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Sermon

Shame vs Glory



Atonement
By Derek Prince

It's good for all of us, myself included, if we recapitulate in the correct order, if we can do so, the various aspects of the exchange. Believe me, I have to exercise my concentration to do this right. If I do it wrong, I'm not embarrassed so don't you be embarrassed either. First of all,

Jesus was punished that we might be forgiven.

He was wounded that we might be healed.

He was made sin with our sinfulness that we might be made righteous with His righteousness.

He died our death that we might share His life.

He was made a curse that we might receive the blessings.

He endured our poverty that we might share His abundance.

Now we're going to go into the area of emotional healing, which is probably very relevant for some of you here. But before we do that I want Ruth to come forward again. We're going to introduce you to a new affirmation, one that we make regularly. This is not directly a quotation of scripture, this is our affirmation of the fact that we have passed out from under the curse and entered into the blessing of Abraham. And I suppose two days never pass that we don't make this affirmation. I'll tell you, we need it.

> "Through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross we have passed out from under the curse and entered into the blessing of Abraham whom God blessed in all things."

Would you like to say that? All right. Don't try to say it with us, we'll say it phrase by phrase.

> "Through the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross we have passed out from under the curse and entered into the blessing of Abraham whom God blessed in all things."

Now if you really believe it, what do you do next? "Thank you, Lord." All right, God bless you.

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Now we're coming to two aspects of the exchange which provide emotional healing. And we're going to deal with two of the commonest and deepest emotional wounds that humanity suffers.

The one we're going to deal with now is shame. What's the opposite of shame? Well, it could be various but glory is as good as you can find. What I'm going to teach you is that Jesus on the cross endured our shame that we in turn might share His glory.

Now in the end of this session I'll deal with some of the causes of shame in people today. I've learned in many years of counseling and ministry it's one of the commonest emotional problems of God's people. And the problem is they're ashamed to let people know they have the problem, you see? So in a sense, it shuts you up in a prison.

Let's turn, as a scriptural basis, to Hebrews 2:10.

> "For it was fitting for him [that's God the Father], for whom are all things, and by whom are all things [that's God the Father], in bringing many sons to glory [that's you and me], to make the author of their salvation [Who's that? Jesus.] perfect through sufferings."

So God permitted Jesus to endure those sufferings that we might come into His fullness. But notice in the middle of verse 10 God's purpose was to bring many sons to glory. We used to have people that said, "I'm glory bound." Not many people say that these days. But that's the truth if you're a believing child of God; you are bound for glory. On the cross Jesus endured your shame that you might share His glory.

Hebrews also brings out the enduring of the shame. In Hebrews 12:2, which is the middle of a sentence—we won't go into the beginning, familiar words, I'm sure, to many of you, Hebrews 12:2:

> "...looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith [or the originator and perfecter of our faith]..."

Let me encourage you with that. Whatever Jesus begins, He's going to complete. So if He started in you, He's going to complete it. That's His faithfulness, it's not our cleverness.

> "...looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God."

So on the cross Jesus endured shame. But He didn't let it deter Him, He considered it absolutely not worthy of turning Him away from His purpose because of the joy that was set before Him. What was the joy that was set before Him? Bringing many sons to glory. So, in order to bring you and me and millions and millions of others like us to glory, on the cross He endured the shame.

You see, there is no more shameful form of death than crucifixion. It's shameful because it's the lowest form for the most debased criminals and it's shameful because of the very way in which things happen. Because, on the cross it's very clearly stated they took all Jesus' clothing away from Him. And He hung there naked before the eyes of the people for something like three hours or more. And people walked past and made fun of Him. How would you feel in that situation? What would you feel? Tell me in one word. Shame, that's right. So He endured the shame. Because He saw that through it He could bring us to glory.

Many years ago I got involved in helping two Jewish ladies who had escaped from Soviet Russia and, in a sense, cast themselves on our mercy—that was my first wife and I. I went to a lot of pain and trouble to help them, and by the grace of God I was ultimately able to help them. But I was complaining to myself as I was actually toiling up a hill in Haifa, a steep hill on a hot day and I was thinking this was an awful lot to go through for these two ladies. And, they were always totally grateful. God gave me this verse which I'd like to share with you. I didn't know where it was but the words came to me and I found them. 2 Timothy 2:10:

> "Therefore I endure all things for the sake of the elect [that's God's chosen ones], that they also may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."

And I saw in that experience that, so far from being in the same position as Jesus on the cross, I was enduring just a very little inconvenience but the purpose was to help God's chosen ones enter into the salvation with eternal glory.

I think we need to devote more time to thinking on that word glory. Because that's our destination. If there's a price to

pay, believe me, it's worth it. So you may be called upon sometime to give up your convenience, your comfort. I say those are the two idols of modern America: convenience and comfort. American Christians will do anything until it affects their convenience and their comfort. Then their commitment begins to wither. But if you could get a vision of what's going to come out of your inconvenience and your sacrifice, one day you're going to see people in glory who are there because of what you did. That was the motivation of Jesus. He didn't do it for Himself but He did it to bring many sons to glory.

Now, we go back to Isaiah 53 which is, of course, the great atonement chapter, and let us look at the emphasis there on how shameful the experience of Jesus was. Isaiah 53:3:

> "He is despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows [but the real meaning is a man of pains], and acquainted with sickness; and we hid, as it were, our faces from him, he was despised and we did not esteem him."

I understand that to mean that we couldn't bear to look at Him, the sight was so horrible. You remember it said in the NIV of the previous chapter that He lost even the form of a human being. Not merely was He exposed naked but all this wounds, bruises, putrefying sores were exposed to the view of those who hated Him, those who were responsible for His crucifixion and all those who passed by idly.

In Psalm 69 there's a further picture of this. Let me say to you that Psalm 69 is what we have learned to call a Messianic psalm. Let me give you a little extra here for which there is no extra charge. Let me say something about Messianic prophecy or Messianic psalms. What we mean by that is they are psalms or prophecies which reveal what's going to happen to the Messiah, not to the person who spoke the words or wrote the words. You've turned to Psalm 69, keep your finger there and turn to 1 Peter 1:10–11, where Peter is talking about the prophets of the Old Testament. He says:

> "Of this salvation [that we enjoy] the prophets [of the Old Testament] having inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you: searching what or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating, when he testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that would follow."

Notice the theme of glory once again. You see, put yourself in the position of David or Isaiah. They found themselves saying in the first person things about themselves that never happened to them. And they must have thought, "Why am I saying that? Whatever is that about?" Peter says it was revealed to them that what they were saying was not about themselves but about the Messiah who was to come. And it was the Spirit of the Messiah in them that was making these statements in the first person, although they didn't apply to the person who said them. Is that clear? Have I communicated that?

So, one of the great Messianic psalms is Psalm 69. And if you look briefly at it you'll find there are four verses at least in it which are specifically applied in the New Testament to Jesus.

Let me offer another comment. The New Testament really gives us very little subjective picture of what Jesus endured on the cross. In fact, you couldn't say it more shortly because it says "they crucified him". That's all they say. But, if you turn back to the Old Testament, to the psalms and the prophets, there's a wonderful unfolding revelation of what went on inside Jesus. For instance, just to look at this, if you begin in Psalm 69:1:

> "Save me, O God, for the waters have come to my neck [the Hebrew says 'to my soul'], I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing."

That's something David probably went through in a measure but it's fulfilled in Jesus on the cross. There He was sinking into the depth. Then we get these four verses, verse 4:

> "Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head..."

Jesus quoted that about Himself. It said that this must be fulfilled, they hated Me without a cause. Verse 8:

> "I have become a stranger to my brothers, and an alien to my mother's children..."

You remember Jesus' own brothers rejected Him. Verse 9:

> "...because the zeal of your house has eaten me up, and the reproaches of those who reproach you have fallen on me."

That's quoted about Him in John 2. And verse 21:

> "They gave me also gall for my food and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to drink."

Fulfilled in Jesus on the cross. Now, how would you have felt—this is a psalm of David—if you heard yourself saying those words? "They gave me vinegar to drink." It never happened to David. He would have been puzzled. But the answer that comes from God is it was the Spirit of the Messiah in David speaking in the first person of two things: the sufferings of Christ and the glory that would follow.

So when we look at Psalm 69:7, we just see one further aspect of what Jesus endured on the cross.

> "Because for your sake I have borne reproach, shame has covered my face."

So there you understand a little of what Jesus endured on the cross. "Shame has covered my face." I don't know whether you've ever noticed, but people who suffer from shame, they find it hard to look you in the face. Shame has covered my face.

And then we look at the actual description of the crucifixion in Matthew 27:35–36.

> "Then they crucified him..."

I always marvel at the restraint of the gospel writers, that's all they said, they crucified Him. They didn't give us a lot of picture of blood or groans. Any modern writer that was asked to produce that would have spent about three pages on the details. Then they crucified Him. You know why? Because the New Testament leaves it to the Holy Spirit to add what we need to know.

> "Then they crucified him, and divided his garments casting lots; that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, 'They divided my garments among them [that's in Psalm 22, another Messianic psalm], and for my clothing they cast lots.'"

Again, consider what David thought when he found himself saying those words which never happened to him.

It's generally stated that a man in those days had four items of clothing. There were four soldiers so each soldier took one item. But then there was the seamless robe and they said it's a shame to tear this so we'll cast lots for it. See how exact the scripture is. The end result was Jesus was exposed totally naked on the cross. And then it says:

> "Sitting down they watched him there."

The New Testament is very discreet but it, generally speaking, gives the impression that the women followed with him stood at a distance. The only woman who came near was His mother. That's of the people who were believers.

I hope that I am succeeding in making this vivid to you because we look at a lot of pretty pictures of the crucifixion and there's a little blood on his hands and his feet, and a nicely adjusted crown of thorns on His head. But I mean, it doesn't give you any concept of what actually took place.

Now, He endured shame that we might be delivered from shame and share His glory. Let me talk to you just briefly about being delivered from shame. I want you to listen carefully and don't give way to embarrassment. There are a number of different causes why people experience shame. One is some embarrassing experience in their past. I think it sometimes happens to people in school but for some reason they're made a spectacle to the whole class. In the old days, which none of you know anything about, they used to give you a dunce's cap and make you stand in the corner. None of you can remember that. Well, that is exposing a person to shame. And you take a sensitive child of about 12 years old and you do that to him, you may have wounded him inwardly for the rest of his life. And of course, that's just one example.

Then another reason for shame is some of us carry memories of things that we did before we knew the Lord that were totally shameful and degrading. Is that right? You don't have to say yes or no. Sometimes I wonder about myself, how I could ever have done some of the things I did. And I'm not going to tell you what they were.

But I think today perhaps the commonest single cause of shame is sexual molestation of children in their early years. And the statistics today in America are absolutely frightening. Something like 1 in 4 for girls and 1 in 5 for boys have been molested sexually before the age of 12. You say that doesn't happen inside the church. Believe me, you are

wrong! When I first began to discover what things were like under the lid of the church I could hardly bear what I discovered. It's not my business to deal specifically or individually with anybody here but I ask you, let the Holy Spirit deal with you. He's gracious, He's tender, He's tactful but He's truthful. Don't run away from the issue. Remember, this is good news, on the cross Jesus endured all the shame that could ever happen to any one of us. He took it all. He bore it away. Remember what Jesus bore on the cross, whether it is sin or sickness or shame, He bore it away. He removed it. He took it out of the way.

Let me turn you to just two passages in the book of Job. Job 11:15, and then we'll look at Job 22:26. You'll see both of these talk about lifting up your face to God. Let me just read them. Job 11:15:

> "Then surely you could lift up your face without spot; you could be steadfast and not fear."

Job 22:26:

> "For then you will have your delight in the Almighty and lift up your face to God."

One of the things that I've observed about people who are struggling with shame is they very seldom lift their face up to pray to God. They pray like this. Why? Shame. It's one of the marks of shame, is an unwillingness to look God or man in the face.

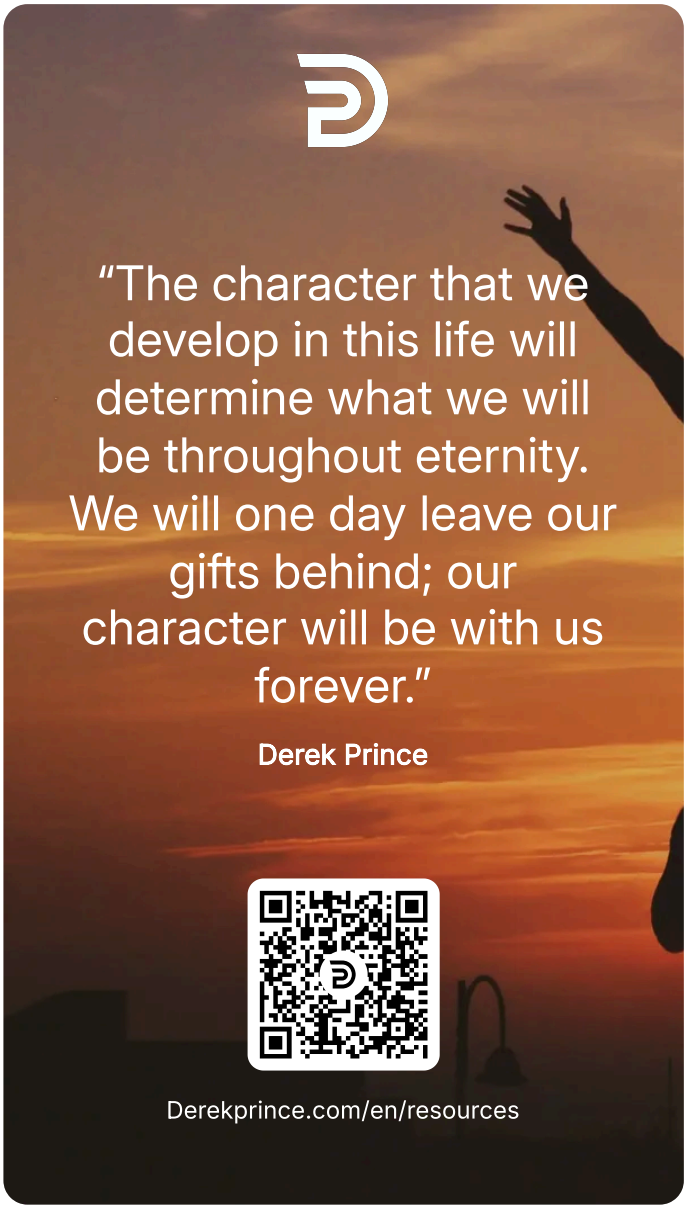
Now, God wounds and He heals. Especially for those of you who are involved in counseling, it is extremely important that you realize that emotional wounds are catered for at the cross. I'll guarantee those of you that are involved in counseling, you're going to have to deal with many, many people who have the wound of shame. Many will carry it because of molestation in childhood. I say this, I don't want to be negative, but it happens with deacons' children, with preachers' children—there's no area of the church which is exempt.

Now, how do you get healed? By faith. You thank Jesus that He bore your shame that you might be released from it. It's very simple. Giving thanks is the simplest expression of faith. So as we close I want everybody to bow your heads and be in an attitude of prayer. I'm not going to ask anybody to put a hand up or anything. I just want you for a moment to shut yourself in with God and say, "God, if there's shame in my heart and life that keeps me from lifting my face up, I want to believe this morning that Jesus bore my shame. That I can be set free from shame, that I can be unashamed." Let's just let the silence of God rest upon us for a moment. I'm not going to go on speaking, you don't need to keep your eyes open to look at me. The cameras will be finishing but let's just wait for a moment or two in an atmosphere and attitude of reverence before God.

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