

Meeting the Risen Christ: Jesus Meets Us In Our Shame

John 21:15-25 || Pastor Paul Hahn || 22 May 2022

*To CARE for one another in truth and in love,
To GROW together as followers of Jesus,
To SERVE those God has placed in our path.
– CG Mission Statement*

Icebreaker: What were your favorite and least favorite things about high school?

Worship: [Psalm 25](#) (Remain a few moments in worship with this passage. What is God's invitation?)

Sermon Summary for [John 21:15-25](#) (Read aloud before reading the sermon summary.)

Shame is an unpleasant aspect of life that we all must deal with. As Ed Welch wrote, it *“drags our souls in the mud, and we can spend the rest of our lives looking for a way to get clean.”* Shame lies underneath and stands behind so many of our problems – because it tells us over and over again that we are unacceptable, repulsive, vile. Addictions are often attempts to numb our shame. But they only lead to more shame when we give in to our compulsions.

It's important to note that shame is not the same as guilt. It can hear about forgiveness, about no condemnation, and not be dented. NT Wright wrote how with shame, there may be *“nothing officially ‘on the record’ against us, but there may still be plenty in our memories and imaginations: old failings, old sores, old wounds.”* Shame binds us up. But there is hope. It can be removed, though never by our own doing. Like Peter, we need the Risen Christ to bring us out of it. But this is where dealing with shame gets more complicated...

Our shame is rooted in something deeper: Betrayal // Within Christ's redemption, we see God moving to cover our shame, promising to fully and finally take it away. Jesus doesn't just heal; He makes a point of restoring people to community. The ashamed are finally able to return home. But like Peter, we have denied the reality and worth of Jesus. We trade His power in our lives for worldly power and acceptance, denying Him out of fear of hardship or rejection. We deny that Christ is real enough, powerful enough, or fulfilling enough to overcome our shameful sins.

Jesus' first step in healing our shame is to fully expose it // Jesus doesn't condemn Peter; He serves him breakfast. As they talk, Christ reminds Peter of his denials by questioning his commitment. Exposing Peter's shame might feel cruel; but it's not. We'll do almost anything to cover our shame. But, as NT Wright wrote, *“Jesus goes to where the pain is.”* He brings light to our shame so we can see it for what it is. This exposure is the only way for the Gospel to penetrate deeply enough to heal. Will we let Jesus do this for us? It's a critical question, for it's the difference between Peter and Judas. Peter experiences the pain of his shame together with Jesus so he can truly be healed.

Jesus takes us beyond our shame // Jesus calls us to a destiny beyond our shame, where we share the hope and life of His resurrection. When He gives Peter three chances to say he loves Him, it's not just to expose his shameful failures, but also to begin to replace them with expressions of faithful love. We need to learn to acknowledge and live into our love for Jesus. He wants this of us – to say that we love Him, even as we admit our betrayals of Him. When we declare this love in hope, the words will begin to grow into actions as we move forward as His disciples. We express our love for Jesus by caring for His people. And this will always involve a death of some kind. Because if we aren't willing to sacrifice, to forgo, to give deeply, how can we embrace a destiny of loving and caring for others? We do it in and through Christ, who gives us the strength and endurance to die with Him.

What about the shame that others heap on us? // There is a whole other side to shame – the shame of being a victim. There is pain in this truth. But we must remember: we can face it all because Jesus has already been shamed for us, enduring the cross for us. Through the cross and His resurrection, Jesus enables us to find hope, purpose, and meaning in those places of shame. We are directly connected to Christ in those moments. *“Those who look to Him are radiant; their faces are never covered with shame” (Ps 34:5).*

Discussion Questions (You will not be able to discuss all the questions. Pick the ones you like. Some are personal perspective and application questions for life-transforming discussions.)

Our shame is rooted in something deeper: Betrayal

- Is there significance in Jesus waiting to talk about heavy things until after breakfast?
- What was Peter’s shame? How was he trying to avoid it?
 - How does Jesus reveal and remove Peter’s shame?
- How does Christ’s exposure of Peter’s shame reveal how God will reveal shame in our own lives?

Jesus’ first step in healing our shame is to fully expose it

- We all have shame we carry. Review some of the shame Paul mentioned at the beginning of the sermon.
 - Can you relate to any of the shame Paul carries? How so?
- Jesus not only removes Peter’s shame; He gives him a purpose. What is Peter’s purpose?
 - What good purpose is the Lord calling you to as He brings you out of your shame?

Jesus takes us beyond our shame

- What does shame do when allowed to persist and remain a part of our lives?
 - Paul used the example of The Scarlet Letter and suggested that when we’ve carried shame so long people cannot recognize us without our shame. What did he mean by this?
 - How is this different from how Jesus sees us?
- The Lord desires our good health, both physically and spiritually. Take time to pray for any physical or spiritual needs the group has, especially as it relates to shame.

Prayer

For this week’s Prayer Guide for personal or group use, click [HERE](#).

Engage & Experience: Prayer & Gratitude

Check out the PCC Pray for Me Campaign at <https://pacificcrossroads.org/prayforme/>. Consider signing up to pray for PCC children or families as a Community Group.