

## Called to be Worthy

February, 2011 Newsletter

The dead line to finish this month's newsletter came around much quicker than usual. This was due to me being gone most of the last week of February. I found myself waking up and realizing I needed to get finished today. Interesting how a little bit of panic creates fear. It happens even in situations that are familiar and some what routine. January's newsletter focused on God's purpose for us. We are called to become more Christlike. I knew last month that I wanted to continue writing on His purpose for us. I did the drama at church this morning. The last line was very fitting to help me focus my writing. "Don't they know how Christians are supposed to behave?!"

I look at the New Testament as our instructions for becoming Christlike. The New Testament tells the story of Jesus. Jesus is an example of what he wants us to do. The New Testament tells us how to live a Christian life. Jesus demonstrated this in his behavior. Jesus demonstrated this in his relationships with others. Jesus demonstrated how to walk in love with others. He demonstrated how to connect in loving relationships with others. This is what this what stress model asks us to do. The stress model gives us strategies to do this with our children. The healing power of Jesus transforms us so we can implement these strategies and be more like Jesus.

Ephesians 4:1 ". . . I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received." Worthy is a powerful characteristic and calls us to a high standard. Webster's synonyms are: deserving, good, and meritorious. Webster defines worthy as being of value and being honorable. Fear not because God has given us the Gift of life (spiritual) because we were dead in our transgressions, Ephesians 2:1-2. This gives us the new start that we need. I believe that we all struggle at times with accepting our new start. Why is that so hard? I believe it has to do with not believing that we are worthy.

I believe that feeling unworthy is a function of our shame. Our shame tell us that we are not worthy. Shame is different than guilt. Guilt is a feeling of remorse or regret for having done something wrong. We usually experience shame after we've done something wrong. It comes from a judgment regarding our behavior. Since we did something wrong, we are not worthy. This judgment can come from us or from others. Shame causes us to feel dishonored and disgraced by our behavior. We feel that we don't measure up. We feel we are not as good as. I believe that shame is part of the curse of our sin. It started back in the garden. Adam answered God in Genesis 3:10 - "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid." I believe Adam and Eve hid because they were ashamed. Think about it. Fear carries a lot of shame with it.

How does feeling unworthy interfere with our parenting? It keeps us out of a love state. We react to our children's faults and mistakes. We react because their behavior triggers our shame. Their behavior triggers our feeling unworthy. Shame causes us to look to our children to get our sense of worth. I challenge you to explore your childhood and determine where your

shame comes from. We can receive shame messages from our parents, teachers, and preachers. We can experience shame messages from most anyone who has influence on our lives. These messages become part of our blue print. Once you raise your awareness of your shame blue print, you can begin to change it. Don't try to do that by yourself. Your shame will cause you to hide from God, just like Adam and Eve did. I believe we need the grace of God to lift our shame. There is work we need to do. Ultimately we need the Holy Spirit to deliver us from our shame.

Ezekiel 36:26-27 says "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you. I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put my spirit with you and cause you to walk in my statutes and you will keep my judgements and do them." I find great comfort from living under the new covenant. The new covenant is all about grace. The covenant of grace is provided by Jesus Christ. "For the law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ" - John 1:17. Press on with your journey. Do so with an abundance of grace. Connect with your child in love that is free from shame. This is one way that Christians are supposed to behave. Remember that you are worthy through Jesus Christ.

In Christ's love,

*Ken Thom*