

LOVE IN ACTION NEWSLETTER

February 2012

HEALING SPIRITUAL SHAME

The previous four Love in Action Newsletters have been focused on shame. What it is, where it comes from, and releasing the bondage of shame. These newsletters are archived on my website @ [Newsletter Archives](#). As I've previously stated, shame significantly impacts our spirituality. This is usually the most challenging area for shame-based people. Spirituality is the deepest level that humans operate from. Spirituality is deep within our core. The ability to live in peace and harmony is a function of our spirituality. Shame contaminates our spirituality. It causes our spirituality to be very negative. Shame keeps us operating from a fear base, not a love base. The basic definition of a shame-based person is that they are flawed and inadequate and do not deserve happiness or success. Shame blocks what God wants for us. Shame reinforces our belief of being unworthy. Shame tells us that we are sinners with no hope. Right now, I'm telling you that there is hope. You may be in a place where that is hard to believe. All I am asking is that you be open to the hope that is available. This will take a paradigm shift of whom and what you believe in. This will take a paradigm shift of where your security is based.

Any paradigm shift is overwhelming. Paradigm shifts are not events. Paradigm shifts are a process. Many times I find my personal spiritual journey overwhelming. That's because I am constantly being challenged to continue to change my paradigm to being more spiritual. A paradigm shift takes willingness and effort to embrace new concepts. It takes repetition and emotional impact. Emotional impact occurs when you actually see and feel new techniques working. You need to become educated and develop new awareness. You need to develop a complete understanding of new information. As I discussed in the previous articles, shame-based people look to other people, places, and things to make them feel good. I will get right to the point. The paradigm shift I'm asking you to make is to put your hope in Jesus. That is where your security needs to be based. Jesus is who you need to believe in. The word of God is what you need to believe in. It is imperative to remember that a paradigm shift is a gradual process. You will be challenged. However, there is support and resources along your journey to help.

Belief in Jesus means that there is a power greater than yourself that you can rely on. Jesus said in [John 14:6 NIV](#) "I am the way and the truth and the life." That is not to the exclusion of others but that Jesus is the ultimate power. That is very scary for shame-based people because of their lack of trust. Their lack of trust is based on their human experiences. It is natural and normal to place human characteristics on God. Our human experiences dictate our perceptions. Therefore, we expect God to treat us like others have. If you did the work suggested in the first four articles, then you should be developing a new support system. I strongly recommend that this include a church community or church family. The book of Acts tells us how the first church developed. [Acts 2: 42-47 NIV](#) describes the fellowship of the believers. It was an active community of believers. They shared their pain and encouragement with each other. John 11:35 NIV, "Jesus wept" and shared his pain. Read the entire account in [John 11:17-37](#). Daniel Siegel in the DVD Trauma, Brain, Relationship - Helping Children Heal says that "what is shareable is bearable". Ernie Larsen tells us that "a joy that is not shared is cut

in half, a trouble that is not shared is double.” Sharing our pain and our shame is all part of the healing process and developing trust. That may be too much of a leap of faith. If it is, then find someone who is a believer in Jesus. Begin your new journey and paradigm shift there. A 12 step group of some kind could be another beginning point for your paradigm shift. That’s where mine started thirty one years ago in Alcoholics Anonymous.

As you begin this process of healing, you’ll begin to feel the love of Jesus. Shame will cause you to doubt this love. Shame will block out the power and the love of God. Shame will block out the healing grace of God. That is why encouragement from other believers is so important. Reading the word of God will help you understand the new information needed for your paradigm shift. The Bible is full of God’s promises and words of encouragement. I’ll begin with [Jeremiah 1:4-5 NIV](#) - “before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart; I appointed you as a prophet to the nations.” This establishes that God has a direction for your life from the beginning. Your paradigm shift will allow you to see yourself through new spiritual eyes. Being born again gives you a new life. [2 Corinthians 4:16 NIV](#) tells you that “we are being renewed day by day.” [2 Corinthians 3:18 NIV](#) gives you your new image. You are shifting your paradigm from a world view to a view of what God’s will is for you. [Romans 12:2 NIV](#) tells you that you will be transformed by the renewing of your mind.

A big stumbling block I find in most shame-based people is their lack of understanding of God grace. If your shame blocks you from being able to receive the full measure of God’s grace, then read the January 2012, Love in Action Newsletter @ [Newsletter Archives](#). God’s gift is already given. It is there for you to take. [John 19:30 NIV](#) - Jesus hung on the cross and said “it is finished”. His work on the cross gives you permission to throw off the bondage of shame. His work on the cross allows you to be released from the shackles of your shame. The closest thing I can compare this to is the love you give your children. No matter what, you wouldn’t take it away. No matter what, you wouldn’t stop giving it. You may not feel that way at times, but I believe that is what is in your hearts. God put it there. He does it perfectly. You must strive to do the same. Your new faith-based community will help you see this. They will encourage you along your journey.

It’s important in this journey to separate religion from spirituality. Religion is the way that you practice your spirituality. It is a structure through which you demonstrate your faith. Religion is made by man. Therefore it is flawed. All too often, our perception of spirituality and faith is damaged by religion. Therefore, it is important to look past religion to what you believe in. You may need to review the articles on forgiveness when religious and other human experiences block your spiritual journey. Be courageous and press on to break the bondage of shame and heal spiritually.

In Christ,

Ken Thom, LPC