



Stay: Discovering Grace, Freedom, and Wholeness Where You Never Imagined Looking, Part 2

“As far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.”
—Psalm 103:12 (NIV)

Reflection Questions:

- 1) As humans, we often allow shame to keep us from abiding in Christ. What shame can you relinquish to Christ?
- 2) Are there obstacles in your life that are keeping you from staying in Christ?
- 3) What is one thing you can do today to lead you closer into His presence?

Extended Devotion:

Not long ago, I made a weekly trip to the grocery store. As I was maneuvering in and out of the aisles, I noticed a woman with a small child who constantly strayed from her mother. Without fail, the mother would quickly leave the grocery cart, quietly remind the child to stay put and bring her back. Each time the child's face wore a look of shame and disappointment but she stayed a bit longer after each reminder. You have likely seen this happen and probably know it all too well with our own children. Dealing with shame and disappointment seems like a natural part of life.

I don't know about you, but I often struggle with shame even in the smallest of ways. We often think of shame as something terrible because we find it prevents us from moving forward with our lives. I think this is often the case because we allow shame to turn into a deep rooted guilt we continually carry. This prevents us from a deeper relationship with God and staying in His presence. But, shame can also draw us closer to God. Sometimes what we view as shame is a gentle reminder from God to move closer to Him rather than away. **True shame will always lead us to the cross. It moves us into the need for grace.**

God's word gives us daily reminders that He has paid the price for our transgressions. He has removed them as far as the east is from the west. When we focus on that promise rather than on our fear or shame, we can truly stay in the presence of God. This does not happen overnight. Staying in Christ happens by daily seeking His presence.

Paul reminds us in Romans 6:18 (NLT) that because of the cross, we no longer carry the weight of our sins. He says, "Now you are free from your slavery to sin, and you have become slaves to righteous living". What areas of shame can you give to God today?

Application:

Remember that true shame will always lead us to the cross. It moves us into the need for grace. As you seek to abide in Christ, start with these 2 steps.

1. Ask this important question: Is the area conviction or condemnation? As you read God's Word or go about your daily tasks, remember Christ has already paid the price and we are no longer condemned. Condemnation comes from the enemy but conviction comes from the Holy Spirit.

2. Pray right away. Once you determine conviction or condemnation, pray right away. Thank God for convicting you of the thing that's drawing you away from Him. Give Him control of the area you feel condemnation. Do this daily and rest in Him.

Takeaway:

We can discover grace and freedom when we daily seek His presence and choose to stay in Him.

