

Christina Aristizabal

February 7, 2021

I was thirteen years old when I experienced shame. It was during my time in junior High School, along with many other students and one teacher. During this time I was always being bullied by a lot of the popular kids at school. One of my teachers, instead of helping me during these difficult moments, I felt as if she did not have compassion or any type of understanding to what was going on with me at the moment. I was always scolded by her, getting in trouble, and feeling unfit to be able to be maybe be felt or understood by a woman, especially an adult.

Shame left with me with such deep sadness and despair. I felt as if I wanted to disappear and never show my face again. Many times I felt that I wanted to run away, but didn't know where or how. My way out in my mind was trying to commit suicide. I believed the lie that suicide was my ticket out of my shame. It led me into a life of not allowing my real persona come out and held me in a lock down for many years. This feeling led me into a destructive lifestyle that God never intended me to live by. Shame, kept me hidden from everyone and everything. I knew how to mask and hide behind a smile. Shame, as an adult hindered my walk with the Lord.

Shame was unfolded at an early age for me. When I was school I was bullied by the other students, because I had made rumors about myself that weren't true in order to fit in with others. This backfired and only made things worst. I told many of the kids in school that I was not a virgin. I wanted to look as if at a young age I was already having sex just so that I could have the approval of others. I wanted to fit in during a time of peer pressure in a teens world. It wasn't until early summer, where things turned for the worst. I was sexually abused by two boys in my school, who at the present time wanted the proof of my "non virginity" claims. I was tricked into thinking that we were going outside to the park to meet different friends together. They invited me inside one of their homes, as I innocently asked

"Aren't we going to the park?"

They said, "Oh yea, we are I just forgot my basketball, come inside really quick while I get it."

I said "Ok."

That day I didn't make it back out. I fell into the hands of prey. I was vulnerable and naive.

I came out in great shame, as my shirt was ripped, and virgin blood stains were on my pants due to the trauma that had just taken place. I went straight to my counselor who then took me over to my parents. I told them everything that had happened.

Later, that night my father and I went to the hospital and filed a report against what had happened. I lived in the greatest shame of my life, to not feeling valuable, but feeling worthless. I felt a sense of brokenness.

The following days to come, at school were one of the worst ones. I was bullied, because I was called a liar, and somehow everyone found out about my rape. I wanted to hide my face and never come back. One teacher instead of empathizing, she actually made me feel little by saying that all I wanted was attention in front of the whole class. I got up in the middle of the class, ran

down the hall way, and out the back doors of the school and ran home. I had to be moved into a different school due to the bullying and it felt that everyone sided with the others, and didn't really understand my story. It always made me feel that everything was my fault. It made me live within shame.

Shame is defined as a painful feeling of humiliation or distress caused by the consciousness of wrong or foolish behavior. This feeling paralyzes many people. It doesn't allow others to grow into the person they are intended to be. Behind shame, there is fear.

Fear and Shame might seem similar but they are different. The root behind shame is fear. Fear brings someone into a triggered feeling of anything that is dangerous whether that is real or unreal. Shame, due to fear makes people place a mask so that they no longer look vulnerable but, strong. A mask that sooner or later tends to fall off.

In conclusion, the experience of shame over my life left me broken. Slowly over time as I began to heal from all the shame in which now Jesus has taken upon Him, I've embraced the Grace that God offered for me when He died on the cross. No longer do I walk in a shamed way, but I went from shame to grace.