

(1) Read the stories of the two women as found in Mark 5:25-34 and Luke 7:36-50. Talk about the shame each woman felt and how it would have affected her ability to function in society and especially how it would have crippled their relationship with God. What did Jesus do in each case to conquer the shame in their hearts and replace it with freedom and joy?

(2) Read Psalm 3 and discuss the reasons for David's shame. Can you identify in your own experience something similar to what David felt? How were you able to overcome its crippling impact in your life?

(3) Take some time and let each person do their best at defining shame and identifying its effects on the human heart. How does shame differ from guilt? Why is it important to distinguish between the two?

(4) How does the truth of forgiveness serve to conquer shame? Contrast forgiveness with the typical remedies recommended by our society.

(5) What specifically should you be asking the Holy Spirit to do to help overcome the paralyzing and enslaving power of shame? Several suggested prayers were given at the close of the sermon. Talk through each of them. Pray through each of them in your group.