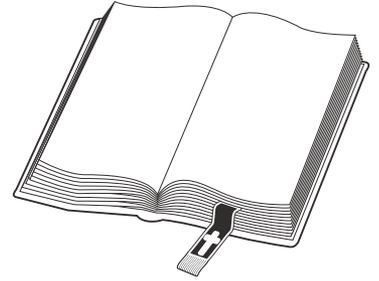


# God's Word Healed My Shame

*"I cling to Your testimonies; O Lord, do not put me to shame!"* Psalm 119:31



## Number 13 in the series "The Joy of Obeying God's Word"

For many years I lived with the pain of a lot of shame. Only by GOD'S AMAZING GRACE, daily time in prayer, and clinging to the promises of His Word have I experienced freedom and healing. According to the dictionary, "shame" means disgrace, indecent, without modesty, dishonor, and injured reputation (to name only a few).

My life of shame started when I was born in Scotland. My mother was not married, and to be born illegitimate in 1938 was a great shame. Some of my earliest memories were feeling I was different, hearing children talking about their fathers and wondering why I did not have one, having children and adults ask me where my father was and not having an answer, asking my mother who my father was and where he was, and experiencing her anger. She would let me know that if she had not become pregnant with me, he would never have left her; so somehow his leaving was *all my fault*.

From my earliest memories, my mother told me that I was a mistake, that I should never have been born, that she did not love me, and how she tried three times to abort me. She could not understand how I survived each time. She never said anything about her doing anything wrong. I was always told this in a way that made it clear that my being born and surviving three attempts to kill me was *all my fault*. I constantly lived with guilt and shame because I was alive and that my being alive drove my father away. For 16 years my mother constantly let me know that it was because of my birth that she was unhappy and that *I had ruined her life*.

I still remember starting school and the shame of being the only illegitimate child around. Seeing and hearing some of the other children laugh and whisper about me. How I dreaded their questions! I was a child during WWII, and my country was bombed a lot. Over the years of the war, many children lived with the pain of their fathers being killed in battle. I in no way want to minimize their sorrow; however, I could clearly see people reach out to them to love and comfort them. They were made to feel special because their dads died an honorable death in battle. They were encouraged to feel proud of their fathers, and they were told that it was natural for them to hurt, grieve, cry, feel lonely, and talk about their fathers, all of which was right. However, this seemed to highlight the fact that there was nothing honorable about my situation. I could not publicly hurt, grieve, cry, or talk about my father. There was so much guilt and shame about my birth and his absence, and *somehow it was all my fault*.

Beloved, my painful story has a joyful ending. Applying God's Word and the power of the Holy Spirit healed, delivered, and set me free from all the shame and gave me the power to forgive. I also had the joy of praying for my mother as she accepted Jesus Christ as her Savior.

Read the next lesson and learn more about the destructiveness of shame and the power of Jesus to set us free.

— *Janice McBride*

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*All scripture is taken from the New King James Version of the Bible.*

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