



STUDENT SCOOP

Fall 2009

They Will Know We Are Christians by Our Scars

I have a fascination with scars. I love looking at them and hearing the tale of how that scar was formed. The gnarlier the story, the better! But I know I'm not alone in this fascination. We've all heard the phrases before: "Chicks dig scars." "No scars, no proof." Men gather and reminisce about how they received their scars, trying to one-up each other to see who has the best one. But they wear them proudly as badges of honor, and display them gratefully no matter what their age.

Whether we are young or old, men or women, scars speak to us. They are living proof of long ago battles long ago or great challenges that have been overcome. Attached to our scars are stories of risk, of danger, of thrill, of courage in the face of adversity, and occasionally of our own stupidity. They are proof of victory, of conquering and prevailing against the circumstances (or against our own stupidity yet again).

MEDIA. FAITH. CULTURE

Music Suggestions:

Seabird

Mat Kearney

Matisyahu

Army of Me

Fiction Family

Nickel Creek

Sean Watkins

WPA (Works Progress Administration)

Alexi Murdoch

Do you have suggestions you'd like to put on here?

E-mail them to brandie@northview.org

But scars can also bring shame. Scars from cutting, from abuse, or from lame or horrific accidents we don't want anyone to know about. These scars—much like the scars on our hearts—we keep hidden. We feel ashamed if people see them, fearful of what they might think of us. Even though these old wounds contain an amazing story, we cover them up and act as if they aren't there. We don't want to return to that place of feeling so vulnerable and helpless.

I often perceive a similar sentiment within the Church as well. We cover up the scars on our hearts and act as if they are not there, effectively closing down our vulnerability and shutting ourselves off from others. We pretend life is great and that we have it all together because, well, we're Christians. We are supposed to act like everything is great and perfect, right? It seems like we forget that the One we love the most, the One whose image we bear, is marked with the eternal scars that prove His love for us. He offers up His battle wounds for the world to see, because by His wounds we are healed.

But this world needs to see our battle wounds, too. Like our physical scars, the scars of our hearts have amazing stories attached to them. They speak of trials and suffering we have encountered and successfully come through. They speak of victory in Jesus, of redemption, of forgiveness, of wholeness and of healing. They remind us where we have been and how far God has brought us. These scars are our stories, and they prove to the world that we are real, that we have earned the right to speak up on valuable, sensitive issues because we have proof that we've been there and made it through as victors. Our words only carry power and meaning into the world when they are backed by the authority that comes from valid experiences. When we are open about what we've been through, we are relatable, real, human. When we are closed off and "happy smiley" all the time, hiding our scars behind a façade of "everything's great", we come off as a little snobbish, judgmental, or—as one of my students put it—"too churchy-churchy". We lose our connectivity to the 'real world'.

This doesn't mean we run around flashing our wounds and screaming "Look! Look at my scars!" It means that we stop making overt attempts to hide them and cover them up, and let ourselves be open and a little vulnerable. They are our badges of honor, confirmation of our faith in Christ (because we were promised suffering along with joy), and battle wounds from the Enemy. There are valuable stories, experiences, and bits of wisdom attached to each of them.

Let your scars tell your story. "This scar? This is from a fight with the Enemy. He got me pretty good, but I sent him packing through God's power. That? Oh, that's an old wound from when I was a kid. Other kids can be so cruel with their words! Funny, most of us are friends now. And this large one that looks new? Ah, that one has quite a story to it. It was given to me by a close friend I love and respect deeply. It is a wound of betrayal, one of the deepest ones I have ever experienced, and it hurt like heck. But let me tell you something: this scar proves that God can heal both a broken heart and a broken relationship. As for the person who gave this to me—well, by the grace of God we are still friends, a fact that both amazes me and causes me to weep with joy over God's mercy and forgiveness. Here, let me tell you the whole story ... "



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UPCOMING ELEVATE EVENTS

NOV 8th :: CITYWIDE @ CBC 7:30-9pm

NOV 9th :: Guatemala Mission Trip Application Due

DEC 17th :: CHRISTMAS BANQUET 6-9:15pm \$5.00

for info on any & all elevate happenings check us out on facebook or northview.org