

Small Group Study Questions

Sermon: "How Hope Redeems Shame"

Passages: Romans 5:1-5 and 1 John 3:19-21

Context:

Shame is universal. "Pretty much everyone experiences shame, though some people experience it more frequently or intensely than others" [Healthline.com]. Since the gospel impacts all of life, how does the hope of heaven enter our ordinary, earthly life in a way that adequately and completely redeems shame?

Questions:

1. Shame is the intensely painful feeling or experience of believing that we are uniquely and hopelessly different and less than other people. It's a heavy inward emotion that feels as if a person is inadequate, unlovable, and unworthy. It's truly a devaluation of one's self. It is a lie from sin and Satan because it involves a perception of permanent unacceptability to God and others—and even yourself. Share an experience when you struggled with shame.
2. Shame doesn't always look the same in each person's life; it doesn't always come out the same way. The sermon described four "forms" of shame: 1) I am Inadequate; 2) I am flawed; 3) I am confused; and 4) I am driven. How might any or all of these forms of shame hinder our experience of a full life in the home? At work? In friendships? In society's public conversations, such as social media and journalism?
3. Romans 5:1-5 explains the results of the gospel when we trust Christ as Savior. Read the passage together. Describe the fruit of faith in Romans 5. How does the gospel protect us from the weight and distress of shame? What is the relation between hope and shame?
4. The context of 1 John 3 is the relationship and impact of truth upon assurance. 1 John 3:19-24 describes the antidote to a condemning heart. List and discuss at least five observations about the Christian life, hope, and assurance from this passage. Since hope is the conviction and confidence of the promises of God, how does hope strengthen assurance?