

New Beginnings Community Church

Date: May 1, 2022

Speaker: Pastor Hurmon Hamilton

SHOULD I FEEL ASHAMED?

Scripture used: [Colossians 2:13-14 \(NLT\)](#)

OVERVIEW

Pastor Hurmon reminded us of the message last week: the resurrection shows us there is life after death; there is hope on the other side of great loss. Today we deal specifically with the tough emotions of guilt and shame that almost always accompany great loss and grief in our lives. Guilt and shame don't go away just by ignoring them, they must be processed directly. Thankfully, the hope of the resurrection and the assurance of God's forgiveness and grace gives us the space to process our feelings of guilt and shame and to receive freedom on the other side.

KEY POINTS

1. Our Scripture today, [Colossians 2:13-14 \(NLT\)](#), says that "you were dead because of your sins, then God made you alive with Christ." Indeed, through faith we have been made alive. God canceled the "charges" against us. The cross wipes away our "records" and burdens. Pastor Hurmon shared two heartbreaking stories about the unique dynamic of losing a loved one during COVID. Lucie lost her husband to severe disease, then other relatives died unexpectedly. Teresita spent a week on a respirator, and saw her 13-year-old son die. We're dealing with many spoken and unspoken elements of shame: the shame of disease transmission, multiple losses, loss of young ones, dying alone, inability to have in-person funerals. Society normalizes it, but our emotions do not. We see painful reminders of the lost ones: the things they used every day, their phone... We may deal with stigma – for instance if someone was not vaccinated. We can't escape feelings of guilt and shame by ignoring them, we need to acknowledge them and bring them before God in order to be set free.
2. Tragedies shape our brain, and can lock us into despair, but processing our emotions honestly and deeply can allow us to gain perspective, freedom, and peace. Pastor Hurmon felt terrible guilt after his grand aunt died, and he felt he had neglected her badly in her time of weakness and need, because he was taken by surprise by her sudden decline while he was away at college. We must call out these feelings, name them. Guilt is generally action oriented; we feel guilty for what we did or did not do. Shame is a deeper sense of *being* bad, of being deficient in some profound way. If we come to God with specifics about where we feel guilt, His response often allows us to remove the root of shame.
3. When we process our feelings of guilt and shame, we should ask: is what I wrestle with reasonable? Where we genuinely could have acted differently, we should repent and receive God's assurance of pardon ([1 John 1:9](#)). One way of saying it is that we can put some actions "under the blood" of Jesus." When we have received God's forgiveness, we need to also forgive ourselves, so we can move forward in freedom. In some cases, the feelings of guilt and shame are actually unreasonable; they come from unrealistic expectations that we never could have met. It may help to identify regrets or things we wish could have happened, while letting go of false condemnation for things that were never our responsibility. In some cases, moving forward in processing our guilt and shame may involve not just experiencing forgiveness for ourselves, but forgiving the person who passed.
4. [1 Corinthians 13:11-12 \(NLT\)](#) - There are things that will feel incomplete during our lives, but we can be assured that God will make them clear and will resolve misunderstandings in eternity with Him. Thus, we should be patient and compassionate with others and ourselves, and do what we can to help others.

DISCUSSION

- 1) **HEAR** - Do you have an experience of feeling guilty or ashamed about something, and being able to process it through and experience freedom? If you feel comfortable, share with your group!
- 2) **UNDERSTAND** - Consider Peter's denial of Jesus and his subsequent restoration ([Luke 22:54-62](#) and [John 21:15-19](#)). How did Jesus help Peter work through guilt and shame? Why do you think it was important for these accounts to be recorded in Scripture? Are there current ways you are struggling with guilt or shame, and if so, what practical step do you think God is leading you to take because of His love?
- 3) **DO** - Check out our grief resources and fill out our grief survey (www.nbccbayarea.com/grief). Pray for courage to take the next step in confronting guilt and shame. See you next Sunday for Mother's Day!