

# **WEEK 1:**

## **JESUS COVERS OUR SHAME**

## A grid of horizontal lines for writing, consisting of 20 rows and 15 columns of lines.

# WEEK 1: JESUS COVERS OUR SHAME

**Beginning the Journey:** Today is your first meeting in our “Our Problems, His Promises” series, and we are excited that you have chosen to join us. Each week we will take a few minutes to “look back” and discuss what you learned last week through the daily devotionals. Then, we will “look up” at what God wants to teach us in our study today. Finally, we will “look forward” to how we will live out the principles God has taught us today.

**Looking Back:** Take a minute to introduce yourselves to one another, and go over the group guidelines on page 7 as you begin your journey together.

**Looking Up:** Play the video and consider the discussion questions together.

**What do you think of “ghosting” as a way of handling relationships? Why do people often prefer to hide from someone rather than face an issue head-on?**

**What are some ways we try to “hide” from God today?**

**What does it teach you about God that He went looking for Adam and Eve instead of letting them hide from Him?**

Read Romans 5:14 and Hebrews 2:14-15. In what specific ways is Jesus a better Adam?

Considering that we still sin, what does it mean that sin's curse has been removed? Considering that we still experience shame, what does it mean that Jesus has covered our shame?

Has there been a time in your life when sin has made you struggle to experience peace? Explain.

Read Romans 16:20 and Revelation 2:7. How do these verses encourage us about sin's curse and the shame it brings?

God's peace and Jesus's grace cover our shame. Is that automatically a daily reality for us when we come to faith, or do we have some responsibility in living it out? Explain.

**Looking Forward:** How will you take what you learned today and apply it to your life this week? Take a few minutes to plan your next meeting and spend some time in prayer together.

## WEEK 1: JESUS COVERS OUR SHAME

### DAY 1—READ 1 JOHN 3:8

*Whoever makes a practice of sinning is of the devil, for the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the works of the devil.*

Shame isn't new. The very first human beings who ever lived felt it, and every human being since then has felt it too. That's what sin does. And that's been the devil's plan from the beginning.

In their shame, Adam and Eve actually tried to physically hide from God. Can you imagine? It seems strange, but the truth is, we do the same thing. You probably haven't sewn fig leaves together or sneaked behind a tree, but you've had moments or even seasons when you avoided God's Word, prayer, confession of sin, and/or engaging honestly with God and in the community of faith.

The short of it is that guilt and shame has, for every person, created distance from God—a distance that is irretrievable in our efforts. It is a distance that perpetuates shame. So God sent Jesus.

Jesus came to destroy the shame-inducing work of the devil. He trusted God completely and obeyed Him fully, taking the curse of sin on Himself so that we could enter the free and abundant life found in God's presence. He covered our shame with His victory and restored what sin had broken. In Christ, there is no reason to hide in shame.

**How does 1 John 3:8 express our problem and God's promise?**

**Why is shame always connected to sin?**

**How does God want you to personally apply 1 John 3:8?**

**Thank Jesus for His work that destroys the shame-inducing work of the devil. Confess any shame you continue to hide or carry. Invite God to show you what it means to walk as one who has been freed of that burden.**

### DAY 2—READ HEBREWS 2:14-15

*<sup>14</sup> Since therefore the children share in flesh and blood, he himself likewise partook of the same things, that through death he might destroy the one who has the power of death, that is, the devil, <sup>15</sup> and deliver all those who through fear of death were subject to lifelong slavery.*

When was the last time someone helped you deal with a problem? Maybe a physician gave you a prescription, a friend helped you move some furniture, or a family member offered some sound financial advice. Those kinds of helps are valuable. They may even answer a desperate need.

Hebrews 2:14-15 helps us understand our *most* desperate need—and it is a need we are tempted to minimize. Intellectually, we understand that death will come, but it often feels like a far-off idea that has little to do with what takes place in our lives today. However, that need has everything to do with today.

The devil held the power of death. As such, he held the power of life because death's hold over us impacts the way we live. That impact reveals itself differently in each person, but Jesus stepped into life to offer us the help we need and the help we cannot receive apart from Him. He came to destroy the devil and deliver us from his power—which was, is, and always will be our most desperate need.

How does Hebrews 2:14-15 express our problem and God's promise?

What are some signs a person might be minimizing their most desperate need—deliverance from sin?

What is one change that would take place in your life this week if you were to live as someone Jesus has delivered from sin's power?

Thank Jesus for meeting your most desperate need—covering your shame and destroying the devil's power in your life. Ask God to help you live as one who has been helped in that way.



### DAY 3—READ ROMANS 16:20

*The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.*

When we come to faith in Jesus Christ, we recognize our need for salvation—because of past sin. And it is true; the sin in our lives necessitates salvation. At the same time, Jesus's covering of our past shame by His blood on the cross has very real and important implications for the present and future too.

It is difficult to understand that Jesus has covered our shame because we still sin and experience shame. The fact is, Satan is still at work on the earth. He is still working to bring about shame in your life. And as sin continues to abound in the world, it is clear that he is often successful.

Yet the peace of God and grace of Christ is with you—in this moment and the next. There is no situation you will face today or tomorrow that erases God's promise through Jesus. As He covered your shame at the initial point of salvation, He will cover your shame every moment going forward.

Ultimately, God's promise means that Satan will be crushed for all time. There is a grace-filled promise of a certain end to Satan's power in the world. God's Word points all our past and present sin-induced shame to a future that is completely glorious. And in that glorious place there will be no more Satan and no more sin. He will be forever destroyed, and we will experience no more shame.

How does Romans 16:20 express our problem and God's promise?

What is the danger in thinking only about Jesus's past shame-covering work in your life and not about His work in your life today?

Satan will be crushed, once and for all time. How do you need God's peace and Christ's grace now?

Thank God for specific evidences of His peace and grace that He shows you as you wait for the day He will crush Satan under your feet.

### DAY 4—READ 2 CORINTHIANS 5:21

*For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.*

Have you ever been blamed for something you didn't do? What was your reaction? It's never fun to be on the receiving end of false accusations. It's never fair to be shamed because of someone else's wrongdoing. It's out of place. It's inappropriate. It's cumbersome. It's unfair.

To be found at fault for something we had nothing to do with is not a desirable position to be in. And yet, that is the position Jesus willingly took on to give us hope, abundant life, and an eternal future in glory.

In this one sentence, we see how Jesus fulfilled God's promise to fix our problem. At the cross, all righteousness was fulfilled as God reconciled grace and justice to sinners.

The essence of atonement is summed up in these twenty-four words. We could only be made right—our shame could only be covered up—through perfect obedience, with no sin before God. So God put all of our sin on Jesus—all our guilt, shame, and even distance from God. Jesus, who never sinned and had no need for personal repentance, took it all on Himself so that we could be put in right relationship with God.

Our Savior, Jesus Christ, makes restored relationship with God possible for all who believe in Him. Are you resting in the righteousness of Christ? Take some time today to marvel at the undeserved grace He has given you.

How does 2 Corinthians 5:21 express our problem and God's promise?

What does it mean that in Christ we "become" God's righteousness?

What are some specific things Jesus was willing to take upon Himself on your behalf for which you are thankful?

Thank God for the reconciliation that He made possible for you through Jesus. Ask Him to help your life demonstrate the righteousness He purchased on your behalf.

### DAY 5—READ REVELATION 22:12-14

<sup>12</sup> “Behold, I am coming soon, bringing my recompense with me, to repay each one for what he has done. <sup>13</sup> I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end.” <sup>14</sup> Blessed are those who wash their robes, so that they may have the right to the tree of life and that they may enter the city by the gates.

Jesus Christ is the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End. He began creation, He observes events as they happen, and He will bring history to a just completion. The book of Revelation ends with a final reminder of the promise of life in Christ—those who receive Jesus’s offer to wash their robes will live forever with Him.

His offer of salvation is for anyone who will take it. It is a gift. It cannot be earned; it may only be received. This great book predicts the end of life as we know it. Until then, we should walk in the reality of God’s promises, fulfilled in Jesus.

There are lots of disappointments in this world. But there is Someone we can cling to who will never disappoint us. In moments of disappointment, it’s good to be reminded of the truth that God will keep His promises. In fact, He affirms those promises to the last pages of Scripture . . . and to our hearts today. The best is yet to come, as we continually watch and wait for the return of Jesus Christ who has eternally covered our shame.

**How does Revelation 22:12-14 express our problem and God's promise?**

**What are the characteristics of the One who is coming soon?**

**What blessings are received by those who have accepted His invitation to "wash their robes"?**

**Thank Jesus for covering your shame, now and forever. Invite Him to help you walk in the reality of that promise each and every day.**