

ABSTRACT

PREACHING THE CROSS ON THE HEALING OF SHAME IN JIKSAN-EUP KOREAN METHODIST CHURCH

by

Sung Kwon Han

Shame is an emotion that affects people's lives in several negative ways. Shame-prone people tend to make problems in a church community, using their shame defenses. Preachers need to deal with the shame problem in their preaching in order to make the church community healthier.

For that purpose, I preached a series on the cross of Jesus Christ. The cross is a sign that God accepts people with unconditional grace. It also demonstrates that Jesus Christ shares their shame on the cross. When people suffer shame, Christ is identified with them on the cross in sharing the shame of the believers.

I traced the congregation's response to the four sermons by interviewing eighteen church members. Before I preached this series, none of them had previously heard the message of the cross related to shame. They connected the cross only to Christ's bearing their sin before the sermon series. After the sermon series, however, they could understand that the cross is the sign of God's unconditional grace and acceptance related to their weaknesses and shame.

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CHAPTER 1

PROBLEM

Background

One of my friends suffered shame for a long time. He had been sick with an unidentified disease for ten years since birth. In recess time at school, he used to stay on the bench by his family doctor when other students ran and played together. He really wished to play soccer with his friends, but no one included him because of his physical condition. From this experience, he became unsure of himself. Finally, he was miraculously healed through prayer at the age of ten. However, longtime illness left him ashamed of himself. He thought he was useless to anybody. Even though he could play soccer with his friends, he believed he had no value.

One day in a prayer house, he woke up before dawn with his body trembling. He was afraid that he might be suffering again. What he feared was not the disease but that he might not play with his friends and feel useless. He could not concentrate on the sermon in the early morning service. After preaching, the pastor started praying for the congregation by laying his hands on them. Praying for my friend, the pastor spoke Isaiah 41:10. Hearing the passage, God's voice came into my friend's mind:

Jinkook, why are you so afraid? I have never been away from you for the time of your suffering. When you were sick, I was with you. When you felt alienated, I was with you. I am with you now when you are trembling. I will be the same all the time.

Realizing God's abiding with him, he was changed. Then, he replied, "Lord, if you are with me all the time, it's OK to be sick. I will thank you for being with me and Jesus' cross for me." From that time on, he never was sick again. He also was freed from his shame-oriented psychology.

Shame experience is not limited to my friend's story. I was also a person who suffered and was healed from shame. When I was in my twenties, I did not have a good self-image. I did not think I was valuable enough to be loved by people around me. When one of my friends told me, "You look good in those clothes," I answered, "Don't tease me!" I could not believe that I was looking good to her. I also was uncomfortable accepting gifts from others. If any girl liked me, I thought I did not deserve her favor. Then I tried to find my weaknesses that could rationalize my psychology: my skinny body, my poor speech, my shyness. I was not sure of my value at that time. Worse, I did not know my thinking was a problematic. I just thought I was.

Around the age of twenty-seven, I had an opportunity to meditate on the cross. I do not remember what caused that meditation, but I started pondering on the cross repeatedly for several years. The more I thought of the cross, the more I realized my value before God. I was valuable because the son of God died for me on the cross. God's love for me soaked in. Also, I realized that my self-esteem had been very low. Later, I realized I had a shame problem. I found my problem and a solution on the cross. From that time on, the cross became my favorite subject in preaching. Whenever I feel frustrated, I always go to the cross to concentrate on God's love. The cross means restoration of my value in God's love. The cross has been the most healing place for me.

In recent years, I have realized that unhealed emotional wounds can be a reason for those unexpected and hidden problems among congregations like the cases of myself and my friend Jinkook. I have also found that shame is one of those emotional wounds that make people problematic in their relationships. Stephen Pattison argues that the issue

of shame affects everyone, not just a limited number of people. Further, shame is powerful in devastating both individuals and groups:

It is likely that most people have some direct experience of shame in their lives, for it seems to be a fairly universal phenomenon. And for some individuals and groups, shame plays a persistent and dominant role whose effects are baleful and destructive. If shame becomes a constant experience, a perennial attitude to the self, a dominant mood or character trait, its effects can be very negative. The habitually deeply shamed or shame-bound person is trapped, self-rejecting, paralyzed, passive, and often depressed. (7)

Thus, preachers face the responsibility of dealing with shame in the congregation by helping them overcome problems produced by shame.

As a full-time pastor in a church, I came to realize that preaching can be a good instrument for treating emotional problems, including shame. I have met many church members who confessed that their lives were changed by listening to my preaching. After hearing a sermon, some church members asked for pastoral counseling regarding an issue pertaining to the sermon they had just heard. They considered the sermon the most important part of the worship service. This experience has convinced me of the power of preaching if preachers speak appropriately to the issues of emotional wounds.

Congregational Context

This dissertation used the survey and interview results of a practical ministry project conducted on the Jiksan-eup Korean Methodist Church, which is located in Choeon-si, Chungnam-do, South Korea. The church consists of 144 adult members, nine youths, fifty-five children. The sermon series were preached for the afternoon worship service that started at 2:00 p.m. on Sundays. The average number of the members who join the afternoon worship service is sixty. Most of the afternoon worship service

attendees had been church members for a long time. Less than ten of the afternoon worship service participants had been members of the church for less than three years.

I came to Jiksan-eup Korean Methodist Church for this research project and had two months to get to know the church members before the project. During the two months, I had an opportunity to preach during every afternoon worship service on Sundays. In this period, I focused on healing of emotions. Then, I heard some responses from the congregation. They reacted to my sermons as if they had never learned about emotional healing. Through this experience, I found that the church members had not heard of sermons based on emotional healing theology.

Statement of the Problem

No one is without emotional problems. Martin H. Padovani contends that all have emotional problems with which they must cope every day, such as anxiety, depression, and frustration: “We are headed for trouble. People, otherwise quite rational, make irrational decisions at such times, usually compounding one bad decision with another. Negative thinking and feelings dominate and we act in an irrational and distorted manner” (6). Christians are not exempt from these emotional problems. Christians also suffer from emotional problems that God does not want for them.

Emotional problems are not supposed to remain with Christians until they go to heaven:

Many Christians are hounded by fear, rejection, worthlessness, shame, insecurity, dejection, hopelessness, or some combination of any or all of these. We may have a “saving knowledge” that we are bound for Heaven, but at the same time we live out a kind of emotional hell on earth. Many in the Body of Christ have yet to experience their “re-birthright” in Jesus Christ. Although we should be living in the power and purpose of God, we instead limp from one day to the next waiting to go to Heaven. However, this is not God’s idea. This is not all there is to life on earth. (Gardner 24)

That is the reason emotional problems should be dealt with in the churches.

Relative to the negative results of shame-based concepts of God, Sandra D.

Wilson contrasts a shame-based serving style with a God-directed serving style (146).

According to the comparison, shame-based people tend to serve under a duty-oriented mind. Their service is to get recognition from people and God. The service goes with a fear of rejection they could get when they fail. On the contrary, Christ-centered people do their ministry voluntarily without fear of rejection (see Table 1.1).

Table 1.1. Shame -Based versus God -Directed Service

SANCTIFIED OVERDEPENDENCY (SELF-PROTECTIVE MANIPULATION)	COMPASSIONATE SERVICE (CHRIST-CENTERED MINISTRY)
“Motivated by self-protection and energized by self-effort.”	“Motivated and energized by the Holy Spirit of God.”
“Characterized by legalistic and joyless works.”	“Characterized by a sense of peace and purpose.”
“People become statistics or projects to be ‘won’ or ‘fixed.’”	“People are seen as being the same as I am, needing to be lovingly led to Jesus Christ as Savior and ‘fixer.’”
“I enjoy serving most when the task is a monumentally big ideal.”	“I enjoy all service to which Christ calls me, even if it appears small.”
“I demand external validation through public attention and appreciation and become resentful if I go unnoticed.”	“I can accept attention, but I don’t demand it; I can remain unnoticed without growing resentful.”
“Serving is the primary source of my identity and sense of worth in the church.”	“My service is the outgrowth of an identity based on being a loved, redeemed bearer of God’s image.”
“In the name of ‘Christian love,’ I bail out others, not expecting them to take personal responsibility for themselves.”	“I take responsibility for myself under Christ’s lordship and let go of others to do the same.”
“I jump in and take care of others without waiting to be asked.”	“I give help appropriately when asked (emergencies expected).”
“As the ‘server,’ I feel and appear competent and powerful (like a savior). The ‘servee’ feels and appears incompetent and weak (like a victim).”	“‘Server’ and ‘servee’ have an attitude of mutual respect by which neither feels nor appears incompetent, for we both realize our roles might be reversed next time.”
“I use my busyness for God to numb painful feelings and to distract me from unmanageable parts of my life.”	“My active serving is balanced with quiet times of prayer, Bible study, and meditation on Scripture, when I reflect on my total lifestyle.”
“I often feel burned out and bitter because I don’t take care of my health, and I’m unable to set limits.”	“I can say no to requests of others for I recognize my own limitations and need for healthy self-care.”

Source: Wilson 146.

Wilson also contrasts the shame-based church family with the grace-based church family (151). In a shame-based church family, people feel a need to be perfect to earn acceptance. They do not want to expose themselves to others. Therefore, their emphasis is not on relationship, but performance. However, the grace-based church family feels

free to confess their weaknesses. They practice living without masks and worshiping God while relying on his love (151). In this sense, preachers should consider caring for shame-based problems in church. Through taking care of shame in the congregation, preachers can develop a healthy church community based on the grace and the love of God.

The emotional problems, especially those of shame, are existent even in Korean churches. Tai Ki Chung observes that Korean people have deep emotional wounds in their hearts. He continues to say that these deep emotional wounds function as the root of problems in the churches. Preaching is one of the most influential methods for healing these emotional problems. Chung insists that preaching for emotional healing should be a crucial way to minister successfully. It is indispensable for helping to heal these deep emotional wounds; however, according to Chung, today's preaching in the Korean churches tends not to deal enough with emotional wounds. Rather, preachers have a tendency to preach the traditional spiritual truth without regard to the need for emotional healing (153).

Talking about the healing of shame is at the heart of emotional healing through preaching. Shame is one of the emotional hurts preachers have to deal with in their sermons. Gershen Kaufman asserts that shame can have deadly effects on the relationships among people and communities:

Shame is the principal impediment in all relationships, whether parent-child, teacher-student, or therapist-client. It violates both inner security and interpersonal trust. Shame wounds not only the self, but also a family, an ethnic or minority group within a dominant culture, or even an entire nation.... Racial, ethnic, and religious group tensions are inevitable consequences of that shame.... Shame is a universal dynamic in child rearing, education, interpersonal relations, psychotherapy, ethnic group relations, national culture and politics, and international relations. (*Psychology of Shame* 7)

The deadly effects of shame are not always easy to be noticed when those problems are under control, but sometimes people come to a situation in which they have lost control over their shame-based hurts. Then, preachers need to deal with shame proactively by recognizing the symptoms of shame and to address it reactively.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the role of a series of the four sermons on the cross for the congregation's understanding of the cross, God, and themselves in terms of emotional healing from shame. Using both quantitative and qualitative instruments, this research aimed to find how the congregation of Jiksan-eup Korean Methodist Church interacted with the messages of the sermon series.

Research Questions

The following questions helped to analyze the interaction of the congregation with the sermon series on the cross in terms of emotional healing of shame:

1. What was the participants' understanding of the cross, God, and themselves prior to the sermon series on the cross?
2. What was the participants' understanding of the cross, God, and themselves after the sermon series on the cross?
3. What aspect of the sermon series was most helpful for understanding the cross, God, and themselves in terms of the healing of shame?
4. What other factors affected the congregation's understanding of the cross, God, and themselves in terms of the healing of shame?

Definitions

This section reviews key terms used in this study related to shame and *han*.

Shame

The feeling of worthlessness and exposure generates a desire to hide and cover the self. Contrary to the concept of guilt, which focuses on the wrongdoings done, shame concentrates on the self who did the wrong thing. Shame defines wrongs against the self. In this way, shame easily relates to the feeling of worthlessness of the self. Also, shame is related to feeling exposed. Shame presupposes the audience is watching the wrong self; therefore, shame-prone people tend to have a fear of being exposed. As a result, shame is a negative feeling of worth of self in terms of self-evaluation.

Han

Han is a Korean word for deep emotional wounds accumulated for a long time. The word *han* is characterized by 恨 in Korean and 恨 in Chinese. Because *han* is a long-time accumulated emotional hurt, sometimes from generation to generation, it is more severe than general emotional hurts. By and large, *han*, a condensed feeling, is generated among the victims who cannot find hope for their miserably limited situation.

Once *han* is fixated, it starts affecting every sphere of human life: body, soul, relationships, and so on. In this sense, *han* also can be defined beyond the scope of emotion: “Han is a physical, mental, and spiritual response to a terrible wrong done to a person. It elicits a warped depth of pain, a visceral physical response, an intense rending of the soul, and a sense of helplessness” (Park, *From Hurt to Healing* 11).

Han and shame are reciprocal in relationship. *Han* generates shame and shame generates *han*. In this way, they reinforce each other. *Han* is like a cradle in which shame can grow; therefore, talking of *han* is indispensable to talking of shame in the Korean context.

Korean Han

Korean *han* is a collective *han* that Korean people have held through generations. Growing up in a Korean culture, Korean people learn the history of their ancestors through literature, education, and family tradition, thereby inheriting the Korean collective *han*. Learning the history of their ancestors, Korean people naturally absorb the feeling of hurts accumulated in those stories integrated into the community of the same *han*. Therefore, by tracing the history of Korean *han*, shame factors affecting Korean people also can be revealed.

Ministry Intervention

Preaching is like a bridge between God and human beings. Through preaching, God and the congregation meet each other at a deep level, a place where human beings experience God, his love, and his power. Preaching, then, is one of the most effective tools pastors can use to affect the congregation. Through preaching, God has an opportunity to heal people, and shame is one of the things God addresses through preaching.

As a ministry intervention, I preached the four sermons on the cross on four consecutive Sundays. The four sermons consisted of the four meanings of Jesus' crucifixion that are expected to work for the healing of shame among the congregation: "Jesus shares our shame," "Nail your shame and weaknesses onto the cross!" "Unconditional acceptance," "Christ's identification with people."

Methodology

This study utilized a qualitative method of pre-interview and post-interview and a simple comparison of quantitative results of pretest and posttest.

Population and Sample

The population for this study was the members of a congregation who attended Sunday worship services in Jiksan-eup Korean Methodist Church. The sample for this study consisted of eighteen selected members who attended all four 2:00 p.m. Sunday worship services in which the four sermons were preached. They were asked to take the two tests: pretest and posttest. All of them completed the pretest survey, but only sixteen of them completed the posttest survey. So, I eliminated the two pretest surveys that did not have the matching posttest surveys in considering the numerical findings. Also, all of the eighteen participants were interviewed before and after the sermon series.

Instrument and Data Collection

The research method used to achieve this study's purpose contained the questionnaire surveys of a pretest and posttest and the interviews of the pre-interview and post-interview.

The study included a series of the four sermons on the cross, a pretest, a posttest, a pre-interview, and a post-interview with no comparison group. The pretest consisted of twenty-three closed questions in three categories. The posttest contained exactly the same questions as the pretest. The pre-interview was composed of three open questions. The post-interview consisted of four open questions.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

For the pretest and posttest takers, I maintained confidentiality and anonymity by letting the respondents create their own personal code instead of writing their names on the questionnaire. Their personal code consisted of their mothers' last name and the first

six digits of their residential numbers—the identification numbers for all Korean citizens. In this way, they were able to remember and recall their personal code.

For the interviewees, confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed by not disclosing their names outside the interview room.

Variables

The independent variable of this research project was the sermon series. I preached four sermons on consecutive Sundays in Jiksan-eup Korean Methodist Church.

The dependent variables of this study were the congregation's understandings of the cross, God, and themselves in terms of the healing of shame after listening to the four sermon series.

Delimitation and Generalizability

The first focus of this study was related to the individual aspects of shame and healing. This study did not include social injustice and abuse, nor structural evil in a society. However, the limitation does not mean that the social dimension is unimportant in the preaching of the cross for healing. The individual dimension is always interwoven with the collective dimension (Park, *From Hurt to Healing* 93).

The second focus of the study was the role of preaching. The study sought the interaction of the congregation with the sermon series after listening to the series of four sermons. Through the research, how preaching could impact the congregation was studied.

Third, the pretest and posttest were used as additional information to learn what happened within the congregations. For this purpose, the pretest and posttest results were compared. For this purpose, the method of descriptive statistics was used.

Fourth, the sample for this study was limited to adult worship participants (age 19 or older) who volunteered for this project in Jiksan-eup Korean Methodist Church.

The final focus was the message of the cross. The message of healing was delivered through the four-sermon series on the cross. Even though preachers can develop sermons using other sources in the Scriptures for healing messages, this study limited the scope of the source for sermons to the meaning of the cross for the shamed.

Theological Foundation

The theological foundation for this study consists of four connected themes: shame, spiritual warfare, atonement, and healing. These four themes are researched in terms of victims who need healing. Christianity has emphasized God's forgiving love for the sinners through the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, but not has focused on God's grace for shame victims. This study is based on the concept that God's grace through the cross should also be adapted for the victims of shame in terms of healing.

Shame and Sin

The emotional problem of shame is already seen in the first occurrence of sin in Genesis 3. "Adam and Eve not only experienced guilt, but also felt shame, as indicated by the realization of their nakedness and their attempts to hide from God" (Tennent 83). Before the fall, Adam and Eve "were not ashamed" of being naked (Gen. 2:25, NASB). Evil tempted Adam and Eve to betray God by distrust in God's love. Adam and Eve responded to evil's temptation. Being dissatisfied with their "essential limitations" (Bradshaw v iii) as human beings, they chose to "be like God, knowing good and evil" (Gen. 3:5). They took and ate the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Their eyes "were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves

together and made themselves loathe in coverings” (Gen. 3:7). Sin generated shame in Adam and Eve by making Adam and Eve victims of sin. “Once they chose to be other than what they were, they became naked and ashamed” (Bradshaw viii). They accepted shame for their dysfunctional attitude toward God:

The urgent desire to cover oneself or disappear succeeds an acute sense of unwanted exposure. Adam and Eve find the fig leaves that cover their naked bodies (their “shame”) when they become conscious that they are exposed in a painful, undesirable way. (Pattison 40-41)

From that time, sin came to govern human beings. Shame became one of the ways with which sin exerts its power over human beings.

War between the Two Kingdoms

Through the Fall, spiritual warfare started between the kingdom of God and the kingdom of evil:

Adam and Eve, by rebelling against God, delivered themselves and their descendants into the hands of Satan, who exploits human sin and brokenness as a means of securing his position as ruler of this world. Death, *shame* [emphasis mine], denial, disease, emotional sickness, racism—human brokenness in all its dimensions is characteristic of Satan’s counterfeit kingdom. (Flynn and Gregg 43)

Paul expresses the clash between the two kingdoms with the reigning of death and the reigning of life. “For if by the transgression of the one, *death reigned* [emphasis mine] through the one, much more those who receive the abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will *reign in life* [emphasis mine] through the One, Jesus Christ” (Rom. 5:17).

Those two kingdoms are still at war until the final victory of God, even though God’s first and initial victory has been proved on the cross. Oscar Cullmann compares the life of Christians between the first victory and the final victory to the war between D -

Day of the Normandy invasion on 6 June 1944 and V-Day of the final victory through the surrender of Germany. “The war must still be carried on for an undefined time, until ‘Victory Day’” (84). Likewise, the war between the two kingdoms is still carried on until the final victory. In this battle, evil still exerts its influence on human beings under the name of original sin until the final V-Day.

Healing and the Fight against the Kingdom of Satan

Healing always accompanies the war between the two kingdoms: the pseudo-kingdom of Satan and the kingdom of God. Healing is one of the active expansions of the kingdom of God, which is a salvation of the victims of sin from the kingdom of death that began with the sin of Adam. According to David Seamands, a chain of “imperfect parenting” is one of the realms of original sin (*Healing for Damaged Emotions* 69). He says, “Beginning with the first sin of Adam and Eve, there was set in motion a chain reaction of imperfect parenting, through failures and ignorance and misguided actions and, worst of all, through conditional love” (69). In other words, the power of evil influences human emotional issues to possess humanity. Then, this imperfect parenting is one of the causes for shame.

In this sense, healing is a fight against Satan’s pseudo-kingdom as seen in Jesus’ ministry. Ken Blue says, “The kingdom of God revealed in Jesus brings comprehensive healing to all that sin and Satan have wounded. Jesus did more than save our souls, he saved all that we are” (66). Mark A. Pearson also supports the concept that healing has something to do with spiritual warfare. He says, “It is Satan, not God, who inflicts harm. Although God allows Satan some freedom, He has already made provision for our ultimate triumph over evil in Christ” (136). Because God does not inflict harm and he

loves us so as to let Jesus Christ destroy “the chief weapon Satan” had (134), in healing God fights against Satan’s strategy to destroy humanity by inflicting harm.

The Healing of Shame and Restoration of the Kingdom of God

Healing is related to eschatology from the viewpoint of the restoration of the kingdom of God. The restoration of God’s kingdom is an eschatological vision, which will be accomplished through restoration of one’s “life-support system” (Long and Strickler 23).

The Garden of Eden was the perfect world over which God reigned. The Garden of Eden had no sickness because the “the tree of life ... [was] in the midst of the garden” (Gen. 2:9). Adam and Even had full and perfect health and relationship with God. They could sustain their lives with God. “Scripture affirms that human beings, created in God’s image, were given vibrant health and immortality.... Abundant life flowed into our first parents as they were living in God’s presence in the Garden, in which there was access to the Tree of Life” (Long and Strickler 23). Then, sin came between them and God to ruin this original state of “life-support system” (23) in the kingdom of God:

Then the LORD God said, “Behold, the man has become like one of Us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might stretch out his hand, and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever.” Therefore the LORD God sent him out from the garden of Eden.... So He drove the man out; and at the east of the garden of Eden He stationed the cherubim and the flaming sword which turned every direction to guard the way to the tree of life. (Gen. 3:22-24)

However, God did not give up on God’s people. God’s plan for the restoration of the Kingdom of God is seen in Revelation. “On each side of the river stood the tree of life, bearing twelve crops of fruit, yielding its fruit every month. And the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations” (Rev. 22:2). The restoration brings healing to the nations

through “the leaves of the tree” of “life.” The tree of life will be freely accessible for human beings to bring them to their original state in the Garden of Eden. A loving relationship with God will be restored (Long and Strickler 29). Eternal happiness also will be restored through healing the hurts of people. Finally, “he will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away” (Rev. 21:4, NIV). Through healing, God keeps expanding and restoring his kingdom until the final victory over Satan, which is a step toward the final and perfect healing in “a new heaven and a new earth” (Rev. 21:1, NASB). Therefore, the healing of shame is a way to restore the kingdom of God.

Furthermore, with faith in eschatological healing, God’s children can endure a pain that is not healed in this world. They know surely that God will bring final restoration of his kingdom at the final day; therefore, they do not fall down even when they sometimes do not see healing in this world. “The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet” (Rom. 16:20).

The Cross—The Peak of God’s Victory

Paul explains the influence of sin and God’s salvation in Romans 5. He explains how sin started influencing people and how God’s grace through Jesus Christ came to save people from the influence of sin, using the concept of a war between the two opposite spiritual kingdoms. According to Paul, human beings came under the reign of death as “the result of the one man’s sin” (Rom. 5:16, NIV). “Death reigned ... even over those who had not sinned in the likeness of the offense of Adam” (Rom. 5:14, NASB; cf. 5:17). In other words, human beings had been possessed by death in the kingdom of evil. However, Christ came to give humanity life through his sacrifice. Through that sacrifice

on the cross, God's children have been moved from the kingdom of death to the kingdom of life (Rom. 6:6-7, 14, 17-18; Heb. 2:14-15). The cross was the scene where the two kingdoms ran up against each other to defeat each other. The cross, then, was the peak of God's victory over the kingdom of evil (Rom. 6:6-7, 14; 8:1-2).

Christ's crucifixion is the clearest message for restoration of the kingdom of God. On the cross God won the victory over the power of evil by Jesus' identifying with God's people in shame and overcoming shame. "The cross is the 'fixed point' for VICTORY OVER THE WORLD [original emphasis]" (Penn-Lewis 16). On the cross, Jesus Christ was the incarnation of God by bearing people's wounds on the cross. Jesus' bearing wounds enables humanity to be healed when they come to the cross (1 Pet. 2:24). On the cross, God restores his people to his kingdom and starts his plan to lead them into his eternal land where the tree of life will heal them. "On either side of the river was the tree of life, bearing twelve kinds of fruit, yielding its fruit every month; and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations" (Rev. 22:2).

Jesus' Ministry and the Healing of Shame

Jesus was always surrounded by those people who were wounded by "being cut off from normal society" (Warrington 142). Encountering them, Jesus' ministry basically centered on healing, and those healing stories accompany the healing of shame. One of the ministries for the healing of shame by accepting the outcast was eating together. Jesus ate with the outcasts who were in shame under the honor/shame social system (Neyrey, *Honor and Shame in the Gospel of Matthew* 204-05). When the Pharisees and scribes grumbled over Jesus' accepting and eating with the tax collectors and sinners (Luke 15:2), Jesus did not care about the criticism. Rather, he continued eating with those outcast

people. Jesus' eating was not only a way to satisfy physical need but also a symbol of solidarity. Robert F. Murphy says, "Commensality ... among most societies ... symbolize[s] the closing of distance and the establishment of solidarity bonds" (1267). Eating "is a physical activity transformed into a means—a ceremonial occasion for communion" (Schneider 67). Jesus' eating was a means to heal the shamed by accepting people into a community of Christ.

Physical healing was also a ministry of the healing of shame for Jesus Christ. Even when Jesus' healing was about physical healing, shame healing accompanies it. Relying on Kleinman's theory on the differentiation between disease and illness, Crossan argues that the original meaning of Jesus' healing miracles, like that of the leper, was about illness rather than disease. The central problem Jesus handled was "the personal and social stigma of uncleanness, isolation, and rejection ... by refusing to accept the disease's ritual uncleanness and social ostracization" (82). Thus, when they were healed, which was a restoration, they could be accepted by the society (Warrington 6). By being integrated into their own society, they could also recover their self-esteem at the same time in the society of honor and shame.

Jesus' Ministry for the Victims

Jesus' ministry included healing for the victims rather than condemnation for sinners:

Jesus used all his measures, including miracles, to heal the wounded from their suffering, oppression, and affliction. Contrary to our present theology that is basically engaged with sinners' sin and salvation, Jesus' teaching centered on comforting and healing the wounded and sinned-against. (Park, "Bible and Han" 54)

For a long time, Christianity has emphasized the importance of sin and forgiveness under the name of the gospel. By this tendency, guilt has become the center of Christian doctrine, and shame has been neglected (Pattison 44). Christianity did not preach about healing the victims as much as Jesus did. As a result, even when sin and guilt occupy only a half portion of the whole gospel, victims of sin and shame are not paid enough attention. However, Jesus provided his ministry for the victims of sin and shame, not only for those who committed sin.

The Cross: Trusting Relationship

On the cross, Jesus exposed himself without hiding his vulnerability. In nakedness, Jesus was mocked, whipped, and spat upon. Through this shameful experience, Jesus showed his weaknesses in his humanity. Jesus' exposure of his vulnerability is a sign that he is ready to accept the shamed in a trustful mutual relationship. "Vulnerability presents a problem only when we cannot trust others. Then we fear they might take our vulnerability, our admission that we need others and depend on something outside ourselves, and use it against us" (Clapp 26). Jesus' nakedness and suffering on the cross of shame broke the human instinct to protect selves from Jesus Christ. Jesus' revelation of his vulnerability is an invitation into an intimate relationship with the shamed who have a desire to hide their vulnerability. Through this *initial revelation*, Jesus invites the shamed to come to Jesus without covering their weaknesses of life: physical condition, psychological sufferings, emotional hardships, family situations. When believers come to Jesus Christ with their weaknesses with open minds, Jesus can accept all the feelings of shame, resentment, rejection, and abandonment in a trusting relationship.

The Cross: Unconditional Acceptance

The cross represents God's grace in unconditional acceptance (D. Seamands, *Healing Grace* 162). God's unconditional acceptance on the cross designates the value of human beings before God. God has accepted human beings but not for what they have done. Rather, Jesus was killed on the cross when they were sinners (Rom. 5:6, 8). The story of the cross teaches that human beings are not worthless, even though not worthy "to be a child of God, a member of Christ and an heir of the kingdom of heaven" (Stott, *Cross of Christ* 284). Peter also wrote about God's acceptance on the basis of the value of human beings: "Knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ" (1 Pet. 1:18-19). Human beings are valuable enough for Christ to bleed on the cross to save them (Hoekema 22).

God proved his unconditional acceptance in forgiveness of sinners. On the cross of Jesus, God resolved the problem of sin. Therefore, all sinners who come to the cross trust God's love and confess their sinful nature, and their sin will be forgiven. Confession of sin is not only for those who have obviously offended others because victims can also be offenders. The wounded people possibly hold onto resentment and kill others invisibly. People are sometimes victims and sinners at the same time (Kraft 51). Long-time hurts accompany deeper enmity and resentment, which finally destroy relationship and physical health. Unresolved deep emotional hurt abiding in a person does harm to him or her by changing him or her into an offender. Therefore, many victims might need to

repent of their wrongdoings before God. In this way, forgiveness of sin is good news for victims, without neglecting their shame.

The Cross: Christ's Identification with People

On the cross, Jesus identified himself with the shamed through the experience of shame. The cross was not just Jesus' experience, but Jesus' solidarity with the shamed in love of God (Kraus, *Jesus Christ Our Lord* 217). In fact, execution by the cross was about disgrace more than cruelty (Green and Baker 26). Compared to the other punishments, the cross "also stripped honor and dignity.... It was a method of brutal disgrace" (Altrock 27). In this way, the cross became a sign of public contempt in the ancient world (1 Cor. 1:23).

Jesus also showed his identification with the shamed through a vicarious cry. Jesus cried, "Why have you forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34). This cry is not based on logic or reason; rather, it is a cry of the emotional wound of shame. Jesus cried out the lament as one being together with the victims of sin and shame. Jesus' cry indicates Jesus' lament for the healing of shame rather than broken relationship between him and the Father God. Jesus' cry represents the shame of the victims who are desperate for God's help (Stott, *Cross of Christ* 47; cf. 29). Jesus' shouted lament was the victim's crying to God through his *vicarious* death on the cross.

The Cross: Believers' Identification with Christ

Christ's identification with humanity is an invitation to believers' identification with Christ. Christians are transformed by the experience of meeting Christ on the cross. Paul's confession shows the transformation to a new life of identification with Christ. Relating to the cross, Paul's identity was his identification with Christ on the cross. He

confessed, “I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me” (Gal. 2:20a). He realized that his identity is not based on his past self, but on his new and true self in Christ (Stott, *Cross of Christ* 341-42). He identified his true self with Christ on the cross. His true self encouraged him to live a new life in Christ. This new identity through identification with Christ is a benefit that believers can get from the cross. Through the cross, the center has changed from “I” to “Christ” (Penn-Lewis 23-34). God’s children are not to live for themselves any more but for Christ (2 Cor. 5:15; 1 Cor. 15:31). “God makes the believer glory-filled once again by removing shame through identification with Christ on the cross and in the resurrection” (Cason 145).

Overview of the Dissertation

Chapter 2 provides the literature review. First, shame is defined and explained in terms of how shame affects people in a negative way. For this purpose, shame is differentiated from guilt by presenting the difference of focuses and responses. Then, expressions, dynamics, defenses, and by-products of shame are explained to show the fatal blows of shame for people. Second, shame is studied in Korean context. The Korean word *han*, which means longtime accumulated emotional wound in a helpless situation, is researched to know the connection between shame and *han*. Shame and *han* are in a reciprocal relationship that affects and elevates each other. Third, shame is studied in terms of healing in the Bible. The examples of shame and healing are researched especially in Psalms and the Gospels. Fourth, the possibility of the healing of shame is studied in relation to the doctrine of the cross. This section tries to balance the doctrine of

atonement between a gospel for the sinners and for the victims. Then, the researcher finds the four meanings of the cross for the victims in terms of the healing of shame. Finally, healing of shame is studied for preaching. Preachers tend to speak more of the forgiving gospel for the sinners to minimize the healing gospel for the victims. This tendency could motivate shame without shame-resolving messages presented in the previous section of “Shame and the Cross.”

Chapter 3 presents the methodology. First, problem and purpose of the study are explained. Then the research questions and hypotheses are presented. The research questions concentrated on how the congregation would respond to the sermon series on the cross. A mixed research method was used to find answers to the research questions: pretest and posttest, pre-interview and post-interview, and journal writing.

Chapter 4 describes the findings. The responses to research questions 1 and 2 were studied around the three categories of the cross, God, and the selves; the participants’ understanding of the cross, God, and themselves prior to the sermon series on the cross; and, the participants’ understanding of the cross, God, and themselves after the sermon series on the cross. Also, the factors that affected the participants’ understanding of the cross, God, and themselves after the sermon series were studied. The answers to the pre-interview and post-interview are described. The method of descriptive statistics was used for analyzing the answers to the pretest and post test.

Chapter 5 concludes with discussion. The findings of Chapter 4 are interpreted to find more practical ways to adapt the research results to local churches. Also, strengths and weakness of the project are described. As a concluding thought, the importance of preaching God’s unconditional grace for the church congregation is emphasized.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE

Shame

According to Kaufman, shame has not been studied as much as guilt, even though shame plays an important role in human lives (*Psychology of Shame* 4-5). The following are reasons shame has been obscured.

First, shame has been unnoticed for the lack of scientifically adequate language describing the inner experience of shame. Kaufman says, “Without an accurate language of the self, shame slips quickly into the background of awareness (*Psychology of Shame* 4).

Second, guilt was, on the whole, considered “easier and safer” to handle than shame among those working in psychology (Kaufman, *Psychology of Shame* 4). Pattison comments on this issue saying, “There are, for example, formal mechanisms for dealing with guilt like confession and atonement. Shame has no such remedies” (43). This “deprivation of visual modality” makes researchers hesitate to study shame (Thrane 321-41). Further, shame and guilt are not differentiated easily: “Shame is notoriously difficult to recognize or distinguish from guilt, even for those who experience it” (Pattison 44).

Third, shame has been neglected due to Western Christian influence. Western Christian culture has traditionally had a tendency to focus on guilt and sin (Tennent 77-103), which has been good news for sinners. This tendency kept Christianity from adequately exploring “the pain of the victims of sin” (Park, *Wounded Heart of God* 10), because shame is that of victims (Kaufman, *Psychology of Shame* 7).

Definition of Shame

Shame is considered a negative emotion about the self. In other words, shame “involves a negative evaluation of the global self” (Tangney and Dearing 57). So, worthlessness stays at the core of the feeling of shame. The negative evaluation of oneself motivates a person to feel unworthy because the feeling of worthlessness is based on the “negative evaluation” done by others and self. Robert H. Alberts says, “Shame results in feelings of worthlessness, helplessness, and hopelessness as one feels judged by others and judges oneself as of no value, consequence, purpose, worth, or significance” (22).

Further, the feeling of worthlessness generates a desire to hide and cover the weaknesses of the self because shame-prone people “feel exposed” as a general experience of shame. “Although shame doesn’t necessarily involve an actual observing audience that is present to witness one’s shortcomings, there is often the imagery of how one’s defective self would appear to others” (Tangney and Dearing 18). This experience of evaluating the self, which finally results in concluding that the self is wrong, “generates a wish to hide, to disappear, or even to die” (Lewis 2). Thus, a voice of worthlessness resonates as “if they really knew who I was, they’d hate me” (McClintock 116). In spite of the hope for covering, shame-prone people feel insufficient to cover their weaknesses; thus, shame is also defined as “the chronic feeling of insufficient means to cover a shortfall” (Gardner 131).

Therefore, shame is basically not about failures or faults but about the value of the self. On the whole, Michael Lewis’ assertion about shame is a good definition of shame:

“Shame can be defined simply as the feeling we have when we evaluate our actions, feelings or behavior, and conclude that we have done wrong” (2).

Positive and Negative Aspects of Shame

Shame does not always function negatively, even with the definition that shame is a negative feeling in evaluating the self. Carl D. Schneider underscores the positive function of shame:

The sense of shame recognizes what is the proper attitude, the fitting response. This perceptual quality of shame further points toward the necessity of considering the context that is perceived. The human context involves the total situation within which shame occurs. Shame, then, is not “just a feeling,” but reflects an order of things. Furthermore, ... shame not only reflects, but sustains, our personal and social ordering of the world. (20)

Even though shame has positive functions as Schneider asserts, it easily sneaks into people's lives to bring about negative results. Kaufman shows how widely shame can affect people in a negative way:

Shame is the principal impediment in all relationships, whether parent-child, teacher-student, or therapist-client. It violates both inner security and interpersonal trust. Shame wounds not only the self, but also a family, an ethnic or minority group within a dominant culture, or even an entire nation. Any disenfranchised, discriminated-against, or persecuted minority group will experience the shame of inferiority, the humiliation of being outcast. Racial, ethnic, and religious group tensions are inevitable consequences of that shame. Just as personal identity becomes molded by shame, ethnic-religious identity and national character are similarly shaped. Shame is also an impediment in international relations, where the dynamics of diplomacy invariably are the dynamics of shame and honor. Shame is a universal dynamic in child rearing, education, interpersonal relations, psychotherapy, ethnic group relations, national culture and politics, and international relations. (*Psychology of Shame* 7)

For that reason, dealing with the issue of shame is imperative in emotional healing.

Expressions of Shame

According to Lewis B. Smedes, those who persistently experience the following feelings are the shame-burdened:

- I sometimes feel as if I am a fake.
- I feel that if people who admire me really knew me they might have contempt for me.
- I feel inadequate; I seldom feel as if I am up to what is expected of me.
- When I look inside of myself, I seldom feel any joy at what I am.
- I feel inferior to the really good people that I know.
- I feel as if God must be disgusted with me.
- I feel flawed inside, blemished somehow, dirty sometimes.
- I feel as if I just cannot measure up to what I ought to be.
- I feel as if I will never be acceptable. (6-7)

Shame can be checked out with the previous expressions.

Shame and Guilt

Both shame and guilt belong to the sphere of emotion. In reality, shame and guilt somewhat overlap each other in many cases:

We do feel guilty for what we do, but we can also feel shame because of something we do. A person may feel guilty for telling a lie to his wife and feel shame for being the sort of person who would do such a thing. (Smedes 10)

On account of the overlapping character of shame and guilt, differentiating guilt and shame is difficult. In spite of the difficulty, shame can be distinguished from guilt by considering the different focuses and responses of these two emotions.

Different focuses. The key difference between shame and guilt is the object of evaluation. Shame focuses more on the self, while guilt focuses more on actions. Shame is defined as a feeling about the self, but guilt is considered an emotion related to evaluation of the actions. For that reason, shame-prone people tend to focus on

themselves as a person who did wrong while guilt-prone people focus on the things done wrong.

The bad action becomes the object of evaluation for the guilty person. Because guilt targets actions, “when a person feels guilt, he or she has a sense of having made a mistake; of doing something that culture or his or her own superego says is wrong, or he or she has failed to do something dictated by culture or superego” (McNish 24). Even when the self is evaluated negatively, the evaluation is “in connection with something” but not “the focus of the experience” for them (Tangney and Dearing 18). As a result, guilt is behavioral, which makes people acknowledge their mistakes.

However, shame is ontological evaluation:

Shame, on the other hand, is self-referential. Regardless of what a person has “done” or “left undone,” to a greater or lesser extent he or she experiences himself or herself as inherently, ontologically flawed in the core of his or her being. (McNish 24)

Shame-prone people feel difficulty objectifying what they did because they tend not to differentiate what they did from who they are. Rather, they drive themselves into the category of object when they “become the object as well as the subject of shame” (Lewis 34). Accordingly, the evaluation of what they did becomes the evaluation of their whole selves.

Different responses. Guilt lets people be responsible for their actions and try to fix the result because guilt enables them to acknowledge their wrongdoings. “Guilty people feel that they have done some specific thing that is wrong or bad” (Pattison 43). As a result, guilt makes people feel responsibility for their actions (Fossum and Mason 5). Therefore, guilt-prone people are more active than shame-prone people in repairing their wrongdoings in a positive way.

However, shame-prone people tend to use shame defenses to protect themselves rather than to repair what was done wrong. “The possibility for repair seems foreclosed to the shameful person because shame is a matter of identity, not a behavioral infraction” (Fossum and Masson 5-6). When they do something wrong, they feel their whole selves are wrong and bad. “The shamed person is likely to feel a sense of personal collapse that implies the loss of self-esteem and self-efficacy.... [They] have to face an unbearable sense that their whole self is bad” (Pattison 44). Therefore, shame-prone people do not easily grasp responsibility for a wrong action.

More differences. Other than the differences of focus and response, June Price Tangney and Ronald L. Dearing assert further differences between shame and guilt (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1. Key Dimensions on Which Shame and Guilt Differ

TOPIC	SHAME	GUILT
Focus of evaluation	Global self: <i>I did that horrible thing</i>	Specific behavior: <i>I did that horrible thing</i>
Degree of distress	Generally more painful than guilt	Generally less painful than shame
Phenomenological experience	Shrinking, feeling small, feeling worthless, powerless	Tension, remorse, regret
Operation of self	Self split into observing and observed selves	Unified self intact
Impact on self	Self impaired by global devaluation	Self unimpaired by global devaluation
Concern vis-à-vis the other	Concern with others' evaluation of the self	Concern with one's effect on others
Counterfactual processes	Mentally undoing some aspect of the self	Mentally undoing some aspect of behavior
Motivational features	Desire to hide, escape, or strike back	Desire to confess, apologize, or repair

Source: Tangney and Dearing 24.

The Dynamics of Shame

Several inherent dynamics are found among shame-prone people.

Fear of exposure. Underneath the feeling of shame, lies fear of exposure:

Many shame-based individuals ... feel as if they are impostors, only waiting to be unmasked. When we are watching ourselves, scrutinizing whatever we see nakedly revealed, it only seems that the watching eyes belong to others. This is, of course, heightened when other people are actually present and may, in fact, be watching. Hence, the situation of being in a group will be especially likely to activate shame and intensify further the sense of exposure. Likewise, the exposure inherent in shame creates the sense of nakedness before an audience: it feels as if others can see inside us or actually read our thoughts. (Kaufman, *Psychology of Shame* 19)

The feeling of nakedness is inherent to shame. Shame is a feeling of exposure.

Because of the feeling of exposure, shame-prone people feel a need to hide from watching eyes. Schneider supports a linguistic theory of the English words for shame, which have their origin in two Indo-European roots of “to cover”:

Our words for shame derive from two Indo-European roots, both with the same meaning. One cluster of words includes our English words *custody*, *hide* [both as a noun meaning *skin* and as a verb meaning *conceal*], *house*, *hut*, *shoe*, and *sky* [original emphasis]. In terms of meaning, the common thread in these otherwise disparate words is their relation to covering. In terms of derivation, each of these words derives from an Indo-European root **[s]que-*; **[s]qewa-*, which means “to cover.” From this same root comes the Lithuanian word *kuvetis* meaning “to be ashamed.” A second Indo-European root **[s]kem-*; **[s]kam-*, also meaning “to cover,” gives us both our English word *shame* as well as the English *camera*, the French *chemise*, and the German *Hemd*.... Shame, then, is intimately linked to the need to cover—in particular, to cover *that which is exposed* [original emphasis]. (29-30)

The root meaning of the word *shame* matches with the psychological desire of the shame-prone people to cover themselves.

Theologically, the fear of exposure was the core feeling of shame of Adam who first betrayed God’s love as a victim of evil. When Adam and Eve were in the original

state of creation, they “were both naked and were not ashamed” (Gen. 2:25). They could disclose themselves to each other and to God fully with “unfettered intimacy” (Comiskey 71). However, they betrayed God by eating “from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil” (Gen. 2:17). Then eating the forbidden fruit made Adam and Eve to feel ashamed. They “knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together” (Gen. 3:7) to cover themselves. “Behind the biblical expression ‘the shame of their nakedness’ lies the assumption that the exposure of that which should be covered is shameful” (Schneider 31). Anthony J. Headley explains the process as follows:

In Genesis 2:25, Adam and Eve were naked but not ashamed. Now they became morbidly aware of their nakedness. Concomitantly, they experienced an unwholesome sense of standing before God fully exposed and vulnerable. As a result, they attempted to cover their nakedness. Adam and Eve had lost their sense of unashamed innocence and in its place experienced what some might call toxic shame. (142)

They felt the fear of exposure toward God, not only toward each other. “They actually felt shame in the presence of each other and, we assume, in the eyes of God, for they hid themselves from His presence in the garden” (R. Anderson 148). As a result, “full disclosure of the self is no longer possible” (Comiskey 71) for people who desire to hide or cover themselves (McClintock 21).

Feeling of separation. Shame is a reaction to an experience of separation.

Schneider says, “The underlying dynamic of ... shame is the fear of rejection” (26).

Gerhart Piers adds, “Behind the feeling of shame stands not the fear of hatred, but the fear of *contempt* [original emphasis] which ... spells fear of abandonment” (16). The experience of rejection or abandonment makes people have a fearful feeling of separation.

The psychological experience of rejection or abandonment shapes abandonment shame in a self because “desertion or abandonment sends a clear and frightening signal of

rejection” (Albers 44). The abandonment shame is not limited to the individual level but also happens on a social level. According to Smedes, individuals feel shame when they are “rejected by their own group” (52). Also, people feel shame when their group is “rejected by another group” (52).

According to Thom Gardner, the reason for feeling rejection is that human beings are made to live in a community. When God created Adam, God did not like Adam to live alone, so he made a helper for Adam (Gen 2 :18). That is to say, human beings have an instinct to live together in a community:

Community, belonging to one another, is a strong instinct within us. We are created in community, reflecting the very schematic of God Himself, who exists as a community of sorts: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Thus we all were made for each other [So,] if we do not experience that belonging, we wither and die. (103)

Therefore, “connection is essential to a healthy life” (Green and Lawrenz 15). People, then, experience the absence of belonging through imperfect love. Imperfect love or conditional love asks people to be worthy of love if they want to be loved (Gardner 103). Consequently, people experience rejection when they feel they do not measure up to the necessary level to be loved. In their shame and feeling of abandonment they feel they do not belong to their community. Thus, Kaufman says, “To live with shame is to feel alienated and defeated, never quite good enough to belong” (*Psychology of Shame* 26).

Loss of love. Shame-prone people have the root of an absence of love. “Basic shame is the pain of feeling unloved and unlovable In very severe shame-proneness this traumatic sense of radical unlovability is present” (Wurmser 97). They experience “the threat of loss of love” (Schneider 26) because “being deserted or abandoned means being separated from the source of life and love” (Albers 43).

The threat of loss of love is about feeling unloved. Shame-based people feel difficulty loving themselves and others. Albers finds an insight for this lack of love with shame-prone people in the lesson from Mark 12:31: “Love your neighbor as yourself.” Following Jesus’ lesson, people are to love themselves if they want to love others, but shame-prone people do not love others because they do not love themselves (Albers 101). Not loving themselves, they do not feel love for others.

Loss of worth. Worthlessness is “a pervasive sense of shame” (Fossum and Mason 5). When a person has a feeling of separation and rejection, he or she becomes weak to the threat of worthlessness. The person says, “I am not worthy of relationship with others and I am ashamed of myself and who I am as an individual. The message may be externally given, but is also an internal judgment made by that person” (Albers 44). Merle A. Fossum and Marilyn J. Mason explain the feeling of worthlessness more specifically:

Shame is an inner sense of being completely diminished or insufficient as a person. It is the self-judging the self. A moment of shame may be humiliation so painful or an indignity so profound that one feels one has been robbed of her or his dignity or exposed as basically inadequate, bad, or worthy of rejection. A pervasive sense of shame is the ongoing premise that one is fundamentally bad, inadequate, defective, unworthy, or not fully valid as a human being. (5)

For that reason, shame-prone people lose respect for themselves.

Exposure of the impotence of false gods. Theologically speaking, a desire to trust in others more than in God becomes the source for shame: “looking good,” “being bright,” “attaining power,” “finance,” “art work,” “freedom,” “service,” “health,” “reputation,” “children,” “physical appearance” (Allender and Longman 197, 201), “control,” “safety,” “approval,” “power,” “freedom,” “perfectionism,” and “invincibility”

(S. Seamands 47). When people find that those false gods cannot be trusted any more, they feel shamed. By watching their wrong trust in false gods, they realize how foolish they were.

Stephen Seamands finds the origin of the trust in false gods in the story of Adam and Eve's fall: "When Adam and Eve accepted the serpent's lie, they bowed down to the false gods of wisdom ("knowing good and evil"), immortality ("you will not die") and pride ("you will be like God")" (45). When they found the false promises of the serpent after eating from the forbidden tree, they covered themselves in shame (45-46). Dan B. Allender and Tremper Longman, III, also explain the process of feeling shame related to the exposure of the false gods:

Shame arises when we feel deficient, yes. But far more, we feel deficient and ugly when the god we (covertly and at times unconsciously) worship lets us down and reveals the foolishness of our idolatrous trust. Shame is not primarily an experience of feeling bad or deficient as it is the exposure of foolish trust in a god who is not God. (197)

In this way, shame exposes the wrongly worshipped object and the impotence of the false gods.

Shame Defenses

Shame defenses are a means of "defending in ... and adapting oneself to outer reality" (Kaufman, *Shame* 96). Because shame is a negative ontological evaluation, "it must be defended against if one is to have any modicum of dignity" (Albers 69).

Therefore, shame defenses are to be understood as a "survival mechanism" (Nelson 81) when shame-prone people feel they are not good any more. "Shame ... makes it imperative for the person to attempt to justify her or himself by employing defending and deflecting strategies in order to justify her or his existence" (Albers 101-02).

Also, shame defenses are a reaction to the fear of being discovered in shame. Exposure to shame leads to the torture of “nakedness before an audience” (Kaufman, *Psychology of Shame* 19). Then the shamed have a desire to use shame defenses.

However, shame defenses do not succeed as a result. Even though shame defenses are meant to help people survive, “rigid defending strategies will in turn produce distorted relationships with others, creating new pressures” (Kaufman, *Shame* 97). The distorted relationships include not only those with people but also a spiritual relationship with God. Jill L. McNish notes that shame defenses function to affect one’s relationship with God negatively in the end: “Shame defenses help us flee from our true selves, from intimacy with one another, and from God. Deployment of shame defenses might temporarily help avoid the experience of shame. It takes us out of the shame vortex and makes us less permeable to God” (53).

Anger and hostility. While guilt enables one to “accept responsibility ... with a somewhat decreased tendency toward interpersonal anger and hostility,” shame can “motivate defensive feelings of anger and hostility and a tendency to project blame outward” (Tangney and Dearing 97). Anger and hostility work as a defense for the ashamed.

Perfectionism. Perfectionism is an attempt by shame-prone people to evade the sense of shame with a perfect goal and a hope for attaining it. Shame-prone people hope to avoid the negative evaluation of the self “by being perfect” (McNish 59). With perfectionism, “the person with a shame-based identity reasons that one of the ways to avoid the painful experience of shame is to live perfectly or flawlessly, thus theoretically eliminating any possibility for criticism or attack which would elicit shame” (Albers 70).

Thus, shame-prone people have a desire to live more perfectly and ask the others to live perfectly.

However, this attempt can never succeed in its intent because perfection is not attained with human faculties. Rather, perfectionism wrecks the self by setting more perfect goals for shame-prone persons to attain, even when they have fulfilled a good goal. In the hope for perfection, they are never satisfied with any good achievements.

Rather, the hope for perfection causes the feeling of failure:

The quest for perfection itself is self-limiting and hopelessly doomed both to fail and to plunge the individual back into the very mire of defectiveness from which he so longed to escape. One can never attain that perfection, and awareness of failure to do so reawakens that already-present sense of shame. (Kaufman, *Shame* 87)

In this way, perfectionism leads to dissatisfaction, which finally generates a negative evaluation of the self to produce more shame in the self.

The other shame defenses. Table 2.2 lists shame defenses from Albers, McNish, and Kaufman.

Table 2.2. Shame Defenses

Albers	McNish	Kaufman
Perfectionism	Perfectionism	Striving for perfection
The scapegoating defense—blaming	The transfer of blame	The transfer of blame
Power and control through disguised manipulation	The assertion of power (exploitive, manipulative, competitive)	Striving for power
Withdrawal and isolation	Withdrawal	Internal withdrawal
Martyr complex	Defeatism	
Self-righteousness	Righteousness	Contempt
	Rage	Rage
	Envy	

Source: Albers 69-83; McNish 53-61; Kaufman, *Shame* 79-97.

By-Products of Shame

Shame produces more problems that affect shame-prone people's lives negatively.

Loss of empathy. Shame-prone people tend to lack empathy with others. Because shame is a very torturous experience for shame-prone people, shame drives them to focus on themselves more than others in terms of need. Shame does not have room for empathy with others. Tangney and Dearing explain the process:

The tremendous preoccupation with the self draws one's focus away from a distressed other, thus short-circuiting other-oriented feelings of empathy. In effect, shamed individuals are less likely to be concerned with the pain experienced by the harmed other and are more consumed with a focus on negative characteristics of the self: I am such a horrible person (for having hurt so-and-so). In fact, rather than promoting other-oriented empathic concern, the acute self-focus of shame is likely to foster self-oriented personal distress responses. (83)

Further, Tangney and Dearing expand the outcomes of shame to moral areas:

Rather, shame appears to set the stage for self-oriented personal distress reactions, where the individual's focus on a distressed other is "derailed" by his or her own emotional experience. These relationships are not only

supported by real-life narratives of specific shame and guilt events but are also readily apparent in correlational studies of moral affective dispositions, as well as in an experimental study involving shame inductions. (89)

Thus, shame tends to drive people toward being less interested in the moral state by keeping people from noticing and acknowledging others' emotional experiences.

For this reason, shame-prone people are not sensitive to others' needs. They concentrate on their "own sense of feeling bad.... It blocks out awareness of other people and their feelings and needs, except insofar as these impinge upon the self" (Pattison 125-26). Albers affirms that shame-prone people have difficulty in servanthood:

Contrary to the intent of these passages in Scripture which admonish servanthood for the sake of the other, the shame-based person envisions servanthood for the sake of the self. There is no real giving of the self for the sake of the neighbor; rather the motivation is to protect the self against the sting of shaming from others by "self-shaming." (80)

Therefore, shame-prone people are inflicted with loss of love, which finally makes them indifferent to others' pains.

Relational problems. This distorted relationship is another by-product of shame. As shamed people use defenses, the possibility for broken relationships increases (Nelson 81). Negative characteristics of shame can be especially found in the intimate relationship of the shame-prone couple. According to Melvin R. Lansky, if two shame-prone people become intimate romantically, they experience a lot of "shame-producing features" in a family system. They tend to increase vulnerability and chaos with repeated attacking in blaming, humiliating, insulting, and rejection (335-62). Finally, this "shamed-bound" system deepens the partner's vulnerability and sense of insecurity (Tangney and Dearing 163).

Abusive relationship is also a part of the intimate relational problems that come from shame:

Dutton's (1998) research suggests that male batterers are, in fact, unusually shame-prone. And clinical accounts, too, underscore that problems with shame lie at the heart of abusive relationships (Dutton, 1995; Lansky 1987). Dutton's (1998) clinical profile of the male batterer paints the picture of a jealous, insecure, easily threatened individual who attempts to cover his fear and shame with overt hostility and demands for control, especially within his most intimate—and therefore most dangerous—relationships. (Tangney and Dearing 164-65)

In this way, shame produces relational problems between husbands and wives.

The other by-products. According to Pattison, shame accompanies many characteristics such as the following:

- A sense of uncontrollable exposure
- A sense of being looked at or seen
- A sense of audience or the critical other entirely on one's own and in private
- It feels that the whole of one's self is involved
- A sense of heightened and tormenting self-consciousness and divided functioning
- A sense of incongruity
- A threat to trust in the nature of things
- Difficulty in communication
- The common experience of a cute individual isolation
- An enormous sense of despair
- A sense of unending present
- A sense of total paralysis
- The affective experience of shame is immediate, rapid and generalized.
- The experience of powerlessness and passivity
- The impetus to hide, disappear or flee
- Perception of the self as being judged to be inferior, defective, incompetent, undesirable, or unlovable.
- The conviction of being unloved and unlovable
- A sense of weakness, dirtiness and defectiveness
- A sense of inferiority, valuelessness, or personal diminishment
- Loss of self-esteem
- A sense of failure
- People ... experience themselves as embodying the anti-ideal

- Contempt or scorn directed towards the self
- The ... unexpected, irrational and unpredictable nature of its incidence and causes. (71-78)

The characteristics of those by-products are influential negatively for the relationships and lives of shame-prone people.

Shame Factors in Korean Context

The feeling of shame is affected by the culture in which people grow up and live. Clifford Geertz affirms the influence of culture as follows: “Our ideas, our values, our acts, *even our emotions* [emphasis mine], are, like our nervous system itself, cultural products—products manufactured, indeed, out of tendencies, capacities, and dispositions with which we were born, but manufactured nonetheless” (50). Two factors have affected the shame feeling of Koreans: history of *han* and cultural characteristics.

Han

Han, a Korean word (恨), is a prevalent concept of emotional wounding among Koreans. Most of them understand it naturally, even though they have difficulty explaining *han*. *Han* generally comes from enduring unfair situations people cannot avoid or escape. *Han* appears as a strained state of hurt when people find no other hope of overcoming the hurting circumstances (J. Lee 139). *Han* also designates an emotional wound that lodges itself deep inside of “people who has/have [sic] endured or are enduring an affliction.... Thus, *han* connotes a mind’s or heart’s affliction and struggle with a deep emotional or spiritual pain” (Son 4-5).¹ In *han*, dynamic interaction of feelings happens:

¹ Chang-hee Son argues that emotional or psychological *han* should be written as *haan* to be read *hän* with an extended ä sound. He differentiates between psychological *han* (*haan*, 恨) and philosophical *han* (韓).

Han is not a single feeling but many feelings condensed together, including resentment, regret, resignation, aggression, anxiety, loneliness, longing, sorrow, and emptiness. It even encompasses contradictory feelings such as hate and love. In han, these feelings interact with each other dynamically, to create a specific han feeling depending on real circumstances. (J. Lee 2)

Therefore, *han* is not a simple feeling but a complex phenomenon of feelings that come from emotional wounds.

However, the consequences of emotional hurts cause *han* not to be restricted to the emotional area. *Han* has influence not only on the emotions but also on every sphere of human life: body, soul, relationships, and so on. For this reason, Andrew Sung Park defines *han* beyond the limits of emotion in the aspect of *han* response. “Han is a physical, mental, and spiritual response to a terrible wrong done to a person. It elicits a warped depth of pain, a visceral physical response, an intense rending of the soul, and a sense of helplessness” (*From Hurt to Healing* 11).

According to Park, *han* is defined in five concepts: frustrated hope, the collapsed feeling of pain, letting go, leading to resentful bitterness, and the wounded heart (*Wounded Heart of God* 15-20). First, *han* can be found in frustrated hope. Human existence is sustained by hope. When hope is frustrated, “hope turns into han” (*Wounded Heart of God* 15). This frustration is caused by injustice, oppression, or betrayal of the trusted. The victims of these *han*-causing factors become hopeless and experience despair. Second, *han* is the collapsed feeling of pain. *Han* involves suffering of emotional, rational, and physical pain. When suffering is accumulated to saturation in a victim, it turns into a condensed feeling of pain. Like a black hole that swallows up everything it touches, the condensed pain feeling of *han* overwhelms and dominates all the other human emotions. It also controls physical modes of expression by producing bodily pain.

Third, *han*-ridden people let go of all feelings when they reach the limit in controlling their own feelings. This negative letting go is self-renunciation. Fourth, *han* is resentful bitterness. *Han*-ridden people experience the feeling of indignation and intense animosity. Fifth, *han* is a wound, which is “the division of the tissue of the heart caused by abuse, exploitation, and violence” (Park, *Wounded Heart of God* 20). *Han* is an aching broken heart that aches.

When *han* appears severer than general emotional hurt, it becomes autonomous energy. *Han* is not a treatable object any more but is forceful energy, moving people toward destruction (Park, *From Hurt to Healing* 132). Thus, *han*, when it is not treated appropriately, moves toward deeper *han* to destroy the *han*-ridden people. “Unresolved *han* or superficial treatment of *han* continually produces sin, violence, and tragedies, thus perpetuating the eruption of *han* by generating yet more *han*” (33). For this reason, *han* becomes the issue of importance among Korean preachers.

Although *han* is the place where human beings can hardly find any hope for their miserably limited situation, it is also a place for finding a hope beyond human hope. When people do not find any hope within, they tend to try to find it beyond themselves. For the people of *han*, one of the ways to find an external better hope is to look to heaven, which represents a transcendental God. When this tendency is misled, people of *han* can be deviated from a correct attitude toward present and real problems with an indifferent attitude toward the problems, focusing only on spiritual and transcendent areas and forgetting the real problems. However, with a mature and sound healing theology, *han*-ridden people find a better way to confront the present and real evil powers in this world.

by relying on God for healing. Preachers have a responsibility to guide the *han*-ridden people to be healed by God with a sound healing theology.

Shame and *Han*

The story of *han* is also a story of shame, and the resolution of *han* also means resolving shame due to the significant relationship between them. The relationship between shame and *han* is reciprocal because they reinforce each other. According to Park, “Han brings forth shame” (*Wounded Heart of God* 81), and shame is considered “a form of the actuality of individual han” (84). Also, shame puts some people in a *han*-ridden position because *han* is “helplessness” at the individual level (*From Hurt to Healing* 15)² as shame is a feeling of helplessness or hopelessness (Bradshaw 23). Park says, “In general, shame emerges when one is helplessly wronged or hurt by others.... The victims of shame (the offended) largely suffer from embarrassment because they could not defend their own territory. Their helplessness is a source of shame” (*From Hurt to Healing* 35). Thus, shame and *han* are on the same ground of helplessness and hopelessness in reciprocal relationship. Both shame and *han* are primarily the words for the victims of helplessness, not for the sinners.

In addition, shame is transmitted along with *han* from generation to generation (Park, *Wounded Heart of God* 80-81). Shame can be transmitted through family (Nelson 81) as *han* is also transmitted through family biologically, mentally, and spiritually (Park, *Wounded Heart of God* 80-81). John Bradshaw argues that shame is “multigenerational” (32). When shame is hidden as a secret, it becomes the “wellsprings of its multigenerational life” (32). For example, family secrets of suicides, homicides, incest,

² See also Park, “The Bible and Han” 47; *From Hurt to Healing* 11.

abortions, addictions, public loss of face, and financial disasters are the “wellsprings” (32). As long as those family secrets are kept hidden by unconscious defenses—denial, idealization of parents, repression of emotions and dissociation from emotions—the family’s pain is covered up, and the shame covered up is transmitted for generations (32).

Also, shame is transmitted at a collective level as *han* is transmitted at a collective level through ethnic ethos for a race.³ Future generations inherit the forms of the historic traumas of a race in an ethnic ethos from their ancestry (Park, *Wounded Heart of God* 80-81). In this process, humiliating shame is also developed at a collective level by “people of a particular race, gender, or class” (*From Hurt to Healing* 44).

Korean *Han* and Korean History

Korean *han* has existed as a collective *han* among Korean people through generations in Korean history. Learning the history of their ancestors, Korean people naturally absorb the feeling of hurts accumulated in those stories integrated into the community of the same *han*. Therefore, by tracing the history of Korean *han*, shame factors affecting Korean people also can be revealed.

Transmission of Korean *han*. Korean people have held collective *han* through generations. About the innate *han* of the Korean people, Ko Eun says, “We Koreans were born from the womb of *han* and brought up in the womb of *han*” (qtd. in Suh 59). Korean people understand *han* naturally because they grow up learning *han* from their culture.

John R. W. Stott’s assertion buttresses this thought:

The mind-set of all human beings has been formed by the culture in which they have been brought up. Their presuppositions, their value systems, the

³ *Han* is also transmitted through social environment. Patriarchy, hierarchy, racism, ethnic conflict, and violent lifestyles are the social evils through which *han* is transmitted (Park, *Wounded Heart of God* 80-81).

ways in which they think, and the degree of their receptivity or resistance to new ideas, are all largely determined by their *cultural inheritance* [emphasis mine] and are filters through which they listen and evaluate. (Foreword vii)

In this sense, Korean people, learning and growing up with the history of Korea, are influenced by the collective *han*, preserved as their cultural inheritance. I believe that a history of a society is a basic element organizing a culture of society. Culture does not develop without reason. The experiences of a societal community are dissolved into and constitute the cultural features. Therefore, searching Korean history is a way to know what has affected Korean personality in terms of shame. For an obvious understanding, I describe Korean history as a basic element of Korean culture, not as the culture itself, which reveals the Korean *han* embedded in Korean people through the history of *han*.

Korean *han* has accumulated for a long time because Korean history is full of experiences of being attacked by foreign countries and nations and has endured many cases of chaos in its history. Korean people grow up learning the ethos of Korean racial *han* especially in history and literature. Finally, the Korean collective *han* that has been transmitted through generations is located in most of the Korean people at the collective level. Being similar to Carl Gustav Jung's "collective unconscious" (Douglas 97), *han* becomes a Korean *han* for all the Korean people who have grown up learning Korean history and culture in Korea. Park explains the process as follows:

At the unconscious level, *han* is immersed in the ethos of group or racial mourning. Many years of social injustice, political oppression, economic exploitation, or foreign invasions create collective unconscious *han*. The victims who experience unjust suffering over many generations develop collective unconscious *han* deep in the soul. (*Wounded Heart of God* 38)

Most Korean people grow up learning the collective Korean *han* as developed through generations.

In spite of the similarity between Jung's collective unconscious and *han*, Park points to a difference in the transmission process between "collective unconscious" and *han*:

Unlike Jung's "collective unconscious," however, this *han* does not take over the content of the *han* of a previous generation, but the structure of *han*-memory. The structure of collective unconscious *han* is transmittable to another generation through the framework of ethnic ethos, tradition, and culture. (*Wounded Heart of God* 38-39)

Therefore, *han* is not exactly the same as Jung's "collective unconscious." It differs somewhat in the transmission process.

Park presents a fourfold transmission of *han*: biological, mental and spiritual, social, and racial (*Wounded Heart of God* 80-81). Among these fourfold transmissions of *han*, I name racial transmission of Korean *han* as a collective shame. In order to clarify the concept of racial transmission, the fourfold transmission is explained based on Park's classification. First, *han* may be transmitted "through biological channels" (80). If a disease of parents is inherited by a child, the "seat of *han*" (80) will also be inherited. This transmission is not the transmission of *han* itself, but "the transmission of the structure of *han*" (80). Second, mental and spiritual *han* of parents may be transmitted. The children of those parents "become heirs to the seat of their parents' *han*" (80) by inheriting "melancholy, bitterness, and resentment" (80). Third, social transmission of *han* is made by inheriting the "social environments: patriarchy, hierarchy, racism, ethnic conflict, and violent life-styles" (80). Finally, *han* is transmitted at the racial level:

Children inherit their ethnic ethos. The collective *han* of race is transmitted to children. Forms of the historical traumas of a race are imprinted in the memory of posterity. These forms constitute ethnic ethos. A particular racial spirit runs down generations through the ethos of racial *han*. (81)

In this aspect, Korean history designates the possibility that Koreans who have grown up in Korean culture possibly have the common Korean *han*. “In Korea, collective *han* is not only embedded in the substratum of the self but also in the bottom of racial unconscious history or racial ethos. This has deepened over many generations in the history of Koreans” (Ahn 46). In this way, racial transmission of Korean *han* becomes collective shame.

Korean History of *han*. Korean history is full of *han* due to the suffering and many hardships of the past (Chung 41-42), enabling the transmission of *han* through generations to make Korean people *han*-ridden. In earlier periods, numerous invasions into Korea by “surrounding powerful nations” brought suffering to the Korean people. This hardship became the source for *han*, and “the very existence of the Korean nation has come to be understood as *han*” (Suh 58). The unfair treatment toward the lower class in a social framework was also the source for *han* in the Korean people. Nam-dong Suh says, “At a certain point in Korean history, about half of the population were registered as hereditary slaves and were treated as property rather than as people of the nation. These thought of their lives as *han*” (58).

In modern times, Korea has experienced three major setbacks that generated collective *han* in its people. The first was the Japanese Colonial Period of Korea. Korea lost its independence to Japan in 1910 and was ruled by Japan until 1945 when Japan finally announced surrender to the Allied Powers of the United States, China, Great Britain, and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. In the colonial period, Japan exploited Korea as a “market for Japanese products” and “a source of goods” (S. Lee 45). Sho says, “When one group of people is unjustly victimized by another group of people,

the tendency to retaliate in the form of racism is handed down through the generations unconsciously in their deep ethos of racial lamentations” (Sho 84-85). The experience of colonial time has been embedded in Korean people as *han*.

The second was the Korean War between South and North Korea, from 25 June 1950 to 27 July 1953. The war itself damaged Korean society. Around 990,968 civilians were killed in South Korea during the war period (Jung 14:134). Korea, which became officially two nations in 1948, is still divided into two regimes (S. Lee 46). The division of Korea hurt some “twenty million families separated” through the confusion of the war. Most of them still have not had opportunity to meet their lost family members. They have not even heard from their families. Those who experienced the war are the generation of *han* in longing for the unification of the two Koreas, South and North (Sho 27-28).

The third setback involved the military dictatorships in Korean political history.⁴ Under the military dictatorships, the ordinary Korean people experienced oppression. Students and workers demonstrated against the military dictatorship. One of the largest resistances against the military dictatorship was the Kwangju Uprising, which is considered a stepping-stone toward democracy (Cho 67-86). Around 1980, Korea had more than fifty thousand students and citizens protesting against the new military regime of general Doohwan Chun that took control of the government through a military coup. On 18 May 1980, many people still demonstrated in Kwangju, even after the expansion of martial law (Choi 238-82). Paratroopers were sent into the city to quell the demonstration with severe violence and killing. The number of those killed is estimated to be a minimum of one thousand by recent government investigations, but many people

⁴ Even though North Korea has been under a Communist dictatorship until now, this assertion of dictatorship is limited to South Korea, as the context of this study is limited to South Korea.

believe the number to be closer to two thousand (Katsiaficas 281-86). In the bloody history, the sufferings became imbedded as *han* among those who experienced the Kwangju Uprising and defenders of the uprising.

Korean Culture

A culture generates shame for its people (Kaufman, *Psychology of Shame* 44, 54). Because “shame is closely related to the ethical values or moral standards of a given culture” (Z. Lee 182), shame can emerge from cultural control. Edward P. Wimberly argues that the cultural factors can be related shame:

Each culture has rules for predicting, controlling, and responding to experiences. These rules carry with them systems of evaluating people and are powerful forces of social control. Certain groups have negative images attached to them, and the internalization of these negative images by group members can lead to shame. (67)

The shame from a cultural factor is called “enforced shame” (George 71).⁵

Among the factors of the Korean culture, two factors are the most powerful generators of shame: the values of solidarity and competition.

The values of solidarity . Korea is a country with a culture that values solidarity in a community, and this characteristic affects the shame of the Koreans. On account of this factor, Western psychologists describe Korean culture as collectivism. However, this collectivism defined by the Western psychologists is not appropriate for the Korean culture. According to Sang-Chin Choi and Soo-Hyang Choi, the idea of group defined by Western, especially North American, psychology is about “an aggregate of ‘many individuals,’” which is based on the “individual perspective of collectivism” (58).

However, Korean collectivism is based on “we-ness.” In the conclusion of the project of

⁵ Joseph George’s “enforced shame” includes not only cultural control but also social and economic control and discrimination enforced by others.

“the cross-cultural comparison of people’s idea of we-ness,” Choi and Choi indicate the difference of Korean collectivism from the Western one:

Instead of commonality, the Korean participants emphasize “one-ness” or “whole-ness....” Above all, in one-ness related themes, the recognition of individual persons becomes an unnecessary conceptual exercise. In addition, a conspicuous presence of individuals is, in fact, a hindering factor to the proposition of one-ness as a characteristic typical of a we-group. (79)

Therefore, Korean collectivism is not based on the commonness among people in a community but one-ness different from the sum of individuals.

The collectivistic character of the Korean culture is also found linguistically. One of the linguistic examples showing this solidarity is the Korean word *u-ri*, which means *we* and *our* in English. Korean people usually use *u-ri—our—*instead of *nae—my—*to refer to the people in their community, so a boss would call the people under him or her *u-ri—our—*subordinates. A subordinate also calls his or her boss *u-ri—our—*boss even in the context where he or she means *my*. The principle can be applied to many relationships. A Korean person uses the word *u-ri* even to designate his or her spouse; therefore, a spouse is called *u-ri—our—*wife or husband. Korean people use the collective word almost unconsciously.

Because the value of oneness and unity has been embedded deep in Korean culture for a long time, relative cultural diversity is the context where shame occurs. Visible diversity is easily considered deviation from the norm of the community, and the people of difference are blamed for not following “existing norms” (Yang and Rosenblatt 363-64).

The value of oneness affects the shame level of the Korean people in a collective way. People in the same community believe that what they do affects each other. When

one of the community members does the wrong thing, people in the community feel shame of a collective responsibility, as if they themselves were the wrongdoers. For example, in April 2007 when the news said that the gunman of the massacre at Virginia Tech was an ethnic Korean, Seung Hui Cho, many Korean people felt ashamed and guilty because he was a Korean like them. An article in *Time* gives an example of the responses of Koreans to the rampage at Virginia Tech:

While Americans were grieving and trying to [sic] make sense of Monday's massacre at Virginia Tech, on the other side of the Pacific, South Koreans were shaking their heads in disbelief that one of their own could unleash the worst massacre in U.S. history.... A collective sense of regret and guilt was palpable today due to the strong tendency of Koreans to perceive the tragedy in terms of Korean nationalism, in which the group trumps the individual. "It's a notion of collective responsibility," says Mike Breen, the author of *The Koreans*. When a Korean does something wonderful, the country rejoices, but when one of its own goes off the rails, like Cho Seung-Hui, there's a collective sense of shame and burden. So much so that South Korea's Ambassador to the U.S., Lee Tae Shik, pledged to fast for 32 days to show his sorrow today.... "I was shocked," says Hong, Sung Pyo, 65, a textile executive in Seoul. "We don't expect Koreans to shoot people, so we feel very ashamed and also worried." Most important, he adds, "we don't want Americans to think all Koreans are this way." (Veale)

When bad things happen, Korean solidarity causes shame for people in the Korean culture.

Competition. Korean culture has accepted the value of competition in a modernization process. Korea has experienced rapid economic growth, the import of democratic ideas, and progress of scientific knowledge. Zuk-Nae Lee indicates that these changes have challenged the Korean traditional value system. As a result, contrary to the traditional values of forbearance, new values of individual "liberty, equality, reasonableness and material wealth" (191) have become fused into the Korean cultural atmosphere:

Modern society is an arena of competition and accomplishment. As a result, how much a person can accomplish has become an important value. Those accomplishing more feel proud and superior, while those failing to do so feel inferior.... In the modernized society of Korea, the inferiority complex born of competition is closely related to the feeling of shame. (191)

With the influence of those new values, incompetence in failing to gain the new values has become the object of shame in modern Korea (190-92).

However, the notion of competition in Korea is somewhat different from that of Westerners. Even though Korea experienced cultural change from solidarity to individuality, it has not completely lost its traditional value of solidarity. In the shadow of the traditional culture, "loneliness and isolation are so greatly feared. Thus ostracism is a most potent and effective punishment for antisocial behavior in Korean. Exclusion from the communal network of human interaction is the pain inflicted upon the wrongdoer" (Ahn 55). For this reason, the Korean concept of competition is not a desire to be outstanding but "from not falling behind others. Living up to the group's norms and values is [still] important" (You 59-60).

Shame and Healing in the Bible

In the Bible, shame sometimes appears to be healed. Most of all, Psalms of Lament and Jesus' healing ministry are good examples for the healing of shame in the Bible.

Shame and Healing in Psalms of Lament

According to Bernhard W. Anderson, sixty one out of one hundred fifty psalms are laments: community laments (12; 44; 58; 60; 74; 79; 80; 83; 85; 89; 90; 94; 123; 126; 129; 137) and individual laments (3; 4; 5; 7; 9-10; 13; 14; 17; 22; 25; 26; 27; 28; 31; 35; 36; 39; 40; 41; 42-43; 52; 53; 54; 55; 56; 57; 59; 61; 63; 64; 69; 70; 71; 77; 86; 88; 89;

109; 120; 139; 140; 141; 142) (70-75). These Psalms of lament, more than one-third of the Psalms, have two characteristics relating to the healing of shame. First, the Psalms of lament invite people to expose hidden weaknesses toward God. “Shame of weakness” leads them to hide from God (Kraus, “Cross of Christ” 211). However, the fear of exposure of weakness is broken in the Psalms of lament. They express human shameful shadows that people do not want to expose:

Psalms of lament enable us to confront our vulnerability, shame, and humiliation and to express them. Psalms of lament take seriously our hurt and anger over being ridiculed and mocked The wisdom of the psalms of lament is that deep feelings of a gony over the presence of suffering in life can be confronted and expressed without negative sanctions. (Wimberly 55)

They give permission to expose emotional hurts without being rebuked or attacked.

Through the exposure, Psalms of lament help free people from the fear of exposure and the defense of denial. Allender and Longman also point to the character of Psalms in terms of exposure of negative feelings:

The Psalms provoke us to move out of denial. Christians are particularly adept at numbing themselves against painful emotions.... Negative emotions such as fear, anger, or depression are stigmatized as inappropriate because God is love and grants us peace. But ... a close look shows that the psalms of complaint and songs of accusation—the music of confusion, doubt, and heartache—significantly outnumber the hymns of joy.... They call us back from our natural tendency to flee from pain and fight against any who provoke discomfort. They expose the essence of our emotional turmoil—the commitment to find life apart from trusting God. (32)

Psalms of lament expose the weakness of humanity and help people confess their weakness.

Most of the Psalms were meant to be sung in the setting of Israel’s worship (B. Anderson 32). Through the Psalms of lament, Israelites could express their feeling of

shame without being rejected. God's grace to accept the laments of his children is the safety zone for shame d people to expose their shameful feelings. God's power to save his people was confessed in the laments; therefore, Psalms of lament teach the community of salvation a lesson: Without exposure of the self, salvation is incomplete.

Second, exposing weakness is not an end of the Psalms of lament. Rather, the Psalms of lament proceed to worship and praise God in the time of ordeal, helping hurting people rely on God's salvation. According to B. Anderson, the form of lament exhibits a definite structure: (1) addressing God—a brief cry, recollection of God's deeds of old; (2) complaining—community laments, military crisis, drought, famine, scourge, or individual laments, sickness, enemies, death; (3) confessing of trust—expression of confidence in God in spite of the problematic situation; (4) petitioning—appealing to God to intervene; (5) giving words of assurance—the prayer will be heard; and, (6) giving vow of praise—the a vow to call upon the name of Yahweh and to testify before the community what Yahweh has done (76). The Psalms of lament do not finish only with lament but always proceed to the conviction of God's help and praise.

The community laments “express the distress of the community in a time of threat when people found it difficult to believe that ‘God is with us,’ a fundamental conviction of faith expresses pregnantly in the word Immanuel” (B. Anderson 71). Individual laments were originally “composed by persons who, in a time of need or anxiety, went to the Temple to pray” (73). Both of the laments are from the context where God should be found for salvation. B. Anderson argues that the laments in Psalms presuppose God's salvation:

[Then the children of God] raise[d] a cry out of the depths in the confidence that God has the power to lift a person out of the “miry bog”

and to set one's feet upon a rock (Ps. 40:1-3). Hence the laments are really expressions of praise—praise offered in a minor key in the confidence that Yahweh is faithful and in anticipation of a new lease on life. (76)

Palms of lament express the joy in God's salvation that God's children finally will find.

Shame and Healing in Psalm 25

Psalm 25 is one of the Psalms of lament expressing the feeling of shame in freedom. Allender and Longman suggest two kinds of freedom in a situation of shame in Psalm 25 (214-19). The first one is “freedom in hope: confidence in an advocate” (214).

Psalm 25:1-3 reads as follows:

To you, O LORD,
I lift up my soul; in you I trust, O my God.
Do not let me be put to shame,
nor let my enemies triumph over me.
No one whose hope is in you
will ever be put to shame,
but they will be put to shame
who are treacherous without excuse. (NIV)

The lament comes framed in trust in God as advocate. God exists to be an advocate in shameful situations. Allender and Longman tell the story of a child who turns to an advocate in a situation of shame :

A child gets pushed around by older boys. His face is shoved in the dirt; he is taunted and shamed. The boys depart with arrogance. When they are a half-block away, the shamed boy regains a shred of dignity as he shouts: “You just wait! You wait until my big brother finds out what you did to me. We'll see if you're laughing then.” (214)

Likewise, trust in an advocate, God, is a hope centered in the future of redemption. “Trust in an Advocate shatters shame because it draws us to look beyond the hopelessness of the moment and gaze on the One whose strength and love is capable of pulling us out of the mire” (214). Trust in God, an advocate, is freedom in hope.

The second freedom is “freedom in gratitude: the wonder of worship ” (216).

Worship in gratitude leads people to be free from shame. Psalm 25 :6-7 reads as follows:

Remember, O LORD, your great mercy and love,
for they are from of old.
Remember not the sins of my youth
and my rebellious ways;
according to your love remember me,
for you are good, O LORD.

Acknowledgement of God’s goodness in mercy and love enables individuals to thank and worship God. When people realize and accept the grace of God’s forgiveness, they experience gratitude and freedom from the fear of exposure. “Hatred stands no chance in a heart that sings with innocent desire, humble sorrow, solid hope, and grateful praise to God’s goodness” (Allender and Longman 217). Shame brings self-hatred to a person, but thanksgiving expels the self-hatred.

Shame and Healing in Jesus’ Ministry

Jesus’ ministry basically centered on healing, and those healing stories accompany the healing of shame. For example, even when Jesus’ healing was about physical healing, shame healing accompanies it. John Dominic Crossan’s assertion gives an insight for interpreting Jesus’ miracles in the light of shame healing. Crossan accepts the concept of “illness” from Arthur Kleinman. According to Kleinman, the term *disease* should be differentiated from the term *illness*:

A key axiom in medical anthropology is the dichotomy between two aspects of sickness: disease and illness. *Disease* refers to a malfunctioning of biological and/or psychological processes, while the term *illness* refers to the psychosocial experience and meaning of perceived disease. Illness includes secondary personal and social responses to the primary malfunctioning (disease) in the individual’s physiological or psychological status. (72)

This differentiation gives a possibility for finding a psychological and social meaning of healing in Jesus' ministry. Relying on Kleinman's theory on the differentiation between disease and illness, Crossan argues that the original meaning of Jesus' healing miracles, like that of the leper, was about illness rather than disease. The central problem Jesus handled was "the personal and social stigma of uncleanness, isolation, and rejection ... by refusing to accept the disease's ritual uncleanness and social ostracization" (82).

If the honor/shame system of Jesus' times is considered, Crossan's assertion supports the insight that Jesus' healings—miracles—were about shame even though they were seemingly physical. According to Jerome H. Neyrey, Jesus focused on the marginalized people in the honor/shame system of his time:

Jesus' teachings were, in general, antithetical to the rigid honor/shame system by which people of his time were judged and measured. Jesus told parables about love and acceptance of shamed and defiled individuals, such as the prodigal son whose behavior in demanding and then dissipating his inheritance in dissolute living before his father's death, sleeping with pigs, etc., should have been heard by his listeners as completely beyond the pale (Luke 15:11-32). (*Honor and Shame in the Gospel of Matthew* 204-05)

As Neyrey states, Jesus was always surrounded by those people who were wounded by "being cut off from normal society" (Warrington 142), and Jesus healed them "to break down the walls of alienation that divided the community from its members on the margins" (Black 121). Thus, when they were healed, they could be accepted by the society, which was a restoration (Warrington 6). By being integrated into their own society, they could also recover their self-esteem at the same time.

In other words, Jesus' ministry included healing for the victims rather than condemnation for sinners:

Jesus used all his measures, including miracles, to heal the wounded from their suffering, oppression, and affliction. Contrary to our present theology that is basically engaged with sinners' sin and salvation, Jesus' teaching centered on comforting and healing the wounded and sinned-against. (Park, "Bible and Han" 54)

For a long time, Christianity has emphasized the importance of sin and forgiveness under the name of gospel. By this tendency, guilt has become the center of Christian doctrine, and shame has been neglected (Pattison 44). Christianity did not preach about healing the victims as much as Jesus did. As a result, even when sin and guilt occupy only a half portion of the whole gospel, victims of sin and the shame of those victims are not paid enough attention.

The objects of Jesus' healing ministry were mostly shamed people (McClintock, 142-44) who were unacceptable in their communities (McNish 164). One of the ministries for the healing of shame by accepting the outcast was eating together. Jesus ate with the outcasts who were in shame under the honor/shame social system. When the Pharisees and scribes gumbled over Jesus' accepting and eating with the tax collectors and sinners (Luke 15:2), Jesus did not care about the criticism. Rather, he continued eating with those outcast people. Jesus' eating was not only a way to satisfy physical need; it was also a symbol of solidarity. Robert F. Murphy says, "Commensality ... among most societies ... symbolize[s] the closing of distance and the establishment of solidarity bonds" (1267). Eating "is a physical activity transformed into a meal—a ceremonial occasion for communion" (Schneider 67). Jesus' eating was a means to heal the shamed by accepting people into a community of Christ.

An adulteress (John 8:1-20). In John 8, Jesus ministered to the woman who was taken out by the scribes and the Pharisees for her adultery. She "has been caught in

adultery, in the very act” (John 8: 4). She was in the plight of being caught in adultery to be stoned and used as an opportunity to attack Jesus:

Here the lawyers and Pharisees use shame as a weapon. They hope to trick Jesus into saying or doing something that will shame him. Their ploy depends, for its effectiveness, on the elevation of the lawyers and Pharisees at the expense of Jesus—and the woman. *She is double degraded* [emphasis mine]. Not only is she a publicly exposed adulteress, but she is only being used to get at Jesus. (Clapp 27-28)

In the middle of the crowd who were ready to stone the adulteress and attack Jesus, she was the person feeling ashamed.

Jesus told the crowd surrounding the woman, “He who is without sin among you, let him be the first to throw a stone at her” (John 8:7b, NASB). Karen A. McClintock expresses the healing moment: “Her shame is released by his comment” (142). The crowd could not stay in “the stoning circle” (Clapp 28) without feeling shame, “since no one can honorably claim to be free of sin” (28). Jesus acknowledged her sin by saying “sin no more” (John 8:11b), but he healed her shame by putting her sin on the same level as those who accused her and by defending the shamers’ attack successfully.

As the woman had been condemned enough to have deep shame, Jesus did not condemn. Jesus accepted her unconditionally in spite of her weakness:

Jesus helped her to see herself not from the perspective of society or of religious law, but from the eyes of Jesus, God. Jesus accepted her as she was. Jesus helped her to believe that it was not she but her action that was wrong and that she did not have to be what the society and tradition had said, i.e., condemned. No matter what she had done and what the society had told her, she was still precious and loved by Jesus Christ. (Shin-Lee 52)

To Jesus, even the apparent sinner should be healed from shame.

Peter (John 21:1-19). Peter was the person who overcame shame by receiving a chance to confess his love for Jesus (John 21). Before denying Jesus, Peter was very

confident in laying down his life for Jesus (John 13: 37), but Jesus already knew Peter was not as strong in faith as he swore (John 13 :38). As Jesus foretold, Peter denied Jesus Christ three times (John 18:17, 25, 27). Peter must have had shame in him, and shame blocked his spiritual relationship with Christ. In his shame, Peter went back to his old job of fishing with the other disciples. In fact, Peter was the first person who blurted out a plan to go back to the old job (John 21:3). He could not think of any plan other than going back to fishing as he did before. He had no hope for restoration.

In spite of Peter's betrayal, Jesus, after his resurrection, visited Peter. Jesus set the charcoal fire (John 21 :19), and it could have reminded Peter of the fire by which he denied Jesus three times (John 18: 18). According to Jay Woong Sho, Jesus intended to use this same setting to heal Peter's shameful memory:

Jesus intentionally set up the same stage as the night of Peter's denial. This is a significant setting because the three denials must be canceled by three affirmations. This special care method offers practical implications for the development of a contextualized biblical model for healing the inner person in the area of treating painful memories. (155)

With the intentional setting of fire, Jesus started healing Peter's shameful memory.

After eating with them, Jesus asked Peter three times the question, "Do you love me?" (John 21:15-17). Peter had to answer Jesus' triple questions three times. Peter's threefold confession probably overcame the threefold denial of Peter. Jesus did not request Peter to repent for what he did; rather, Jesus helped Peter restore his love by confessing three times. "The framework for questions was intended to reaffirm the first love that Peter had for Jesus The purpose of the repetition was to match his earlier triple denial" (Sho 155). The healing came through the confession of love toward Christ. Jesus accepted Peter's confession and gave him a mission: "Feed my sheep" (John 21:18).

Jesus defines Peter by giving him a mission; Peter is accepted. The experience of acceptance was the driving power for Peter to overcome shame and follow Jesus again.

Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-9). The story of Zacchaeus is considered to be that of a sinner's repentance before Jesus; however, this story is first about the healing of shame. Zacchaeus was the chief tax collector (Luke 19:2), and he was despised and ostracized from the community of the Jews. Because his job was "popularly understood as 'unclean'" (Malina and Neyrey 88), even though he was rich, he was in status an outsider (Moxnes 255).

However, Jesus treated Zacchaeus with honor. Jesus looked upward to see Zacchaeus in the tree and wanted to stay at Zacchaeus' home. Jesus' asking Zacchaeus to accept him meant that Jesus wanted to have communion with Zacchaeus. Jesus even called him by his name. "He recognises and honours Zacchaeus' distinct subjectivity and personhood, a fact denoted by the use of the man's name" (Pattison 308).

People around Jesus grumbled because they considered Zacchaeus an outsider and unclean. Nevertheless, Jesus did not point to his sin; rather, Jesus wanted to accept Zacchaeus by giving him an opportunity to accept Jesus. Literally, Zacchaeus accepted Jesus. In reality, Jesus accepted Zacchaeus by inviting him into his love, grace, communion, and the healing of shame.

Through Jesus' acceptance, Zacchaeus was healed. Even though he had plenty of money and food, people did not accept him. This rejection accumulated as *han* in Zacchaeus' life. When Zacchaeus met Jesus, he could see the others around him who were suffering. His eyes were opened to his brothers and sisters around him through the healing of *han* (Chung 36). He repented of his wrongdoings as a healed and accepted

person. Jesus confirmed the healing of shame in Zacchaeus following his repentance by declaring, “Salvation has come” and “this man is a son of Abraham” (Luke 19:9). The people of his nation did not accept Zacchaeus but considered him a target that had to be attacked for his wrongdoings, but when Zacchaeus declared his intention to fix his wrongdoings, Jesus restored his honor by announcing his salvation publicly.

The prodigal son (Luke 15:11-32). The prodigal son was a representative of shamed and ostracized people from the mainstream of the community in Jesus’ times. The story begins with a statement that the Pharisees and the scribes did not like Jesus eating with and accepting sinners and tax collectors. On the basis of the law system, sinners and tax collectors were in a position of shame and not supposed to be accepted by God. However, Jesus liked teaching them about the kingdom of God. Moreover, as an advocating activity in front of the Pharisees and the scribes, he told a story of a shamed prodigal son who represented the shamed sinners and tax collectors. Through this story, Jesus restored the worth of sinners and tax collectors. God’s grace was ministered to them in this healing story.

The story of the lost prodigal son is on the same line with the other two previous stories of the lost sheep and the lost coin. All three stories are aimed at the Pharisees and scribes who accused Jesus for his receiving and eating with sinners and tax collectors. Jesus answered them with these three stories. Therefore, the three stories are in a parable with the same theme of the validity of Jesus’ accepting the outcast. The fact that “the word *parable* in Luke 15:3 is a singular” (Bailey 60) also designates that the three stories are with the same theme in a parable.

When the son came back to the father's house with a shameful mind, the father accepted the son without reproaching him. The prodigal son could not expect the father's acceptance because losing his family inheritance to Gentiles was considered very shameful according to some writings reflecting the culture of Jesus' times. Kenneth E. Bailey explains about the culture:

The horror of that shame is reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls. *The Testament of Kohath* reads: And now, my sons, be watchful of your inheritance that has been bequeathed to you, which your fathers gave you. Do not give your inheritance to gentiles ... lest you be regarded as humiliated in their eyes, and foolish, and they trample upon you for they will come to dwell among you and become your masters. (102)

Hence, the prodigal son's wasting money in a Gentile land was a shameful deed.

The Jews also had "the *kezazah* ceremony" (Bailey 102) to punish any Jewish boy for losing his family inheritance to Gentiles. The ceremony demonstrated the cutting-off of the Jewish boy:

Fellow villagers would fill a large earthenware pot with burned nuts and burned corn and break it in front of the guilty individual. While doing this, they would shout, "So-and-so is cut off from his people." From that point on, the village would have nothing to do with the hapless lad. (102)

Therefore, the prodigal son was in the place of shame when he came back home after losing his money—inheritance from his father—among the Gentiles in a distant country (102). The son knew the culture and had to say to the father, "I am no longer worthy to be called your son" (Luke 19:21).

However, to the statement of the prodigal son, the father showed the son's worth by clothing him, putting a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet, and having a feast. Even though the Scripture does not record the father saying that the prodigal son is worthy, the father said enough in his attitude of acceptance. The father accepted the

prodigal son back as a beloved son in his family: “He displaces his son’s shame with the power of his loving presence.... Having displaced the son’s shame with the power of his love, the father clothes him with honor” (Comiskey 89). Even to the complaints of the older brother, the father talked of the returning son’s self-worth rather than his wrongdoings. Smedes shows that the center of this story is about the restoration of the returning son’s worth by reconstructing the father’s answer to the older son, in his words:

Ah, you are right, he does not deserve it. But if you only knew him as I know him, you would know he is worthy to be my son. That fellow he became for a while out in the far country was not his true self; it was a stranger, a false self. But now he has come back to find his true self. And that self is worthy to be my son. (122)

Jesus demonstrated God’s unconditional acceptance and love through the story of the father’s acceptance of the prodigal son.

Shame and the Cross

Jesus’ ministry was full of the healing of shame and finally reached its highlight on the cross. The cross is full of mysteries one cannot understand by reason. Jesus, on the cross, was not beautiful (Isa. 53:2-3). In spite of that, the cross has been the place of healing (Isa. 53:5). One can only understand those mysteries by faith. For this reason, the cross became “a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles” (1 Cor. 1:23).

Preachers help the congregation accept the cross, with its mystery to heal emotional wounds, shame. In order to be healed, people are to accept their responsibility to respond to the healing cross. Trusting and accepting the mysteries of the cross, they are called to bring their shame to the cross to get the healing benefit:

Ultimately, however, every Christian is responsible for his or her own maturity and freedom in Christ.... That’s your decision and daily responsibility.... You alone must initiate and follow through with that

process.... Thankfully, however,... the indwelling Christ is eagerly willing to walk with us each step of the way. (N. Anderson 18-19)

Healing comes when people open themselves to the cross. Their emotional hurts are to be brought to the cross to be healed. “He has called us to share in his sufferings, to take up our crosses, and in identification with him and through him to find our self-esteem and fulfillment” (Kraus, “Cross of Christ” 226).

The Cross: Trusting Relationship

Trusting relationship in the healing of shame can be found in God’s ultimate goal, which is restoration of relationship in love for people :

God is not ultimately interested in judgment which results in a perfect balance of retributive justice God’s ultimate goal is reconciliation, restoration of relationship, reintegration, and unification of the created order (John 3:16 -17; Eph. 1:9-10).... Salvation is a relationship to God. (Kraus, *Jesus Christ Our Lord* 167-68)

According to C. Norman Kraus, sin means, primarily, a broken relationship. In this broken relationship, people are alienated from God, “the very ground of our being” (166). In this case, sin is characterized as hostility, blindness, fear, and separation that inhibit people from recognizing God’s love. Consequently, God’s goal to overcome the power of sin results in restoration of relationship between God and people (166-68).

On the cross, God’s ultimate goal, restoration of trusting relationship, has been fulfilled. Ephesians 2:13-16 tells how Jesus’ death on the cross brought reconciliation:

But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.

In this passage are two kinds of reconciliation/restoration of trusting intimate relationship—through Jesus' sacrifice on the cross. The first reconciliation is between self and others. God made the two split parties one. The second is between human beings and God. God reconciled self and others to himself. Charles H. Kraft says, "The Scriptures, either by specific statement or by implication, present us with certain ideals concerning our relationships with God, self, and others" (63). The cross is the place where these two mysteries of intimate trusting relationship happen.

The restoration of broken relationship is also shown in Jesus' initiative revelation of his weaknesses on the shameful cross. On the cross, Jesus showed his humanity and vulnerability. In nakedness, Jesus was mocked, whipped, and spat upon. Through this shameful experience, Jesus showed his human weaknesses. Jesus' showing his vulnerability is a sign that he is not attacking any person of weakness. Rather, Jesus wants to meet those of weakness with an open mind. "Vulnerability presents a problem only when we cannot trust others. Then we fear they might take our vulnerability, our admission that we need others and depend on something outside ourselves, and use it against us" (Clapp 26). Adam and Eve's nakedness was a metaphor of a self-perception beyond physical exposure (R. Anderson 158). After Adam and Eve ate from the tree of knowledge, finding their vulnerability (26-27), they had to protect themselves from each other and from God by covering themselves.

Jesus' nakedness and suffering on the cross of shame broke the human instinct to protect selves from others. Jesus' revelation of his vulnerability is an invitation into an intimate relationship with the shamed who have a desire to hide their vulnerability. Through this *initial revelation*, Jesus invites the shamed to come to Jesus without

covering their weaknesses of life: physical condition, psychological sufferings, emotional hardships, family situation. When believers come to Jesus Christ with their weaknesses with open minds, Jesus can accept all the feelings of shame, resentment, rejection, and abandonment in them. If sin is “a reality signifying the broken relationship between God and humanity” (Jefford 1224), it cannot exert its power over God’s children anymore on the cross.

The Cross: Unconditional Acceptance

The cross represents God’s grace in unconditional acceptance:

The greatest manifestation of grace is the Cross, and the Cross means that when God *saw us at our worst* [original emphasis], He *loved us the most* [original emphasis]. So armed with the courage grace can bring, look squarely at the worst, the most painful, the most humiliating, the most abusive, and the most devastating put-downs of your life. (D. Seamands, *Healing Grace* 162)

Kraus also argues that the meaning of God’s unconditional love is its unchangeable quality and constancy:

It [God’s love] does not turn to hate or anger or apathy when the response is negative.... God’s love takes the initiative to approach not only friends from whom it may expect a loving response, but also to be reconciled to enemies, that is, those who have hostile feelings and ill intentions (Rom. 5:6-8). (*Jesus Christ Our Lord* 164-65)

The fact that God’s love is for everyone means that God’s love is unconditional.

God’s unconditional acceptance on the cross designates the value of human beings before God. God has accepted human beings not for what they have done. Rather, on the cross where Jesus was killed, God showed his love for sinners (Rom. 5:6, 8). The story of the cross teaches that human beings are not worthless “to be a child of God, a member of Christ and an heir of the kingdom of heaven” (Stott, *Cross of Christ* 284). Jesus died because they are valuable to God.

Through Jesus' death on the cross, he proved human beings are valuable. "The ultimate basis for our positive self-image must be God's acceptance of us in Christ" (Hoekema 102). Peter wrote about God's acceptance on the basis of the value of human beings: "Knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, but with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ" (1 Pet. 1:18-19). Human beings are valuable enough for Christ to bleed on the cross to save them (Hoekema 22).

Another meaning of God's unconditional acceptance is its inclusiveness toward human beings. No human weakness can be an obstacle to God's acceptance of human beings. No sinfulness can disturb God's acceptance in grace and love. No authorities over people can keep God from loving them:

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? ... For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, will be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Rom. 8:35, 38-39)

Jesus' cross is not only for people of honorable state but for all people, including shamed individuals who hardly believe they are accepted with their weaknesses.

I need a new relationship with myself as much as I need a new relationship with God. And this too begins on the cross

Our hearts melt with love for the sad, lonely, hurting person that had lived inside us and, like God, had endured our rejection for as long as we can remember We hear a helpless, human God say these liberating words: "Here I am, willing to be who I really am, but also who *you* [original emphasis] really are. Now, why don't *you* [original emphasis] be willing to be you? Why don't you allow *yourself* [original emphasis] to become fully human—to feel helpless and lost and bleeding, and *not ashamed* [original emphasis]? It's OK to feel the same compassion for your own deepest, truest self as God feels for that self. It's OK to be *you* [original emphasis]." (Frank 132)

Therefore, God's unconditional acceptance on the cross enables self-acceptance.

Finally, God proved his unconditional acceptance in forgiveness of sinners. On the cross of Jesus, God resolved the problem of sin. Therefore, all sinners who come to the cross trust God's love and confess their sinful nature to be forgiven. Confession of sin is not only for those who have obviously offended others because victims can also be offenders. The wounded people possibly hold onto resentment and kill others invisibly. People are sometimes victims and sinners at the same time (S. Seamands 21). Kraft says, "Though it is no sin to be sinned against, the reaction to such abuse may easily become sin" (51). Longtime hurts accompany deeper enmity and resentment, which finally destroy relationship and physical health. Unresolved deep emotional hurt abiding in a person does harm to him or her by changing him or her into an offender. Therefore, many victims might need to repent of their wrongdoings before God. This repentance is a sign of taking responsibility about the wrong ideas the victims have had relating to their hurts (D. Seamands, *Healing for Damaged Emotions* 21). Jesus' cross is the place where forgiveness happens.

Forgiveness eliminates the need for hiding and concealment because it overcomes the fear of rejection in the shamed. For shame-prone people, forgiveness is not an issue about sin itself but about the value of them. For that reason, they cannot accept God's forgiveness and keep punishing themselves. God's unconditional acceptance in forgiveness breaks the lie.

God's forgiving people encourages them to respect themselves by forgiving themselves. They are comfortable in forgiving themselves because Jesus Christ already forgave them on the cross. Many times, their hurts offend themselves and drive them into

shame as a victim. Then they need to forgive themselves for having offended themselves and receive the truth of God's acceptance in love.

The Cross: Christ's Identification with People

On the cross, Jesus Christ showed his love for people in identification with them.

The cross as a shame experience. On the cross, Jesus identified himself with the shamed through the experience of shame. The cross was not just Jesus' experience, but Jesus' solidarity with the shamed in love of God:

This love of God expressed itself through his solidarity with us in Jesus and especially through his shameful death on the cross. Jesus identified with the "poor." He was born and raised among the lower classes, associated with outcasts, and chose artisans, fisher folk, and tax collectors for his disciples. He belonged to the multitudes whom the religious leaders pronounced "accused because they know not the law" (John 7: 49). He identified with the socially excluded and despised and shared the stigma of their inferiority. The cross is the epitome of this identification with us in shame. (Kraus, *Jesus Christ Our Lord* 217)

The cross is a "word of liberation" through God's "incarnational identification" in Christ with the shamed. The identification is the good news proclaimed on the cross (Albers 105).

Jesus' cross was the place where he experienced shame. Josephus asserts that the cross was "the most pitiable of deaths" (qtd. in Green and Baker 26). In fact, the cross execution was about disgrace more than cruelty: "According to the conventions of first-century Jewish and Roman society, the suffering Jesus experienced on the cross was less about physical pain and more about degradation, rejection and humiliation" (26).

Compared to the other punishments, the cross execution "also stripped honor and dignity.... It was a method of brutal disgrace" (Altrock 27). In this way, the cross became a sign of public contempt in the ancient world (1 Cor. 1:23).

The cross was, in the first place, a sign of shame because of its appearance:

The victim dies naked, in bloody sweat, helpless to control body excretions or to brush away the swarming flies. Thus exposed to the jeering crowd, the criminal dies a spectacle of disgrace. By Roman law no citizen could be so dishonorably executed. The cross was reserved for foreigners and slaves. (Kraus, *Jesus Christ Our Lord* 216)

Therefore, what really made the execution of the cross cruel was shame put on the executed because of “the pain of public exposure, derision, ridicule, contempt, and mockery” (Albers 103). When a criminal carried his cross, he did so on the streets publicly. Clearly, public execution on the cross added shame to a criminal (Tennent 90).

Another reason crucifixion was disgraceful was abandonment of the body. Crossan traces the disgrace of the crucifixion in the “carrion crow and scavenger dog” (127). The body was left on the cross without burial to be prey for the wild beasts. For this reason the crucified bodies around Jerusalem are hardly found today (124-27). The cross was a symbol of shame because the body on the cross was not claimed but abandoned.

Albers further finds Jesus’ shame experience in the story of passion. The cross was a shameful experience as a heightened epitome of Jesus’ passion which was full of shame. When Judas betrayed Jesus and the other disciples ran away at the moment of Jesus’ arrest, Jesus experienced shame. In the court of Herod and Pilate, Jesus endured “false accusations and indictment” (104). When people mocked him, dressing him up in purple, putting a crown of thorns on him, beating his head with a reed, and spitting on him, he went to the lowest place of shame as God’s son. “Carrying his own cross and being crucified ‘outside the city walls’ (Heb. 13:13), coupled with the public exposure of his pain, which is heightened by derision, mockery, total humiliation, are all designed to

intensify the sense of shame” (Albers 104). The preceding story of Jesus’ passion is summarized on the cross.

Fourth, theologically speaking, Jesus’ cross was a shame experience when he was crucified as a sinner “separated and judged by God” (91). His death on the cross means that he bore the shame of the sinners on the cross. Jesus did bear not only guilt but also the shame of the sinner, “the public shame of being disgraced before the world as those who are under God’s curse” (Tennent 91).

Finally, the cross was a shameful experience for Jesus as a victim of an unfair action. Relating to *han*, a source of shame, Park interprets Jesus’ cross as a shameful and unfair experience. According to Park, Jesus already knew human hurts in his body and emotions when he was crucified by the Roman government:

The shame of Jesus’ crucifixion is the symbol of victims’ shame and the pain of humiliation. Victims of violence are often mistreated, jeered at, scapegoated, distanced and blamed for their victimization. Jesus’ crucifixion represents the inexpressible *han* of innocent victims, undergoing all these unjust treatments—the shame of double victimization. (*From Hurt to Healing* 39)

The cross was unfair treatment for Jesus. This unfair and ignominious situation is the same as that of all *han*-ridden victims.

Vicarious cry on the cross. Jesus cried, “Why have you forsaken me?” (Matt. 27:46; Mark 15:34). This cry is not based on logic or reason; rather, it is a cry of the emotional wound of shame. In other words, it is a cry for help from God for the healing of shame. Jesus’ ministry and being were always based on God’s love for him: “Certainly Jesus’ ability to handle rejection in his early life and in his ministry were grounded largely in his fundamental belief that there was nothing that could separate him from God’s love” (Wimberly 52). Therefore, Jesus’ cry could not be interpreted as a factual

relationship between God and Jesus. Rather, Jesus' cry does indicate Jesus' lament for the healing of shame, not the broken relationship between him and the Father God.

In fact, Jesus cried out the lament as one being together with the victims of sin. In other words, Jesus' death was that of a victim:

He was killed, publicly executed as a felon. The doctrines he taught were felt to be dangerous, even subversive.... The Jewish leaders were incensed by his disrespectful attitude to the law and by his provocative claims, while the Romans heard that he was proclaiming himself King of the Jews, and so challenging the authority of Caesar. To both groups Jesus appeared to be a revolutionary thinker and preacher. ... So profoundly did he disturb the *status quo* that they determined to do away with him. Ostensibly he died as a law-breaker, but in reality as the victim of small minds. (Stott, *Cross of Christ* 47; see also 29)

In this way, Jesus' cry represents the shame of the victims who are desperate for God's help. Jesus' shouted lament was the victim's crying to God through his *vicarious* death on the cross.

In the center of emotional healing lies Jesus' understanding of people's weaknesses by his being together with the weak people on the cross. "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are?yet was without sin" (Heb. 4:15, NIV). "For the wounded, Jesus' crucifixion signifies God's woundedness with them To the oppressed, it shows God's solidarity with their suffering" (Park, *From Hurt to Healing* 127). The wounded people are connected to God's love in Jesus' solidarity with them:

Thus we can say that Jesus both shared our shame and has borne the shame for all who through his disclosure of God's holy love find freedom from its dread and power. His identification and suffering with us as the truly pure and honorable one has potentially released all humankind from the authority of false standards of value which cause hostility and dehumanization. (Kraus, *Jesus Christ Our Lord* 222)

Through the connection, the wounded people experience salvation, which transforms them in healing.

Despising shame. Jesus' crucifixion reveals the injustice of the shamers who nailed him on the cross:

From a victim's perspective, Jesus was killed by injustice of his time.... His death was not a natural one, but a hand-filled one that found voice in his outcry, "My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?" He worked for the arrival of God's kingdom and was murdered by the unjust powers for doing so. His death signifies his solidarity with the victims of injustice, oppression, abuse of power, and violence.... However, Jesus chose to face crucifixion because he trusted in God's ability to fulfill his mission even through death, and wanted to confront the power of injustice and evil with justice and truth. (Park, *From Hurt to Healing* 117)

Through revealing their injustice, Jesus also shamed the shamers. By his bearing shame, he exposed the shame of the true nature of those who tried to shame him. S. Seamands summarizes the process of exposure: "By crucifying him, their true nature was exposed, made public for all to see. They were *not* [original emphasis] God's agents as they claimed, but God's adversaries, agents of false gods, of the principalities and powers" (52). In this way, Jesus overcame shame put upon him.

Seemingly, Jesus was possessed by the authorities but he won the victory over evil's shaming power. Jesus did not avoid the shaming place of the cross. Jesus rather obeyed God by enduring shame on the cross:

He also triumphed over the power of evil, winning a great victory by refusing to disobey God, hate his enemies or resort to violence. He overcame ... through the power of suffering love. He chose the way of forgiveness, not retaliation; meekness, not self-assertion. As Peter says, "When he was abused, he did not return abuse; when he suffered, he did not threaten" (1 Peter 2:23). He took everything the powers of evil could throw at him yet remained free, uncontaminated, uncompromised. The devil could gain no hold on him and therefore had to concede defeat. (S. Seamands 86)

When the evil power tried to taunt Jesus with the threat of shame, “Jesus did not turn to another god to find relief or strength; therefore, Jesus did not fear shame” (Allender and Longman 211). Jesus did not surrender to the false power to get help but shamed the evil power as written in Hebrews: “fixing our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of faith, who for the joy set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God” (Heb. 12:2, NASB). As Jesus endured shame on the cross voluntarily, there happened the “great reversal” (Tennent 88). Paul declares the “great reversal” as the following: “When He had disarmed the rulers and authorities, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him” (Col. 2:15).

The cross as a present event. The truth that Jesus’ crucifixion represented human shame is still true as a present case for humanity now. The mystery of the cross event transcends physical space and time. For this reason, Paul did not leave Jesus’ crucifixion as a past event. He thought of Jesus’ cross also as a present event in which believers put their lives on the cross. “I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:22, NIV; see also Rom. 6:3-11). Stott applies Paul’s testimony on the cross to preaching the cross:

Jesus Christ had been crucified at least fifteen years before Paul was writing, and in our case nearly two millennia ago. What Paul did by his preaching ... was to bring that event out of the past into the present. The ministry of both word and sacrament ... can overcome the time barrier and make past events present realities in such a way that people have to respond to the message. Paul’s preaching brought it before their [Paul’s readers] eyes so that they could see it, and into their existential experience so that they must either accept or reject it. (*Cross of Christ* 343-44)

The event of the cross becomes a present event all the time, not as a memorial or symbol but as a real event.

If Jesus' cross is a present event, people's present shame is also on that cross and the same for tomorrow's shame. Christ's identification with people is on the cross where their hurts are cared for by God's love. The cross takes over their shame through the mystery of Jesus' being united with them on it. Jesus' cross event transcends space and time to work for them as a present mystery. "His presence is an abiding witness of his desire to exchange our debilitating shame for his honor" (Comiskey 89). Jesus takes their shame on the cross so that they will not need to carry the burden of shame any more.

That event of the cross can be either a stumbling block or healing power (1 Cor. 1:23-24). The healing power is experienced for "all who care to believe. Through his [Jesus'] identification and participation with us, he can overcome the self-exposure, the feeling of self-loathing bound up with shame" (S. Seamands 51). Therefore, anyone who wants healing for shame needs to come to the cross to put his or her shame on the cross.

The Cross: Believers' Identification with Christ

Christ's identification with humanity is an invitation to identification with Christ. Christians are transformed by the experience of meeting Christ on the cross. Paul's confession shows the transformation to a new life of identification with Christ. Relating to the cross, Paul's conception of his identity was his identification with Christ on the cross. He confessed, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself up for me" (Gal. 2:20a). He realized that his identity is not based on his past self, but on his new and true self in Christ (Stott, *Cross of Christ* 341-42). He identified his true self with Christ on the cross. His true self encouraged him to live a new life in Christ. This new identity through identification with

Christ is a benefit that believers can get from the cross. Through the cross, the center has changed from “I” to “Christ” (Penn-Lewis 23-34). God’s children are not to live for themselves any more but for Christ (2 Cor. 5:15; 1 Cor. 15:31).

The mystery of Jesus’ death on the cross is always connected to the mystery of his resurrection. Then God’s children also are dead and alive with Christ. “If we have been united with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection” (Rom. 6:5). “God makes the believer glory-filled once again by removing shame through identification with Christ on the cross and in the resurrection” (Cason 145). Therefore, believers are alive in identification with Christ who resurrected.

Jesus accepted the shameful death on the cross, but he also “despised the shame” (Heb. 12:2; Kraus, *Jesus Christ Our Lord* 222). Jesus’ passion story shows that he was not overwhelmed and conquered by shame when he voluntarily bore shame. He never lost real honor:

Jesus stands up and exhibits control of the situation, giving directions to the Roman soldiers (John 18: 8), acknowledging that this arrest took place to fulfill Scripture (Matt. 26:54, 56), healing the man’s ear (Luke 22:51), and even causing the soldiers to draw back and fall to the ground while Jesus remained standing (John 18: 5). (Tennent 89)

The shame that he suffered never destroyed him; rather, it was overcome by his vicarious death and resurrection through which Jesus despised shame and people are to live in the hope of resurrection in taking his death (Cason 227). Those people live in the true self-esteem and self-image:

He has called us to share in his sufferings, to take up our crosses, and in identification with him and through him to find our true self-esteem and fulfillment. He has called us not only to be reconciled with God but with other people, finding our true unity in the new self-image which we have in him. (222)

Through being united with Jesus, God's children experience Jesus' victory over shame.

Emotional healing of shame generates a new life through change of the past and a new healthy relationship with God and others. Kraus suggests three positive changes in solidarity with Christ: taking the "attitude of Christ," "adoption of his lifestyle," and "participation in his mission" (*Jesus Christ Our Lord* 239). First, through the act of repentance, believers adopt the attitude of Christ, being united with Christ. "Repentance is a change of attitude in response to the offer of forgiveness" (239). It is also participation in Jesus' "death, burial, and resurrection to new life (Rom. 6: 3ff.)" (239). Second, being in Christ, God's children take on a new lifestyle. The phrase "in Christ" contains a new life of a new order (2 Cor. 5:17) based on the new relationship with others as a member of "the body of Christ." Third, solidarity with Christ means participation in his mission. Jesus was a "pioneer" by "opening the way for others to follow" (239-45).

The author of this study expands the meaning of "participation in the mission of Christ" toward two kinds of participation. One of the participations is *the life of a healer*. After being forgiven, the healed are asked to forgive others in order to live a life of new relationship. Jesus himself was a wounded victim, but he overcame victimization to become a healer. Park says, "The han-ridden can use their own han as the channel of God's healing stream to flow into the healing of others' han. Jesus is the ultimate wounded healer. Through his own woundedness, he heals the wounded" (*From Hurt to Healing* 132). Then, disciples of Jesus are to follow him and be healers through overcoming their shame and *han*. To be healers is God's blessing for those who were healed in identification with Christ on the cross. A prayer of St. Theresa of Avila reminds them of their responsibility to be healers like Christ:

Christ has
 No body now on earth but y ours;
 No hands but yours;
 No feet but yo urs;
 Yours are the eyes
 Through which is to look out
 Christ's compassion to the world;
 Yours are the feet with which he is to go about
 Doing good;
 Yours are the hands
 With which he is to b less now.
 (qtd. in Job and Sawch uck 22-23)

The life of the healer is the life of reconciliation between peo ple and people and between people and God. Likewise, as Jesus was the bridge for reconcili ation between God and people, they are to l ive in the ministry of reconcili ation. "Now all these things are from God, who reco nciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation" (2 Cor. 5:18).

The other part icipation is *forgiving others* following Jesus' forgiveness. On the cross, the place of shame, Jesus C hrist prayed the words of forgiveness: "Father, forg ive them; for they do not know what they are doing" (Luke 23:34a). Identified with Christ, God's children are c alled to forg ive those who shame d them, as Jesus did. But the forgiveness is not based on d uty. It comes fro m Christ's lovely invitation to God's ministry, which is a sign of their value: They are valuable enough to b e called for God's ministry of love as Chr ist's hands. "We know love by this, that He laid down His l ife for us; and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren" (1 John 3:16). By forgiving others, peo ple practice laying down their lives as Chr ist did in love on the cross:

For most people, shame is an enemy. For God's people, it becomes a friend that exp oses our idolatry, draws us to the wonder of the Cross, and serves as a weapon to mock evil. A friendship with shame enables us to surprise the world w ith love. It also frees us to love one another with the love of God. (Allender and Longman 219)

Following Jesus, people also share his shame (Heb. 13:12-13). By sharing Jesus' shame voluntarily, they shame the shame like Jesus did.

Preaching and Healing

Preachers are not like Jesus in healing, in that they need to be empowered by Jesus Christ as the disciples who were sent to the villages to preach and heal (Matt. 10:5-8; Mark 6:7-13; Luke 9:1-6). Preachers can be the healers through preaching Jesus' healing, which reached its highlight on the cross.

Preaching as Purposeful Ministry for Transformation

Preaching is a purposeful ministry. Relating to this aspect, Johnson T. K. Lim says, "Our problem is that we do not expect anything to happen. If nothing happens after our preaching, something must be amiss" (22). Preachers are supposed to have in mind a purpose to fulfill when they preach. Martin Lloyd-Jones asks preachers the following question:

Do you expect anything to happen when you get up to preach in a pulpit?... Are you expecting it to be the turning point in someone's life? Are you expecting anyone to have a climactic experience? That is what preaching is meant to do. (325)

Preachers need to expect something to happen among congregations through their preaching.

Preaching is said to be a purposeful ministry, expecting something to happen and bringing transformation into congregations' lives. God's word, which represents God, intrudes into their lives to transform their beings through preaching because God wants to restore the distorted things in his children back to their original state as created in the Garden of Eden. Lim agrees that preaching should bring transformation :

Preaching is the human communication of the Written Word Through the Spoken Word to transform lives by the power of the Holy Spirit. Preaching is the human proclamation of the Living Word based on the Written Word through the Spoken Word to effect changes in the listeners by the power of the Holy Spirit. (14)

Preaching aims at transformation through God's word with the help of the Holy Spirit.

Peter's preaching is an example that shows how preaching can effect changes in the listeners. After Peter experienced the unction of the Holy Spirit, he got up to preach and finally closed his sermon by saying, "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). The people were pierced by this word and asked Peter and the disciples, "Brothers, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37b). Peter's preaching enabled the Jews to experience God through listening to his word. In that experience, the Jews found their faults and wanted to be restored to what God wanted them to be. This reaction was a starting point of transformation, and their transformed life was written right after their response (Acts 2:41-47). Preachers should purpose to see change spiritually, cognitively, affectively, and behaviorally.

Specific Goals in Healing Preaching

If preaching is a purposeful ministry, healing preaching has several specific goals.

God's healing. In the first place, preachers expect God to work for healing of the wounds people bring. Preachers are to believe God heals congregations through preaching on healing. Through the proclamation of God's word, God works for the people who have wounds. Donald E. Demaray introduces an example of God's healing through preaching. In the church where Lloyd-Jones preached, a person who had a paralyzing fear had attended. Finally, this person was healed listening to God's word

repeatedly. Introducing this case to advise preachers to preach consistently, Demaray says, “Dr. Lloyd-Jones believed hearing the truth of the gospel released her from the fear that bound her. Exactly! Consistent preaching of the Bible exposes people to the truth that can free them” (53).

Preparing people to be healed. Another function of preaching for healing is to prepare people to be healed in other ministries. The congregation needs diverse ways to be healed from their emotional hurts. Preaching does not work for healing alone because healing is a process. Park says, “Healing is an ongoing process, transpiring gradually under the guidance of the Holy Spirit” (*From Hurt to Healing* 131). Sometimes healing of a hurt takes time through counseling and prayer. At other times, new hurts come to the congregation even after being healed through preaching. A congregation has to have time to meet God more deeply, to get healed in prayer, reading the Bible and meditating on God. Listening to preaching is more passive and less voluntary than prayer ministry and people sometimes need to come to God more actively and voluntarily in the spiritual area through other spiritual practices. Preaching is not the only method for God to heal the wounded. God also works for healing through prayer ministry, counseling ministry, small group ministry, visiting ministry, and so on. Preaching can be a means for healing, but many times it has to be followed by other means.

Preaching helps the congregation to recognize a need and the possibility of being healed by God. Preachers awaken congregations to understand the need to pray or to be counseled for their healing. In many cases, Christians live unsatisfactorily, not knowing their need to let God heal their hurts. Some of them do not even know what their problems are until they listen to God’s word about their problems. Preaching can help

them see their hurts and a need to go to the Lord honestly with their broken minds. In this way, preaching lays the foundation for a deeper healing ministry.

Preaching is often used as a means to open the hearts of the congregation to God. Then, a deeper relationship with God through other ministries needs to follow in order to bring healing full circle. Preachers can care for the wounded by referring them to professional counselors. Also, they can be involved in prayer ministry for healing.

Encouraging faith in the congregation. The third function of preaching healing is to encourage faith in the congregation. Warrington says that faith is “trust,” which is the opposite of “mistrust” (18). Faith is not a condition for making God heal people, but a right attitude in trusting and accepting God’s grace and love for them. In other words, faith is submission, permitting God to work. Manipulating God to heal is a distorted concept of faith (Warrington 17).

However, faith is not passive but active acceptance of God’s grace and power and trust in God:

[Faith is] an active trust that overcomes obstacles in order to reach Jesus; it is a faith that expresses a desire or even a determination to be healed; it is a faith that finds expression in prayer and suppliant petition.... Those who approach him must have faith in his power to heal. (Latourelle 245)

Through preaching, preachers aim to encourage an active faith to accept God’s grace and power by trusting God’s healing works.

Shame and Preaching

Compared to the counseling setting, preaching has limitations while talking about shame. Preachers are not expected to teach psychological concepts about shame as much as counselors do in counseling sessions. Because of the limitedness, preachers have difficulty conveying the concept of shame in order for the congregation to look into

themselves to find their own shame. In a sense, counseling language is more direct and specific than preaching language related to the healing of shame. Preaching is a religious action done for people who come to experience God. In other words, the congregation sitting in the pew wants to hear religious language that reveals more about God than in a counseling setting. Preaching aims to transform persons through religious language.

McNish points to this characteristic, explaining how preachers can adapt the insights from depth psychology in their ministry:

Nor should one preach the gospel in the explicit terms of depth psychology.... People who come to church to participate in worship services, and those who come for pastoral care and counseling, expect their ministers to have theological insight and to speak the language of the Christian faith tradition. For a minister to habitually use the explicit language of depth psychology in ecclesiastical settings is not particularly helpful. It tends to elicit dazed looks at best and hostility at worst. Most people are not conversant in this language and may feel that a minister who uses it is deliberately obfuscating matters. (63-64)

Consequently, preaching does not seem to have enough linguistic resources for the healing of shame.

However, this seeming limitedness can be a strong point of preaching. The religious language is the very method that enables the congregation to get into God's transforming power more than in counseling sessions. Congregations sitting to hear the sermon are supposed to hear God's voice if the content of the sermon is intimately related to their life. Chung argues that the church attendants usually do not want to hear psychological answers to their troubles. They really want to hear the answers from the Bible, God's words (169). If the congregations come to hear God's words, many of them shall be ready to acknowledge the authority of God. Congregations would expect God's voice, which has greater authority than the voices of counselors. Therefore, for preachers

who believe in God's working power through preaching, the pulpit is the place where they can challenge the shame of the congregation, relying on God's words.

Through preaching, preachers help congregations expose their shame to God and themselves. Even though preachers usually do not use psychological terms as much as counselors do, God's words conveyed in preaching reveal their state of emotional and spiritual health. When God's authoritative words intrude into the congregation, they can see their present state and hunger for God's salvation. In this process the shamed start overcoming the fear of exposure, which is "at the heart of neurotic shame" (Bradshaw 14) because "the healing of the shame that binds" shame-prone people is "a revelatory experience" (237). Bradshaw says, "Because your shame exists at the very core of your being, when you embrace your shame, you begin to discover who you really are" (237). In other words, shame-prone people begin to recognize and acknowledge their hidden shame. Through those recognition and acknowledgement they have a greater freedom to be vulnerable and therefore they open themselves up more to God's grace in healing. This process is an exposure of their own shame to God and finally to themselves. Preaching, then, turns the eyes of the congregation to God's presence and working then enables them to see themselves in the light of God's presence and working. Finally, the people of the congregation find God's grace and acceptance to accept themselves as valued.

Shame-Motivating Messages

A problem on the side of preachers. When religion does not contain grace, it turns into the "the sources of our false self" (Smedes 38-39) of which shame is a type. About the possibility for a shame-motivating message, Karen A. McClintock says, "A

word from the pulpit ... serve[s] as governing scenes for shame in Christian individuals and families" (26). The most usual case is that preachers emphasize punishment, rejection, and self-worthlessness rather than God's love for people and their preciousness to God. S. Bruce Narramore points out that the ministry of church leaders "endeavoring to stir men to more effective living" results in negatives: "punishment, rejection and lowered self-esteem" (182). He argues that the wrong emphasis can cause Christians to be nervous and unsure of themselves (182-89). Then he introduces an assertion from Albert Ellis about the negative threats. "Religion, by positing absolute, God-given standards of conduct, tends to make you feel self-depreciating and dehumanized when you err; and also encourages you to despise and dehumanize others when they act unethically." In this way, a biased emphasis on the negative side of humanity can aggravate shame among congregation.

Thus, the problems reflect the wrong way of preaching God's grace and forgiveness, and the lack of a message of God's grace and forgiveness. Acknowledging the possibility of the negative effects of threatening messages, Narramore calls that type "guilt-motivated Christianity" (183). Even though he uses "guilt motivation" instead of "shame motivation" for the wrong emphasis, the content of his arguing is correspondingly about shame-motivating messages (182-89). The message of the wrong emphasis is that God does not accept people until they become good enough. Emphasizing God's punishment more than God's unconditional love is like asking people to be perfect. Perfection is not attainable for anybody in this world; rather, it motivates more shameful feelings of unworthiness and rejection in congregations. The following example shows how wrong emphasis can affect people negatively:

I thought the church was supposed to help people. But sometimes all I remember are the endless messages that I was bad and would go to hell. The punishments and humiliations of the religious school I went to convinced me that if so many others thought I'd turn out bad, then I probably was bad. I still have trouble with that. Some days I feel worse than guilty—like I don't really belong on this earth. I feel unclean deep inside myself. (Potter-Efron and Potter-Efron 97-98)

The negative effects of threatening messages can devastate people.

Smedes' experience shows how the message of being good enough — perfectionism—can generate shame in the congregation. On the basis of his experience of shame-fed messages, Smedes picks two messages that reinforce the shame of the congregation before they accept God's grace as good (77-81). The two voices represent the message of perfectionism, which is graceless and requests people to be perfect in order to be accepted.

First, the voice of duty feeds shame. The message is that God asks people to be perfect before they can be acceptable to him. The message makes a person feel a duty to be perfect as God is perfect. When Smedes felt this duty, he had to feel shame because he knew he could not be perfect as God is, however hard he tried. Even after declaring his born-again experience, he felt shame more than before. People around him seemed to expect him to be perfect after being born again.

The second is the voice of failure. This message says that a human being is totally unacceptable because of being flawed. Smedes was in despair for his failures, and the feeling of despair resulted in shame for his being a hypocrite. Further, due to the wrong voices, he could not receive the good news of God's grace. God's grace works rather as a reinforcing message for his shame (77-80). "When grace comes to us graciously, it heals. When grace is offered ungraciously, it shames" (119). A voice of shaming is "ungracious

grace” (119). A preached grace can be a message not of healing but of shaming, when grace is given not for people’s being worthy but in spite of their unworthiness.

If a preacher is to preach to resolve the shame problem in the congregation, he or she must stop preaching perfectionism. Perfectionism is against the gospel of atonement because justification is not based on what people did but on their faith in God’s grace, which is manifested in Christ’s cross:

Nevertheless knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, so that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the Law; since by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified (Gal. 2:16)

However, some preachers may abuse the gospel of grace by inculcating the congregation with the fear of punishment to an undue extent and finally by underemphasizing the value of Christians as God’s children. According to Joe D. Elenbaas, fear is “one of the most effective deterrents to grace and a grace-oriented life” (54). Fear prohibits people serving God in a happy mode:

When fear motivates us, tremendous energy is expended in a defensive fashion to avoid the object feared, and personal creativity, joy and fruitfulness are difficult to achieve. When we are serving God out of fear, the Christian life becomes a series of duties to perform in order to avoid punishment.... When fear is used to motivate people, especially sensitive children, in the name of God, it is a grave mistake and constitutes one of the biggest dangers and difficult obstacles that young people have to overcome in order to live happy, fruitful, adult Christian lives. Fear can run deep in a person’s life and nip incessantly at one’s heels. (Sloat 112)

Through this process, fear tends to keep people from experiencing unconditional grace.

When fear is embedded in Christians as a motivation to live up to God’s righteousness, they can easily become victims of perfectionism under the title of Christianity.

A message of perfectionism is made when preachers emphasize what congregations need to do more than who they are to God. When they focus on what they need to do more than their value before God, they will lose God's grace:

Graceless religion tells us that, to be acceptable, we must live up to the customs and shun the taboos of its tradition. It shames us when we do what it forbids and do not do what it requires. Our religion-shaped self easily becomes a self of hypocrisy and appearances.... Graceless religion creates the illusion that if we only follow the letter of the rules, we will be acceptable, and that if we fail we will be rejected and despised. (Smedes 39)

McClintock argues that classical Christian theology follows that line. She claims that perfectionism teaches people to be worthless, to get close to salvation by giving a message "that we must first acknowledge that we are sinners and then take a step toward salvation" (116). However, this theory has a problem that "once people feel themselves unworthy, change is a slow and difficult process" (117).

A problem on the side of the shamed. Another case of shame-motivating messages is that the shamed do not hear the messages as others do. According to Elisabeth A. Horst, the same words can be heard differently due to different situations. For example, repeating the words of confession of sin may bring the message of forgiveness, worthiness as a child of God to some people, and finally the grace of God to some people. However, the same repeated words of confession may call up the shame:

The person sitting next to her [who experienced God's grace] in the pew may instead experience the practice of confession as an opportunity to call up and sit in her own shame. Repeating the very same words, this person will end the prayer feeling more aware of unworthiness, more conscious of her faults and failings, more convinced that she can do no better no matter how hard she tries. She may even add an extra twist and tell herself how bad she is for not being able to experience the forgiveness that confession is supposed to produce. Everything is her own fault and she must never forget it. (33)

Even in this case, church cannot be exempt from balancing the messages between the confession of sin and confession of shame, even if the church might not be blamed for the hurting and shame motivation instance. If the church does not balance between the two confessions, the message preached in the pulpit will be motivating shame without resolving it through a theologically biased message.

Shame-Resolving Messages

Due to the fact that shame focuses on the self more than on deeds, the shame-resolving messages need to be made relevant to the self.

The grace of God's acceptance. Smedes contends that the grace of acceptance is the answer to shame because the fear of being unacceptable lies at the core of shame. He argues that grace teaches the lesson that people are acceptable. "Grace is the beginning of our healing because it offers the one thing we need most: to be accepted without regard to whether we are acceptable. Grace stands for gift; it is the gift of being accepted before we become acceptable" (108). Further, Smedes says, "[T]he surest cure for the feeling of being an unacceptable person is the discovery that we are accepted by the grace of One whose acceptance of us matters most" (108). Albers agrees with the opinion that grace is the right message for shame-prone people. "God's unilateral declaration of grace is one of acceptability and love. If this message can be translated experientially in the lives of shame-based people, release and newness of life can result" (100). God's grace of acceptance resolves shame.

The message of acceptance is that love "experienced as unconditional acceptance empowers the self" (R. Anderson 218). God's unconditional acceptance of oneself is based on the value of the one when shame is a negative evaluation of the self. For the

people who think they are not worthy of God's grace because they do not deserve God's grace, Smedes differentiates being deserving and being worthy. Being deserving of a good thing is because "I *did* [original emphasis] something to earn it." But being worthy is because "I *am* [original emphasis] somebody of enormous value" (120). Therefore, "being worthy" of God's grace is not based on what a person did; rather, it is related to the value of a human being to God. People do not deserve God's grace because of what they did, but they are worthy of God's grace because they are valuable selves to God.

The shamed are those who have experienced rejection. They feel unaccepted by themselves and others (Morrison 314-15). For those who fear being rejected, accepting grace is a signal that they do not have to be somebody good or capable enough to be accepted. Because God's accepting grace is an unconditional acceptance of the whole self, the grace of unconditional acceptance is good news for the people who are tired of struggling to be worthy and acceptable (Smedes 108-09). According to Paul J. Tillich, the phrase "justification by faith" is not the right formula in Christianity because it gets people confused in understanding the cause of justification. Tillich argues that the cause of justification is not faith but grace. When faith is considered the cause of justification, faith is not grace but "the intellectual work of accepting a doctrine" replaced for "the moral and ritual works of Catholic teaching" (224). The term "justification" also should be rightly understood as "'acceptance', in the sense that we are accepted by God although being unacceptable according to the criteria of the law" (224-25). Shortly speaking, God's grace of acceptance takes the precedence of human works. Albers confirms Tillich's statement for shame-based people: "The shame-based person requires an experiential encounter with grace as unconditional acceptance. Accept that you are

accepted is Tillich's succinct summary of the gospel message of God's grace, and this epitomizes the need of the shame-based person" (97).

According to the author of Hebrews, God's grace is experienced when people are weak:

For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but One who has been tempted in all things as we are, yet without sin. Therefore let us draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need. (Heb. 4:15-16)

When people experience the grace of unconditional acceptance, they do not suffer from their imperfection or others' criticism as much as before. For them, imperfection is rather a reason to be thankful for the unlimited potential of God's grace. Confronting their critics, they still can enjoy freedom from addiction to the approval of others (Smedes 156).

Self-acceptance. Under the shame influence, the self is a victim and an abuser at the same time. Robert Karen points to the self-disruptive character of shame as a punishment: "It is the self regarding the self with the withering and unforgiving eye of contempt" (42-43). Agreeing with the comments, Ray S. Anderson contends that shame is beyond emotion. Shame is self-abuse on account of the character of punishment of the self (154). Accordingly, the shamed self experiences split the "self into accuser and victim" (157). In this splitting, the shamed also suffer from "punishing shame, as both abuser and victim" (157-58).

According to R. Anderson, one of the processes for resolving shame as self-abuse is "uncovering," which is a process of "self-perception." The origin of shame comes from the fear of exposure as Adam and Eve experienced. When they betrayed God, they got a

desire to hide their nakedness (Gen. 3:7-11) and “nakedness is a metaphor of a self-perception rather than of physical exposure” (158). Therefore, the pattern of self-abuse needs to be broken by self-perception. Through self-perception, people realize and acknowledge that “one is naked” (158-60).

For self-perception, the self is requested to take an active role, adding to passive acceptance of God’s unconditional acceptance on the cross: self-acceptance. For victims suffering from emotional wounds, forgiving and accepting themselves is difficult. They tend to treat themselves as the perpetrators and further go into “self-condemnation, self-rejection, and self-hate” (Kraft 156). In spite of the obstacle, to accept themselves based on freedom is their decision and choice (Bradshaw 158-60). “Shame tends to seek the healing response of acceptance—acceptance of the self despite its weaknesses, defects, and failures” (Morrison 317).

Because self-forgiveness is spadework before accepting the self, Smedes recommends starting by forgiving the self to accept the self. He presents the process of connection between forgiveness and acceptance as the following:

- We hold ourselves accountable for what we did.
- We surrender our need to punish ourselves.
- We revise our understanding of ourselves; we are weak and faulty persons, so we can have compassion for ourselves to balance our judgment of ourselves.
- We revise our feelings about ourselves; we are responsible persons who fail, but we are also worthy persons who are accepted by grace.
- We make a move toward reconciliation with ourselves or, in other words, toward accepting ourselves. (143-44)

Forgiving and accepting the self is another name for loving the self. As Albers proves with the passage, “[y]ou shall love your neighbor as yourself” in Mark 12:31 (101-02), forgiving and accepting—loving—the self is the necessary step toward forgiving—

loving—the shamers. “Sometimes the greatest battle is not in forgiving those who have hurt us ... but in trying to *forgive ourselves* [original emphasis]” (D. Seamands, *Healing of Memories* 159). People can hardly resolve their shame only by forgiving the shamers. Forgiving others always requires them to forgive themselves and finally to accept themselves as God has accepted them, unconditionally. If God accepted them unconditionally on the cross, they can accept themselves unconditionally.

Forgiving the shamers. According to Smedes, emotional healing of shame does not happen through revenge or forgetting. Rather, it is resolved by forgiving:

The way I recommend is the hard remedy of forgiving. It is, in the end, the only remedy we have. None of the options to forgiving does us any good. Revenge does not heal; it only makes things worse. Forgetting does not help. If we think we have forgotten, we have probably only stuffed the memory beneath our consciousness to fester there as the poisonous source of assorted other pains. Besides, some things should never be forgotten. The only option we have left is the creative act of forgiving our shamers with the same grace that enables us to forgive ourselves. (135-36)

Kraus also points out that the law of retaliation is not an appropriate way to resolve shame. He indicates, “No payment such as a ‘debt to justice’ can balance accounts and thus restore lost honor. ... Only forgiveness which covers that past can banish shame” (“Cross of Christ” 224-25). Forgiving the shamers is a step toward the healing of shame.

Forgiveness is a way for shame-prone people to be released emotionally. Robert W. Harey and David G. Benner articulate the products of forgiveness in the emotional area: “a sense of cleanness, a sense of guilt decisively removed, a sense of healing and emotional release” (25-26). Through the experience of forgiveness, people finally experience being released from the bondage of shame that has caught them. On the surface level, forgiving others seems a loss, but on the deeper level it is a way to bring them back to life:

When we release others from their debts, we also release ourselves from the painful effects of what they did to us. It is a paradox, but it is absolutely true; when we harbor bitterness against others, that bitterness eats away at *us* [original emphasis]. The only way to get the poison out of our system is by forgiving. (Stoop and Masteller 163)

Therefore, forgiveness is first “for our sake” (160).

Exposure to trusting relationships. Ironically, for resolving shame, which is a fear of exposure, exposure should be made. Because the fear of exposure is behind the shame feeling (Whitehead and Whitehead 103; Schneider 29-39), coming out of hiding is a way in which shame-prone people can be healed. “Destructive shame hides in secrecy and silence. For healing to come, we have to bring our pain to light” (Whitehead and Whitehead 99). In order to be exposed, it is indispensable for the shamed to find people to whom they can trust enough to expose their hidden selves. Bradshaw contends that finding significant trustworthy people is the meaning of coming out of hiding and isolation (119). Bradshaw tells this finding in terms of an intimate relational network, where true love for the shame-prone exists. In this intimate network, the shame-prone people are asked to expose themselves to the significant others to be evaluated positively. Exposure is not easy for the shamed, but it is indispensable to being healed (120). Under this idea lies an approach to a cause of being shamed:

Since it was personal relationships that set up our toxic shame, we need personal relationships to heal our shame. This is crucial. *We must risk reaching out and looking for nonshaming relationships if we are to heal our shame. There is no other way* [original emphasis]. (121)

Even though Bradshaw introduces this idea in terms of group therapy of his invented twelve-step groups, the principle is appropriate enough to be applied to the relationship between Jesus Christ and the believer. The core of faith in Christ is that the believer has a trust in Jesus enough to expose the self to him. “Faith is not defined here as an

intellectual assent to a given set of dogmatic propositions, but rather as an unqualified trust” (Albers 102). In faith, people trust Jesus Christ to the extent that they can expose themselves without being ashamed within the intimate relationship with Jesus Christ.

This trustful exposure is possible when people realize the mystery that Jesus already exposed his own shameful self to them on the cross and now invites them to be united with him on the cross where he overcame shame by bearing their shames. Trusting in this relationship enables them to expose their shames to Jesus so that Jesus can carry their shames with his cross. This trust requests the shamed to give up their shamed selves to get a true valued and accepted self in Christ. Bradshaw says, “To find one’s life, one must lose one’s life.... This is a literal truism for shame-based people. We must give up our delusional false selves and ego defenses to find the vital and precious core of ourselves.... There is no life without death” (121). The love of the cross breaks the desire to hide and enables people to expose their shames to God and themselves. When they believe they are accepted in Christ unconditionally, they also can accept their shames as theirs without covering or denying those and can be healed.

Summary

Shame is one of the most deadly emotional hurts for human life. It shatters human life by making human beings unsure of themselves. The shame-oriented people tend to think of themselves worthless. They have a fear about being exposed with their weaknesses because that exposure reminds them of low evaluation of themselves. For this reason, the shame-burdened feel inadequate, inferior, flawed, unacceptable, or watched.

Korean society has a culture of shame in its traditional values of solidarity. Because the value of oneness and unity has been embedded deep in Korean culture for a long time, relative cultural diversity is the context where shame occurs. Also, the value of solidarity makes the community members feel shame collectively when another member does a wrong thing. They feel shame as if they also did the wrong thing together.

The other shame factor comes from the history of *han* for the Koreans. *Han* is a concept of the emotional hurts accumulated for a long time in a situation the victim could not escape. *Han* also produces shame, and shame reinforces *han* simultaneously. Korea experienced many *han*-producing events in its history. Korean people grow up with the spirit of *han*, learning Korean history and the literature of *han*. In this way, Korean people get used to the hurts of *han* and begin to feel shame.

However, the Christian truth of the cross teaches people that all human beings are worth being loved and accepted even with their weaknesses. Jesus died on the cross of shame, revealing his weaknesses. Through his death on the cross, Jesus identified himself with those of shame. Therefore, weaknesses cannot be an obstacle to the intimate relationship with Jesus. Jesus bore the weaknesses of the shamed. Also, he died on the cross, showing God's unconditional acceptance. Jesus' death on the cross shows God's love for those with weaknesses. Any weakness people desire to hide cannot be an obstacle to God's grace because God loved people when they were deep in sin. God's love enables shamed people to realize their own value before God. Their value is as much as that of Christ who died on the cross for their hurts. When he was flogged, people were healed.

On the whole, the cross teaches that all people are worth being accepted by God ; people do not have to feel worthless. They can expose their weaknesses without being shamed before the cross, because Jesus already bore their shameful experiences and hurts on the cross.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Problem and Purpose of the Study

The problem of shame stays even among the congregation, and shame generates problems in several areas. Due to the unhealed shame kept in them, they are blocked from approaching closer to God to enjoy happiness in the faith life. The shame problem also generates unexpected negative results among congregations and in individual lives.

Shame-prone people need to listen to a message about God's graceful action in unconditional love for them. God showed his love most dramatically on the cross where God's only son, Jesus Christ, died. Therefore, preaching on the cross is a good way to care for the shame problem in congregations; however, the shame-resolving messages are not preached enough to care for the shame problems among the congregations in Korean churches.

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the role of a series of the four sermons on the cross for the congregation's understanding of the cross, God, and themselves in terms of emotional healing from shame. Using both quantitative and qualitative instruments, this research aimed to find how the congregation of Jiksan-eup Korean Methodist Church interacted with the messages of the sermon series.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The main purpose of this study was to find out how the congregation would interact with the sermon series on the cross. In order to analyze the interaction of the congregation with the sermon series on the cross in terms of emotional healing of shame, instruments were provided to answer the following basic questions.

Research Question #1

What was the participants' understanding of the cross, God, and themselves prior to the sermon series on the cross?

The answer to this question provides information of the congregation about the general understanding of the cross, God, and themselves before the introduction of the independent variable of the four sermons on the cross. This is a base to measure what changes are generated by the four sermons on the cross for the possibility of healing shame through right understanding of the cross, God, and the congregation themselves. The interview questions in Appendix E were provided for the eighteen participants to answer. Also, all the pretest questionnaires measured the understanding of the cross, God, and the selves of the same eighteen participants. To answer this research question, I used the responses to Appendix D.

Research Question #2

What was the participants' understanding of the cross, God, and themselves after the sermon series on the cross?

This research project was built on the premise that a preaching program of the cross can positively impact understanding of the cross, God, and the congregation for healing shame. The four-sermon series project mainly focused on God's unconditional love, Christ's bearing emotional hurts of shame, trusting relationship between Christ and Christians, and an invitation to identification with Christ to the cross.

The posttest questionnaires in Appendix D measured how the sermon contents impacted the change in the level of shame in the congregation. Also, to measure the impact of the sermon series, I executed post-interviews for the eighteen interviewees. The

interview items in Appendix F asked how they interacted with the sermon series.

Through analyzing and interpreting the answers, the question was answered.

Research Question #3

What aspect of the sermon series was most helpful for understanding the cross, God, and themselves in terms of the healing of shame?

Through the post-interviews with the participants, the answers to this research question were provided. The interviewees were asked to state what factors they think affected their understanding of the cross, God, and themselves after listening to the four sermons on the cross. Through this question, the effective aspects of the sermon series were found.

Research Question #4

What other factors affected the congregation's understanding of the cross, God, and themselves in terms of the healing of shame?

Through this question in the post-interviews, unexpected effective factors were found. The question was answered in an interview by asking about the interviewees' responses to the sermon series.

Participants

The population for this study was the members of a congregation who attended Sunday afternoon worship services at 2:00 p.m. in Jiksan-eup Korean Methodist Church. The sample for this study consisted of eighteen selected members who attended all four 2:00 p.m. Sunday afternoon worship services in which the four sermons were preached. They were asked to take the two tests—pretest and posttest—about their emotional state related to three areas: their relationship to God, self-esteem, and understanding of the

cross. They also were interviewed before and after the sermon series. For selecting the interviewees, I announced the opportunity to the public in a worship service so that people could volunteer.

Instrumentation

The method used to achieve the purpose was the mixed research of the questionnaire surveys of a pretest and a posttest, two interview surveys, and journals.

Pretest and Posttest

The pretest consisted of twenty-three closed questions in three areas. The first area was about the participants' relationship to God in terms of emotion. They were asked what their image of God was and what they felt about themselves before God. They were asked ten questions. The second area was about the participants' self-esteem. For the test, I used the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RES). RES consists of ten equations for evaluating the self-esteem of the participants. The third area concerned what they knew and believed in relation to the cross for them. The area consisted of three questions.

For the questions, the participants were asked to answer on a scale of level one to level four: SA (Strongly Agree), A (Agree), D (Disagree), and SD (Strongly Disagree). The answers were used to find out what they felt and believed about God, themselves, and the cross before the sermon series.

The participants were asked to designate their demographic information to help me find out how gender, age, the length of faith life, background, and motivation of faith life, and personal experience of faith made differences in results.

The posttest contained exactly the same questions as the pretest. The answers were used to find out if their understanding of God, themselves, and the cross has changed after listening to the four sermons on the cross in terms of the healing of shame.

Pre-Interview and Post-Interview

The first interview was performed before the sermon series. The interview questions were composed of three open-ended questions. First, what do you think about God? Second, what do you think about the cross? Third, what is your feeling about yourself? Under the questions, the eighteen interviewees were asked to talk freely including their faith journeys. The participants were asked to concentrate on their emotions in relationship to God, the cross, and themselves, but I did not exclude the cognitive aspect of their answers.

The second interview was performed after the sermon series. The interview questions were composed of four open-ended questions. First, what new things did you learn? Second, what did you realize again that you already knew? Third, did the sermons remind you of your past or present events? Fourth, do you have anything else to share? The eighteen interviewees were asked to answer freely about what they experienced while listening to the sermon series and after listening to them. In this way, I found more in-depth information related to the research questions that could not be expressed in the questionnaire surveys (Wiersma 185).

Journal

The eighteen volunteers were asked to write journals as a response to the four sermons. They were asked to write a journal entry per each sermon. Journaling was not a compulsory project process. The interviewees were encouraged to write journal entries

so that they could not forget their responses after the sermon series finished. Therefore, the journals were used as subsidiary materials in the post-interview process.

Design and Procedure

The study included a series of the four sermons on the cross, a pretest, a posttest, a pre-interview, a post-interview, and journal writing with no comparison group. The design and procedure of the study includes the process of collecting data, ensuring anonymity and confidentiality, and analyzing the data gathered.

Data Collection

Pretest. The pretest questionnaires were given when the participants were interviewed before the sermon series. I explained the procedure for collecting the data while giving the pretest questionnaires. The questionnaires were given in a prestamped envelope before the first sermon was preached. A separate letter in the same envelope with the test encouraged the participants to complete the survey and to return it in the self-addressed, stamped envelope by the Saturday prior to the sermon series. The letter also promised that the confidentiality of the respondents would be guaranteed by letting them create their own personal code no others could recognize. I sent reminder/thank-you sentences to the participants' cell phones for a higher return rate.

Posttest. I sent the posttest questionnaires by mail a month after I preached the final sermon. The posttest questionnaires were given to those who volunteered for interviews. The posttest had the same questions as the pretest. The tests were sent through the same process like the pretest: prestamped envelope, separate letter of encouragement. I sent reminder/thank-you sentences to the participants' cell phones a week after the final sermon of the series for a higher return rate. The posttest was only for the volunteers who

participated in the pretest. I gave the participants two weeks for sending the answers back to me. All of them returned the pretest answers but only sixteen returned their posttest answers.

Interviews. I recruited eighteen volunteers for the project before the four sermon series. I announced the project in an 11:00 Sunday morning worship service and asked them to volunteer to be the interviewees. In advance, I notified them that I would interview the volunteers before and after the sermon series. In this way, I gave them an opportunity to look at the experience in advance more concretely and carefully. I texted a reminder/thank-you sentence two times to encourage them to check their experiences before the sermon series and in the middle of the sermon series.

After the sermon series, I interviewed them, spending as much time as needed in an interview room where we were not interrupted by anything or anyone. I encouraged them to write their experience related to the message given to them. If they wrote their responses in a journal, they were encouraged to bring them to the interview.

Journals. I encouraged the interviewees to write journal entries for reflection after each sermon. This process was supposed to help them interact with the sermon series by thinking about what they heard. Also, journal writing was to help them not to forget what they realized, felt, and thought in the research period. They could come to an interview with the papers to refresh their memory. Also, they could submit the papers to me, so that I could review their interactions. In this way, I could grasp richer information about what they learned and how they responded to the sermon series.

Recorded sermons. I recorded every sermon and distributed them to the participants after every sermon. The participants were supposed to listen to the sermons

whenever they wanted to review what they heard. Listening to the recorded sermons was supposed to remind them of the points of the sermons and help them understand better about God, the cross, and themselves.

Confidentiality and Anonymity

For the pretest and posttest takers, anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed through the surveys. I asked participants to create and write their own personal code on their test papers instead of writing their names. The personal code was composed of their mother's last name and the first six digits of their residential numbers—the identification numbers for all the Korean citizens. In this way, they could remember their personal codes. I was the only person to read the answers for gathering data; however, if any of the participants wanted to talk to me face to face, breaking confidentiality by their choice was allowed to help participants resolve any shame issues.

For the interviewees, confidentiality and anonymity were guaranteed by not disclosing their names and content outside the interview room.

Any of those who were asked to take the pretest, posttest, or be interviewed had an opportunity to deny those tests and interviews. The data used for the research was gathered in a sealed envelope with a warning sign of “Needs Confidentiality” on it to be kept in a locked safety box until the dissertation was finished. After the dissertation was finished, the data was destroyed in a shredder.

Data Analysis

The pretest and posttest questionnaires contained twenty-three closed questions per each test to find out the differences between the participants' state before sermon series and their state after the sermon series in terms of shame. I adopted ten questions

from the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale to check their level of self-esteem. I did not statistically analyze the data collected from the questionnaires. I performed the assessments just to know what changes could be found. Therefore, the pretest and posttest results were compared in a simple way in a table.

The post-interview for the main purpose of this research contained four questions. From the data collected, the analysis was more descriptive than statistical. The description included not only the exact answers but also the unexpected answers that seemed to be divergent to the questions to grasp the in-depth changes in their lives.

Summary

Shame in people can generate problems in family life, church life, and other areas. They need to listen to a message of unconditional love of God for them to be healed from shame. I thought preaching on the cross should be an appropriate means for the healing of shame; therefore, I gave a series of the four sermons on the cross to the congregation of Jiksan-eup Korean Methodist Church.

The purpose of this study was to know how the congregation would interact with the sermon series on the cross. Eighteen volunteers were recruited for this research project. They were interviewed before and after the sermon series. They were asked to take a pretest and a posttest for a supplementary result to research any possibility for change.

Using both quantitative and qualitative instruments, the research focused on finding what changes happened in the congregation's understanding of the cross, God, and themselves in terms of emotional healing from shame.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Among emotional hurts, shame is one of the deadliest. The shamed tend to feel remote from God, but God's grace and love can bring recovery from hurt emotions. For this purpose, I preached a four-sermon series on the cross. Because shame prohibits people from respecting themselves, the content of the four sermons concentrated on the value of the congregation. Then I traced how the congregation interacted with my sermon series in terms of their understanding of the cross, God, and themselves.

Four research questions guided this study. In order to analyze the interaction of the congregation with the sermon series on the cross in terms of emotional healing of shame, instruments were provided to answer the following basic questions:

1. What was the participants' understanding of the cross, God, and themselves prior to the sermon series on the cross?

2. What was the participants' understanding of the cross, God, and themselves after the sermon series on the cross?

3. What aspect of the sermon series was most helpful for understanding the cross, God, and themselves in terms of the healing of shame?

4. What other factors affected the congregation's understanding of the cross, God, and themselves in terms of the healing of shame?

Description of Participants

The number of female participants was 13. The number of male participants was 5. What follows is the demographic information about the participants.

Table 4.1. Information about Ages

Gender	Ages per Person													Average	Total Average
Men	32	33	38	51	65									43.8	44.1
Women	26	27	35	37	40	41	44	45	53	54	55	55	65	44.4	

Table 4.2. Information about Years of Christian Faith

Gender	Years of Christian Faith per Person													Average	Total Average
Men	11	2	10	31	57									22.2	23.7
Women	12	30	11	45	20	29	25	40	22	15	15	39	25	25.2	

Numerical Findings

Numerical results were found through pretest and posttest research. What follows are the numerical results from the pretest and posttest. The participants were asked to mark their agreement level among the four states of Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The questions were divided into three categories: about God, about themselves, and about the cross. Eighteen volunteers were given the pretest papers, and all of them returned the answers. Four weeks later, the same people were given the posttest papers, and sixteen of them returned their answers. Therefore, I removed the two pretest answers that were not matched with the returned posttest answers.

I shaded the number of the positive changes; if the number in the posttest column was bigger than the number in the pretest column for SA, it was considered a positive change. If the positive changes were not seen in Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A) was

considered for finding the positive changes. For the reverse-score items, Strongly Disagree (SD) was considered for the positive changes and then Disagree (D) if not found in SD. Several test questions without shaded marks represent that no positive change was found relating to the questions.

For the items about God, positive changes were found in nine out of ten items (see Table 4.1). For the items about the self, positive changes were found in eight out of ten items (see Table 4.2). For the items about the cross, positive changes were found in three out of three items (see Table 4.3). On the whole, the numbers from the pretest and posttest show that positive changes took place in the participants' attitudes toward God, themselves, and the cross.

Table 4.3. Strength of Agreement with the Statement about God (Your Relationship with God)

Questions	SA		A		D		SD	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
1. God is judgmental.*	1	1	5	2	7	5	3	8
2. God accepts me unconditionally.	8	12	7	2	1	2		
3. God understands my shame (weaknesses) fully enough. SA	11	15	5	1				
4. God never abandons me in any circumstances.	12	15	4	1				
5. I am valuable to God and precious even when I sin.	7	8	7	6	2	1		1
6. I am valuable to God even when I am ashamed.	6	9	8	6	1		1	1
7. I am loved even when I betray God.	4	5	6	8	4	2	2	1
8. I am living with a sin that God will never forgive.*	3	1	1	2	3	5	9	8
9. I am worthless before God. *	1	1			7	5	8	10
10. I feel a need to be more perfect to be loved by God.*	7	2	6	8	2	3	1	3

* = reverse scored item.

Table 4.4. Strength of Agreement with the Statement about Yourself

Questions	SA		A		D		SD	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
1. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others .	6	6	7	8	2	2	1	
2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.	2	2	8	9	4	5	2	
3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. *	1	1	1	1	10	11	4	3
4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.	3	2	9	11	2	3	2	
5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of. *	1	2	8	5	5	5	2	4
6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.	3	6	9	9	3	1	1	
7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.	1	1	9	11	4	1	2	3
8. I wish I could have more respect for myself. *	2	3	10	5	4	5		3
9. I certainly feel useless at times. *	3	2	5	2	5	4	3	8
10. At times I think I am no good at all. *	2	2	5	4	8	7	1	3

* = reverse-score item.

Table 4.5. Strength of Agreement with the Statement about the Cross

Questions	SA		A		D		SD	
	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post	Pre	Post
1. Jesus' cross is intimately related to my present life.	8	10	6	6	2			
2. Jesus bore my shame (weaknesses) on the cross.	8	15	7	1	1			
3. When I think of the cross, I feel the grace of God.	6	12	8	4	2			

Findings Related to Research Question 1

This section reviews the findings related to research question 1 : what was the participants' understanding of the cross, God, and themselves prior to the sermon series on the cross? Pre-interview responses to Appendix E and all of the pretest responses to the survey of Appendix D answered to question 1.

Related to the Cross

Two results were found related to the interviewees' understanding of the cross.

No awareness of the meaning of the cross. I found that the participants had no awareness of the meaning of how the cross related to shame. Their focus was on forgiveness of sin through the cross. They knew the cross was a means of torture and were aware of the misery Jesus endured on the cross, but they did not comment on the cross related to shame. Most of them had spent their Christian lives in Jiksan-eup Korean Methodist Church; therefore, I would say that the cross's power to heal from shame had not been sufficiently preached or taught for the congregation in Jiksan-eup Korean Methodist Church.

No connection between the cross and their practical lives. Additionally, they could rarely connect the impact of the cross to their practical lives. Most of them accepted the doctrine of atonement as abstract rather than practical. They did not have much experience or thought on the practical application of the doctrine of the cross. Therefore, I could not spend as much time with the question related to the cross as with the other questions. In the pre-interview, some people had nothing to say about the cross.

Related to God

Four results were found related to the interviewees' understanding of God.

Positive image of God. Unlike the cross question, participants spent much time answering the God-related question. Thirteen of the participants had a good image of God: generous King, forgiving and accepting mother, intimate one, safe and dependable one, the one who is on my side, comforting one, steadily loving one, daddy holding onto

the back of a bicycle, close friend, helping hands, careful one, strong one. Only eight of the interviewees had a positive image of God.

Mixed image of God . For five of the participants, however, the image of God was not generally consistent. They had two or three contrasting images of God. God is warm but strict at the same time. God is intimate but asks them to become mature too much strongly. God makes them secure but is distant. God is to be feared but also thanked. God rewards but also scolds.

Negative image of God. Three participants had only negative images of God. One said that God would be impatient at her depression. Another believed that God was terrifying and unchanging in his plan. When I asked how far away from God he felt he was, he answered, “as far as the moon in the sky.” He meant not only the distance but also the difficulty in communication. He felt God answered slowly, with a delay of five or ten minutes. The third participant also felt God was far away from her even though she knew he was protecting her. Her emotion toward God was in conflict with her knowledge about God. In fact, she felt no intimacy with God; rather, God was a strict figure for her. She also felt she could be abandoned for her bad faith.

A sense of failure. Three of the interviewees felt apologetic toward God even when their image of God was positive. They thought God would look on them with anger or sadness because they did not measure up. They all believed that God was good. Therefore, their feelings of disappointment could come from their love for God and their zeal to be more obedient.

Related to Themselves

Related to the interviewees' understanding of themselves, they were found to have a feeling of shame.

Feelings of shame. On the whole, the participants did not evaluate themselves positively. More of them than I expected felt shame, even though the level of their shame was different. At least twelve evaluated themselves negatively: incompetent, inferior, awkward, cowardly, disappointed with themselves, fearful of being discovered in hardship, naked, ashamed, sensitive to being ignored, unworthy of pride, wounded in their pride, useless.

What supported their shame was the attitude that they rarely exposed their weaknesses to any one. They had difficulty talking candidly with others about their weaknesses. Rather, they wanted to cover the weaknesses in order not to be ashamed by others. They feared that they would be ridiculed if they shared their weaknesses with others. For this reason, they felt they had no safe place to disclose their weaknesses except before God. Some even confessed that they had not confessed their weaknesses to God.

One participant had a desire to be more powerful because he was afraid of falling behind others if he disclosed his weakness. I asked him if he had ever wept. He answered that he had wept only when his father passed away because he felt too weak to be responsible for his mother and younger brothers. He wanted to be powerful but always felt weak. He could not feel comfortable with honestly accepting his weakness.

Another participant said that she had a fear of being discovered in her hardship. When I interviewed her before the sermon series, she depicted her situation in an abstract

way. I could not recognize her concrete family problem until she came back for the post-interview. She felt she was nothing and her sorrows were disguised with her smiles, so she had resentment against her life.

The third participant did not want to drive her car because she did not want to make a mistake in driving. Any small mistake would make her feel ashamed. She could not bear any failure in her life. She always wanted to be the best. She never missed being at the top of her class in her college years and graduated first on the list. However, she had lived with a feeling of being naked.

The fourth participant was very sensitive to being ignored. He remembered how his church friends ignored him during his junior high school years. He once stopped going to church because of his feeling of being ignored. He rarely talked to the church members, even when my project was performed. He was ashamed of himself for being ignored. He confessed that he sometimes felt ashamed; he said his face burned with shame when he thought of his life lying in bed.

Findings Related to Research Question 2

This section reviews the findings related to research question 2: what was the participants' understanding of the cross, God, and themselves after the sermon series on the cross? Post-interview responses to Appendix F and all of the posttest responses to the survey of Appendix D answered to question 2.

Related to the Cross

The messages on the cross were found to be effective for the interviewees' practical life issues. The interviewees had not previously related the cross to their life

problems. The cross just remained as a doctrine for them. However, after listening to the sermon series, they found how practically the cross could be applied to their real lives.

A lady confessed that she had lived with a bitter mind because her life had not been the way she wanted it to be. She felt she was treated unfairly. On the second Sunday, however, she nailed her emotion of unfairness onto the cross. Then she could escape the feeling of being treated unfairly. Moreover, she could forgive a person she had not forgiven for a long time.

A lady confessed that she never thought the cross was a disgrace and difficulty. She had thought it should be easy for Jesus Christ, Son of God, to endure the torture of the cross, so she had never thought seriously about the meaning of the cross. Afterward, she realized how difficult and shameful it was, even for Jesus Christ, to carry the cross to be nailed unto it.

A lady experienced deliverance from her sorrows when she nailed them to the cross on the second Sunday. She could not help delivering the message of Jesus bearing our weaknesses and shame to her younger sister, who was only thirteen years old. After explaining how Jesus carried human weaknesses and shame with joyfulness, she felt that her younger sister understood the message of the cross.

A lady felt I was preaching the entire sermon series for her situation. Her husband was alcoholic and did not care for his family well. She suffered from poverty and a feeling of uneasiness and shame. Because of her situation, chagrin, shame, and sorrows were piled up in her. When I preached about emotional hurts, she accepted my sermons for her concrete life situation. She acknowledged her emotional hurts before God,

accepting the message that she needed to place her hurts under the cross. When she confessed her emotional hurts before the cross, God's consolation strengthened her.

The message of the cross of shame reminded a lady of her long-time complex about her dark skin color. She realized her shame while listening to Jesus' shame experience. Because she was ashamed of her dark skin, she never wanted anyone to take her picture, even after a good meeting. Although she had to be counseled in the post-interview to get out of the complex, the sermon series was meaningful in that she recognized her shame and started a journey toward healing.

Related to God

Two results were found related to the interviewees' understanding of God in a post-interview.

Unconditional love of God. Some participants realized for the first time that God loves them unconditionally. A young lady had thought that God loves those who do something good in God's eyes. She was sure that God's love for her was because she had done what God wanted her to do. However, she came to understand that God's love is not conditional. She admitted that God loved even when she was not good enough and that God loves her more than she could imagine. The sermon series enabled some of the participants to remember God's love for them again.

A wrong sense of duty. Unexpectedly, a lady felt a sense of duty after realizing God's love for her. According to her, she was sure of God's love on a knowledge level. However, she became sure of God's love on the emotional and spiritual level as well after the sermon series. She confessed that she had never loved God as much as God loved her. She was full of a sense of duty that she needed to pay back God for his love. She was sad

that her family was not evangelized, and she was the only one who believed in God. She interpreted this situation as evidence that she had not loved God because she had not evangelized her family. She was filled with a sense of duty that she needed to do something not only for her family but also for others in order to have God's love remain. She believed that if she did not do something valuable for God he would take away his love for her.

I realized that her belief was not based on an appropriate sense of duty. I told her not to worry about her family with a dutiful mind. I let her know that a feeling of being loved will cause her to love others and advised her not to concentrate on what she could not do but on what she could do and what God had done for her.

Related to Themselves

Two results were found related to the interviewees' understanding of God in a post-interview.

Finding shame. Some of the participants recognized and acknowledged shame in themselves after the sermon series. They found they had been hiding their weaknesses from others in order not to be shamed.

One participant found that he had had shame in him for a long time. He had not revealed his shame even to his family. He did not speak of the shame concretely to me, but he started a journey for the healing of shame because he recognized and acknowledged his shame.

One woman found that she had not revealed her shame even to God. She had suffered from an inferiority complex, especially because she was not in a good relationship with her husband and his family of origin.

Healing in self -image. Several participants experienced healing in self-image.

Four weeks after I finished the project I received a letter from a lady who had participated. She wrote, “Thank you for providing me an opportunity for transformation The evaluation of myself changed a lot positively after I listened to the four sermon series on the cross. These days I live in happiness. Thank you again.”

In an interview, she answered that she found her previous positive self-image. At her workplace, she had been stressed and pressed by the thought that she had to succeed. Therefore, she used to urge herself to work harder and harder. However, she was never satisfied with herself. Even she could not treat others with a good mind naturally. A sense of duty and dissatisfaction filled her life. However, after listening to the sermon series, her self-image changed positively. She could treat others with good words and actions naturally. She also got away from false sense of duty defined by perfectionism.

One woman had not been satisfied with herself. Because of her dissatisfaction, she endeavored to do everything perfectly as possible. She wanted to be perfect in everything. She never wanted to hear any bad evaluation from others. After listening to the sermon series, she realized that she had tried desperately to hide her weaknesses by doing well. She now felt that she could accept her mistakes differently from her old days.

One participant realized how God loves him. He had been laid off for seven months because of shoulder injuries. For this reason, he was disappointed with himself. He thought he was useless. However, he was consoled by the message of God's unconditional love. He realized that he was still valuable to God and that God would never stop loving him even with his weaknesses.

Findings Related to Research Question 3

This section reviews the findings related to research question 3: what aspect of the sermon series was most helpful for understanding the cross, God, and the selves in terms of the healing of shame?

Most of the participants picked the second Sunday message as the most impressive one: Nail your sorrows to the cross. To my question, "What was the most impressive message for you?" at least nine participants said that the performance of nailing to the cross had made the greatest impression and impact on them.

The reason they gave was the use of a wooden cross for affirmation. I made a cross of limbs cut from a tree in the churchyard. Around two weeks earlier, a church member had pruned the tree and stacked the branches beside it. The branches were crooked and ugly. Because of their ugliness and uselessness they could not remain on the tree. I thought they resembled our weaknesses that Jesus carried on the cross, so I made a cross of the branches. Because I used the crooked and ugly branches, the cross did not seem normal, but it demonstrated that human shame in weaknesses was nailed on to Jesus' cross.

At the end of the second sermon, I asked people to nail their hurts, sorrows and shame on the cross. My helpers nailed to the cross eight pieces of paper on which eight emotional hurts were written. I announced these eight emotional hurts, showed the written papers one by one, and handed them to my helpers to nail onto the cross. Then I showed the congregation a blank piece of paper and encouraged them to write on it their hurts, which had not yet been announced, in their imagination. Finally, I handed the blank paper to my helpers and they nailed it on the cross.

One lady experienced all of her problems being lifted from her when she nailed her emotional problems on the cross in her praying imagination with my helpers nailing the papers of hurts on the wooden cross. Then she proceeded to witness her experience and transmit the lesson to her thirteen-year-old sister at home. She gave thanks that she was born again with a new mind in Jesus.

Findings Related to Research Question 4

This section reviews the findings related to the research question 4: what other factors affected the congregation's understanding of the cross, God, and themselves in terms of the healing of shame?

The Length of Spiritual Journey

One of the other unexpected factors that affected the congregation's understanding of the cross was the length of their faith journey. Generally speaking, the more years they had attended church, the better they could understand the sermons. One participant had started his spiritual journey only two years earlier. When I interviewed him after the sermon series, his response was only to the second Sunday. Even though he confessed that he was touched in his heart, he did not understand my sermons well.

The Situation of the Participants

The second unexpected factor that affected the congregation's understanding of the cross was the situation of the participants. If they were struggling with the hardships of life, they tended to adapt the message to their lives more quickly than the others.

One woman finished the post-interview in just ten minutes because she did not have much to tell me related to the sermons. She answered that she felt somewhat remote and perplexed when her friend was weeping softly while listening to the sermons. She

had lived an ordinary life without many troubles. Her family life was uncomplicated and she had no serious life troubles.

Another woman experienced dramatic change after being touched by the message of the sermons. In her post-interview she wept a lot, remembering the deep emotion she had experienced in the previous four Sunday worship services. She passionately accepted the power of the cross for her life. She had had trouble with her husband for a long time. Because of her sense of being treated unfairly, she had been dissatisfied with her life. However, when she came to my office for her post-interview, I noticed a change in her. Her appearance was more tender and positive than when I first met her. She smiled more than before. She confessed that her life changed.

Journal

The third factor was journal writing. I wrote some questions on which I wanted them to concentrate and asked the participants to keep journals with these questions in mind. I gave them journal folders and asked them to write only when they felt touched. They did not have to summarize my sermons. All but three of the participants confessed that journaling helped them to concentrate better on the sermons.

Sermon CDs

The final factor was the use of CDs. I recorded each of my sermons before preaching them on Sunday and distributed them to the participants after every service so that they could review my sermons in case they forgot what they heard. As a result, they could remember what was preached by listening to the CDs. Some participants listened to the CDs repeatedly because they wanted to chew over the messages. Through this process, they could understand and remember the messages better.

Other Findings

More results were found in the interviews and the tests.

The Influence of a Movie

When I asked what they thought about the cross in the pre-interview, eleven of the interviewees remembered the movie, *The Passion of the Christ*.⁶ The image of the tortured Christ in the movie was strong enough to make them to feel the pain of Jesus' crucifixion. From this finding, I realized that a movie clip would be useful to help the congregation understand a sermon. I was not able to use a movie clip because Jiksan-eup Korean Methodist Church was not equipped for visual presentation; however, the use of a movie clip for the sermon series on the cross should be an option if possible.

Opening the Minds of the Congregation through Preaching

The participants tended not to expose their deep hurts in the pre-interviews, but the sermon series encouraged them to expose their problems in the post-interviews.

One woman did not expose her sorrows in the pre-interview. Before the sermon series, she gave me a positive answer to the question, "What do you think about yourself?" She answered that she did not have severe emotional problems. In the post-interview, however, she confessed that she had a complex about her dark skin. She did not want to stand before a group of people to sing or teach because she had a fear that people would not like her dark face. She also confessed that she had disliked having her picture taken in any situation because she was ashamed of her dark skin color.

One man did not know he had lived with shame related to his weak points of poverty, low education, and fear concerning the hardships of his life. In the post-

⁶ A few years ago, the movie was played for the congregation in [Jiksan-eup Korean Methodist Church](#).

interview, however, he confessed that he realized how desperately he had tried to cover his shame by living diligently, not enjoying life.

The Need for Prayer and Counseling Ministry

Some of the participants needed a follow-up ministry of counseling and prayer. Regarding the five-minute prayer time following my preaching, two of the participants suggested that they should have spent more time in prayer.

I asked one woman, who realized her shame but did not expose it to Christ in the five-minute prayer time after the sermon, why she did not do so. She answered that she needed more time for a deeper level of prayer after the sermon. This case indicates that preaching needs to be accompanied by prayer ministry for deeper healing. The participants probably would have responded more seriously if they had more prayer time after my preaching.

In this woman's case, I realized that she also needed counseling. When I asked how she responded to the message of the cross, she kept saying something related to her sin and her duties, even though my preaching had concentrated on God's unconditional grace for the shamed. I realized that she was hiding something, so I asked more directly if she had any ideas or emotions about shame. She finally confessed her shame related to her dark skin. She had a complex about her dark skin and was ashamed of herself because of her dark skin.⁷ She heard the message of nailing her shame onto the cross in my preaching, but she did not do it. I started praying for her to expose her shame to Christ in the post-interview. Then I encouraged her to nail her shame on the cross in prayer. Finally, she could nail her shame onto the cross to be freed from her complex.

⁷ Some Koreans have a biased view against dark skin. They think lighter skin is more beautiful.

Another woman started her post-interview by bursting into tears. She wept when I asked her to tell what she felt and thought listening to my sermons. Then she disclosed her shame relating to her husband. Her husband was alcoholic and did not care for his family. On account of his indifference for the welfare of his family, the family suffered from poverty and shame. She confessed how shameful her situation was. Then I did not ask much about her experience in listening to my sermons, but encouraged her to disclose her shame more. I tried to listen to enough of her sad story, and then I helped her nail her shame onto the cross in a prayer.

Unexpected Results Found

I found three unexpected points in classifying the interview results.

Love for others. One woman got an answer to her longtime prayer to love others. She had prayed for twenty years, but never felt she was ready to love others. In her heart she could not really love them. However, after the sermon series, she received an answer to her longtime prayer, and she finally felt a desire to love others. Her next step was to find how to love.

Spiritual experience. A participant experienced a gift of spiritual tongues. After listening to a sermon on the cross on the first Sunday, he came to Wednesday night service. I was leading the service and asked the congregation to pray aloud with their most important prayer request. He remembered my first sermon on the cross and wanted to put down all of his sorrows, weaknesses, and shame in his prayer. Then he felt his tongue become twisted in his prayer. His prayer lasted only two or three minutes, but in those short moments he experienced a spiritual gift. After experiencing the gift of tongues,

he could concentrate on reading the Bible. Before, he did not understand the Bible even though he had tried several times to read it. Now he could understand the Bible.

Struggling in a process of healing. For two weeks one woman experienced resistance in accepting God's love. When I preached on the cross on the first Sunday, she felt God's love was too huge to accept. She did not expect God's love for her to be so big and especially so unconditional. She was not ready to accept that big love of God. According to her, his love had looked like thousands of arrows aimed at her. She wanted to accept God's love as only one or two arrows and keep an appropriate distance from him. She felt emotionally uncomfortable in accepting God's love because she did not want to be loved so closely or to love him so closely. She did not want God to intrude into her life.

Two weeks later, she felt crushed by God's love. She found that she had endeavored to disguise herself. She was afraid she would disappear if she was exposed. She said, "I have lived like a swan maintaining her dignity, moving her web feet diligently under the water. I have tried to make my life well controlled, perfect, independent through many practices. That was my life direction. I really felt perfect and did not need any help from others. I thought I could do well alone. It was comfortable for me to keep a distance from others. I was not interested in others' issues. Rather, I despised those who could not live well in resolving their own problems. On account of that, I could not have close relationship with others." She confessed she always tried to keep a wall between herself and others including God. However, God finally broke down the wall and opened her mind.

In the process of healing, she experienced a resistance period for two weeks. I let her know that the resistance period was part of the healing process. Healing is not a one-shot case, but a process. In the healing process, people experience diverse emotional responses.

Summary of Findings

Four major findings resulted from this study: (1) Many of the participants had shame problems and they had not been cared for enough before the sermon series; (2) on the whole, the participants interacted with the messages from the sermon series positively and showed a possibility that preaching would work for the healing of shame; (3) not only the contents of the sermons, but also the performance of nailing their emotional problems worked efficiently; (4) other factors helped the congregation understand and accept the messages on the cross effectively—a long spiritual journey in faith, a situation in which some of the participants hungered for healing, journal writing, and sermon CDs; and, (5) other findings were revealed: preaching can open minds of the congregation, preaching can be assisted through the influence of a movie, and prayer and counseling ministry are needed to support preaching on healing.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The congregation was more receptive than I expected. I knew the message of shame related to the cross was very new for the congregation in a Korean church. Indeed, most of them confessed they had never heard the message of the cross related to shame.

Interpretation of the Findings

According to Fossum and Mason, worthlessness is one of the basic feelings of shame. “A moment of shame may be humiliation so painful or an indignity so profound that one feels one has been robbed of her or his dignity or exposed as basically inadequate, bad, or worthy of rejection” (5). Some of the participants carried shame and one of them had a sense of rejection and worthlessness in shame. A male participant was very sensitive to being ignored. He had a memory of being ignored by his friends during his junior high school years. He had the feeling of being ignored when he was in church, so he would not talk to the members of his church. In that way, he came to carry shame. Shame even made him feel ashamed whenever he thought of his life; his face burned with shame when, lying in bed, he thought of his life.

Worse, before I preached this series they had never heard the message of the cross for the healing of shame. The cross had been a message related only to their sin and redemption from sin. Jesus’ taking their shame and weaknesses on the cross was new to them. For this reason, preaching on the cross for the healing of shame was an appropriate subject in Jiksan-eup Korean Methodist Church.

The participants moved forward toward emotional healing, especially the healing of shame, through listening to the four-sermon series on the cross. They realized that they

had shame that they did not previously recognize. Also, they became ready to disclose their emotional problems before God frankly because they learned God's unconditional acceptance shown on the cross: "It's OK to be you" (Frank 132). They also realized that the cross is the place where trusting relationship is restored between them and God (Eph. 2:13-16). Further, they had to be comfortable with bringing their weaknesses to the cross because the cross signifies that Jesus Christ carried and carries their weaknesses by being identified with them. Jesus experienced shame on the cross and he knows the shame of the people (Albers 105). Some not only recognized their shame but also experienced healing. They became comfortable with revealing their weaknesses. They also became sure of God's love for them on the cross.

They might not have finished the healing process perfectly, but they knew they already were transformed in emotional and spiritual areas. Therefore, preaching helped them experience and start the healing process. The cross should be an eternal signal that teaches them their value before God.

Through this project I realized anew the power of preaching. Before I started the project, I was not sure how the congregation would respond to my preaching. Even though the congregation and I had several weeks to become acquainted, the period was not enough to share our lives. We needed more time to build a trusting relationship so that they could accept my message positively. In spite of this obstacle, they responded to my message positively and sincerely adapted the message to their lives. They reported that they liked the new messages and how the preaching had encouraged them to change their self-images.

I also came to understand that God is the final authority in preaching. I did my best to deliver my message as effectively as possible. However, I met some of the congregation who were not touched much. When one participant answered plainly, “Yes, it was good,” I felt somewhat frustrated. She was young and had attended church for more than twenty years. I expected her to be touched greatly because she seemed to be smart enough to understand my sermons; however, she did not accept the message seriously. Rather, those from whom I did not expect positive results responded positively. Through this project, I acknowledged again God’s authority for healing. Preachers just preach and God works with his power of love.

Suggestions

The fallout from the post-interviews shows a need for more than preaching in order to see emotional healing. Through the cases of other findings in Chapter 4, I found that in order for healing to take place, preaching needs to be combined with the ministries of counseling and prayer. Other cases also presented themselves in which I had to counsel and pray for deeper healing. Preaching alone is not the only way to heal the congregation. For emotional healing to occur, other methods, such as counseling, prayer ministries, and support groups, need to be used along with preaching. With this principle, I suggest the following healing ministries in Jiksan-eup Korean Methodist Church.

Counseling Ministry

Some of the participants had problems with their everyday lives. When they came to me for their interviews, they disclosed their bitterness with sobbing. When I finished the pre-interviews, I realized that I would need to provide tissues for the post-interviews. Preaching encouraged them to disclose their life issues frankly, and they talked about

their problems more freely than before the sermon series. They appeared to need counseling with their serious life issues.

Even though I counseled them concerning their life issues, some of them seemed to need a more ongoing counseling process. For two of the male participants, I recommended the Father School, which teaches men good fatherhood. If Jiksan-eup Korean Methodist Church could provide the church members a counseling program or refer some of them to a counseling center, the congregation would get help from the church more efficiently.

Support Group

I found that some of the participants needed a support group in which they could share their hurts and pray together. Because of their situation they had difficulty keeping praying on their own; rather, they needed a support group that could encourage them to reveal their problems and pray. One of the participants did not have any Christians in her family. She encouraged her husband and sons to go to church, but they did not follow her advice. This situation made her lonely. In her family she had no one with whom she could pray and share her faith freely.

Prayer Ministry

In the previously mentioned case, the participant needed a prayer group to keep her in a spiritually stable state. She wanted to pray with other Christians regularly. Related to this subject, I also found that the church needed well-trained prayer group leaders. She and others tried a prayer group by themselves, but they had no leader and soon stopped the prayer group. She wanted me to lead a prayer group. I answered affirmatively but have not yet fixed the schedule.

Acting Out Truth in Preaching

Preachers can help the congregation experience truth by acting out truth in a performance such as nailing shame on the cross. The content of a sermon is carried more effectively through a good method. One of the good methods was acting out the content of a sermon in a performance related to this research; most of the participants pointed to the performance of nailing sorrows onto the cross as the most impressive preaching method. The method also can be a way to counterbalance the shame defenses like anger and to bring an answer to the defenses. This performance can be a transformational moment for the listeners. Therefore, I suggest using a method of acting out to deliver the message of healing more effectively.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Project

The project has several strengths and weaknesses.

Strengths

The project has three strengths.

The subject of the cross. One of the strengths of this project has been the choice of the cross for the preaching of healing. Most of the participants admitted that the most important issue they should have explored more in their faith lives was the cross. One of the participants regretted the ten years when he did not know the importance of the cross after beginning his faith life. He knew that he did not cling to the cross and God's grace, but he was faithful in his church life because of a promise he made to himself. The promise he made was that he would have a Christian faith because her fiancé wanted it. For ten years since his marriage, he never missed a Sunday because he did not want to

break the promise he made to himself. He had not understood the truth of the gospel rightly until he heard my preaching on the cross.

Lent for preaching. Another strength is the season of Lent for preaching on the cross. Lent was the most appropriate season for preaching the cross. Even though my sermon series started one week before Lent, still I could preach the rest of my sermon series during Lent. Additionally, I realized that I needed to preach more about the cross during the season of Lent, and I preached about the meaning of the cross all the way through Lent. Even though the season was not originally intentional in my research project, the church had a good opportunity to concentrate on Jesus' crucifixion during Lent with the help of the sermon series on the cross. The possibility of the sermon series to bring healing to the shamed during Lent came as an unexpected coincidence.

Preaching on the cross in a practical way. The final strength was that the sermon series enabled the congregation to realize that the cross is a practical grace for their real lives. One woman confessed that she did not expect the sermon series on the cross to be life situational. She thought she already knew what she needed to know; however, she finally realized that the cross should not remain only as a doctrine. She herself could adapt the meaning of the cross to her real life after the sermon series. The cross has the power to bring the emotional healing necessary for the congregation in their real lives.

Weaknesses

The project has three weaknesses.

Cultural character. One of the weaknesses of this project was the interviewees' cultural character in the interview. For Koreans to say, "I am proud of me," is not easy

culturally. In Korean culture, individuals are not supposed to be emphasized as much as in American culture. In a collective culture such as the Korean one, being much self-confident is considered rude in some way. Therefore, when I asked in the interview how they thought about themselves, they might want to be modest by not valuing themselves too much. For this reason, the interviewees probably found faults in themselves in answering my question about themselves.

No close relationship between the interviewer and the interviewees. Another weakness was the interviewees and I did not have a close relationship enough to disclose their hurts and shame. I came to know the interviewees only two months before my project. We did not have enough time to build a mutual trust. As a result, I believe several interviewees hesitated to speak out and say anything more about their lives. When one woman realized she had disclosed more than she had expected, she told me, "This is why I did not want to join this project." Therefore, they might not have asserted their deep sorrows freely to me as much as I wanted.

Descriptive statistics. The quantitative method which was used in this research was descriptive statistics, not inferential: pretest and posttest surveys. The number of samples, 18, was not enough to be studied in terms of Inferential Statistics. Therefore, with the data tables that reflect the results of the responses to pretest and posttest, I do not know if the changes shown in the data tables are significant.

Concluding Thoughts

I learned that more people than I expected carried shame in the church. Interviewing the participants, I discovered their shame and also the possibility of healing their shame through preaching the cross. At first, I started with theories but finally

realized the importance of the cross message for healing shame in a ministry field. Even better, I was told some of them experienced dramatic change in their attitudes toward themselves. They started recognizing themselves as God's valuable children by accepting God's unconditional love.

I believe every person has good and bad aspects at the same time. A problem of shame-prone people is that they do not recognize their good aspect. They just think of their bad and sinful aspect. Some preachers try to emphasize humanity's bad aspects to lead their congregation to repentance. However, the message tends to strengthen the level of shame to devastate the congregation's self-esteem and image of God. Without recognizing their good aspect, they cannot come into a deep and meaningful relationship with God. Without healing shame, they might not understand God's real love for them. The gospel of the cross is not for condemning but for salvation. Salvation is possible through healing.

My hope is that more preachers will realize the importance of the healing of shame and the effectiveness of the cross message for the healing of shame. Further, I pray that more Korean churches come to realize that modern church congregations need to get help through healing ministries such as preaching, prayer, and counseling.

APPENDIX A

THE FOUR SERMONS ON THE CROSS

First Sermon : “Jesus Shares Our Shame”

Scripture : 1 Cor. 1:23-25; Heb. 4:15-16.

Date: Feb. 15, 2009

Preacher: Sung Kwon Han, Reverend: Jiksan-eup Korean Methodist Church

Song for reaffirmation and prayer: “Come as you are!” (Words and music by Jung-hoon Oh)

If you have seen the movie, *The Passion of the Christ*, which Mel Gibson directed, you would know how cruel the cross execution was. When this movie was released, I remember how many people were shocked by the depiction of the cruelty of the cross execution. Even a friend of mine who is a pastor did not want to show this to the children in his church because of the cruelty portrayed in the movie.

It is true that the cross was a cruel execution. But, more than that, Jesus' cross was a sign of shame. First, in Jesus' times, the cross was a sign of shame because of the appearance of the criminal and his being ridiculed in front of the people around the cross. The victim dies naked, in bloody sweat, helpless to control body excretions or to brush away the swarming flies. Thus exposed to the jeering crowd, the criminal dies a spectacle of disgrace.

The second reason was the abandonment of the body. Generally, the body was left on the cross without burial to be prey for the wild beasts like crows and scavenger dogs.

For those reasons, the cross was a sign of shame. By Roman law no citizen could be so dishonorably executed. The cross was reserved only for foreigners and slaves.

What an absurd thing it is to follow this shameful figure as our savior. It was not understandable to people who lived in Jesus' times, and even thirty years after Jesus was killed, when Paul said, “but we preach Christ crucified: a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles” (1 Cor. 1:23, NIV). Paul knew the cross was a symbol of shame to his contemporaries. So, it was foolish for the Gentiles to follow Jesus who died on the cross. It seemed impossible for the Jews that the savior was killed on the cross of shame. But Paul continues, saying, “but to those whom God has called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the ‘foolishness’ of God is wiser than man’s wisdom, and the ‘weakness’ of God is stronger than man’s strength.” (1 Cor. 1:24-25).

Then how could it be the power and wisdom of God? How could a shameful death be the power and wisdom of God? The answer is that God changed the site of shame into the site of salvation, not only in his resurrection, but also in his unfair, shameful, and painful death itself. “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way, just as we are — yet was without sin” (Heb. 4:15). We feel shame when we fail to measure up to a standard or someone’s expectation. We feel shame when we doubt ourselves. If we have no weaknesses, we don’t feel shame. So, shame is a sign of our weaknesses. According to Hebrews 4:15, Jesus understands our shame because he experienced it. Jesus can be with

us whenever we are ashamed of anything, because he experienced it. Jesus died on the cross, which was a sign of shame.

Therefore, Jesus is the true friend who perfectly understands our sorrows, weaknesses and shame. When I was in college, a friend of mine came to me one night to talk. He looked disappointed and weak, contrary to his usual condition. He wanted to go somewhere to talk with me. We went to a park. It was a dark night when we sat down on the grass. He began talking about his mom's physical condition. He had found out that day that his mom had cancer. He was very upset with the news because his mom had lived a harsh life until that time. He did not understand why his mom, who had suffered from the heavy burdens of life, had to get another suffering of cancer. I did not know what to say, but I felt pity and was overcome with compassion. I wept listening to his mom's story and his feelings. I don't remember how many hours we spent there, but it was a long enough time to get exhausted. Then we came back to our dorm. It was a few years later when I realized what I was like to him that night. One day he said to me, "You wept with me there. You understood my sorrow there. I believe you are my real friend. Thank you!"

Our true friend understands our weaknesses, sorrows and shame. Jesus is our most trusted friend who sympathizes with our weaknesses. We want to hide our weaknesses from others' eyes. When our weaknesses are discovered, we feel ashamed. Because of a shameful mind, some people cover their weaknesses with anger, eagerness for success, or discovering others' weaknesses. But we should know that Jesus Christ is with us. He knows our weaknesses and shame. He experienced weaknesses and shame on the cross.

In fact, Jesus experienced shame not only on the cross. The cross was a shameful experience as a heightened epitome of Jesus' passion full of shame. When Judas betrayed him and the other disciples ran away in the moment of Jesus' arrest, Jesus experienced shame. In the court of Herod and Pilate, Jesus endured "false accusations and indictment." When people mocked him, dressing him up in purple, putting a crown of thorns on him, beating his head with a reed, and spitting on him, he went to the lowest place of shame as God's Son. The cross was the summary of Jesus' shame in his passion story. Finally, the cross was a shame experience as a victim of an unfair action. Jesus did no wrong, but was betrayed and finally killed unfairly on the cross. In this way, Jesus' cross was full of shame. Because of this, Isaiah told it like this. "He was despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows, and familiar with suffering. Like one from whom men hide their faces he was despised, and we esteemed him not" (Isa. 53:3).

To the people who are ashamed of failures, fears, limitations, wrong ideas, wrong things you have done, mistakes, weaknesses, poor physical condition, financial suffering, rejection from a community, family secrets, relationship with your peers, let me introduce Jesus Christ who is ready to listen to your story and understands your shame.

How beautiful it is that our every emotion can be delivered to Jesus Christ. We are connected to God "in Christ" (Eph. 1:7) who knows and shares, shares, and will share our weaknesses in the place of shame. Don't you want this advocate for your life?

Don't drive yourself into despair like you have never had a trustful friend who understands you. Jesus Christ is ready to get into your shameful situation to be with you. In this way, the cross of Jesus becomes the power and wisdom of God, as Paul said in 1 Corinthians 1:24.

This is possible only when you trust and proceed to God in Jesus Christ. “For we do not have a high priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who has been tempted in every way just as we are —yet was without sin. Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need” (Heb. 4:15-16).

Second Sermon : “Nail Your Shame and Weaknesses onto the Cross!”

Scripture : Isaiah 53:4

Date: Feb. 22, 2009

Preacher: Sung Kwon Han, Reverend: Jiksan-eup Korean Methodist Church

Preparation: a wooden cross —the cross was made of the branches pruned off the tree in the Jiksan -eup church yard.

Song for reaffirmation and prayer: “Were you there?”

Last Sunday I preached that Jesus Christ understands our shame and weaknesses because he experienced them like we did. Today I will preach about the second meaning of the cross. Jesus Christ bears our shame and weaknesses for us. So, we can put down our shame and weaknesses under the cross.

In fact, Jesus seemed powerful in his ministry. He healed the diseased. He criticized the Pharisees and the scribes. He was wise enough to answer to the tricky questions that were designed to get him in trouble. He used so many parables that even the unlearned could understand.

Then, why did he need to be crucified with shame in weaknesses? He needed to bear our shame and weaknesses. In Isaiah 53:4, it reads, “Surely he took up our infirmities and carried our sorrows, yet we considered him stricken by God, smitten by him, and afflicted.” So far, Isaiah 53 has been read related to sin. But that is not all. Jesus Christ bore not only our sin but also our sorrows and infirmities. We especially pay attention to the word “our.” He took up “our” infirmities and carried “our” sorrows. He bore not only his own sorrows but also ours. He came into our shame and weaknesses and even bore them. When we wept over our weaknesses, he went to the cross to bear them vicariously. When we strived to be stronger in order to cover our weaknesses and shame, he took our place in that shame and weaknesses. Jesus Christ, Son of God, didn’t have to do that. But he did not overlook our shame and weaknesses. He provided the place where we can be healed in our sorrows. He allowed us to put our sorrows on his shoulders.

Jesus Christ is the savior not only for the sinners, but also for the victims who are sinned against. We could be hurt by the wrongdoing of our family members. We could be abused physically and have a deep sorrows. We could be shamed with a long-time disease. We could hear wrong words to have shame on us. We could be hurt by unfairness or indifference. We could get discouraged with failure. All of these are our sorrows in our shame and weaknesses. Jesus Christ bore them for us. He even bore our disappointment with God. When he cried out, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” in Matthew 27:46, he expressed our disappointment with God. We get disappointed with God when we face our limitations in a situation. When we say, “I am disappointed with you, God,” we mean, “I cannot do anything in this situation. Why don’t you help me?” In other words, we get disappointed with God when we feel weak. Even Jesus Christ bore that weakness vicariously in crying out his words of disappointment.

Last Sunday I preached that Jesus Christ is our true friend who understands us in all our shame and weaknesses. Now, let’s go further. Not only does he understand our sorrows but he also bears them. We can come to the cross to give over our shame and weaknesses to Jesus Christ. Let’s not hold them as our own. Holding them as ours gets us into trouble.

There was a boy whose father was addicted to gambling and was also an alcoholic. Whenever he got drunk he gambled. Every time he gambled, he lost money. When he got sober and realized he had lost money, he drank again with a bitter mind. He lost money in drunkenness and vented his wrath in drunkenness. He used to lose control of himself and fall down. The boy had to carry his father home on his back. The boy loved his father, but he felt ashamed when his neighbors spoke ill of him behind his back. Shame became embedded in his heart.

Eventually the boy became a pastor. He was a sincere pastor, but he could not put up with one thing. He got angry when people complained. One Sunday he was preaching when he noticed a choir member who seemed to be grumbling. She had often grumbled before. When he thought she was grumbling, he could not put up with it. He got very angry and threw his Bible at her. He still held onto his shame even when he grew up to be a pastor.

Don't hold your shame and weaknesses inside you. I encourage you to nail them onto the cross. Nail those you have carried on your back. Nail those resentments you have held deep in your heart. Bring them out.

The cross is like an ocean. From the time when this world is made, a lot of dirty things have flowed into the ocean, but the ocean did not refuse to take them in. The ocean has taken up all those dirty things and taken care of them. Our Lord's cross is like that. Jesus Christ takes our weaknesses, shame, sorrows, and hurts on the cross. There are no sorrows that we cannot bring to the cross. Hebrews 4:16 says, "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence [emphasis mine], so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need." The cross of our Lord is the throne of grace.

The truth that Jesus' crucifixion represented human shame is still true as a present case for humanity now. The mystery of the cross event transcends physical space and time. For this reason, Paul did not leave Jesus' crucifixion as a past event. He thought of Jesus' cross also as a present event in which believers put their lives on the cross. "I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me" (Gal. 2:20, NIV; cf. Rom. 6:3-11). Stott applies Paul's testimony on the cross to preaching the cross:

"Jesus Christ had been crucified at least fifteen years before Paul was writing, and in our case nearly two millennia ago. What Paul did by his preaching ... was to bring that event out of the past into the present. The ministry of both word and sacrament ... can overcome the time barrier and make past events present realities in such a way that people have to respond to them.... Paul's preaching brought it before their [Paul's readers] eyes so that they could see it, and into their existential experience so that they must either accept or reject it" (*Cross of Christ* 343-44).

The event of the cross becomes a present event all the time, not as a memorial or symbol but as a real event. There are two ways before us. One way leads to healing through nailing our sorrows to the cross. The other way leads to embedding our sorrows in our hearts as ours. Choose the right way of healing mystery to be healed. Believe the words from Isaiah 53:5: "by his wounds we are healed."

Please look at this cross. You will find that this cross is somewhat different from other crosses you have known. This cross is made of the branches that were pruned off a tree in our church yard. These branches are crooked and ugly in our eyes. A gardener

must have thought that the branches needed to be cut off to make the tree beautiful, which means the cut branches are useless. It would be a shame experience for the branches if they could feel like us. The experience is one of shame and weakness for the branches. Then I thought these are the right wood to express our sorrows, our shame, and our weaknesses. Our sorrows are borne on the cross. Looking closely, even you can find the wounds made when I hammered down the nails to make this cross. They look like our wounds that Jesus Christ bears for us.

I have written one of our sorrows on each of these pieces of paper. I will nail them to this wooden cross one by one. When you read your sorrow on a paper, please pray, "Lord, I nail my sorrow with that paper."

(One by one I nailed the papers on which eight emotional hurts were written: feeling of failure, fear, disappointment, feeling of unfairness, total exhaustion, feeling of being betrayed, loneliness, shame).

This is the last piece of paper is empty. This is a sorrow that I have not mentioned. Write on it your sorrow that I have not spoken yet. I will give you a moment.

Now as I nail this sorrow to the cross, I ask you to nail it in your mind with me and get free from your burden of sorrows.

Third Sermon : “Unconditional Grace ”

Scripture : Romans 5:5 -6; 8:39

Date: Mar. 1, 2009

Preacher: Sung Kwon Han, Reverend: J iksan-eup Korean Methodist Ch urch

Song for reaffirmation and prayer: “My father’s song” (words and music by Kang, Myeong-Sik)

Last time when I preached, I said that the cross was a sign of shame in weakness. Then Jesus Christ willingly accepted the shame of the cross. Jesus Christ showed his weakness before people, in his life and finally on the cross. Reading the story of Jesus in the Gospels, we find miracles he did for people. But, as we go toward the end of the Gospels, we find how weak Jesus became. Finally, he died on the cross with our weaknesses and shame.

Today, I want to talk about the second meaning of the cross where Jesus showed his weakness. The second meaning is that Jesus showed how valuable we are to God.

June 8, 2008, seven people died and ten others were injured after a man hit pedestrians with a truck and then stabbed passersby on Sunday in broad daylight on a street in Tokyo’s busy Akihabara district. Akihabara is a district known for its electronics shops and as a center of modern culture, and attracts many visitors from both Japan and abroad.

The name of the culprit was Tomohiro Kato. He did not aim at any particular persons. Anyone was OK for him to kill. Kato had written on the bulletin board that he had no friends, according to media reports. Once when he was asked on a Web site forum to put a price on himself. Kato allegedly wrote, “I’m worthless. I’m below garbage, though garbage is much more valuable because you can at least recycle it.”

Like the case of Kato, low evaluation of oneself leads to a problem for society and not only for an individual.

Can any of us really be useless and below garbage as Kato says? When we think of the cross, we are not useless. No one is useless under the cross. Everybody is valuable under the cross for the following two reasons.

First, the event of the cross was initiated by God’s love of “in spite of.”

Romans 5:5-6 says, “And hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us. You see, at just the right time, when we were still powerless [emphasis mine], Christ died for the ungodly [emphasis mine].”

When we were helpless or powerless, Jesus came to carry our weaknesses. In other words, we call this love “unconditional grace.” There is no condition for his grace and love. We did not satisfy any condition for getting help from the cross. Rather, when we were weak and didn’t want to expose our shame, Jesus came to die for us. In spite of our weaknesses, Jesus came to die on the cross.

God’s love never changes at any time. He loves us when we fail. He loves us when we are without hope. He loves us when we feel sorrowful. He loves us when we are treated unfairly. We don’t need to do anything special to get his love. His love is given even before we do anything, for “neither height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Rom. 8:39).

Nothing can prohibit God's grace and love. Why? Because it is unconditional. If God's love were conditional, that love would not be given for all people. "You are not worth my love because..." This is not God's voice. It is the voice of the evil one. Our past events, present situation, and future hurts cannot obstruct God's love.

One pastor said it like this: "We work to be recognized. We overwork to be recognized under the obsession that we should do well to be recognized. But, our Lord thinks differently. He accepts us as we are. He loves us as we are. He loves us not because we do well or we do something worth his love. Our duty is to accept and enjoy this unconditional love."

Let me tell you the story of Rev. Jinkook Kim. He and I studied together in Asbury Theological Seminary. He was born as a healthy boy. But on his first birthday morning, he had convulsions. He started groaning like a monster and his eyes were rolling strangely. His parents were shocked and brought him to a big hospital. A doctor diagnosed him and said that he had an alien substance in his brain. After that, he had to be treated in a hospital for nine years. But, he was not healed. Finally, he was healed through his mother's prayer. It was God's miracle.

Being healed after ten years, the happiest thing for Rev. Kim was that he could play with his friends. He felt alienated when he had to stay on the sidelines watching his friends play soccer. No one wanted to involve him in any game because he was sick. Finally, when he was fourth grade in elementary school, he could join in a peer group.

One day when he was freshman in junior high school, he attended a revival movement at his church. He slept in the church and woke up early in the morning because he felt his body trembling just like when he was sick before. He became possessed by fear. He was not afraid of being sick again. He was afraid that he would not be able to join his friends again. He was afraid that his friends would reject him again. After a morning meeting, the speaker prayed for him. He could not understand any word from the speaker. Then suddenly, he heard a Bible passage from the speaker. "So do not fear, for I am with you; do not be dismayed, for I am your God. I will strengthen you and help you; I will uphold you with my righteous right hand" (Isa. 41:10). The words touched him. Rev. Kim confesses that he felt God was speaking like this: "Jinkook. Why are you so fearful? I never left you for the ten years of your sickness. When you were sick, I was too. When you were alienated from your friends, I was too. Jinkook. I am with you now and will be with you in the future."

Actually, Rev. Kim thought that God had given up on him. In his years of sickness he lost his sense of self-value. He wrote his feeling like this.

"I was alone. I was totally alone. I was a useless boy who could not even kick a ball. I didn't have any hope or happiness in my life. But God touched me with his shocking words. I said, 'Lord, you were with me? You were with me when I was suffering? You never left me when my friends treated me as defective?' My Lord answered yes. He answered that he never left me even for a second. Hot tears came down on my face. They were not tears of hope that I would be healed. They were tears of thanksgiving because God would never leave me in spite of my sickness. 'Lord, it's OK, even if I am sick again. I don't care if I cannot play soccer. I am happy that you are with me. I love you, Lord. Thank you Lord.'"

After this event he was perfectly released from the sickness, but I think it was a real blessing that he found out how valuable he was to God and how much God loved

him. The cross is the place where unconditional love and grace appear like that. When we are weak, God rather shows us greater love so that we cannot stop confessing that God loves us infinitely.

Second, the cross event shows that we are as valuable as Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

In God's unconditional love, God permitted Jesus Christ to die on the cross experiencing our weaknesses and shame. God gave his most valuable Son to us, because we are also valuable to God. We are as valuable as the love God showed to us on the cross. God did not cruelly kill his Son for us. Rather, it was an experience of torture for God himself when Jesus Christ died on the cross, because Jesus' name was Immanuel. Jesus got this name when Mary received a revelation about the birth of Jesus. "The virgin will be with child and will give birth to a son, and they will call him Immanuel—which means, God with us" (Matt. 1:23). God the Father was always with his Son. Even on the cross, we can say that God the Father was with Jesus in his suffering and shame. Thus, through the event of the cross, the God the Father went through death himself. Further, Jesus Christ gave himself voluntarily. "(Jesus Christ), who gave himself for us to redeem us" (Tit. 2:14). So, his death was not a cruel and miserable sacrifice but a voluntary loving sacrifice for us. This happened for each one of us.

God loves us regardless of what we can do or who we are. We are always valuable to God. Our very being is precious to God. That is the reason why Jesus Christ, Son of God, came into the place of shame, weakness, and suffering.

The event of the cross happened two thousand years ago. But it still remains a proof of God's unconditional love for us. No one is worthless or unloved by God. All of us are the object of God's love. We are precious.

Fourth Sermon : “Jesus Lives in Me”

Scripture : Gal. 2:20; Col. 2:12

Date: Mar. 8, 2009

Preacher: Sung Kwon Han, Reverend: Jiksan-eup Korean Methodist Church

Song for reaffirmation and prayer: “Crucified with Christ” (words and music by Yunho Park)

Until now, we have learned about God’s grace through the cross. On the cross, Jesus understands us as our most trustful friend, and bears our weaknesses and shame. Because of this, we know we are so very precious to God. When God has shown his grace like that on the cross, what do we do? How can we be fruitful in faith? We can be fruitful by being united with Christ. In John 15:5, Jesus told about the principle of being united to him to be fruitful: “I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him [emphasis mine], he will bear much fruit [emphasis mine]; apart from me you can do nothing.” Be united with Jesus, then you will be fruitful.

Let’s adapt this principle to the cross. What does it mean for us to be united with Jesus? Let’s read Colossians 2: 12. “having been buried with him [emphasis mine] in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.” The people baptized, in other words Christians, are united with Christ in Jesus’ death and resurrection. In a different way, Paul confessed the faith of unification as follows. “I have been crucified with Christ [emphasis mine] and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me [emphasis mine]. The life I live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Gal. 2:20).

With cross faith, Christians are nailed on the cross with Christ in a deeper dimension. Then a mystery happens. They no longer live, but Christ lives in them. God’s people nailed their weaknesses and shame on the cross of Jesus Christ. Then they don’t claim their old lives. Rather, they should live a new life of Jesus Christ who died on the cross. Jesus Christ took our shame on the cross so that we could be born again as new beings. We gave Christ our lives, and we took his life. It is a mysterious exchange happening on the cross.

Then what is a concrete life of Christ living in us? It is a life in which we go into others’ sorrows as Jesus Christ did. We begin to understand others’ shame and weaknesses as Jesus did. We don’t just look at others’ sorrows but mourn with those who mourn (Rom. 12:15). That was Jesus’ attitude toward our shame and weaknesses in his ministry on the cross. That is Christ who lives in us.

This way of life is opposite to the way of survival in this world. If we want to survive successfully in this world, we should not be weak; we should not be with the weak; we should be with the strong; we should follow the strong. But Jesus did not teach us how to survive, but he taught us how to revive. To revive people, we should not rule or control them but understand the weak, be with the weak, stretch our hands toward the weak and mourn with them. In this way, Jesus revived people with shame, weaknesses, and sorrows. Because of that, Jesus disappointed the Jews who wanted to make him a king of Israel, a secular Messiah.

We can find Jesus’ attitude toward worldly power in Mark 10:35-45. Right after Jesus prophesized his suffering and resurrection, James and John asked Jesus to let one of

them sit at his right and the other at his left in his glory. Then the other disciples became very angry, but Jesus told this lesson to his disciples who wanted to be powerful:

You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many [emphasis mine]. (Mark 10:42-45)

The rulers in Jesus' times could order their subjects, take others' properties, and share their power with those they liked. Probably the disciples were excited when they expected to be powerful with Jesus. However, Jesus did not survive with his power in this world. He rejected the devil's temptation to take authority by worshipping the devil.

The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. And he said to him, "I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. So if you worship me, it will all be yours." Jesus answered, "It is written: Worship the Lord your God and serve him only." (Luke 4:6-8)

Jesus rejected the devil's suggestion because he did not come to survive in the world, but to revive the world. Finally, he fulfilled his purpose on the cross by being with the weak. He even became weak in his sufferings. He was betrayed by one of his disciples. When he was arrested, his disciples ran away. Peter, the most trusted disciple, denied Jesus three times. Jesus was beaten, spit on, and jeered at.

Those who have nailed themselves on the cross should live the way of Jesus Christ on the cross. In the middle of my sermon series on the cross, I heard of some church members who gathered after my sermon. They shared their shame and weaknesses with each other. They prayed for each other with tears. They said they could understand each other's sorrows. I believe they followed Jesus' example on the cross. I believe they lived the life of Jesus Christ among them. I want to see this happen every day among church members, among family members, and among friends.

Now I will introduce a poem to you. It was written by Sok Hon Ham. I encourage you to find Jesus in this poem.

Do you have this person in your life?

By Sok Hon Ham/Translated by Ann Isaac and Sung-soo Kim. (Kim 24-25)

Before you leave for a long journey
Without any worry
Can you ask this person
To look after your family?

Even when you are cast out from the whole world

And are in deepest sorrow
Do you have some one
Who will welcome you warmly and freely?

In the dire moment when your vessel has sunk
Is there someone
Who will give you their life belt and say,
“You must live before me”?

At the execution ground
Is there someone
Who will exclaim for you,
“Let him live, even if you kill the rest of us”?

In the last moment of your life
When you think of this person
Can you leave this world smiling broadly
And feeling at peace?

Even if the entire world is against you
When you think of this person
Can you stand alone for what you believe?
Do you have this person in your life ?

Where can we see this person? On the cross. We have that person on the cross.
And when Jesus Christ lives in us we can follow that person by nailing our lives on the cross.

APPENDIX B

COVER LETTER FOR PRE -SERMON SERIES QUESTIONNAIRE

Rev. Sung Kwon Han

Feb. 1, 2009

Dear Friend in Christ,

You may be aware that I have been working on a dissertation project for a Doctor of Ministry degree from Asbury Theological Seminary. The first three chapters of the dissertation are completed and approved by my faculty committee. Most of my library research for the project is now complete. It is time to collect data from a real, live congregation. I am writing to ask for your assistance.

Here is how you can help:

1. Complete the enclosed questionnaire. It will take no more than 15 minutes to finish. Note that it includes 2 pages.
2. Place your completed questionnaire in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope.
3. Place the envelope in the mailbox by Saturday, Feb. 14, 2009.

Here is my pledge to you:

1. No attempt will be made to match returned questionnaires to individuals within the congregation. The personal code created by you for each survey will ensure anonymity. The code you create will be destroyed after the project is complete.
2. Because all responses are vital to this research, every returned questionnaire will be gratefully received and included in the study.

Thank you for your participation.

In Christ,

Rev. Sung Kwon Han

*Source: Brue 145.

APPENDIX C

COVER LETTER FOR POST-SERMON SERIES QUESTIONNAIRE

Rev. Sung Kwon Han

April 12, 2009

Dear Friend in Christ,

Thank you for your participation in my dissertation project. I have now preached all four of the sermons for my project in worship at Jiksan-eup Korean Methodist Church. At the completion of the sermon series, I write to seek your assistance once again.

Here is how you can help:

1. Complete the enclosed questionnaire. It will take no more than 15 minutes to finish. Note that it includes 2 pages.
2. Place your completed questionnaire in the enclosed self-addressed stamped envelope.
3. Place the envelope in the mail by April 28, 2009.

Here is my pledge to you:

1. No attempt will be made to match returned questionnaires to individuals within the congregation. The personal code created by you for each survey will ensure anonymity. The code you create will be destroyed after the project is complete.
2. Because all responses are vital to this research, every returned questionnaire will be gratefully received and included in the study.

Thank you for your participation.

In Christ,

Rev. Sung Kwon Han

Source: Brue 147.

APPENDIX D

QUESTIONNAIRES FOR PRETEST AND POSTTEST

SA=Strongly Agree
 A=Agree
 D=Disagree
 SD=Strongly Disagree

1. How strongly do you agree with the statement about God (your relationship to God)?
- | | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|----|
| 1) God is judgmental.* | SA | A | D | SD |
| 2) God accepts me unconditionally. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 3) God understands my shame (weaknesses) fully enough. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 4) God never abandons me in any circumstances. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 5) I am valuable to God and precious even when I sin. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 6) I am valuable to God even when I am ashamed. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 7) I am loved even when I betray God. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 8) I am living with a sin that God will never forgive.* | SA | A | D | SD |
| 9) I am worthless before God. * | SA | A | D | SD |
| 10) I feel a need to be more perfect to be loved by God. * | SA | A | D | SD |
2. How strongly do you agree with the statement about yourself?⁸
- | | | | | |
|--|----|---|---|----|
| 1) I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal basis with others. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 2) I feel that I have a number of good qualities. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 3) All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure.* | SA | A | D | SD |
| 4) I am able to do things as well as most other people. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 5) I feel I do not have much to be proud of. * | SA | A | D | SD |
| 6) I take a positive attitude toward myself. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 7) On the whole, I am satisfied with myself. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 8) I wish I could have more respect for myself.* | SA | A | D | SD |
| 9) I certainly feel useless at times.* | SA | A | D | SD |
| 10) At times I think I am no good at all.* | SA | A | D | SD |
3. How strongly do you agree with the statement about the cross?
- | | | | | |
|---|----|---|---|----|
| 1) Jesus' cross is intimately related to my present life. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 2) Jesus bore my shame (weaknesses) on the cross. | SA | A | D | SD |
| 3) When I think of the cross, I feel the grace of God. | SA | A | D | SD |

* = reverse-scored item.

⁸ Rosenberg (1965) Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)

APPENDIX E

PRE-INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What do you think about God? (Who is God to you? What is your relationship with God? What is your image of God? What does God mean to you? What is your feeling about God?)

2. What do you think about the cross? (What do you know about the cross? What do you feel when you think about the cross? What do you believe relating to the cross?)

3. What is your feeling about yourself? (How would you evaluate yourself? What is your image of yourself? What is your feeling about yourself?)

APPENDIX F

POST-INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What new things did you learn?
 - 1) Related to God (the relationship between God and you)
 - 2) Related to the cross
 - 3) Related to yourself
2. What did you realize again that you already knew?
 - 1) Related to God (the relationship between God and you)
 - 2) Related to the cross
 - 3) Related to yourself
3. Did the sermons remind you of your past or present events?
4. Do you have anything else to share?

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