



I LOVE MY CONNECT

STUDY 15

My Salvation, My Freedom from Shame

Romans 1:16-17, 3:23, 5:17, 10:11; Isaiah 61:7

Every person has a past. Each of us has experiences we want to live down and leave behind that can turn into shame. We feel shame when we are aware of our wrongness. Shame is toxic and has been described as the swampland of the soul. Many people live in a defeated position of shame, but when we believe in Jesus, shame is not our future. Shame defines us by what we have done; God's righteousness defines us by what he has done. Jesus paid the wages of our sin through his death and has freed us from condemnation so we can walk in freedom with him.

The righteousness of God frames our life. No longer does sin and shame define who we are. Through the grace and life in Jesus, we rule and reign our lives by his righteousness. We choose to live according to the rightness or righteousness of God and no longer live by our wrongness. When we fully believe in Jesus, we refuse to carry shame. No one can put shame on us, when we remember the name of Jesus has been put on us. We now live by what is right with him, instead of what is wrong with us.

The gospel liberates us and gives us life. Shame is our response to condemnation, while faith is our response to the gospel. There is no condemnation in Jesus. Alone before Jesus, all accusations and condemnation leave and we are known only by what God has done for us. Jesus makes us right and he says to us "sin no more." When we break free from shame and condemnation, we break free from sin. We accept the righteousness of Christ and in the absence of condemnation Jesus empowers us to live.

We live free by faith in Jesus. It is in our soul where our greatest battles are fought and where our greatest victories are won. It is God's will for us to flourish, to be free from shame, guilt, mistakes, failures, condemnation and believing we are disqualified. By faith in Jesus we receive a revelation of God's grace, forgiveness and righteousness, which is our inheritance. Let us walk free, stand tall, live redeemed and enter into our future of everlasting joy with him, fully believing what he has done for us – the sacrifice Jesus made for us so we may live freely with him.

CONNECTION AND ACTION Use these questions to promote conversation and connection.

ICEBREAKER: Share a time when you were physically stuck or trapped by something (i.e. in a car, in a piece of clothing, in a room, foot caught in something, etc.). What had to happen to set you free? Describe the feelings you went through.

- Q:** What images and feelings come to mind when hearing shame is "the swampland of the soul?"
- Q:** Discuss what it means to live our lives "by what is right with God, instead of what is wrong with us."
- Q:** "When we break free from shame and condemnation, we break free from sin" – how have you seen this be true in your life or for someone you know?
- Q:** Share with one another what is "right" with God and what it means for us today to be defined by his "rightness" or righteousness.
- Q:** Are there areas of God's grace, forgiveness, righteousness or joy that are challenging to fully accept? Spend time praying for each other to live free in Christ.

HIGHLIGHTS COMING UP

- City Care "Love One" Campaign

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BIBLE AND BELIEF Use these questions and scriptures to help believers develop a biblical worldview.

Read: Psalm 34:4-5, Isaiah 61:7, and Romans 10:11

- Q:** What do these passages say God will do for his people? How do his people respond?
- Q:** What do these passages tell you about God's heart for his people?
- Q:** How do each of these passages speak of shame? What truth can we apply to our life today?
- Q:** Which of these promises is easiest for you to believe for? Which is the most challenging? Why?
- Q:** Explore the surrounding context to these verses. Are there any conditions to being free from shame in these passages?
- Q:** What hope do these passages give to us? How do they help us live free from shame?

GROWING LEADERSHIP Use these questions to help people in your group grow as leaders.

- Q:** How does identifying yourself by God's "rightness instead of your "wrongness" change or empower your leadership?
- Q:** How does shame and condemnation impact team atmosphere? What does faith and freedom in Jesus bring into the dynamic of our teams?
- Q:** As leaders, what can we do to produce an environment where people walk free from shame and condemnation? What does accountability look like in such an environment?
- Q:** In our life and leadership, what can we do to move on after we have made mistakes and to walk in freedom?
- Q:** How does our choice to live free from shame and condemnation impact the people in our teams, our families and our world?

PRAY TOGETHER

- Decisions for Jesus in our Services
- Pastors Brian & Bobbie Houston

PASTORAL CARE

- We have a pastoral care team at church to walk alongside people in your group who may be going through a tough time
- Please contact the church office Sydney 02 8853 5353, Melbourne 03 9720 2099, Brisbane 07 3422 8500 or Newcastle 02 4927 1888 to let us know of anybody in your group (with their permission) who have sickness, death of a loved one, marriage challenges, surgeries.

NATION BUILDERS – ON MISSION

One of the best ways we can make a difference as a connect is to regularly PRAY for the Nation Builders causes we support, and regularly inspire your group to receive your Nation Builders offering. Your giving makes a massive difference in helping us 'reach and influencing the world'.

Nation Builders Update: Asia

Steve Dixon and Sam DiMauro hosted three training events in three different Asian nations to equip hundreds of Senior Pastors and then with our College Band held city-wide Night Rallies for thousands of believers. These nights witnessed breakthrough praise and worship, many salvations and healings. These events were held in Bangkok (Thailand), Manila (Philippines) and Kota Kinabulu (Malaysia) but included pastors and believers from surrounding nations, some of which are non-access countries where Christians face persecution because of their faith. Your Nation Builders giving made these events possible and helps us fulfill our Senior Pastors passion to 'Champion the Cause of the Local Church everywhere'. Thank you.

