

Note:

-Italics used for notes to the speaker

-Regular text for specific discussion points to be brought up in the session

-The option to ask students questions may not be available in larger settings, please feel free to adapt the talk as necessary, while retaining key points

Goal of the talk:

Students will recognize the problem of shame and that humanity is in search of honour

Students will connect the true source of shame to our separation from God

Students will find healing from their inherent sense of shame (as fallen beings) in the love of God

Shame: Our Fall from Glory – Talk-sheet

Key Points: Our search for honour in all the wrong places. The true source of honour is God our Father

Introduction:

Before beginning, invite students to quickly recap what was discussed in earlier sessions (as time permits)

We have been going through a series on the story of Scripture,

In our previous session, we talked about God creating humans in His image

What does it mean to be created in God's image?

It means that we as humans are unique and different from the rest of all God's creation.

Nothing else was created in God's image. Only humans.

To be created in God's image means that we were created

- To relate to Him and bear a resemblance to Him like children relate to and bear resemblance to their parents (Gen 5:3)
 - o We have the unique ability to have a parent-child relationship with God, which the rest of the universe doesn't have
 - o We have unique abilities eg: to love, to have emotions, to think and make decisions, to have morals, to create, to dream and to imagine
- To represent Him on the earth. (Gen 1:26)
 - o We also have the unique responsibility of "ruling over" and taking care of everything else God created –animals, plants, and the environment.

In an earlier session, we also saw that God is love. Now love always demands a response. Do you agree? - your response will determine whether you enter into a relationship with them or not. This of course doesn't need to be a romantic relationship only. It can also be a friendship or a family relationship.

Relationship necessitates two people who have committed themselves to one another in love and the deeper the commitment, the stronger the relationship.

Invite students to answer: What are some ways a person can respond to love?

Possible responses –

1. *Acceptance – You are happy about being loved, you accept that person’s love for you and love them back*
2. *Rejection – You don’t love the person, so you reject both their love and their invitation to a relationship (reasons why you don’t love them might vary Eg: they hurt you, they can’t be trusted or they do not meet your desires)*
3. *Indecision – You are not sure whether you should enter into relationship with the person, so you essentially decide not to decide until you feel more certain about how you should respond. Even here you eventually decide to accept or reject. You cannot remain in indecision forever. Never making a decision, is actually a decision to reject the love offered to you.*

The first humans God created also had the same choice. God loved them as a Father, but He didn’t want to force them to be in a relationship with Him. Instead, He let them choose how they would respond to His love. Let’s look at a story from the Bible that tells us what they chose. **Gen 2:7, 15-23; 3:1-6 (NLT)**

Ask students: Do you see God’s love in this story?

- *God provided for every need of the man and woman (a beautiful place to live, food to eat, companionship, He cared for all their needs and desires)*
- *God wanted to protect them (that’s why He warns them about eating from the tree)*

Ask students: How did the man and woman respond to God’s love?

- *Although they could see how much He had given them, not because they deserved it, but simply because He loved them, yet, they didn’t trust that He really loved them*
How do we know this? - The serpent made them think that maybe God was trying to keep something good from them. They wondered if God didn’t want them to have all the power and abilities He has and that’s why He had told them not to eat the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil.

Now there’s another character in our story - the serpent.

Satan, who is the enemy of God, came to Adam and Eve in the form of a snake. Satan did not want to follow God’s ways and he wanted humans too to reject God.

Ask students: Like Adam and Eve went against God, we as their descendants have continued to go against God and reject His love. Case in point, do you always do what is good and follow God’s ways or do you follow your own desires and end up doing things that are wrong?

When humanity chose to reject God’s love, what God warned them about actually happened - God had told them they would die. While death was a physical result of their rebellion, there was also a spiritual death – a separation from God. That separation resulted in

several negative outcomes for humanity and the whole universe, one of which was a loss of honour.

Romans 3:23 all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God

As God's children, our honour once came from God. But our rejection of God left us searching for honour in all the wrong places - our fancy cars, how "good" we are, the status of our family, how cool our friends are, whether we are keeping up with the latest trends (or at least those that are adhered to by people we admire), how much we score in our exams, our wealth, whether we have a boyfriend/girlfriend etc. All of these temporary things have now become our source of honour.

We work excessively to protect our honour, any danger to it must be thwarted - even if it means letting go of that friend who's a wonderful person, but just cramps our style! The problem with this approach to life is that our sense of security rises and falls with every 'like' or 'dislike' that we receive from our community as if our lives itself are a social media post. Here's the problem - all our human efforts to earn honour actually result in greater feelings of shame, because true honour belongs to God.

But what if we could have a life of complete security – knowing no matter what we did, we would be accepted and loved? That it wasn't our achievements or our efforts to please someone that earned us their love. Instead, they simply valued us for who we are – seeing our quirks, our failures, our jealousy, the things we love (whether cool or not), our desires, our hopes, our dreams – all of it.

If there's one person who would accept us just the way we are, it is God and this is how He proved it to us - **Though we, like Adam and Eve, rejected God, He did not stop loving us.** He showed us that He still loves us by coming as a human being, taking our shame on Himself and giving us His honour in exchange.

The honour we are looking for and that we can never earn by all our medals and achievements, is a gift that God gives us – a gift that we can choose to accept or reject. And once again God gives us the choice as He gave the man and woman in the garden. We can accept or reject His love and be in a place of true honour that no one can take away from us. How will you respond to God's offer of love?

Resources Used:

The Prodigal Son (by Ken Bailey) - <http://honorshame.com/videos/>

Back to God's Village - <https://youtu.be/DLQmgPT-xOU>

