

“UNSTUCK – Shame & Regrets” (4.23.17)

Have you ever been stuck?

The last time I was physically stuck was on our Panama missions trip in February 2017.

Our team was building our 7th medical clinic on a remote island in the **NW province in Chiriqui Grande** of Panama.

The new construction was situated on a narrow strip of dry ground in the midst of a swamp-like area = huts were built on stilts.

I was helping put up a new chain link fence around the property to keep the critters out. The fence line was a narrow path surrounded by muck & mire.

You had to walk with one foot over the other - - I'd done really well up until the last 10 ft I lost my balance & instinctively stuck my left foot out side ways to catch myself, before I knew it my boot was sunk in that nastiness (like suction cups)

There is nothing like the feeling of having no control and little ability to get out of the situation.

With enough pushing & pulling & little creative thinking my buddies got me **UNSTUCK**.

People have a tendency to get stuck in various patterns of life.

Stuck in financial difficulty - *Stuck in* a job they hate- *Stuck in* a powerful addiction:

Today we're going to look at an area many of us get stuck in = **SHAME & REGRETS**

Speaking of regrets = **On May 6, 1954**, **Roger Bannister** became the 1st man in history to run a mile in less than 4 minutes. Within 2 months, **John Landy eclipsed the record by 1.4 seconds**. **On August 7, 1954**, the two met together for a historic race.

As they moved into the last lap, Landy held the lead. It looked as if he would win, but as he neared the finish he was haunted by the question,

“Where is Bannister?” As he turned to look, Bannister took the lead.

Landy later told a Time magazine reporter, “If I hadn't looked back, I would have won!”

The “World of Sports” is filled with such regrets:
ENJOY this VIDEO CLIP that DJ Barnette and I collaborated on together ☺
Maybe you remember some of these ☺

Everyone has regrets:

Maybe you said words you wish you could take back, *Maybe you* weren't there for your kids when they needed you, *Maybe your life* took a left turn and you are still living those consequences... regrets are unavoidable but they don't have to ruin you.

- ✓ We tend to think life is all about where I came from. NO.
- ✓ It's all about what happened to me. NO. IT'S NEITHER!

IT IS all about how you chose to deal with the things in your life that you regret.
The road to victory is paved with repentance.

Repentance = not just being sorry, but change of heart and attitude and action.

Today's about dealing with our Shame & Regrets (**defining the terms**)

REGRETS = I feel bad about something I have done.

&

SHAME = I am bad because of something I have done.

The Garden of Eden was God's intention for us to live free from shame.

- ✓ **Eden** = means delight.
- ✓ **Shame** corrupts pleasure and delight.

I. BIRTHPLACE of SHAME

A. **Early chapters Genesis** we find *Story of God our Creator* creating the Universe

- 1) **SHAME was not part** of God's original plan for us,
so much so that it was never mentioned in the beginning chapter of Genesis.

- 2) 1st & only commentary on God's original creation =
God said, "God saw that it was good"
 - 3) © Genesis 2: 24-25 (they felt -- NO SHAME)
 - a. Adam & Eve were completely vulnerable (naked physically and emotionally, in every way) and yet they didn't feel awkward or unworthy or diminished.
 - b. That is how God intended for us to relate to Him, with no shame.
- B. SHAME & REGRETS enter the story:
- ✚ © Genesis 3: 1-13
- C. [Notice] how Adam & Eve were 1st deceived:
- 1) 1st = © vv 1-2 " [Did God really say that...]
 - 2) CREATES DOUBT / *makes you question things you know aren't true!*
- D. [Clear warning & prohibition ~ in black & white] © Genesis 2: 16-17
- 1) *One of the enemy's oldest and most used tricks* = to make us think that God is unreasonable restrictive, stingy and not generous.
 - 2) *Enemy wants you to think* God's boundaries are unrealistic and confining.
 - 3) *He is good at telling the part of the truth...* the enemy of our souls still tells us these half truths... *he was right that they would know ... They'd now know shame.*
- E. SHAME arrives as a result of disobedience!
- 1) SHAME was the very first consequence of them disobeying the one guideline God had given them.

- 2) **They immediately tried to cover up.** Shame will find you trying to cover your mess and mistakes with inadequate means.
- 3) Don't we all do some ridiculous things trying to cover up and hide our stuff from God? We can't hide from our Creator:

F. © Psalm 139: 7-12 or p. 476

- ✚ **SHAME is destructive** = it makes us less open, receptive and vulnerable to God.
- ✚ **Without vulnerability to God there is no connection to God.** If you don't allow God to come into the areas of your life that you don't want or allow anyone else to see or know about then your relationship with God will be limited.

G. **Secular therapy / psychology**

- 1) This is why **secular psychology has a hard time helping** in this area. If there is **no** God, **no** sin, **no** repentance & forgiveness, there is **no good way** to handle shame.
- 2) In spite of who we are or what we've done = **GOD KNOWS**, we can't hide, we can't put on fig leaves...
 - a. Lewis Smede (Art of Forgiving) says only solution, the only way to deal with this guilt and shame is a "spiritual experience of radical acceptance."
 - b. **When people have this spiritual experience** (not just going to church) **ACCEPTANCE of God & others people** in their community, there is study after scientific study that shows only then are we truly able to get rid of the guilt and shame of our past.

H. **Shame causes us to seek refuge** in ridiculous places:

- ✚ If you've got a need, shouldn't you go to the place where you can get need met?
 - ✓ If you're sick where should you go...to the hospital.
 - ✓ If your car breaks down where should you go...to the autoshop.

- ✓ If you want to buy some food where should you go...to the grocery store.
- ✓ If your tooth hurts, where should you go...to the dentist office.
- ✓ If you want to get your hair did and your nails did, where should you go...to the beauty salon.
- ✓ If you want to deal with your shame & regrets?
The only answer is in God... relationship with His Son, Jesus Christ

I. Two Lessons of Regret

- 1) Whatever regrets lurk in our shadows, that may to a degree be fixed — fix them! Right whatever wrongs you can. And seek God's pardon in his appointed ways — whether as sinner (Acts 2:38), or saint (Acts 8:22).
- 2) If you have done everything biblically possible to remedy past mistakes, **resolve that even though regrets linger, you will not let them control you and disable you.** Determine that you will use them as a springboard to a higher good than you might have accomplished otherwise. Such would be God's will for you.

II. Few things you'll never regret – keep you from getting & staying stuck ☺

A. 1st you'll never regret = Spending time with your children.

- ✚ It's not quality of time that's important, it's quantity of time.” When we get so busy at work, we comfort ourselves knowing that we're going to stay late at the office again with the idea that we'll make it up by taking our son to a ballgame on the weekend. As long as I spend some quality time with him, we think, it will all balance out. It probably won't. M.B. was in a state speech competition (day before Easter – missed setting up at WRNorth)

B. 2nd you'll never regret = Turning off your phone.

- ✚ Many of us can't get off our phone/email addiction. We sleep with it next to us. We carry it with us constantly. It's right next to us in the shower, just in case we

see a new email icon light up through the steamed up shower glass. **Working so much at the expense of family and friendships.** There are always worries. But the “making up” never seems to happen. Days turn to months and then years and then decades.

C. 3rd you'll never regret = **Not worrying about what others think about you.**

✚ Most of us place way too much importance on what other people around us think about us. On our death beds, none of that matters.

D. 4th you'll never regret = **Investing in your marriage.**

✚ Learning to date your spouse again ~ Learning to pray with your spouse ~ Learning to communicate your spouse's heart language, Learning...

E. 5th you'll never regret = **Burying the hatchet ~ forgiving a past offense.**

✚ I know family members that haven't talked to a brother or sister for 30 years. One's in bad health and will probably die soon. But neither he nor the other brother will make an effort. They've both written each other off.

F. Finally you'll never regret = **giving your time talents and treasure to God.**

✚ In 1904 William Borden, heir to the Borden Dairy Estate, graduated from a Chicago high school a millionaire. His parents gave him a trip around the world. Traveling through Asia, the Middle East, and Europe gave Borden a burden for the world's hurting people. Writing home, he said, "I'm going to give my life to prepare for the mission field." When he made this decision, he wrote in the back of his Bible two words: No Reserves. Turning down high paying job offers after graduation from Yale University, he entered two more words in his Bible: No Retreats. Completing studies at Princeton Seminary, Borden sailed for China to work with Muslims, stopping first at Egypt for some preparation. While there he was stricken with cerebral meningitis and died within a month. A waste, you say!

Not in God's plan. In his Bible underneath the words
No Reserves and No Retreats, he had written the words No Regrets.