

# The Lost Art of Blushing

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Have you young people ever had a red face?

Have you ever been embarrassed because of what you did or are doing that has manifested itself as silly or wrong in the eyes of those before whom you stand?

Young men, look at your feet. Did you find that this morning you put a blue sock on your right foot and a green one on the left foot in the darkness of your bedroom? You will, no doubt, blush, but not if you are alone in the room when you find out this mistake. But if you arrived at school or at work, and others called your attention to this error, you might probably blush, or at least in your soul feel foolish.

Blushing is an outward manifestation of an inward feeling of shame because of a wrong or foolish deed that has been performed. It means that one's face is red because one is embarrassed because of a shortcoming or wrong deed.

Take note, young people, of the fact that Jeremiah gives us a very important warning in regard to such evil deeds that call for blushing. For in Jeremiah 6:14, 15 we read: "They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? Nay, they were not at all ashamed, neither could they blush: therefore they shall fall among them that fall: at the time that I visit them they shall be cast down, saith the Lord."

Plainly that kind of blushing is far more serious. To lie about something is a breaking of the ninth commandment and a sin that calls for punishment in the lake of fire. O, yes it does. Read Acts 5. Ananias and his wife Sapphira both were punished with death for having lied about whether they had given to the church all the money they received for the land that they sold. Peter told them that they lied unto God. And God, not Peter or that early New Testament church, punished them with death.

In the text quoted above we read of certain people who lied and said, "Peace, peace," when actually there was no peace of God resting upon the wicked Israelites. They were not treated peacefully by God but in the awfulness of His holy wrath.

The tragedy, today, young people, is that there are so many sins wherein we are not simply by the world, but often even by the church, encouraged to walk, and told that these acts are not wrong, and do not call for punishment. We are taught that God's peace will rest upon us if we walk in these deeds. We of the older generation can see these things more clearly than you of the younger generation. But make no mistake about it. We so often today tell others as well as ourselves that it is quite all right to walk in this sin or in that evil way. It is claimed that God's peace will not be taken away from us, if we do this or that evil deed, which we call a good deed. In fact, in much of the church today it is taught that man is getting better and less sinful than in ages gone by, so that soon the kingdom of heaven will be here on this earth through the works man has produced.

There is so much breaking of both tables of the law today that brings forth not the slightest trace of blushing and shame because of the devilish deed. Not simply in the world is this true today; but also, as in the days of Jeremiah, in the church world there are gross sins that get applause instead of shame and blushing.

God's law, however, teaches us that when we break one of the commandments from two through ten we are breaking the first commandment, and we have a god who in our minds stands

before Jehovah. No matter what kind of sin it is that we commit, it is always due to the fact that we have another god before the one true and only God, Whose is this earth and all that it contains, and must be served with heart, mind and strength. And God is sovereign and has the right to demand of us that we live only to His praise and glory and have no idols, but serve Him alone. That idol must not be our flesh. All that we have we owe to God, and we are obliged to use all that which He gives us in a way that confesses Him to be God alone.

We must then feel shame and blush when we set ourselves, or some other creature up as the god we are going to serve. Instead, not only is there no shame and blushing, but men are even praised and feel honored for their evil deeds. Yes, even in the church world that is true. In many churches the art of blushing, that commendable manifestation of being children of God, is hard to find. And today the church in many ways and with increasing intensity is beginning to look and live like the world. Even as in the name Antichrist you find the name Christ, so in much that calls itself church today there is that anti, that is, that which is against Christ, even though it does claim to be His Church. Instead of being Christian it is antichristian.

Get the picture, young people, which Jesus gave us in the parable of the Pharisee and the Publican. The Pharisee did not blush, felt no shame over his doctrine and ways of an evil walk which Jesus condemned. He boasted of his wicked works as that which pleased God. He bragged of God's peace being upon him and not on that blushing publican. He condemned the publican's good works and boasted in regard to the evil works he was himself at the very moment committing. In shame, with a spiritually red face, the publican cried out: "God be merciful to me the sinner." That manifests spiritual blushing and that he was ashamed of what he had done that was contrary to God's holy law. But plainly the Pharisee had another god before Jehovah, a god who enjoyed seeing sin and delighted in works that denied and defied the one only God. The publican pleads for God's mercy, because of the sins which made him blush in shame. The Pharisee behaves as though God owes him something for his satanic works. Yes, he did thank God that he was not as other men are. But note that he thanks God for the fact that he is not one who blushes because of sin, and is ashamed because of sin. For he in his prayer points to this publican, and he thanks God for not being like that publican. He begins his prayer with: "God, I thank thee...." For indeed he has a god; but that god is not the one Who in Jeremiah 6 condemns boldness in the works of sin. And Jesus makes it very plain that God's peace is not on those kind of people.

Because of the development of sin there are so many violations of God's law that are approved today, and men are lauded for walking in sin. There is today so much dishonoring of those in authority, so much murder in the heart, that is, hatred that wants to kill someone because of his deeds; not only are women allowed to kill the child developing within them; but this murder is also defended and protected by the government, which will even pay for that crime's hospital bill. Adultery is not kept in secret today; but instead of blushing when it becomes known, today there are those who boldly and openly boast of their sexual filth, without the slightest blush. No, they boast about their breaking the "old, outdated life style." Today women do not blush, have red faces and are not ashamed when they appear dressed and undressed as boldly as the world does, dressed in ways that entice to adultery. Sad to say that is in the church world as well as among the unbelievers in the world. In this sin also the art of blushing is getting lost!

There is lying and theft and an overwhelming sin of covetousness all around us and in our midst. That leads to dishonoring the authorities, killing, committing adultery, stealing and lying. Covetousness leads to breaking all the nine commandments above the one that in the tenth

commandment forbids it. And the higher standard of living that we have today, and with so much wealth and luxury displayed before the eyes of men in our country, covetousness is producing sins that bring smiles upon the faces instead of the blushing of a soul that is ashamed. Satan has been so very, very successful in getting men to seek the things here below instead of the kingdom of heaven.

The tragedy in all this is that which Jeremiah wrote: There is no shame and blushing when these sins are committed and when these sins are made known to others. Yea, some will say to those who commit these sins: "Peace, peace, God loves you," and they heal the hurt of the sinners slightly, that is, for a few years and until they die and God reveals His holy wrath.

Yes, young people, look in the mirror—no, not in one made of glass, but in the word of God which shows sin in its awfulness. Look at your heart as well as at your face when you are enjoying these sins and going along with the world in their worldly amusements and enticement. The TV screen does not make you blush but makes us far more interested in sin. There was a time when men would blush and feel cheap when they were caught coming out of a theatre. Today churches will even advocate and recommend entertainment of the flesh by showing the world in its sins. Sin becomes entertainment, not, as the psalmist wrote: "O how love I Thy law! It is my meditation all the day." Psalm 119:97

Are you willing to heed this advice, or are you ready to try to defend your position in living as the world lives? Do you want to go with that Pharisee or have that publican as your example? Does it give you joy to weep about your sins, or make you weep when you are kept from sin?

There is something else that we should consider. One of the things that should make us blush and be ashamed of is the widespread, bold and powerful preaching of the lie. Instead of blushing, instead of looking down when a false doctrine is shown as that which must be rejected, there are those who will become furious and defend that which should bring shame. Here, too, it must be remembered that, holding on to false doctrine is having another god before Jehovah. For it is calling Jehovah a liar and Satan a promoter of the truth. It is doing exactly what Adam and Eve did when Satan came with the lie that God had been lying by telling them that they would hurt themselves, if they went against His will. And take note of the tragic effect that sin had on Adam and Eve. They did not blush and feel ashamed. They were scared, frightened to an awesome degree. But they ran away from God rather than to Him as the publican did, crying out for mercy and confessing that they were guilty sinners. Adam blamed God for that sin, accusing God of having given him Eve as his wife. Eve shoves the blame upon the serpent. No shame, no blushing is there at all, just fear and an attempt to defend self in sin.

Above all, consider that these lines were written to you to benefit you spiritually. Here is the exhortation to hold on tightly to the truth you have received in our churches. Do not let go of the truth that salvation in every part and in every way is a gift of God's grace. He does not plead and beg, coax and invite to salvation. He does not offer it to us who are spiritually dead. He is no fool. He is not subject to our wishes. We cannot prevent Him from saving those He wants to save. He performs the first act of our salvation. And that act is not knocking on the door of our hearts to beg for the right to come in and save us. The first act (Ephesians 2:1 and 8-10) is to give us spiritual life by a rebirth. God is not changeable. He is the unchangeable, almighty God Whose grace is everlasting and not stopped because men will not accept His "offer."

Be thankful to Him for the truth He gave our churches. And may He give you the grace to be able to blush and be ashamed when you do fall into sin. Blush now and you will in the new Jerusalem shine with glory. For, those who blush because of sin they committed will sing of His

sovereign grace in Christ, and thank Him for every bit of their salvation, confessing HIM to be our Savior.

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