

Mark 7:24-30

New International Version

Jesus Honors a Syrophoenician Woman's Faith

²⁴ Jesus left that place and went to the vicinity of Tyre.^[a] He entered a house and did not want anyone to know it; yet he could not keep his presence secret. ²⁵ In fact, as soon as she heard about him, a woman whose little daughter was possessed by an impure spirit came and fell at his feet.

²⁶ The woman was a Greek, born in Syrian Phoenicia. She begged Jesus to drive the demon out of her daughter.

²⁷ "First let the children eat all they want," he told her, "for it is not right to take the children's bread and toss it to the dogs."

²⁸ "Lord," she replied, "even the dogs under the table eat the children's crumbs."

²⁹ Then he told her, "For such a reply, you may go; the demon has left your daughter."

³⁰ She went home and found her child lying on the bed, and the demon gone.

Genesis 2:18-25

New International Version

¹⁸ The Lord God said, "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."

¹⁹ Now the Lord God had formed out of the ground all the wild animals and all the birds in the sky. He brought them to the man to see what he would name them; and whatever the man called each living creature, that was its name. ²⁰ So the man gave names to all the livestock, the birds in the sky and all the wild animals.

But for Adam^[a] no suitable helper was found. ²¹ So the Lord God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man's ribs^[b] and then closed up the place with flesh. ²² Then the Lord God made a woman from the rib^[c] he had taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.

²³ The man said,

"This is now bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called 'woman,'
for she was taken out of man."

²⁴ That is why a man leaves his father and mother and is united to his wife, and they become one flesh.

²⁵ Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.



They felt no shame.

The Foo Fighters released a new album in 2020. The second track on that album was a song called “Shame, Shame”. It emanates from a dream that 14 year old Dave Grohl, the bands leader, had that he had carried all his life. The song includes the following words:

if you want to
I'll make you feel something real just to bother you
Now I got you Under my thumb like a drug, I will smother you
I'll be the one, be the moon, be the sun Be the rain in your
song, go put that record on
If you want to I'll be the one, be the tongue that will swallow
you
Shame, shame, shame, shame

Another season of loneliness
I found a reason and buried it
Beneath the mountain of emptiness

It's a dark record. It tells of a shame that smothers and
buries; that is almost addictive and which spoils even that

which is good – “the rain in our song”, and yet the shamed cannot escape.

This is not a worship song.

It may however be a song that captures the reality of life for many.

But its not a song of Genesis 2. Its not a song of God’s intention. “They felt no shame”.

According to the internet....

Shame is a discrete, basic emotion, described as a [moral](#) or [social emotion](#) that drives people to hide or deny their wrongdoings.

We see that of course in the Genesis narrative as it progresses. A snake. Some fruit. A decision. And suddenly they are stuttering, blaming, lying and shaming one another before God. For they had rebelled and given in to the temptation to want to be like the almighty rather than live in perfection with him.

The focus of shame is on the self or the individual with respect to a perceived audience.

Adam and Eve, before that choice only have reference to each other, equal partners in paradise, and reference to God. They lived together. Until Eve and Adam lost their innocence, asked the question, broke the rule, and now they knew not the pure presence of God but his disappointment. They were no longer in tune with their audience and they looked at themselves and did not like what they saw.

Shame can also be described as an unpleasant self-conscious emotion that involves negative evaluation of the self.

So shame is about how we perceive ourselves as much as how we are perceived. I spoke to someone recently who had many regrets about their life and the hurts that they had caused. My prayer for them was that they could receive forgiveness from God, so that they could forgive themselves.

Shame can be a painful emotion that is seen as a "...comparison of the self's action with the self's standards..." but may equally stem from comparison of the self's state of being with the ideal social context's standard.

How do you measure yourself? Is it against what you would like to be? What you think others would like you to be? What the world has held up as perfection? Or what God tells you that you are? God smiles on the smallest act or thought or prayer that brings you closer to him.

"The Lord does not look at the things people look at. People look at the outward appearance, but the Lord looks at the heart." (1 Sam 16:7) yet "circumcision is circumcision of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the written code. Such a person's praise is not from other people, but from God." (Rom 2:29)

The praise you seek is the praise of God and the source of that praise is the surgery God does to the human heart by the transformation by his Spirit. And God looks at the heart he has transformed and praises the person. All we have to do is let him!

"To shame" generally means to actively assign or communicate a state of shame to another person. Behaviors designed to "uncover" or "expose" others are sometimes used to place shame on the other person.

²¹ The eye cannot say to the hand, "I don't need you!" And the head cannot say to the feet, "I don't need you!" ²² On the contrary, those parts of the body that seem to be weaker are indispensable, ²³ and the parts that we think are less honorable we treat with special honor. And the parts that are unpresentable are treated with special modesty, ²⁴ while our presentable parts need no special treatment. But God has put the body together, giving greater honor to the parts that lacked it, ²⁵ so that there should be no division in the body, but that its parts should have equal concern for each other. ²⁶ If one part suffers, every part suffers with it; if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it. (1 Cor 12:21-26)

So what of shaming others. Making people feel self conscious or unworthy? Paul says this has no place in the body of Christ. The less honourable gets special honour? Who says what is honourable? Well even if the world does we welcome and uphold them with special honour. People not like us are *our people* in the body of Christ because *"parts (of the body) have equal concern for each other"*. And what we have in common is being in Christ.

In contrast to having shame is to have no shame; behave without the restraint to offend others, similar to other emotions like pride.

²³ *for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,”* No one can claim a special privilege or status or place. We are all sinners. Yet all are equally valued and receive the gift of grace if they will receive it “²⁴ *and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.”* (Rom 3:23-24) There is no place for pride or an attitude that all that sin stuff doesn’t apply to me, to have no shame before the Lord. As James wrote “*“God opposes the **proud** but shows favor to the humble.”* (James 4:6)

Shame is a self-punishing acknowledgment of something gone wrong. ...Studies of shame showed that when ashamed people feel that their entire self is worthless, powerless, and small, they also feel exposed to an audience—real or imagined—that exists purely for the purpose of confirming that the self is worthless.

When we feel ashamed we can become acutely aware of the internal struggle with what we have done, or believe we have done or that we do not match up to some standard. We can be equally aware of a perception that others think the same of us. In fact what we think people are thinking becomes what we think of ourselves – whether they think this or not!

In the great hymn Be thou my Vision we find these words:

*Be thou my vision, O Lord of my heart
Naught be all else to me, save that thou art
Thou my best thought, by day or by night
Waking or sleeping, thy presence my light*

*Riches I heed not, nor vain, empty praise
Thou mine inheritance, now and always
Thou and thou only first in my heart
High King of heaven, my treasure thou art*

Jesus taught that his ministry was to set people free from shame and oppression “³¹ To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, “If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. ³² Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”...”, “Very truly I tell you, everyone who sins is a slave to sin....So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed. ³

The only riches to heed are the riches of the truth – Jesus – the way, the truth and the life. For they will set you free. Just as the woman was set free from the demon for her commitment to the Son. She spoke the truth to his power, he saw her faith. He released her from bondage.

Shame, devaluation and their interrelationship are similar across cultures, prompting some researchers to suggest that there is a universal human psychology of cultural valuation and devaluation.[\[10\]](#)

Shame is a universal thing. It is not how God intended it, in the beginning.

They felt no shame.

God releases people from shame through his son. All you need to do is receive his release, listen to his voice that says “you are mine, follow me”.

Unworthy by nature, worthy by grace.

You feel no shame.

Lets pray....