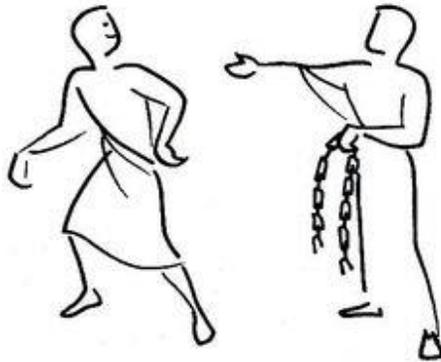


Name \_\_\_\_\_

# OVERCOME

*Offenses*      *Shame*      *Labels*



CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH  
2021

## Introduction to the series: *Overcome*

Have you noticed how holidays tend to magnify things? Good times are better and bad times are worse. Unfortunately, hurtful feelings from the past can also pop up and be magnified – feelings over incidents or relationships that you maybe wish never happened. Feelings of being offended. Feelings of shame. Feelings of being labeled by past, or even present, events. To truly live in Christ as a new creation, these are all feelings we must *overcome*.

To do this, we must not allow these feelings to define or control us. Instead, we need to focus on who Jesus is, what He has done for us, and how He has labeled us. Let's throw off the old, welcome the new, and help others struggling with the same feelings.

### Introduction To The 4G Guide

#### *GATHER – GOD – GROUP – GIVE*

It's important that we *GATHER* each week as a church family. Still, God has so much more for us! He wants us to take what He's teaching and apply it to our lives. This is the heart of the 4G Guides. These guides are written to encourage you in your personal *GOD TIME* and in your small *GROUPS*. They are designed to help you understand what God is teaching and apply it to your daily life. Understanding and application allows you to then take what God is teaching and *GIVE* it to others.

Unless otherwise indicated, all scripture references are from the *Christian Standard Bible* (CSB Text Edition: 2020).



## USING THE 4G GUIDE

Each week is divided into four sections:



### Gear Up

Each week starts with the Gear Up section. This section introduces the weekly topic and expounds on Scripture. Also provided are some practical steps to putting the subject matter into practice.



### God Time

Personal time with God is vital to the Christian walk. Five daily devotionals are provided for each week's topic. This is your one-on-one time in a guided devotional format. At the conclusion, we encourage you to pray, seeking direction for the day and the rest of the week.



### Group Time

We learn from one another! In small groups we meet to dig deeper into the weekly material. This booklet contains lesson outlines for discipleship discussion. For more information on available groups and forming a group, go to our Groups webpage:

[cbcfamily.net/groups](http://cbcfamily.net/groups).



### Family Group Time

Family worship glorifies God. Each week we have simple devotionals just for Families. Plan ahead though, as many of these lessons include fun experiments or video shorts to discuss.



## Gear Up: Overcome Offenses

**We live in a world where people are easily offended.**

In some circumstances, being easily offended is even celebrated. It's as if some people are on the lookout, waiting for the smallest offense so they can pounce on the person who said or did the "wrong" thing.

**This is destructive and not the way Christians should be.** Yet sadly, sometimes we behave this way, and sometimes it's toward our friends and family. While it can be a response from very real hurts, many times it isn't. Either way, we must learn to overcome offenses. But how? Thankfully, this isn't new; the Bible, written so long ago, offers help.

### Don't "Live Offended"

**Life is too short, and our calling is too great, to "live offended!"** God calls us into a relationship with Him and others, and we must submit to living in a way that honors Him. This means that we align with His way of thinking. So, like Him, we value relationships. In other words, we will seek to preserve and nurture relationships with family and friends. Living in a constant state of being offended destroys relationships!

**Read in Proverbs 18:19.**

*<sup>19</sup>A brother wronged is more unyielding than a fortified city; disputes are like the barred gates of a citadel.*

**Instead of living ready to be offended,** we need to overlook offenses. This doesn't mean pretending that hurtful things don't affect us, or glossing over abusive behaviors, but it does mean that we need to be prepared to forgive. This may mean shrugging off small things, or it may mean addressing weightier things with a mindset of reconciliation and conflict resolution. Either way, we can't let the offense define us or take control of our emotions. No, we are accountable to God for our own actions; others are accountable to Him for theirs.

## Overcome Being Easily Offended

**Christians are called to love others like Christ loves us.** This means that we need to be patient and forgive others, offering them the same type of forgiveness He gives us.

**Often, we judge others by their actions while we judge ourselves by our intentions.** Let that sink in! When we do this, we are living in such a way that stands ready to be offended. Instead, we must forgive others and remember how much God has forgiven us. Sometimes we just need to stop and ask ourselves, "Is the way I am reacting to others the way I'd want God to react to me?"

**Read Ephesians 4:1-2.**

*<sup>1</sup>Therefore I, the prisoner in the Lord, urge you to walk worthy of the calling you have received, <sup>2</sup>with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love.*

### Overcome the Big Offenses

**As Believers, we want to glorify God through our forgiveness.** This is admittedly hard when the offenses are big! And it doesn't mean that we have to reconcile, since reconciliation is only possible when both parties repent and work to restore trust. But forgiveness *does mean* that we let go of offenses in order for us to obey God and to heal.

**Read Colossians 3:12-13**

*<sup>12</sup>Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and dearly loved, put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, <sup>13</sup>bearing with one another and forgiving one another if anyone has a grievance against another. Just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you are also to forgive.*

**Remember, life is too short, and our calling is too great to live offended.** Forgive like Christ, overcome, and heal!

## WEEK 1 – OVERCOME OFFENSES

### God Time Day 1: People Are Easily Offended



We live in a world where people are easily offended. There is no shortage of voices crying out, complaining about one offense or another. In some ways, media feeds off of people being offended. Unfortunately, while being offended seems so prevalent in our culture, it is nothing new. Being offended was even addressed in the Bible.



Read from Proverbs 18:1-2.

<sup>1</sup> *An unfriendly person pursues selfish ends and against all sound judgment starts quarrels.* <sup>2</sup> *Fools find no pleasure in understanding but delight in airing their own opinions.*

Circle the words “*selfish ends*” in verse 1.

Underline the result of those selfish ends.



In verse 2, what is considered foolish behavior?

\_\_\_\_\_

What is considered wise behavior? \_\_\_\_\_

How could you be more “*understanding*?”

### God Time Day 2: Life Is Short



Read in Proverbs 18:19.

<sup>19</sup> *A brother wronged is more unyielding than a fortified city; disputes are like the barred gates of a citadel.*



The most dangerous impact of getting offended is that it destroys relationships. How does the verse above describe someone who has been “*wronged*” or offended?

\_\_\_\_\_

You might recall from yesterday, in Proverbs 18:2, that it is foolish behavior to seek only your opinion and to ignore the pursuit of understanding. Far too often, we are offended and allow that hurt to push us into burning a relationship to the ground. This is a serious problem. Why? Because people are important and valuable. When we allow getting offended to control us, it divides people.



Read and memorize Matthew 22:36-40. Share it.

### God Time Day 3: Your Calling Is Great

Reread Proverbs 18:1-2 and 19 from Days 1 and 2.



Looking back at these verses, we can see how destructive it is when we allow getting offended to divide us and build walls between us. It is important for us to understand how to overcome getting offended because people are important.



Read Proverbs 19:11.

*A person’s insight gives him patience, and his virtue is to overlook an offense.*

Circle the word “*insight*” in this verse.



What kinds of “*insight*” do you think might allow us to be more patient with others?

\_\_\_\_\_

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It begins with having insight into ourselves. When we are honest about our own brokenness, flaws, and mistakes, it allows us to have insight into the brokenness of others. Then we are far more inclined to show patience and compassion towards those who have offended us.

Reread the verse above and draw a box around the words “*overlook an offense.*”

Insight produces patience, and patience allows us to *overlook an offense*. This does not mean to ignore, forget, or pretend it did not happen. Rather, it means to forgive the person and not to allow the offense to become how you define that other person. Overlooking an offense also means not allowing that experience of offense to define your life either.



Write down two behaviors that people do that offend you.

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

Now take time to reflect on your own life. Are these offenses present in your own life, perhaps in a different form? (If you are not sure, ask the people closest to you.)

## WEEK 1 – OVERCOME OFFENSES

### God Time Day 4: God Help Us – Get Over Being Easily Offended



Read Ephesians 4:1-2.

<sup>1</sup> Therefore I, the prisoner in the Lord, urge you to walk worthy of the calling you have received, <sup>2</sup> with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love.

We have been called to something bigger and greater than this world has to offer. The world is full of people who are hurting. Those hurting people, in turn, hurt others out of bitterness or apathy, creating an ever-growing cycle of pain and turmoil. The cycle only stops when we choose to stop it. And God already took the first step.



Read 1 John 4:19.

*We love because He first loved us.*

God is the ultimate example, and we see that in the life and redemption we have in Jesus. After all, God forgave us despite all our sins. Consider all the ways in which we sin against (offend) God. Imagine: what if God reacted to those offenses the same way we react to others offending us?

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What if God pushed us away when we offend Him, just like we tend to push people away when they offend us?

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WE JUDGE OTHERS BY THEIR ACTIONS WHILE  
WE JUDGE OURSELVES BY OUR INTENTIONS.

We know our own intentions, but we tend to imagine the worst of intentions when offended by others and how it makes us feel.

Everyone was made in the Image of God; every person is valuable and worthy of love. Keeping in mind God's love and forgiveness for us helps us to find that place of love and forgiveness for others.



Recall a time when someone offended you. Instead of getting upset, what is something you could have done to show them God's love? What is something you can do to show them God's love this week?

### God Time Day 5: God Help Us – Get Over the Big Offenses



Read Colossians 3:12-13

<sup>12</sup> Therefore, as God's chosen ones, holy and dearly loved, put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, <sup>13</sup> bearing with one another and forgiving one another if anyone has a grievance against another. Just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you are also to forgive.

Underline the words that describe the qualities of God's chosen people.

Notice that the words used to describe God's people are mostly connected to how we treat others. The reason for this is because we have been called to share God's love with others, but we must be able to forgive to do that.

It is an unfortunate truth that we live in a fallen world. We will experience pain and loss. Some offenses are relatively small, while others can lead to significant traumas. Either way, we have a choice to make. Either we allow it to consume us, or through God's strength, we release it.

Forgiveness does not mean that our pain is any less real or legitimate. It does not mean that we ignore how we have been hurt or pretend as if nothing happened. But forgiveness does mean letting go of the hurt to allow our wounds to heal.



Reread Colossians 3:13 above and circle the words "bearing with one another."

Forgiveness and healing can be difficult, and at times, we need others to help us through that process, whether it be trusted friends or even professional counselors. There is nothing wrong with asking for help.



Is there a big offense in your life that you are still feeling pain from? Who can you share this with?

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If you think you need some professional assistance, go to this page on our website: [cbcfamily.net/health](http://cbcfamily.net/health)

In the end, life is too short, and our calling is too great to live offended.

**Group Time**

◀◀◀ **LOOK BACK:**



1. Each participant shares one praise and one prayer request. (Commit these to prayer for the coming week.)

2. ENCOURAGEMENT 1-on-1 (See last page for directions)

Y / N	Y / N	_____
_____	_____	

3. Starting a new series.



What do you hope to gain from this series?

▲▲▲ **LOOK UP:**

**Question:** Finish this old saying: *“Sticks and stones may break my bones, but ...”* What was it supposed to teach us? Have you used it to teach others (ex: children)?

We live in a world where people are easily offended – to the point where being offended is often celebrated and encouraged. Technology has made it even easier through avenues like social media. Unfortunately, we often seek out offenses from those who should be closest to us. The holidays can often be confrontational with relatives and friends, from tiny to big offenses.

But life is too short for such things to dissuade us from our calling. As Christians, we are to be the first to forgive, and seek forgiveness. People who are hurting often lash out to hurt others. Therefore, we need to ask ourselves, “What are they going through – why are they hurting? How can I help them – shouldn’t I at least pray for them?”

**LOOK IN: Discussion**

- Look at this statement: *“We judge others by their actions while we judge ourselves by our intentions.”*
  - Have others done this to you?
  - Have you done this to others?

- Recall someone you know who became consumed by an offense.
- Recall someone you know who was able to love an offender.

▶▶▶ **LOOK FORWARD: Application**

**Point:** *Your life is too short, and your calling is too great to live offended.*

**Find A Way To Get Over It And Get To Work.**

Read Colossians 3:12-13

*<sup>12</sup> Therefore, as God’s chosen ones, holy and dearly loved, put on compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience, <sup>13</sup> bearing with one another and forgiving one another if anyone has a grievance against another. Just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you are also to forgive.*

**Forgiveness** does not necessarily mean trust or reconciliation. Forgiveness means letting go, the offence doesn’t control you anymore.

Is there an offense that has been controlling you or a relationship? How will you forgive them with God’s help? Make a plan. Ask for help from other believers. (If you think you need some professional assistance, go to this page on our website: [cbcfamily.net/health](http://cbcfamily.net/health).)

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**Reconciliation** is when one or both parties repent, make right, and live different. Then you both can work on restoring trust.

Is there someone who feels you’ve offended them – even if you view it as a “perceived” offense?

How can you “make” the first step towards reconciliation?

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*While we should seek reconciliation, we must forgive. Pray for one another to follow the example God gave to us through His son.*



## Family Time

Main Idea:

### Life Is Too Short To Live Offended



#### Key Verse: 1 Peter 4:8

*Above all, maintain constant love for one another, since love covers a multitude of sins.*

**Ask:** Have you ever been offended at something someone did or said? As you watch this week's video, pay special attention to the ways that Joseph's family got offended by things he said or did.



#### Watch: Week 1 Video



**Talk about it:** What is one way that the family got offended? Spend some time on this question, as there will be many ideas that can be shared.

It can be very easy to be offended by something that someone says or by something that they do to you. What does our key verse say we should do when someone offends us?

What are ways we can show love to someone when they have offended us?

What are ways that Joseph's brothers could have "not" been offended by what Joseph said?

This week we are going to work on ways we can show love to one another. To practice this, check out our family activity.



#### Family Activity:

The goal of this activity is to help kids see the importance of identifying the good in others and being able to forgive others, especially their siblings.

Have one person from the family stand across the room from another person in the family. Set a timer for two minutes and ask one of the family members to share something good about the person across from them. After they share, they will take one step toward the other. Then the other person will take their turn. Keep this going until either the time runs out or they reach each other (and maybe give each other a hug ;-).

You can do this multiple times with different family members. After you have finished this activity, re-read the key verse and remind everyone that we are to love each other even when we might not want to.



### Gear Up: Overcome Shame-Based Thinking

**Shame-based thinking is harmful.** Many people struggle with either living in a destructive state of shame that is damaging to themselves and their relationships. How do we overcome this?

**First, we need to know what shame is,** and how it is different from guilt. Guilt is the violation of a standard or law, or the feeling that accompanies that violation. Shame is a loss of honor, or the feeling of lost honor.

**Sadly, many of us live “stuck” in shame.** What sociologists call “felt shame” can keep us locked into the lie that we have to live up to others’ expectations or be perfect. This will prohibit our growth, change, and healing. Many, many times, people have the feeling of shame when they never even incurred guilt in the first place— meaning they never violated any standard. For example, we’ve all met the person who doesn’t feel like they’re not worth much or live in constant fear of failure. This way of thinking must be overcome! Yet without a sense of *shamelessness* which disregards God and others. What is the healthy, scriptural approach?

**Read Isaiah 50:7,** *The Lord GOD will help me; therefore I have not been humiliated; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame.*

**Read Isaiah 54:4a,** *Do not be afraid, for you will not be put to shame; don’t be humiliated, for you will not be disgraced. For you will forget the shame of your youth...*

#### There Is No Shame in Jesus Christ

**Regardless of the cause of shame-based thinking, God offers restoration.** If our shame is a result of incurred guilt, once we repent, we are forgiven and cleansed. And if our shame is just leftover from past sins or hurts, (as in, “I am a bad person because of this or that”) understanding both our

position of forgiveness in Christ and our identity in Him is crucial to moving forward.

#### Read 1 John 1:9

*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

#### Read 2 Corinthians 5:17

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!*

#### Read Romans 8:1

*Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus.*

#### Know Who God Says You Are

**An excellent way to overcome shame-based thinking** is to learn who God says you are. (You can look up the verses on page 17 of this guide to learn about your identity in Christ.) When we know who we are in Him, we are set free from the shame-inducing lies of Satan and others, and even lies that we try to convince ourselves to believe.

#### Move the Focus to Who Jesus Is

**Another way to overcome shame-based thinking is to focus on Jesus!** When we begin to think more of Him and less about ourselves, we are set free from the weight of shame that traps us in “me-centered” thinking. We can recenter our thoughts on Jesus in very practical ways like reading His Word, worshiping along to praise music, serving others in His name, praying Scripture, or keeping a gratitude journal. Don’t get stuck in shame-based thinking! There is no shame in Jesus, so know who you are in Him, and move your focus to who He is.

WEEK 2 – OVERCOME SHAME

God Time Day 1: Shame Versus Guilt



As we learned last week, God helps us overcome offenses. He also helps us overcome shame.

Shame is a painful feeling of humiliation that usually results from doing something that shouldn't have been done. Shame often focuses on self. (As in, "I am bad...")

Guilt is a recognition that something was done that shouldn't have. Guilt focuses on the action. (As in, "I did something bad...") The Bible calls this type of feeling "godly grief."



Read 2 Corinthians 7:10  
*For godly grief [recognition of guilt] produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, but worldly grief produces death.*



Think about this verse. What feelings of shame or guilt do you need to deal with? Pray that God will help you change your thoughts and behaviors throughout this series.

God Time Day 2: Identifying Shame-Based Thinking



Read Isaiah 50:7  
*The Lord GOD will help me; therefore I have not been humiliated; therefore I have set my face like flint, and I know I will not be put to shame.*

Underline the first six words of the verse and the last seven.

Shame-based thinking follows at least three patterns:

First We think we must be perfect to make up for our failures.

Second We attempt to shift the focus onto others' faults.

Third We expect the worst, which validates our fears when things don't go right.



What are the opposites of these patterns?

First \_\_\_\_\_

Second \_\_\_\_\_

Third \_\_\_\_\_

How can you begin to put these opposites to practice today?

\_\_\_\_\_

God Time Day 3: There Is No Shame in Jesus



Like we talked about on Day 1 of this week, guilt helps us to recognize that something was done that shouldn't have been done. It sets the focus on the action. Therefore, feelings of guilt can be very helpful.



Read Isaiah 54:4a  
*Do not be afraid, for you will not be put to shame; don't be humiliated, for you will not be disgraced. For you will forget the shame of your youth...*

Underline all the negative feelings in the passage above.

According to the verse, what actions should accompany those feelings?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

The verse above was written before Christ, but they point to Christian truth. Read the verses below, circling anything that stands out:



Read 1 John 1:9  
*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

Read 2 Corinthians 5:17  
*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!*

Read Psalm 103:12  
*As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.*

Read Romans 8:1  
*Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those in Christ Jesus.*

We do not have to live in shame and let it become our identity! Instead, we can know that God forgives us when we confess our guilt.



Which of these verses do you need to memorize? Share why you chose this verse with someone this week.

God Time Day 4: Know Who God Says You Are



God wants us to know who He says we are. As we focus on our real identity (our identity in Christ) we are armed with powerful truth that removes shame from our lives. We also are left with less time for the negative, shame-based thinking that we talked about on Day 2.



How familiar are you with who God says you are? (Rate yourself on a scale of 1-10.)

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

What will you do to improve your score?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

While reading the verses below, circle any words that tell you about your identity.



John 1:12

*But to all who did receive him, he gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in his name...*

Ephesians 2:10 (NLT)

*For we are God’s masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago.*

Romans 3:24 (NLT)

*Yet God, in his grace, freely makes us right in his sight. He did this through Christ Jesus when he freed us from the penalty for our sins.*

Our identity in Christ truly affects everything; knowing who God says we are is important! For example, knowing we’re His masterpiece helps us live in awe of our Maker. Living as a child of God gives spiritual freedom from Satan. Knowing that we are “right in His sight” reminds us that He has paid for our sins-- we don’t have to live in shame!



Would you like to read more verses about your identity? Check out page 11 or watch this video by Matthew West – *Hello My Name Is*.



God Time Day 5: Move the Focus to Who Jesus Is



Yesterday we talked about who God says we are. That’s a great way to remove shame from our lives. Another way to do that is to move our focus from shame to who Jesus is.

Mankind living apart from God always elevates the creation above the Creator. This can mean that “self” gets all the focus – and guess what? Focusing on ourselves will always leave us dissatisfied. We can never be fully content or one hundred percent satisfied except through Jesus.

When we shift our focus to Jesus and what He has done for us, we find freedom from shame. When we come to Him in confession, whatever we have done in the past (even if the past was one minute ago) is removed. (Look back at Day 3 and read 1 John 1:9 again.)

Here are a few practical ways you can focus on Jesus:

- Read/Study His Word
- Listen to Audio Bible
- Pray
- Keep a Gratitude Journal
- Listen to Worship Music
- Memorize Bible Verses



Make a list of 5 ways you will spend time focusing on Jesus. (Pull from the ideas above or come up with your own.)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_



When you feel shame, recite Philippians 3:13-14:

*<sup>13</sup>Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself to have taken hold of it [the goal]. But one thing I do: Forgetting what is behind and reaching forward to what is ahead, <sup>14</sup>I pursue as my goal the prize promised by God’s heavenly call in Christ Jesus.*



You are not your past. Shame does not have to control you! “Forgetting what is behind,” focus on Jesus... and move on.

WEEK 2 – OVERCOME SHAME

Group Time

LOOK BACK:



1. Each participant shares one praise and one prayer request. (Commit these to prayer for the coming week.)

2. ENCOURAGEMENT 1-on-1 (See last page for directions)

Y / N	Y / N	_____
_____	_____	

3. **Point:** Life is too short, and your calling is too great to live offended.



Review the previous lesson. Did you take a step towards forgiveness and/or reconciliation with anyone this past week?

LOOK UP:

**Question:** Read Genesis 2:25. Then read Genesis 3:21. Why did God sacrifice an animal and “clothe” them? Was it their bodies or their shame that needed to be covered?

One of the most painful emotions we can feel is shame. It may haunt us from our earliest memories and can cripple every aspect of our life if we allow it to define and identify us. Shame is different than guilt. Guilt says, “I did something bad/wrong, so I feel bad about it.” Shame says, “I did something bad/wrong, so I am bad.” It is an identity and causes shame-based thinking where one views oneself as damaged or defective.

We try to get out of this by seeking perfection, comparing ourselves to others, and/or expecting the worst in every situation (“See, I told you so.”). But these just reinforce the lie, “You are bad.” The only real way out of shame-based thinking is to truly see who we are as a child of God. We need to see what God Himself says about us and then focus our energy and efforts on His will and His purpose.

LOOK IN: Discussion

Fill in the blanks with words related to your **identity** and share it:

There was a time in my life when I was...

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

But then Jesus forgave me, and I chose to follow Him. Now I am...

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

LOOK FORWARD: Application

**Point:** You are not your past. Focus on Jesus and move on.

**There Is No Shame In Jesus Christ.**

Read each of these verses and write down your **identity** for each:

- |                     |                    |                    |
|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| John 1:12           | Romans 8:17        | John 15:15         |
| Romans 3:24         | Romans 8:2         | Romans 15:7        |
| 1 Corinthians 1:2   | Ephesians 1:1      | 1 Corinthians 3:16 |
| Ephesians 3:6, 5:30 | Galatians 3:28     | Ephesians 1:3      |
| Philippians 3:20    | Ephesians 2:10     | 2 Corinthians 5:17 |
| 2 Corinthians 5:20  | 1 Corinthians 6:19 |                    |

Make a list of five ways you can spend time focusing on Jesus:

- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Pick one to focus on this week and add one more each week.

Read Philippians 3:13-14.

*Pray for everyone in your group to deal with the damage of shame. Ask that we each focus on Jesus, move on, and seek help if needed.*


**Family Time**
**Main Idea:**

**There Is No Shame In Jesus.**


**Key Verse: 2 Corinthians 12:9**

*But he said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is perfect in weakness.” Therefore, I will most gladly boast all the more about my weaknesses, so that Christ’s power may reside in me.*

**Set it Up:**

What is the difference between guilt and shame?

*Guilt* is, “I did something bad, and I feel bad for doing it.”

*Shame* is, “I did something bad so I am a bad person, and I cannot be better.”

Let’s watch a short video about a bunny named Milo that can help us understand shame better.


**Watch: Week 2 Video**


**Ask:**

- Why did Milo feel shame?
- Were Milo’s friends really making fun of him?
- Have you ever had a time at school or home when you felt like Milo did? Ask your child to share their experience.

**Encourage:**

God never wants us to feel like we are bad people or unforgivable for what we do. No matter how bad we mess up there is always hope for forgiveness. We are promised that God will forgive us when we mess up, but Satan wants us to think that we are never good enough.

Spend some time praying for each person in your family and that God will take away feelings of shame anyone might have.

**Family Activity:**

To help your kids understand the concept of grace, give each child a gift card to spend. Take them to the store and let them spend the gift card on whatever they want to spend it on.

**Talk about it:**

What did you do to earn the gift card?

A gift is not earned. A gift does not cost you anything. Who paid for your gift card? Someone else pays the price of the item when he/she gives you a gift.

Read Ephesians 2:8-9

How is this like what Jesus did for us? God’s gift of salvation is free to us; Jesus paid the price. We cannot earn it. This is what real grace is. It is because of the grace God has given us that we do not live in shame.



## Gear Up: Overcome Labels

**We've all been labeled at some point in our lives.**

Sometimes, we get a good label like *dad, mom, friend, loyal*, and so on. Other times, we are stuck with a label that defined us in the past, or one that we never deserved in the first place, like *liar, cheat, untrustworthy, or loser*. Sadly, we sometimes even give ourselves these hurtful labels. Yet, we don't have to let these negative labels define us!

### Words Have Power

**Words have the power to bless or curse.** It's with our words that we can shower someone with encouragement, or pepper them with criticism. We can build others up, or tear them down. We can patch the suffering back together, or rip them apart. *Words have power.*

#### Read Proverbs 18:21

*Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.*

**Not only do words have power,** but once words are spoken, we have to live with the consequences of those words (or “eat” their “fruit”). This reminds us to be careful not to negatively label ourselves or others. But, if we already have a label, how do we overcome it?

### God Is Bigger Than Your Label

**We must remember that God is bigger than our labels.** Here are a couple of Old Testament stories that show us this.

#### Read Genesis 35:16b-18

<sup>16b</sup>*Rachel began to give birth, and her labor was difficult.* <sup>17</sup>*During her difficult labor, the midwife said to her, “Don't be afraid, for you have another son.”* <sup>18</sup>*With her last breath — for she was dying — she named him Ben-oni, but his father called him Benjamin.*

Rachel named her son Ben-oni, which means “son of my sorrow.” But Jacob, his father, renamed him Benjamin, which means “son of my right hand.” Jacob knew the power of a name! After all, God had changed Jacob's name, years before Benjamin was ever born.

#### Read Genesis 32:27-28

<sup>27</sup>*“What is your name?” the man asked. “Jacob [which means “deceiver”],” he replied.* <sup>28</sup>*“Your name will no longer be Jacob,” he said. “It will be Israel [which means “God perseveres”] because you have struggled with God and with men and have prevailed.”*

### Take a New Name

**Like Benjamin and Jacob did, we can take a new name.** We can choose to find our identity in Christ Jesus (see page 17), and stop identifying ourselves by our labels. Labels can be hurtful and divisive, and God wants better for us!

#### Read 2 Corinthians 5:17

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!*

### Once we take that new name, we can:

- **Turn pain into blessing.** We can't ignore a painful past, but we don't have to let it define us. Instead, we can fellowship with others who have experienced similar hurt. We can bless and encourage each other.
- **Turn brokenness into ministry.** Pain gives us a unique position to help others navigate their ways through similar situations.
- **Turn weakness into faith.** Instead of feeling weakened by labels, we can draw near God and let Him replace weakness with strong faith.

God will help us overcome our labels and find our identity in Christ!

WEEK 3 – OVERCOME LABELS

God Time Day 1: Words Have Power



Words have power. They shape our lives in both positive and negative ways. They can encourage us, but they can also wound us.

If you have ever been labeled negatively by someone (or yourself), you know the harmful power of words firsthand. Labels can hurt!



Read Proverbs 18:21  
*Death and life are in the power of the tongue, and those who love it will eat its fruit.*

This verse simply means that words have the power to destroy, but also to build up-- and we have to eat (live with) the fruit (consequences) of those words.

Do you need to change the way you use words? To others? To yourself? What will you do differently today?

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God Time Day 2: God is Bigger than Your Label - Benjamin



God is bigger than your label. The story of Benjamin’s birth can be found in Genesis 35:16-18. Before his mother, Rachel, died from giving him birth, she named him Ben-oni— “son of my sorrow.” Jacob (his father) changed his son’s name to Benjamin— “son of my right hand.”



Read Jeremiah 32:27  
*Look, I am the LORD, the God over every creature. Is anything too difficult for me?*

Nothing is too difficult for God. He can easily overcome our labels and help us overcome them, too. What label do you need to overcome? It could be something hurtful, like “liar,” or something true, like “victim.”

Write it down, then over it write: **GOD IS BIGGER!**

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Pray that God will help replace your old label with a new name!

God Time Day 3:- God is Bigger than Your Label - Jacob



Yesterday we read that Jacob knew the power of labels (in fact, his own name meant “deceiver”). Perhaps his encounter with God before Benjamin’s birth taught him that.



Read Genesis 32:24-30  
*<sup>24</sup>Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until daybreak. <sup>25</sup>When the man saw that he could not defeat him, he struck Jacob’s hip socket as they wrestled and dislocated his hip. <sup>26</sup>Then he said to Jacob, “Let me go, for it is daybreak.” But Jacob said, “I will not let you go unless you bless me.” <sup>27</sup>“What is your name?” the man asked. “Jacob,” he replied. <sup>28</sup>“Your name will no longer be Jacob,” he said. “It will be Israel because you have struggled with God and with men and have prevailed.” <sup>29</sup>Then Jacob asked him, “Please tell me your name.” But he answered, “Why do you ask my name?” And he blessed him there. <sup>30</sup>Jacob then named the place Peniel, “For I have seen God face to face,” he said, “yet my life has been spared.*



Jacob thought he was wrestling with a man. Who was it? (Hint: verse 30)

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Look carefully again at verses 27 and 28. Underline anything that stands out to you.

Some Bible teachers say that God asked Jacob his name to get him to confess, “I am a deceiver.” (He was known for his trickery.) Once Jacob confessed that, God could give him a new identity. Jacob went from deceiving others to clinging to God in order to be blessed. This was an expression of faith.



Sometimes we get a label because of past sin. If you have confessed it, it’s in the past. (Week 2 Day 5). If you haven’t confessed, do that now. Whether you do or do not have a confession to make, how will you cling to God today?

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God Time Day 4:- Take A New Name (Part 1)



Once we’ve confessed past sins or hurts to God, we are ready to take our new name – just like Jacob, clinging to God in faith, ready for a new blessing.

We know that labels have power -- whether they were assigned to us undeservedly, because of past sin, or even innocently. But the label we had yesterday or even today, doesn’t have to be there tomorrow.



Read 2 Corinthians 5:17  
*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!*

Memorize that verse if you haven’t already. Thank God that He has made you new. Like Jacob, cling to God and take your new name: I am a new creation.

Labels can hurt. (They can even cause separation in the church and make people feel like outcasts.) But God is good! When we cooperate with Him, He can use our pain to bless others who are walking through a similar situation.



Who do you know that is struggling with a pain like you’ve experienced? (If you don’t know, ask God to show you.)

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Try to reach out to one of them this week.

Who might that be? \_\_\_\_\_



What hope can you give them? List at least three ways you can show them love and care in the next few weeks. (Some examples: Let them know you are praying for them and, tell them you love them, share what God has done for you, etc.)

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

God Time Day 5: Take a New Name (Part 2)



As you take your new name, you can not only turn your pain into a blessing for others, but you’ll also be able to use your hurts for ministry and turn weakness into faith.

We’ve all been hurt and “broken” in some way – whether by words or by deeds. Either way, it’s when we realize that God is our hope that we find healing.

Did you know that many ministries began with a person who was labeled? Ministries for young widows, grief, addictions, abuse, homelessness, and so on. Sometimes these ministries are organized efforts with group meetings, but sometimes they are simply quiet, person-to-person efforts... all pointing to God, the Healer.



Read 2 Corinthians 1:4  
*He comforts us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to comfort those who are in any kind of affliction, through the comfort we ourselves receive from God.*

Pray and ask God if He is opening the door for you to minister to others in His name.

What ministry might you be interested in joining?



Read Galatians 5:22-23a  
*<sup>22</sup>But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, <sup>23</sup>gentleness, and self-control.*

Taking a new name also means we can turn our weakness into faith. Faith is a fruit of God’s Holy Spirit in us, so as we submit to God, obey Him, and draw nearer to Him, He fills us with this fruit. One aspect of that is that He grows our faith!



What will you do today to submit, obey, and draw near to God?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Based upon this series, what new name would you give yourself?



## WEEK 3 – OVERCOME LABELS

### Group Time

#### LOOK BACK:

1. Each participant shares one praise and one prayer request. (Commit these to prayer for the coming week.)

2. ENCOURAGEMENT 1-on-1 (See last page for directions)

 Y / N	 Y / N	 _____
 _____	 _____	

3. **Point:** *You are not your past. Focus on Jesus and move on.*

 Review the previous lesson. What was your favorite identity from the verse sets? What did you do to focus on Jesus?

#### LOOK UP:

**Question:** How many of you have a name, and/or gave your child a name, based upon the meaning of the name? Share the meaning and why you were given or chose that name.

Words can label or define us – both good and bad. That ungodly person we once were might also come with a label. A label keeps turning up like a bad penny. The label defines us.

If we have since given our lives to Jesus, we are no longer that same person and no longer deserving of that label. So, how do we lose the label and take on our true identity in Christ?

1. Turn pain into blessing. Fellowship with others with the same pain.
2. Turn the brokenness that led to the label into ministry. You are uniquely gifted to help others going through the same situation.
3. Turn weakness into faith. Freely admit the label you were given, deservedly or not, and exhibit your faith for others to see. Show and share how identity in Christ covers over any man-made label.



#### LOOK IN: Discussion

Fill in the blanks with words related to your **labels** and share them:

There was a time in my life when I was...

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

But then Jesus forgave me, and I chose to follow Him. Now I am...

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

#### LOOK FORWARD: Application

**Point:** *What is true about you today doesn't have to be true about you tomorrow.*

#### Take A New Name And Live It

- Turn pain into blessing. Fellowship with others with the same pain. Do you have a painful situation from your past that has labeled you? Are you meeting with others who are dealing with the same pain? If not, how can you?

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- Turn the brokenness that led to the label into ministry. You are uniquely gifted to help others going through the same situation. What brokenness in your past can you use to minister to others? How will you do it? If you need help, is there someone or an existing ministry that can show you?

\_\_\_\_\_

- Turn weakness into faith. Freely admit the label you were given, deservedly or not, and exhibit your faith for others to see. Show and share how identity in Christ covers over any man-made label. What can you do to throw off the old label and let God make you new? Remember, you are not alone. Seek God's label.

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(For some professional assistance: [cbcfamily.net/health](http://cbcfamily.net/health).)

*Pray for those in your group who are dealing with the stigma of past labels. Ask that we each focus on God's will and seek help if needed.*

## Family Time



Main Idea:

## God Is Bigger Than Your Label



## Key Verse: 2 Corinthians 6:18

*And I will be a Father to you, and you will be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.*

**Set it Up:** We all have labels people have put on us. It might be that someone calls you tall, short, skinny, chubby, redhead, or something like that. When we have asked Jesus to be LORD over our life, we are given the label, “child of God.” Check out this great illustration about what it means to be a child of God.



Watch this week’s video:



**Encourage:** Scripture tells us that when we asked Jesus to be our Lord and Savior we were adopted into God’s family and have been given the label, “child of God”. As Believers, we hear we are God’s children, but we often don’t live our lives in response to that truth. Instead, we live as someone who doesn’t belong to God’s family.

So what does it mean to be God’s child? It means that you are now part of a heavenly family, and you have rights to the things a son or daughter in His kingdom would have. You have a Father who absolutely loves spending time with you. His love is persistent, powerful, and freely given. You no longer need to worry about whether you have a place in this world. There’s no need to worry yourself with whether you will have clothes or food. You no longer have to live in pursuit of the opinions of those around you. God enjoys you.

He has a plan for you to follow. He doesn’t take being your Father lightly.

He takes complete ownership of His responsibility. He will strengthen you, teach you, develop you, and give you a life of passion and meaning. The label of being His Child means so much. To be the child of God is to be loved, liked, and completely cared for.



**Family Activity:** If you have any children that do not have a relationship with Jesus, take some time to talk to them about the ABCs.

**"A" stands for Admit.** A person must admit to God that they are a sinner. They must be sorry for their sins and turn away from them. Verses that support this step are Romans 3:23; Romans 6:23; Acts 3:19; and 1 John 1:9.

**"B" stands for Believe.** A person must believe that Jesus is God's Son and that God sent Jesus to pay the penalty for sin. Verses about believing include John 3:16; John 14:6; and Romans 5:8.

**"C" stands for Confess.** A person must confess their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord. Read Romans 10:9-10 and 13.

Remember: It is not your job to "save" your child - it is God's! However, as a parent, you have the responsibility (and privilege) of guiding your child to faith in Christ.

The following is a sample prayer to use as a guide for praying with your child:

*Dear God, thank You for choosing to love me! I know I am a sinner. I believe You sent Your Son, Jesus Christ, to die for my sins. I believe He rose again and lives today. I am sorry and turn away from my sin. Thank You for Your wonderful love and for changing my life forever. In Jesus' name, I pray, Amen.*

## The 3-Step “Encouragement 1-on-1” Process

*Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how to stir up one another to love and good works, not neglecting to meet together, as is the habit of some, but encouraging one another, and all the more as you see the Day drawing near.*

Hebrews 10:23-25

1. Choose partners: Partners should be of the same gender. If there is an odd number, triplets are OK, but you need to work swiftly.
2. Partners ask each other these five questions:

	1) “Did you spend specific personal time in the <b>BIBLE</b> <u>each day</u> this past week?”	These are “Yes” or “No” questions. Any hesitations or “Well...” responses are circled “No.”
	2) “Did you spend specific time in <b>PRAYER</b> <u>each day</u> this past week – not just for meals?”	
	3) “Did you do something specific to show Godly <b>LOVE</b> to someone this past week?”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If so, the partner briefly shares the encounter(s) with their partner and, on the provided line, writes the name(s) of the person(s) they showed love to, shared the gospel with, or disciplined.</li> <li>• If not, leave the line blank.</li> </ul>
	4) “Did you intentionally share the <b>GOSPEL</b> with anyone this past week?”	
	5) “Did you <b>DISCIPLE</b> anyone this past week?” (Sharing with others from any of the Gathering, God, Group, or Family Times)	

3. To finish, each partner prays for the other: No matter how or what the partner has done over the past week, this is an intentional prayer of **encouragement** for the coming week!