

# OUT OF THE SHADOWS

## PART 3: THE SHADOW OF SHAME

### WIN

To recognize the difference between guilt and shame, and to experience the freedom that comes from bringing hidden struggles into the light.

### CONNECT

What's a harmless mistake you've made that still makes you laugh when you think about it?

### LEARN

Before watching the video together and discussing the questions provided, we suggest taking a few moments to pray. Here's a simple prayer you can use:

*Heavenly Father, thank you for your grace. Help us be honest about the things we've hidden, the mistakes we've made, and the lies we've believed about ourselves. Remind us that our identity is found in you, not in our mistakes or failures. Amen.*

After praying, watch the video for Part 3.

### APPLY

After the video, discuss the following questions as a group:

1. Do you have a recurring thought that seems to play in your mind more often than you'd like? It might sound like, "I should be farther along by now," "I should know the answer," or "I'm just never going to get this right." What does yours sound like?
2. Read **Luke 22:61–62** aloud.

*The Lord turned and looked straight at Peter. Then Peter remembered the word the Lord had spoken to him: "Before the rooster crows today, you will disown me three times." And he went outside and wept bitterly.*

What stands out to you about this interaction between Jesus and Peter?

3. Guilt says, "I did something bad." Shame says, "I am bad." What stands out to you about that distinction? Why is the difference important?

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4. Which one of these common lies are you most likely to believe, even subconsciously? What makes you say that?
  - I'm not enough.
  - I'll never change.
  - If people knew the real me, they wouldn't accept me.
  - My failure defines me.

5. Have you ever experienced the freedom that comes from finally telling someone something you had been hiding? Without needing to share details, what changed?

6. Read **John 21:15-17** aloud.

*When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?"*

*"Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you."*

*Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."*

*Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"*

*He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you."*

*Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."*

*The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?"*

*Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you."*

*Jesus said, "Feed my sheep."*

How does knowing that's how Jesus responds to our failures change the way we think about bringing our own struggles into the light?

7. As you reflect on this entire series, which shadow is holding you back from the freedom God has made possible for you: pride, loneliness, or shame? What could it look like to take a step out of the shadow?

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## PRAY

Take prayer requests, then close your time in prayer. Here's a simple prayer you can use:

*Heavenly Father, help us step out of the shadows of pride, loneliness, and shame. Give us the humility to depend on you, the courage to walk alongside others, and the honesty to bring hidden struggles into the light. Remind us that we are fully known and fully loved because of Jesus. Amen.*

## AFTERWARDS

This week, reflect on Peter's restoration in John 21. When shame reminds you of your failures, remember how Jesus responded to Peter—with grace, restoration, and purpose. Ask God to help you receive that same grace and take one step toward living in the freedom he offers.