

Bottled Up Shame (Luke 15:11-24, 1 John 1:7)

Bottled Up: Understanding Our Emotions

Discussion Questions

In your own words, give a definition for guilt and for shame.

- “Shame is that all-to-human experience of worthlessness, failure, and not belonging. It can come from what we have done or what others have done to us.” (Ed Welch)
- What are some words for other emotions that describe what shame feels like?
- Shame has a voice. Gives some examples of the kind of things that shame says.
- Would you be willing to share a specific message that the voice of shame speaks to you?

Read or retell the story of the Prodigal Son from Luke 15:11-16.

- How do verses 11:16 depict the circumstances of shame in the son’s life?
- What was the story of shame he told himself?

Read or retell the story of the Prodigal Son from Luke 15:17-19.

- How do we know that the son was going back to the father with shame?

Read or retell the story of the Prodigal Son from Luke 15:20-24.

- How does this part of the story picture God’s response to shame?
- What do you think the symbols of a coat, a ring, and celebration mean for the Prodigal Son.
- What did the voice of the Father speak to the son? What did shame speak to the son?

Explain in your own words what this statement means: *Let God, not guild and shame, determine who you are.*

Read Hebrews 12:2.

Read 1 John 1:7.

- How does this passage tell us to fight shame.
- As a group, formulate a way to explain the meaning of this verse to someone who needs to experience the keys to fighting shame: (1) Believe the good news of what God says about you. (2) Live with vulnerability in a gospel community.
- Ask if anyone has experienced freedom from shame because they were vulnerable in gospel community?
- What does it take for a small group to be like coming home to the Father’s house each week? How will you help your group be like coming home to the Father’s house?

How do the identities in the growth grid affect shame in our lives?