Why Does Jesus Still Bear His Scars?

John 20:24-29 (NKJV)

For our scripture text this evening please turn with me to the Gospel of John, chapter twenty. And follow along with me as I read verses 24-29.

JOHN 20:24-29 (NKJV)

24 Now Thomas, called the Twin, one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came.

25 The other disciples therefore said to him, “We have seen the Lord.” So he said to them, “Unless I see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and put my hand into His side, I will not believe.”

26 And after eight days His disciples were again inside, and Thomas with them. Jesus came, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, “Peace to you!”

27 Then He said to Thomas, “Reach your finger here, and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.”

28 And Thomas answered and said to Him, “My Lord and my God!”

29 Jesus said to him, “Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”

PRAYER
INTRODUCTION

Chances are everyone of us bears a few scars from a lifetime of wear and tear on these physical bodies of ours. Perhaps you have a few scars from those unstitched nicks and cuts you picked up in your childhood. Or maybe you have a scar on your abdomen where you had your appendix removed; or perhaps some of you ladies have a scar where the doctor did a C-section when one of your children was born. My dad's chest was heavily scarred from the three heart by-pass surgeries he had.

Sometimes we are proud of our scars, especially if we received them while serving in the military or while playing a sport. But then other times we are very ashamed of our scars, especially if they mar our appearance or disfigure us in some way.

ILLUSTRATION

When I was six years old, my brother and I were playing one day in a sand pile behind the Church parsonage where we lived in Virginia; when all the sudden I felt a sharp, searing pain in the bottom of my left foot. I had stepped on a broken-off neck of a Ginger-Ale bottle that was sticking straight up in the dirt beneath the sand pile. I was losing blood rapidly and needed to get to the hospital as soon as possible.

My dad got one of the men in the Church who lived about a half-a-mile away to drive us to the hospital in Danville, Virginia while my dad held a tourniquet tightly on my foot the whole way.

By the time I arrived at the hospital I had lost so much blood the doctor told my dad had they gotten me there ten minutes later I probably wouldn't have made it. Fifty-five years later I still bear a deep, gaping scar on the bottom of my left foot that reminds me of that awful day.
Of course, not all scars are physical. Sometimes we bear emotional or psychological scars from abuse, or from a tragic or traumatic event we experienced in our childhood or adulthood. Though these kinds of scars may not be visible to others, they are just as real as our physical scars.

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Perhaps the most famous scars ever born by any man are the scars that were left on the body of Jesus Christ following His crucifixion. Those scars are the focal point of the passage of scripture I read at the outset of the message.

The gospel writers tell us that Jesus appeared to His apostles behind closed doors on the Sunday of His resurrection, but there were only ten, not twelve. Judas Iscariot wasn't there because he had committed suicide by hanging after he betrayed Jesus. And Thomas was not there. The scriptures don't tell us why Thomas wasn't there, they simply tell us he wasn't there.

Luke's gospel tells us that when Jesus appeared to the ten on the day of His resurrection they didn't really believe it was Him. In fact, Luke 24:37 tells us the disciples were scared to death because they thought they were seeing a spirit or a ghost.

How did Jesus convince them it was really Him? He had them examine His scars.

Luke 24:38,39 (NKJV) And He said to them, “Why are you troubled? And why do doubts arise in your hearts? Behold My hands and My feet, that it is I Myself. Handle Me and see, for a spirit does not have flesh and bones as you see I have.”
The disciples had been eyewitneses to the crucifixion of Jesus. They saw the Roman soldiers drive the nails through the hands and feet of Jesus. They saw the Roman soldier thrust a spear into the side of Jesus after He had died. **And now the scars left by those awful wounds bore testimony to the ten that Jesus was truly alive and they weren't seeing a ghost!**

Move ahead one week. Jesus appears once again to His disciples. But this time **Thomas is present.** The other disciples had told Thomas they had seen the risen Savior, but Thomas needed more than their word to convince him. **He too needed to see the scars of Jesus.**

Jesus said to Thomas, “**Reach your finger here and look at My hands; and reach your hand here, and put it into My side. Do not be unbelieving, but believing.**”

And upon closely examining **the scars of Jesus,** Thomas exclaimed: “**My LORD and my God!**” And Jesus said to him, **“Thomas, because you have seen Me you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed.”** *(John 20:28,29 NKJV)*

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**Will we one day see the scars of Jesus?** I believe we will. In fact the only thing in heaven made by the hands of men are **the scars of Jesus.** How do we know Jesus still bears the scars of Calvary?

One reason is because **the scars the apostles saw were on Jesus post-resurrection body.** The wounds were inflicted before His death. The scars were present after His resurrection. There are NO scriptures that tell us Jesus’ scars disappeared on the day He ascended back to His heavenly Father.
In the Old Testament Book of Zechariah we find further proof that the Lord still bears the scars of Calvary. The Book of Zechariah as you know, is one of the prophetic books of the Old Testament, and much of Zechariah’s prophecies have to do with the end of time and the second coming of Christ. Listen closely to these prophetic words of Zechariah regarding Christ in the future.....

Zechariah 12:10 (NKJV) “And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced..........  

And in ..........

Zechariah 13:6 (KJV) And one shall say unto him, What are these wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends.

This brings up a very thought-provoking question. “Why Does Jesus Still Bear His Scars?” He certainly has the power to make those scars disappear if He wants to, doesn't He? If He wanted to He could erase every ugly reminder on His body of what happened to Him on Calvary’s hill that day, couldn't He? So “Why does Jesus still bear His scars?” I suggest to you that in heaven, the scars of Jesus are a thing of beauty and honor rather than objects of scorn and shame.

I believe Jesus will bear the scars of Calvary for all eternity and here are three reasons why.
First of all.....

I. The Scars of Jesus Will Always Remind Us Our God Was Willing To SUFFER For Us

1. Any time you see a scar on someone you know that scar is the result of suffering of some kind; whether it is from a surgery........or an accident........or an injury.

2. This world is full of suffering. Everywhere we turn we see suffering.

   - Look at our soldiers who have come home from Iraq or Afghanistan with grossly disfigured faces.....or missing one or both legs.......and you see suffering.

   - Walk up and down the hallways of a hospital or a nursing home and you will see people who are suffering.

   - Walk into the waiting room at a cancer treatment center and you will see suffering.

   - Look at the long lines of people outside of soup kitchens and homeless shelters and you will see suffering.

   - Every time you meet a funeral procession on the road you are seeing people who are suffering.

In recent weeks we have seen a lot of interviews on the news with victims of hurricane Matthew who lost their homes and all their personal belongings in the ravaging flood waters. And when we saw their tear-filled eyes and heard their quivering voices it was very obvious those people were suffering greatly.
3. Most of our suffering in this life is involuntary. None of us volunteers to get cancer. None of us volunteers to become flood victims, or hurricane victims, or victims of a crime or accident.

4. That is what makes those precious scars of Jesus so beautiful. Those scars tell us God was willing to suffer for our sake that we might have eternal life.

5. I don't know if you have ever thought about this, but in Jesus' final hours, starting with Gethsemane until He drew His final breath on the cross, Jesus suffered every form of suffering a human can suffer to most intense degree.

(A) Let's begin with the most obvious, His physical suffering.

Think of that merciless beating Jesus received at the hands of the Roman soldiers that went on and on and on until Jesus was nearly dead. By the time the soldiers were through, Jesus was no longer recognizable.

And think of that crown of thorns they placed on His head. The crown was made from the thorny branches of a Judean bramble bush, with prickly thorns an inch to an inch and a half long. Think of how He suffered when those thorns were forced down upon His head.

And think of excruciating pain of having the crossbar of the cross rubbing against His bloody mangled shoulders as He carried His cross towards Golgotha's hill.
And think what it would feel like to have 8” - 10” construction nails driven straight through each of your wrists and through both your feet.

Having the weight of His entire body putting tremendous pressure on His chest Jesus gasped for each and every breath. He sweated profusely. He thirsted intensely.

If someone were to have asked Jesus to rate His level of pain from 1 to 10, perhaps He would have said “100.”

(B) But there was also His EMOTIONAL suffering.

He was under so much stress when He prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, Luke tells us “He sweat as though it were great drops of blood.”

Later that same night when Jesus was put through all those “mock” trials, He felt the humility and indignation of being stripped of all His clothes.......and stripped of all His rights.....and treated as though He were a common criminal.

He was despised. He was rejected. He was cursed at......and mocked.....and ridiculed....and laughed at.

And He was forsaken by His disciples and He even felt His own Father had forsaken Him. He experienced a loneliness unlike anything any human has ever experienced before or since.
And let’s not forget His **SPIRITUAL** suffering.

**II Corinthians 5:21 (NKJV)** For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him.

Jesus didn't suffer and die on that cross for anything He had done, He suffered and died for **everything we had done.**

**Isaiah 53:5 (NKJV)** But He was wounded for our transgressions He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed.

One day you and I are going to see Jesus face to face, and we are going to live in His presence for all eternity. **And every time we see the scars of JESUS they will forever remind us that OUR GOD WAS WILLING TO SUFFER FOR US!**

Secondly.......

**II. The Scars of Jesus Will Always Remind Us Our God Was Willing To **SYMPATHIZE** With Us**

**Hebrews 4:14-16 (NKJV)**

14 Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession.  

15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin.  

16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.
And listen to this beautiful passage in **Psalm 103:8-14 (NKJV)**

8 The **LORD** is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in mercy.
9 He will not always strive with us, nor will He keep His anger forever.
10 He has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor punished us according to our iniquities.
11 For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward those who fear Him;
12 As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us.
13 As a father pities his children, so the **LORD** pities those who fear Him.
14 For He knows our frame; He remembers that we are dust.

1. Christ demonstrated sympathy and compassion throughout His earthly ministry.

* In **Mark chapter one**, a man with the dreaded, incurable disease of leprosy came begging Jesus to heal him. **Mark 1:41,42 (NKJV)** says, *Then Jesus, moved with compassion, stretched out His hand and touched him, “I am willing, be cleansed.” And as soon as He had spoken, immediately the leprosy left him and he was cleansed.*

* In **Mark chapter six** we read the account where Jesus went to a secluded place to mourn the death of John the Baptist, His cousin and forerunner of the gospel. Well a huge multitude of people found out where Jesus was and they went out to see Him. Rather than sending them away, **Mark 6:34** tells us *“Jesus was moved with compassion for them, because they were like sheep not having a shepherd.”*
* In **Luke chapter seven** we read the account of where Jesus went to the small town of **Nain** one day. And as He and His disciples were coming into town **they met a funeral procession**. A widow woman in town had lost her one and only son. When Jesus saw the grieving mother, **Luke 7:13** tells us **Jesus had compassion on her**. Then He touched the open coffin and told **deceased young man to arise**. And the young man **sat up in his casket and Jesus gave him back to his mother**.

* Of course in **John 11** we find that account of where Jesus' dear friend **Lazarus had died**. And when Jesus stood at the entrance to Lazarus' tomb **John 11:35** simply says, "**Jesus wept."**

2. But the greatest demonstration of Christ's sympathy and compassion was when He went to the cross to die for us.

**Romans 5:7-9 (NKJV)** 7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet perhaps for a good man someone would even dare to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, having now been justified by His blood, we shall be saved from wrath through Him.

3. One day you and I will walk the streets of gold with Jesus and we will see Him seated high and lifted up on His throne. **And when we see those scars in His hands and feet, we will forever remember OUR GOD WAS WILLING TO SYMPATHIZE WITH US.**
III. The Scars of Jesus Will Always Remind Us Our God Was Willing To SAVE Us

**Titus 3:3-5 (NKJV)** 3 For we ourselves were also once foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving various lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful and hating one another. 4 But when the kindness and the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, 5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,

**Romans 5:6 (NKJV)** For when we were still without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.

**Ephesians 2:8,9 (NKJV)** 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

1. We were not **worthy or deserving** of what Jesus did for us on the cross, so why did He do it? He did it because He loves us. He knew we could not save ourselves. He knew we were doomed to live for all eternity apart from Him. And He knew He, and He alone could do something to save us; and that was to **pay the penalty for our sins with His own blood**. His blood was the only thing God would accept as payment for our sins. He was the only perfect, sinless, spotless sacrifice that could be offered on our behalf.

2. So every time you and I see JESUS in heaven, every time we see **the scars in His hands and feet** we will be forever reminded **OUR GOD WAS WILLING TO SAVE US THAN CONDEMN US.**
CONCLUSION

The late G. Campbell Morgan once wrote.....

It is impossible to omit from that ascended and reigning One the wounds He bears. They are part of His Personality and speak of the fulfillment of a purpose which was the purpose of God, and which was carried out by God in and through Jesus. If the perfect Manhood of Jesus be the perfect unveiling before the eyes of men of the essential glories of God, so the wounded Personality of Jesus is the unveiling before the eyes of men of that wounding of the heart of God, through which His grace was manifested and wrought its mightiest victory.

Just as the ten apostles saw the scars of their resurrected Lord on the evening of His resurrection, and as Thomas saw His scars a week later when He appeared again to His apostles; we too shall one day see the scars of Jesus.

And those scars will forever remind us OUR GOD WAS WILLING TO SUFFER FOR US.......OUR GOD WAS WILLING TO SYMPATHIZE WITH US......AND OUR GOD WAS WILLING TO SAVE US!