

# Why Are You Ashamed?

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Date: 03 February 2019

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[ 0 : 00 ] And we're going to jump into really a large survey of all the scripture has to say about one topic in particular that really deeply, deeply affects all of us.

That controls you far more than you may be aware of. And controls me far more than I'm aware of. So let me begin with a word of prayer. Because what we're talking about is just going to be so, so, so important to a life lived for the glory of God.

And God, we need right now eyes to see, ears to hear, hearts to understand.

God, this is so critical to living a joyful life. To living a life of freedom.

To living a life in which we are turning to you, recognizing that there is forgiveness of sins in your name.

[ 1 : 02 ] In the name of Jesus Christ, your son. Lord God, I pray that as we look at all that scripture has to say, all the good news that there is for us, Lord God, may we turn in faith.

May we turn to seek help. I know there's many people, Lord God, who right now are really struggling with what we're talking about this morning. God, give us the courage to seek help, to turn to one another for help, for a reminder of all that Christ has done for us.

Give us courage to, you know, reach out to the elders of our church for counseling, for help in working through all this. Lord God, we need help. We thank you that Christ our Lord has come.

And he has given us all that we need. In your name. Amen. Amen. Now, just over two weeks ago, CBC News published an update on a murder case that is 19 years old.

And here's what the report said about the latest update on the legal proceedings on this murder case. Arrangements are now being made to extradite the BC pair accused of masterminding the so-called honor killing.

[ 2 : 16 ] Jass Winder, Jassie Sidhu, to India to face trial. Jassie Sidhu's mother and uncle lost their last-ditch effort at a stay of extradition proceedings last month.

They are accused of planning her murder because she ignored the family's wishes and married a poor rickshaw driver. Jassie Sidhu, 25, had her throat slit and body dumped in a canal after she and her new husband were attacked by a group of armed men during a trip to India in 2000.

Now, this sort of murder. Most Canadians, when they hear the occasional news story about this, the response seems to be just almost incomprehension.

There is no comprehension. What could possibly drive a mother and an uncle to conspire together to murder their daughter, their niece?

What experience, what emotion could drive a person to harm or to kill someone that they love? This phenomenon, it is not limited to honor killings.

[ 3 : 34 ] Would you believe that in your own heart is the same seed that in this case blossomed into murder? And in your own life it has blossomed into many, many other things.

This physical violence and harm, it's hidden in the dark corners of our families too. A husband abuses his wife and children.

A teenage girl who cuts her wrists to draw blood. A young boy who lashes out at his peers in rage. Then it often shows up in much more subtle ways too.

We've got a middle-aged man, perhaps, who secludes himself in his home. A woman who wears loose clothing to hide the shape of her body. An unemployed older man who refuses help looking for a job.

A young woman who spends money she doesn't have to maintain the appearance of wealth. A young man who spends all his time at the gym because he's worried about what others are going to think about his physical appearance.

[ 4 : 46 ] A woman who covers herself up because of a history of sexual assault. What experience or emotion can drive people to harm themselves or to harm someone they love?

In many, many cases, these behaviors are not driven by reason. They are not driven by logic. They are driven by shame. They are driven by shame.

Shame, it is an ancient cancer. It runs very, very deep in our souls. It is hardwired into you.

The desire to avoid shame and to seek honor. To avoid shame and to seek honor. We often don't call it that in our culture. We don't have a well-developed vocabulary to describe this appearance of shame in our own culture.

They do in Eastern cultures, but not in ours. But everyone in this room knows shame, whether you have the words for it or not. You know shame deeply. You know shame intimately.

[ 5 : 51 ] It is like an old abuse to friend that you've just grown used to. You've learned to live with. You may be so accustomed to the presence of shame in your life that you are no longer aware of it.

You may not even be aware there is any other way to live. But it controls you. It controls you regardless. Now what if I told you that we have in this very room the single most comprehensive, the single most powerful resource that you will ever find to describe and to deal with shame?

Wouldn't that be great news? Well, you've got it. The Bible is God's word. And would you believe it? The Bible talks about shame way more than you and I do.

If we actually are learning to think biblically to conform the way that we think to God's word, we're actually going to start talking about shame and honor much, much, much more than we do. Because it's all over the pages of scripture and you may never have noticed it, but it is everywhere in scripture.

We're raised in a culture that does not prepare us well for the experience of shame. We don't talk about it. We act out of it, but we don't talk about it. But you and I, we're just driven by this experience.

[ 7 : 19 ] We are just as driven by this experience as any person from a shame-oriented culture in the East or from the shame-oriented cultures in which the Bible was written.

God knows that we need to talk about shame. We really do. And so God gives us words that describe the appearance and the experience of shame.

God shows us the way that our shame can be replaced with honor and with glory. Here's what shame looks like in a nutshell in Psalm 22.

In Psalm 22, the poet King David writes these words. Here's what shame says.

Here's what shame says. I am a worm and not a man. I am a worm and not a man. And you are treated as a worm and not a man.

- [ 8 : 38 ] The author Ed Welch, he describes shame in this way. You are disgraced because you acted less than human. You were treated as if you were less than human or you were associated with something less than human and there are witnesses.
- That's from Ed Welch's book, Shame Interrupted, which by the way, I strongly recommend in your bulletins.
- You'll see that as a recommended resource. That's going to go into far more detail than we could possibly do in a single sermon. But fundamentally, this statement, this self-talk, I am a worm and not a man.
- Here's what the voice of shame sounds like in your life. I'm not special. I'm worthless. I'm ugly.
- I'm a terrible person. Nobody could love me. Nobody wants me around. I'm stupid. I'm a screw up.
- [ 9 : 47 ] I ruin everything I touch. I'm weak. I can't get anything done. I'm poor. I'm useless.
- I need to run away. I'm garbage. I'm a loser. I hate myself. I am a worm and not a man.
- Have you ever thought anything like that? Shame? Let's be straight. Shame is torment.
- It is just as bad as, if not worse than any physical pain you will experience. It is torment. People harm themselves. People will kill themselves.
- Or they will harm or kill someone else to find a way out of shame. That's how bad it is. Here's how David described the experience there later on in Psalm 22.
- [ 10 : 47 ] I am poured out like water and all my bones are out of joint. My heart is like wax. It is melted within my breast.
- My strength is dried up like a pot shirt and my tongue sticks to my jaws. You lay me in the dust of death. When faced with this experience of shame, this experience that hurts, we try to run away from God or we try to run away from other people.
- We try to hide ourselves. We try to clean up or we try to cover up. That's the experience of shame. So where does shame come from? What's the origin of shame?
- Well, we can see the very first origin of shame in the Bible. It talks about that. We read in Genesis chapter 3 about how shame first entered the world. Genesis chapter 2, it ends with this description of the first human beings, a fundamental state of the first human beings.
- The man and his wife were both naked and were not ashamed. We're both naked and we're not ashamed. Everything about the man and his wife was open for all to see.
- [ 12 : 04 ] There was no reason to hide. There was no reason to run away. There was no reason to clean up or to cover up. They were naked and unashamed. They were honored by God, honored by one another.
- And well, they should be because they were created in the image of God. They were representatives of God's glory on earth. But this honor, this unbelievable honor, it wasn't enough for them.
- They were tempted by a serpent, the devil. And do you know what he promised them? He promised them that eating fruit from a forbidden tree would not bring them death as God promised. Rather, it would bring them the power, the glory of God.
- It will allow them to take the place of honor, to take God's place of honor at his expense. And as we read in verses 4 and 5, the serpent said to the woman, you will not surely die, for God knows that when you eat of it, your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.

You will be like God. So when they ate the fruit, we read, then the eyes of both were opened and they knew that they were naked and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths and they heard the sound of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day and the man and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God among the trees of the garden.

[ 13 : 38 ] And so for the first time, when they looked at each other, they looked at one another with the eyes of judgment. You ever had someone look at you that way?

Have you ever looked at someone else that way, looked at them and assessed them? Hmm. And they felt shame. On that day, they really did die.

They wanted the glory of God for themselves and instead they found themselves severed from his glory. death and shame entered the world and they tried to cover themselves up to cover up their shame.

Fig leaves. That seemed to ease the shame they felt when they looked at one another but when the Lord God arrives, fig leaves aren't enough. You've got to hide behind entire trees. You and I know something instinctively.

We just sense something that covering up shame must come at a cost. Covering up shame has to come at a cost. That's why in verse 21 we read, the Lord God made for Adam and for his wife garments of skins and clothed them.

[ 14 : 49 ] An animal had to be put to death and its skin taken to cover up their shame and still, even still, they were driven out of the garden.

Cast out. Ed Welch, in that book, Interrupting Shame, he says that in the Bible we find what he calls a triad of shame. The first experience of shame in the triad is nakedness.

That means being exposed for everyone to see. What if people find out who you really are? What if they find out what you really look like underneath?

Not just physically, but also find out who you are spiritually, what you act like. What if they saw into every dark recess of your life?

The second experience of shame is rejection. Not just nakedness, but rejection. It means being an outcast. As Adam and Eve were driven out of Eden, what if people not only saw who you are, but then they saw it and rejected you and said, get away from me.

[ 16 : 03 ] You don't belong. You're different. The third experience of shame is one that begins showing up soon after that.

The experience of contamination. Contamination. In the Old Testament, it was called being unclean. It was being unclean. In the Journey class this morning, we learned how the book of Leviticus, it identifies uncleanness as a fundamental human problem.

It's the problem of shame. We rightly sense that if we are unclean or if we are shameful, we do not belong with other people.

We're going to contaminate them. We certainly don't belong with God who is not only clean, he is holy. He is not common.

He is holy, unique. Earlier, we talked about shame as the sense of being a worm, as being less than human. More fundamentally, shame is the deep sense that I am nothing like God.

[ 17 : 13 ] I am nothing like God. I am not like God in his holiness. I am not like God in his wisdom. I am not like God in his power.

I am dead. I am cut off from his glory. I am a worm and not a man. That's the origin of shame. That's where it comes from.

But what about your shame? Because yes, theologically, that's the origin of humanity's shame. But in your life, shame has shown up for very specific reasons.

How did you, in particular, end up experiencing shame? And Ed Welch points out three ways that the scriptures speak about the origin of your shame. First, shame can come from sin that I commit.

It can also come from sin that someone associated with me commits, by the way. And that's especially true with family. What your children, spouse, parents, siblings, aunts, uncles, et cetera, do.

[ 18 : 18 ] It reflects on you. Many of you have had words spoken to you by your parents that still stick with you to this day. Or maybe you have had something your child has done.

They've sinned and their shame falls on you. And if you sin, your shame falls on them as well. Perhaps you're deeply ashamed because of something you've done that reflects on your family.

That's one way that shame can show up from sin that you commit or that you're associated with. Second, shame can come from sin that is committed against you or sin committed against someone associated with you.

The sin can be harsh or insulting or dehumanizing words. The sin can be words that are needed but not spoken.

to you. The sin can be physical violence or intimidation. The sin can be sexual touching or abuse. These two types of shame, by the way, they're easily confused.

[ 19 : 33 ] They both feel the same. That confusion can cause a lot of problems in our life. Sometimes you and I are the ones who commit the sin. We feel the shame that we ought to feel for our sin.

But then we do what Adam and Eve did. We feel that shame and so we blame another person. We claim their words or their actions are the source of our shame. We play the victim.

We shift the blame. Then on the other hand, sometimes we're sinned against by others and so we feel ashamed. and we blame ourselves and beat ourselves up and invent reasons why we deserve to be called a worm and not a man.

You blame yourself for something that is not on you. That's so important. And when I'm counseling people, I have to sort through this because you have to know the source of your shame to know how to deal with your shame.

Because you got to deal with it differently. The source of your shame could be sin from you or it could be sin against you and you have to deal with it differently even though they feel the same. There's a third source of shame too and that is simply the shame that is present in all of humanity, this sort of low level background shame that we all share together.

[ 20 : 57 ] Paul writes in Romans chapter 3 verse 23, all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God. They fall short of the glory.

They are ashamed. We have all been cast out of Eden. We are all no longer glorious and godly as we ought to be. We are afflicted with poverty. We are afflicted with weakness.

We are afflicted with disease. We are afflicted with death. We are shameful people who sense that we are unacceptable, people who feel exposed and humiliated and dirty and disgraced, people with weakness, people with secrets, people with dark corners of our lives, people who cover up and hide and run away from one another and from God.

Or, we try to find some way to compensate for that shame, some way to restore honor to themselves, disassociating ourselves with people we think will drag us down, putting down others, gossiping about them, buying things we can't afford, doing whatever it takes to get away from the shame.

There's an old joke about a prankster who decides to have some fun with the distinguished business and political leaders of his town, and so for each one of these people, he one night writes a note, he seals it in an envelope and he places it on their doorstep, and the note simply reads, I know everything, leave town at once.

[ 22 : 26 ] the joke goes that the next morning, every one of them is gone. They're terrified. They're terrified that their dark and shameful secrets have been uncovered, and the point of the joke is that everybody has this shame.

Everybody has something about themselves that they are terrified that others will find out about. We are afraid that our shame will lead to our destruction.

You know that's what happens in Mark chapter one. Jesus confronts a man who is controlled by what Mark calls an unclean spirit.

It's so funny, we, you know, some Bible translations simply call this an evil spirit, but the English Standard Version makes it clear, this is actually an unclean spirit.

In another incident, Luke describes a similar man with an unclean spirit, and you know what that man is doing, what the unclean spirit is causing him to do? It's causing him to wander around naked, living not in town, but cast out.

[ 23 : 35 ] Where is he living? In a graveyard, an unclean, contaminated place. This triad of shame is present. This man is naked, an outcast, contaminated by decay and death, but in Mark chapter one, with another man with an unclean spirit, notice what the unclean spirit expects Jesus to do to him.

Immediately, there was in their synagogue, a man with an unclean spirit, and he cried out, what have you to do with us, Jesus of Nazareth? Have you come to destroy us?

I know who you are, the Holy One of God. Because the unclean spirit, he understands what ought to happen when the Holy One of God encounters someone who is utterly shameful.

That someone ought to be destroyed. God in his holiness cannot be contaminated by shame by someone who is a worm and not a man. If he draws near to the man, he has to destroy him and the unclean spirit together.

He cannot be contaminated by him. That's what God could do for our shame, by the way. God could destroy it by destroying us. In fact, you and I sense that is what he ought to do.

[ 24 : 55 ] Have you ever felt like I cannot approach God in prayer and worship? I feel ashamed, I feel defiled, I feel unworthy because of some shame in my life right now. Have you ever felt that way?

If so, then you have innately sensed that you are not worthy to draw near a God who is holy and honorable and glorious.

I am a worm and not a man. But you know what? Jesus does not destroy the man like the unclean spirit claims he's going to do.

Here's what Jesus does. Jesus rebuked him saying, be silent and come out of him. And the unclean spirit convulsing him and crying out with a loud voice came out of him.

And they were all amazed. So they questioned among themselves saying, what is this? A new teaching with authority.

[ 26 : 00 ] He commands even the unclean spirits and they obey him. If you have ever felt that your shame could never be driven away from you, that it could never be separated from you, that it would be with you forever, take heart.

Take heart. Jesus commands even the unclean spirits and they obey him. Jesus has authority to cover your nakedness, to welcome back the outcast, to clean the one who is contaminated, to wash you clean.

shame. That's what Jesus can do for your shame. How does he do it? A price has to be paid, doesn't it?

You can't just speak a word and get rid of shame. If you could do that, we wouldn't have a problem. If we could just speak a word and clean up all the shame in your life, you wouldn't still be dealing with it.

But Jesus does something far greater. He does the only, he takes the steps that are needed to clean up the shame in our lives. In verse 40, Mark chapter 1 verse 40, Jesus encounters a man who is a leper.

[ 27 : 27 ] He may not have had leprosy, it may have been some sort of contagious skin disease, and the law of Moses had very specific instructions, very specific instructions about people who develop this sort of disease.

in Leviticus chapter 13, here's what we find. There's like two whole chapters on this in Leviticus. And here's what we see in chapter 13. The leprous person who has the disease shall wear torn clothes and let the hair of his head hang loose, and he shall cover his upper lip and cry out, unclean, unclean.

He shall remain unclean as long as he has the disease. He is unclean. He shall live alone. His dwelling shall be outside the camp.

Can you imagine that? One day waking up and realizing there's a patch of skin that seems to be turning red and scaly, and then seeing it spread day after day, and realizing I can't live at home anymore.

I have to leave my family. I have to leave my community. Everybody knows I have this. I have to go out. I have to wear a mask over my face. I can't, and if anyone even comes close to me, close to a man like me, in tattered clothing, contaminated, cast down to this deserted place, I have to cry out, unclean, unclean, warning them, don't come near me.

[ 28 : 51 ] Stay away from me. I will make you unclean too. This is shame in ultra-concentrated form. And that's this man's life experience.

he's supposed to yell unclean, unclean at Jesus. But he doesn't do that. He doesn't run away from Jesus like he's supposed to, like he instinctively would do.

Mark writes in verse 40, a leper came to him, imploring him, and kneeling said to him, if you will, you can make me clean.

clean. The man approaches Jesus in faith, in faith. If you will, you can make me clean.

He believes that Jesus has the authority, and Jesus alone has the authority to remove all of his shame, to make him clean and fresh and new again. And Jesus doesn't despise the man.

[ 30 : 07 ] He doesn't drive the man away. He doesn't shrink back in horror. Here's what Jesus does. Moved with pity, he stretched out his hand and touched him and said to him, I will be clean.

Jesus reaches out his hand to an unclean man who ought to contaminate him with a single touch. And Jesus touches him, he does it willingly, and he says with utter authority, be clean.

So instead of Jesus becoming contaminated by his uncleanness, Jesus makes him clean. And he's the only one who can do it. And he's the only one who can do it for you.

Verse 42, immediately the leprosy left him and he was made clean. And Jesus sternly charged him and sent him away at once and said to him, see that you say nothing to anyone but go show yourself to the priest and offer for your cleansing what Moses commanded for a proof to them.

But he went out and began to talk freely about it and to spread the news so that Jesus could no longer openly enter a town but was out in desolate places and people were coming to him from every quarter.

- [ 31 : 42 ] The story begins with a man who is unclean and living in a desolate place. Jesus makes him clean and he's able to return to town and he tells the news to everyone he knows and so then the story ends with Jesus with Jesus out in desolate places.

Jesus no longer able to enter the town. Now it is Jesus who was cast out. Jesus took the leper's place. This is what Jesus does for your shame.

If you have faith in Jesus to make you clean all your sin all your shame has been taken up by Jesus Christ.

He took it on himself. Took it off of you and on himself. He took it all the way to the cross. Crucifixion was the most shameful execution ever devised by man.

crucifixion was a terribly painful way to die. But honestly there are ways to die that are more physically painful than crucifixion.

- [ 32 : 57 ] What made crucifixion so bad, so unspeakable, it was not merely the physical pain, it was the shame. It was the shame of being a public spectacle, dying filthy and naked in a desolate place to the horror, to the ridicule of everyone who passes by and looks at you and sees you naked, cast out, contaminated.

I want you to understand, you have to understand and to feel the full weight of the shame that Jesus took on himself for you. You have to see it. There has never been a man as deeply shamed as Jesus was.

from the glory, coming all the way from the glory of being in this triune, deep, loving communion, glorious communion with God, to humble himself by becoming a man and then humbled further by death on a cross, the most shameful way to die.

You need to hear this, you need to feel the full weight of this. If you are going to understand all the shame that Jesus took on himself and took away from you. This is the account of Jesus' crucifixion in Mark chapter 15.

I'm going to read it and I want you to notice something. Notice line by line, first what Mark doesn't mention. Mark never mentions any of the physical pain that Jesus encountered.

- [ 34 : 28 ] We tend to fixate on that but Mark doesn't even mention it. Mark doesn't even dwell on the injustice of it like Luke does. every last detail that Mark includes is about the shame that Jesus bore.

Put yourself in Jesus' shoes. Understand here how it must have felt. Feel the shame that he bore for you. In Mark chapter 15 beginning in verse 16.

The soldiers led him away inside the palace, that is the governor's headquarters, and they called together the whole battalion. And they clothed him in a purple cloak and twisting together a crown of thorns, they put it on him.

They began to salute him. Hail, King of the Jews! They were striking his head with a reed and spitting on him and kneeling down in homage to him.

And when they had mocked him, they stripped him of the purple cloak. And put his own clothes on him, and they led him out to crucify him. And they compelled a pastor by, Simon of Cyrene, who was coming in from the country, the father of Alexander and Rufus, to carry his cross.

- [ 35 : 54 ] And they brought him to the place called Golgotha, which means place of a skull. and they offered him wine mixed with myrrh, but he did not take it.

And they crucified him and divided his garments among them, casting lots for them to decide what each should take.



And it was the third hour when they crucified him, and the inscription of the charge against him read, the king of the Jews. And with him they crucified two robbers, one on his right and one on his left.

And those who passed by derided him, wagging their heads and saying, aha, you who would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days, save yourself and come down from the cross.

So also the chief priests with the scribes mocked him to one another, saying, he saved others, he cannot save himself.

[ 37 : 02 ] Let the Christ, the king of Israel, come down now from the cross that we may see and believe. Those who were crucified with him also reviled him.

And when the sixth hour had come, there was darkness. over the whole land until the ninth hour. And at the ninth hour, Jesus cried with a loud voice, Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani, which means, my God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

And some of the bystanders hearing it said, they hauled, he's calling Elijah. And someone ran and filled a sponge with sour wine, put it on a reed and gave it to him to drink, saying, wait, let us see whether Elijah will come to take him down.

Jesus uttered a loud cry and breathed his last. And the curtain of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. And when the centurion who stood facing him saw that in this way he breathed his last, he said, truly this man was the son of God.

Did you feel that? That terrible, unrelenting, shame upon shame upon shame upon shame, this endless humiliation, despised and rejected by men, even his own father turning his face away from him.

[ 38 : 53 ] But at the end of it all, the centurion understood. He understood the honor of Jesus. Truly this man was the son of God because Jesus did not stay in shame upon that cross.

Jesus is alive. Jesus is risen. Death and shame no longer have a grip on Jesus.

He has ascended into heaven. Jesus reigns in power and glory and triumph. There is no more shame in Jesus.

And just as Jesus bore your shame, just as Jesus paid the price to make you clean. So the honor, the glory that Jesus has gained, it is yours. It is yours as well.

Hebrews chapter 12, we are told, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and sin which clings so closely and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus, the founder and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross despising the shame and is seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

[ 40 : 27 ] we are running a marathon with all those saints who have gone before us, surrounding us, cheering us on. So run with endurance, rid yourself of everything that is holding you back from Jesus.

Fix your eyes on the finish line on Jesus who is waiting for you because he too, he fixed his eyes on the joy that was set before him.

He too endured the cross, he scorned, he dismissed the shame because he knew he was going to rise in honor and glory and he knew he was going to be seated at the right hand of the throne of God.

That is where you are welcome. Because you belong to Jesus. You have not defiled Jesus.

You have not contaminated Jesus. Jesus has made you clean. Jesus has welcomed you home to the kingdom, to the glory of your father in heaven.

[ 41 : 38 ] So what now? Your shame has been covered. Your nakedness covered. You have been clothed in the righteousness of Jesus.

Jesus. you have not been cast out anymore but welcomed back home into the heavenly courts of the glorious God who is now your father.

And you are no longer contaminated but washed clean, spotless. So what now? What of those temptations and trials we've been talking about the last few weeks?

verses 3 and 4 of Hebrews chapter 12. Consider him who endured from sinners such hostility against himself so that you may not grow weary or faint-hearted.

In your struggle against sin, you have not yet resisted to the point of shedding your blood. Consider him. Look to Jesus.

[ 42 : 43 ] Keep your eyes, your thoughts fixed on Jesus and you will not grow weary. You will not grow faint-hearted. Jesus has shed his blood for you. If your eyes are on him, if your eyes are on his honor, his glory, the honor and glory that are yours in Christ, you will be able to resist temptation.

You will be wise. You will be, you will have his power, the work of the Holy Spirit in your life to resist temptation even to the point of shedding your blood for him. What of the trials you are facing?

Verses 5 through 7. And have you forgotten the exhortation that addresses you as sons? My son, do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord, nor be weary when reproved by him.

For the Lord disciplines the one he loves and chastises every son. whom he receives. It is for discipline that you have to endure.

God is treating you as sons. For what son is there whom his father does not discipline? You have been welcomed into the family of God.

[ 44 : 03 ] You are his daughters and sons. And this means that the trials you face, the suffering you endure, they are not intended by God to shame you.

They are not intended by God to destroy you. They are the wise discipline of a father who loves his children, who knows what is best for each one of us, who has welcomed you into his family and will never let you go.

David speaks about this father at the end of Psalm 23. A psalm that famously talks about what a good shepherd God is, the Lord is.

And he ends by shifting the scene to write about a meal with the Lord. To write about the honor that God has in store for you and me. The honor of being a welcomed child in the home of the king.

And David writes, you prepare a table before me in the presence of my enemies. You anoint my head with oil.

[ 45 : 18 ] My cup overflows. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life. And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

If you have believed in Jesus Christ and belong to him, if you have been baptized, washed away the shame, baptized into the family name of the Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, then you are welcome to his table, to a family meal with the triune God and with all of us who believe.

You're welcome to the table of the Lord. I'd like to invite the men forward. We're going to take part in this. This table is a reminder.

This meeting is a reminder.