



Sermon Notes

Term – Spring Term

Series – Wholeness - Ephesians

Gathering & Date – 10am 170319

Title – Freedom from Shame

Preacher –Neil Shepherd

Reading: Ephesians 1 – 3 and John 4

Main message of this talk in one sentence: Shame hinders our ability to enter into the promises of God

Main points of the talk:



The talk started with thinking about playing in a stream. For me, if there was a stream around then I would love to build dams, blocking the stream. Too much build up though will completely block the stream. We will return to these images.

Recap of Ephesians 1-3



This wordle is the words from Ephesians 1-3 and we can see that the the largest word (most used) is Christ. We have looked at the first three chapters of Ephesians over the last 10 weeks. Some of the themes we have looked at are:

Signed, Sealed and Delivered – God the Father has signed His plan, Jesus sealed it in His obedience to the cross and the Holy Spirit has delivered it to us.

The two prayers; open the eyes of my heart and God is immeasurable more

All that God has done for Christ – raised from the dead and seated in heavenly places – has also been done for us

If these truths are a spring of living water that flows in our lives, then returning to the original imagery of the stream, what is ‘blocking the stream of our lives’.

There are lots of little stones that can block the stream but one of the BIG rocks is SHAME!

Read John 4:1-18 – The Women at the Well

The women at the Well was excluded from the village because of the life that she lives and the shame that she feels. No-one goes to the Well during the heat of the day except someone who wants to avoid other people.

This is one symptom of the effects of shame.

Definitions:

Guilt – I did something wrong. I made a mistake. This is a western culture and means that we often think about changing our behaviour. Often, our response to the words of Jesus are how does this change my actions.

Shame – There is something wrong with me. I am the mistake. This is an eastern culture and speaks into the issues of identity rather than behaviour.

Shame effects us because of three reasons:

1. The culture we live in and have grown up in
2. Things we have done
3. Things that others have done to us

Other Symptoms of shame:

1. Lying about our accomplishments or things of the past
2. Pretending everything is OK when it is not
3. Shifting the blame
4. Compromising so that we fit in
5. Compensating in one area to cover up for other areas of weakness
6. Criticising others to make us feel better
7. Strive for perfection in some areas to compensate for feeling like we fall short in other areas

How do we respond?

Once we recognise that there is shame operating in our lives, we can start to deal with it.

Ultimately, our response needs to be submission to God as we need a change of identity. In Ephesians, Paul speaks about our old nature and how we have a new nature in Christ. Our old nature has been dealt with by Jesus on the cross, put to death by Him, so that we can be raised up with Him into our new creation.

Read John 4:28-30

After spending time with Jesus, the women at the Well is able to return to the village and share with us all that Jesus has done. She begins the journey of reengaging with her community.

Submission to God means:

1. Submission to His word
2. Spending time with God in His presence
3. Submission to his leading – responding to God's purposes

For further thought and prayer –

1. As we have been looking through Ephesians, what has been God highlighting to you most about his character
2. What has God been showing you about who you are in Christ
3. How do you understand the difference between guilt and shame – are the definitions above helpful?
4. Do any of the examples of the outworking of shame resonate with you?
5. Make space to listen to God for yourself and each other about hindrances to living in God's promises.
6. Pray for each other, speaking truth and live over each other, so that we can begin to walk into the promises of God.