

December 6th



Advent 2020

"...the healing of shame begins and ends in the experience of being known, a biblical notion that begins in the heart of God..."

—Curt Thompson, *The Soul of Shame*

—A SEASON OF SADNESS & CELEBRATION—

“SIN, SHAME, & REDEMPTION”

Introduction:

- Within every human society there are certain beliefs and practices that are considered dishonorable or shameful. 2020 has been a year where this has been demonstrated repeatedly, as people of certain political and social groups seek to stigmatize one another for their particular beliefs and actions (or lack thereof).
- A stigma is a mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person. Although these can be illegitimate and culturally construed, they often reflect something about the true nature of reality, even if they are falsely applied to someone or something.

Key Point: In His incarnation, the Lord Jesus came to save us from the just _____ that our sin deserved and to deliver us from both the deserved and undeserved _____ that we often experience as we live in a fallen world.

Shame & Stigma in Scripture

- **The experience of shame was not a part of life in the world before the fall.**

Gen. 2:25— And the man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed.

⇒ This changes after the fall, as demonstrated in the first family when the man and woman (Gen. 3:8, 3:12-13) and their firstborn son (Gen. 4:9,13) are each confronted by God regarding their sin.

- **Shame is often referenced in connection to the sin of an individual or group.**

Jer. 3:25— Let us lie down in our shame, and let our dishonor cover us. For we have sinned against the Lord our God, we and our fathers, from our youth even to this day, and we have not obeyed the voice of the Lord our God.”

⇒ Because of the intimate and personal nature of rebellion against God, it is often compared with adultery and sexual immorality (Jer. 3:1-2) because of the sense of shame or stigma associated with them. In spite of this, God calls to the wayward and offers them mercy and grace (Jer. 3:12-13, 21-23).

- **Shame is often experienced because of the sin of others.**

Psa. 44:15-16—¹⁵ All day long my disgrace is before me, and shame has covered my face ¹⁶ at the sound of the taunter and reviler, at the sight of the enemy and the avenger.

Prov. 10:5—He who gathers in summer is a prudent son, but he who sleeps in harvest is a son who brings shame.

Prov. 12:4— An excellent wife is the crown of her husband, but she who brings shame is like rotteness in his bones.

Prov. 29:15—The rod and reproof give wisdom, but a child left to himself brings shame to his mother.

- **God promises to one day deliver His people from the stigma and shame of sin.**

Isa. 61:7a—Instead of your shame there shall be a double portion; instead of dishonor they shall rejoice in their lot;

Zeph. 3:11—“On that day you shall not be put to shame because of the deeds by which you have rebelled against me; for then I will remove from your midst your proudly exultant ones, and you shall no longer be haughty in my holy mountain.”

Key Point: The experience of shame should teach us about the true nature of sin and cause us to look away from ourselves and our circumstances to God who alone can give us _____ in a fallen world.

Shame & Stigma in the Story of Advent

Concerning Galilee & Betrothal

- As rural and agrarian region, the people would have been both devout and nationalistic, but of the more simplistic varieties. The life of the community would have been centered around both the home and synagogue.

“The purity of betrothal in Galilee was less likely to be sullied, and weddings were more simple than in Judea... [Joseph & Mary’s betrothal] perhaps concluded [with] a benediction over the statutory cup of wine, which was tasted in turn by the betrothed. From that moment Mary was the betrothed wife of Joseph; their relationship as sacred, as if they had already been wedded. Any breach of it would be treated as adultery; nor could the band be dissolved except, as after marriage, by regular divorce.”

—Alfred Edersheim, *The Life & Times of Jesus the Messiah*

The Announcement to Mary — Luke 2:36-38

Some Observations:

- (1) The angel's first words to Mary emphasize God's _____ with her and _____ towards her.
- (2) The angel first states that the child will be called Jesus ('Yahweh is salvation'), and then indicates that He will fulfill God's messianic _____ to Israel.
- (3) In light of Mary's question, the angel explains that her child will have his physical origin in a _____ act of God.
- (4) Mary is receptive to the Word of the Lord, trusting that this is His _____ for her life.

Key Point: Mary recognized that the _____ that God was going to accomplish through her son would be the means by which He would show mercy to the humble and carry out judgment on the proud (Luke 1:50-55).

Luke 1:50-51—⁵⁰And his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. ⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the thoughts of their hearts;

The Announcement to Joseph — Matt. 1:18-25

Some Observations:

- (1) In light of Mary's pregnancy, Joseph recognized that there was now a _____ associated with their betrothal.
- (2) The angel's words to Joseph declared God's personal _____ of him and his circumstances.
- (3) The angel's statement concerning the child emphasized that His work as Messiah would bring about the _____ of sins.

Key Point: Joseph _____ the Word of the Lord and was willing to lead his family by it, even through great difficulty.

Redemption & the Story of Advent

- Although Joseph and Mary had not committed sexual sin, the shame and consequences associated with that particular sin are all too common in a fallen world. (Matt. 1:1-6).

⇒ This can be the result of sin that we ourselves have committed, or that which has been committed _____ us.

- The undeserved shame and social stigma that Joseph and Mary endured because of her pregnancy was in some ways a foreshadowing of what their son would endure.

⇒ During His life, the Lord Jesus experienced the stigma of sin.

Matt. 11:19—The Son of Man came eating and drinking, and they say, 'Look at him! A glutton and a drunkard, a friend of tax collectors and sinners!'

⇒ On the cross, the Lord Jesus experienced the full _____ of sin and its consequences.

Gal. 3:10-14—¹⁰For all who rely on works of the law are under a curse; for it is written, "Cursed be everyone who does not abide by all things written in the Book of the Law, and do them." ¹¹Now it is evident that no one is justified before God by the law, for "The righteous shall live by faith." ¹²But the law is not of faith, rather "The one who does them shall live by them." ¹³Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us—for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who is hanged on a tree"—¹⁴so that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles, so that we might receive the promised Spirit through faith.

Knowing God's Hope in the Advent Season

1. Advent is a time to _____ upon the reality of sin and its consequences (shame, stigma) in our lives.

Jer. 3:22—"Return, O faithless sons; I will heal your faithlessness." "Behold, we come to you, for you are the Lord our God."

2. Advent is a time to _____ in the hope that we have in Christ who came to save us and who will come again for us!

Heb. 12:1-2—¹Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, ²looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.