



The Soul of Shame: Retelling the Stories We Believe About Ourselves

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Prominent Psychiatrist and Author Uncovers the Soul of Shame in New Book

Dr. Curt Thompson, a psychiatrist in private practice in Falls Church, Virginia, and founder of Being Known has published a new book, *The Soul of Shame*. It follows up on the research and discoveries he made in his first book, *Anatomy of the Soul*, by unpacking shame, revealing its ubiquitous nature and neurobiological roots and describing the affect it has on our souls. He also provides the theological and practical tools necessary to dismantle shame based on years of researching its damaging effects and counseling people to overcome those wounds.

“I was motivated by the intensity with which how, when working with patients or consulting with businesses or schools, virtually everything that I addressed in *Anatomy of the Soul* eventually leaned in the direction of shame,” Thompson said. “Shame seems to be the drain to where all the water in the tub eventually runs.”

In *The Soul of Shame*, Thompson shows that shame is the primary force that evil wields as a means of destroying creation, both through theological and neurobiological methods. Shame attempts to stunt our ability to answer our vocational callings by infecting our interpersonal relationships, disrupting our emotional and neurobiological systems and curtailing our capacity for creativity and imagination. Furthermore, Thompson demonstrates that shame is not simply an artifact of human developmental evolutionary biology; rather, it’s from the story within the biblical narrative. It is a vector, wielded with intention by evil to destroy anything it touches.

Thompson based the findings in his book on years of researching its damaging effects while also counseling people to overcome the wounds shame causes. “The distinctive about this approach lies in how the book frames shame as part of a larger story, a story in which God in Jesus is actively and intentionally addressing not only the brokenness of sin in the world, but also (one of) its most powerful emotional accompanists,” Thompson said. “It also demonstrates how the God of the Bible accomplishes this by acting in the very way that current research in the field of interpersonal neurobiology suggests is necessary if we are to discover lives of goodness and beauty. . . . My hope is that readers would not only more helpfully recognize the nature and functional features of shame, but also (and perhaps especially) realize its healing, with which comes not only the repair of ruptured interpersonal relationships but also a fresh awakening to vocational imagination and creativity.”

Gayle D. Beebe, president of Westmont College, said, “Under the rapid-fire pace of modern life, Dr. Curt Thompson provides laser focus to the dynamics of the human soul and

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BOOK DETAILS

especially the crushing weight of untreated shame. With the heart of a pastor and the training of a surgeon, Dr. Thompson excavates layers of shame and then demonstrates their life-destroying aspects when left untreated. His training in psychiatry and medicine and his love and commitment to the life and spirit of Jesus uniquely qualify him both to diagnose and treat the ailment while pointing us to the one and only source of true life. Every individual who suffers under the weight of shame will benefit from this important book.”

Thompson is the founder of Being Known, an organization that develops resources to educate clinicians, individuals and groups on the connection between interpersonal neurobiology and Christian spirituality. He is board certified by the American Board of Psychiatry and Neurology and his main focus of clinical and research interest has been the integration of psychiatry, its associated disciplines and Christian spiritual formation. Serving as an elder at Washington Community Fellowship in Washington, D.C., his duties have included preaching, teaching and participation in the fellowship’s healing prayer ministry. He has also produced a video series titled *Knowing and Being Known: The Transforming Power of Relationships*.