

“If I only...”

Matthew 9:19-22

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- **Establish Rapport**
- **Pray**

Illustration: I'm a huge fan of the office. We may disagree, but I believe some of the greatest moments on the silver screen happened on this show. The filming, the comedy, the characters, the plot.... So good! There is one specific episode, where Jim and Pam's baby is going to get christened in catholic church, and they invite the entire office to come and join. All of them go, and commit their usual shenanigans. Michael is doing everything to become the Godfather, Dwight is selling paper to everyone in the church, Kevin is thinking about football, but there is one person that doesn't join them. Toby, the hated man in the office, is standing outside trying to gather the courage to step into church. He say's him and the big guy have a lot of catching up to do, and in one moment says to himself "oh this is silly" and starts to walk towards the doors, but immediately turns again and says "nope, nope, nope, nope".

Application: How many of us have felt like Toby? Standing outside the walls of church, or distanced ourselves from relationship with Jesus because of shame? Have you let shame stand between you and God? Have you let shame stand between you and restoration?

Romans 8:1 "Therefore now there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus."

Redemption Focus: Although sin may bring with it shame, God is actively reminding us that we are worthy of his Grace and love.

- Guilt: "I did something bad" "I did something wrong"
- Shame: "I am bad" "I am dirty"
- Guilt is therefore mostly tied actions we commit that are wrong. But Shame is almost always rooted in the way we SEE ourselves.

Whether you've had a relationship with Jesus for 1 day or 50 years, feelings of shame can hinder anyone from pursuing, or growing in their God given potential!

Illustration: A few years ago, I was going through some tough times, emotionally I felt exhausted, and stressed. I'm a perfectionist, and in many moments I definitely struggle because of that. When I don't see an outcome that I expected in certain things, I beat myself up! This particular night, I was going through it, sleepless and emotionally spent. My wonderful wife who is much better than me in so many ways came to me in the living room and told me something I will never forget "Jp, you're doing much better than you think you are".

- It seems simple enough, but those words had the power to remind me not only that my expectations of perfection were unachievable, but that God never once expected that from me as well!

Fallen Condition Focus: I believe that God consistently reminds us of His grace and mercy all throughout scripture in order to de-throne shame in our lives! So how can we remind ourselves of that when shame comes our way? The power of the “If I only” prayer.

Transition: To answer this I wanted to read a story that perfectly reflects boldness in faith, and overcoming shame. If we could open to Matthew 9:19-22, Here we find a story about a woman who had every reason to run away in shame, but still, chose to run and press through the multitude, to at least touch the EDGE of Jesus’ garment.

Background and Context:

This story is happening INSIDE another story. This is called an intercalation, and usually when this happens, the authors are trying to tell us something! It means that these events could have something in Common.

A synagogue leader comes to Jesus and kneels before him saying his daughter who is 12 years old, is dead, and asks him to come lay his hand on her so she will live. Jesus, then, Gets up and goes with this synagogue leader toward where his daughter was.

READ Matthew 9:19-22

Transition: What a beautiful story of Faith! In order to understand and overcome shame, It is important to understand the power of that epiphany she has. She thinks to herself “**IF I ONLY** touch the edge of his garment, I will be healed”. That was her moment of epiphany, her moment of realization! It was her “Hail Mary” moment. Her last chance! I wanted to give you three “**If I only**” statements that will help YOU overcome shame.

1. IF I ONLY remind myself that everyone experiences shame! V19-20

- Shame is as old as sin itself. Adam and Eve hide themselves from God in the garden, not Just because of their guilt, but also because of their shame! They feel naked and embarrassed because of their shame!
- Even the most formidable characters in the Bible faced moments of shame
- **Shame has a funny way of making us feel alone in our struggles**
- This woman probably did as well! She probably felt like She was 100% alone in a crowd full of people. The gospel of Luke says that this crowd was so big that it was pressing Jesus!
- **But still**, has the courage to look past that and reach out to Jesus.

A . If we only remind ourselves that we are not alone in our struggles, that we are not an abnormally because of our sin, we begin to de-throne shame in our lives!

2. IF I ONLY remember to run to the right source! V 20

- Sometimes, because of an incorrect understanding of Grace, or of the Character of God, we get scared to run to Jesus!
- Shame steps in and says “How could God love someone like YOU”, “You’re worthless”, “You don’t deserve to be in a church” “You’re not Holy like them” “Jesus doesn’t love you either!”
- When that happens sometimes we often run to the WRONG source.
 - o We sometimes run to celebrities for help on Instagram and YouTube
 - o A guy or a girl for help, finding validation and worth in relationships
 - o Addiction for help, to try and cope with the feelings of shame!
 - o Sometimes we even run the other way! Instead of dealing with shame and overcoming our issues, we look for things that affirm what WE want to hear and not what God has to say!
- But this woman, runs to the **RIGHT source**. She had been running to physicians and healers. But here she finds the RIGHT source here! She knew it wasn’t his cloak, but that even the most minimal exposure to the Son would certainly heal her!

Illustration: In one of my classes, we were asked to site where we found a poem to read, and someone had the audacity to cite Wikipedia! Everyone knows Wikipedia is not the right source! Sources Matter! Make Jesus your refuge, and remember that he welcomes you with open arms!

B. If we only remember Jesus is the right source, we begin to de-throne shame in our lives!

3. IF I ONLY remember that Jesus RESTORES me. V 22

- It is easy to think that in the middle of a multitude, Jesus does not see you. It is easy to believe that in a church full of people, God has forgotten about you.
- **But that Could not be farther from the truth!**
- I believe somewhere in heaven God has a Motorola Razor with your name on it, and he is patiently waiting, ready to **HEAR** you.
- God made so many beautiful things when He created the earth in Genesis, but only Human kind was “VERY GOOD”. He looks and **SEES** many things, but YOU are what pleases him!
- Here Jesus notices something happened. Someone had faith in that moment, faith that could be **SEEN** by him, faith that shifted the Gaze of the almighty to her! Faith that healed her!
- And in seeing her, He **doesn’t just heal her**. He makes SURE EVERYONE KNOWS he heals her.
 - o If Jesus had only healed her quietly, She would’ve still been deemed uncleaned by her community.

- But Jesus wants to heal her in a wholistic way. He wants to restore her HEALTH, he wants to restore her to her COMMUNITY, and he wants to restore his RELATIONSHIP.

C. If we only remember that Jesus is in the business of RESTORATION. When you de-throne shame, and step out in faith, HE is faithful to restore you, your position, your future, the time that you thought was lost... etc etc

Conclusion:

Hebrews 4:15 says “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. ¹⁶Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.”

Whatever shame has had a footstool in your life, remind yourself that you are not alone, that Jesus is the right source, and that he is ready to restore you, because he Understand you! He isn’t ignorant of your struggles, and temptations. He knows what it’s like, to be hurt, and stabbed in the back. He understands you!