

How to Strip Away the Enemy's Deep-Seated Lies That Have Left You Clothed in Shame

Do you wholeheartedly see yourself as clothed in a beautiful robe of the righteousness of Christ? Or do you still define yourself by your weak moments or the shame from your past?

Several months ago, I heard what seemed like the audible voice of the Lord saying my name while I was waking up. An inner cry rose up inside of me, and I said, "Lord, I just want to be who I was made to be." I immediately heard Him respond and say, "You already are; you just need to believe it."

Later on I went for a walk and saw a group of beautiful butterflies drinking nectar from some wildflowers, when I sensed the Lord continue saying, "Juliet, you are a butterfly who still believes you are a caterpillar."

This dialogue with the Lord started a process of Him revealing a dark and hidden area of shame-based thinking that robs me from understanding at a heart level my real identity in Christ. I want to point out that deep-rooted lies and core beliefs about our identity can remain stuck within the subconscious, which means that we are not conscious of them.

However, these lies and core beliefs are exposed when just the right painful circumstances touch these places indirectly. An example might be a friend who is in a busy season and doesn't have the time to connect with us, triggering in us an old wound of rejection. The pain of rejection feeds an insecure core belief of not being enough or worthy of one's attention. Most often, these fears and insecurities reinforce our shame-based thinking, which feeds our worst fear of *believing there is something wrong with us*.

This stronghold of shame started at the very beginning of time when Adam and Eve felt disconnected from their perfect union with God the moment they sinned. In Genesis 3:7, it says that “the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked [Adam and Eve became aware of their vulnerability and humanity apart from God]. So they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.”

While growing up, my identity was scarred and damaged by my earthly father’s extreme brokenness. Deep inside, I believed that there was indeed something wrong with me because I had unknowingly taken on my earthly father’s shame. I imagine that you might relate to similar feelings of shame that say deep down inside, “There is something wrong with me.”

If our core belief is that there is something wrong with us, we will perform for love, striving to prove we’re OK and worthy of acceptance. This mentality feeds legalism—the belief that we must earn or deserve God’s love and acceptance. The opposite of this is licentiousness, which says, “Why even bother. If I’m bad, I might as well give up trying.”

The truth is that Father God “has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. [God] chose us in [Christ] before the foundation of the world, to be *holy and blameless* before Him in love.” He adopted us into His family by Christ Jesus—to the praise of the glory of His grace which He graciously *bestowed on us in the Beloved*” (see Eph. 1:3-6; emphasis added).

In the Message translation, 1 Peter 2:9-10 gives a powerful declaration of who we are in Christ: “But you are the ones chosen by God, chosen for the high calling of priestly work, chosen to be holy people, God’s instruments to do His work and speak out for Him, to tell others of the night-and-day difference He made for you—from nothing to something, from rejected to accepted.”

I want to share some more truth with you about how our heavenly Father has removed our garments of shame and sees each one of the redeemed as clothed in the righteousness of Christ. The following passage illustrates that our robe is “put on by God” through faith, rather than by what we do. At the beginning of Zechariah, there is a powerful scene that unfolds, where Joshua, the high priest, is accused by Satan.

Then he showed me Joshua the high priest standing before the Angel of the Lord, and Satan standing at his right hand to accuse him. And the Lord said to Satan, “The Lord rebuke you, Satan! The Lord who has chosen Jerusalem rebuke you! Is this not a brand plucked from the fire?”

Now Joshua was clothed with filthy garments and was standing before the Angel.

Then He answered and spoke to those who stood before Him, saying, “Take away the filthy garments from him.” And to him He said, “See, I have removed your iniquity from you, and I will clothe you with rich robes” (Zech. 3:1-4, NKJV).

The name of Satan means “the accuser.” In Revelation 12:10, it says that Satan accuses us day and night before God. The accuser says, “You’re bad. You’re a loser and will never measure up.” However, Hebrews 7:25 tells us that Jesus, our advocate, always lives to intercede on our behalf. Jesus says, “Father, I’ve clothed My beloved ones in My robes of righteousness. They are holy and without blame.”

In many ways, in this present age, we relate to God mostly as sons and daughters. The prophetic picture in Psalm 45 describes us as His royal daughters (or sons) clothed in beautiful robes standing before the King. It’s a song about the love of King Jesus for us and the glory we will share someday as His eternal bride (or partner): “Listen to me, O royal daughter; take to heart what I say. Forget your people and your family far away [let go of your past shame]. For your

royal Husband delights in your beauty; honor Him, for He is your Lord” (Ps. 45:10-11, NLT)

“The bride, a princess, looks glorious in her golden gown. In her beautiful robes [of righteousness], she is led to the king” (Ps. 45:13-14).

This psalm reflects how our heavenly Father sees us based on our identity in Christ, which is confirmed in the New Testament as well:

[Jesus] died for all, that those who live should live no longer for themselves, but for Him who died for them and rose again.

Therefore, from now on, we regard no one according to the flesh. ... If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new. He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Cor. 5:15-17, 21, NKJV).

Beloved, do you still see yourself through the old lens of shame as a caterpillar? Or do you genuinely believe you are a butterfly in the spirit—a new creature in Christ?

When we have mother and father wounds, it distorts this picture of how our heavenly Father sees us and our belief about His love for us on a personal level. Consciously, we know He’s a God of love, but subconsciously, we don’t believe that He will love and accept us whenever we are weak. Instead, we listen to the voice of the accuser and live in anxiety and self-condemnation. Fear and self-condemnation both keep us trapped in a state of introspection and rob us from connecting with the presence of the Holy Spirit at a heart level. If the enemy can keep us stuck in a shame-based mindset and focused on our perceived weakness, we will miss out on walking in the authority of God’s kingdom.

I have good news for you! It's not God's goal to perfect us in our areas of weakness (so we can relax and take our eyes off ourselves). Instead, He uses our weakness to teach us to depend on Him humbly, so we will decrease, which makes more room for His life to increase through us. Paul describes this well:

And lest I should be exalted above measure by the abundance of the revelations, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I be exalted above measure. Concerning this thing, I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in needs, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake. For when I am weak, then I am strong (2 Cor. 12:7-10).

How do we overcome shame-based thinking and begin to see ourselves as sons and daughters of the King clothed in robes of righteousness?

Growing in surrender and faith based on the understanding of God's unfailing love are the primary keys. Once we truly comprehend and receive the depth of God's love, we can fulfill His plan of loving and obeying Him with all of our heart, soul, mind and strength—along with genuinely loving others as ourselves. Ephesians expresses the dynamic of God strengthening our faith, which increases our capacity for surrendering to God's love and results in being filled with more of Him.

That [God] would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be

able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God (Eph. 3:16-19).

Our faith becomes stronger as we posture our hearts to listen to the Lord. Romans 10:17 says that “faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.” Whenever I hear from the Lord, faith becomes an anchor within my heart, and it holds me steady through the storms of life. Hebrews 3:7-8 says, “Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts,” but lay down your walls of self-preservation.

If you sense there are walls of self-preservation around your heart that are hindering you from hearing from the Lord, ask Him to give you the grace and courage to express your pain to Him. If the wall deep down inside of you had a voice, what would it be saying? An example might be, “I am afraid that if I lay down this wall of protection, no one will keep me safe.”

I encourage you, beloved, to lay down your walls of self-protection and trust Jesus to share the job of protecting you. In the world, we will experience sorrow and suffering, but our heavenly Father is always there to use everything for our good when we surrender our lives to Him.

Hind's Feet on High Places is a beautiful allegory, written many years ago by Hannah Hurnard. In this story, the main character's name is Much-Afraid. On her journey to the high places with the Chief Shepherd, Much-Afraid learns two crucial lessons: *acceptance with joy* and *bearing with love*. Some practical ways to surrender our will is to rejoice in the Lord by faith—no matter what—and to allow His love to set the pace of our lives in how we relate to others. Recently, when I was required to surrender something very dear to me, I heard the Lord telling me to thank Him for the years I had to enjoy doing what I loved. Acceptance with joy helps to minimize

feelings of loss and disappointment.

A few years earlier, I was feeling anxious about potentially losing what I described as important to me. I heard the Lord say, "Whatever you give to Me, you will not fear to lose, because it's Mine and no longer yours." The enemy will no longer attack us with fear in the specific areas that we have genuinely surrendered to the Lord. What are some examples of things we might surrender to God? Reputation, title, position, friends, family members, finances or even our need for sleep.

Here is a perfect example of God's strength operating through our weakness: I woke up recently at 2:30 a.m. on a day when I had to speak at an event. I immediately ran to fear instead of God. Consequently, I took a sleep aid rather than turning to the Lord in faith. I felt so much anxiety about it that I ended up staying awake for the rest of the night. God was faithful, and He showed up the next day in my weakness. However, the lesson I learned was to trust Him more with my need for rest.

Here are some verses that connect faith and righteousness, and some regarding surrendering—or death to self:

For in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed—a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: "The righteous will live by faith" (Rom. 1:17, NIV).

The righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe. For there is no distinction (Rom. 3:22, NRSV).

And be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith (Phil. 3:9, NKJV).

Nor must you surrender any part of yourselves to sin to be used for wicked purposes. Instead, give yourselves to God, as those who have been brought from death to life, and surrender your whole being to Him to be used for righteous purposes (Rom. 6:13, GNT).

My old self has been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me. So I live in this earthly body by trusting in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me (Gal. 2:20, NLT).

He died for everyone so that those who receive His new life [a butterfly represents a new and transformed life] will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them (2 Cor. 5:15).

“Let us be glad and rejoice and give Him glory, for the marriage of the Lamb has come, and His wife has made herself ready.” And to her it was granted to be arrayed in fine linen, clean and bright, for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints [faith working through love] (Rev. 19:7-8, NKJV).

Beloved, are you ready to surrender your shame-based thinking to the Lord and put on His robes of righteousness by faith?

Where do you need freedom from fear or shame? {eo}

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This article originally appeared at [.](#)