

The Name of Jesus Heals All Wounds

Acts 3:1-10, Trinity Sunday I

May 25, 2008

Beloved of the Lord..... Whatever wounds that we as Christians have, all our wounds stem from, and come from sin. Sometimes we are wounded by those who sin against us. Sometimes we are wounded by our own sin and sometimes we wound others by our words of sin. Thanks be to God, the name of Jesus heals all wounds.

In our lesson today, we see a wounded man, a broken and lame man, lying on the ground, at the gate called "Beautiful." Indeed here is a fitting picture for us to behold, for this lame man represents all mankind. When you look upon this man and behold him, as Peter and John did, we should see ourselves suffering from our self-inflicted wounds of sin. We too are unable to stand and rise up before God by our own power or holiness, for we were born into the world spiritually lame, dead in trespasses and sins. We are quite unable to heal our wounds of sin.

But in this picture of the lame man and Peter and John, there is another Man unseen, and His name is Jesus, mankind's Savior from sin. The unseen Jesus looks upon and beholds this lame man with compassion. Jesus will heal him. That is why Jesus came down from heaven above to earth below, to heal our wounds of sin. When Peter says, "In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk" we should see that we too through the holy name of Christ rise up and walk as new creatures! It is by and through the name of Christ, that we are justified and declared righteous. This is why the name Jesus sounds so sweet in the believers ear. "It makes the wounded spirit whole, [it] calms the troubled breast. 'Tis manna to the hungry soul, And to the weary, rest."

I. Our wounds of sin and God's warning. Let us then begin today with two simple questions: 1) Why is there suffering in the world? 2) Does the suffering of the world prove that God is unloving, or unmerciful? First, from the Bible we see that the real fount and source of all the world's suffering is sin. Before Adam and Eve fell into sin, there was no suffering - they literally had Paradise. But they willfully threw Paradise away, when they broke God's law, though they had been warned of the consequence. After their fall into sin, they suffered constantly for their sin. You and I, we and the whole world, suffer from our own sins. We are just like the man who was born lame from his mother's womb. Spiritually speaking we are born lame also, from our mother's womb. Spiritually speaking we are born dead in trespasses and sin. Sin which is spiritual, causes all the physical deformities and sufferings in life. Physical death and physical suffering is the fruit of spiritual sin.

But now the second question: Does the suffering of the world prove that God is unloving, or unmerciful? Really this is a trick question which proceeds from an unbelieving heart. For the real question that should be asked is this: Who should be blamed for all the suffering in the world, man or God? When men argue and rail against

God, as if God is the cause of all suffering, they ought to consider what the Lord says in Ezekial 18. God says, "Do I take pleasure in the death of the wicked? Doesn't it make me happy when the wicked repent of their sins and live? But when the good turn away from doing good, and instead do every kind of evil after their own heart, would it be right for me to just let them live?" Let's think about this.....when we see evil people doing evil things, and then God punishes them so that they suffer and die, don't we say in our heart - they deserved it? When Saddam Hussein was hanged for his many crimes against his own people, didn't the world rejoice and see God's justice in it all? But when the tables are turned, and it is we who suffer, what happens? Suddenly we change our tune. We say in our heart, "God, I don't deserve this, what have you done? Where is your mercy? I thought you loved me?" This alone ought to prove our sinful nature. We have no problem when other people suffer for their sins. They deserve it, our flesh says. But when we suffer for our sins, we find ourselves accusing God of injustice! God's answers this accusation also in Ezekial 18. God says: "You say that I am being unfair with you? Isn't it true that you are really the one being unfair with Me? Therefore I will judge you, each one of you for your sins against Me. Therefore repent and turn yourself away from your own sin, lest it be your ruin." God's point is this: man has ruined himself by his own sin. In Hosea 13 God says, "O Israel, you have destroyed yourself; but in Me is your help."

Really, God's purpose in punishing the ungodly, is so that they repent of their sins and see their need for Christ. The Bible says, "the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ." As a rule, men do not repent when things are going their way, but when God punishes and chastises the sinner, they quickly discover their need for God's forgiveness. Consider the recent earthquake in China or the devastating cyclone in Burma (Myanmar). These are signs that God will soon return as Judge. God would by these means prepare the hearts of men to repent, lest they die in their sins. God's law, be it through the preaching of the law, the physical punishment of sickness or disease, war, famine, or natural disaster - His law has the singular purpose of leading hearts to despair of sin. When we see the wounds of our own sin, God would have us see there is healing in Jesus. Jesus is the "Sun of righteousness". He carries healing in His wings.

II. There is perfect healing for our wounds of sin in the name of Jesus. Now let us again consider the man born lame, from his mother's womb. Again he is a picture, representing all mankind, born spiritually lame, dead in trespasses and sin. It is true also that this man had to live a long life with this physical deformity. You could rightly say that though God is gracious, God permitted or allowed this bodily affliction, for His own good and divine purpose. The lame man even had to suffer poverty from his affliction. He daily lay at the temple gate called "Beautiful". He begged for pennies just to get by. God knew all of this. God even permitted his poor condition to

exist for many years. When we as Christians endure physical suffering, perhaps sickness or disease, we must remember God's ways are higher than our own. "Who hath known the mind of the Lord, or who hath been His counselor?" The sufferings of this present world are not worthy to be compared to the glories which await us above. God means it for your good. His mercy is behind your suffering.

God has a good plan a good purpose for the sufferings He permits to befall His children. We see this in the case of the lame man. According to His own good pleasure the day arrived, when God would help and deliver. Peter and John went to the temple to pray. Seeing them, the lame man hoped they would help. But Peter and John had no money. Peter fastened his eyes upon the man, seeing his poor and desperate condition. "Look on us" Peter said. "Silver and gold have I none; but such as I have I give thee: In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth rise up and walk!" Peter then took him by the hand, "immediately his feet and ankle bones received strength..." the lame man arose, and not only did he walk, but "he leaping up stood, and walked, and entered with them into the temple, walking and leaping and praising God!"

What a wonderful picture the Holy Spirit has given us here! What mercy, what compassion we see from the gracious hand of God! For we first see that if it be His will, God can heal our physical ills. It is well within His power to heal our poor and frail bodies, even if they be afflicted with great disease or deformity. With God all things are possible, and with God nothing shall be impossible! Who could number the multitudes that Jesus Himself healed in His earthly ministry? The Bible says, "great multitudes came unto him, having with them those that were lame, blind, dumb, maimed, and many others, and cast them down at Jesus' feet; and he healed them." With the touch of His hand, or the hem of His garment, or His Word alone, Jesus can heal our physical woes just as easily as He heals the scrapped knee of a child. "Ask and it shall be given you." If it is God's will, it will be done.

But O what a tragedy would occur if today we saw only that Jesus has the power to heal our physical diseases! For there is a far greater lesson here, a bigger spiritual picture: namely that in the name of Jesus there is perfect healing for our wounds of sin. When you see this lame man so perfectly healed, that he not only stands, but rises up, jumping and leaping in God's temple like a little child in the midst of a joyful dance.....you should see how perfectly God has healed you of your wounds of sin. Your healing took place through the name of Jesus long ago, when He received into His own body your wounds of sin. "He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities." Your wounds of sin are healed, in, by, and through the wounds of Christ. His blood heals you, it makes you whole, if only you believe. If you want to know whether or not God is merciful and gracious unto you, if you in your heart question whether or not God will forgive you, do not look forward, but look back to the cross. There in the wounds of Christ you will see God's mercy and love

toward not just you, but a world of sinners.

Beloved, which would you rather have: healing of body, or healing of soul? In the name of Jesus, by faith in Him, there is perfect healing for your wounds of sin. In His holy name you will find the sweet mercy of God. His lovingkindness is upon you every day by way of Christ, so that His face continually shines upon you, and is gracious unto you - no matter the physical condition of your body. In the name of Jesus, with a simple child-like faith, we stand before God as new creatures, holy, spotless, undefiled, the righteousness of Christ being upon us by faith. It doesn't matter whether we are in God's house here, or outside His house living and working in the world (our temporary home), we are always in God's kingdom by faith in Christ Jesus. In the name of Jesus, there is true life, spiritual life, life everlasting. Jesus grants the balm of healing - for our soul. How sweet the name of Jesus sounds, in a believer's ears.

As we close today, let us remember that God may likewise for our own good, grant us physical hardships, poverty, sickness, even disease, as He did the lame man. But it is only for a time, a short moment. Our day of deliverance shall come. By faith, take another look at the lame man lying on the ground, at the Temple gate. Who is he? Do you know his name? Does the Bible give his name? He goes nameless, because he is you. Who is it that walks up to you, fastening His eyes upon you? Who is it that says, "Look upon Me". He is Jesus Christ, the Lord. How does Jesus look upon you? He is looking upon you with mercy and tender love. Jesus has compassion upon your soul. What is it that Jesus says to you which causes you to be healed so that you can rise up, and stand, and walk and leap and praise God? Jesus says to you, "Thy sins be forgiven thee, go in peace." Where is that lame man now? Where will you one day be by grace, through faith? What do you think you will be doing in heaven? Amen.

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