

“With His Stripes We Are Healed”

As I told you last night, all throughout this Lenten Season, we have turned our attention to our brokenness: broken hearts, broken promises, we are jars of clay – easily broken. But God does not leave us in our brokenness. We are restored in Christ. If you want a one line summary of the entire Bible, you could say: God’s creation was spoiled, broken with sin; Christ came to make all things new. That’s the whole story – without all the detail.

“Making all things new” cannot be an easy fix. Nothing of real value is ever gained without sacrifice. That is true in your everyday walk of life. It is certainly true within the Kingdom of God. Jesus came to usher in the Kingdom of God. There was no “easy button.” The “easy button” is a myth and a vain hope created by our sinful nature and the Staples corporation in their television commercials.

There is no forgiveness of sin without the shedding of blood. Jesus could not defeat death unless He died. Our brokenness cannot be fixed unless the Son of God takes our brokenness from us upon Himself. Tonight, we gather in our brokenness and see the full weight of our burden placed upon the Son of God.

As we have been saying throughout this Lenten Season, the Son of God being betrayed, mocked, spit upon, beaten, nailed to a cross – this has always been the plan. This is what Jesus told the disciples over and over again as they journeyed toward Jerusalem. As Isaiah wrote 700 years before the world witnessed the event of Good Friday, “it was the will of the Lord to crush Him.”

As I said last night, your brokenness could not be fixed by some half-hearted symbolic gesture. Last night, as we witnessed the events of Jesus and the disciples in the Upper Room, He does not come with some feel-good remembrance meal. He offers His real broken body and His real shed blood. “This is My body; This is My blood; given and shed for you.”

Again, Jesus does not offer up a half-hearted symbolic gesture for the forgiveness of sins. He offers up His real hands and feet to be pierced. He offers His real blood to be poured out. His life really did end. The “Good” part of this “Good Friday” is that His real blood shed for you has brought real healing and real forgiveness of sin for you.

As Isaiah said, “He was wounded for our transgressions; He was crushed for our iniquities . . . and with His stripes we are healed.” Amen.