

03 Shame & Forgiveness

LEADER GUIDE

BIG IDEA:

Shame can be crippling, causing your students to feel isolated or even to isolate themselves. This lesson is meant to expose the lie of their shame. We know that if shame is not addressed early in this series, it can cause a fog to fall over everything they hear and see moving forward. Students might be carrying a weight of shame surrounding the topics of sex and sexuality; it will become increasingly important for them hear the words, “You are forgiven,” and to believe those words!

Tips for Conversation:

Shame can happen for almost any reason. Some students may experience shame because of a past mistake. Others might experience shame because of something that has happened to them, like rape or abuse. And still others might feel shame because of the nature of their attractions. No matter the reason, we want students to understand they are not alone in their shame.

This lesson is designed to help students expose their shame to the light so they can begin healing. Students need to understand that there is no condemnation in Jesus Christ. Even when we mess up or make a mistake, God is eager to forgive us.

We do discuss rape and abuse in this video (along with porn). We also give you instructions, in the mentor video, for how to walk with students who have been raped or abused. You should expect that at least a few students will come to you or one of your leaders. Statistically, 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men will experience some sort of sexual abuse in their lifetime, usually perpetrated by family members or friends—and religious homes are unfortunately not exempt. Those who experience abuse often blame themselves and turn their pain and hurt into

shame. It is important that you listen and engage with your students' stories of abuse while also communicating that the abuse is not their fault!

For more information, go back to the mentor video or utilize the resources below for help with a student who reports sexual violence.

Remember, God is in the business of taking our brokenness and mending us back together. He does this in community with trusted siblings in Christ.

Questions for Small Group:

1. Where has the devil caused shame to creep into your life?
 2. If past sin (or current sin) has caused you shame, who can you talk to as you start the journey to restoration and healing?
 3. How do you understand the difference between guilt and shame?
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Additional Resources:

WEB: [RAINN.org](https://rainn.org) - the nation's largest anti-sexual violence organization

VIDEO: Full-length interview of Alex Lerza

TOOL: Weekly devotional

