

Isaiah 53:5

“But he was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed.”

I Corinthians 2:2

“For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.”

I Corinthians 2:2 was the subject of all the preaching of the greatest of all missionaries, the Apostle Paul. I Corinthians 2:2 is the subject of all Christian preaching and the very core of all Christian knowledge – Jesus Christ, and his crucifixion. We firmly believe that this belief was also the saving truth that the departed held fast in his dying hours. The departed was privileged to hear that saving message of Christ from the sainted Pastor John A. Moldstad (*this was the last sick call of his eventful career*) and the visit made a deep impression upon him. After that he again gladly heard that Gospel which is able to make one wise unto salvation, through faith which is in Christ Jesus. During his last days he received the Lord's Supper, in which Christ brings and assures us of the forgiveness which he has won for us on the cross by offering up his very body and blood. The departed brother found healing for his sin-sick soul in Christ and in his stripes. To that same Christ to which your beloved husband, father, and friend was directed, also today, as always, I would direct you dear mourners.

When your souls and hearts are bleeding from the wound inflicted by the hand of death - look up to your bleeding, dying Savior. **“For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified.” I Corinthians 2:2** For I know that Jesus alone can heal us today from the wounds of: **1. Sin 2. Affliction 3. Death “... and by his wounds we are healed.” Isaiah 53:5**

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Look to your crucified Lord! Look to his sorrow and grief! Stricken smitten and afflicted, his body and soul was full of wounds, bruises, and stripes. With his stripes we are also healed.

Sin has wounded everyone as Scripture testifies: **“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.” Romans 3:23** We must confess with David: **“Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me.” Psalm 51:5 . . .** and with the Apostle Paul: **“I know that nothing good lives in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For what I do is not the good I want to do; no, the evil I do not want to do – this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.” Romans 7:18-20** The wound of sin is fatal and unless this wound is healed, no word of comfort may be spoken on earth. No word of comfort would be heeded by the wounded one. But with his stripes we are healed, for: **“But he (namely Christ) was pierced for our transgressions, he was**

crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all.” Isaiah 53: 5-6

All of our sins were laid on him. Christ was smitten by the law and thereby gained for us a perfect righteousness. Christ was wounded by his Father’s wrath (*which we deserved*), and this reconciled God to us for: “God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men’s sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation.” II Corinthians 5:19

The stripes of Christ are the healing balm which heals the wound of sin. When a wound is healed it disappears and our sin is permanently taken away by the blood of Christ. For: “... the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.” I John 1:7 As soon as we put our trust in Christ and his stripes (*inflicted upon him for our sin*) the accusing voice of hash judgment disappears and we stand before God justified.

We need at all times to know for certain that all of our sins are forgiven. The Bible is certain when it says: “He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; by his wounds you have been healed.” I Peter 2:24 God cannot turn from those whose sins are forgiven. Believing this you may say: “*I have many problems, but bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name.*”

We can be certain of the truth that Christ: "... forgives all your sins and heals all your diseases, who redeems your life from the pit and crowns you with love and compassion ..." Psalm 103:3
So then rejoice even in great affliction - for the stripes of Jesus that grants forgiveness of sins can also heal the wounds of affliction.

II

To the unbeliever, affliction is a rod in the hand of an angry Lord which cuts to the quick. But a Christian can be healed by Christ's stripes. The stripes inflicted upon Jesus for our sins assumes that God cannot punish us as well for those same sins - because God is fair and will not punish twice for the same offense. Christ's stripes take from our stripes the painful sting. The painful sting is changed into a loving father's chastisement. God's warning for us is this: do not attach yourselves to earthly things. His warning admonishes us: be prepared at all times for a Christian death. The Lord invites us: "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest." Matthew 11:28
God is now waiting for you to cast yourself in your loneliness upon him. Do this and you will hear these sweet words: "... why are you crying?" John 20: 13 Your Lord and God is with you and me and also with those who have been taken from us in death. Gustave is not dead, but lives eternally - for Christ's stripes have healed the wound of death.

III

Death itself is a fatal wound and a natural person is spiritually dead. This means that a temporal death will be followed by eternal death. But the spiritually redeemed person is healed by the stripes of Jesus. Jesus bore our sins and takes away the penalty of sin and death. Because Christ conquered death we can now shout with the voice of faith: **“Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?” I Corinthians 15:55** We are healed from the dread disease of death and it cannot destroy us. We will not even fear temporal death, for beyond it there is life. The blood of Jesus appropriated by faith performs the miracle of life after death in heaven.

Today we thank God that the departed fell asleep in the wounds of Christ and that in dying, he is now fully healed.

May the stripes of Christ keep all of us in the one true faith so that in our death we also will be blessed by seeing God. Then we will enjoy an eternity of bliss with Christ and our fellow Christians. In our hour of death may we look to Jesus and cry:

Be my consolation and shield when I must die.

Let me see your passion when my last hour draws near.

Then may my dim eyes see you and rest upon your cross.

My heart by faith will enfold you - who dies this way, dies well.