
My Name Written Over His Wounds

“After eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors having been shut, and stood in their midst and said, ‘Peace be with you.’ Then He said to Thomas, ‘Reach here with your finger, and see My hands; and reach here your hand and put it into My side; and do not be unbelieving, but believing.’ Thomas answered and said to Him, ‘My Lord and my God!’” (John 20:26–28).

“So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men” (Romans 5:18).

One truth that is reflected continuously in the Epistles of the New Testament is the vicarious nature of Jesus’ death. Paul said that He *died for our sins*. To the Corinthians, he wrote,

For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died *for our sins* according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures (1 Corinthians 15:3, 4; emphasis mine; see Galatians 1:4, 5).

Paul further said that Jesus was *made to be sin for us*: “He made Him who knew no sin *to be sin* on our behalf, so that we might become the righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21; emphasis mine). Peter declared that Jesus *bore our sins* in His body: “And He Himself *bore our sins* in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed” (1 Peter 2:24; emphasis mine). John affirmed that He *took away our sins*: “You know that He appeared in order *to take away sins*; and in Him there is no sin” (1 John 3:5; emphasis mine).

We must admit that there is a depth and mystery to the cross that we will study and ponder throughout this life and perhaps throughout eternity. However, the basic meaning of it is presented with stark simplicity in the New Testament. In reading it, no one can miss the emphasis on Jesus’ taking our place and bearing our sins by sacrificing Himself as a sin offering for us. Can we fully grasp this concept? No, we cannot; but we can accept it because of the clear testimony of the Scriptures. We know that

He died for us, for God has revealed this truth to us so that we might rejoice in our salvation and His love for us. A recent song by Stuart Townend has captured this divine thought in a single stanza:

Why should I gain from His reward?
I cannot give an answer;
But this I know with all my heart—
His wounds have paid my ransom.¹

If we carry the thought to its fullest depth, we have to say that the names of each of us were written over each wound that He suffered. Isaiah wrote,

Surely our griefs He Himself bore,
And our sorrows He carried;
Yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken,
Smitten of God, and afflicted.
But He was pierced through for our transgressions,
He was crushed for our iniquities;
The chastening for our well-being fell upon Him,
And by His scourging we are healed.
All of us like sheep have gone astray,
Each of us has turned to his own way;
But the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all
To fall on Him (Isaiah 53:4–6).

Let us think through this line—this image of having our names written over His wounds. In this, we may well be meditating upon the greatest of all truths.

¹Stuart Townend, “How Deep the Father’s Love for Us,” (<http://kingswayworship.co.uk/song-library/showsong/728>; Internet; accessed 17 May 2011).

The Son of God. We go first to the background truth, the underlying affirmation of the New Testament, that Jesus was and is the Son of God. The Gospel of John begins with the revelation that “the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth” (John 1:14). The New Testament ends with the promise of the divine Son: “Behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward *is* with Me, to render to every man according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end” (Revelation 22:12, 13). Jesus, the second member of the Godhead, visited this planet and walked among us for a little over thirty-three years. The people around Him saw Him, studied Him, heard Him, and touched Him. His coming was the epoch of all epochs, the event that not only divided the calendar but completely changed the history of the earth.

Wounds. We come now to the wounds that were inflicted upon Jesus. Our thoughts rise to the most amazing realization: the understanding that Jesus was—somehow, beyond our ability to understand—totally, completely, authentically, and fully human. He retained His deity, yet He actually became one of us. In the Old Testament, God at times appeared as a man; but in the New Testament, Jesus became a man. All we can do is wonder and say with Paul: “Who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men” (Philippians 2:6, 7). Jesus did not just look like a man or have some of the features of a man; He was a man. His wounds prove it. He was a person whom cruel hands could crucify. He was so completely one of us that He could be killed on a cross. We cannot understand it, but we can stand on it. We cannot explain it, but we can accept it and spend the rest of our lives contemplating the mystery of it.

Our names. We come finally to our names, to the fact that our names were written upon His wounds. Something about His suffering was very personal. Each of us can say, “He

died for me as if I were the only one for whom He needed to die.” In other words, my name was written on His heart before my name was written over His wounds. His whole advent was for me. From eternity past, the Father and the Son saw my lostness, my cry for a Savior. He was the only One who could address my need and save me, but He had to become one of us in order to do it.

This great plan of redemption involved physical as well as spiritual writing. The holy message of God, the divine Bible, was written to allow us to understand and believe God’s love and His plan for us. John said,

Therefore many other signs Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples, which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name (John 20:30, 31).

However, we must recognize another kind of writing: God intended for the new covenant to leave the page and become written on our hearts as we yield to it. He said long ago, “I will put My laws into their minds, and I will write them on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be My people” (Hebrews 8:10b; see Jeremiah 31:33). As we rise up to the highest level, we see that God’s whole plan revolved around my name—and your name—being written over the wounds that Jesus suffered as He died for us.

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This, then, is one of the greatest of all truths: My name was written over His wounds! The Old Testament points to it and the New Testament reveals it. If it is true, I can be saved for all eternity through the justification that His death provided; if it is not true, the Bible is false and Christianity is just another religion that has no substance to it other than the opinions and machinations of man. Because it is true, we can sing with Stuart Townend, “His wounds have paid my ransom.”²

²Ibid.