

Peniel Postings

PENIEL HOLINESS CAMP · CONNEAUTVILLE, PA



So Jacob called the place Peniel, saying "It is because I saw God face to face, and yet my life was spared." - GENESIS 32:30

SHAME, SORROW & SIN

President's Message by Dan Segool



This past fall, we sang several songs at my church that touched on the idea of shame. You might be familiar with the song, *The Father's House*, by Cory Asbury. In part, the lyrics read:

*Ooh, lay your burdens down
Ooh, here in the Father's house
Check your shame at the door
'Cause it ain't welcome anymore
Ooh, you're in the Father's house*

There are a number of other songs that deal with the idea of shame, and it got me to thinking. Is there a difference between shame and sorrow when it comes to sin? Or, are they just two words that mean the same thing? I'll save you the suspense, while related, I think they are very different.

Shame is something we all have experienced. In fact, I can say that even my dog Johnny knows what shame is. If we leave the house without the trash can behind a closed door, he will get into it. He takes the trash to his little area in the living room and goes through it. I'll come home and find the evidence. I stand over the trash and say, "Who did this?" He drops his head; sometimes he hides behind a chair. He won't look me in the eye. If I lift his head up and get nose-to-nose with him, he still diverts his eyes. He is shamed, but if we leave the trash out again, it will happen again. He is a dog, so I don't think he understands the concept of having sorrow for his sin. Without that sorrow, there is no change.

Shame might lead us towards sorrow, but I believe that the songwriter is correct. God doesn't have any interest in shame. People are into shaming, not God. There is a great example of this in scripture. In John 8, Jesus is teaching when the religious leaders haul in a woman who was caught in the act of adultery. Noting that the law commands she be stoned, they ask Jesus what he thinks. You are probably familiar with this passage so you know that Jesus paused for a moment, wrote in the sand, and suggested that those without sin should cast the first stone. The people began dropping their stones and leaving. Once they left, Jesus asked the woman, "Where are your accusers? Didn't even one of them condemn you?" The women replied, "No," and Jesus said, "Neither do I. Go and sin no more."

The religious leaders wanted to use this woman to prove their point - to prove themselves right. They had no desire to see the situation made right or to see this woman forgiven and restored. Their selfish motives were further proven by the fact that they totally ignored the man's role in this. If they really cared, they would have included him too. It was easier and more convenient for them to shame this woman, and several others gladly joined in.

Thankfully, Jesus had no interest in shaming her. I believe he looked her straight in the eye when he said, "Go and sin no more." Don't misinterpret Jesus' lack of interest in shaming her as being soft on sin. Rather, he is more interested in dealing directly with sin. He wanted to forgive her so she could be set free from sin. He wanted the sin to be left behind and for her to move forward in the power of forgiveness. He wants the same for you and me.

I believe that God never wants to shame us. He wants us to experience and express Godly sorrow over our sin. God's purpose in dealing with sin is always restorative. Shame doesn't accomplish that. Shame is all about putting someone down, so the one doing the shaming can be elevated. Returning to my example of Johnny, shame causes us to hide our eyes. But when we experience sorrow, we will lift our eyes to God, or perhaps to one we have offended. We will seek to look him straight in the eye, even if ours are clouded by tears, and we will say we

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PENIEL HOLINESS CAMP INFORMATION

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IMPORTANT DATES 2023

Work Days

Saturday, April 1

Saturday, May 6

Friday/Saturday, May 26-27

Friday/Saturday, June 16-17

Friday/Saturday, July 14-15

127th Annual Encampment

Thursday, July 20 through
Sunday, July 30

PENIEL LOGO ESTABLISHED

This fall, work began on a logo to provide a uniform look and message for Peniel. Joe and Courtney Wambach headed up the effort while Bethany Doyle produced the artwork. As we considered what should be in our logo, we kept coming back to the most iconic image for most Peniel campers, our Tabernacle. Thus, the Tabernacle was incorporated into the logo. We also developed a wordmark (as seen above in the header of the *Postings*) as well as incorporated our motto, "Holiness Unto the Lord."



We also launched the new Peniel Store, which can be found on our website, where campers can order logo wear and items. Just go to our home page and click on "store." A portion of the proceeds from all sales will be designated to the Boy's Dorm fund.

IN MEMORY: BERYL MCCLAY 1940-2023



Long time camper Beryl McClay passed away on January 6, 2023. Beryl first attended Peniel when she was just five weeks old. Her parents, Harris and Marian Smith, had met at the camp a few years earlier. Her father had been a youth worker from Pittsburgh, and Marian's family were long

time attenders of camp. Her maternal grandparents, William and Margaret MacKenzie, traveled to camp via train from New Castle, Pa., annually and were some of the original members.

Beryl was a lifetime camper at Peniel, and her family now has had five generations in attendance at camp.

At about age six, Beryl came to faith in Jesus during Children's Meeting at Peniel. It is believed that Beryl attended 78 consecutive camp meetings! During those years, Beryl served in many capacities, helping in the kitchen and attending most workdays. She helped with secretarial duties in the office and in the 1990s, became our Treasurer, serving until 2013 and remaining active on the Board in the years that followed.

In 2021 during our 125th Celebration Service, Beryl was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award to recognize her many years of faithful and diligent service to the Lord through Peniel Holiness Camp. It was a time of great celebration as many friends across the years were re-united. It was also Beryl's last appearance at Peniel. Friends gathered at her Memorial Service on January 13 to remember her love for Jesus, family and Peniel.

In the fall of 2021, Beryl asked to share some words of thanks with her camp family.

"When I think of Peniel Camp, I see a plot of green grass with beautiful rolling hills in Northwestern Pennsylvania. These grounds have been visited by many people, both young and old for 125 years. There have been many physical changes to camp, but one thing has never changed - God's word has been preached and received by many people. Many young people have left these grounds to serve God either as a minister, missionary or a Christian worker. Only heaven will tell how many lives have been touched over the years.

During this past encampment, I along with several other campers were honored by receiving a 'Lifetime Service Award.' I was completely overwhelmed by this award. I love camp, and it has been a privilege to serve God by cleaning, painting or whatever needed to be done. I want to thank the Board for honoring me with this award. I did not deserve nor expect to receive a reward here on Earth, but I am so touched. I can no longer do anything physically, but will continue to pray for camp. May God continue to bless Peniel."

God has indeed blessed Peniel through the witness and ministry of Beryl! You will be missed - until we meet again.

...SHAME... continued.

are sorry. We've messed up; We're wrong and we want to change; We don't want to be like that anymore. We will know that we can't change without His forgiveness and empowerment. We can praise him because He always desires to forgive us. When we express our Godly sorrow, God will forgive us, lift us up and get us restored in a right relationship with himself and others.

If we remain in shame, we will never deal with the problem. We will feel sorry we got caught, but we will keep going back to the trash just like Johnny. We really need to open our hearts to God and where there is sin, to experience Godly sorrow for it so we are moved to seek forgiveness and change. If we won't, now that would be a shame.

BOYS DORM & PLANNED IMPROVEMENTS UPDATE

The Board recently met, and after consultation with contractors and several campers, the decision was made to demolish the Boys Dorm. The building is no longer suitable for housing our boys and repairs would be too extensive given the value of the building. It is estimated that the cost to demolish the dorm will be approximately \$5,000. A Boys Dorm fund was established during our past encampment, and donations are appreciated. We are in the process of gathering information and costs to construct a new facility for our boys. We hope to have more details to share in time for our encampment this summer. In the meantime, we have put a plan in place to subdivide the current girl's dorm into a Girl's Section and a Boy's Section. We already have materials on hand for this and will begin work during a special workday on April 1.

The Board also approved the purchase of a used commercial dishwasher for our kitchen operation. Our old machine broke during camp last year, and it is not easily repairable due to its age. Upgrades to the kitchen could run slightly over \$3,000. All in all, the Board approved a total of over \$13,000 for repairs, upgrades and to cover insurance costs, pending funds available. There are other projects under consideration that could raise that figure closer to \$20,000. Your financial support is welcome and needed at this time.

PENIEL HOSTS YOUTH LOCK-IN

A Launch Party for the youth program happened on February 18-19. It was a great time of reconnecting with camp friends and meeting some new youth! During the event, youth played traditional camp games, heard a message about this year's theme,



"Hope," and ate lots of good food! Youth are excited for camp and have already begun signing up! Know any youth who might be interested in coming to camp this summer? Have them check out our youth page (penielholinesscamp.com/youth-program). First year youth camp for free!!

2023 CAMP THEME ANNOUNCED

In a world of uncertainty and constantly changing truths, we are in need of an anchor for our soul. We chose this year's camp theme to be HOPE, as we seek and meditate on what it means to find our HOPE in Jesus Christ.

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead..." 1 Peter 1:3



HOPE