

LET IT BE CHRISTMAS



sStudy Guide

Hey Jude

Shame, shame, double shame

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INTRODUCTION

Shame is described in the dictionary as being "a negative emotion that combines feelings of dishonor, unworthiness and embarrassment - a state of disgrace or dishonour." As such it has the potential to be most damaging to our emotional, relational and spiritual health. One of the problems is that shame comes in two forms:

- a. Healthy shame - designed to alert us to something in our lives that we have done which is dishonouring both to God and ourselves as well as to others.
- b. Unhealthy shame - either self-assigned or imposed by others on us.

Either way God wants us to be out from under the damaging cloud of shame and disgrace.

Begin by reading Matthew 1:18-25.

1. Note how Joseph was determined, despite the personal hurt of his situation, not to shame or disgrace Mary. Why was he able to make that kind of choice?
2. Think back on a recent occasion when you were experiencing a measure of shame. Was that healthy or unhealthy? Have you been able to get out from under the shadow of that?
3. Have you ever been tempted to "shame" someone in order to motivate them? What do you think might have been the adverse consequences of doing that? Is it possible that you need to have a conversation in order to own that shaming behaviour with another person and free him/her from any residual negative consequences?
4. Read Psalm 25:1-5 and focus particularly on the words of Verse 3 which, in the New Living Translation, says: "No one who trusts in you will ever be disgraced (shamed)..." Why does this matter so much to God?

Moving Forward

If you are experiencing any lingering or ongoing form of shame, is it time for you to have a conversation with someone who can help you get to a better place - a place where God would prefer you to live consistently?

changing your mind

O Lord, I give my life to you. I trust in you, my God! Do not let me be disgraced, or let my enemies rejoice in my defeat. No one who trusts in you will ever be disgraced, but disgrace comes to those who try to deceive others. Show me the right path, O Lord; point out the road for me to follow. Lead me by your truth and teach me, for you are the God who saves me.

Psalm 25:1-5 NLT