

September 16, 2012

Hello World!

In prison there are many unwritten rules among the inmates. One is abstaining from violence in three specific areas. The first is the visiting room because that is where we can touch the outside world through family and friends. The second, in the case of prisons where handicraft still exists, the hobby shop is off limits because this is where we can be productive and creative. Third, but not last in order of importance, is the chapel. This is where we seek and can find peace of mind through our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Sadly, today the rule was violated. Two men began fighting in the chapel before service began. Regardless of the races involved, the closest men took hold of the combatants, wrenched them apart, and all cried, "Not in the sanctuary!" One was tossed out the front door as the other was pinned to the floor.

What possible reason could bring about the gross violation? It was shame in their sins. One man was a pedophile and stalker. The other represented himself to be a hard as nails gang banger when in fact he is an active homosexual. It began with name calling that led to defending their manhood. Each were "outed" in front of other inmates. They feared being labeled. They feared being ostracized. They felt shame. They had to hurt the one who was causing them pain. Instead of looking in the mirror they lashed out. Instead of looking to God, they took matters into their own hands, and the result was destruction. Each

now sits in the "Hole."

I often wonder if shame for their sins led the mob to commit violence against Jesus. He outed them. He was the light exposing what they did in their hearts and minds and to each other. Instead of recognizing that each has to be made aware of sin before it can be washed away in Christ's blood, we often times, and no pun intended, "we kill the messenger."

It is still difficult for me to say aloud, "I murdered another human being." However, in doing so, the shame and darkness that I was in is awash in cleansing light. The statement defines an act but not the person. I can look back on a long, rocky path and see how it has become smooth. Don't get me wrong, I still glance left and right of the path to find myself face down in gravel, but knowing that Christ is my guard against staying down, I always rise with Him.

After the brief fight, we sang praise to God, and thanked Him for "outing" us all so that the promised peace could settle in our hearts.

Thanks for checking in on me.

Cordially,

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