

STUDY GUIDE

FIVE SESSIONS

CHRISTINE CAINE

DROP THE
BAGGAGE, PICK UP
YOUR FREEDOM,
FULFILL YOUR
DESTINY



UNASHAMED

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STUDY GUIDE

Also by Christine Caine

Unashamed (book)

Undaunted (book and video study)

Living Life Undaunted (365-day devotional)

Unstoppable

UNASHAMED

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FREEDOM, FULFILL YOUR DESTINY

STUDY GUIDE
FIVE SESSIONS

CHRISTINE CAINE

WRITTEN BY KEVIN AND SHERRY HARNEY



ZONDERVAN

Unashamed Study Guide

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This title is also available as a Zondervan ebook.

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ISBN 978-0-310-69848-7

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Published in association with the literary agency of David O. Middlebrook, 4501 Merlot Avenue, Grapevine, Texas 76051.

Cover design: Jessica Davis

Cover photography: David Dobson Photography

Interior design: Kait Lamphere

First Printing May 2016 / Printed in the United States of America

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OF NOTE

The quotations interspersed throughout this study guide and the introductory comments are excerpts from the book *Unashamed* and the video-based curriculum of the same name by Christine Caine. All other resources—including the small group questions, session introductions, and between-sessions materials—have been written by Kevin and Sherry Harney in collaboration with Christine Caine.

A WORD FROM CHRISTINE CAINE

I spent the first twenty-two years of my life shackled by shame. Looking back, I realize I had always felt it. It had been a part of my life from my earliest memories.

I felt it when I was rejected. Made to feel unworthy. Of no value.

I felt it when I was abused. And couldn't tell anyone. And believed it was somehow my fault.

I felt it when I tried to hide who I was, apologize for who I was, minimize my talents, or overachieve and compensate for feeling somehow "less than."

Have you felt it? If you're human, you have—and the result is always the same.

Shame makes us feel small. Flawed. Not good enough. And controlled.

Shame is the fear of being unworthy, and it adversely affects our relationship with God, others, and ourselves. It greatly hinders our ability to receive God's unconditional love—and share it with others.

Because of God's great love, I began to discover the power of God's Word to break through the lies I had believed—and to reveal the truth of who I am and why I was created. Breaking free from the shackles of shame is not an overnight experience or a quick-fix, ten-step process. It is, however, a grand, ongoing adventure of discovering the depths of God's love and the huge scope of God's

power to transform us, re-create us, and continually renew us. This process will not end until we meet him face to face.

The development of this curriculum, along with the writing of the book *Unashamed*, is yet another step in my journey. I pray that my story and this study will open your heart and allow God to lift the shame off you so you can flourish and become all that he has created you to be.

Do you struggle with the fear that you are not enough?

Are you afraid to let your true self be seen and known?

Are you always trying to gain approval? Trying to prove you are valuable and worthy to be loved?

Do you want to break the power of shame in your life?

If so, join me and your small group members as we learn to drop the baggage of shame, pick up our freedom in Christ, and step into the fullness of the destiny—the shame-free life—God has in store for us.

I pray that these five sessions of learning, and the exercises you will do between the sessions, will help you take the next steps on your journey to freedom. As you read, the enemy will be trembling, because he knows that once God has broken the chains of our slavery to shame, there will be no holding us back!

God created you for a unique purpose. He has a specific plan for your life, and he has a powerful destiny he wants you to fulfill. And guess what? Shame has no place in that purpose, plan, and destiny. Jesus came to set you free from shame.

“It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery” (Galatians 5:1).

Session 1



**RUN, DON'T
HIDE**

Introduction

Anna went to the doctor for a routine checkup and some additional “age appropriate” tests. At forty, she had been super healthy all her life. As a matter of fact, she had never had a broken bone, a surgery, or even a cavity. When she spoke of her good health, she would often say, “I guess I just have good genes!” When the doctor’s office called two weeks later, she was shocked to learn of a number of serious concerns, including the possibility of cancer. She was given the number of a specialist to contact immediately. Two months later, Anna had still not told her husband and children about the doctor’s report, and she had not yet called the specialist her doctor had recommended.

Simon was a curious eight-year-old boy. He loved to play, explore, and experiment with anything and everything . . . including fire. He found a pack of matches and went out into a field near his home to see if he could light them and start a “little campfire.” In the dry summer conditions, starting a little fire was easy; the hard part was keeping it little. In less than sixty seconds, Simon’s experiment had gotten out of control. He ran home as fast as he could. Instead of telling his parents, he hid in his bedroom. He did not want anyone to know what he had done.

Ricardo and Maria could see that their daughter was not the same happy, joy-filled young woman she had been two or three years ago. At seventeen she had become sullen, a recluse who stayed in her room most of the day. She rarely smiled and had very little to say. They did not want to intrude or seem overly concerned, so they decided to leave her alone and hope she figured things out on her own.



God always runs toward us, not from us.

Talk About It

Think about one of the three scenarios in the session introduction and tell about how this story might end if the pattern of running away were to continue.

or

How might the same story end on a happier, healthier note if there were a decision to run to the right person and address the challenge at hand?



You were created on purpose for a purpose.

Video Teaching

Watch the video teaching segment for session one, using the following outline to record anything that stands out to you.

Notes

There is ice cream on your face

The life-giving balance of grace and discipline

The difference between “who” and “do”

Many women have been trained to live in shame:

Shame we put on ourselves . . .

Shame others impose on us . . .

The shame-lifting story of a loving Father

The only antidote to the power of shame . . . the unconditional love, grace,
and acceptance of God revealed in Jesus:

The difference between shame and guilt

We are loved, accepted, and sons and daughters of the King of kings

Get up and run to the Father, not away from him



*Shame tries to keep us hiding from
God rather than running to God.*

Video Discussion and Bible Study

1. Tell about a time you got caught doing wrong but were afraid to admit it. Why do you think we tend to run away and hide instead of quickly admitting our wrong?

2. Nick and Christine still disciplined their daughter Sophia after she admitted her wrong and expressed genuine sorrow. How is this kind of discipline actually a sign of deep love and devotion? How does God extend grace to us and yet still lovingly discipline us?

3. How does realizing that our “who” and our “do” are not the same become the starting point of freedom from shame that wants to keep us imprisoned and shackled to our past?



A lot of times we feel such shame that we never recover from what we did because we cannot separate our “who” from our “do.”

4. Christine shares honestly about the shame she lived with and carried deep in her soul for many years. She also talked about how most women deal with some kind of shame in their lives. Take a moment to reflect on some of the sources of shame that can keep a person shackled, unable to fully receive God’s love, and unable to pursue his vision for their lives. Identify one or more of these that seems to be alive and working in your life:
 - Shame over what someone has done to you in the past
 - Shame over some aspect of your physical appearance
 - Shame over needing the help of others and feeling you are not strong enough
 - Shame over a poor and ungodly decision in the past
 - Shame over how you parent (as you compare yourself to other parents and families)
 - Shame over your personality and fundamental wiring as a person

- Shame over your dreams, hopes, and aspirations
- Shame over something else

Silently pray for God to give you courage and strength to face this shame and to bring it, in a new way, to the foot of the cross of Jesus. For those who feel led, tell the others in your group about one source of shame in your life. Seek to explain, as best you can, how this shame is affecting you.



The perfect antidote to shame is the unconditional love, grace, and acceptance of Jesus toward each and every one of us.

5. **Read** Psalm 139:1–14. King David, the person inspired by the Holy Spirit to write this beautiful prayer, knew a lot about shame (self-imposed shame as well as shame placed on him by others). Yet he could write this bold declaration about himself and the God he loved. What do you learn from David’s perspective in this psalm?

Describe a time you actually felt wonderfully loved and accepted in the eyes of God. How does knowing and embracing God's amazing love change how you see yourself?



Nothing that you have done can change the fact that you are created in the image of God. You are a son or daughter of the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

6. **Read** Luke 15:11–24. The father in this parable is a picture of God, your heavenly Father. The wandering and rebellious child is a picture of you and me. What do you learn about the love and heart of the Father in this beautiful story?

7. Christine makes an interesting and provocative declaration in today's session. She says that shame is destructive and demonic, but guilt can be valuable and helpful on our spiritual journey. What is the difference between shame and guilt? Why is it essential that we crush shame and still embrace the good aspects of guilt?



Jesus qualifies those whom the devil has tried to disqualify. He has borne your shame so that you no longer need to carry the burden of shame.

8. What does it mean to declare, “What we do can be wrong, but doing these things does not make *us* wrong”? How can admission of our wrong and guilt before God, and running to the cross of Jesus, lead to freedom from shame?



God declares that our “who” is far greater than our “do.”

9. In the story of the rebellious and wandering son, there was a moment when the young man came to his senses, got up out of the pigpen, and began heading home to his father. This was the beginning of his healing process and freedom from shame. What will it look like for you to come to your senses, get up, and begin running toward God instead of away from him? Share specific ways you will need to change your thinking, attitude, actions, and lifestyle if you are going to seek freedom from shame.



*Only Jesus Christ can give us forgiveness
for our past. And here is the power
of it—a brand new life today.*

10. Respond to this statement, “If it is not revealed, it can’t be healed!” Why is identifying our shame, admitting it, and sharing our story with other people essential in the freedom and healing process? How are you feeling about the coming four sessions of this *Unashamed* study?

How can your group members pray for you, encourage you, and support you in the coming week as you walk through this learning experience together?



*God can help you become a victor
and not a victim of your past.*

Closing Prayer

Spend time in your group praying in any of the following directions:

- Thank Jesus that he left the glory of heaven, bore your shame on the cross, and longs to set you free from all shame.
- Thank God that he not only extends amazing grace to you but also lovingly disciplines you because you are his precious child, whom he has fearfully and wonderfully made.
- Pray for eyes to see the spiritual reality that your “who” and your “do” are not the same.
- Pray for the members of your group to experience powerful freedom from shame in the coming weeks as you walk through this study together.
- Invite the Holy Spirit to show you the places in your heart and life where shame is entrenched and secretly seeking to destroy you.



God longs for us to run to him and not from him.

BETWEEN-SESSIONS PERSONAL STUDY

You are invited to further explore the themes of *Unashamed* by engaging in any or all of the following between-sessions activity options. Any time you invest will be well spent; let God use it to draw you closer to him. And, as time allows, share with the group what you are learning when you gather next.

Shame Hunt

Take time in the coming week to survey your life: your relationships, your thoughts, your motives and attitudes. Where is shame hiding? Where has it made a home in your heart? What is driving and growing your shame? Be honest and humble. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you eyes to see, even if seeing the shame in your life is painful. Write down two places of shame that you identify.

One place of shame I identified:

How is this shame impacting how I see myself?

How is this shame shaping how I relate with others?

How is this shame causing me to run from God and not toward him?

How might this shame poison and damage my life if I don't face it and deal with it?

Another place of shame I identified:

How is this shame impacting how I see myself?

How is this shame shaping how I relate with others?

How is this shame causing me to run from God and not toward him?

How might this shame poison and damage my life if I don't face it and deal with it?



Shame makes us feel unworthy. We end up running from God instead of running to God. And we run from each other rather than helping one another.

Social Media Evaluation

Reflect on your engagement in the world of social media (or media in general). Commit to pay attention to what you view, what you share with others, and how this might be a source of shame.

What social media do you participate in?

How much time do you spend watching media (TV, movies, online)?

What are some of the primary messages you are receiving from viewing social media and other forms of media? (Write down five messages below.)

Message:

Message:

Message:

Message:

Message:

How might these messages be creating a place for shame to take root and impact your life?



*Shame makes us feel unworthy,
like we are not enough.*

If you have concerns about the messages you are receiving or sending through media, consider doing a media fast for a week—eliminating or cutting back as much as possible. See if this impacts you in a positive way. If you do this, share the results with your group when you meet for the next session.

Start Running

If you have been avoiding God because of an area of shame in your life, commit to run *to* God in the coming days and weeks. Choose one or more of the “Run to God” exercises from the checklist below, and then use the journal section or a separate notebook to write about what God is teaching you through the exercises you’ve chosen.

- ❑ **Run to God #1:** Make a decision to be with your group at every session of the *Unashamed* study, even when you feel tempted to avoid it because the process might be getting difficult for you.
- ❑ **Run to God #2:** Commit to attend church weekly while you are walking through this study and seek to engage your heart, mind, and body fully in worship, even when you might feel some measure of shame and unworthiness.
- ❑ **Run to God #3:** Read a portion of the Bible each day and invite the Holy Spirit to speak to you, teach you, and minister to you as you read.
- ❑ **Run to God #4:** Begin a journal in which you write down three prayers of praise each day: one for God’s love, grace, and goodness; another for someone in your life who is a blessing and joy; and a third for something about who God has made you and what he wants to do in and through you as his beloved child.
- ❑ **Run to God #5:** Read Psalm 139 each day for the next week. Slow down and meditate on verses 13 and 14, and say them out loud. Thank God that you are fearfully and wonderfully made!



When that shadow of shame lurks in the corners of our hearts, it holds us back from the fullness of all that God has for us. . . . You can leave your guilt and your shame at the cross and you can move past your past.

Journal

Use the space provided below to write some reflections on any of the following topics:

- How have you experienced both the grace and discipline of God, and how has this combination revealed God’s fatherly love for you?
- Where have you too closely connected who you are (your “who”) with what you have done in the past, or what you are doing right now (your “do”)? What consequences might result if you can’t separate your “who” and “do” in this area of your life?
- When you think of honestly sharing your places of shame with God and the members of your group, what will get in the way and tempt you to keep running from God and the people in your life?
- What are some possible results if you stop running and really face your shame?
- What are some possible consequences if you keep running from your shame and refuse to face it?

