

## D-Cycle 3: Freedom From Shame

In the context of honor / shame culture within the South Asian community, we can often feel isolated and bound by shame. We need to experience healing found in Jesus to move forward in freedom and wholeness. We also need to discern if mental health support is part of that healing journey.

### Hear the Word

#### DISCUSS

Take a minute or two to read over and think through the definition of shame: “a feeling of guilt, regret, or sadness that you have because of a past or current situation. Dishonor or disgrace, embarrassment. The feeling of not being enough.”

What resonates with you from this definition? When in your life have you experienced this?

Take a moment to **pray** this prayer: “Jesus, I bring all of myself before you. Open my ears to hear your voice; open my eyes to see you in your word; open my heart and mind to receive and believe your truth. Help me to find my identity in your thoughts about me and not in the image of myself that I or others have created. I pray this in Jesus’ name, Amen.”

#### ZECHARIAH 3

*Take 5 mins individually to carefully read this passage then discuss the questions below together.*

1 Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right side to accuse him. 2 The Lord said to Satan, “The Lord rebuke you, Satan! The Lord, who has chosen Jerusalem, rebuke you! Is not this man a burning stick snatched from the fire?” 3 Now Joshua was dressed in filthy clothes as he stood before the angel. 4 The angel said to those who were standing before him, “Take off his filthy clothes.” Then he said to Joshua, “See, I have taken away your sin, and I will put fine garments on you.” 5 Then I said, “Put a clean turban on his head.” So they put a clean turban on his head and clothed him, while the angel of the Lord stood by. 6 The angel of the Lord gave this charge to Joshua: 7 “This is what the Lord Almighty says: ‘If you will walk in obedience to me and keep my requirements, then

you will govern my house and have charge of my courts, and I will give you a place among these standing here. 8 “Listen, High Priest Joshua, you and your associates seated before you, who are men symbolic of things to come: I am going to bring my servant, the Branch. 9 See, the stone I have set in front of Joshua! There are seven eyes on that one stone, and I will engrave an inscription on it,’ says the Lord Almighty, ‘and I will remove the sin of this land in a single day. 10 “In that day each of you will invite your neighbor to sit under your vine and fig tree,’ declares the Lord Almighty.”

## DISCUSS

1. What contrasts do you see between Satan’s actions and God’s actions towards Joshua? What do you notice about the Lord’s personality?
2. Place yourself in Joshua’s shoes. What range of emotions would you experience if you were Joshua?
3. How does the Lord respond to Joshua’s filthy garments?
4. In verses 9-10, God makes a promise to Joshua that anticipates the coming Messiah. How does Jesus fulfill this promise?

## REFLECT

Take a moment of silence to be present before God. Reflect on what your filthy garments might be. What accusations come up when you think of yourself?

## Respond Actively

Prayerfully engage in this imaginative exercise.

Leader: read the following instructions aloud slowly, pausing between each prompt.

Close your eyes if you are comfortable and imagine yourself in the story of Zechariah 3 in the place of Joshua.

- You are standing before Jesus. Take some deep breaths and embrace being in his presence. Ask Jesus to bring His light to your thoughts and feelings. (pause)
- Jesus looks at you warmly, and tells you to list all the things you are shameful of. (pause)
- Ask Jesus to reveal the lies you have believed about yourself. Name those lies and accusations before him. (pause)
- Hold out your arms before you and clench your hands into fists. As a sign of giving to Jesus the things you're ashamed of and the lies you have believed about yourself, open your hands so your palms are flat. (pause)
- Colossians 1:21-22 reads, "Once you were alienated from God and were enemies in your minds because of your evil behavior. But now he has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation." (pause)
- Jesus is still looking at you with eyes of love. He reaches over and wipes your hands clean. (pause)
- Ask Jesus to tell you what He thinks about you. (write them down). Invite Jesus to speak truth and replace the lies you were believing. (pause)
- Thank Jesus for the truth He has brought. (pause)

### WRITE

Write out your experience in a journal or on your phone. Go out and find a stone to keep that can serve to remind you of this interaction with Jesus.

## Debrief & Interpret

*\* Note: This activity may have brought up past experiences of trauma (sexual, emotional, physical, etc.). We encourage you to seek out mental health resources your campus or local area offers for additional support.*

### SHARE

1. What was your experience like?
2. What lies were you believing about yourself and what truths did Jesus replace them with?
3. What did you learn about God through this experience?
4. Who is one person you can share this experience with?

### PRAYER

Close by **praying** aloud these words of worship from Micah 7:18-20:

*Who is a God like you,  
who pardons sin and forgives the transgression  
of the remnant of his inheritance?  
You do not stay angry forever  
but delight to show mercy.  
You will again have compassion on us;  
you will tread our sins underfoot  
and hurl all our iniquities into the depths of the sea.  
You will be faithful to Jacob,  
and show love to Abraham,  
as you pledged on oath to our ancestors  
in days long ago.*

### EXPAND THE INFLUENCE

- Ask God to bring to mind 3-4 people with whom you can share about how God met you through the imaginative prayer exercise. Write their names down, and pray every day this week for them.
- Share your experience with at least one of them, and invite them to go through this discipleship cycle with you.