

(Kenya) The Power of Jesus; Blood (Hebrews 9:1-15): Easter Bible Conference for Kenya (By Juma Fuchingo)

This year, 110 attendees attended our Easter Bible conference. Among them were 25 local leaders and missionaries, 55 students, and 30 second-gens.

This time, we struggled to find God's direction for our conference, but eventually God gave us Hebrews 9:14 as our key verse. We realized that most of our members, among them students and junior leaders, had confessed and repented for their struggle with sin during our past conference; however, some of them still felt guilty and judged. Through this key verse, we prayed that all who bring their burdens of sin to the cross of Jesus may be fully freed by the blood of Jesus and serve the living God with a free mind and heart.

Indeed, God worked powerfully, and two of our junior leaders, Brian and Davis, who served the first and second main messages, respectively, once again confessed freely and openly their previous struggle with sexual sin. S. Brian became overjoyed and thankful for God's full forgiveness through the blood of Jesus. After delivering his message, he was smiling throughout the conference and happily picked up other roles to support his sheep, who was a testimony speaker. Our junior leaders served opening and three main messages. S. Ken K. opened the conference by welcoming us to Jesus wedding banquet from Matthew 22:1-14 (4). His sense of humor and sincere confession of how he declined joining Jesus' banquet during his college days opened up everyone's heart to be ready to experience Jesus' blood through the conference.

S. Brian served the main message 1 from John 19:1-30, "It is finished." He genuinely confessed his struggle with disobedience and sexual sin immediately after graduation. It made him run away from the ministry, but he was restored by the love and gentle care of his shepherd. Eventually, he confessed and received forgiveness. However, his conscience still felt a sense of guilt, and he was afraid to serve sheep freely since he felt unworthy to be a shepherd to anyone. Through serving his message, he fully accepted Jesus' cry on the cross, "It is finished." He was set free and declared that from now on, all his previous struggles were finished at the cross of Jesus, and he was now ready to freely serve as many sheep as God would bring to him.

S. Davis served our conference theme message from Hebrews 9:1-14, "The power of Christ's blood." He had confessed his struggle with sexual sin and reunited with his wife in Nairobi after many years of being lost in sin in a far-off town. He had lost his job due to insincerity and became involved in alcohol and adultery, making him suffer for a long time together with his wife, who was also jobless. God accepted his repentance and granted both him and his wife jobs in Nairobi, and they were able to support their two children and serve God with devotion. His wife was greatly moved by Jesus' forgiveness of her husband and his grace upon their family. Even though she was not raised in UBF, she accepted her husband's calling and was designated as a shepherdess last year. Out of her grateful heart to God, she commutes 100km from her work station to join our fellowship on Friday and worship before traveling back.

Finally, S. Ken O. served the final conference message from John 21:1-17, "Feed my sheep." He had struggled to feed sheep ever since he was a student. Even though he was faithful, God taught him to be a good shepherd when his engagement for marriage by faith eventually collapsed, and his co-worker left the ministry. He struggled to overcome the emotional trauma for a long time. Eventually, he decided to go out and fish to learn to be a good shepherd. God granted him 1 faithful sheep whom he is feeding. His prayer is to first learn to be a good shepherd for God's sheep and eventually prepare his heart to be a gentle and shepherd-like husband to his future wife.

Our student shepherds prepared and presented skits before each main message. They were supported

by one of the junior leaders, S. Hillary. As well, 4 students voluntarily devoted themselves to memorizing John 19, which was our first main message, and they presented it during our Saturday evening fellowship. After our program on Saturday evening, we had a campfire where all attendees wrote down their sins and burned them in the fire as a sign of being completely cleansed by Jesus' blood. It created memories in their hearts to remember that Jesus' blood cleansed them once and for all. Finally, the conference was crowned by a special presentation of a beautiful orchestra performed by our second gens together with their teachers: S. Kevin, his co-worker Nancy, M. Esther, S. Clifton, Hannah, and M. Jeremiah. We also had two evening messages and three morning devotion messages served by student shepherds (esses). Friday evening message "Go now and leave your life of sin from John 8:1-11 (11) was served by S. Simon (4th yr.), and Saturday evening message "There is no

condemnation in Jesus”

Romans 8:1-17(8) was served by S. Christin (graduate). Morning devotion messages came from John 4:1-26(10), Mark 2:21-34(34), and Luke 24:1-12. They were served by shepherdesses Ann, Irene, and Caroline, all students.

At the beginning of this conference preparation, we prayed to strengthen the growing student leaders by inculcating the self-supporting spirit. Previously, they paid 30% of the conference cost, and the ministry supported 70%. As the economic situation keeps changing, many things become more costly, including the conference venue. Even though we used the same venue last year, the cost this time increased by 10%. So we prayerfully decided to challenge our faith and that of the students. All graduate leaders onwards paid the full conference fee, while students were asked to pay 50% of the total cost. It looked like a mountain to them, and even most of them began to form worship and Friday fellowship. Three weeks before the conference, no student had paid more than 1 USD. It felt like only senior leaders would join the conference since even most graduates struggled to raise the fee. God gave me peace that this should be a leader’s level of conference, and God will bring those he has chosen to grow as reliable and devoted leaders for campus ministry.

At this time, most of our leaders were scattered both spiritually and physically since most of their jobs are field-oriented. In the midst of despair, God gave us a spiritual challenge to unite in prayer. I challenged myself to put on hold all work travels and stay in Nairobi to pray for our conference. Eventually, all leaders joined in prayer in the morning as well as each evening. We had three prayer topics:

God to provide for our members to pay for the conference

God to change the hearts of those who had despaired of making a decision to join the conference

Everyone who joins the conference may experience the cleansing power of Jesus' blood.

At the end, we experienced the power of prayer when most members cleared their conference fees at once during the last week. Even some sheep who had not been faithful and were not part of those being followed up by shepherds came out and paid the full conference fee.

Eventually, the conference venue was almost full with attendees. We thank God, who worked powerfully to give a willing heart to all who served the conference. All students and leaders

shared sincere testimonies based on each message, and 4-6 students were given a chance to share their testimonies before the whole congregation every evening.

I was also thankful to God for the unity and co-working spirit among all our senior leaders, junior leaders, missionaries, and students that made the conference successful.

After completing the conference, 10 students accepted God's calling for campus ministry and asked to be designated. This incited us to prepare and begin discipleship devotional camp immediately after EBC. We pray that God may help them be prepared for shepherding work in our ministry.

Prayer Topics

All EBC attendants to be fully cleansed by the power of Jesus' blood

To have a successful Discipleship devotional camp (DDC) and all 10 willing students to devote to the program despite the approaching exam period.

All shepherds are to have a shepherd's heart and fish this year and feed at least two sheep.

One word: We are cleansed by the power of Jesus' blood!



