

Title: **Woe #4: The Shamer Shamed**
Text: **Habakkuk 2:15-17**
Date: **October 2, 2022**

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Big Idea

When we aren't secure in Jesus, we end up trying to prove our worth by measuring ourselves against others. We compare and compete. We try to get glory for ourselves by shaming them. But such things are never sufficient. Only Jesus offers us a way out of this trap and into freedom!

As we come to Woe #4 another aspect of this Babylonian oppression and strategy for self-exaltation comes into view. When you're trying to make a name for yourself, and you're doing it without reference to God or the vertical dimension, the only way you can really measure your own worth is by seeing how you stack up against others. And what this inevitably leads to is comparison and competition—which, of course, so quickly and tragically devolves into dehumanizing tactics: things like gossip, slander, mockery, etc. You make a name for yourself by belittling and defaming others. You build yourself up on their broken backs. You get glory for yourself by exposing and shaming them.

It's not enough, in other words, for these Babylonians to amass wealth, build up their empire, keep themselves safe, and forge some sort of identity and legacy in that. They don't just want to defeat other nations and take their stuff, they want to shame them. They want to "rub it in," so to speak—to make sure everyone knows: "We won and you lost." Because, in so doing, they feel better about themselves.

1. The Reversal

The concept of "nakedness" in the Bible is the idea of being seen for who you really are. Before the fall you could be naked and unashamed. Now, because of sin, we all struggle with shame and feeling like we need fig leaves around us, like we need to control the information people know about us. Sometimes we can expose our naked shame through our own actions and deeds—you slip up, you

mess up, it's out in the open now. But other times, people uncover us and take sick delight in showing our weakness, our frailty, our sin. That's what these Babylonians are doing. They're trying to cover their own stuff by exposing others. And this is what so often we can do as well.

2. The Rescue

Jesus' earthly life bears no resemblance to these charges made against the Babylonians here. And yet he's judged as if guilty of the worst of it all on that cross. Why? To rescue us of course. He wants to cover us in the fullest sense. He wants to protect us from the wrath of God due our sin. So he's going to suffer in our place, as our substitute. He takes the cup of fury from his Father so he can turn and offer us the "cup of blessing" (1 Cor. 10:16)—the cup of the "new covenant" (Luke 22:20). He's cut off like foreskin and thrown in the trash so that we could be circumcised in heart by the Spirit and brought into the covenant family of God. He's polluted with the sewage of our sin so we could be washed in the fresh water of his grace. He's exposed to naked shame so we could be clothed with glory!

3. The Renewal

You can now be naked and unashamed, not because you don't have guilt or things to be ashamed of, but because he bore that guilt and he took your shame on the cross. If you let his love in, it will make you a loving person. Covered people cover others!

Reflection Questions

- Read Gen. 3:1-21. What stands out to you in this story? As you consider nakedness, shame, and the ways we go about trying to cover things up, what do you learn from this text? How are you like Adam and Eve? How can you step away from this towards the gospel and Jesus?
- Describe your experience with shame. What do you feel most ashamed of? What would it look like to let Jesus cover you?
- If "covered people cover others" are you? Are you a safe place for struggling people, or are you tempted to shame them to get glory for yourself? What needs to change?

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Our Mission & Values

Mercy Hill Church exists to help restore us to God, neighbor, and city through the good news of Jesus Christ.

FAITH: The Way Back to God | We are redeemed to enjoy intimate relationship with him. This value presses our church *upwards* in love for God.

COMMUNITY: The Way Back to Christ, adopted in the Beloved relationship with his people. This value presses our church *inwards* in love for the

MISSION: The Way the Embassy of Christ, Savior to be his value presses our church *outwards* in love for the

Neighbor | We are the Family of and brought into covenantal relationship with him. This value presses our one another.

Back to City | We are commissioned by the ambassadors. This church *outwards* unbelieving.

Your Next Steps

When approaching the Christian faith and life, it can be confusing to know where to even begin. Come find us at the Next Steps Table after the service—it would be our joy to help you along in the journey! And if you're a visitor, we have a special gift bag for you. Don't miss it!



Mail: PO Box 23806, San Jose, CA 95153
Phone: (408) 320-7080
Email: info@mercyhillchurch.org
Web: mercyhillchurch.org



Welcome to Mercy Hill Church.
We are so glad you've joined us today!

Announcement Spotlight

All Church Hangout - Today!

Meaningful community is hard to find in Silicon Valley, even in the church. Our congregation is spread out all over the city. But there is one day of every week when we all commit to gather together and worship our God: Sunday. It seems strategic to take this pre-existing momentum and work with it in an attempt to develop deeper community within our body. Therefore, on occasional Sundays throughout the year we will invite the church to enjoy picnic-style afternoons together immediately following the service.

The Plan: After service, bring or buy your lunch and join us at the tables out back for a picnic-style afternoon.

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to us at info@mercyhillchurch.org.

Allen at Steinbeck - Volunteer Application

We have some exciting opportunities to partner and serve Allen at Steinbeck Elementary School in this upcoming school year. In order to volunteer at any future school events, all volunteers are required by SJUSD (San Jose Unified School District) to do the following:

- Completed volunteer application (for link, scan QR code below)
- Proof of COVID vaccination
- TB clearance
- Fingerprint/background check clearance through San José Unified

Please note that there is a 6-7 week wait for the fingerprint/background check clearance—so if you're even remotely interested, please start the process ASAP. (Youth volunteers—under 18—need to go through the process but do not need to get fingerprinted.)

If you have any questions, feel free to reach out to Joey at joey@mercyhillchurch.org.

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