



the fellowship message

"Proclaiming freedom for the captives." ISAIAH 61

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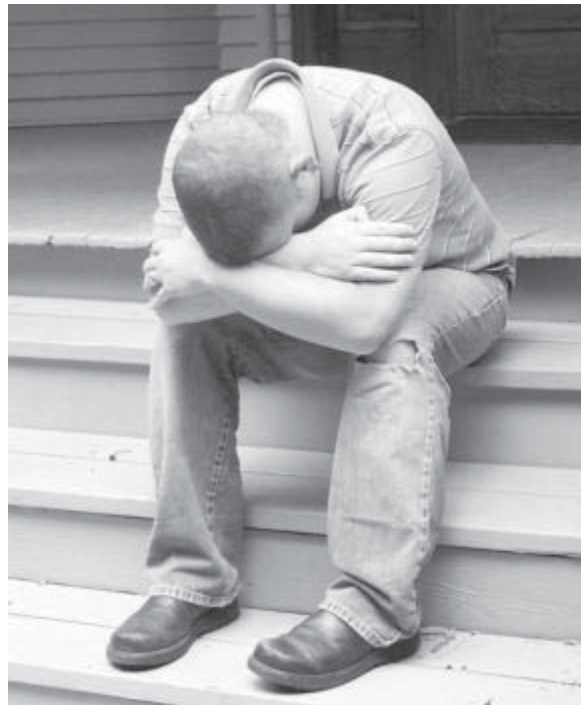
Shame on you *by Drew Berryessa*

I am sure that most everyone has heard the saying, "Like a deer caught in the headlights," but have you ever had a moment where you found yourself completely identifying with that deer? I have. Frequently, to be quite honest, it comes immediately after I hear... "So Drew, what do you do for a living?"

At first glance, it seems like a pretty harmless question doesn't it. I am sure for most people it is. It is the kind of surface question you ask to be friendly or to gain just a little bit of information. It is not an intimate question...for most people. However, for those of us in this ministry, it is a question that can start an instant emotional reaction that is hard to explain. "What should I say...Should I filter my response...How will they react if I tell them the everything...How will they feel if I don't tell them everything and they find out the full story later... What will they do with the information I tell them ... What will they think of me?" You're probably getting the point. It kind of feels like you got on a rollercoaster and you don't know where it is headed. You just know that you're in for a ride.

Sometimes I feel that being asked this question is the hardest part of this ministry. Before you scratch your head with a confused look on your face, let me tell you why I feel this way. I am very proud of the work we do here at PF. I wish I could tell the whole world about it. I love the opportunities I have to speak to churches, colleges, youth groups, individuals and even television audiences about what we do here, and all that God has done in my life. Each of us on staff feel this way. We are very passionate about this ministry. That is why the question can pose such an emotional threat. For me, answering honestly and openly exposes a very personal and passionate part of my life which inevitably leaves me vulnerable to the person's uncertain reaction. Answering in a way that does not fully disclose the work of PF can leave me feeling, at times, like Peter after his third denial of Christ. I know that may seem a bit extreme, but it is truly how I feel.

The experience of this little dilemma, and the havoc it can wreak, is fresh in my mind. I was on a trip last week, and I bumped into an old church-ministry friend. It started well. We shook hands and begin to



catch up. Then he asked *the question*. “So Drew, what are you doing for a living these days?” I took a deep breath and gave a somewhat rehearsed two sentence explanation about Portland Fellowship and my work there. After my statement was over I took another breath and waited for his response. He stared back at me with a blank look on his face. After about 10 seconds of silence, he said, “Huh” and simply turned and walked away. The conversation was over. It was very difficult to know how to sort through my feelings when this happened, and although it happens frequently, it does not get easier to understand. That uncomfortable moment and the moments that follow, provide an excellent example as to why I feel this question can carry such emotional weight.

There is a reason why one of Satan’s nicknames is *the Accuser*. The words I heard in my head immediately after my old friend walked away hit me straight in the heart. “Shame on you! You should be ashamed of your life. Why do you have to go and talk about it like it is something to be proud of? You should be ashamed of yourself!” Don’t forget that another of the devil’s titles is *the Father of Lies*. It never ceases to amaze me the way the enemy works. The subtle nature in which he schemes to rob us of our joy, our victories and our freedom can sometimes come out of nowhere, packing quite a punch. “So Drew, what do you do for a living?” I will be honest, that was a very lonely moment. Feelings of shame may not have been the appropriate response to what just happened, but Satan can make a pretty convincing argument. He made me, at least for a moment, feel ashamed of the work that God had done in my life, and the work that I see him doing in the lives of so many others.

Let me take you back now to another lonely moment. Familiar words were running through my mind. “Don’t do it...Don’t make that phone call. You should just bury this stuff... just bury it...Don’t talk about it. Don’t tell the truth about yourself, what would they think about you ...” I was sitting on my bedroom floor, staring at my cell phone laying in front of me. My heart felt like it was going to leap out of my chest. I was in a cold sweat and tears were coming down my face. Jason Thompson’s business card was in my hand. After years of believing that I would never overcome this struggle, I held the possibility of hope right in front of me. I sat there for over an hour staring at the number. All I needed to do was dial the phone. Unfortunately I did not make the call. I was too ashamed.

I tore up Jason’s business card and tossed the pieces in the trash. That was seven years ago. I was too ashamed of my past and my present to call PF for help. Seven months later, I finally made an appointment to meet with Jason. So why mention these lonely moments?

The longer I am in ministry here the more I realize that the enemy’s tactics, although effective, are not very original. I can not tell you how many men and women I have spoken to who say that, although they knew of Portland Fellowship, they did not make the call for months or years because of the weight of shame they felt. I cannot tell you how many people circle the block several times before actually deciding to walk in to the front door. We may never know how many people fail to make it through the front door because of the amount of shame and fear the enemy piles on them. I cannot tell you how many people sit in *Taking Back Ground* the first night looking as if they may bolt for the door at any moment. Again, it is amazing to

me how much the enemy robs us of our joy, victories and freedom because of shame. I can, however, tell you what it looks like to see someone riddled with shame come to the knowledge of God’s indescribable love and acceptance. It is like the sun breaking through the clouds. It is beautiful.

Friends, as we draw near to the beginning of *Taking Back Ground* this year, I ask that you would be in prayer for those who are too afraid call or email I ask that you would pray for those that have circled the

block but have never come into the office. I ask that you would pray for those who will walk through these doors daring to hope for a life free from this bondage. Your prayers are powerful. Your prayers are essential.

As for me, I cannot even imagine what my life would be like if I had resigned myself to the lies the enemy whispered in my ear. I am grateful that no matter how many times the enemy has attacked me with lies about my identity or God’s work in me, the Lord has always been faithful to remind me of the truth of who I am in Him. The work that God does here at PF is truly awesome. If you are currently battling with whether or not to contact us, I encourage you to not wait as I did, God has freedom in mind for you, right now.

One last word- for the enemy. For the hearts you have discouraged and the lies that you have told: Shame on you!



Introducing the 2005-06 Upper Room Interns

Here is a brief introduction to our seven new interns. Please be in prayer for them as they begin the program.

Ed Murphy, 35, hails from Bakersfield, CA, but is no stranger to Portland as he has just recently completed certificate work at Multnomah Biblical Seminary. Prior to his pursuit of a theological education, Ed worked in the world of Civil Engineering for nearly ten years. Increasingly, Ed has felt called to pursue a life offered up to God in service of those struggling with unhealthy and addictive behaviors. A close friend of his identified that passion by saying: "Ed desires to serve God, not out of duty, but out of an appreciation for what He has done for us."



Duan Walker, 28, was born in Arkansas and he and his family moved to the west coast at age 13. He currently lives in Albany, OR, where he volunteers in a variety of ministries at his church: worship team, small group leader, publicity coordination, youth pastor's administrative assistant. Since 1996, he has been working in a technical support role in the business world. Over the past three years he has been an active participant at PF and feels ready and called to counsel and pursue God in this area of ministry. "My passion is to assist people in addressing issues in their lives, so they are freed up to pursue God's intended design for them."

Jimmy D'Agosta, 23, has lived in Salem, OR for the last 5 years. He was born in Chattanooga, TN, but spent the majority of his youth in sunny Hemet, CA. He made the move to Salem to attend Corban College (formerly Western Baptist) where he received his bachelor's degree in Biblical Studies. Following graduation he decided to stay in the area and work for the college as an Admissions Counselor. Jimmy looks forward to continuing his education by attending seminary while participating in the *Upper Room Intern Program*.



Matt, 30, who is Deaf, will be staying for his 2nd year. After completing the first year of *Taking Back Ground*, he decided he wanted to receive more training, leadership, and hands-on experience at Portland Fellowship. He is still introducing the Deaf Community to this unique ministry. Many hearing people have already heard that Jesus is a way out of homosexuality, but most in the Deaf Community have not. Right now, he wants to tell, teach, educate, inform and help the Deaf Community about homosexuality issues. He is thankful to Jesus for this opportunity. His favorite hobby is collecting colorful retro antiques from the 1950's - 1970's era.

Richard T. Welden, 45, moved from Denver to Portland in 1998. He likes to refer to that course of events as, "the best move that God ever engineered for me." He didn't know about Portland Fellowship when he arrived, but God knew that it was just what he needed. The Lord put Richard on a path to bring him back to Himself and He used the *Taking Back Ground* program as a means to do so. "no matter what, God is always faithful and very persistent." It was last summer that the Lord placed on his heart to go further and apply for the internship here at PF "I know this is what He wants for me at this time because He has blessed my every move."



Don Hawes, 47, lives in Oregon with his two children. He will be one of our non-residential Interns this year. Since 1982, he has owned and operated a hair-dressing business in Gresham. Over the two years of being involved with the *Taking Back Ground* program a remarkable transformation occurred in Don's life that affected every relationship in his life. PF's staff often refers to the smile on Don's face as a wonderful indication of the joy he now radiates and embodies. He desires to see others find their way to Hope in Christ.

(continued on page four)

september - october calendar & services

september 5

Welcome Interns

The staff will host a dinner for the seven new interns,

september 6, 13, 20, 27

Leadership Training

Small group training for the *Taking Back Ground* 2005-06 program. 7 p.m.

september 9 & october 14

Family & Friends Group

Support for family and friends with loved ones struggling with homosexuality. 7 p.m.

sept 8, 15, 22, 29

october 6, 13, 20, 27

Upper Room Interns

These two months of training will include: orientation, personality testing, basic counseling skills, and small group dynamics.

october 4, 11, 18, 25

Taking Back Ground

Discipleship program for men and women struggling with unwanted same-sex attractions.

sept 24

Mentor Training

This will be a half day training for women who are interested in mentoring women coming out of the lesbian struggle. This training is open by application only. If you are interested in this ministry opportunity please contact Catherine at the PF office.

Are you interested?

If you are interested in having a staff member or intern speak at your church, youth group, college, or fellowship group contact the PF office.

Additional updates:

www.portlandfellowship.com

Counseling and youth support

Can be arranged through the office.

Sexual Abuse Survivors Workshop

Childhood abuse. It leaves far more than physical scars. Its impact is pervasive and often debilitating. We are often left with questions, confusion, shame, and a guardedness that prevents us from experiencing life as it was intended. Whether physical, emotional, or sexual abuse, the childhood scars follow us into adulthood.



This workshop is designed to help individuals better understand the nature of childhood trauma, how we respond and defend against these type of hurts, the lasting impact of such abuse, and the road to recovery. The presentation will offer understanding, direction and hope for survivors, partners, support people, and even professionals. A panel of survivors who have finished their recovery work will also speak and be available for questions from those attending.

This workshop will be presented by Byron Kehler of Agape Youth and Family Ministries. He has specialized in working with survivors of physical, emotional, mental, and sexual abuse for over 25 years.

The workshop will be held September 24, 2005, from 10:00am – 5:00pm at Studio Imago Dei in Sellwood (7730 SE 13th Ave. Portland, OR 97202. For directions call 503-235-8590.). Cost for individuals is \$45 at the door, or \$40 for pre-registration. Cost for couples is \$70 at the door, or \$60 pre-registered. To register, call Agape Youth and Family Ministries at 503-653-2267.

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(Picture not available)



Jeremy Gordon-Smith, 27, will be making the biggest move of all the interns to attend the program this year, as he relocates from England for the next ten months. World travel is nothing new for him. He spent the past five years with YWAM in South America ministering and leading teams across the continent, picking up Spanish and Portuguese along the way. Since 2001, he has had a deep desire to come alongside those struggling with homosexuality and offer hope and compassion. He desires to continue the counseling training he has received thus far in his years of ministry.



P O R T L A N D

f e l l o w s h i p

The Fellowship Message is a monthly publication of The Portland fellowship, a ministry proclaiming freedom from homosexuality through the power of Jesus Christ

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