Body Image

by Darren Dalton

The main theme was about expressing yourself and 'how far would you go to express yourself?' As a curate representing Christ and the Church of England, I was asked to speak on the show concerning my tattoos and faith, and whether there is a controversy or expectations regarding the two.

Within the Bible there are moments where people have laid memorial stones in order to remember what God has done for them. In Genesis 28: 10-22, Jacob creates a pillar of stones to remind him of the awesome vision he had while sleeping. In the same mind set, my tattoos are the same. Yes, they may not appear to be godly or religious statements, but my Marvel & DC Comics, my children's portraits and tribal designs and the cross are constant reminders of when God interacted in my life.

 In some ways, my body is a stained glass window telling the story of God's amazing unconditional love for me. While the people would look at me and say he will not accomplish anything, my faith and God told me I could.

I spoke about my faith is a heart matter, not a flesh matter. God does not look on the outside but is concerned with things of the heart. As a curate, I would love to get more tattoos but the difference now is if I have a spare £90 could I, knowing Gods heart and will, spend that on decorating my body while there are people out on the streets going without food?

Scripture tells me that there is nothing I can do that will separate me from the love of God so, with my tattoos, I know God uses them to connect and strike up some amazing conversations with people, breaking down people's perceptions of priests and Church.

I believe we as Church get so caught up in these theological debates that we forget that we are redeemed people and should be united in that. That as a representative of Christ and the Kingdom of God we should be revealing that to the world and not revealing the world to itself. We should be able to listen and hear one another and respond in a way that reveals Christ's nature.

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