



The Kingdom Perspective

Shame and Personal Growth

Hello, this is Pastor Don Willeman of Christ Redeemer Church. Welcome to The Kingdom Perspective.

Fear has the power to constrain. Bad fear, that is fear not rooted in the fear of God, will constrain you from growing as a person. It will stunt your emotional, spiritual and relational development. Actually, depending on the nature of the fear, it may even stunt other aspects of your development. For example, some studies suggest that an obsessive fear of allergens, such as avoiding peanuts, can actually leave you more susceptible to developing a peanut allergy (see: <https://directorsblog.nih.gov/2017/01/10/peanut-allergy-early-exposure-is-key-to-prevention/>)

Succumbing to shame will stunt your personal growth. In order to overcome our fear of shame, we have to face it. The only way to overcome shame is to carefully walk into it and through it—to face the vulnerability of shame.

But how can we do that, when our fear of shame so cripples us?

The popular academic sociologist Brené Brown has made a career out of addressing this troublesome issue of shame.

She says: “Shame cannot survive being spoken. It cannot tolerate having words wrapped around it. What it craves is secrecy, silence, and judgment. If you stay quiet, you stay in a lot of self-judgment.”

This is precisely why God comes to us in the gospel, the “good word”. God does not keep quiet in the face of our shame. He speaks to us tenderly, but truthfully. In Christ, God confronts our shame by placing it on Himself on the cross for all to see, and thus condemning it to the grave.

He wraps our shame in the Good Word of His Son Jesus Christ. Listen to prophet Isaiah (53):

He was despised and rejected by men,
a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief
[Yet] Surely he has borne our griefs
and carried our sorrows;
yet we esteemed him stricken,
smitten by God, and afflicted.
...and with his wounds we are healed. (Isaiah 53:3, 4 and 5)

“Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away” our sin and shame (John 1)!

Something to think about from The Kingdom Perspective.

“Then the Lord God said, ‘It is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.’ Now out of the ground the Lord God had formed every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens and brought them to the man to see what he would call them. And whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name. The man gave names to all livestock and to the birds of the heavens and to every beast of the field. But for Adam there was not found a helper fit for him. So the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and while he slept took one of his ribs and closed up its place with flesh. And the rib that the Lord God had taken from the man he made into a woman and brought her to the man. Then the man said,

“This at last is bone of my bones
and flesh of my flesh;
she shall be called Woman,
because she was taken out of Man.”

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Therefore a man shall leave his father and his mother and hold fast to his wife, and they shall become one flesh. And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.”

~ **Genesis 2:18-25 (ESV)**

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