

A. PROMISE

- God promises to show us His Way of Wisdom but there are obstacles we must identify and overcome. Last week we saw how distrust and false hope hinder us.
- Trust grows as we lift up our souls and situations to God time and time again. This allows us to know God more deeply and discover that He is a promise keeper!
- By observing David, we can see more barriers keeping us from God's promised wisdom and the process He reveals for handling them wisely: Ps 25:6 – 11 NIV -- Remember, LORD, your great mercy and love, for they are from of old. ⁷ Do not remember the sins of my youth and my rebellious ways; according to your love remember me, for you, LORD, are good. ⁸ Good and upright is the LORD; therefore he instructs sinners in his ways. ⁹ He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them his way. ¹⁰ All the ways of the LORD are loving and faithful toward those who keep the demands of his covenant. ¹¹ For the sake of your name, LORD, forgive my iniquity, though it is great.
- David seems to be dealing with guilt and regret about his sins, past and present. He's already mentioned in this psalm the additional burden of shame. (v. 3)
- Since the fall, our merciful God has made a way for His people to be forgiven and in right relationship with Him. Animal sacrifices foreshadowed God's promised Savior: Lev 16:30 -- The priest shall make atonement for you, to cleanse you, *that* you may be clean from all your sins before the LORD.
- David is counting on this promise and provision from the Lord. As he is reminded of God's promise, he calls on God to remember it, too! (Great prayer strategy!!)
- David does more than hold God to His promise. He understands God's nature – His love, goodness, mercy and desire for relationship with His children.
- God has done the very thing for which David prayed – for our sins to be forgotten! Though it's incomprehensible that an omniscient God could forget, He says He will: Jer 31:24b -- I will forgive their iniquity, and their sin I will remember no more
- What comfort and hope can be ours as we see the heart of God and cling to His promises. Let's be vigilant lest we let guilt or shame rob us of them.
- Insights:

B. PROCESS

- Wisdom tells us to gain understanding about the obstacles we encounter. So let's explore guilt and shame and the process for dealing with each of them effectively.

1) Proper Identification:

- Guilt and shame are similar, but there are important differences:

GUILT

Relates to right and wrong
Centers on actions or behaviors
Deals with our righteousness
Brings feelings of judgment

SHAME

Relates to dishonor and disgrace
Centers on how it looks (to God, self, others)
Deals with our identity
Brings feelings of exposure

2) Legitimate vs. Illegitimate

- Because believers continue to have reason for legitimate guilt and shame, we must first let the Spirit search our hearts for recent sin. If it's present, then we seek forgiveness: 1 Jn 1:8-9; 3:21 NIV -- If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness... if our hearts do not condemn us, we have confidence before God
- Let's be quick to practice this principle whenever we sense distance from God, reluctance to approach Him, or difficulty discerning His wisdom and guidance.
- On the other hand, our feelings of guilt or shame are not always reliable. False guilt and shame feelings can come through enemy accusation or our own faulty thinking.
- If we have confessed any known sin, our process then moves to replacing our illegitimate feelings of guilt and shame with what God says is true.
- Jesus bore both our guilt and shame at the Cross. (Is 53:5, Heb 12:2) But because these feelings have different roots, different truths need to be applied:

3) Targeted Truth

- Guilt – Our sin is paid in full, and we stand perfectly righteousness before God:
 - Is 44:22 NLT -- I have swept away your sins like a cloud. I have scattered your offenses like the morning mist. Oh, return to me, for I have paid the price to set you free.
 - Micah 7:19 NLT -- Once again you will have compassion on us. You will trample our sins under your feet and throw them into the depths of the ocean!
 - 2 Cor 5:21 -- For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him
 - Heb 8:12 -- I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their lawless deeds I will remember no more.
- Shame – We are perfectly loved, accepted, and honored because of Jesus:
 - Is 61:7 NLT -- Instead of shame and dishonor, you will enjoy a double share of honor. You will possess a double portion of prosperity in your land, and everlasting joy will be yours.
 - Heb 2:11 NLT -- So now Jesus and the ones he makes holy have the same Father. That is why Jesus is not ashamed to call them his brothers and sisters.
 - Is 54:4 NLT -- Fear not; you will no longer live in shame. Don't be afraid; there is no more disgrace for you. You will no longer remember the shame of your youth
 - Is 43:4 NLT -- You are precious to Me. You are honored, and I love you.
- Whenever you first notice that guilt or shame is plaguing you, start immediately replacing your feelings with what God says is true. (See handout "I Feel But God Says")
- Stay with this process of renewing your mind until you are fully convinced that what God says is greater and more accurate than your feelings.
- It takes time to create new mindsets when our former way of thinking has been around for years. Don't be surprised when old thought patterns continue to surface.
- The truth is powerful and will eventually penetrate deeply enough for transformation and freedom to come.
- Every time we push back against false guilt and shame, we gain ground back from the enemy. The Spirit will alert us whenever we need to realign with God's truth.
- As the truth of forgiveness and redemption sinks in, we'll find ourselves saying as David did, "You are good, O Lord!" (v. 7b)

- LISTENING EXERCISE
Are guilt and shame a regular part of your life?

Is one of them more dominant than the other?

Hear the Lord say to your guilt:

- *"I have paid the price to set you free"*
- *"I have thrown your sins into the depths of the sea"*
- *"I became sin for you so that you are now righteous before Me always"*

Hear Him say to your shame:

- *"Let me replace your dishonor and shame with a double share of My honor"*
- *"I am not ashamed to call you My own."*
- *"You are precious to Me and I love you"*

Lord, would You give me the wisdom and courage to come to You to deal with these feelings instead of my efforts to justify my sins or hide from You due to shame?

- We make progress in the Way of Wisdom as the fruit of humility grows in our lives: "He guides the humble in what is right and teaches them His way." (v. 8)
- Sometimes guilt and shame are confused with humility. Humility is an overflow of understanding God's great love and mercy vs. focus on our weakness and sin.
- Setting aside guilt and shame frees us to look at Jesus, to know and follow Him.
- While humility does not come naturally, it is God's call for every believer. He will work it in us: Phil 2:5 AMP -- Have this same attitude in yourselves which was in Christ Jesus [look to Him as your example in selfless humility]
- Humility requires surrender. Let's lay down our ways of seeing and doing life so that Jesus might increase and we might willingly and wisely decrease. (Jn 3:30)
- Insights:

C. TESTIMONY

D. PERSONAL APPLICATION

- ONE THING
- The One Thing that I'd like to take away from today's class and believe God to accomplish in my life is:

- PONDER THE TRUTH

Which verse or principle stood out to you this week? Write it below taking some time to review it often. Be still in God's presence, alert for new insights. Record them here.

- PROCESSING THE TRUTH

Prayerfully consider the Listening Exercises from this lesson. Ask the Spirit to guide you into a deeper understanding of the truth and to reveal any specific faith steps He is calling you to take. Write down your insights.