

Help! I Feel Ashamed—Sue Nicewander

Supplemental Chart (Not printed in second edition booklet by Shepherd Press)

The chart below demonstrates more ways to renounce shame by thinking and acting biblically. I have provided just a few limited examples here. You should spend time in God’s Word to learn more about overcoming shame God’s way. The passages in the chart will help you get started in your new way of life.

RENOUNCING SHAME

Shame-Driven Thoughts and Behaviors	Biblical Humility (H), Thinking (T), and Action (A)
<p>Love and Merit Shannon: “No one loves me. But they should.”</p> <p>Gwen: “I’ll never be good enough to merit love from anyone, but I’m angry to be put into this position.”</p>	<p>(H) Love is a gift, not a right. It can’t be earned, manipulated, or demanded. God deeply loves me because he is good, not because I deserve to be loved (John 3:16; I John 4:7-19). (T) God’s gift of love will never end (Romans 8:31-39; I Corinthians 13:8a). Because his love is complete, I have all I need in him (Colossians 2:9-10). (A) Self-pity, angry demands for love, or wallowing have no place in the life of a believer. Instead, God wants me to respond to his love by loving others the way he loves me (John 15:12; I Corinthians 13:1-8; I John 4:11).</p>
<p>Suffering Isn’t Fair! Shannon: “Bad things happened to me; therefore I am bad, a slut, a liar, an idiot. But it isn’t fair that there’s no way out.”</p> <p>Gwen: “It isn’t fair because I am innocent and shouldn’t have to change. Why did God make me like this?”</p>	<p>(H) Bad things happen to everyone because we live in a fallen world (Romans 8:22). I am not bad because of what has happened to me (Hebrews 11, esp. verses 37-38). I am bad because I sin against God by nature and by choice (Romans 3:10-12, 23). God didn’t make me sin. That is my fault. It would be fair for God to condemn me. But instead God has provided forgiveness through the Savior, Jesus Christ (Romans 6:23). (T) God doesn’t make me wallow; I choose what I dwell on. In Christ I have hope and new identity, so I must not call myself names or doubt his purpose for my life (2 Corinthians 5:17-21). (A) I will think and act as Christ did when bad things happened to him (Philippians 4:13; 1 Peter 2:21-24).</p>
<p>Self-Image Shannon: “People tell me I’m bad and stupid. I know I’m not perfect, so they must be right. I can’t change; so I’ll pretend or hide, even from God. He must not love me.”</p> <p>Gwen: “People don’t treat me well, and I know I’m not</p>	<p>(H) My fears of people’s opinions deny God’ power and love toward me (2 Timothy 1:7). Yes, I am imperfect, but Christ has forgiven me and is leading me to grow in grace (Colossians 1:10; 2:14). (T) I must wisely choose to believe Scripture, no matter what people say (2 Corinthians 4:2). Even if I don’t know why people think poorly of me, I must follow Christ. People thought poorly of him and treated him badly, but he was perfect. I am imperfect, but every day I can choose to be more like my Savior by responding to poor treatment the way he</p>

<p>perfect, so I must be at fault. I'm stupid, stupid, stupid! But I'll put on a happy face for everyone and pretend everything is okay."</p>	<p>did. And that pleases him (2 Corinthians 5:9). I do right when I choose to follow Christ, no matter what people tell me. Ultimately I must put my hope in Christ, not in people (Romans 15:13).</p> <p>Using Scripture, have I evaluated whether people think poorly of me because I have sinned against them? If so, I must confess my sins to God and the people I have offended (Matthew 5:23-24; I John 1:9-10). If not, then I must forgive those who have offended me (Romans 12:17-21; Ephesians 4:31-32).</p> <p>(A) My purpose is to shine for Christ even when life is hard, not to focus on my flaws or listen to unwise people (Matthew 5:16; Psalm 55-57). God has made me his beloved child (Ephesians 1:4-6) and he wants me to live boldly for him, not to hide (Philippians 1:19-20). To live for Christ means living for the truth, not pretending to be something I'm not (John 14:6).</p>
<p>Failure Shannon and Gwen: "I'm not as good as other people. My appearance, education, intelligence, social skills, background, and family all fall short. I'll never be good enough. Look at what I've done! Look at how I fail. I try my best, but I mess up all the time. How could anyone accept a miserable person like me?"</p>	<p>(H) Christ had 'no form or comeliness...no beauty that we should desire him,' yet he was perfect (Hebrews 53:2). Inner beauty is what God values (I Peter 3:6). Is that what I value most?</p> <p>(T) In Christ I am accepted and dearly loved (Ephesians 1:4-6). Though even as a believer I still have faults, Christ does not hold them against me (2 Corinthians 5:19; Psalm 103:12), but teaches me to be like Him (Hebrews 12:11). God has given me my appearance, education, intelligence, social skills, background, and family; I must give thanks to my Creator for them (I Thessalonians 5:18).</p> <p>(A) Therefore, I am responsible to love others rather than comparing myself unfavorably (2 Corinthians 10:12).</p>
<p>Painful Memories Shannon: "Bad memories persist, no matter what I do, and I feel badly about what has happened to me. Those events have made me what I am. Since I can't change my past, there is no hope." Gwen: "See all the ways people have hurt me!"</p>	<p>(H) The psalms teach me how to faithfully endure hardship without denying pain, but with gratitude for God's presence and help (Psalm 55-57, Psalm 73).</p> <p>(T) I can acknowledge pain with recognition that in Christ all things are made new (2 Corinthians 5:17), that God has good purposes for every event in my life (I Peter 5:7-10), that Christ now defines me (Ephesians 1:3-21). I always have hope in Christ (Ephesians 1:18-19).</p> <p>(A) Christ has bad memories, too, but he commits everything to his Father and focuses on God's purposes rather than his pain. I please God when I follow Christ's example (I Peter 2:21-25).</p>