

The Shame of the Cross

So many people live in shame. The shame of things done to them or the shame of things they have done. It is something they live with, go to bed with, get up with. Shame is something people wear. It comes in many disguises or masks which is interesting considering the root word in Greek for shame is to cover up.

God never intended us to live that way hiding in shame when he created mankind. It says *"they were naked but not ashamed."* Genesis 2:25.

Shame is a curse born out of the disobedience of mankind. It is a horrible disposition in life. A feeling of unworthiness, inadequate, a low self esteem.

Shame is a feeling and an emotion of experiences. We have all heard: *"you ought to be ashamed of yourself."* or *"Shame on you!"* or as Derryn Hinch would say: *"Shame, Shame, Shame."*

Shame leaves us feeling:
 Inadequate
 Indifferent
 Guilty
 Uncomfortable
 Isolated
 Venerable

And a target for shame based religion (2Timothy 3:6) and shame based advertising, playing on guilt and what I have done wrong.

Shame is a universal human condition that stems back to the beginning of creation with Adam. It says that after man had disobeyed God, that God came looking for him. *"But the LORD God called to the man, "Where are you?" He answered, "I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid."* Genesis. When God asked: *"where are you?"* Adam's answer came so clear of his condition—naked, afraid and hiding. Afraid because of some area of nakedness, so he hid. Adam hid behind leaves but we hide behind other things such as work, alcohol, drugs, our personality, our possessions even our religion. It is interesting to note that the root word in the Greek language for shame is "to cover up". Of course covering up is only one result for other outworks of shame.

Through the blame game, just like Adam did when he blamed Eve and then Eve blamed the snake and the snake didn't have a leg to stand on.

God has not created or called us to live there. We are called to live in freedom, free from fear, guilt, shame and condemnation. *"Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit. When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the LORD"— and you forgave the guilt of my sin."* Psalm 32:1-5

The covering of our shame need not be the substitutes of this world but the true covering that comes from the work of Calvary which Jesus accomplished on the cross.

So powerful was this work that when we fully understand and embrace it and apply it we are free and free indeed.

The cross is called "the great exchange" a place where we exchange our sin, shame, guilt and condemnation for His forgiveness, confidence and image that we are found in Christ that is it is no longer I that lives but Christ that lives in me.

What a salvation beginning! He became sin so that we can be righteous. He became sick so that we can be healed. He was made separate for a moment so that we are welcome into His presence forever. He became poor so we can be made rich. He went to hell so we can go to heaven. He was pieces with the crown of thorns so we can have the mind of Christ. Even His tongue was touched with vinegar on the cross dispersing the poison so that even our tongues were redeemed at Calvary so that we can speak well.

The Son of God became a Son of Man so the Son of men can be Sons of God. He became as we were so we can be as He is!

Praise God! How beautiful is that! But to top it off, he became naked so that we do

not have to be ashamed.

I saw a painting that surprised me recently. I saw Jesus totally naked on the cross—not a stitch of clothing. I mean you never see this type of picture—usually you see some loin cloth on him covering his private parts not even Mel Gibson betrayed this reality in His movie "The Passion", but the truth is Jesus was totally naked! As I looked at the painting God spoke to me and said: *"see even my nakedness was punishment I took on the cross for your freedom and wholeness. Imagine there was the Messiah, God in skin, naked before the world—how humiliating. That is what the cross was all about."*

The Romans created the cross to be a symbol of shame, extreme humiliation and torture. The cross was reserved for tyrants, robbers, slaves and rebels. Victims were placed at crossroads, theatres and high grounds so that the most amount of people could view it.

They would place above the victim the crime and their name.

Jesus took our shame and humiliation on the cross for it says in Galatians 3:13: *"Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, for it is written: "Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree."*

We no longer need to carry that shame. Others will try to hang out our dirty laundry, remind us of our failures but let the revelation of what Jesus totally accomplished on the cross allow you and I to walk in freedom!

"Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. ³Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men, so that you will not grow weary and lose heart." Hebrews 12:2-3.

Live free
 Live victorious
 Live in Christ



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Two Chefs, a Pub and an Art Show

So what do two chefs, a neighbourhood pub and an art show all have in common? They are all part of the ministry of Life Church in Newcastle Australia. This Life Church is not to be confused with maybe another Life Church you may have heard about. While this Life Church may have far less people, they make up for it with a tremendous missional drive and desire. During the first four days of our trip to Australia Kevin Wilcock, the pastor of the church was our host. How do I describe Kevin? The only thing Kevin loves more than a good drink and a party is probably his family, his church and Jesus! Kevin is a wild character; but he has a creative passion for helping people find their way back to God.

In the few days that I spent with Kevin, his church did the following:

- ◆ They have hired two chefs on their staff so they can use their church facility to feed the homeless and hungry. Every week

they serve more than 800 meals.

- ◆ They opened up their church as an art gallery on Friday night with both Christian and non-Christian artists displaying their art for the community. One young man sold his very first painting. Kind of cool that an artist gets to launch his professional career in a church building.
- ◆ Kevin had a party in his neighbourhood on Saturday night he called, "Jazz in the Vines". He hired a local jazz band and invited 150 of his neighbours over for the evening. They all came with their foot and their drink and a great time was had by everyone.
- ◆ They announced they were starting a new service in the local pub called The Kent that would meet on Sunday nights. The poster advertising the "2 beer service".

All this took place just during the few days I was there...while holding a leadership conference! They are doing a lot more than that too! They have AA groups, SA groups, NA groups and more. They host jazz concerts with local professional jazz musicians

at their church.

I left his church inspired to be more missional, more engaged in the community and more intentional about using all our resources to reach out to the least, lost and lonely and help them find their way back to God!

Dave Ferguson
<http://daveferguson.typepad.com/daveferguson/2009/11/two-chefs-a-pub-and-an-art-show.html>



GlobeReach some of the works we support overseas

Bali—Michael & Bianca Zietsch

Bee's Tale.

I was feeling a little home sick this past few weeks and honestly I was doubting what Papa really wants for me here in Bali. But he always lifts me back up and I believe I had a divine appointment with a young girl in a shop the other day. Her name is Mersy, she is catholic and has just moved here from Flores (near Timor), when she opened up and told me her story I was overwhelmed for compassion for her. Her father has just died and she has been sent here to work to provide for her family. She is only 19 years old and lives in Kos with nothing. No family, no friends, and the little money she does make goes home to help her family. She sleeps on the floor. As she was sharing these things with me she began to cry, not because she was sad with her circumstance but because she felt that Papa had answered her prayers by sending me into the shop she worked, just to be her friend and listen to her. I was so touched that Papa listens to every person that calls on him. My

prayer was answered by bringing this girl too me and this gave me hope that I am supposed to be here and hers was answered by bringing me to her just for me to be a friend or family to her. I am going to continue hanging out and helping where I can with Mersy but please keep her in your prayers. Please be encouraged and remember that he really does hear us and wants the best for us, don't think that the random acts of kindness you do does not affect people on a heavenly realm. He really does care about even the smallest things in all our lives.

Michael's Tale

I feel constantly challenged by the way I put out work my faith and how much I actually trust the Lord. I see my friends who spend so much time, money and energy appeasing gods who they are so fearful of. One of our friends had a small ceremony because their child was being naughty and are always fearful because they believe that bad spirits control all things. I was reminded that Pap is in control of all things

and that he loves me and them equally, no matter what we do. Even if I do stuff up all the time and even if they worship other gods, he loves us unconditionally and He still is wanting us to follow and have a friendship with Him. Pray for the people we meet daily and for opportunities to share with them, and for wisdom for us to speak the right words at the right times.

Many blessing
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GlobeReach some of the works we support overseas

Philippines—Alvin Bautista

Every year, Youth to the Max for Jesus are looking forward to the end of year Camp. Praise the Lord, for God never fails. He has blessed the camp of 2009 abundantly. This year the camp was held on 27th October to 30th October in Jordan Farm Resort, Tigbe Norzagaray Bulacan, Philippines with the themes of "More Than Conquerors."

Almost 75 youth from different churches joined in this camp and there were 20 staff who helped us to facilitate this work of God. We were blessed that we were able to have friends from Australia who joined us (Heather, Loren and Alec). It was early in the morning that the youth gathered in their church and headed off to Jordan farm at 8am in the morning. The registration started at 1pm. We started the camp by blindfolding all the youth who had to follow a rope and do the entire task at every station blindfolded. After briefing and some ice breaking, the youth were finally divided into groups and were assigned their leaders and room mates. Each group was given materials to do their banner that represented their group. Every group was doing their yells, cheering, flag and skit. It was a great time for the youth to know each other and to have a bonding time. God then began to move and stir the hearts of the youth as flames in their hearts for God were once again ignited after the praise and worship. Our Australian friends from South Coast City

Church Thirroul shared the word of God about the three points:

1. Know your creator;
2. Have a faith; and
3. Stick together.

After group devotions campers went to bed.

On the second day we work early to have daily exercise and devotions among the groups. The task for this day was for all youth to look and act like beggars. After breakfast Pastor Ronald spoke on "Obstacles in life". We learned a lot of things and enjoyed in this teaching. Thanks also to Pastor James that he put words that are simple and yet powerful. After lunch we had a question and answer time with our friends from Australia. At the next session Pastor Rey Dumdum spoke about "Inside Problems". The session was action-packed as well, full with joy, high spirits and vitality.

After washing up from dinner we got ready for the night service. God, without fail once again moved in the hearts of the youth. Many cried and revival took place. Praise God! God spoke to our hearts and ignited youths were once again recharged by the Holy Spirit. His divine presence was so strong until the youth just want to keep praising and worshipping the Lord. On the last day Alec Gilbert spoke on Romans 8 "Being more than Conquerors". We had a wonderful time praising and worshipping God. He really moved in this camp.

Alvin Bautista
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PHILIPPINES—Ken & Maisie Gibson

On our first day I was asked to do a funeral, for one of our students, Xian Magno aged nine years of age who died suddenly. Xian had been with us since the age of three years old. He was a good student and loved by all.

We continue to pray for the parents as they come to terms with their loss.

We thank those who generously gave for the assistance to the community of Patulo who lost homes and possessions in the last typhoon. We were able to identify eight families that required assistance to rebuild and refurnish homes. Both of us were genuinely shocked at the devastation.

We continued to give rice, milk and vitamins to the children until the funds run out. The good news regarding Patulo is that they now have their own church.

We attended the second meeting of Life Church Patulo. Thirty-five people attending this meeting and many came to Christ at the meeting.

The 5th South East Asian Global Outreach Conference is coming up in February 2010 and we are expecting 100 pastors and leaders to attend. Lolit has done a wonderful job in gathering the pastors from the surrounding areas into fellowship groups with the aim of working together to impact the local communities.

This trip both Maisie and I felt in our spirit that our work in the Philippines is drawing to a close. The ministry under Lolit's hands has moved to the next level and requires less guidance from us.

While we will continue with sponsorships, to visit, help and encourage, we feel the more we release the more it will grow.

After 20 years of ministry in the Philippines there is a sense of loss for us but we rejoice in the fact that Child's Faith has a future, run by Filipinos for Filipinos.



Ken & Maisie Gibson
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Innovate Conference—Highlights

Thanks Kev for a great conference hearing Dave Ferguson and what they have done in the last 20 years was inspirational how they have stayed focused on their original goals and mission for the church personally and as a team was very innovative. There were many key principles that we will definitely adopt.

The highlight for me was seeing Kev's **"Wine & Art Night"** first hand.

What an innovative way to get 80 unsaved people into your church and have their full attention as you gently preach the gospel in a real life situation way, then have us mingle and talk with each other in a relaxed atmosphere about art, God and His church.

Fantastic!

Bless ya
Kim Iredale

Coming to the conference is like coming home to see family...God's family... you never know what your gonna get, but you leave feeling loved and accepted...which is what we all desire deep inside...love and acceptance! Thanks Kevin and Tracey for opening your place "Life" for us to come and hang and just be ourselves.

Janet David

INNOVATE



Six great messages from
Dave Ferguson
Kevin Wilcock
Kim Hammond

The highlight of the conference for me was the sign outside of Life Church - **"A church for people that don't normally go to church"** and then a statement from Dave Ferguson - **"When you take care of the people nobody wants, God sends you the people everybody wants!"**
Malcolm Weir

The conference had so many high points, including Dave Ferguson's teaching and Kev and Kim's inspiration. The real highlight for me though was the sense of the missionary heart of God, revealed through *ordinary* people being intentional about mission. The opportunity to encounter firsthand the mission of **Soul Café; Ted's story** and **Jed's story** and **Greg Condon** and **Peter Loosemore's** stories of lives changed by encounter with God, simply because Jesus followers were obedient to His mission...that was what was most inspiring.

Mike McGarrity

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\$25.00

Ph 4961 0211

Hi, the highlight of the conference for me was the ability to rub shoulders with other pastors who are experiencing similar pastoral issues as me. This includes the ability to speak into someone else's situation and have someone speak into mine. The teaching was very practical and helpful from a very humble man who wanted to invest in us. I really enjoyed the conference as did others from my church who came along.

Bernie Higgins

24HR EXPRESS @ LIFE

Will be on the 19th to 20th February 2010.
Playing at Soapbox will be Bodacious Cowboys a 14 piece band that pay tribute to Steely Dan.

24hr express is a 24hr experience for ministers & leaders that will give you a missional approach to church. You will experience a Soapbox night where some of the best muso's in Australia play. It will have its own bar and restaurant. Then you'll serve in Soul Café among the needy of Newcastle. You will also get to see an art exhibition, attend A.A. and spend time with Kev talking about the whole missional church. For more information and accommodation suggestions, contact Life Church office on 4961 0211 or Kevin Wilcock on 0407 467 798.

(Limited seats of 6 available need to book this year!)

It's Missional
It's Emergent
It's Incarnational
It's 24 Hr Express

Cost for Soapbox
\$45.00
Cost for 24 hr Express
\$35.00