

the
PROVERBS 31
MINISTRIES
podcast

Biblical truth for any girl in any season.

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Lysa TerKeurst: Hi, I'm Lysa TerKeurst. And welcome to *Therapy and Theology*. This is some of the most favorite time that I have, recording these sessions with *Therapy and Theology* with two men that are very, very dear friends of mine. Joel Muddamalle. We get to work together at Proverbs 31 ministries. Tell us a little bit about what you do there.

Joel Muddamalle: Yeah, I get to serve as Director of Theology and Research and bring oversight to our theological development formation. And I really think that I have the best job in the entire world.

LT: That's good, because if you left, I'm leaving with you. So, I'm just going to go ahead and get that out of the way. And then, also my personal counselor, Jim Cress. Jim, tell us a little bit about you and what your passion is in counseling.

Jim Cress: Yeah, I like to tell people that we have more help than they have problems. And to just get into the narrative and the story of people's lives, as you've heard said before. And now, you have in a new book that we simply collect dots, connect dots, and hopefully correct the dots. And just walk people through their pain, through some of the things like is in Hebrews 12, that are hindering them from running the race and seeing some people set free. I love doing it every day.

LT: That's awesome. And I'm so grateful for you. Not only does Jim help me out, but many people I love come to see Jim too. And so, just so grateful. Today we're talking about a very important topic, shame and guilt. And, you know, I was thinking about this before we stepped on camera today. I have carried the weight of feeling just rejected and betrayed, I've carried the weight of having breast cancer, I have carried the weight of disappointment. But I'm telling you, the hardest, most heavy weight I've ever carried is the weight of shame. And for me, mine really played out in my early 20s, when, before I was married, I got pregnant, and was just very uneducated, about options and choices. And I was just very desperate, I felt alone. I was not really walking with the Lord at that point and was too afraid to ask for wise counsel. So, I went to an abortion clinic and I had an abortion, and the weight of shame that came upon me was the heaviest weight I've ever known.

So, when we talk about this today, none of us are far removed from this shame and guilt topic. It's something that we've all experienced. So, I just wanted to normalize the reality that this is a common human dynamic. And I think one trick that either our minds can play on us or that the enemy can play on us is to make us feel like we're the only one. And I think that's part of the setup for shame: the isolation, the intimidation, and just feeling like no one else in the world could possibly be okay with me because I'm not even okay with me.

So, let's start off, first let's define shame. And then let's talk about how does it play out. How do we recognize some of those thoughts or some of the reactions that we're having in life where, okay, this is shame, because we're also talking about guilt, and shame and guilt are not one in the same? So, what do you think, Jim?

JC: Well, I say and, you've heard me say this, that shame I say stands for "S.H.A.M.E. Self-Hatred at My Expense". It's always about condemnation, literally condemning myself. And there's a message, which we're going to get into another episode of shame scripts. But there's a message that something is clearly defective in me. Something is wrong as we get to guilt. It has been said, well, the guilt is, you know, I've done something wrong. There's healthy guilt, which we'll get into later. But shame is "I am someone wrong."

LT: Okay. Say the acronym one more time because I love to take notes during the podcast and I just need a refresher.

JC: I just say that shame - S.H.A.M.E - stands for self-hatred. I hate myself. There's the condemnation, "Self-Hatred at My Expense", because it cost me. It cost me of myself. It costs me and my relationship with others. And it will cost me certainly in my relationship with God. Romans 8:1 tells us "*there is therefore now no shame,*" - if you will- "*no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus*" and experientially if I'm in shame, walking in shame, not that I've lost my salvation - don't worry to our resident theologian - but experienced there functionally that I've kind of stepped outside of Christ Jesus for a moment. It's like I'm not walking with Him, because walking with Him there is no condemnation. So, self-hatred, I hate myself and it costs me a lot at my expense, cost me a lot quite frankly.

JM: So good.

LT: Yeah. I've often said, I think I talked about this in my book, *Uninvited*, which is primarily a book about rejection, when you feel left out, less than and lonely, and something that I became aware of is that a lot of times something will happen to me or I will make a choice. And from that, I develop a line that I say inside of my head. And that line, eventually if unattended to, turns into a label that I put on myself. So, you were saying, shame isn't just that we've done something wrong, but it's us determining we are something wrong. So, then the line that either someone else spoke over me, or I have this perception and I've spoken it over myself, that line turns into a label then that label very quickly turns into a lie that I believe. And I find myself really turning more to the lie rather than turning to the truth. And I want God's Words to be the words that become the story of my life. Not this lie that I believe because of a line that was spoken over me that I labeled myself with. So, the line turns into a label turns into a lie. And that lie then turns into a liability.

JC and JM: Totally. Yeah.

LT: And so, I think this is kind of the way for me that it starts to play out. And when I say a liability, it turns into a liability, not just of holding things that hold me back, but also liability in my relationships, and liability even in my relationship with God. So okay, so we know now the difference between shame and guilt. But how does it play out for you, Joel? Like what starts to happen that you're able to identify *that's shame*?

JM: Yeah, I think where the big thing that happens for me is when I begin to think about my own immediate consequences, like when I think about shame, and then I, to Jim's point, I get to self-hatred. I get to self-condemnation, I begin to listen to my own brain in my own echo chamber, of all the things that I have done wrong. And I begin to tell these stories about myself and almost it turns into an over exaggeration of myself, not in the way that God sees me but I would say in the way that the enemy sees me and in the way that is, exalted by our fallen nature.

So, what's really interesting is that I think both of you have said four words. And there's a fifth kind of idea. So, we've talked about guilt. We've talked about shame. We've talked about conviction. And we've talked about condemnation. And theologically, like once we introduce the theology concept here, I would just suggest that guilt and conviction are actually, really two godly, theologically appropriate responses. Genesis 1 and 2 tell us that you and I were created in the likeness and image of God. So, I want to go to identity here. What does it mean that we were created in the likeness and image of God? In the ancient Near East, so, this is like Mesopotamia, and the Canaanites and on all those ancient people, —

LT: And hold on, because, you know, Joel is about to get in his field right here, y'all. He is really, I mean, this is, this is why I like to work with Joel because I'm like, No, I haven't actually thought of Mesopotamia in a while, but let's go there, because I know it's going to lead me somewhere good. So, don't tune out right here, I want you to really get this because it's going to be good.

JM: Because we read a phrase like “likeness of an image”, and we just bypass it so quickly, right? But it's rooted in a historical context. And the context is that when those words are being used at that time around those people, it was actually a reflection of a king and his children. So, you would depict the likeness or the image of royalty with their children, and you would use those exact same words and phrases.

So, when Moses, who I think is writing Genesis says that Adam and Eve were created in the likeness and in the image of God, this is an identification of our sonship, of our daughtership, of the fact that we are made in the likeness and the image of the Royal King of heaven and earth. And so, this means the way that we think of ourselves should be through the lens of this theological truth, not what the enemy wants to step in and kind of bypass, and so, this is just another really quick thought. If we, guilt is a good thing in the sense that it lets us know that this is not how it ought to be.

JC: Yeah.

JM: Right. Guilt left unattended, and you used that word Lysa, guilt left unattended turns to shame. And it's the shame, it's in that sweet little spot between guilt and shame I think the enemy loves to play the same thing with conviction, condemnation. Conviction is a good, good thing. It reminds us that we have an area that we have to reorient ourselves to with God. However, if we don't act in response to the conviction, that little spot is where the enemy steps in, and that turns into condemnation. Conviction and guilt are meant to cause our hearts to turn back to Yahweh, turn back to God. But guilt, but shame and condemnation are tools used by the enemy to cause us to run away.

LT: Hmm, that is so good, Joel. And we were talking earlier too about you saying that it, it was not just what the feeling was in the moment, but it's where it's leading us too ultimately, right. And so, I think this is really important, when we have a thought, that we need to play that out a little bit and ask, like, where does this lead? If this is leading me, because conviction if unattended to when, when we're, it's almost like the Holy Spirit is kind of prompting us like, this is not what you need to be saying. This is not what you need to be doing, or don't participate in this activity, or don't turn to this as a coping mechanism or whatever, but that conviction is leading us to repentance, or even to prevention of sin. Like it's saying don't do this because if you do this it's going to cause you to get into this sin, or it's going to cause you to feel in a way that is not in keeping with who you really are.

But that condemnation, if it gets to that place where we're just feeling ultimately condemned, that's also going to lead us somewhere, and that condemnation will lead us into shame. And shame - Jim, I want you to comment on this - shame is going to lead us into something to cover up that shame. Because the thing about shame is, it is of the darkness and when kept in the darkness, it leads us further and further and further away from God's very best. So, it's almost like shame is a driving force to get legitimate needs met in an illegitimate way. And there is a plethora, I mean just a plethora of addictions and distractions and sin cycles that, that people can get into when this happens, right?

JC: It's so true. And to go back, which we've done on these podcasts before, to go back to Genesis 3. You're in Genesis 2, they're naked and unashamed. Genesis 3, all of a sudden, their eyes are open. Ah Oh, and they go from naked and unashamed to naked and ashamed. It's so interesting. The way I see it is then in that narrative with Adam and Eve, they grab fig leaves to cover their inadequacies. What was so beautiful and precious before, is like now so shameful and so scary. Then they jump over in bushes to hide from, interesting, from themselves. Like you can hide from yourself. People try to. They'll disconnect from themselves; shame is always about disconnection. It is always about disconnection.

Interestingly, that healthy guilt will lead us to connection if we follow the path, like to Psalm 51, a broken and contrite heart God won't despise. And so, they're over there hiding from themselves. Hiding from yourself, hiding from each other, and then hiding from God. So, what we want in life is connection. We're wired for it. And what we do in shame is we literally disconnect. Once I can disconnect, the nature abhors a vacuum. We were literally born, you know, in utero, we're connected with an umbilical cord to mom so nobody is going to stay disconnected. They will reach out and it really doesn't matter. They will reach out for something.

Addictions are usually shame driven, and yes, trauma driven, but out of trauma those messages can be I'm a loser; I'm unwanted. Those are shame messages. So, I will reach out for something in shame, but usually not something good. And that guilt part is so interesting that both the Bible would teach, I believe, and if you want to call it secular psychology would teach, we need healthy guilt because if we don't... see everybody has a personal value system. Everybody has a value system. Guilt is that whisper in your ear. Maybe someone's yelling in your ear saying "this is incongruent with what you say you believe in, certainly in the Word of God. This is incongruent with what your values are as a Christian." So, guilt is a friend saying, stop, don't go down that path. Shame will say, actually do go down this path.

And then the last thing I want to say is if you try to fight shame with shame, it's one of the most common things people will do. They're in shame, and they fight shame with shame, shame themselves more or watch somebody outside basically tries to shame them as someone's in their own shame. And

then you speak even words of condemnation over them. I see that all the time, which is either why you are doing it or the other person trying to fight shame, with shame, that will spin you down that vortex of shame, darkness really quickly.

JM: And I think Jim, what you're saying, and Lysa, what you've said, there's this underlying current or thread, which is the difference between isolation, individualization and darkness versus biblically, the people of God, the family of God, the presence of the Spirit of God, to unite us together to be able to deal with these issues. And so, I do think one of the tragedies of part of our cultural context and situation is that we have felt more alone than we've ever felt before. But we have more opportunity to quote, unquote, connect to each other, you know, and so I just think that's really interesting that one path, this path of shame, and condemnation will lead you to self-isolation and self-hatred.

JC: And disconnection.

JM: And disconnection.

JC: Yeah, that we're wired for connection and that isolation piece that we started off, I think we started off this podcast with, when we talk about any level of disconnection and isolation, here's the practical, yet deadly part: If I can get isolated and disconnected over here, everything's possible. People say, how could you do this? Which is not a wise thing to say, by the way. What were you thinking in shame? They're in that limbic brain that we've talked about here before. They're not thinking, this prefrontal cortex, prefrontal cortex is offline. So, they're there. And it's like, what were you thinking? Not a really good question. They're not thinking. And once I go down, I say that shame is the runway for addiction to take off on. So, when you're in shame, all things are possible. How could you do that? I'm in shame, I'm disconnected. I can do anything.

LT: And the limbic part of the brain is that fight, flight, freeze, freak out.

JC: Yes.

LT: And you've even said fornicate.

JC: Or forage. People, all this eating stuff is very primal, if you will, a very limbic brain, because it's about I feel like I'm dying. And therefore, I am going to do something fight, flight freeze, freak out, fornicate. A lot of sexual activity is that way. And here's the thing, the worst of the three major F's fight, flight, or freeze is freeze. Shame is notorious for getting someone to freeze because at least in fight or flight, you've got some movement going, but you get in that and you literally will get paralyzed in shame. It just seems as layer after layer, and you can go down a rabbit hole, so deep in shame that it can feel like it's quite hard to come out of.

LT: So, speaking of that, how do we come out of it? Or how do we help someone who we know is already down in that vortex of shame. Because this is really the root of addictions, it's at the root of narcissism. A lot of people think that the root of narcissism is pride, it's really a cover up for some deep, deep shame that is there. And that, you know, it's not just narcissistic personality disorder, but it's narcissistic tendencies, which we all have - that at the root of it, it's some kind of cover up for shame.

So, addictions and narcissism and, you know, we were talking earlier, even like, bingeing on Netflix, or overeating.

JC: Which is its own connection. Right? You will say, well, you said, you'll always reach out for a connection, even in shame. That's a connection, that I can binge watch however much and it'll even their notice, we're watching those shows. I'm not against Netflix, but the body and brain and soul, I believe there is going to feel like, yeah, I know those people, that sitcom, or in that drama, or in that movie. Those are all stories and narratives. We're wired for story. So, it will feel like I'm connected in kind of an alternative world, but it's still about connection.

LT: Right? And the same thing with pornography. You know, and it's kind of like I know, sometimes when people do not struggle with pornography, they look at pornography and they just don't get it. But if you understand that, looking through the lens of shame, it is a way to connect with no emotional responsibility.

JM: Yeah.

JC: And I love that we're going to do our podcast coming up on emotional maturity, immaturity. And you look at that dynamically on just the pornography issue. It doesn't require the person viewing it to show up. The Trinity invented sex, not man. God, Father, Son, Holy Spirit, invented sexuality for bonding, attachment, oneness. And so, when someone is there viewing pornography, it will feel like that there is a connection. Virtually they feel like they actually are being sexual. And then the problem is at the end of that, in sex between a man and a woman, there would be oxytocin.

Everybody knows mothers with babies and bonding, the bonding chemical, guys, all those neuro chemicals plummet at the end of sexuality. And when they plummet, the only one God left there that we know of is oxytocin to bond. Well, when you are by yourself and watching that, the end of that's why despair is always at the end of an acting out sexual cycle. You're left to bond with nothingness, nothing. You can't bond with yourself. So therefore, you've reached out for connection in the end, extremely feeling like I am so utterly alone.

LT: So, I want to get to what is the solution? Because I would imagine that biblically, and psychologically, there are solutions. So, I want to get to those. But as to the connection, let me just read a verse because I think that this is very telling. It's one that we were talking about Jim, from Jeremiah chapter 2. I want to go before verse 13. I want to go to Jeremiah 2, halfway through verse 11 and it says, "... *but my people have exchanged their glorious God for worthless idols.*"

So, they've exchanged the connection with a God that satisfies; a God that gives peace; a God that gives just joy; and they've traded that for worthless idols that in the end, are no connection at all. And then let's keep going down to verse 13. "*My people have committed two sins, they have forsaken me the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns, broken cisterns that cannot hold water.*" And I've been in Israel before and actually put my eyes on a cistern and it is muddy. It is sometimes stagnant. And it is no substitute at all for a spring that you could literally hold your water bottle up to and with confidence know that this is living water. This is water that's going to be good. And you stick your water bottle down in a broken cistern, I mean, you could very well pull up mud. Yes, there's an element of water to it, but it's not going to be satisfaction.

JC: Think about which we've talked about before. It's not, think about it, you know, this, the dilemma and having worked with many people with addictions, the thing that the broken cistern does do: It is on demand God. I've said G.O.D. does not stand for God on Demand. So, He is living water, He provides the living water, it's everything. But that lack of trust, the sense that, you won't be there God. And I've watched. In one point for a year after college, I lived at the Salvation Army with alcoholics and drug addicts, and the stuff they would try to drink, the unbelievable ways they tried to get alcohol, but they knew it was on demand. So, the broken cistern is deadly. It's terrible. But it's on demand. And some people would say I would rather have this, and yes, its muddy water, but I can get it whenever I want.

You've seen people, we've all seen people, destroy their lives with addictions. Because I know if I drink the bottle, if I take the drugs, if I act out with porn, it is here instantly. It is here now. In the moment, it feels like a connection – watch – to the broken cistern. But in the end, as the Word of God says, I've said before, Deuteronomy 30 “*life and death, blessing and cursing, I say that you choose life.*” It feels like life in the moment because it'll numb out even a broken cistern, but always delivers death, just in that moment.

LT: I've said before, so my issue isn't so much drugs and alcohol and all of that, but more like french fries. You know? So, I've said before, it's much easier sometimes to figure out how to drive through a fast-food restaurant and get french fries that will give me a temporary sense of fullness–

JC: Usually in less than five minutes because they're running the clock in the drive thru. You better get them through.

LT: Yes. And so sometimes it's easier to get that instant satisfaction of french fries than it is to open up my Bible and get that hit of instant satisfaction. So, you know, I just, I think no matter where you're at, humanity does this. It is not just the children of Israel; it is a human condition. So, we've established what it does to us, this shame and condemnation, the difference between guilt which can lead to repentance and conviction which can, you know, prompt us to not do something as opposed to condemnation, which keeps us away from God and stuck in possibly a sin cycle? So, we've talked about all that.

But what do we do? Okay? We recognize sin in us, or shame in us. And we recognize maybe somebody's stuck in a cycle of shame that we love very much. Jim, you've mentioned a couple things. Don't say, what were you thinking? I think that's a really good, helpful, practical tip. But what do we do? And I'd love to hear both from Joel and Jim on this. What do we do when shame is very present?

JM: Yeah, I would say let's listen to what Paul says, and this might be helpful. Ephesians 4. And I think it's important to understand what's happening in the city of Ephesus. The Temple of Artemis is there. It's one of the wonders of the world. This is a place when we talk about all these things. I mean, debauchery and fornication and drug addiction. I mean, this was rampant in the Temple of Artemis.

JC: There's nothing new under the sun, right?

JM: There is nothing new underneath the sun. We've been turning to the same vices for ages since the beginning and yet there's a virtue that God has given us that we should seek after. And this is how Paul

describes it, and what Paul is doing is really summarizing what we've been talking about, this idea that - and we're going to talk about it more later - there is an old self that is associated with a dark way of living, that is bent on self-glorification, which is ultimately self-hatred. I'm curious what you think about that.

JC: I totally agree. That's right where it ends. Yeah.

JM: But that's kind of what I think like, we think we're glorifying ourselves. But actually, it's an act of hatred of self-hatred. And so, it's so intriguing, but this is what Paul says, and he starts in verse 22. What chapter? Ephesians chapter 4. I would definitely suggest you read verses 17 through 22. He talks about the futility of our minds. *"We were once darkened, and our understanding were alienated from the life of God."* So that is our past sense. But then in verse 22, he says this, *"to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life, and is corrupt through what deceitful desires, and to be renewed."* So, we were once corrupt, but *"to be renewed in the spirit of your minds and to put on the new self, created after what the likeness of God in true righteousness, and holiness."* And I think this is the very practical and unexpected. How do we do this? *"Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another."*

And so, I do really believe what Paul is getting at here is, in a sense, what do we do, we do what we've just done, we have to identify the falsehoods, we've got to name them for what they are, we've got to see them for what they are. One of the things I've learned, Jim from you, and from Lysa is actually tangibly, sometimes writing these things out so you can visibly see them. But I also see this other great principle that Paul is getting at. And the principle is we were not meant to do this alone. To be a part of the family of God is to be surrounded with brothers and sisters that can speak the Truth of the gospel into your life.

What is the Truth of the gospel? That you are not your worst moment. Right? You are not your best moment. You are a reflection of Christ on the cross and His victory over sin and death. And so, just very tangibly, being in relationship. And so, I would just say and suggest if you find yourself isolated from the family of God, that is one indication, one tangible step to fight aggressively to be connected to the family of God. And that typically happens within the local church.

LT: And Joel, it's not just about going to church, although that is important. But if we go and we're just sitting on the last row or, you know, in that last section of seats, and we're not ever connecting personally with people, then we're kind of missing what's so important here. And that is connection. And, Jim, you've taught me this, it's really about intimacy. And it's having someone close enough or a group of people close enough where you feel safe enough to have into me you see intimacy. And, you know, it's not that we want to be completely naked with someone, but it's that we want to have an opportunity with people to see the stripped-down version of us; the part of us without the performance, without the pretense, without all the accolades, and without all the props. You know, it's just the stripped-down version of me emotionally, and maybe spiritually, that you allow them to see. Naked we came into this world. Naked will go out of this world. But vulnerability, even though we wear clothes, but vulnerability is what really provides intimacy. So, Joel, what you're saying is having those connections, biblically, is part of how we can get out of isolation. Which isolation, it seems like, is kind of feeding into the shame and continuing the cycle of shame.

JM: And I would just say very practically too, when you have that level of connectivity and intimacy, we've been working together long enough, where we could say, hey, I kind of understand that you have this doubt, and you're beginning to work down this spiral. And that's the intersection that we have, responsibilities as brothers and sisters in Christ, to be able to speak truth in love in those moments. In a way that if I am isolated, I'm not going to be able to see those on my own. I'm just going to keep going down that black hole. And so yeah.

LT: And sometimes, I think shame sneaks out in snarky comments people make about themselves and others, you know. And so, sometimes, I think if you're in a safe, more intimate friendship with someone, you can have the opportunity to just say, stop that thought. Yeah, like, take that thought, or I'll see them. Or I can even find myself being resistant to take a compliment, because it's almost like me saying, if you really knew me, you would never say something so nice. So sometimes when I see people resisting a compliment that I give them, I'll say, no, I want you to take that compliment. I want you to put it right here on your chest, I want you to rub it in and let it sink in. Because it's truth. And the resistance that you're feeling right now is because the truth I'm speaking over you is bumping into a lie that you're carrying inside, and you need to make room for the truth by uninviting the lie from inside of you. So, Jim I would love just any counseling, wisdom or wisdom that comes from your counseling brilliance. So, if I'm sitting in front of you today on your famous couch, and I am struggling with shame, what are you telling me? Like what is what is the thing that I need to remember or shift in my thinking?

JC: I'm going to start with what I call the hub of communication. It's the hub of connection, I hear you. And people can hear this and think, well, that's just cheesy or trite. No, it's not. It's simple. The Hub is I hear you, you as I understand you, or I'm trying to understand you, and be as I believe you. And often I'll say to people very simply, that makes sense. Of course, that makes sense. So, I want to connect that way. The person understands that I'm trying to be safe.

If you share, according to researcher, Dr. Brené Brown, and we know this experientially, if you share your shame story, your trauma story, your abuse story with someone who's not safe, it literally will just explode inside you and make it where safety is crucial. That's to a degree why a lot of counseling exists to go in. It's confidential. It's safe. Dr. Brené Brown again says the key that she's found in her research on dealing with shame, like indeed an antidote to shame, is empathy. Notice empathy for yourself. I also like the word compassion. Dr. Kristin Neff, has an incredible book called *Self-Compassion*. Calm means with passion to suffer. So, I want to, in an appropriate way, suffer with my story. I want to walk with my story, looking for self-empathy. And then an empathy for someone says, tell me more. That's, I tell people constantly, if you don't have anything else in relationship, say, is there more, tell me more, invite them to share.

And then as I look at another Brené Brown quote that I love, and I've used time and time again, it's been on this podcast before talking about dealing with shame, an antidote to that. She says, “we tend to orphan off parts of our story, I'm not going to share that.” If I could tell how many times people have left my office and come back, or in the middle of the office said, I was taking that one to my grave. And we've talked about if you're in a rut in your life, that's just a grave with both ends knocked out of it already. I'm taking that one to my grave. Don't take things to your grave. Share with one to two people. So, she says we tend to orphan off parts of our story, you can't do that. And no, she adds, which I love, “is you either walk inside your story, all of it, or you will spend your life walking outside your story and outside yourself and do what? Hustle for your worthiness.” If there was ever a shame driven statement, I

will be hustling for my worthiness, maybe I can be worthy with God. Maybe if I do this, I'll get God's approval.

Maybe you are, which is, one of the heights of shame is the perfectionist and some enneagram numbers which is not for this program today, struggle with that because the perfectionism is one guarantee you can never pull off. You will constantly fall back in shame, empathy, self-empathy, empathy of another person towards you. And then I just want to add to it, which may take some time to get to for a person: Psalm 51. In the addiction cycle, if you have shame at the top of it, that's the runway for that thing to take off. You're thinking about a preoccupation of how you're going to act out. The rituals come in, then you act out, then it's despair at the end of it. At that moment of despair, where you're like, I can't believe I've done it again. You can either go to shame and spin around, or you can go to Psalm 51: "*a broken and contrite heart God will not despise.*" How does David open the passage? "*Have mercy on me? Oh, God,*" Are you going to go vertical to God at that moment or are you going to go internal? There is an exit ramp out of shame through Psalm 51.

LT: That's beautiful. So, I started off today's episode with my story, just a snippet of it, about carrying the weight of shame after having made the decision to have an abortion. And I carried that shame for so long. I eventually wound up going to a, at that time it was called a crisis pregnancy center. And, and they offered post abortion Bible studies. My good friend Pat Layton has one now called *Surrender the Secret*. It's a great resource. But I got into the post recovery of the post abortion recovery Bible study, I wouldn't even do it in a group. I told the lady, the only way that I will meet with you is by myself. And I had no clue what a huge ask that was of her. And, and I told her I wouldn't even walk in the front door of the center, because I was too ashamed.

So, this kind counselor would meet me at the back door each week. She would lead me up a back staircase into a little room where she would just speak truth about my identity over and over and over and I could hear her words. And I kept thinking, yes, this applies to most people. But it doesn't apply to me. And then one day, she shared her story. And she asked me the question, Lysa, do you know why I do this? Do you know why I volunteer here? And she shared her story of how she had had an abortion. And there was something so transformative in my ability to believe that the truth she was speaking, if it could apply to her, it can apply to me too. And then I knew. I knew what I needed to do. If I wanted to get rid of this shame, I needed to get to a place where I was healed enough to share my story.

And I just knew. I watched her. And she told me every time she shares her story; she gets healed more and more and more. And she wasn't speaking out of her brokenness. She was speaking out of the restoration and the redemption of her life. And so, it took me a little. I still had a lot of healing I had to do. And then one day, I found out about a young girl that had made an appointment to go have an abortion, and I met her at this little fast-food restaurant, I sat across from her I was terrified to share my story. But when I did, I it was almost as if the more the light bulbs came on in her eyes and the more, she so appreciated my empathy for her situation, the more that I could feel those shackles of shame.

JC: And we have often mirror neurons there that you know about - literally that God put in - that it's not just oh, I can feel this. They're literally these mirror neurons that go on, you literally are healing. And notice this precious lady. She walked you, literally talked about one of the antidotes to shame is empathy. She literally walked you in and down and up a path of empathy before she even brought you to God's Word. That's a perfect picture of empathy.

LT: And I wouldn't have been ready at that point to stand up in front of, you know, a whole group of people or even hundreds of people or certainly not, I wasn't ready yet to share my testimony in front of like the whole church or anything like that. But just doing it one on one - when I saw God take what I felt had not only been used for evil in my life but had rendered me evil, but when I saw God take that and use it for good in another person's life, it started to cure me of my shame. And it was a beautiful thing. And so, any last thoughts, Joel or a verse or anything that you want to end this on? And Jim, I want to get your last thoughts too.

JM: Yeah, I just think it's so intriguing that sometimes we maybe overlook the God never asks us to do something that He Himself hasn't done first. And so, I love this just a couple sentences in Exodus 3:7-8, the Israelites are in plight, they're in bondage in Egypt and this is what the Lord says to Moses: "*Then the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people who are in Egypt and I've heard their cry because of their taskmasters. I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians.*" And so, just those descriptive words He's seen us. He's heard us. He knows of the suffering, and therefore He acts. And the intriguing thing about Exodus 3 is, the way that God acts is through Moses. That is His sender. And I just loved the story that you had, Lysa, that the way that God acted in that situation was through that generous kind, lady who met you in the moment of your needs, that you could now meet so many people in their moments of need.

LT: Absolutely. And I love that it's revealed there. So much of what keeps us in shame is that we have something secret that we feel like no one else should ever know. But God already does know. He already knows. He already sees us. And I truly believe shame is Satan's signature. And where he can take and write shame across some pages of our life or some part of our life. That's where he feels like, aha, I found the secret that's going to keep you turning to me and hidden in darkness rather than turning to God. But the truth is, God already sees. He already knows. He is so fully aware. And all He wants us to do is turn from the darkness into the light and He will be right there to help us. Okay, Jim, wrap us up with anything you have that you want to share.

JC: Yeah, the, for me, at least the most shameful event that ever happened ever in recorded history, seen on the largest social network ever. It's recorded in the Word of God is at Calvary. So, shame has been paid in full. Literally Jesus bore, if we will, yes, our sins. Calvary, as we've talked here, we'll talk again more about the trauma egg. That's Jesus' trauma egg right there. He literally bore all the narratives, the stories, the abuse, every atrocity that's ever happened to you. He bore that in his body, literally becoming that shame for a moment. So, it's been paid for in full, as we know to tell us, paid in full. It is finished. And so that's all been covered.

And wherever you are today, in your shame, I bring you I John 1:7, which I love this verse, memorized as a child, "*Whatever has gone on, but if we walk in the light, shame cannot abide in the light.*" It just cannot. It needs dark crevices. "*If we walk into the light as He is in the light, it is there*" notice connection. "*It is there that we fellowship, one with another,*" and then God adds through John. "*And if you have any doubt, the blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from what all sin, all shame has been paid in full.*" Today, Deuteronomy 30, again, the paths of shame, right? God has said before, He is a good, good father, the path of, of blessing and of life for the passive path of cursing, or death. And He says as a good Father choose life.

LT: Thank you so much, Jim, Joel, it's always a joy to do this. If you want a list of verses that we've talked about in the show today, Bible verses that I think are going to be the power behind everything that we've shared, and certainly the power for you to have in front of you God's Word. At Proverbs 31 we say, if you *Know the Truth and Live the Truth, It Changes Everything*. So, I want to make sure you have these Bible verses, we'll put a link in the show notes so that you can have access to those. Thank you for joining us today. God bless.