



Stop! Drop! And Declare! | Doug Wekenman | 3.3.19  
Life Group Weekly

## START

To get things started, go around and answer the following question:

**If you had to delete all but three apps from your smartphone, which ones would you keep?**

## SHARE

Welcome to week four of our relationship series called “Mixtape.” If you have ever made a mix tape for someone, chances are your motivation was to move them. Whether it was to remind them of your love, make them rethink things about your relationship, or even convince them to get back together; mixtapes are created to inspire movement!

In this series, we are talking about moving our relationships closer to what God originally intended them to be. Whether you are single, dating, engaged, or have been married for years, we all have meaningful relationships in our life. And if we are honest, these relationships always have room for improvement.

**Let's get started by answering these two questions.**

**What was your favorite part of your week? Why?**

**What was your least favorite part of your week? Why?**

G R O W

This week we continued our relationship series by talking about shame. We all have meaningful relationships in our lives, and we want to see them thrive. But shame is one of the great enemies standing in the way of that happening. This problem is nothing new; it goes all the way back to the very first relationship recorded in Scripture. So once again, let's move forward in our relationships by first going back to the very beginning of the Bible.

**Read Genesis 2:25-3:10**

Genesis 3 is an essential chapter in Scripture. This is the moment every relationship is compromised. Adam and Eve take the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of God and Evil, and then they panic. Adam tries to hide from God, he sows fig leaves together to cover himself up, and he blames Eve for everything. And then things spiral out of control eventually leading to one of his sons murdering the other (Gen 4:8). In short, Adam's relationships go from complete peace, to utter chaos.

**Why? What caused the shift?**

There are several answers to that question, but a big one is SHAME. When everything goes down, Adam feels shame. His immediate response is to run and hide from God. Ever since that moment, we have all been doing the exact same thing. As Doug pointed out this week, "shame is so powerful that it will cause you to do everything you can to not feel it." Shame drove Adam to jump into the bushes and cover himself up with fig leaves, and while we may not use fig leaves, we've all found ways to try to hide our true selves from God and others.

Everyone's "fig leaves" look a little different. Some of us try to hide behind our accomplishments. We think if we just do enough things, earn enough degrees, make enough money, or receive enough notoriety in our field we will be okay. Others try to hide behind a certain image portrayed on social media, by the friends we surround ourselves with, or simply just by numbing everything with our drug of choice.

It is not easy to have meaningful, authentic relationships with someone when we are devoting all of our energy to trying to cover up our true selves. So, no matter which avenue you go down, it does not take long for our “fig leaves” to create rifts in our relationships.

Shame is the great enemy of healthy relationships. Thankfully, the entire story of the Bible is about the great lengths God goes to in order to save us from this shame!

**What are some “fig leaves” you tend to hide behind? Why do you think you gravitate toward them?**

**How would your relationships look different this week if you stopped hiding behind those “fig leaves”?**

M O V E

**Read Romans 8:1-4**

If someone asked you to explain what this passage means in your own words, what would you say?

Reread Romans 8:1. Do you find it difficult to believe this verse about yourself? Why or why not?

We can't talk about shame without talking about Romans 8. Throughout his life, Paul always wanted to visit Rome, but at the time he is writing this letter, he still hadn't managed to get there. He reaches out to a group of people he has never met before which explains why Romans goes into so much more detail than all his other letters.

Paul just spent seven chapters laying out our need for a Savior. He even confesses at the end of chapter seven, that despite his best intentions, he still finds himself doing things he wishes he wouldn't do (Romans 7:21-24). The first half of the letter leaves us all feeling like we don't stand a chance. But of course, this is all to point us back to Jesus! Chapter eight goes on to remind us over and over again that our job is not to be “good enough” to make God happy,

But the truth of the gospel is that Jesus has already accomplished everything necessary with His death and resurrection, to make us “good enough.” There is no condemnation for us!

Our feelings of inadequacy give birth to shame. When we don’t feel like we are enough, we (like Adam in the garden) run and hide from God. But Paul just reminded us that the problem is fixed. Jesus took care of everything. There is now no longer any condemnation for us which means shame is nothing more than a lie that we need to rebuke!

Romans 8:1 is the antidote to shame!

Of course, this is WAY easier said than done. We will all spend the rest of our lives trying to understand and believe that there is no condemnation for us because of Jesus. This week, we have another opportunity to wrap our minds and hearts around this beautiful truth a bit more. We have another chance to say “no” to shame and preach to ourselves the truth of the gospel! As we do, we will begin to experience our relationships become healthier and more authentic! So, let’s STOP, DROP, and DECLARE!

**Write out Romans 8:1 on a sticky note or a 3X5 card and place it on your mirror, your steering wheel, your computer, or wherever you will see it often. Every time you look at it, or anytime you start feeling shame creep in; stop, read it, memorize it, preach it to yourself, and then keep going throughout your day.**

Take a step further and text the verse to someone in your group this week as a reminder of the grace God has given us. And if you really want it to sink in, try memorizing the entire passage (Romans 8:1-4) before your next meeting.

**Romans 8:1**

*Therefore, there is now  
no condemnation for  
those who are in Christ  
Jesus.*

## P R A Y

As a group, spend some time praying with and for each other. If you are in a coed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to share more freely.

## T O G O

"In all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us."  
- Romans 8:37

