

the
PROVERBS 31
MINISTRIES
podcast

Biblical truth for any girl in any season.

Copyright 2018 Proverbs 31 Ministries. All rights reserved.

Lysa TerKeurst: Hi, I'm Lysa TerKeurst. Welcome to *Therapy & Theology*. One of my favorite parts of my job at Proverbs 31 Ministries is doing this podcast, specifically this series where we combine therapy, really good counseling techniques, ideas, definitions with solid theology. So, I'd like to welcome back of course, our resident theologian, Joel Muddamalle, welcome Joel.

Joel Muddamalle: Thanks, Lys.

LT: And Jim Cress, who is my personal therapist, but also, I'm just going to say world renowned counselor. You not only are a Christian counselor, but you also have a degree from Seminary, right?

Jim Cress: Dallas Theological Seminary.

LT: Yes.

JM: That was a good one.

LT: That was good. So, it's always fun to sit down and process topics that are very relevant to mental health issues, spiritual health issues and just general well-being as a human.

JC: And may I say something real quick?

LT: Yes.

JC: I don't think we've done this on any of the *Therapy & Theology* videos, and if we didn't, I want to do this now. I remember when you talked, I'm sure you'd talked with Joel, this is very important, and you'd said I've got an idea. And the title, I think is killer, *Therapy & Theology*, and you said so many people, you're one of the most truly compassionate, empathic people I've ever met, and you said, so many people are not going to be able to afford therapy and I want to bring good quality therapy, good quality theology. And what I love is I bring theology in, as you do. You bring therapy in, and this incredible man brings therapy stuff in all the time.

You add the vision for people who may not be able to afford it, and as we look back now, however many shows we're in deep on this, there is so much good therapy and good theology. I just want to honor that you had that vision to say, let's bring to people who probably will never hear it. And I hope

they'll go back and watch these again and again or share them with friends or people that just can't afford, or they have the stigma they won't go to therapy. Thank you for your vision. That's what we do here.

LT: Thank you Jim, thank you. Yeah. And sometimes it's that people can't afford it, or they can't find a counselor in their area that they really connect with. Or, for some people, it feels too scary.

JC: Of course, it does.

LT: And so, it's easier to sometimes pull up a podcast and get a taste of what this is. Which our desire always is, if you need further help, please connect with the American Association of Christian Counselors, aacc.net, I believe is the website.

JC: That is right.

LT: And find a counselor that you can go to, to really process personally. But this is a great first step. So, thank you Jim, we really appreciate it.

So, in our last episode, we talked about shame and guilt. We talked about the differences. We talked about what to listen for, to kind of be aware that you or someone you love is struggling with shame, and then what to do about it. Today, we want to dive in a little bit deeper into a part of shame that I think is really going to help you have more self-awareness. It's helped me tremendously. And that's this idea of shame scripts. These scripts that we repeat to ourselves, or maybe we don't even realize we're repeating it to ourselves. Maybe like Jim, you've said, "it's like a ticker tape that runs on the bottom of a TV". It's just running pretty rampant in your subconscious, but it's changing the way you perceive things, what you believe about yourself, others and God, and it is affecting you probably more than you know. So, what is a shame script? So, I'll start.

JC: Oh, you're going to be vulnerable here?

LT: I'm going to be vulnerable.

JC: Good.

LT: I know. And then I'm going to turn to you and do some forced vulnerability, how's that sound?

JC: Forced vulnerability, okay.

LT: But before I get to my shame script, I want to tell you how Jim helped me even become aware of this. Because of course, if it's just running in the back of your mind affecting your perceptions and your beliefs, maybe you have no clue what it is. Now, some people will say, Oh, yeah, I know what mine is. But I didn't. And so, Jim did this wonderful technique that helped me realize what was happening.

So, I took a piece of poster board, and I wrote, I drew out a stick figure scene. Like little scenes, anytime I'd felt traumatized, abused, emotionally, physically, sexually —

JC: Something impactful.

LT: Rejection —

JC: Any of that.

LT: When I felt rejected or abandoned. Something that felt significant in my life, from my earliest childhood memory to the present. So, I drew all these little stick figure scenes and have little boxes around them. So, there were different scenes, and I had quite a few of them. So, then you told me to take my poster, and in one of our sessions, you said, now, just tell me, tell me about what happened in each one of these stick figure scenes. And it's not about the drawing, he wasn't judging my artistic abilities. But it was just a safe place for me to say, okay, this happened, I'll tell you about it. And then this happened. I'll tell you about it. And then when I was eight, and then when I was 20, and then when I was 30. And then you know, I'm old, so I kept going. And what you were listening for is what, Jim?

JC: The impact, because we love to say, well, you know, my story, and that's it. That's the fact and you've written about this now yourself, is the impact. I think, well, this happened to her then I ponder with curiosity, I wonder what that did to her. The same sun outside today that hardens clay, softens butter. So, I can't think what happened to your sister; What happened to Joel or me. How did it impact you? I'm always listening, and pondering impact.

LT: And what became evident is some shame scripts.

JC: Yeah.

LT: Some beliefs about myself, others, God that have affected, and that still do, if I'm not fully in tune with what's really going on.

JC: Sure, right.

LT: But these shame scripts; it's these sentences, it's these perceptions, these beliefs that help me interpret something, but not always with the greatest sense of truth.

JC: That's right.

LT: And, you know, I've heard the statement said many times, you know, just be true to yourself. I understand what's behind that sentiment.

JC: Yeah.

LT: But I think shame scripts really point out the fact that we need to make sure that we are being true to our most healed, healthy, whole, wholly surrendered to God selves. Because if we're being true to our most unhealthy self, we're being true to our shame scripts, then we probably are not operating with the healthiest perspectives, and maybe even with some faulty beliefs about ourselves, others and God. So, all that to say, that's how we discovered this shame script. So, here's my moment of vulnerability, ready?

OK, so my shame script, I think, it's probably one of my most pervasive ones, I probably have a primary and then I have some that are secondary, too.

JC: Sure.

LT: But my primary one is basically, Lysa, you are unwanted. And because you're unwanted, you need to make sure to never, ever ask too much of other people, because you're going to get disappointed. And really, the caution that I give myself all the time, because of this shame script is, do not ask too much of other people, because you are an inconvenience.

JC: Notice F-I-T; Fact, there it is, Impact, shame script, Track, is what I do. Fact, Impact, Track. The track is where you go with it and it becomes relational. Right? I mean, to me, you just did that eloquently.

LT: Thank you. So, and for me, I bump into this more times than you could believe because think about what we talked about on our last show about shame, that all humans are created for connection. And so, think about how this shame script, now, you go, wow, Lysa, you know, mine is this, which sounds so much worse than that. But think of how this plays out in my life. Every time I have an opportunity to connect with someone, I have to battle. Have I asked too much of them? I should probably just do it myself. Remember this one time I asked something of somebody, and they didn't do it. So, it's just easier not to rely on other people.

JC: Sure.

LT: And do you see how it's kind of backing me into this place of isolation? And I battle it all the time. So, what's funny is you've let me in on a potential shame script about even coming on *Therapy & Theology*. Do you know what I battle? I wonder when the day is going to come where Jim's like, I've given too much. Like, Lysa, I'm not gonna do *Therapy & Theology* anymore. And so, I'm all the time questioning, how do I make sure that Jim feels valued? How do I make sure...? Do you see how this plays out? And even sometimes —

JC: And then I see what's over here with me going, do you remember what I said before we went on the air?

LT: Yes.

JC: And I said about doing *Therapy & Theology*, and so sometimes therapy is tiring.

LT: Yes, yes.

JC: And that's okay. I'm called to it. And I said to come out here, and I've got a 35-year radio broadcast background, this is God redeeming that because I walked away in 2014 from hosting three national radio shows a day. And to come here it is fun. I told you out there and back here this morning. I said, love you, and I said you are so fun to work with. You're not a weird theologian. No, he's just cool and I love what we've started here and so I told you before we went on set here it's like, thank you for letting me do this. This is actually so much fun.

LT: And so isn't that ironic that my shame script would cause me to back off from Jim and make assumptions. Like I would give assignments to you because remember, my shame script is a faulty perception of myself, others and God. And it's usually leading me toward isolation, which is where shame thrives. Remember, shame operates in the darkness. And shame wants to pull us toward the isolation and the darkness. And so, for me to say, oh, man, I wonder when the day is going to come when Joel just doesn't want to do this anymore or Jim doesn't want to do this anymore. You know, I really need to prepare myself for that.

And it always goes back to, Lysa, don't ask too much of other people, you know. Or Lysa you're unwanted. And eventually they're going to say, No, I'm not going to do this with you anymore. And so, I think these shame scripts not only impact the way we think about ourselves, but it also becomes a liability in our relationships, as we give assignments to other people that they really don't deserve because they're not thinking what we think they might be thinking

JC: Or thinking the very opposite.

LT: Or thinking the very opposite. Oh, okay, Jim you're turn, moment of vulnerability here.

JC: Yeah, mine is, there are many shame scripts, or at least a few, and so I've been in therapy as a client for literally so many years. Mine is, it starts with the words "if you really knew me", and that it's that imposter syndrome, that you will find out how much I don't know, or that I'm really not that good of a counselor. And I shared one with you the other day is I'm going to pop something out here with a theologian, and he's going to go, kind of wrong over their buddy. You know, not good (unintelligible) Jesus. That's low for me, because I trust you all, and you in here. But inside, if you really knew me, you would find out like a fraud or I'm inadequate to do counseling.

And there are days because how God called me, I was a radio broadcaster all those years. Never thought I'd go be a therapist. I love doing therapy. So, days, I still wake up as I will do in my office and say, how did I end up being here? I'm never embarrassed to be on a set like this or in a radio or TV thing? That's home for me. But how did I end up being the therapist? I'm always the client. What I do there, though, which you didn't ask me is 2 Corinthians 10:5, I take those thoughts captive, making (unintelligible) Christ and say, Jimbo, because God's called you to be here, and you're helping some people. But the still thing, and I'm not worried about that message ever going away, it just doesn't move from the crawl down here up to the large screen of my life and define me. It's there and I notice it like, go away mosquito. I know the truth. I'm always answering it.

LT: That's great. Okay, Joel?

JM: Yeah. So, it's a little bit similar to what you said, Jim, I think executes a little bit differently. It's, it's my performance, I've got to be the one, and this is from growing up and some cultural stuff as a kid, but I've got to be the one who performs. And then my fear is, if I don't perform, people are going to find out that I'm actually a fraud. And that is like the terrifying thing you know. And so, it's, it's funny, like you would introduce me, even in this episode of saying, you know, our resident theologian, and I love that. But the, the ticker tape that's running in the back of my head is, am I really a theologian? Like, am I good enough to do this? Like, like, maybe there should be somebody else that's here. And so, you're

worried about the day that I might say, hey, Lysa, I think I'm done. I'm worried about the day where Lysa's like, you really didn't bring much to the table today Joel, so I think we're gonna find somebody else. So that's, that is funny. That is, you know, how it works out for me.

LT: And I think this affects not only, like I said, how we think about ourselves and our perception of ourselves and the shame that that we carry with us that we're always navigating just the realities of, but it really impacts our relationships. So here are a couple others, and we may or may not have polled people in our study day, hashtag staff and family members. So, we may or may not have polled people to say like, hey, what do you think your shame script is and, and yours is going to be unique to you. But let me give you a couple –

JC: We changed the names to protect the guilty here, right?

LT: That's right.

JC: I just want to make sure, okay.

LT: Or innocent, but guilty. Okay, if you really knew me, you wouldn't like me. I feel disqualified because, and then it could be my weight, my height, my lack of speech, my ability to not be able to spell or whatever. So, if you really knew me, I would be disqualified. And then another one is if I don't do this for myself, no one will do this for me. I'm not the worst, but I'm definitely not the best. I'm only as good as my last successful item completed. I'm as bad as my most recent mistakes. So just that out of proportion, internal shaming, I don't want to be a disappointment. If I disappoint someone, then I'll feel bad about myself. I don't want to feel exposed because then I will feel unsafe, weak, vulnerable, and then someone else can control me.

And I think a big one that was kind of repeated that's kind of simmering underneath so many of these is I'm not good enough. And I remember one time a young person that is in my life that I just love so much, I remember them saying to me, you know, I'm just not good enough. And I remember thinking, when did that ever become the goal? Like when did the goal ever become that you're just good enough? Like nobody wants to be just good enough. You're better than good enough. So, you know, you are a child of God, holy and dearly loved. And then I started speaking things over them about personal, you know, realities about their life and I could see the light bulb coming on in their eyes. So that takes me to this place of Scripture that Joel, where's my favorite place in Scripture to go to?

JM: Genesis chapters 1, 2 and 3.

LT: I know. You know me well, and what version of the Bible am I using, much to your chagrin.

JM: NIV all day. every day?

JC: The non-inspired version? Sorry, Zondervan. I didn't mean that I use it too.

LT: Yes, but the thing is, I've memorized so many verses, in the NIV, so even if I'm reading ESV or CSV, or, you know, King James or whatever, my brain will literally revert back to NIV. So, okay, you're welcome. I don't charge extra for all the Bible insights there. But let's go to Genesis, chapter 1 and I

think that this is really important. In Genesis chapter 1, verse 27-28a, it says, *“So God created mankind in his own image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it’*, we’re gonna come back to that but I think it’s really important that we understand that God was, God was the blueprint, if you will, and we are a direct reflection of who God is; His goodness, His glory. And so, we are made in that image. And I think that’s lost on us sometimes because we hold our image up to expectations of the world. Am I skinny enough? Am I cute enough? Am I stylish enough? Am I with it enough? Am I smart enough? Am I educated enough?

You know, we hold the definition of ourselves up to this impossible standard of the world, when in reality, we are enough because of who God is not because of some form, fashion or function of our own self. So, keep that in mind. But then let’s go down to Genesis chapter 2, and I think this is a verse that has intrigued me and at times haunted me. So, let me just read it to you. Let’s go to halfway through verse 20. *“But for Adam”*, and this is Genesis chapter 2, halfway through verse 20, *“But for Adam no suitable helper was found”*. Verse 21. *“So the LORD God caused the man to fall into a deep sleep; and while he was sleeping, he took one of the man’s ribs and closed up that place with flesh. Then the LORD God made a woman from the rib taken out of the man, and he brought her to the man.”*

Okay, so, you know, sometimes when I’m studying Scripture, and I come across certain words, I tend to pay attention to the individual words. So, I’m constantly asking Joel, okay, let’s take this back to the original language, let’s make sure that we really understand the fullness of this word, and that something’s not getting lost in translation. So of course, if we’re in the Old Testament, we’re going back to Hebrew. And I try not to do this all the time, but when I’m studying, I really love to do this, because I don’t only want to read the Bible, but I want the Bible to read me. So, when the light was reading me, then I just try to soak in the Word as it is, but when I’m reading the Word, I love to dig in. So, my question became this, if God said that it’s not good for the man to be alone, which is an amazing verse actually, if you think about it, it’s not good for the man to be alone, right? So, He created a helper suitable. So, it seems like this is a very important situation. So, my question is, what am I supposed to help with? As a woman, what am I supposed to help with? And what would make me fit or suitable and what would make me not suitable because this is really important. So, Joel and I did some digging in this and it appears, and I’ll let you say the word Joel, because I want you to get the Hebrew word in, but it appears that this Hebrew word, suitable or fit, in the ESV is very I know, thank you.

JC: You just had to get that in, didn’t you?

JM: Some people might be looking at the ESV. I don’t know.

LT: They might. Good for you Joel. Um, but it has two meanings that I think are very significant. So, I’m going to turn it over to you, Joel.

JM: Yeah. This is really important and it’s interesting because the word actually shows up in verse 18, it’s not good for the man so I’ll make a helper fit or suitable for him. And again, in verse 20. So, what is this word fit? It’s the Hebrew word *neged* –

LT: And how do we spell it?

JM: The transliteration of the Hebrew word would be N E, G, E, D. And the most literal translation of this suitable fit is true, but it is also one who is opposite, or in front of, it's a reflection of or a mirror of. And this is one of the things about the biblical text, y'all I just to let you know, we are perpetual students of God's Word. There's never a moment that we just arrived. Recently, like, within the last couple of days, while we've been back in this verse, I've been doing more Hebrew study, and I looked into this word a little bit deeper, and this word, neged, there's a noun form of the word which is negid with an "id" instead of an "ed", and that means prince, or royalty.

So, in the word, there's this family of words, and one of the connotations, one of the ways to think about it is also in royalty. So, what is happening here? And I'm going to hand it back to Lysa. But it seems like, absolutely, there's an intentionality of God placing Eve in front of, opposed to him, mirrored to him, and who is Eve but an image bearer, a person made in the likeness image of God, and who our image bearers, royalty, children of the King.

LT: Yes. And so, it appears as if Eve is reflecting something back to the man, not something of herself like a mirror, so it's not a perfect reflection of Adam. Adam and Eve are very physically different. But she is reminding Adam of the royalty that they both possess, because they're made in the image of God. So, let's go back really quickly and look at why would this be important and what does this have to do with shame scripts?

So, if you look at the ingredients that the man is made from, it says very clearly that God chose the dust of the ground, now God had access to everything and I think it's kind of ironic that God would choose this ingredient dust. Because, you know, think about if you go and dust your house or dust your bookshelf today, and you use I don't know, like a Swiffer wipe or something, one of those that collects the dust okay. So, you use this. I've never seen someone go, wow, precious dust. Amazing. Let me put it in a little acrylic shadow box and let's treasure you forever. No, what do you do with the dusty rag? You wash it, or you throw it away? Right? So, dust is seemingly pretty insignificant. But man is not just dust. Man is also breath of God, made in the image of God, meant to, if we look back up Genesis chapter 1, fill the earth.

Now right before that, it says in Genesis 1:28, "*God blessed him and said, 'be fruitful and increase in number.'*" Now that is to populate the earth. But if you look at the fill the earth part, not everyone is going to add to the population of the earth. Some people are parents, and some people are not parents. But everyone is supposed to fill the earth up with what? Evidence of the goodness of God and the glory of God. So, when you put all of this together, it seems as if Eve, her primary help that she's supposed to give is, certainly have children, if they're in a marriage, and they want to have children. That's great. And Eve can do that very uniquely. But she's also supposed to remind Adam that you are not just dust of the ground. You're not dust just meant to be pushed aside or thrown away. You are also breath of God, made in the image of God, hand designed by God to fill this earth up with the evidence of the goodness of God and the glory of God. And so, she is to speak this over him now. Now as humans, men will sometimes have moments where they look more like the ingredient dust than they do the ingredient of the breath of God. So, it's so important, I kind of think about the dust being equal to the shame script, like, I'm not good enough dust.

JM: That's good.

LT: But I am good enough, not just good enough, I am enough because I'm made in the image of God with a holy assignment to fill the earth up with the glory and the goodness of God everywhere, I go. And I just think this is so beautiful. And then Adam is supposed to reflect back to the woman, you're not just broken off bone. If you're driving down the road today and there's a carcass laying on the side of the road, now some people like to decorate with carcasses, you know, that's the issue they can cover in counseling someday, but for the most part, if you just see a broken off bone, what is a broken off bones supposed to be? Buried, right?

And yet the woman has not just broken off bone, the woman is also touch of God, design of God, because she's made in the image of God, with the holy assignment to fill this earth up everywhere she goes with the evidence of God's goodness and God's glory. And so, this is the divine echo, where the man is reminding the woman, you're not just broken off bone. You are touch and design of God. And the woman is saying, and you're not just dust, you are also breath of God. And do you see how this takes us from getting stuck in those shame scripts, I'm nothing but dust, I'm nothing but broken off bone, or the equivalent of whatever your shame script is, and infusing the right picture of who we really are in Christ. And this is what I like to call the divine echo.

Now, who would hate the divine echo? The very one, the enemy, who was at one time an angel, just glorious, glorious angel, right, before the fall. And the decision that he made is that he didn't want to just reflect the glory of God or praise God. He wanted that praise, that worship, that glory for himself. And so, God took him out and put him in a position here that he can never have access to that glory. And he is the opposite. He does not reflect the goodness of God and the glory of God. The enemy, what does he do? He steals, he kills, he destroys. He is the author of every shame script. He is the father of lies, right? And so, he can't stand the enemy, whether you call him Lucifer, the devil, Satan, the enemy cannot stand us reflecting the goodness of God and the glory of God because it's the very thing he can no longer have access to for himself.

So, what does he do? He makes us want to revert back to your nothing but dust, you're nothing but broken off bone. And so, he introduces a counterfeit echo. He wants to interrupt this divine echo where we're speaking life over one another and we're speaking the true identity about us being made an image of God. And the enemy comes in and interrupts the divine echo with the counterfeit echo, which is shame.

JC: Interestingly, we'll have our theologian back this up, but he'll find it's true. He already knows is true. This is so powerful what you're teaching because Satan literally mimics and does a faux echo of God. When Adam and Eve are there, Eve says, God said you will surely die, and in Hebrew, we read it in our text it says, Satan says, you shall not surely die. It's not what he does in Hebrew, he echoes God word for word quotes Scripture and says, you shall surely die, not. That was real popular in the 80s in skits and people would say "not" but he quotes God literally it says, "*you shall surely die not*". And so, he's even there mimicking because sometimes it sounds like it's a total setup.

And it's like, you know, James 1:19, that you believe in one God you do well, the demons also believe in and tremble at just a sense of that angel of light. But when I hear that in Genesis 3, that he literally says what God says, "not", for a moment, I think all you are quoting God, and then put that knot into the deceptive nature and you tie it to the shame scripts is sometimes there's the sense that, well, maybe you're right, or maybe this is what I should believe in. A lot of this goes back to parents, not parent

bashing, but things that we heard or internalized that we literally begin to go I think this is the truth. Some people have done it theologically, like warm theology people call it or something and say, but we are all despicable apart from God. And I think I can understand that, but that can run down such a path that says, I'm just, that it turns into a shame script.

JM: Yeah, I had I had a conversation with a ministry coworker recently about this, the doctrine of total depravity. And I want to make a point, one of the things I love when Lysa talks is that she's got all of this intense theology that she's doing, but she's just like saying it, you know, with every with just everyday language, what we're talking about is the doctrine of the Imago Dei. And here's a suggestion I want to make for us, I think, and some scholars back me up, a brilliant one John F. Kilner in the area of bioethics, this is really from his research, but I don't think at the fall the image of God breaks. But many commentaries sometimes will say, the image breaks, I don't think the image breaks. What breaks at the fall is humanity, the image stays intact. What does that mean?

I would say this, that the image of God comes with a status that is given to us that is irrevocable, you cannot snatch the status away from us. However, that status comes with a standard. And our ability, as a human that is broken, is no longer able to meet the standard. So, what does that mean? It means it is necessary for Jesus to fulfill all the things we were unable to do. So now the indwelling Spirit helps us to meet that standard. And so, what's taking place here is that the counterfeit echo of shame is trying to reinforce the broken humanity, and disregard, the theological word is ontology, the fact that right now we are the image of God. That has not been snatched from us. But sadly, it's almost like we just are a kid that refuses to just deal with it. Like, we're just going to go into a corner and hide. And that's what the enemy wants.

LT: And part of the tragedy of that is not how, not just how we think of ourselves, we think of others, we think of God, but part of the tragedy is, God said part of our purpose is to fill the earth, right? And it is to multiply or make evident or to represent or like my, my friend, Pastor Mike Todd re-present God wherever we go. So, think about it. If we are operating in our shame scripts, we are so focused on what we're not that we cannot possibly properly reflect who God is. And we are missing out on a very significant purpose. So, think about the condition of our world today. And I'll just ask the question, are people operating out of the Imago Dei, like you were saying, like, are they operating out of this reality, that they're not just dust and not just broken off bone, but they are made in the image of God, the design and touch of God with the purpose to fill up every place they put their foot, every place they walk, every place, they type, every place they visit online? That they, their purpose is to fill this up with the evidence that God is good. God is good to me. God is good to you. And God is good at being God. Is that really what's happening today? Or are people really just in such a space where they're acting like everyone around them is nothing but dust and broken off bone. Because how you view someone is how you will treat someone.

JC: That's really good.

LT: And how you will speak to someone. And so, you know, it's not just about like, oh, you're Christian so you need to be kind, be nice and speak life over other people. It's not just about that. It's truly about being a representative of God. And recognizing people already feel like they're nothing but dust and broken off bone. People are so stuck in their shame. I can be so stuck in my shame. Sometimes you guys can find yourselves in a place where just so stuck in your shame. And imagine what it will do because

it's not just the wife speaking to the husband and the husband speaking to the wife, it is a female human speaking to a male human, or a female human speaking to a fellow female human, or a male human speaking to a fellow male human, or a male human speaking to female. It is the way that we are supposed to view ourselves, view others and have a proper view and a proper understanding of the assignment of God. You know, you in our last session, you went to Ephesians chapter 4, and I think we should go back there. You know, in Ephesians chapter 4, let me get out my little glasses here, you know, because old eyes. But Ephesians –

JC: Is that a shame message you just did there?

LT: Thank you, Jim, for pointing that out. See, this is what happens. This is what happens when you invite your therapists to come on, you just go therapy is gonna happen, right here.

JC: It wasn't shame? It's resiliency you should.

LT: Thank you. It was a fact, this was not impact. This is a fact. I have old eyes. I don't think it was my shame script. But we can talk about that in our next session together, Jim, thank you. Ephesians 4, verse 29, *“Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouth, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs.”* And it's not just their need for encouragement or their need for, you know, atta boys or anything like that. It's according to the need I think that that they need to remember at the end of the day they're not just dust, they're not just broken off bone. According to their needs, that it may benefit who? Those who listen. So, I think it's not just benefiting you and benefiting me, but it's benefiting others, those all around us who are listening, and that is the evidence of the goodness of God and the glory of God that it will benefit everyone, when we bring more of who we really are into the world that's so sin soaked, and so full of this counterfeit echo called shame.

JC: I thought just a moment ago, I know, I'm sure we all have experienced this, but going to the county fair for me or the pumpkin show in the little town I grew up in and at times, there would be that house of mirrors that you would go in, the one that feels fun for kids. So, we have the Imago Dei and that mirror part that you've talked about but Satan loves to get us in and keep us in, perpetually in that house of mirrors that I look in. It is a mirror, that's a mirror, Word of God is a mirror, that's a mirror, and it's distorted. And while that seems like a funny little metaphor, it can make us look sideways, fat, or tall or stretched out or weird. It's still a mirror that he's holding up. And then people perpetually living in a house of mirrors saying this is what I really looked like, this distortion. And again, him being the father of lies, it's like to come out of that and it's like, which mirror to follow what you've seen, which mirror are you looking at. You all are a mirror for me, I can sit here and as we talk and I want to be a mirror for you all as we talk and there's a sense of reflecting back words of life not death, of blessing, of reality, of vulnerability, that we three will be vulnerable with each other. Whose mirror are you looking at? Not the funhouse mirror, because it's so distorted.

LT: I think to bring it back to what we talked about last week. So, I guess my question would be, okay, so I do want to speak life over people. And I do want to remind them, you're not just dust, you're not just broken off bone, I want to remind them your breath of God, your touch of God, design of God, I love all of that. But does this mean we never hold somebody accountable? And say the answer is no. We still hold them accountable because actually not holding someone accountable in their sin, or not holding someone accountable when they are actively operating in shame or addiction, or you know, so many of

the other tendencies, if you, if we don't hold them accountable, then we are actually almost agreeing with whatever it is that they're doing that's taking them away from design of God, touch of God, breath of God, right?

JC: Keeping them sharing in that distorted funhouse mirror. They'll think, now this is what I really look like. Like, no. Yeah.

LT: So, my question is, and I want to land here. How do we hold someone accountable without feeding their shame? How do we simultaneously call someone to the fullness of who they are, or to a better choice, or to not continue to dabble in the sin? How do we do that without feeding the shame that their brain is probably instantly going to go to?

JC: Well, I like to follow, as we all do, right, the path of Jesus, the greatest therapist ever, truly. Because He was, He's the Lord and Master and Savior of the universe too. But there's a sense that he would ask questions and rarely did I find him going straight in the front door of a person and trying to talk to them. He would come in, and I don't think it's sneaky, I think it's wise. He would draw their heart out and sometimes say, almost like, how's this working for you? What are you thirsty for? What do you really want? Or if I can borrow from Revelation, "*behold, he stands at the door knocks*".

If you'll allow me, I'll come in and we'll have this conversation, including about shame, but I'm not going to kick the door down. So, to invite a person, we have research about the brain, if you go right at a person like that, to confront, think of the word front, confront, with the front, the pre frontal cortex, that is a known fact to shut a person down and they'll go into that limbic brain. So, the idea of wisdom, like being wise as a serpent, harmless as a dove, saying things like, I've done this, hey, there's something I see. Are you open to me speaking to that? Because if they say, I guess, they've bought into open kind of that trapdoor from the prefrontal cortex to the lower limbic brain, and to invite and say, I have something here, I'd like to share with you about that. And then the degree of accountability is, I always want to assess two things. Is this person, do they really want accountability? Like I want my accountant, my CPA to do. I don't wanna hide anything. I don't want the IRS knocking on my door. Don't hide anything.

I'm amazed at the Christian friends I have that go, but you know, you as a therapist gets paid cash, it's under the table. Not with this guy. Everything's being reported. I just, I want it all reported. I want that level of accountability, to say, do you want that? And what happens is people say I want accountability quite, quite accurately. It's very famous in the church with men, we're accountability. It's vague, you remember what happens in vagueness stays in vagueness. And like, well, did you lose? Or did you do this, but there's no accountability. So, what does accountability look like? Like, what do you want me to hold you accountable for? Clear that up and if the person then, the second part of this, if they're not doing their own work, looking at their shame scripts, and looking at what is driving them to unhealthy behaviors, I think I can't be an external solution to their internal problem. I just can't.

So, what does accountability look like? Talking about it. What do we want to do? What's our contract? We did the healthy conversations contract. If you look at that, that's accountability. Are we going to agree to this? Often, we think they've agreed, and they really haven't.

LT: That's really good. I like what you said about asking questions. Because another thing you've taught me is listen closely, and people will tell you who they really are, and then believe it when they do. But I do think asking questions is a much less triggering way to draw someone out. And I know if someone comes right at me and says, you know, wow, you're such a pain, like why would you ask this? Like, you know, whatever. That is just speaking straight into my shame and I'm gonna want to run the other direction.

JC: Look what Nathan did to the (unintelligible) the B-I-B-L-E right, basic instructions before leaving earth people say. There's so much wisdom, we know that, but no, really, in this book, the ultimate (unintelligible) psychology book, Nathan's era, and it's just so cool, he could have walked right in, I am the prophet, thou art the man, you loser, you sinner. He draws a story out, David's ticked, I'll kill him. Thou art the man, pregnant pause. It's you. So that idea to know, you know, there's so many stories in here, that you go along and say, but to draw the person out, because people will say, I tell you with fellows a lot in the church, they want accountability. As I investigate, I say I don't think you do. You say you do but what it will cost you, the mental and spiritual health, is a commitment to reality at all costs. They really don't want it. They say they do, but they don't when it's time to show up.

LT: So good. Jim. Any closing thoughts, Joel?

JM: Yeah, I think it's turning back to Ephesians 4, it's almost likely, so Paul anticipates exactly that question. You know, and so he before he gets to 5, chapter 5, walking in love, I want to turn to verse 32. This what Paul says, "*Be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving*", This is the Greek word charizomai, "*one another*", which is a reciprocal pronoun, "*as God and Christ forgave you*".

Why did I make note of the forgiving and the reciprocal pronoun? The charizomai is a unique word. A lot of people actually think that Paul coined this word. He's kind of known for that too, making up words, it is a type of forgiveness that is grace-laced. So, notice this, "*Be kind, be tender hearted*", remember that the forgiveness that you received is a gracious type of forgiveness, and then "*forgive others as Christ as God in Christ has forgiven you*". If we embody these truths, if we embody this, what Paul tells us to do, it actually demands that we engage with our fellow human, and especially our fellow brother or sister in Christ, with a sense of compassion that mirrors the compassion that God had with us.

And I want to turn to one last example in the Bible, is the book of Job, and I think Job's three friends, we all know the story, talk about an individual who's just going through all kinds of chaos. And I actually think his three friends they get a really bad rap in the story, but they do a lot right. They sit there in a moment of compassion. The place where things go wrong is when they open their mouths and they start to talk. And I think that's actually an indication that the friends are operating out of assumptions and when you operate out of assumptions it's liable, and an indication I think, that maybe you don't have a sense of tenderheartedness. Maybe there might be some lack of compassion. Maybe we're working in a place where we just haven't listened to the other person, because if we're listening to them, that listening and understanding of where they are, as we step in to provide discipleship and discipline and accountability, informs, the listening informs our words and informs our works and informs everything.

But Jim, I actually think something else is happening to Job that I've just been thinking about, as we've been in the session. When the friends begin to, they're working on a retribitional theology like Job, you

must have sinned in all these ways. These must have been a type of shame scripts that have been running through Job's mind. So how does Job respond? Like, what do you actually do in that situation?

LT: Well, and also the friends, you know, you're talking about assumptions, they probably have their own shame scripts. Because remember, they're going to speak out of their shame scripts, if they're not careful, and those shame scripts make us have wrong perceptions or assumptions about ourselves, others and God. So, they're almost speaking like, yet you must have done something Job in order for this to be happening. So, they're making a perception judgment or an assumption about God and God's motives here.

JC: So, the therapy word there is projection. It's my stuff, it really is, without even knowing it I will speak that up, and it's kind of like, what to do? So even in my own life, where we started the show personal, we'll come back personal. Martin Luther, the great theologian said, you cannot keep those thought birds, and I'm gonna borrow, Luther wouldn't mind, you can't keep those shame scripts, birds, from flying over your head but you can keep them from making a nest in your hair.

We have bird boxes all over our backyard. No Bluebird is flown with an entire look like purchased at Hobby Lobby nest, that's how they look inside the box, and gone through the little hole, one piece of pine straw at a time. So, we know of course what? 2 Corinthians 10:5, and let us not forget verse 4. There are strongholds in our lives, things that would come up against, arguments against God and His truth and what He has said, and these strongholds can be loaded with shame scripts. So, what do you do? It's an active program. Take every, not every other, not every one in five, take every thought captive. But wait and people go, I do, I do. No, make it obedient to Christ and His truth. And with that, I use a word very practical, often I'll say, and I'll say it out loud because I hear myself resonate and say, I refuse that thought. I mean, activated. Remember, these shame scripts are never out loud. You can kick the decibel level up by speaking out loud. They're always silent, they feel out loud, but to say I refuse that thought and then literally find a way to say, Jesus, that is a lie. This is the truth. This is who I am in Christ and get you a bunch of I am statements of who you are in Christ, to speak over. You know what? Those shame scripts will begin to get softer and softer in the background. And even if they come up one time again, once a week, once a month, answer every one. And that's what I've seen both clinically, theologically, is people let those things build back up, back up, often coming from childhood, it's time to start answering this shame scripts with the truth.

LT: That's so good. And just a reminder, how do I know if this is shame and I need to take that thought captive to the obedience of Christ? Or how do I know if it's conviction because I really should feel a little bit of conviction or prompting, because this is maybe taking me to a place that wouldn't be good or I'm dabbling in sin? How do we know the difference? Shame is going to tell you are something wrong. It's attacking the very essence of who you are. And if it does not line up with the fact that, yeah, there's some dust, there's some broken off bone, but ultimately, at the end of the day, I am breath of God, I am touch of God, designed of God, made in the image of God. So, if it's attacking who you are, that's a shame script. If it's attacking something that you are doing, that's something to pay attention to, because maybe that's conviction meant to prevent you from diving deeper into that sin. Well, thank you so much, Jim, Joel. Always so fun and important conversations that we have, and thank you for tuning in. God bless you.