the light, not be ashamed of being who we really are

Take Responsibility For Your Behavior

“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,”

(Romans 3:23, NKJV)

- We all sin
- We tend to cover it up, but God sees through us
- No matter how imperfect we are we must come boldly before the throne of Grace to get the help we need
- Don't let Satan put shame on you
- There is no power in shame
- There is no grace in shame
- There is no freedom in shame
- Shame is a prison that keeps us in the bondage of our sin

We must take responsibility for our behavior and stop blaming other people

- When Adam and Eve sinned, God comes to Adam and asks, *“Adam, what have you done?”*
- Adam said, *“Eve made me do it. It is that woman that You gave me. She is my problem.”*
- Eve replied, *“The devil made me do it.”*
- They blamed each other, God, and the devil

Yes, the devil did tempt Eve. Eve ate first and gave it to Adam, but Adam needed to be responsible for his sin

When we blame others, our friends, spouse, co-workers, our boss, the government, or even God for our sins we are looking for a scapegoat

- Many times, this is how we come to God
- But God will not accept it
- The only acceptable scapegoat under the New Covenant is Jesus Christ!

My sin is my problem, and God will help me if I will take responsibility and get honest about my behavior

“Let no one say when he is tempted, “I am tempted by God”; for God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does He Himself tempt anyone. But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.” (James 1:13–15, NKJV)

- Yes there is a tempter
- However, we decide to give into sin

We must *Confess* our sins as well as *Repent* for them

- It's one thing to admit our sin but another to turn away from it

“For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.” (2 Corinthians 7:10, NKJV)

Believe You Are Forgiven and Shame Has Been Removed

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

(1 John 1:9, NKJV)

- *Confess* means “*same word*” in the original language
- If we will say what God is saying about our behavior and tell the truth, He will take away our sins

“The LORD is merciful and gracious, Slow to anger, and abounding in mercy. He will not always strive with us, Nor will He keep His anger forever. He has not dealt with us according to our sins, Nor punished us according to our iniquities. For as the heavens are high above the earth, So great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father pities his children, So the LORD pities those who fear Him. For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.”

(Psalm 103:8–14, NKJV)

- As far as the east is from the west
- What a wonderful passage
- God has an ability that we don't; the ability to forget
- He removes our sin
- The shame is completely gone
- It's as if we have never sinned!

Fight Satan with the Blood and the Word

- The devil will attack you every time you do something wrong
- He will try to bring condemnation and shame to keep you away from God
- He wants to make you feel like a failure and keep you from relating to people in the right way

“There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.” (Romans 8:1, NKJV)

- There is no condemnation
- Scripture says that Jesus mentally battled against shame and won
- We must learn to take the word of God and fight Satan with it

“Then I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, “Now salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of His Christ have come, for the accuser of our brethren, who accused them before our God day and night, has been cast down. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb and by the word of their testimony, and they did not love their lives to the death.” (Revelation 12:10–11, NKJV)

- The blood of Jesus is what cancels our sins and defeats Satan
- Demonic spirits cannot stand Praise and worship or the mention of Jesus and His blood

Forgive Every Person Who Has Shamed or Hurt You

“And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.”

(Ephesians 4:32, NKJV)

“bearing with one another, and forgiving one another, if anyone has a complaint against another; even as Christ forgave you, so you also must do.” **(Colossians 3:13, NKJV)**

You may have been abused, raped, had something done to you, or been publicly embarrassed

- Someone may have used shame to try and control you or your behavior
- It could have been your parents
- It could have been a church
- It could have been somebody else

God will never administer more grace to us than we are willing to give away to other people

Keep Your Eyes On Jesus

“looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.” **(Hebrews 12:2, NKJV)**

- Jesus defeated shame once and for all
- He is our Scapegoat
- Now we can live free from the curse of shame for all of eternity