

Church- Messy but Real

June 24, 2008

June

A miracle happened at church. It may have been missed behind all the pain and tears, but I saw a miracle. A man, a leader in the church, stood before the congregation with his wife and confessed to his sex addiction. He admitted the pain he had caused his wife, his family and the church and asked for forgiveness. Together they stood humbly before the church family vulnerable and in pain. Members of the church were invited to come and pray for them and demonstrate forgiveness and mercy. Together we wept.

It's a tragic story; a man trapped in an addiction which is so wounding. The pain is undeniable. But, it is a reality that exists in probably every congregation around the world: men and women living with secret sins afraid of the consequences. This man's fear and love of God and his wife, lead him to confess and to publicly ask for forgiveness. Today the church was real: messy but real.



I have been going around speaking in churches for years about the issues of prostitution and trafficking and challenging them to get involved. In every congregation there are women and men who are in pain because of their or someone else's sin. The church needs to be a place where the broken can come and be honest knowing that there will be forgiveness and a



There is Hope

There are many who struggle with sexual addictions. My prayer is that the church will be a safe place for confession, healing, and restoration. However, not every church is ready to meet these needs. Still, there is hope.

Here are a few links that offer help. I am not familiar with all of them but you can check them out. Maybe you need help and accountability, or maybe you know someone who does. The cycle can be broken, but it starts with honesty and a desire for healing.

Links

- [XXX Church](#)
- [Pure Life Ministries](#)
- [Shelly Lubben](#)

- Healing for the Soul

chance for healing. I am continually encouraging churches to become those places of healing and restoration. Until the church begins to admit the hidden pain and allow confession without judging and condemning the sinner, the sexual sins will be dark secrets continuing cycles of exploitation around the world.

Almost every time I speak in a church, someone will come to me to share their story. They are on a path of healing. Others act out defensively or legalistically and I sense that they may be in bondage to their secret, afraid of the truth and its consequences.

What happened in church was a vision come true. Not that a man, a leader would have sinned sexually - no, of course not. But, a vision and a hope that those sins which are shamefully being hidden behind masks of togetherness are mercifully being brought out with the purpose of repentance, forgiveness, and healing.

This couple has taken a brave step and I know God is pleased with this beginning. The Bible says the angels rejoice more over one sinner who repents than those who don't need to. I think the angels rejoiced while we cried together in church. What happened was a snapshot of God's mercy and acceptance of all of us. If only we all had the courage to acknowledge our sins and humbly confess. Then maybe, there would be healing in our lands.



Annie Dieselberg
NightLight