

FREEDOM FROM GUILT AND SHAME

Luke 7:36-38

³⁶ Then one of the Pharisees asked Him to eat with him. And He went to the Pharisee's house, and sat down to eat. ³⁷ And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner, when she knew that *Jesus* sat at the table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of fragrant oil, ³⁸ and stood at His feet behind *Him* weeping; and she began to wash His feet with her tears, and wiped them with the hair of her head; and she kissed His feet and anointed them with the fragrant oil.

This whole story is one of the most beautiful passages in the Bible about God's forgiveness. But this story is not only about forgiveness, it's also about guilt and shame.

Luke starts this story by stating that the woman was a sinner.

In verse 37 we read, And behold, a woman in the city who was a sinner (...).

Jesus also acknowledged that.

In verse 47 He said: ⁴⁷ Therefore I say to you, her sins, which *are* many, (...)

Simon, the Pharisee who had invited Jesus to eat at his house also knew that the woman was a sinner.

Verse 39 says:

³⁹ Now when the Pharisee who had invited Him saw *this*, he spoke to himself, saying, "This Man, if He were a prophet, would know who and what manner of woman *this is* who is touching Him, for she is a sinner."

In the eyes of everyone there this woman was guilty of sin.

But at the end of this story we see Jesus displaying His compassion and forgiveness to the woman.

Luke 7:48 Then He said to her, "Your sins are forgiven."

One of the things that we can learn from this story is that until we encounter the mercy of Jesus, His love and forgiveness, we are all guilty of sin.

Romans 3:23

23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

But the good news is that when Jesus died on the cross, He took care of the guilt problem that separates mankind from God.

Ephesians 1:7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.

There is something about the woman in this story that is very inspiring.

Although the woman knew she was guilty, she was determined to come to Jesus even if that meant being openly humiliated and shamed by everyone else.

In verse 37 it says when she knew that *Jesus* sat at the table in the Pharisee's house (...).

What did she know about Jesus?

1. Jesus had a meal with people who were considered sinners, like tax collectors.

Luke 5:29

29 Then Levi gave Him a great feast in his own house. And there were a great number of tax collectors and others who sat down with them.

2. Jesus healed a man from leprosy. A leper was someone considered unclean.

Luke 5:12-13

12 And it happened when He was in a certain city, that behold, a man who was full of leprosy saw Jesus; (...)

13 Then He put out His hand and touched him, saying, "I am willing; be cleansed." Immediately the leprosy left him.

3. Jesus healed many people and cast out evil spirits of many who were tormented.

Luke 6:17-18

17 (...) a great multitude of people from all Judea and Jerusalem, and from the seacoast of Tyre and Sidon, who came to hear Him and be healed of their diseases, **18** as well as those who were tormented with unclean spirits. And they were healed.

4. Jesus healed the servant of a roman centurion, someone who was not a Jew, who was considered an enemy of Israel.

Luke 7:8-10

8 For I also am a man placed under authority, having soldiers under me. (...)

9 When Jesus heard these things, He marvelled at him, and turned around and said to the crowd that followed Him, "I say to you, I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel!"

10 And those who were sent, returning to the house, found the servant well who had been sick.

5. The only son of a widow was raised from the dead.

Luke 7:12-14

12 And when He came near the gate of the city, behold, a dead man was being carried out, the only son of his mother; and she was a widow. (...) **13** When the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her and said to her, "Do not weep." **14** Then He came and touched the open coffin, and those who carried him stood still. And He said, "Young man, I say to you, arise."

What the woman knew about Jesus gave her the boldness to come near Him.
God is a compassionate God.

Psalm 103:11-12

11 For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him; 12 As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.

Although we may all acknowledge this as a powerful truth, many people still struggle with the feeling of shame and guilt.

Many experience anxiety and depression because of things done in the past. Shame and guilt ties you to the past and it cripples your future.

Let me give you an example from the Bible of someone who was not able to deal with guilt and shame and two others who were able to overcome it:

JUDAS

His guilt and shame drove him to take his own life.

PETER

Peter denied Jesus three times after He was arrested before going to the Cross, but later on we see that Peter was able to accept Jesus's forgiveness and went on to become one of the greatest apostles of the Christian faith.

PAUL

Paul consented and facilitated the slaughter of Christians before he encountered Christ. Paul also had to deal with guilt and shame, but he was able to overcome it. He became a great man of God who wrote two thirds of the New Testament.

How to break free from guilt and shame:

1. Run towards Jesus. Don't run away from Him.

Like the woman in the story, Peter and Paul who did not let guilt and shame take over their lives. Trust in the love, compassion and forgiveness of Jesus.

Let the Word of God penetrate your mind and take hold of your thoughts.

Romans 5:8

But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.

Romans 8:1

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

2. Resist the accuser

The devil cannot stand the fact that God loves you so much. So, he keeps bringing accusations into your mind.

1 John 1:9

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

James 4:7

7 Therefore submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.

Let the Word of God renew your mind.

Philippians 4:8

8 Finally, brethren whatever things are true, whatever things are noble, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report, if there is any virtue and if there is anything praiseworthy—meditate on these things.

Ask God to remove those feelings of shame and guilt and He will do it. Enjoy the freedom that God gave you in Christ.