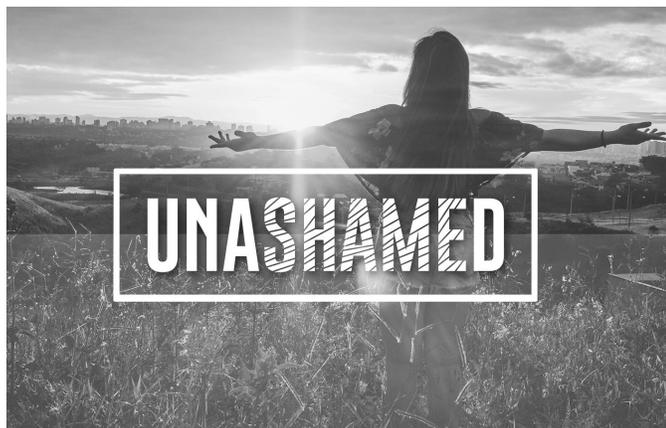


SMALL GROUP STUDY GUIDE



**PRINCE
OF PEACE**
Called to Connect



Origins

April 27 & 28, 2019

Guilt and shame are closely related, but they are not the same. Guilt says, “I’ve done something bad.” Shame says, “I am bad.” Guilt is rooted in our actions; shame is rooted in our identity. Shame leads to powerful feelings of inadequacy, unworthiness and “not-enoughness”. If God’s will is that we might experience “fullness of life”, few things hinder that goal like shame.

SCRIPTURE TEXT : GENESIS 3:1-13, 21

Read the scripture text together as a group.

BACKGROUND INFO

Not only does shame cause a distortion in our identity, it causes us to avoid our shame, hide ourselves, breaking relationship with God and others, and ourselves. Even more deeply, shame is rooted in a distortion of our vision of God, which is what the serpent did with Eve in the Garden, planting seeds of doubt into her mind about the love and goodness of God. When we think about what that scene in the garden must have been like, we often assume that God enters the area, lights flashing ready to catch Adam and Eve. Then, because they are guilty, we believe that what follows is a description of their punishment. Read through that lens, the entire arc of the Bible is set such that where it is going, what God’s role is, what Jesus’ role is, what our role as the church is now is colored by guilt and punishment. I don’t think that is an accurate description of what the author of Genesis chapter 3 has given us. Instead, what I see are two people feeling a feeling that we all know too well, shame.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- Put yourself in Adam and Eve’s shoes. What do you think that moment was like? What do you think they anticipated God’s reaction to be?
- How do you differentiate between guilt and shame? Think of an example of each and share.
- How have you isolated in shame? Silenced in shame? Recast others in shame?
- How can we protect ourselves from letting guilt turn into shame?

APPLICATION: This week, consider what first step you need to take in order to acknowledge areas that you might experience shame. Maybe it is sharing with someone you trust. Maybe you simply need to write it down. Take the first step.